

Laura

Kae Tempest

Laura sitting here old memories are flooding back
How we used to put on plays for Mum and Dad
How we made up songs and costumes, plots counter plots we even
made them little ticket stubs
And we'd move the chairs around to make a stage and put a curtain up
And would make the front room out of bounds for hours as we practiced and we dragged them for the kitchen we're they be trying
to relax as time would say we're ready now
And then we'd pushed them through the doors and then we'd make
them sit and watch and then we'd pause and bow gratefully and a
wait applause
And I remember me and you and Jack sharing baths at Grandpa's flat
and using the shampoo bottles as props for them made up puppet shows
You taught me to go underwater without holding my nose
I still can do that
And we sat there 'till the water got cold being TV chefs

Or whales in the sea surfacing to blow water out and take a breathe
Spilling bubbles all over the floor and speaking gibberish
And singing and you made me sit at the plug end cause I was always the youngest sibling, always
I got so many memories of me and you mainly just giggling over
some inexplicable joke that no one else had even heard
You know that strange intrinsic humour that doesn't even need a
word to be spoken just a little look between us both was all it took
To provoke silent hysteria our bodies heaved and shook our breath came hard with teary eyes and screechy yelps of glee it's the kind of laugh I've only ever seen in Mum and you and me and way back with Jack and Ruth and Cita in their school days we'd go on them long car journeys we'd have to sit in the boot on duvets and they all get in the back seat and we'd complain it wasn't fair but it's cause we were the smallest and you would play with Ruthy's hair and we would sing them cheesy songs together completely out of key but we did every backing vocal though and every harmony

And if I got upset you'd prod my face or tickle me or give me cuddles 'til I forgot what I was crying for my troubles was your troubles you took the wrong for yours you'd sit me down and like

Kate this just won't do, you would not accept that I'd be sad if there was games to play fun to be had cause I was your little mate you'd drag around and getting mischief with us two the kitchen making biscuits I can picture it and then when we got old

er before I toughened up when I was getting picked on you were tough enough for both of us and then when we were teenagers I copied what you wore and then I followed you to youth club and was shocked at what I saw

I went all the kids kissing, smoking fags and drinking coke
And I'd sit there in the corner looking sheepish and remote
But you never let her tease me Laura though I'm sure that you are embarrassed and if it weren't for you Laura I'm pretty sure I'd be more damaged

Anyway so now we grownups right? And I'm sat here treasuring the times and we played out in the streets and didn't have to be in bed 'Till nine how we snuck down to Michaela's house Michaela she was the baddest on the street and she made us watch this horror film we both had nightmares for three weeks

Having sit there on the Dean's wall makeup dance routines to Kris Kross and we'd play cricket with the wheelie bins from wickets Laura none of its lost those days remain within me they are brilliant and real and I know that at the moment you don't know quite what to feel cause you are ready for that baby Laurel you are ready to be a Mum but a universe it has it's ways and even though you're numb and you're mind is spinning backwards and you're hurting and confused I love you like I always have and time will pass and time will move onto other Mum's and then one day one day not far away we'll sit there giggling in silence watching your kids put on a play