

Failure, A Play with Words

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Two characters, I and YOU, are simple words. They are anywhere a reader can imagine.

YOU stand still, gesticulate, move. YOU shift. YOU is silent. YOU does not mime. YOU is you.

I is everyone else. Everyone's I is not YOU. I speak. I shift, too.

I: Your father? It's terrible, I didn't know.

YOU look distressed.

I: I'm so sorry. It's terrible.

YOU grimace.

I: How did it happen?

YOU tremble.

I: It's too hard to talk about now.

YOU shake.

I: I went through it. Remember, I lost my mother three years ago.

YOU knead your hands.

I: But it's part of life.

YOU go blank.

I: I don't know how to help you.

YOU slump.

I: Some day, you won't feel like this. You won't.

YOU sicken.

I: I wish I could make it better. The pain gets better.

YOU squirm.

I: Believe me, it gets better, day by day.

YOU gasp.

I: The first months, the whole first year, it's bad. Then it gets better.

YOU groan.

I: I know it's hard to believe now. It's a big shock to the system.

YOU cringe.

I: But you learn to live with it.

YOU moan.

I: I know how you feel.

YOU walk away.

CHORUS: It's not your fault. It couldn't be helped.

What's done is done. It was meant to be.

Nothing is forever. Life goes on.

Be happy you're alive. Live every day like your last.

You have to let go, you have to let go.

It's all good. It's all good. It's all good.

YOU vomit.

I: I give up! I can't stand YOU.

YOU stamp your feet. YOU curse. YOU collapse. YOU hate you.

YOU hate everyone. YOU hate life. YOU want to die.

CHORUS: It's all good.

Time passes.

It's all good.

Time passes.

All change is good.

Times passes.

All change is good.

Times passes.

It's all good, it's all good, it's all good.

YOU vomit again.

CHARACTERS clean up YOU'S mess.

IT comes before YOU and I. IT is inexplicable, and arbitrary, and takes no position.

CHORUS: Destiny lies beyond the words

YOU and I.

IT's nomadic, grief its only baggage,

as empty as the future's grave,

Destiny lies beyond the words

YOU and I.

I: Listen, IT's an old story. Ok, it's always new, too.

IT's fate, mate.

YOU choke.

CHORUS: IT tells of eternity.

Words are IT, words are not IT.

IT tells of eternity,

Words are IT, words are not IT.

YOU and I: YOU and I have each other.

IT has everything.

YOU and I love each other.

IT is heartless.

YOU and I want each other.

IT wants nothing.

YOU and I need each other.
IT needs nothing.

CHORUS: If YOU and I are lucky,
IT will come and go and go,
and, when IT returns, resolute,
for YOU and I,
no one can say
IT.
Word and word,
YOU and I
Word by word,
YOU and I.
No one can say
IT.

There are no more words. YOU and I fall silent. They feel inadequate.

FAILURE threatens. FAILURE won't be ignored. Disconsolate, YOU and I contend with FAILURE.

SOUNDS: Screeches, crashes, bird calls.

SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECT: Depthless blur.

I: Is this death?

YOU: Or failure?

I: It feels like failure.

YOU: Or death.

I and YOU: Maybe both,
could be both.

What is IT?

What is IT?

HOPE enters.

CHORUS: See, there's hope, dope.

There's hope, dope.

See, there's always hope.

HOPE: This meeting of YOU, I
and IT could be a fantasy.

And YOU and I can start over
and over, and play again, any time, any time.

YOU and I can start over
and over, and play again, any time, any time.

FAILURE and HOPE hang around. YOU and I go off in different directions. IT is nowhere to be seen.

The End