EXTRACT

The First Fireworks

a ten minute play

by

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The First Fireworks

Cast

HELEN – Mid 50s to early 60s

DAWN – 30s

Setting

A park bench.

Time

New Year's Eve.

The First Fireworks.

New Year's Eve. Close to midnight. A bench on a hillside.

DAWN, a frail woman in her mid 50s-early 60s enters, wearing a white hospital gown. Her feet are bare. She slowly makes her way to the bench. She sits on the bench, panting heavily. Pause.

HELEN, a well-dressed woman in her mid 30s enters.

HELEN: Mum? Mum!

SHE GOES TO **DAWN**.

HELEN: What are you doing? Dad's going out of his mind.

DAWN: He'll be alright.

HELEN: The whole hospital's turned upside down. Everybody's looking for you.

DAWN: But you're the only one who found me.

HELEN: (WRAPPING HER COAT AROUND HER) Here you go. It's freezing.

DAWN: Is it? I don't really feel it anymore.

HELEN: How did you get up here?

DAWN: There's a hole in the fence.

HELEN: I know but how did you get up here? The steps almost killed me.

DAWN: I'm not sure.

HELEN: It's a good spot. Wonder more people don't get up here.

DAWN: They don't know about the hole.

PAUSE.

DAWN: Shouldn't you be at your party?

HELEN: I was until Dad called and told me you'd vanished.

DAWN: He will be annoyed.

HELEN: Dad?

DAWN: No. What's his name?

HELEN: You know his name.

DAWN: Do I? What is it again? Gordon, Gormond –

HELEN: Garan.

DAWN: That's right – Garan. Sounds like some kind of rash. "Oh no. I've got a nasty case of Garan on my bum."

HELEN: Mum, he's my fiancée.

DAWN: More fool you. I always liked that other one. Simon. He was –

HELEN: Wet.

DAWN: Considerate. He was always so nice to me.

HELEN: Probably fancied you.

DAWN: Me? Really?

HELEN: Really.

DAWN: But I'm twice his age.

HELEN: Trust me.

DAWN: Garan reminds me too much of someone else.

HELEN: Who?

DAWN: My husband.

HELEN: Dad's alright.

DAWN: You try being married to him for twenty-five years.

PAUSE.

HELEN: Come on, we better get you back.

DAWN: I'm not going back.

HELEN: Don't be silly Mum. Come on.

DAWN: Helen – I'm not going back. I hate that awful room full of all that stuff. People keep ringing me and saying "What can I bring you?" I say, "Don't bring me anything!" I don't want any more things.

DAWN TAPS THE BENCH ALONG SIDE HER. **HELEN** SITS.

DAWN: Beautiful clothes. They look very expensive.

HELEN: They are. So I guess Garan is good for one thing.

DAWN: (TAPPING **HELEN**'S STOMACH) Maybe two.

DAWN: How did you work it out where I was?

HELEN: It wasn't hard. New Year's Eve. Where else would you be?

DAWN: My chair. My view. Surprised you remembered where it was.

HELEN: Come on Mum, it hasn't been that long.

DAWN: Five years.

HELEN: Five? Really.

DAWN NODS. PAUSE.

HELEN: I still remember when you first brought me here. I was eight years old.

DAWN: Long time ago.

HELEN: I remember it like yesterday. We got here just as the sun was going down. My legs got tired so you had to carry me up the last fifty steps. And I kept asking: "What is it Mum? Why are we here?" And you just smiled and said : "We're going to my chair. The best view in the city."

DAWN: I remember.

HELEN: And I kept asking: "But what are we going to see?" And you wouldn't answer. You just put your finger over my lips and said:

DAWN: "You'll see my love."

HELEN: And then when it got dark you pointed to the stars and said "Look" and suddenly the sky was full of light. Huge explosions of colour all around us. Orange, pink, blue. It was like you and I