

# *Hieroglyphics*

Written by  
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For the  
ATYP Home Theatre series

## **CAST:**

Jack and Isla, siblings

Emily and Graham, their parents

## **NOTES:**

In this script, the family is identified as a mum, dad, son and daughter. However, full permission is given for edits along gender, age and relationship lines, as applicable. If your household requires that the characters be twin girls, say, who live with their gran and a roommate, go with that option. Pronouns/descriptions can of course be changed accordingly.

Throughout the script, images drawn on walls are referred to. But so as not to cause trouble (for you or me...) it might be good to note that these drawings don't actually need to exist – the actors' reactions can inform what they are seeing, even if we the audience can't. If you do choose to actually draw them on, choose your (erasable) writing implement wisely...

Thanks for bringing it to life – sure you'll do wonderfully.

*Emily is walking down the hall when she passes a drawing daubed on the wall.*

Emily: Kids!

*Isla and Jack enter.*

Jack: Mum, I'm trying to do my schoolwork.

Isla: And I'm trying to play a video game.

Emily: Okay firstly, that's... not even a reason. And second, what is this?

*Both consider it.*

Jack: Some kind of... dinosaur gathering?

Isla: No look that's a wheel – motorbikes maybe?

Jack: Oh yeah. Dinosaurs on motorbikes?

Emily: I don't mean what is it *of*? I mean, what is it!? Why is it drawn on my wall?

Isla: ...Bit possessive.

Jack: It's kind of... everyone's wall, Mum.

Emily: The point *is*: Someone has drawn on *the* wall. And it wasn't me. And it wasn't your dad. *[Beat]* Probably.

Isla: If it was him, it's a self-portrait. Look: there he is coming out of a door with a box.

*As Isla says this, Graham actually does come out of a door with a box. All stare at him.*

Graham: ...What?

Jack: Well that was weird.

Isla: *[Still looking at the drawing]* And see, there's a little speech bubble. It says:

Isla: 'Look what I found in the garage'!

Graham: /Look what I found in the garage...

*All stare between Isla and Graham in shock.*

Graham: ...Some stuff I made in that Crafty Crafts for the Modern Man workshop last year.

*He peers into the box, its contents unseen [unless you want to do some bonus craft exercises and make them of course], and laughs.*

Graham: Ha. Mostly dinosaurs on motorbikes – funny where your mind goes.

*The family is in shock.*

Emily: Okay – tell me honestly. Which of you drew this?

Jack: Definitely Isla.

Isla: As if! You know what they say: ‘If *you* blame, then *you*’re ashamed’.

Jack: Yeah absolutely no one says that.

Isla: It’s a very common saying.

Jack: Maybe where you’re from.

Isla: Which is here. We live together.

Jack: Unfortunately.

Emily: Guys! Stop. *[Beat]* Anyway, you’re right.

Jack/Isla: Thank you.

Jack/Isla: She was talking to me.

Emily: I was talking to both of you. I now think that the bigger issue than who drew it, is *what* they drew. What does it show happening next?

*All peer at the wall.*

Graham: Hey look – dinosaurs on motorbikes! I love those.

*All look at him. He ignores them.*

Graham: And then there’s me coming in. Hi, me! And then something that looks kind of like... the dishwasher exploding? And... plates flying everywhere? And those plates knocking over other things in the kitchen. Which then knock over *other* things. And those new knocked-over things shattering the windows. And glass going everywhere. Huh.

*All look in fear at each other, then warily look off towards the unseen kitchen [again, unless you actually want to recreate this visually. But probably don’t].*

*Suddenly the loudest sequence of noises is heard, as everything just described occurs [up to you how you achieve these sound effects/foley – if someone in your household doesn’t want to perform and would rather focus on that aspect, then this is truly their time to shine].*

*As the noise of various calamities occurs, the family expresses all reactions, their responses letting us know just how bad it really is.*

Emily: Well that wa/

*Further noises continue, everyone grimacing at each new element of devastation.*

Emily: Do you think i/

*A last bit of noise...*

Emily: So is that...

*Silence.*

Emily: Good. Now *please tell me* that is where the events end.

*Jack and Isla study the wall, then fearfully look at their parents.*

Isla: ...Ish.

Emily: What does 'ish' mean?

Jack: That's where the events end... inside.

Emily: Meaning?

*The kids look back at the wall and describe what they see [again, if keen to visualise the ensuing sequence in some way, go for it].*

Isla: Well a... spaceship, full of... aliens, lands on top of the tallest building in the city.

Jack: They fire some type of... beam which makes all the seasons move quickly, and effect things more powerfully.

Isla: Snow falls for many days, and many weeks, upon our beleaguered city.

Jack: And dinosaurs on motorbikes ride roughshod over everything.

Graham: Yes.

Isla: Then Spring arrives from nowhere and the sun's rays are powerful, doubly powerful, and they melt the snow, and great waves of newly-formed water wash through our city.

Jack: The waters send the cars whirling in great, unceasing eddies and we shut our windows and stare at the world outside, as sharks and whales navigate our streets.

Isla: Then summer comes with a cruel intensity and the water evaporates and the whales are beached atop our houses. The seas have been replenished though, in this time of excess, and the populations of every marine creature are healthy and abundant.

Jack: So we all come out of our dripping homes, every family from every house and flat and lean-to and barn and bungalow. And we encounter each other again – encounter each other after so long apart.

Isla: And without a word we drag every table and chair we own out onto the streets. We set them up one after the other, in a grand unending line which wends its way through every corner of our so-long-silenced city.

Jack: Then we cook on burning coals all the shellfish and bream and trout and haddock and plaice and perch that's been left strewn throughout our suburbs, and we pile the tables high.

Isla: And we don't use cutlery.

Jack: And we don't be polite.

Isla: Instead, we eat. As one, every family passing food to every family.

Jack: We eat the grandest feast the world has ever known, side, by side, by side.

Isla: We eat until we are full.

Jack: And the clocks have slowed down.

Isla: And life... is back to normal.

*Silence.*

Jack: And that's where it ends. So... what are we doing, guys? Like, we could rub it off the wall now or...?

*The family looks at one another. Then at the wall. Then back to one another.*

The End