

The Diamond Child

CHARACTERS

Mère Mer -- 4 Billion years old, but looks great for her age. She is the ocean that surrounds the earth and the cradle that nurtured life. She is larger than life yet motherly. A no nonsense woman who has only the best for all her children at heart.

Tod -- 27, American, investment banker, lives in La Jolla California. He's worked hard for everything he's earned, and he's earned a lot. His success has given him an absolute sense of his entitlement to all that he owns. This can make him seem smug at times, but he is always centered on his own idea of justice, and to his mind the laborer is worthy his wages. This utterly held sense of a moral world where one earns what one gets, keeps Tod from being a mere cartoon caricature of greed.

Mary --25, Tod's wife, works with a cellular phone company, convincing home owners to lease their yards or rooftops for radio towers. She has a way with people and is used to getting her way. She shares Tod's certainty that she deserves Tod's success. But where Tod sees the world as a business interest, Mary holds to a sort of triumphant Christian point of view. The world is a mess, but at least she is saved, thank God. This attitude can seem narrow minded, but it allows Mary to approach the world with more of her heart than Tod can. This emotional sensitivity is her nicest quality.

Paul -- 17, Tobago native, dreams of making it to America in the Xtreme Olympics as a skateboarder. He's always been an outsider among the kids he grew up with and he's always had terrific physical grace and agility. His poverty makes him ambitious. Sylvia is his first real girlfriend, and he has shared more with her than with anyone else in his life.

Sylvia -- 16, Paul's girlfriend, works for her uncle at a notions shop. Paul is not her first boyfriend, but he is the first with whom he has been this intimate. Though younger than Paul she is more emotionally mature. This fact doesn't make her any happier.

Aloon -- 30, Guinean truck mechanic. His father had been a tribal leader and respected silversmith. Aloon was sent to French schools in Conakry, then travelled to France for an engineering degree. He never finished that degree and returned to Guinea finding work in the garage where he now works.

Faheen --27,Aloon's wife and mother of seven. She never had a career and never wanted one. Originally from Aloon's village, she moved to Conakry to find domestic work. When they were courting Aloon saw in her, perhaps, the traditions that he had abandoned. She herself, though, is much less nostalgic about life in the village. She is a realist and lives in the present.

Xiao Bin [She-owl Been] -- 28, Chinese civil engineer. The major fact of his life is his love for Li Yu. He is overwhelmingly, almost eerily, attuned to her emotions. More than her husband, he is her friend and servant. This sensitivity is both his strength and greatest weakness because it keeps leading him to fears for a future he's not quite sure he can control.

Li Yu [Lee You] -- 23, electronics technician and Xiao Bin's wife, has never thought about the future until now. Her focus has been fixed in the past, having grown up with a mother who became increasingly unstable, and a father she never knew. She fears, but she never knows what it is she fears.