

Stage Jump

“What is that sound...that clapping noise?”

“That’s your audience congratulating you on such a tremendous performance!”

“What audience? What are you talking about? Everything is blurry. Why can’t I see properly? Everything is white”.

“Things will be clearer in a minute or two. Just take in the moment for what it is. It will make sense soon”.

“Who are you, and where are you?”

“I’m your creative coach and counsel...Jim...you will remember me shortly...you have to let the effect of death wear off first”.

“Am I dead?”

“Not in any real sense of the word, only in that your stage play has ended”.

“I can see my hand now...and colours”.

“Great, the effects are wearing off already”.

“You do look familiar...Jim, you say? What about my family, all the ones I have left behind?”

“You will see them soon, once they finish on stage...it won’t be long”.

“Yes, I am remembering now. I can see normally again”.

“And do you remember *me* now?”

“Of course I do! Did you like my performance Jim? How did I go?”

“You were tremendous Grace! You kept everyone glued right until the end. It didn’t matter what we threw at you, you kept navigating it with flare...I’d say the perfect balance for the viewer between tragedy, humour, love, and intrigue”.

“I want a full debrief as soon as possible!”

“Of course, of course...just give yourself a moment or two. Soak it all in. Your fans of course, and there are plenty of them, will want a ‘meet and greet’ with you. You see Grace, you cracked the code while you were on stage!”

“No way! Does that mean I am part of the ‘club’ now?”

“Sure does baby...and not only that, but you are currently in number eight spot!”

“Remind me again, how many are in the club?”

“Only 1865, including yourself...and you are in number eight spot! Marvelous achievement. Simply marvelous!”

“I’m sure I won’t stay in the top ten for long Jim. They are getting younger and younger, the more actors there are on stage. It’s easier to trans-mutate idea’s now...grow them from a whiff of a notion and cultivate it from there...especially with the close proximity of everyone on stage, and the collective props of mass media, podcasts, etc...”.

“Don’t be so negative Grace, just enjoy the moment for what it is! And right now, you are one of the highest rated actors of the time! Should we commence on the debrief now or fans first?”

“Debrief please...you know I love the analytics!”

“Great. Let’s start. You entered the stage like most do, but immediately you presented a situational disturbance for Fred and Jessica, who were of course acting as your father and mother. By the way, I have organised a post-performance dinner tonight which they will be attending”.

“Awesome. I am also keen to catch up with Nelsie, and David...will they be attending too?”

“David will of course be there, but Nelsie couldn’t pass up the opportunity to be in the current big-screen tragedy drama “Gaza War Front”. Her role will end in approximately 2 days our time – so you will be able to catch up then”.

“Right, ok...well keep going with the debrief then”.

“Yes, of course. Where was I...that’s right, you worked well with the “hole-in-the-heart” scene...you really had Fred and Jess right on the edge with worry for you. The audience didn’t know if you were going to live or die...but you kept on hanging in there. Just for effect, we introduced the ‘faith healer’, which you responded to perfectly...your heart healed immediately, and we could move onto new scenes for you to face”.

“Thanks for that little twist, it was just the sort of scene I have wanted to play for a while...I felt I was getting a little type-cast in plays that had no thriller moments”.

“Yes, well you certainly had twists and turns this time around. After the baby scene, your younger years were more in the supportive actress role of daughter...providing just the right amount of drama to help Jess and Fred have their time to shine in the spotlight. The audience loved the way your father responded in the scenes where you had an early morning epileptic

seizure when you were seven years old. You had a great connection with him on stage...it has earned him the opportunity to play an upcoming role in a sci-fi drama piece”.

“Oh, I am so excited for him...that’s great news!”

“The audience was once again on the edge of their seat as you progressed through your high school years. Once in a while, you would do something that had us all wondering if you would go completely off the rails, like that time you ‘borrowed’ and pranged the car of your boyfriend’s mother. But we were all rooting for you, and you came good...in fact you came great! I’m sure those mischievous teenage moments as well as the difficulties you had with your mother really set you up well to handle what was next”.

“Well Jessica definitely played the role of narcissistic ‘pain-in-the-arse’ really well. Thank goodness she isn’t like that in real life!”

“I know, it wasn’t so much fun for you being placed alongside such a character, but it was the only way for you to grow in your abilities and break through to the next level. You lent into your father for perspective and resilience, which was needed to balance out the effects of your mother. It could have gone very differently, though, should you not have reconciled your stage life, forgive her and move forward to become a role model and support to her. In doing so, you are one step closer to becoming a coach and counsellor”.

“Do you really think so?”

“Of course, only if you want to be. I think you are definitely on your way! Obviously, the role you just played really demonstrated your persistence and problem-solving skills. It wasn’t an easy one, especially once you were interacting with your ex-husband James”.

“Is he still on stage?”

“Yes, he will be there for the next week or so. He had given strict instructions to cover enough experiences to help him ‘level up’. So, the combination of having you as an ex-wife, the struggles with raising children between you, and now his new partner’s struggle with cancer is just the right combination for him to advance forward...*if* he is willing to let go of his ego and just surrender to the experience”.

“How many more experiences do you think *I* will need to go through to get my first coaching gig?”

“Grace, you know that depends on you, your ability to process each experience, and also a degree of luck for when the right role becomes available. You are at a competitive level now with many people looking for the sort of roles that will give them the complexity to demonstrate mastery in the field. All I know is that after working out what happens in real life while *on* stage, *and* at such a young age, you will get first pick at your next role...when you are ready”.

“Thanks for all your help Jim”.

“My pleasure Grace. How about we go ‘meet and greet’ those adoring fans now? We have all eternity to unpack your last stage jump”.

“Sounds good Jim. Let’s do it”.