

Smash.

It falls.

It breaks.

Which is called pathetic fallacy. Or foreshadow. Or something. I dunno. All I know is I will never be with all the girls together again.

*Change. Forty-five years old.*

I am with all the girls together again.

We are in the dining hall.

Twenty five-year-olds are singing 'sleigh bells ring are you listening?'

We are forty-five years old. We are at St Helen's. They are tearing down the school, building a fresh new state-of-the-art all the bells and whistles blah blah.

And so all the former St Helen's girls are invited to come for a reunion of sorts.

There is about two hundred in all. Everyone from our year has made an appearance. And it's nice to see the old faces. Because over the years, despite our best intentions – well life gets in the way doesn't it.

And I'm not sure why I've come.

I can't believe I've come.

Maybe out of curiosity.

Maybe out of some weird twisted obligation.

Maybe I think I'm going to give her all the unsent emails I've written over the years.

Maybe to see her entrance. Like she promised.

And after the current reception class finishes singing we have some time to catch up. To reminisce about school shows when I was the lead.

And that boy we used to fancy... um Robert? Roger? Can't remember but one of the girls ran in to him and apparently he's fat and bald and works in IT.

And someone still sees Tyler, who used to have the parties, who has a much younger boyfriend who is a model. Go figure.

And it's like no time has passed at all. It's like we are sixteen again. Except that I *have* a sixteen-year-old. A daughter.

My daughter's ten.

Mine are six and eight.

Mine are twelve and thirteen, God help me. Can I fast-forward please?

My three are all boys. I still don't know what to do with them.

I had my tubes tied.

My girls are at the age where I say: how was school? And all I get is 'fine'. I've stopped trying to get more out of them. Futile.

And I look around for her. But she's not there. I don't think so anyway.

And as we're heading to the car park, I see the reception girls in the playground. But something's wrong.

One of them has built a snowman, but someone is trying to destroy it. A boy.

And I wonder if I should intervene. Should say something. But what would I say?

So we just watch.

And then suddenly without planning, without saying a word, the girls start to link arms. All twenty of them.

Making a barrier between the boy and the snowman.

Her arm in her arm

Her arm in her arm

Her arm in her arm

Her arm in her arm

Her arm in her arm

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*The GIRLS stand at the front of the stage like at the start, facing the audience in a line – their arms linked.*

And then one of them speaks, the smallest of the group:

'Us girls stick together.

Think you can break through us, boy?

Go on. Just you try.'

*End.*