

Fledglings

A Play for Theatre
by Hattie Naylor

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CAST

SELVA (Non-Caucasian) 48

GARTH (Welsh but has been living in London for twenty years) 52

CERIS (Welsh) 52

BRAN (Welsh) 15

NB // denotes interruption and a line talked over.

(..) If dialogue is placed in italics and in brackets it means a thought – that is not said out loud.

Intro – the LIGHTHOUSE SONATA – by Dan Jones

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFb7c3tkdkA>

SCENE 1

The LIGHTHOUSE SONATA – by Dan Jones

Images flick across the screens. Random photographs of holidays on beaches from the 70's to present day – of couples and then of families and children. Moving images supplants these photos accompanied with the SOUND OF the SEA, about 60 secs in. Then photos from the 70's of CERIS and GARTH (at approx. 80secs in) the images gradually fade as the space becomes Ceri's bedroom. Ceris sits and combs her hair, while she waits with some trepidation. The music ends. She looks at her SMART PHONE (checking the time – we are in the present day).

A moment later - GARTH enters and takes his coat off.

CERIS: How was it?

GARTH: It was. *(beat)* I mean. It's done.

Silence.

CERIS: Well.

Beat.

GARTH: Well.

Beat.

CERIS: Rwy'n dy garu di *(I love you)*

He lightly kisses her. Silence.

GARTH: fi hefyd. *(Me too)*

CERIS: Did she know?

GARTH: No. I mean. *(beat)*
I don't know.
But. Probably, no.

CERIS: *(sotto)* She had no idea.

GARTH: We don't have to talk about this now.

Silence.

CERIS: I've got some prosecco in the Fridge. *(Beat)* Was that wrong?

GARTH: No. Not at all. We've waited – what, thirty years.

CERIS: Thirty-one.
Right.

GARTH: Right.

CERIS: I'll get it then.

Ceris exits.

Garth – sits for a moment and then wanders about the room. Ceris re-enters with glasses and bubbly. She smiles, tries to open it, fails and Garth opens it for them.

CERIS: Is she still in love with you?

He shrugs and gulps the wine.

GARTH: She thinks she is.

CERIS: She isn't then?

GARTH: I mean. Maybe.

Beat.

CERIS: *(sotto)* Yeah.

GARTH: But the other way is living a lie.

CERIS: Yeah.

They drink. Silence.

Did she shout? I mean.. Upset was she?

Garth drinks.

GARTH: Yep. *(beat)* Upset.

They both drink.

CERIS: I'm sorry.

GARTH: What are you sorry for?

CERIS: Well, I just.. I don't know. I just.

GARTH: I don't want to live a lie.

CERIS: Yeah. Yeah. We said.

GARTH: We said.

Silence. They drink. Touch, tenderly.

CERIS: Hard then.

Garth nods.

Harder for her.

GARTH: ...

CERIS: And she had no idea.

GARTH: No.

They sit, silently drinking.

CERIS: We should do something nice tomorrow.

GARTH: Aren't you working?

CERIS: I finish early on a Sunday. Walk up Cadair Idris?

GARTH: That's a bit of climb. Not sure if I'm up for that.

CERIS: It would clear our heads.

GARTH: ... *(do they need clearing)*
O.k. That'd be great. I've not been there since I was.

CERIS: Seventeen.

GARTH: *(smiling – they went there together)* Yeah. Feels like yesterday.

CERIS: We almost died.

GARTH: Would've done if you'd not been listening.

CERIS: Well, someone had to.

GARTH: It was so fast, wasn't it, the white out.
We would have died together.

CERIS: Yeah. And that would have been?

GARTH: Great.

CERIS: Great?

GARTH: Well, we'd have been together.

CERIS: Yeah, but better to have a life don't you think.

GARTH: Apart?

CERIS: But not now. *(beat)* They sacked those teachers.

GARTH: Good. *(beat)* You tied us together, didn't you.
It was sort of beautiful.

CERIS: Don't you remember how frightened we were?

GARTH: Yeah, but we had each other. And the mist and the cloud. It felt like it was just us, didn't it. Everything stopped.

CERIS: I don't know if I remember it as clearly as you.

I know you were already on your way to University; I was going to stay.

GARTH: You were angry with me.

CERIS: ... *(maybe)*
I guess it would have been romantic, two young lovers dying in a white out on Cadair Idris, found holding each other. Maybe it's what turned you into a composer, that night.

GARTH: What almost dying?

CERIS: No. It's the myth - a night on Cadair Idris turns you into a poet or a madman. I thought you knew that.

Silence. They drink.

So.

GARTH: So. *(beat)*

CERIS: I think I'd like to know everything. All your history, in between, so we know each other's lives.

GARTH: Why?

CERIS: What d'you mean why? So we know each other.

GARTH: But so much of mine was spent with Selva.

CERIS: I know that.

GARTH: Why on earth would you want to know all that?

CERIS: Because we, because well. We were apart for so long. And aren't we just our past.

GARTH: ... ?

CERIS: Don't you want to know mine, everything that's happened to me? I got married, had a child //

GARTH: No.

CERIS: You don't want to know about me?

GARTH: That's not what I said. Of course I want to know about you, but I'm not sure if I want to know about you and other people.

CERIS: Well, there weren't many, mostly just Alwyn's dad.

GARTH: Many?

CERIS: I don't know a couple after we split up, a few before.

GARTH: Exactly, I don't want to know.

CERIS: I'm not ashamed.

GARTH: Why would you be. I'm saying I just don't want to know. What matters is now.

CERIS: But aren't we, I mean, aren't we— what's the word — it begins with 'S'.

GARTH: Shits.

CERIS: No. At least. No!

GARTH: Sticky.

CERIS: No.

GARTH: Not sticky?

CERIS: I'm not sticky. It's summation, that's it. We are only the summation of everything that's been.

GARTH: Are we?

CERIS: Course we are. We are our past. The now that is ‘us’ is only everything that came before.

GARTH: O.k. But I’m the same.

CERIS: A bit.

GARTH: No. I’m exactly the same person I’ve always been.

CERIS: How can you be? You weren’t a professional composer at seventeen, were you?

GARTH: Yeah, but//

CERIS: And you hadn’t lived in London for most of your life at seventeen, had you.

GARTH: No but I could see that happening.

CERIS: But it hadn’t. You were just like me, then, roped together on the ridge of Cadair Idris.

GARTH: I’m still just like you, that’s why we’re together – now.

CERIS: You are a bit! Without knowing everything – or at least much of the everything in between – we’re sort of strangers. Don’t you see?

GARTH: We’re not. We always were, we’ve always been, an arms breadth away.

CERIS: A very long arm!

GARTH: No, we were always connected. I felt you.

CERIS: ...?

GARTH: And I know you did me.

CERIS: ... (*I did*)

GARTH: You thought about us. I know you did, about what could have been. About the life we should have had together about what we can have now – finally.

CERIS: I still want to know your past.

GARTH: And my life with Selva?

CERIS: Yeah, all of it.

GARTH: I don't want to slag her off.

CERIS: I'm not asking you to do that. Why would you think I'm asking you to do that?

GARTH: Aren't you?

CERIS: No. Not at all. There must have been good moments, great moments for you to stay so long?

GARTH: Yes, I 'spose so.

CERIS: And I think you might hate her.

GARTH: (*hesitating*) No.

CERIS: I mean I think you will. They'll be the house, and she gave up a lot to come here. She'll feel wronged, very wronged. She'll feel betrayed though.

GARTH: She wanted to move here with me.

CERIS: Back to your hometown, in the middle of nowhere? You sure about that?

GARTH: Yeah.

CERIS: But now you've gone – for, well, because of me. Because of moving back. Because of coming home.

GARTH: It would have happened anyway.

CERIS: I don't know.

GARTH: It would've, Ceris.

Pause.

CERIS: She'll be angry. And then..

GARTH: What?

CERIS: And tonight wasn't she, hurt?

GARTH: ...

CERIS: Well then. That usually gets worse. The more she thinks about what's just happened.

GARTH: (*accusing*) You been there then?

CERIS: ... (*of course I have*)
And so.. if you think happy memories, that can help, with your anger. Hate.

GARTH: I'm not angry with her.

CERIS: But you will be.

GARTH: ...

CERIS: I know, believe me I know – when Alwyn's father went.

GARTH: Right. Well. I don't want to know about that, your past with someone else.

Pause.

I want it to be as it was, don't you. As if we've opened a door and there we are standing in the room, the room of the past. But it's now. I don't need to know.

CERIS: Alright. As you say. But I do.

GARTH: But won't it hurt you?

Ceris shakes her head.

How do you know?

CERIS: Am eich bod yn perthyn I mi.

GARTH: What?

CERIS: Because you belong to me.

GARTH: Perthyn i mi.

CERIS: Yeah. You always have. *(beat)*
One thing, just one good thing.
Am eich bod yn perthyn I mi.

GARTH: I can't think of anything good. Were there good times with Sean then??

CERIS: I'm not about to go to war with Sean.

GARTH: There doesn't have to be a war.

CERIS: There's hurt and property, they'll be war, I know. One beautiful memory – to hold on to, to remember.

GARTH: Well, we'd go to the same place every year. Elba.

CERIS: Off Tuscany?

GARTH: Yeah. You've not been?

She shakes her head.

There's a lighthouse at the top. We always walked there, it's very beautiful and we'd sit, sometimes for hours, looking out at the sea.

He drifts off thinking of the memory.

CERIS: There, let's start with that memory.

They take another sip each and then kiss passionately.

A reflection of water floods the space – a taste of (music) ‘the Lighthouse Sonata’, and sound of seagulls, then crows, a black fluttery image – glides across the stage, with a sense of foreboding.