# Emmy Stonelake delivers a powerful performance in 'Tell Me How It Ends' play highlighting AIDS crisis and political activism



In the late 1980s, Aster, a compassionate friend to HIV patients in Liverpool, has a unique trait: she invariably reveals the ending of books she recommends. In Tasha Dowd's play, "Tell Me How It Ends," this quirk becomes a poignant metaphor, especially when considering Marc, the patient Aster grows closest to. Marc's life, dependent on medication, faces an inevitable end, mirroring the stories Aster inadvertently spoils.

The play's climax features a fervent speech by Aster, performed by Emmy Stonelake. This speech advocates for protest, public services, and trans rights, delivering a sharp critique against reactionary governments and underscoring the need for continuous vigilance. This powerful moment shifts the play from its soap operatic origins to a bold political statement.

Dowd, who uses they/them pronouns and is a 2023 Homotopia writers’ award winner, brings a nuanced perspective to the era of the AIDS crisis. Directed by Gitika Buttoo, "Tell Me How It Ends" is a heartfelt tribute to solidarity and resilience, offering insight into how societal responses and medical advancements have evolved over decades.