

Generation ?

Lizzie Goodman

A tale of the disillusioned youth  
Genre: fantasy

A fantasy-based coming of age tale about a girl torn between following her dreams or her parents wishes. Else is an off-beat character who struggles with her identity and ends up finding herself in a situation no-one could have ever predicted.

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FADE IN:

EXT. KENT COUNTRYSIDE - EARLY EVENING

An establishing shot shows the beautiful countryside. The sun is setting on the late summer's day. We see a large MANOR HOUSE with ivy running up its red brick walls.

1,2,3 in a Series of shots

Over the sound of a dripping tap, a ticking clock and unsettling laughter..

1. EXT. MUSIC FESTIVAL - EARLY SUMMER

Disorientating flashes show a petite, pretty, blue eyed and brown haired ELSE trashing about distressingly in the middle of a busy campsite. She has black make-up and mud smeared down her face and straw in her hair. People in fancy dress walk past and around her in what seems like a circle of flashing colours and objects. Their conversations sound muffled and indecipherable. ELSE cowers as if they are monsters..

ELSE

(Voice Over V.O.)

I was going for escapism and ended  
up somewhere between death and  
insanity

She grabs something from the grass and moves it towards and away from her face in an attempt to focus. It is a daffodil. She stares intently at it and everything stops quickly before her VOMIT pours down..

2. EXT. BRIDGE - WINTER - NIGHT

Brown haired ELSE hangs over a bridge precariously. Devoid of colour and personality: she wears black high heels, a black work dress and smart black over coat. She looks back and forth at the water below. Orange street light bounces off her grey concrete surroundings. She is about to jump.

ELSE

(V.O.)

For some reason I could not get  
that scene from Titanic out of my  
head. You know, the one where Kate  
Winslet hangs off the back of the  
boat about to jump? I kept  
imagining Leonardo DiCaprio, with  
his floppy 90s hair, running from

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ELSE (cont'd)  
 the tower blocks to save me. It  
 nearly made me laugh..

3. INT. DINING ROOM - MANOR HOUSE -  
 NIGHT

At one end of an epically long mahogany wood table brown haired ELSE sits with a large notepad and pen in front of her. To her left there are several bottles of alcohol and to her right bottles of pills. We cannot see their labels. The light from the room reflects its contents on the large windows in a distorted and eerie way. The large grandfather clock ticks ominously.

ELSE  
 (V.O. Chanting)  
 I must stop getting  
 distracted. I must stop  
 getting distracted

She begins to write:

'This is the End but I'll Love You Forever'.

INT. BEDROOM - MANOR HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

ELSE, slightly younger, more naive looking and now again with wild blond hair, sits hands in head staring vacantly into a large extravagant, gold framed mirror. She is wearing pink slippers, boy's gray Nike jogging bottoms, a Pink Floyd t-shirt and pink patterned dressing gown. She does not blink. Her large room has pink flowery - everything. A few boxes of her personal things look very abstract in their childish pink surroundings.

MONTAGE:

INT. GRADUATION HALL - EARLY SUMMER

Blond ELSE, wearing her graduation gown and hat walks up the long hall stairs to the stage. She shakes hands with with the elderly man who hands her the certificate and walks quickly back down to sit amongst the crowd.

ELSE  
 (V.O - fed up)  
 Yes, this is one of those  
 generic graduation scenes. I'm  
 sorry, but it's a pinnacle  
 moment. And anyway, in this  
 case, I think the paralysing

(CONTINUED)

monotony of the scene  
accurately reflects my mood at  
the time..

CUT:

Her smartly dressed parents, in amongst other smartly  
dressed parents, look at each other and smile.

MONTAGE:

Several scenes of blond haired ELSE and friends at many  
different parties, in many different outfits. She laughs,  
jokes and dances with a naive, careless freedom.

INT. BEDROOM - MANOR HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Blond haired ELSE continues staring herself out in the  
mirror. The sound of the ticking clock and dripping tap gets  
louder and louder until she stands abruptly.

ELSE

(V.O.)

So what happens when the bubble  
bursts? I guess I am about to find  
out.

CUT:

ELSE walks, head hanging and arms straight by her side, down  
the dark hallway and down the dark stairs. She resembles a  
zombie. Dark oil paintings of prestigious historical men  
hang on the walls. Their judging eyes follow her.

INT. KITCHEN - MANOR HOUSE - EVENING

ELSE enters like the walking dead. She grabs a glass and  
begins to fill it with water. Her parents sit around a large  
table sipping wine and reading The Telegraph newspaper. The  
headline reads 'Highest Graduate Unemployment Levels'. They  
look up.

MUM

How many jobs have you applied for  
today, darling?

DAD

Did you fill in the process  
management analyser application I  
sent you?

(CONTINUED)

MUM

Have you heard back from the  
accounts and systems investment  
graduate scheme?

Erie music plays. Lifelessly, without looking nor stopping to acknowledge their questions, ELSE turns and vacates the room walking back down the long dark corridor.

INT. BEDROOM - MANOR HOUSE - EVENING

All the curtains are shut. ELSE hides under her duvet clutching her open laptop. The time on it reads 19.03.

ELSE

(V.O.)

I can't decide, am I being  
dramatic, selfish and spoiled or is  
the world against me? This must be  
something everyone goes through,  
right? Choosing your future is all  
just part of growing up. Am I just  
being melodramatic or does the  
concept of the 'real world' seem  
this bleak to everyone?

She inserts a disk and presses play. The screen reads 'The Graduate'.

CUT:

INT. BEDROOM - MANOR HOUSE - MORNING

A loud banging at the bedroom door, proceeded by ELSE'S MUM storming in. She wears an almost 80s style power suit as she tears around the room ripping open the curtains.

MUM

Up you get, time to get on with the  
job hunt!

She rips the cover off ELSE and drops it by the door. ELSE unrolls from her fetal position, she stares directly into the intrusive ticking clock which reads 6.45.

CUT:

ELSE sits in front of her laptop. The threatening gold mirror reflects her sullen face. An application form reads 'Recruitment Manager Graduate Scheme' she closes the tab and another half filled application form reads 'PR and Sales

(CONTINUED)

Assistant' she exits it and 3 more similar forms before slamming her laptop shut. She opens a new tab - freelancer writing.. fills in almost completed application.

She looks around the room, so abstract from the person she is today and sighs.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

ELSE, her MUM and her DAD sit at opposite ends of a sparse wooden table. A few white roses in the middle slightly block their view of each other. They eat in uncomfortable silence.

MUM

Did you receive the Business and Finance trainee position I sent you today?

ELSE does not respond.

MUM

I was thinking you may need to tweak your CV. You know, remove all that magazine writing stuff. It may put employers off. I don't want them to pigeon hole you or anything.

(pause)

How about the Bank Manager Graduate Scheme i sent you? It's a good starting salary, you know? 30 grand a year!

ELSE

I did journalism. Banking would destroy my soul.

MUM

Well Else, you say that now but I did banking for many years and found it very fulfilling!

ELSE

Well I am not you.

The silence falls again.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

In ELSE'S pitch dark room we can hear the clock ticking and tap dripping then the sudden burst of the door. Her MUM storms in and rips the cover off her. The light from the hall way silhouettes her.

MUM

Up, up, up! I did not pay all that  
money for you to lay around  
avoiding your future!

CUT:

ELSE sits in front of her laptop. The screen reflects her now dead blue eyes as she stares without blinking.

ELSE (V.O)

It's ironic really, you spend your  
whole childhood being told you can  
be whatever you want to be. If you  
work hard enough anything is  
possible and you believe it. So you  
spend three years in your own  
cocoon working towards something  
that in the end you find out is one  
big propagandist sham..

The ticking clock gets louder as the hands fly round. ELSE breathes heavily and the tap drips louder..

ELSE

(V.O confused)

Happiness? Money? Happiness? Money?  
Happiness? Money? Happiness? Money?

MONTAGE:

Images of ELSE with blond hair in summer. She wears colourful outfits, writes passionately into a journal and socialises at parties - juxtaposed - with images of brown haired ELSE in winter. She is dressed all in black, sitting in front of a computer in silence and on her train journey home from work.

ELSE

(continued)

Recession. Depression. Recession.  
Depression. Recession. Depression?

FADE OUT:

INT. MUM'S OFFICE - EARLY AFTERNOON

ELSE'S MUM sits in front of a large generic office desk. She is wearing a navy blue suit as she types away furiously at her keyboard.

The phone rings.

CUT:

EXT. GARDEN - MANOR HOUSE - SAME

Blond ELSE sits on a bench in the garden surrounded by cascading vines and flowers. She wears a bright yellow dress and delicate white sandals - she looks as if she could be a character in a french romance novel as she holds a phone to her ear.

ELSE  
(Smiling)  
Mum, I got the job!

MUM  
(V.O.)  
Well done, darling. I am so proud  
of you!

ELSE  
I mean it's not exactly what I want  
to do, but at least it's related.

MUM  
(V.O.)  
Excellent. What's the salary?

ELSE  
It's 18 grand.

MUM (V.O)  
Hmm, that's a bit low, but it's a  
start, I guess!

ELSE  
(defeated)  
I guess.

MUM  
((V.O.))  
Well you better dye your hair now  
then.

(CONTINUED)



ELSE

What? Why?

MUM (V.O.)

Well it's all very well running  
around with silly white hair whilst  
you're a student, but you're a  
grown up now, after all. If you  
ever want to be taken seriously  
you'll have to have a more mature  
image!

ELSE'S smile begins to disintegrate.

CUT:

EXT. WEST LONDON - EARLY MORNING

Brown haired ELSE stands outside some impressive black  
gates. She resembles her mother more than ever now.

A sign reads 'Jeffrey and Butler LTD for all your bespoke  
health needs'.