

# A SHORT HISTORY OF WEATHER

## CHARACTERS

EARL GREY: A man, any age.

ALOE VERA: A woman, any age.

## SETTING

A bare stage.

## TIME

The present.

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*At rise: Earl Grey wearing a black raincoat. Gazes into the sky, surveying, then to the audience.*

EARL GREY: What's today's weather? What's tomorrow's? Next week's? Have you noticed? Checked? I have. I know the weather very well, or try to. I'm not gloating, just saying. The weather's very important. Critical. It never leaves.

*(A female yelp is heard, followed by a thud.)*

EARL GREY: My wife fell from the sky on a cold, misty morning.

*(Lights up to reveal Aloe Vera, also wearing a black raincoat, laid out.)*

ALOE VERA: Oh gosh! Fallin' from the sky stings!

EARL GREY: Fifty-eight degrees, with a slight southwesterly breeze. Curious, and in the market for a mate, I move toward the stranger.

ALOE VERA: Oh, I think my face is broken! What misfortune!

EARL GREY: Miss, are you all right?

ALOE VERA: *(Shielding herself.)* Don't look! I'm unseemly!

EARL GREY: You took quite a dive.

ALOE VERA: I should be dead!

EARL GREY: Now, don't say that. Let me have a look.

*(He draws her hands from her face.)*

EARL GREY: Oh my . . .

ALOE VERA: I know! Ghastly, aren't I! A she-beast! I was cute once, I swear!

EARL GREY: You still are. As cute as a bunny.

ALOE VERA: Don't goad me. I can take it. I'm a mutant!

EARL GREY: On the contrary . . .

ALOE VERA: I am! All because of air balloons! Such an impractical way to travel!

EARL GREY: Outdated, yes.

ALOE VERA: Hours ago I boarded one. Mostly cloudy, highs in the mideighties. Out for a stroll, enjoying the grandness of life and climate, when, suddenly, the parachute valve locked up! There was no way to land! I was terrified!

EARL GREY: Naturally.

ALOE VERA: Here I am, stranded in midair, helpless, sailing closer and closer to outer space where I'd probably combust or evaporate, right?

EARL GREY: Very likely.

ALOE VERA: So I gambled and hurled myself overboard, without thinking of the pain or what it'd do to my face.

EARL GREY: Your face is lovely.

ALOE VERA: Oh, cease your niceties! I'm a disfigured hag! Give it to me straight, why don't you!

*(Earl Grey kisses her with feeling.)*

ALOE VERA: I didn't get your name.

EARL GREY: Earl Grey. And yours?

ALOE VERA: Call me Aloe. Aloe Vera.

EARL GREY: Aloe Vera, I'd like to spend a lifetime with you.

ALOE VERA: Our wedding day is sunny and clear.

*(They shed their raincoats to reveal Aloe Vera's simple white dress and Earl Grey's modest blue suit.)*

EARL GREY: Dewpoint: 12 percent.

ALOE VERA: Earl Grey rents a gazebo. I decorate with papier-maché.

EARL GREY: Do you take this man, me, to be your lawfully wedded husband?

ALOE VERA: I do. Do you take this woman, me, to be your lawfully wedded wife?

EARL GREY: I do.

*(Loud, celebratory music. They dance a flash. Music and dance cut abruptly.)*

ALOE VERA: After honeymooning at the South Pole, life ensues.

EARL GREY: Our future spreads before us like a broken mirror.

ALOE VERA: It's time to get jobs.

EARL GREY: Be adults.

ALOE VERA: I land a position as a phone psychic.

EARL GREY: I become a traveling gutter salesman.

ALOE VERA: Tough rackets.

EARL GREY: You'll find most homeowners are content with their gutters.

ALOE VERA: And few psychic callers want to discuss the weather.

EARL GREY: *(As a caller.)* Ring-a-ding!  
ALOE VERA: Phone psychic! How can I help!  
EARL GREY: Will I ever know true love?  
ALOE VERA: How 'bout this jet stream we've been seeing?  
EARL GREY: *(Hanging up.)* Who gives a flip, you fake! Click!  
ALOE VERA: Sadness.  
EARL GREY: Our lives become mundane.  
ALOE VERA: One dimensional.  
EARL GREY: Lethargic.  
ALOE VERA: So we buy a cat and name her Karen.  
*(A stuffed cat flies from offstage into Aloe Vera's arms.)*  
EARL GREY: Yeow!  
ALOE VERA: Hey kitty, kitty.  
EARL GREY: So soft, so sweet.  
ALOE VERA: A real part of the family.  
EARL GREY: Then one icy winter evening . . .  
ALOE VERA: Earl Grey backs over Karen with his gutter van.  
*(Tosses cat off.)*  
EARL GREY: Yeow!  
ALOE VERA: A deep depression sets in.  
EARL GREY: The only cure is twins.  
*(Crying babies sound. Two baby bundles are thrown from an offstage area. Aloe Vera catches one, Earl Grey the other.)*  
ALOE VERA: They're born during the summer solstice.  
EARL GREY: A long day, indeed.  
ALOE VERA: One girl, one boy.  
EARL GREY: From the start, we could see the girl was intelligent and resourceful.  
ALOE VERA: We name her Google.  
EARL GREY: The boy dull and common.  
ALOE VERA: We name him New Hampshire.  
EARL GREY: For a while, we're the happiest family.  
*(Celebratory music again. Dancing. Cuts abruptly.)*  
ALOE VERA: But funds dwindle.  
EARL GREY: Aloe Vera loses her psychic job.  
ALOE VERA: Didn't see it coming.  
EARL GREY: And, despite the reliability of rain, the great gutter boom never unfolds.

ALOE VERA: I decide to speak to Earl Grey. *(To Earl Grey.)* Earl Grey, I feel something's missing from our lives.  
EARL GREY: I feel it too, Aloe Vera.  
ALOE VERA: Two kids, three mortgages, a pile of bills . . . where's the money gonna come from?  
EARL GREY: Crime.  
ALOE VERA: Earl Grey was right. The only reasonable option was crime.  
*(Both pull guns from their bundles before tossing them aside.)*  
EARL GREY: Our first bank robbery comes on a storybook spring day.  
ALOE VERA: Barometric pressure: 30.20 and rising.  
EARL GREY: Blue skies and golden sunshine.  
ALOE VERA: Perfect for a picnic.  
EARL GREY: *(Gun pointed.)* THIS IS A HOLDUP! GET YOUR FUCKING HANDS UP, MAGGOTS!!!  
ALOE VERA: *(Gun pointed.)* DO IT NOW, BITCHES! OR I'LL BLOW OFF YOUR UGLY HEADS AND DROP-KICK YOUR TESTICLES!  
*(Distant sirens sound. Adrenaline pounding. Coming together again, triumphant.)*  
EARL GREY: What a rush!  
ALOE VERA: Our own private fortune!  
EARL GREY: Google and New Hampshire won't have to worry again.  
ALOE VERA: And I don't feel guilty, not in the least.  
EARL GREY: Who knew we could be so bad?  
*(Loud music, jubilant dance. Cuts abruptly.)*  
ALOE VERA: Google goes to college, becomes an engineer, and invents a mechanized wind chime.  
EARL GREY: We're very proud.  
ALOE VERA: Meantime, New Hampshire drops outta school and joins a grunge band called The Sweaty Pickles.  
EARL GREY: We're very disturbed. *(As if to his son.)* What's wrong with your biscuit, boy! You haven't left the garage in three weeks! It's time you stop playing this hullabaloo and think about your future! Make somethin' of yourself! Go in the market for a mate!  
ALOE VERA: Financially, however, things are looking up  
EARL GREY: With the extra loot, I'm able to expand the gutter business into monsoon regions.  
ALOE VERA: Cha-ching!  
EARL GREY: And for our twentieth anniversary, we splurge on a trip to Egypt.

ALOE VERA: Where a massive sandstorm ensnares our hotel.

EARL GREY: We watch from our penthouse balcony, knowing we might perish but unafraid still.

*(Gusting winds are heard. Both are awed by what they see.)*

ALOE VERA: Isn't it remarkable?

EARL GREY: Wondrous. *(Down on one knee, pulling out a ring.)* Aloe Vera, your falling from the sky was the most amazing gift. I'd like you to have this, love, as a token of my renewed vow.

ALOE VERA: Oh, Earl Grey . . .

*(They embrace, cheek to cheek.)*

EARL GREY: We're just two grains of sand.

ALOE VERA: Swirling madly in the desert debris.

EARL GREY: Clinging to each other despite it all.

*(The wind gusts reach a crescendo, then cut.)*

ALOE VERA: On the strength of our newfound fortune, Earl Grey runs for the Senate.

EARL GREY: My top issue: a national weather day.

ALOE VERA: Google, a celebrity inventor, is a huge help to the campaign.

EARL GREY: New Hampshire, stoned and doddering, a minor embarrassment.

ALOE VERA: Election night arrives and victory is ours.

EARL GREY: *(Stump speech.)* For too long this nation has shortchanged its weather! Tonight, with one voice, you sent a resounding message, friends! It's time to recognize! Let's hear it!

BOTH: We like weather! We like weather!

ALOE VERA: So we move to Washington.

EARL GREY: Where our ideas are met with stone-faced pundits.

ALOE VERA: They say the country isn't ready for a Weather Day.

EARL GREY: Buncha blowhards.

ALOE VERA: Even so, it was a happy time, those years.

EARL GREY: Google makes us grandparents.

ALOE VERA: And, to our astonishment, New Hampshire's band, The Sweaty Pickles, begins to take off.

EARL GREY: We actually attend a concert.

*(Unsettling grunge music plays. Earl Grey and Aloe Vera appear befuddled. Music ends.)*

EARL GREY: It sounds like dog rape.

ALOE VERA: Be nice. Here he comes. *(As if to her son.)* Wonderful job, sweetheart. Really something. Loved every second.

EARL GREY: Especially the ones in-between songs.

ALOE VERA: Your father and I never imagined there were so many Sweaty Pickle fans. We're so impressed, aren't we, Earl Grey?

EARL GREY: You baffle me, son. You've always been odd, done things your own way, but you've managed to pull it off. Just like your old pop. I'm proud of you.

ALOE VERA: *(Returning to the audience.)* After three terms in the Senate, Earl Grey finally gets his Weather Bill passed.

EARL GREY: How sweet it is!

ALOE VERA: I was working out on the StairMaster when he broke it to me. *(Begins stepping as if working out.)*

EARL GREY: Darling, I've got news.

ALOE VERA: I'll never forget the weather that day, not as long as I live. The sky was sepia. Sorta. I can't really describe the color, but once or twice in our lives, the heavens have a strange, hazy light to them. Kinda dulled, like the sunshine's weeping. Maybe I'm nuts, but it's comforting, those days, at least for me. I think it's the color of memory.

EARL GREY: It passed.

ALOE VERA: IT PASSED!

*(Ecstatic, they embrace and dance again to the joyous music. Cuts.)*

EARL GREY: *(Again, a stump speech.)* Humbly, we gather today to pay homage to the world's most persistent icon. And so, without further delay, what we've all been waiting for: I hereby declare this National Weather Day!

BOTH: Hip Hip Hooray! Hip Hip Hooray!

ALOE VERA: I love you, Earl Grey.

EARL GREY: I love you, Aloe Vera.

*(A zap and a bright flash of light. Aloe Vera collapses like a brick.)*

ALOE VERA: Ouch! What's happened?

EARL GREY: *(Rushing to her aid.)* You've been struck by lightning!

ALOE VERA: I'm all warm and fuzzy!

EARL GREY: It came outta nowhere!

ALOE VERA: I don't feel so good.

EARL GREY: Irony: my arch nemesis!

ALOE VERA: Live by it, die by it. Good-bye, Earl Grey. My heart's stopping.

EARL GREY: But you can't! Winter's around the corner . . . who'll drink cocoa and collect snowflakes with me? No one can marvel over a snowflake like you, Aloe Vera.

ALOE VERA: You kind man. Time marches, but your keen eyes are the same as that boy's who first rescued me. You asked for a lifetime and that's precisely what we've had together. I'm glad my air balloon malfunctioned.

EARL GREY: I'm glad your face wasn't broken.

*(They chuckle.)*

ALOE VERA: When you think of all we'll leave behind . . .

EARL GREY: Not too shabby.

ALOE VERA: *(Growing weaker.)* You'll take care of the tombstone and epitaph . . . ?

EARL GREY: I didn't think the moment would come.

ALOE VERA: But you remember?

EARL GREY: "Everything possible is happening somewhere on earth. And above it, perpetually passive and indifferent, hovers the weather."

ALOE VERA: Very nice. Just as we drew it up.

EARL GREY: I wish there was something I could do. It all seems to happen so fast.

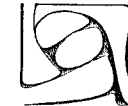
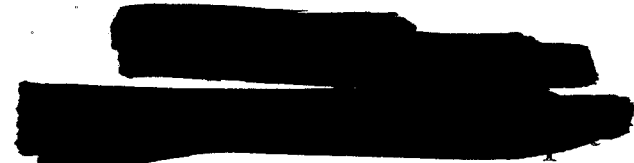
ALOE VERA: Tell me tonight's forecast?

EARL GREY: Foggy through the evening, turning cold, with a chance of early morning showers.

ALOE VERA: Our favorite.

*(Earl Grey hugs his wife to him as lights fade.)*

END OF PLAY



*Super 8 versus Bacara Resort and Spa* was originally presented at The Actor's Group in Universal City, Calif., March 29, 2008, as part of an Evening of Four 10-Minute Comedies by Stephanie Hutchinson, AOPW Fellowship Award winner. Directed by Jonathan Levit. Cast: Jeremy — Frytz Mor; Lulabelle — Lauren Kidd. *Super 8 versus Bacara Resort and Spa* was also performed at Camino Real Playhouse's Showoff! International Playwriting Festival in San Juan Capistrano, Calif., January 2009. Directed by Jennifer Hartline. Cast: Jeremy — Corey Eib; Lulabelle — Jennifer Pearce.

