



Home Front II

Episode 1

1st December 1914 – Mrs Sylvia Graham

By Sarah Daniels

Cast

Sylvia	Deborah Findlay
Dorothea	Rachel Shelley
Esme	Katie Angelou
Gabriel	Michael Bertenshaw
Hilary	Craig Els
Isabel	Keely Beresford
Juliet	Lizzie Bourne
Nancy	Jane Whittenshaw
Ralph	Nicholas Murchie
Pallbearer	Clive Hayward

Directed by JESSICA DROMGOOLE

PLEASE BRING HARD-SOLED SHOES TO THE STUDIO

TX Date: 1st December 2014

1 **SCENE 1 INT. GRAHAMS. 2.00. PM**

2 **SYLVIA AND ISABEL ARE IN THE DRAWING**

3 **ROOM. GABRIEL COMES IN.**

4 GABRIEL: Ready when you are.

5 SYLVIA: We are all going out as a family and the eyes of the

6 world will be watching.

7 ISABEL: Hardly the world, Mother.

8 SYLVIA: Well, the town of Folkestone then.

9 GABRIEL: Our world.

10 SYLVIA: Precisely, and we are not going to let ourselves

11 down.

12 GABRIEL: For Goodness sake Sylvia, this is my best suit.

13 SYLVIA: I can see that but I also specifically asked for your

14 best shirt to be starched and pressed yesterday-

15 GABRIEL: I prefer this one.

16 SYLVIA: And I find my gardening clothes more comfortable

17 but completely inappropriate for wearing in public.

18 Please go upstairs and change it.

19 GABRIEL: Oh Sylvia. Hardly any of this shirt can be seen

20 underneath my jacket and waistcoat.

21 SYLVIA: At least put some cufflinks on then.

22 GABRIEL: I couldn't find any... I even looked for some of

23 Freddie's but (SLIGHT FALTER) I couldn't find any

24 of his either.

25 SYLVIA: Not today of all days, Gabriel. Today is a proud day

26 for our family. We need to go out there with our

27 heads held high.

- 1 ISABEL: I'll go and get you some, Father.
- 2 SYLVIA: You'll do no such thing, Isabel. Ring for the girl.
- 3 GABRIEL: I need a drink.
- 4 **FX: BELL RINGS FOR ESME.**
- 5 SYLVIA: That's why she's here. I don't want you tiring
6 yourself out before the day's even begun.
- 7 **ESME COMES IN**
- 8 ESME: You rang, mam.
- 9 SYLVIA: Esme would you please go upstairs and find Mr
10 Graham a pair of cufflinks? They will be in the top
11 left hand drawer on my side of the bed.
- 12 ESME: What any old pair, mam?
- 13 SYLVIA: Perhaps you'd bring the box down?
- 14 ESME: Yes, Mam.
- 15 **SHE GOES.**
- 16 SYLVIA: And look sharp about it. It wouldn't do at all to be
17 late.
- 18 **FX: KNOCK AT DOOR. MRS PARKER COMES IN.**
- 19 NANCY: Begging your pardon, Mam but I'm hoping you won't
20 mind if I have a head start, what with my legs and
21 all.
- 22 SYLVIA: Of course Mrs P. I take it that preparations for the
23 meal are all under control?
- 24 NANCY: All as we discussed mam, fit for a king, if I say so
25 myself.

1 ISABEL: You must have been up at the crack of dawn, Mrs
2 Parker. No wonder your legs ache.

3 NANCY: Ache? Oh Miss Isabel, that's not even the half of it. I
4 don't know what's throbbing worse me veins or me
5 haemorrhoids.

6 GABRIEL: (COUGHS)

7 NANCY: Begging your pardon, Sir. I didn't see you there. Oh,
8 I don't know where to put myself now.

9 ISABEL: Please don't concern yourself. You look very smart,
10 doesn't she mother?

11 SYLVIA: Indeed, she does.

12 NANCY: Well, I want to look my very best don't I? It's a big
13 day.

14 GABRIEL: It is Nancy. It is.

15 NANCY: If you'll excuse me I'll go and get me hat and coat.

16 **NANCY GOES AND BUMPS INTO ESME COMING**
17 **BACK IN.**

18 NANCY: Watch where you're going, girl.

19 ESME: Begging your pardon, Mrs Parker. (TO SYLVIA)
20 There was quite a lot of odd ones in there so I only
21 brought the pairs

22 SYLVIA: Very good Esme. There was a time early on when I
23 thought we'd never get here. But you seem to have
24 miraculously developed the knack, albeit a moderate
25 one, of showing initiative.

26 ESME: Thank you, mam. What do you think of the silver
27 ones then?

- 1 SYLVIA: I think they'll do just splendidly.
- 2 ESME: Yes. Mam.
- 3 GABRIEL: I better go and get my coat, so I don't get barked at
4 again.
- 5 **HE GOES.**
- 6 ISABEL: I'll come with you father and see if I can find my
7 gloves.
- 8 **SHE GOES**
- 9 ESME: What shall I do, Mam, while you're all out?
- 10 SYLVIA: You need to just hold the fort, Esme.
- 11 ESME: You mean polish it?
- 12 SYLVIA: Polish it?
- 13 ESME: The fork?
- 14 SYLVIA: No, the fort. Please don't make me take back
15 everything I've just said.
- 16 ESME: Suppose someone calls?
- 17 SYLVIA: Take their card and ask them to come back another
18 day.
- 19 ESME: Not later today?
- 20 SYLVIA: No, today is just for us, for family.
- 21

1 **SCENE 2. EXT. HARBOUR. 2.30. PM.**

2 **SYLVIA, GABRIEL AND ISABEL ARE WAITING**
3 **AT THE HARBOUR.**

4 **FX: WAVES CRASHING, SEAGULLS SQUAWKING**

5 SYLVIA: And of course she keeps us waiting, today of all
6 days.

7 ISABEL: We are a bit early, Mother.

8 GABRIEL: She'll be here. She's never let us down.

9 SYLVIA: But she's never been on time either.

10 **FX THE SOUND OF A CAR HORN**

11 SYLVIA: How unseemly. It can't just stop there. Gabriel, go
12 over there and tell them to move that wretched
13 automobile, please.

14 GABRIEL: It is a public highway.

15 ISABEL: (SEES JULIET GET OUT OF THE CAR) It's Juliet.

16 SYLVIA: Where?

17 ISABEL: Getting out of that car. Look.

18 **JULIET COMES OVER TO THEM**

19 JULIET: I'm not late, am I?

20 GABRIEL: No, dear.

21 SYLVIA: What have you done with your driver?

22 JULIET: I'm right here, Mother.

23 SYLVIA: You drove yourself?

24 ISABEL: Whose car is it?

25 JULIET: Mine. Lovely to see you, Sis.

1 ISABEL: And you. (THEY HUG)

2 SYLVIA: (DISAPPROVING) You bought that for yourself.

3 JULIET: There's no need to look so shocked.

4 SYLVIA: Gabriel, say something.

5 GABRIEL: What horsepower is it?

6 SYLVIA: I meant about the danger and complete

7 inappropriateness of a young lady owning a car,

8 never mind driving it.

9 JULIET: Hardly that young. I have two children.

10 ISABEL: (IN AWE) Did you come all the way from Biggin Hill

11 by yourself?

12 JULIET: Yes, it went by in a flash. Honestly, mother I didn't

13 know what freedom was until I got behind a steering

14 wheel.

15 SYLVIA: Whatever is the world coming to?

16 JULIET: Mother, the world is changing and for the better.

17 **FX: THE TRAIN CARRYING THE COFFIN**

18 SYLVIA: Your world might be.

19 JULIET: I'm sorry, I didn't mean-

20 GABRIEL: Shush, not now, dear.

21 **FX: SLAM DOORS OPEN. MEN ALIGHT**

22 ISABEL: I don't recognise those men. I thought you said you'd

23 arranged for Prebble and Spain to do it.

24 GABRIEL: Prebble Spain don't have enough men to go all the

25 way to France and back.

26 SYLVIA: Gabriel, there is no need to snap.

1 GABRIEL: Where is he?

2 SYLVIA: Patience.

3 **FX: THE MEN TAKE THE COFFIN FROM THE TRAIN**
4 **AND LIFT IT ONTO THEIR SHOULDERS AND**
5 **WALK TOWARDS THE FAMILY.**

6 GABRIEL: Steady, steady, easy does it.

7 ISABEL: There.

8 JULIET: Oh Freddie.

9 GABRIEL: My son.

10 ISABEL: Home at last.

11 SYLVIA: Gentlemen, please would you lower the coffin so I
12 can see the lid?

13 PALLBEARER: Yes, marm.

14 SYLVIA: Thank you.

15 PALLBEARER: Will that be all, marm?

16 SYLVIA: Yes. The carriage is waiting.

17 PALLBEARER: Very good, marm. Gentlemen.

18 **FX: THEY TAKE THE COFFIN OFF TO THE HORSE**
19 **DRAWN HEARSE.**

20 ISABEL: What were you doing, Mother?

21 SYLVIA: I had to make sure.

22 ISABEL: Of what?

23 GABRIEL: That the lid was screwed down rather than nailed.

24 SYLVIA: As befits an officer.

25 JULIET: And, was it?

1 SYLVIA: Yes.

2 **HILARY COMES UP TO THEM.**

3 HILARY: Councillor, Mrs Graham.

4 GABRIEL: Thank you so much, Hilary, for arranging everything.

5 HILARY: I'm very honoured to have been of help, Councillor

6 Graham, and I do beg your forgiveness if what I'm

7 about to say offends in any way...

8 ISABEL: Mr Pearce, the cortege is waiting for us.

9 HILARY: I'm really very sorry but I've been asked if perhaps

10 you'd change the route it takes to St Jude's.

11 SYLVIA: By whom?

12 HILARY: Sergeant Major Davies at the recruiting office. It

13 wouldn't perhaps be the ... it might affect

14 morale...adversely.

15 SYLVIA: No might about it. I should think it will.

16 HILARY: They're having a very hard time recruiting anyone at

17 present and they are obviously rather keen not to

18 exacerbate the situation.

19 ISABEL: My brother died doing his duty for this country. We

20 will not skulk around the back streets, hiding his

21 body.

22 HILARY: I do apologise, Miss Isabel, but it's now become a

23 national crisis. There are so few men willing to join

24 up, not just here but everywhere.

25 GABRIEL: Understood, Pearce. Absolutely.

26 ISABEL: Father?

1 GABRIEL: Surely you don't want Freddie to have died in vain.
2 Because if we put other young men off from joining
3 up and we lose the war as a consequence then
4 that's what it will have been. Leave it with me Hilary.
5 HILARY: Thank you, Councillor.
6

1 **SCENE 3. INT CHURCH. 3.00. PM**

2 **RALPH IS OUTSIDE THE CHURCH**

3 **FX THE HORSE DRAWN HEARSE - WITH THE**

4 **FAMILY FOLLOWING IN A HORSE DRAWN**

5 **CARRIAGE - ARRIVES.**

6 **(ORGAN MUSIC – 1”14”)**

7 RALPH: (GOES TO GREET THE GRAHAMS) Councillor,
8 Mrs Graham, Isabel, and Juliet. Just to let you know
9 that Mrs Parker is already inside.

10 SYLVIA: Thank you, Mr Winwood.

11 RALPH: Would you like to go in before or after the coffin?

12 SYLVIA: I would like to walk behind Freddie, but my husband
13 and daughters would like to go in before.

14 RALPH: As you wish – if you'd like to go in and take your
15 seats now.

16 ISABEL: Come on Father.

17 SYLVIA: I'll wait here.

18 **THEY START TO GO IN.**

19 JULIET: I just hope Mrs Parker doesn't attempt to kneel.

20 ISABEL: Juliet.

21 JULIET: Well, it'll be the devil's own job to get her on her feet
22 again.

23 ISABEL: Don't say devil in God's house.

24 **GABRIEL, ISABEL, AND JULIET GO INTO THE**

25 **CHURCH.**

26

1 **FX:** PALLBEARERS CARRYING THE COFFIN FROM
2 THE CARRIAGE TO THE CHURCH GO
3 TOWARDS THE CHURCH DOOR.
4 **DOROTHEA COMES UP BEHIND THEM.**
5 DOROTHEA: Good afternoon, Sylvia.
6 SYLVIA: Dorothea.
7 RALPH: Dorothea, whatever are you doing here?
8 DOROTHEA: I've come to pay my respects to Freddie and his
9 family, Ralph.
10 RALPH: But I told you this is for close family only.
11 DOROTHEA: A funeral is a public act in a public place.
12 **FX:** ORGAN MUSIC STARTS UP (MENDELSSOHN?)
13 SYLVIA: (TAKING A COUPLE OF STEPS BACK TOWARDS
14 THEM) If you're joining us, Dorothea, the time to go
15 in would be now.
16 DOROTHEA: Thank you Sylvia.
17 **DOROTHEA GOES IN.**
18 **FX** THE COFFIN FOLLOWS
19 **RALPH AND SYLVIA GO IN**
20 **FX** THE MUSIC SWELLS.
21 THEN THE DOOR IS SHUT
22

1 **SCENE 4. EXT. GRAVESIDE. 3.45 PM**

2 **EVERYONE STANDING BY THE GRAVESIDE**
3 **AFTER THE SERVICE.**

4 **FX: HANDFULS OF EARTH THROWN ON TO COFFIN.**

5 SYLVIA: Rest in peace.

6 GABRIEL: Sleep well dear chap.

7 JULIET: Bye Fred

8 ISABEL: Darling brother.

9 GABRIEL: Thank you Ralph. You will come back and have
10 something to eat with us?

11 RALPH: That's very kind -

12 GABRIEL: And Mrs Winwood of course.

13 RALPH: - but I think not. We wouldn't want to intrude.

14 ISABEL: Are we ready, then?

15 SYLVIA: I'd just like a moment alone at the graveside. You go
16 on. Take Mrs P in the carriage. I'll meet you back at
17 the house.

18 JULIET: If you'd take me back to my car, I could come back
19 for you, Mother.

20 SYLVIA: Thank you but no.

21 GABRIEL: Come on then if you're coming.

22 RALPH: (CONCERNED, TO SYLVIA) I'll take my leave then,
23 Mrs Graham.

24 ISABEL: No, need to worry about her, Ralph.

25 JULIET: (AS THEY GO) Tough as old boots.

THEY GO. CUT BACK TO SYLVIA NOW ALONE AT THE GRAVESIDE.

11 And yet there is something singular between us
12 which is never spoken of out loud – a cord that joins
13 us – not the one that was cut in the hour of your birth
14 but the invisible one, the one through which a
15 mother feels all her child's joy and pain. It was there,
16 part of me, invisible but so real, right up until the
17 moment the telegram arrived. And in that moment
18 the thread that held you taut to me all your life
19 snapped. As though someone had punched through
20 my heart and left a permanent emptiness in its
21 centre.

22 I have borne a lot, Freddie, but I cannot bear the
23 thought that when the last hour came I was not there
24 to stand between you and the darkness, to take your
25 place.

26 You are back with me now. Would that you were
27 not. Would that you were out in the world, breaking
28 my heart or disgracing the family name. I would
29 happily strike that bargain with God. You could do

1 anything now just so long as you were alive and not
2 as you are now, silent and cold.

3 But know, please know, that you are safe, you are
4 home. You are home at last, where you belong - my
5 beloved only son.