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BELOW THE PACIFIC

by

Ryan Wallace Oliveira

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Master of Fine Arts
degree in Theatre Arts in the
Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2015

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Art Borreca

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Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Ryan Wallace Oliveira

has been approved by the Examining Committee for
the thesis requirement for the Master of Fine Arts degree
in Theatre Arts at the May 2015 graduation.

Thesis Committee:

Art Borreca, Thesis Supervisor

Dare Clubb

Lisa Schlesinger

To Mom and Dad
(because *saudade* exists)

“Saudade: presença dos ausentes.”

- Olavo Bilac

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It is said that it takes a community to make theatre and that certainly holds true in the development of a playwright. To my teachers beyond the University of Iowa: Daphnie Sicre, Beth Milles, Bruce Levitt, Sara Warner, Ross Haarstad, Elaine Avila, and Jacqueline Goldfinger – I would not *still* be a playwright without your challenges, your feedback, and your encouragement. I would like to thank the playwrights of the Iowa Playwrights' Workshop for their generous feedback, attention to detail, and camaraderie these past three years.

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PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Adapted from the conspiracies and events surrounding Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, which presumably disappeared over the Southern Indian Ocean, this play examines the emotional, mythological, and political ramifications of loss. By exploring the bottom of the ocean, the characters gather clues and memories in order to find their loved ones, only to discover that there is no complete return to life after a disaster. The only solace is the memory of those loved ones tethering those who must go on living.

The play is, in a sense, a drama of *saudade*. It is a Portuguese word roughly defined as the feeling of losing something or someone one loves, has lost, and can never return. The play is not only a tragic love story; it is also an attempt to translate this word for American audiences through theatre.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY	1
LIST OF CHARACTERS	3
SETTING AND TIME	4
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	5
From Atlantic to Pacific	5
An Exploration of Saudade: Fado, Lamentation, and Theatre	8
PROLOGUE, OR PRE-SHOW	13
ACT ONE	15
ACT TWO	45

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Below the Pacific first received a workshop reading at the University of Iowa in September of 2014:

DOUG	Skyler Matthias
KAI	Regina Morones
MARINA	Allyson Malandra
TAKAROA	Ruben Lebron-Villegas
MELE	Keyla McClure
JELLYFISH	Frankie Rose
AMELIA	Valeria Avina
STAGE DIRECTIONS	Niki Charisse Franco

Below the Pacific then received a production as part of the 2015 University of Iowa New Play Festival on May 8, 2015. It was directed by Marina Johnson, with music composed by Joseph Z. Adams. Alice Doherty and Alyssa Cokinis were the co-dramaturgs on this production. The set was designed by Melissa Gilbert. Costumes and make-up were designed by Joshua Christofferson. The lights were designed by Josh Hinden. Sound was designed by Rob Bergentsock. The production was stage managed by Rachele Ekstrand, who was assisted by Brigidta de Souza. Music was directed by Frankie Rose.

DOUG	Skyler Matthias
KAI	Aneisa Hicks
MARINA	Madeline Ascherl
TAKAROA	Morris Hill
MEI-LEI	Weiyi Zhang
JELLYFISH	Matthew Schutz
	and Christopher Matheson

LIST OF CHARACTERS

DOUG	Male, 20's to 30's, American. Flight crash investigator.
KAI	Female, 20's, Kiwi (New Zealander). Flight crash investigator.
MARINA	Female, 20's, American. Flight attendant, now ocean nymph. Doug's wife. Sings like a loon (of the avian variety).
TAKAROA	Male, ancient (looks 30's to 40's). Tattooed Polynesian of the sea. Appears fearsome, but is actually a sensitive soul. Armed with a scepter.
MEI-LEI	Female, ancient (looks 20's to 40's). Asian. A mermaid. Sings like a canary.
JELLYFISH	Unknown gender, unknown age. A jellyfish. Simple, yet so complex. Can be played by two actors.

Voices of a PILOT and ATC (Air Traffic Control).

Body of a FISHERMAN.

SETTING AND TIME

Below the Pacific takes place in the bottom of the Southern Pacific Ocean. It ends on a beach.

The time is the future, when humans can safely and *humanly* navigate the ocean floor. In stage time, it is set approximately one week after American Airlines Flight 13 mysteriously disappears from the Southern Pacific Ocean.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

From Atlantic to Pacific

On March 8, 2014, Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 disappeared from the South China Sea. The last blip on a radar turned into a months-long search for a plane, for bodies, for any evidence in the Strait of Malacca and the Southern Indian Ocean. I remember becoming fixated on the news coverage, surfing through conspiracy theories as well as the accounts of the loved ones passengers left behind. Like everyone, I was swept into a frenzy of whys and hows, scanning Wikipedia articles on other tragedies involving passenger jets mysteriously disappearing or crashing in the ocean. Questions concerning the Malaysia Airlines pilot's mental state dredged up thoughts of Egypt Air Flight 990, which crashed in the Atlantic Ocean on October 31, 1999 – presumably a pilot-directed suicide, though debated by the Egyptian government. The contention over that incident's causality subsequently led to a lapse in providing grieving loved ones monetary compensation for their losses, since international aviation guidelines indicated that a cause needed to be determined in order to prompt due reparations. The grieving loved ones of those disappeared on Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 would suffer the same fate until January 29, 2015, when the Malaysian government officially declared the incident an accident with no survivors.

From March to July of 2014, I was haunted by this tragedy. A plane was cosmically “snatched” from the Earth, over the Pacific Ocean with no evidence of physical existence. On land resided the bodies of those searching for closure, but receiving only questions muddled with terrorism theories, odd piloting behaviors, signal malfunctions. Here was a torture all too familiar with matters concerning the

missing: The call for a return, for a sign in the cosmos to move on, and the cosmos responding with nothing. I settled on these sentiments and dropped my search for answers; after all, Flight 370 was not *my* tragedy. It was not my place to write on sentiments I could not understand. Furthermore, I was already conducting research for another play, *Pessoas*, in which I was aiming to portray the same cycle through Portuguese poetry and fado. Exploring *saudade* – the Portuguese sentiment of losing something or someone one loves and can never get back – through my own theatrical poetry proved more pressing of a project. Earning the Stanley Grant for Graduate Research would award me an opportunity to immerse myself in Fernando Pessoa’s poetry, fado music, and the deep cultural and literary histories of loss in Lisbon, Portugal. What I never expected was that Malaysia would haunt me again – this time, from the eastern edge of the Atlantic Ocean.

I was in Lisbon, Portugal in late June of 2014 and decided, on July 17, 2014, to set out for the Atlantic Ocean and spent the evening at Praia do Guincho. During the Disquiet Literary Conference in Lisbon a week before, I participated in a series of hikes along the Caminho Lisboa, a section of a trod-upon pilgrimage route toward Spain. I figured that I would try my own hike up the eastern edge of the Atlantic Ocean from Praia do Guincho to Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point in mainland Europe. To my dismay, I did not plan the route carefully enough; outdated maps and limited wireless Internet hindered my grand hiking plots. I ended up retreating to my hotel that night. Before my respite, however, I spent the sunset surveying the Atlantic Ocean alone on my hike, traversing rock faces, winding through brushes, exploring beaches rocky and sandy. I found myself reflecting upon the dangerous majesty of the ocean. (Praia do Guincho is known as a wonderful surfing spot, provided one is careful of the severe

undertow that threatens to snatch swimmers away from the coast.) I simply kept my feet on the shore and walked along the edge, listening to the peacefully surging surf, ingesting the colors of descending sunlight from the clouds, and smelling the brine of the seawater. I considered my awe and fear of the ocean, evident since I was a child playing in Miami's tropical waters when my body stumbled upon a stinging jellyfish. The water conjured wonder; it also made me wince with pain.

Dusk turned to darkness. With barely enough light pollution, I could see the stars blinking in the night sky as I roamed the beach, listening to the smooth surf. I kept a flashlight on my phone, in case some stranger would snatch me in my coastal wonder. And yet, I wondered why I thought so gravely next to the sea. I was in the *lonely* of my ocean, with no one but the stars and the surf and myself. And so I began to sing in my lonely reverie. A soft English fado of my own lyric seemed to rise from the roaring sea. The words sung were a wistful longing for someone on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, wondering if anyone would hear, fashioning myself like some old-school widow upon the rocks waiting for her sailing lover to return home – if he ever *did* return home. And still I waited. I was transfixed. After a spell, the cold coastal air had frozen me enough. I retreated to my hotel room. Nothing from the human world penetrated my psyche on the Atlantic Ocean.

Two days later, I returned to my homestay in Lisbon. My host asked me if I heard the news. I checked my e-mails, went on Facebook, and finally received the news: a missile in Ukraine shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 on July 17, 2014. Charred bodies still strapped to their seats could not be returned to their loved ones. Rebels in eastern Ukraine fiercely defended the crash site with arms, hoping to destroy any shrapnel or evidence of wrongdoing. They stormed morgues, demanding innocent

bodies at gunpoint. Months after Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, bodies were still disappearing on the same airline, but for *very* different reasons. There was a cause. And closure was prevented because of political limbo.

An American “translation” of *saudade* through Portuguese culture may have been my intent upon arrival in Lisbon, but two airline tragedies in the span of six months? I took the coincidence as a sign: I *had* to write this play. My thoughts returned to the original incident – Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, disappearing over the Indian Ocean. Flight 17 was destroyed over European airspace as I was hypnotized by the Atlantic Ocean. The meeting place between the two would occur over the Pacific Ocean – the “peaceful sea”, as Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan called it. The moniker was woefully deceptive. The ocean with a continuous typhoon season, where an entire naval war was fought, where nuclear bombs were tested and detonated upon human lives, where indigenous peoples were occupied by maritime empires (and *still*, in the case of New Zealand’s Maori subject to the United Kingdom) – the drama of loss and *recovery* would play at the bottom of this grand space.

Thus, I began to write *Below the Pacific*.

An Exploration of Saudade: Fado, Lamentation, and Theatre

If Federico Garcia Lorca’s notion of a *duende* calls to mind an Echidna at the precipice of love and death, *saudade* is the monster’s sister – one of the Sirens. If *duende* is of the bloody earth, *saudade* is of the briny sea. If *duende* is symbolized by the bullfight, *saudade* is symbolized by the lonely song. That the two sentiments emanate from Spain and Portugal respectively is not unusual as both once-maritime powers drew cultural inspirations from the Moors before Catholic sentiments swayed the

countries elsewhere. Still, the Moorish influence remains in the countries' cultural DNA, presenting itself most commonly through lyric, and guitar. Yet saudade is also an immigrant sentiment, shared by my mother and father's long sighs reminiscing about Brazil. When their oldest son departed for college, they left voicemails commonly ending in droplets of tears, "Tenho tanto saudade de você" (I have so much saudade for you) before the lingering air and subsequent hang-up.

It is my firm belief, however, that saudade is not a strictly Portuguese concept. The Brazilian poet Olavo Bilac has said that saudade is "the presence of an absence," which, in my mind, presents a contemporary haunting. Unlike traditional hauntings where the ghosts are corporeal and disappear once their business is complete, saudade is the exact opposite: the living *body* is corporeal and disappears and the ghost is *incorporeal* and *never disappears*. In Portuguese fado, the performer calls to a person, lover, or audience that implies a physical form and yet is *not* present in its performance. The only presence that replies in a typical fado is the guitar, which notes an *incorporeal* essence. The other reply that can occur in a fado is silence, the acknowledgment of *no* answer. In one performance I witnessed at a *tasca do fado* (a small dive bar where fado is sung), an old man sung of a lost lover. At the song's climax, the guitar cut out and only the performer's voice that hung in the air, starting in his falsetto, then spiraling down into his bass tones as if he was diving deep into the ocean. There was silence. And then he surfaced. The song continued and ended as normal. Fado can easily climax into a frenzy rather than a calm, with both performer and guitarist whipping voice and strings into a commanding cry out across the audience to some presumed loved one. The response at the fado's end is applause – a signifier of a presence, but not the actualized presence of the loved one the singer is conjuring.

Why utilize saudade in such a manner if the fado is ultimately fruitless? It is here that I am reminded of a quote from Samuel Beckett: “When you’re in the shit up to your neck, there’s nothing left to do but sing.” On the surface, it is the last gasp of breath while treading water in the ocean. Saudade, however, can also be viewed in the greater oral tradition of lamentation. It is a spiritual release that acknowledges the *living* existence of a loved one in the grasping for nothing of a great loss or disaster. Lamentation is a three-part otherworldly journey. The body physiologically prepares for communion through music, converses with the divine (or incorporeal) via monologue and dialogue, then arrives from the journey with signifiers (tears) that fundamentally change the individual’s worldview. Tears are the reactive *evidence* of the journey when there is no other evidence to provide adequate closure for the performer. The cry in lamentation is significant, but tears behave as *marks* upon the audience’s bodies. Failing another body, the tear can serve as evidence of tension relief, that one has communed with the divine and received assurance that all is okay. A fadista who can elicit tears as he or she sings the fado is considered a skillful fadista – more so if he or she can conjure tears from his or her audience.

That lamentation ritualistically occurs in the presence of others – funerals, benefit concerts, dive bars – furthers a concept of saudade that is fundamentally theatrical. Saudade is collectively fostered in the form of a public ritual, in which community can be created for empathetic assistance when it would seem that no divine assistance can be given to the person performing saudade. Saudade *creates* a corporeal presence in the wake of a subject’s presumed absence. However, this poses a contradiction: Should not the *experience* of saudade be predicated on the inability to *realize* an absence?

One of the inspirations for *Below the Pacific* was the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Orpheus descends to the underworld to retrieve his lover, Eurydice, but can only do so if he manages to escape without looking at her. He must maintain her incorporeal nature. Orpheus, however, fails to do so as the absence of her voice – her *signifier* – prompts him to doubt her presence. He turns, only to find her returning to the underworld; thus, he returns to the living, singing his *saudades* through his lyre until his dying breath. In the story, Eurydice's incorporeality is the tragic reality that must be lived and re-lived through the incorporeal nature of Orpheus' song. In the spaces between song and silence, presence and absence, there is room for *saudade* to exist as a *realized* feeling of non-feeling. The singer screams out for a once-real lover, but only silence exists, and the silence becomes the *new* signifier of the lover. The song is the new medium to communicate with the lover; the tears created mark our perceived meaningful experience communing with the lover. Theatre, then, provides the *communal* experience for the lamentation to be re-lived and re-marked upon the audience, with *saudade* operating as the transmitting experience.

If Lorca's *duende* is a product of time, then the Portuguese *saudade* is a product of distance. It is why *saudade* is often defined as a *longing*, for it *dilates* the distance between two people who are connected by the same tether-point in time: the departure. It is never residing in the same space, a longing for togetherness that is separated by vast, uncertain terrain. In *Below the Pacific*, a horizontal and vertical ocean exists between the lovers that will never keep them in the same plane of existence. The interlocutor between the distances, then, *must* be song, often in the form of lamentation. In a theatre space, *saudade* provides an opportunity for community in the shared grievance of loss. It contains the promise of that most sought-after enlightenment in the

theatre: *empathy*. Rather than inspire an audience to happily distance themselves from the action in argumentation, it invites an audience to converge on the same tether-point of memory in the characters who long. As a theatrical outcome, saudade poses a difficult utopian resolution to the human disasters that defy logic or explanation. Those that are living must still *live*, even in the presence of a nothing that will always be. It is the communal presence – the presence of *another* – that alleviates, but does not entirely negate, the presence of *a nothing*.

PROLOGUE, OR PRE-SHOW

(As the audience is seated, we hear haunting sounds from an airplane cabin...)

AUSSIE TOURIST (V.O.)

I'm heading to America. On holiday. Hollywood, where the stars play.

CHILD (V.O.)

I can't sleep. There's so many stars in the sky tonight.

RESEARCHER (V.O.)

There's 127 kakapos left in the wild. One of them tried to have sex with my neck!

BACKPACKER (V.O.)

Ever been to the goblin forest? It's like, Lord of the Rings, man.

ARTIST (V.O.)

I feel like a floating island up here. Like I could touch the moon.

REALIST (V.O.)

Who thought Air Force One was a good idea to watch in an *airplane*?

DREAMER (V.O.)

I had a dream? That lightning struck us? That's not gonna happen, right?

KIWI MAN (V.O.)

It's hei matau. Made of bone. It's for good luck over water.

(As the show starts, we hear...)

MARINA (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome aboard American Airlines Flight 13 with non-stop service from Auckland to Los Angeles.

At this time, make sure your seat backs are in their upright positions and your seat belts are securely fastened. We also advise that you turn off any cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices for the duration of this flight, as these may interfere with our navigation systems.

On behalf of the captain, first officer, and the entire crew, we thank you for choosing American Airlines, and hope you have a wonderful flight.

Cabin crew, please prepare for take-off.

(In complete darkness, we hear an audio recording between American Airlines Flight 13 and Auckland Air Traffic Control.)

ATC (V.O.)
AA13, please climb to flight altitude 250.

PILOT (V.O.)
AA13 is climbing to flight altitude 250

(Long pause.)

ATC (V.O.)
AA13, climbing to flight altitude 350

PILOT (V.O.)
This is AA13, flight altitude 350

(Long pause.)

ATC (V.O.)
AA13.

(Long pause.)

AMERICAN 13.

PILOT (V.O.)
AA13 remaining in flight altitude 350

ATC (V.O.)
AA13, please contact Nadi 3467.0, good night

PILOT (V.O.)
Okay. Good night.

(Silence. Then, a growing, oceanic static.)

ACT ONE

Scene 1

(The bottom of the Southern Pacific Ocean. The only lights we see are the lights from the underwater suits of DOUG and KAI, adapted for extreme pressure and temperature down here. They search the empty zone.)

KAI

Nothing here.

DOUG

A passenger jet doesn't just magically disappear over the Pacific Ocean. There were clear skies -

KAI

No debris. I read the reports -

DOUG

298 people lost their lives on that flight. Another plane collapsed near Australia last week. And the month before that, a jet disappeared. Last headed toward Chile from New Zealand. None of the black boxes were recovered -

KAI

Our radar hasn't detected anything in the area for the past week -

DOUG

You have to do *more* than detect metal with your little instruments -

KAI

My instruments are just as good as yours

(Deadly pause.)

While you are in *my* territory? We're investigating *together*. Are we clear?

DOUG

Crystal.

KAI

Choice.

(They continue searching. She flashes her light upstage quickly, revealing a ruin.)

DOUG

Hold it!

(Doug shines his light on a tail of the wreck.)

KAI AND DOUG

...American Airlines 13.

KAI

How is it even...?

(Doug rushes toward the wreck and exits.)

Doug!

(A rumble is heard. Kai checks her arm.)

We only have four hours of oxygen left! Doug!

(No response. Kai exits after Doug.)

Scene 2

(Lights shift to an underwater parlor, once a proud palace, now a sunken dump, with a few floating frills of detritus nicely strewn about. There is a table with a sort of sea-candle in the middle. Romantic. Sitting across from each other are MARINA, an elegantly garbed ocean nymph, and TAKAROA, lonely god of the sea. They stare at each other for an awkward spell.)

TAKAROA

So. Um. You love flying?

MARINA

I loved it.

(Beat.)

TAKAROA

Ever been on a cruise?

MARINA

I worked on one. The Royal Caribbean.

TAKAROA

I love that ship! It looks so...royal. Traversing the ocean. Smooth sailing, I hope.

MARINA

Got seasick. Or food poisoning from the tuna. It's why I switched to airlines.

(Beat.)

TAKAROA

Regardless...I hope you like crab.

I'm allergic.

MARINA

(MEI-LEI enters with a tray of crab.)

Alaskan King Crab?

MEI-LEI

Not now.

TAKAROA

I swam all the way for –

MEI-LEI

What else. Do we have.

TAKAROA

Tuna.

(Marina feels an urge to vomit.)

Oh! Maybe she'd like a seaweed salad? For her *figure*.

MARINA

If that's what you have -

TAKAROA

- then that's what she'll get! One salad for me, and one for the beautiful lady!

MEI-LEI

About as beautiful as a *conch*.

TAKAROA

Watch your tongue or I'll make you walk on it.

(Mei-Lei exits.)

Forgive me. Mei-Lei is just a bit...

MARINA

Is she your wife?

TAKAROA

Are you kidding? Why would you think - *No*. Mei-Lei is not wife material. She was someone I saved. Like you.

MARINA

Except you didn't turn her into...whatever I am -

TAKAROA

Unlike any other creature in this ocean. And Mei-Lei...was a boy.

(A light shines on a FISHERMAN, fishing at the lip of the stage. Mei-Lei appears, as a young boy.)

Fell in love with an oyster fisherman. A brute who had an eye for pearls and an ear for melodies. And boy, could Mei-Lei sing.

(Mei-Lei sings a melody, entrancing the fisherman...until he spots the young man and rejects him.)

But for the fisherman, he was horrified by the swine he saw before him. And Mei-Lei pined for him, rang for him, sang every day and night for him...but nothing. So Mei-Lei asked me -

MEI-LEI

Turn me into a woman he could love. His singing pearl.

TAKAROA

I warned her. She'd be bound to the sea. Her voice might drive men to madness. Her lovers would carry her young like seahorses -

MEI-LEI

I don't care. I accept.

TAKAROA

And so, she became a mermaid.

(Takaroa transforms Mei-Lei into a mermaid. She returns to the fisherman and sings a melody. The fisherman turns to her, entranced. They kiss. Lights go out on them and return to the present.)

MARINA

But then...I assume that he died?

TAKAROA

Of natural causes, I believe. Dangers of the job. Sharks probably swallowed him. Or a storm washed him away.

(Mei-Lei enters with the seaweed salad.)

MEI-LEI

He drowned.

(Mei-Lei dumps the seaweed salad on the table.)

Diving to reach me.

TAKAROA

...I couldn't reach him in time.

MEI-LEI

I gave you my human life and his got taken away. How is that fair.

Limitations. TAKAROA

MEI-LEI
(*to Marina*)
I used to sing for lonely old men.

TAKAROA
Mei-Lei -

MEI-LEI
Watched them huff and puff to the sound of my voice. And when they finally release, they fall asleep and drown. And that's when we serve Braised Land Monkey -

TAKAROA
That's enough!

MEI-LEI
Enjoy your fucking seaweed salad.

(*Mei-Lei exits. Awkward pause.*)

TAKAROA
There's no Land Monkey. On the menu. Anywhere.
(*He eats the seaweed salad. Cringes.*)
Mmmm. It's soooooo...*not* terribly salty. Good for you.
Tomorrow, I can have Mei-Lei cook puffins in milk sauce, all the way from Iceland!

MARINA
I'd rather be dead.

TAKAROA
I know this life takes a little getting used to, but...I am a very good person. I saved you from certain death.

MARINA
And I wish you hadn't. It's...not home.

TAKAROA
This is home, Marina. America is a land mass of the past now. And if I could've saved you long ago, if I could've *loved* you...I'd cover the world in ocean for you.

MARINA
But you can't, can you. *Limitations.*

TAKAROA
Your humans will melt the ice caps. They'll flood themselves. They'll *all* drown. And there will be nothing but Land Monkey served in these halls for all eternity! So for the sake of all that is living - *Eat Your Damn Salad!*

(Pause. She takes a bite of the salad. She chews and tastes the salt. It's painful enough to produce tears. Takarao melts.)

Forgive me. You will be worshipped like the rarest of sea angels. As a proper wife should be. I wish you could see that. But I can wait. I've waited ages enough.

(He exits. Mei-Lei enters.)

MARINA

I want my husband.

MEI-LEI

Don't we all. If only they'd listen.

MARINA

I miss our karaoke date nights. He'd sing cheesy Disney songs to me - but drunk, so they were more endearing? And this one night...I wanted to sing "My Heart Will Go On" to him.

MEI-LEI

Whyyyyy -

MARINA

I thought I sounded like Celine Dion in my head, with the piccolo and the synthesizers in the background? I even beat my chest like she did! Like it was for all of Canada! For all of Los Angeles, at least. And I sang so loud that I...broke the mic. And the speakers. And everyone's eardrums. And we got kicked out of the bar. So I asked him, was I good? And he said I sounded like a drowning puffin on crack.

But I was *his* puffin.

I just want him to know to know his puffin is here.

MEI-LEI

Puffins are *horrible* singers –

MARINA

They mate for life-

MEI-LEI

And they *die*.

(Pause.)

MARINA

Teach me how to sing.

MEI-LEI

Do I look like a magic mermaid to you?

(Marina looks at Mei-Lei. She sighs and checks Marina's vocal cords.)

Ugh. So misshapen. Takaroa didn't do you any favors. But with a little adjustment...
(She does some vocal chiropractic work.)
There. Sing like you're singing to your husband.

MARINA

But what if he hears me and goes crazy? Or doesn't hear me at all?

MEI-LEI

Better than thinking you're alone, right?
Now. Stand up straight and sing. Anything but the Titanic song.

(Marina stands up straight and sings. It starts a cappella, but moves into a beautiful seafaring ballad, as if the entire ocean comes alive to support her. Her voice is suffused with heart-wrenching and powerful nostalgia.)

MARINA

HEY THERE, CAN YOU HEAR ME?
THROUGH THE SILENCE OF THE SEA
IT'S COLD AND THERE'S NOWHERE ALL AROUND
NOTHING AT ALL BUT MY SOUND

AND I DREAM THAT YOU DIVE
INTO THE DEEP, HOPE SEEMS FLEETING
HOLDING BREATHS, YOUR HEART BEATING
AND YOU ARRIVE, AND I'M ALIVE

(Mei-Lei stops her voice.)

MEI-LEI

Bubble steps. With practice, we'll build to waves.

(Lights go out on them.)

Scene 3

(Lights shift to the wreck, which Doug finishes exploring. He scans the audience with his light, looking for someone. Kai enters.)

KAI

Don't mind that they're missing limbs. Everything wants a taste of Kiwi or American pie -

DOUG

All of them still in their seats. Were they asleep?

KAI

The flight data on the black box would confirm it.

DOUG

I checked the wreck twice -

KAI

I checked three times. Radar didn't detect a ping in the area and -

(A rumble is heard.)

Must be an incoming storm. We've only got three hours of oxygen left -

DOUG

It's been almost two weeks! There *has* to be an explanation -

KAI

It's...familiar. The plane...it's like a gentle going under. Like you've slit your wrists in the bath. And the *bodies*. Give or take a few, all perfectly preserved. Still in their seats in the upright position. Nobody struggled. Not even the stewardesses.

DOUG

I counted five.

KAI

So did I.

DOUG

There's supposed to be six.

KAI

The plane could've been understaffed.

DOUG

The plane was staffed with exactly six when it disappeared. I checked.

KAI

There's no way a stewardess downed the plane, if that's what you're suggesting -

DOUG

Then what is it, Plane Whisperer? Explain why she's *gone*.

KAI

Not without the black box. Not until we return to the surface for more clues - *not* until your country's airline releases the captain's flight simulation data. Which they refuse. Why is that, eh?

DOUG

I'm not...privy to that sort of information.

KAI

“Need-to-know” basis, right. Except *we* need to know. Didn’t you put pressure on your bosses?

DOUG

Maybe they don’t have all the facts! Maybe he was tired, maybe they -

KAI

No. An American suicide pilot wouldn’t look very *good* for your image.

DOUG

And your suicide stewardess theory is *better*?

KAI

The only thing I have to go on is *you*. And you’re not offering much except it *had* to be the co-pilot, *had* to be a Kiwi -

DOUG

He was disturbed – !

KAI

And your *white* American captain was *so* depressed, *so* disturbed that he crashed *three hundred people* to their deaths! Deal with the facts -

DOUG

There’s a missing body -

KAI

News flash: They’re *all* missing bodies! Every last one of them has some family member sleepwalking every day and night hoping to find *something* on their loved one, and until we go *back* to the surface -

DOUG

I’m not going back -

KAI

Until we pinpoint the black box and bring that *something* back -

DOUG

I told you I’m not going back -

KAI

And I’m not *leaving* you in the wreck, so what the *fuck* is your issue?!

DOUG

My wife was on the plane!

(Pause.)

I left her with good night. And then I woke up to the brass at my door – two men, all shadow government in their uniforms. They said, “We’re sorry for your loss.” That

was it. No promise of an investigation, no reparation, no news. Just an apology in suits. Not a fucking tear in their eyes. Not a fucking word from her and...

I was waiting for her at home. I was finally home and she...

I left her with, "Good night."

She *had* to know I was home, she *had* to know I loved her, and...I should've told her I had this *sinking* feeling, to *stay* there. Stay right there, I'll fly to you, I'll pull whatever strings to get to you, and me, in New Zealand, and if she wants me to stay, fine, we'll stay in one place, we'll find a home, we'll make a life...and it's gone.

And you know what the fucked up part is? No one's worried but me. No one's investigating the disappearance but *me*. I had to suck up my tears just to *get* here. So I could find the plane, report it found – simple. For *them*. But not for *me*.

I need to find my wife.

(Pause.)

KAI

You lost someone. I get it. So did hundreds of Kiwis. That black box, wherever it is? It's the only peace in the puzzles *our* people will have. But it's not here. Your wife isn't here. And under the present circumstances, we have to go back -

DOUG

No –

KAI

Yes. Because there's nothing we can do here. We only have so much air –

DOUG

We've got three hours, that's more than enough –

KAI

It's *never* enough time, Doug!

(Beat.)

We find the black box. We find your wife. We find everyone. Find *peace*. Let's go.

(Doug doesn't move.)

Fine.

(She exits. For a moment, he is alone. He tracks Kai's footprints, but notices something odd...)

DOUG

Kai? Kai! KAI!!!

(Kai re-enters, light dead on Doug.)

Walking tracks. They're not human.

KAI

Then it's a walking octopus. Half the creatures down here are undiscovered -

DOUG

No, no, it starts with small prints, and then bigger footprints with the smaller footprints,

and then these lines...like it's dragging a body.

...Or a box.
KAI

What if the black box is with Marina?
DOUG

*(A light shines on Marina in the distance, singing
as Mei-Lei conducts her.)*

MARINA
HEY THERE, I'M STILL HERE
MAKE THE DARKNESS DISAPPEAR

DOUG
Marina?
MEI-LEI
Paint with your voice -

MARINA
SUNLIGHT NEVER REACHES THIS FAR DOWN
AND MY FEET ARE IRON-BOUND

KAI
We're running low on oxygen -

DOUG
Our oxygen levels are fine -
MEI-LEI
Bend the water with every breath -

MARINA
I DREAM OF YOUR HAND
YOUR LIPS UPON MINE, BREATHING

KAI
It's a stress-induced hallucination -

DOUG
Shut up!
MEI-LEI
Kiss him with every note -

MARINA
HOLD ME UP, YOUR HEART BEATING
AND WE ARRIVE, AND I CAN STAND

DOUG
The tracks! This way!

(Doug drags Kai to exit. Music continues.)

Scene 4

(Lights brighten on Marina and Mei-Lei.)

MARINA

HEAR ME RISE AND ROAR
A WHALE FROM THE OCEAN FLOOR
FLOATING UP AND THROUGH THE SEA
WHERE YOU ARE WAITING FOR ME
ALONG THE LONELY SHORE

(Takaroa enters with a beautiful pearl necklace.)

TAKAROA

Who's waiting for you?

MEI-LEI

She's not fully formed –

MARINA

I'm just...singing the time away.

TAKAROA

There's nothing better than an ocean full of song! Do you know that - oh, what's that song? The one with the piccolo and the sinking ship -

MEI-LEI

NO!

MARINA

It's not a very happy song.

TAKAROA

I find it soothing, actually.

MEI-LEI

In poor taste, *actually*.

TAKAROA

Only because you sang it to every man along the ocean -

MEI-LEI

Because that's what I'm good for, isn't it. Fetching bodies on the edge -

TAKAROA

I will cut off your tongue -

MEI-LEI

Go ahead. Feed it to her if you'd like. So she can spit pearls at you for all eternity.

TAKAROA

I learned my lesson long ago. And I provide better than that.

(He presents Marina the pearl necklace.)

I asked all of the oysters in Tahiti for their most precious pearls. Years worth of irritation for them. I alleviated their suffering to offer you a trinket of beauty. We call it tāonga. Do you like it?

(Marina isn't sure how to respond.)

Stay. Sing. *Everything* you want.

This is but a trinket of time until you feel I am yours and you are mine.

MARINA

This...is beautiful. But...I can't be won with...tonga.

TAKAROA

Tāonga. But they offer fine fabrics to me in Tonga, right at the water's edge. I can have Mei-Lei fetch them for you -

MEI-LEI

Or string some dead tourists along the way. Would you like that?

MARINA

No dead bodies, just - ! Let me sing. Alone. With my thoughts.

TAKAROA

You don't have to feel alone with them anymore. When you told me -

MARINA

I didn't tell you anything! I wanted to return home.

TAKAROA

Think of how your life would've been if some madman held you hostage in the air, or lightning struck you, *burned* you to a crisp. *Desecrated*. Rather than preserved.

MARINA

I'm not a corpse!

TAKAROA

You can't breathe the air anymore -

MARINA

Then turn me into something my husband could love -

TAKAROA

I couldn't make you human even if I wanted to -

MARINA

Then let me tell him that I love him -

TAKAROA

If he heard you, you'd kill him -

MARINA

Then kill me!

(A heartbreaking pause.)

TAKAROA

Even for all the world I give you...you would end it all?

(Marina turns away from him.)

Mei-Lei. Take her to the confines of my chamber. Where you can sing your love to your husband in a *cage*. Enjoy the *loneliest* of my ocean.

MARINA

You do this and I'll never sing for you! I won't sing for anyone!

TAKAROA

Then still your tongue!

(He goes to exit. Mei-Lei chuckles.)

What are you jittering about?

MEI-LEI

You look like an octopus.

TAKAROA

And I'll make *you* look like a corpse -

MEI-LEI

I'm not a sea canary, hussied up with your wife's pearls and your wife's dresses. In the cage you built for your play-wives. Lonely when you "saved" them. Lonely when you loved them. Lonely when they got away from *you*.

(Takaroa emits a violent outburst with the fury of a Māori haka. Mei-Lei is stunned into silence.)

TAKAROA

Take her to the chamber. *Now*. Or I take both your breaths from you.

(Takaroa exits. Lights fade out on the women.)

Scene 5

(The deep, dark ocean floor. Doug and Kai enter.)

KAI

Trail's gone.

Look for clues, anything - DOUG

As much as I appreciate this tiki tour of the abyss, we've got two hours to return to the surface before - KAI
(A rumble above them is heard. Their lights go out.)

Great. Electrical interference.

We're not going to die. DOUG

Hunky dory... Everything is hunky dory... KAI
(They rest in the dark. It's awkward. There are a few pulsing lights that "blink" in the distance.)

Oh look. Squids.

...Any of them gonna eat us? DOUG

Maybe. KAI

How maybe are you? DOUG

Some have been known to attack humans. KAI

But that's rare, right? DOUG

Did you feel that? KAI

A sea current? DOUG

It's the bottom of the ocean, there's nothing but - OW. KAI

Like someone bit you "ow" or someone - DOUG

Something shocked me and we need to get the hell out of here. KAI

Stand perfectly still - DOUG

I don't think it's taking the hint - KAI

Well, don't hit me! DOUG

I didn't hit you! KAI

Something definitely nudged the shit out of me - DOUG

Swing your arms around! KAI

So I can get my arms chomped off? DOUG

It's not like you can - Did you just try to cut me? KAI

Did I hit you? DOUG

Slash first, ask if I got hit later - you are *such* a fucking American - KAI

Did you hit me? DOUG

I will make sure a giant squid / tears you to shreds if you stab me - KAI

Please don't talk about squids or sharks because I will stab you - DOUG

Show yourself! KAI

Get off the grass... *(A gloomy light illuminates the two investigators and a third creature - a bizarre-looking JELLYFISH, drifting around Kai. There is a black box chained to it, like a necklace. Kai swats it away. It drifts off, hovering.)*

That's the shocker?

DOUG

I've never seen anything so...

KAI

Bloop.

JELLYFISH

(What.)

Is that...the black box?

DOUG

Grab it -

KAI

(Doug tries to grab the black box, but the Jellyfish swats him away.)

Hey!

DOUG

That doesn't belong to you!

KAI

Wow. Wow. Wow. Bellooo... Bloop. *[You're pretty. Hello there.]*

JELLYFISH

(The Jellyfish encroaches lovingly on Kai. It attempts to sing a lullaby lovingly toward Kai.)

Bloop-bloop-bloop-bloop-bloop - ?

DOUG

Have you heard a woman around here? Marina Washington?

JELLYFISH

Glub-glub. Bellooo... *[Never heard of her. But you...]*

KAI

Sing the song we heard, Doug.

DOUG

Um...it's like:
HEY, THERE, I'M STILL HERE
FEEL ME THROUGH THE DARKNESS, DEAR

DOUG AND KAI

WHERE SUNLIGHT DISAPPEARS
THIS FAR DOWN

JELLYFISH

WHEER! WHEER! WHEER! WHEER!
WHEER! WHEER! WHEER! WHEER!

AND MY FEET ARE IRON-BOUND

(Jellyfish shocks Doug and Kai with its tentacles.)

JELLYFISH

TCH. Glub-glub. *[YOU SOUND HORRIBLE. No-no.]*
Glub wheeere glub-glub... *[But I did see someone earlier...]*

*(It reenacts, with movement and jellyfish noises, a rescue wherein a woman falls from the sky in a plane, sinks to the ocean floor, and is dragged away toward the darkness by an imposing figure. But she is **alive**.)*

DOUG

She's alive...? And she was dragged that way?

JELLYFISH

Bloop! *[Yep!]*

KAI

Who took her?

(The Jellyfish tries to reveal "Takaroa" through a sort of charades, in which Kai attempts to interpret it...and finally succeeds.)

KAI

...Bugger.

JELLYFISH

Bloop. *[Yeah.]*

DOUG

What?

(Kai goes for the Jellyfish's black box, but the Jellyfish threatens her with its tentacles.)

JELLYFISH

TCH-TCH! GLUB! *[NO!]*

KAI

You don't even have a use for it!

JELLYFISH

Whishy, whishy. *[It has...sentimental value.]*

KAI

That belongs to the international community! It's not some plaything –

DOUG

But Marina's *alive!* We bring her to the surface and she can *speak* to the whole world about what happened. She's better than any black box! So we get her back and if it's alright with you, sir-or-madam-or-thing -

JELLYFISH

Bloop.

DOUG

Right, bloop, we'll let you do your thing, get the black box back from you, and then we'll have Marina, we'll have answers for everyone, and we can all return home. But you have to wait for us at the plane, okay?

JELLYFISH

Bloooooop... [*Okay...*]

KAI

Not okay!

KAI

I want that thing to promise me.

(The Jellyfish reaches its tentacle toward Kai.)

Drop the tentacle or I'm gonna -

(The Jellyfish reaches for her light. It magically turns on. It does the same for Doug, who points his light at Kai. The Jellyfish is mesmerized.)

Oh.

JELLYFISH

A-wheeeeer. A-bloop-a...a-whishah... [*In the light... You look...so familiar...*]
(It goes to touch Kai's face...and stings her.)

Bloop! [*Sorry!*] Whishy whishy whishy...

(It squishes toward the wreck.)

DOUG

Thank you very much for your help! And make sure you stay there!

(The Jellyfish exits.)

Good thing it shocked us, right?

KAI

I *know* who took her. Fairytale sonofabitch.

(Kai exits onward.)

DOUG

Wait! Kai!

(Doug follows. Lights shift.)

Scene 6

(Lights shift on Marina, trapped in Takaroa's chamber. She is in a coral cage. Darkness surrounds her. It's awfully quiet. And then, Marina sings. Very simple accompaniment.)

MARINA

HEY, THERE. CAN YOU HEAR ME?
HEY, THERE. CAN YOU HEAR ME?
IT'S DARK... IT'S COLD...
YOU FEEL SO LONG AGO...

(Mei-Lei enters.)

MEI-LEI

You could've stopped singing hours ago.

MARINA

Teach me to sing past these walls -

MEI-LEI

It's pressure-packed with rock all around. Nothing escapes his chamber.

MARINA

Except Takaroa.

MEI-LEI

And me. While you're sunk to rock bottom.

MARINA

Nobody stays sunk.

MEI-LEI

How's that working out for you?

(Pause. A light appears on Doug, in civilian attire.)

MARINA

Like staring at the walls -

DOUG

A Malaysia Airlines flight just disappeared -

MARINA

Like breathing in the dark -

DOUG

Suspect passengers were on board.

MARINA

Like...

(Lights shift on Marina.)

When are you gonna be home?

DOUG

You know the drill -

MARINA

Investigate the crash, determine the cause, deliver the bodies, fill out the paperwork -

DOUG

Come back home.

MARINA

Except you don't. There's always another crash -

DOUG

Five planes gone in the past week, Marina! It's an apocalypse of planes out there!

MARINA

And Los Angeles is heaven, right? Breathe in the smog, sit at a desk, commute for *hours*, listen to the same songs over and over, stay at home, nuke a meal, watch the TV? Another plane crash. Maybe it's suicide. Maybe it's nothing. But you're *diving* for more bodies. But you're always sorry. And I'm tired.

DOUG

You don't have to stay at home! Take the car, go out on the town, build a karaoke posse - there's a *million* things to do if you're bored -

MARINA

I'm flying with American Airlines.

DOUG

What.

MARINA

To New Zealand and back. Crystal blue waters, sandy white beaches -

DOUG

You could get those *here* -

MARINA

Fresh air, mountains, *parrots* who think they're people -

DOUG

You don't have to fly fourteen hours and handle bodies / so you can watch *parrots* -

MARINA

Oh, like you handle cold, dead bodies –

DOUG

It's my *job!* I handle *wrecks.* / And I don't want to lose you *to* a wreck.

MARINA

Oh, fuck you, Doug! You're a little late for that.

(Long pause.)

Maybe it's suicide. Maybe I murdered what we had inside me...maybe it's nothing. Maybe I *need to change* me out of...this city. This *stuck* inside a house. Where everything's plastic. Where everything's microwaveable. Where everything's waiting for you, for *us*, for future uses to be born and... I think we're dying, Doug.

(Pause. They separate. Lights begin to shift.)

DOUG

...After every flight. I'll be waiting on the other side of the ocean for you. I promise.

MARINA

Except I'm on *your* side of the Pacific. And you're not even *here*.

(Lights shift. Takaroa enters, watching Marina from afar in the ocean. Ocean surf is heard.)

DOUG

E-mail, January 18th. Sorry, another crash near Wake Island. Hope that I'm home soon. Happy face.

TAKAROA

Your face is sad.

MARINA

Maybe next week.

DOUG

Video message, Valentine's Day. A poem:
I have clean underwear.
My thoughts are pretty dirty.
Guess we missed each other again,
But I'll be home on March thirty.
(See? I can be talented.)

TAKAROA

Your face is sadder still.

MARINA

Maybe when I get back? Maybe I can touch his hand -

DOUG

Down the back and at your sides. Gently.

MARINA

Like I'm barely brushing your skin –

DOUG

Don't cringe because you're giggling -

MARINA

You can try to hide it way below, but -

DOUG

I'm a master painter.

MARINA

Fine brush strokes, so gentle, I won't even have to touch you -

DOUG

I'll just stop on my way to stroke you and you'll giggle so hard because –

DOUG AND MARINA

You're waiting for me.
You know I'm going to.
I'll surprise you with my lips.
You taste like...

MARINA

Kiwi...

DOUG

Strawberry.

MARINA

...I'm off to New Zealand again.

(Beat.)

DOUG

Voicemail, March 7th. Surprise! Coming home tomorrow! So when you get home, I'll snatch you from the airport and we'll go singing and dancing at this new karaoke joint. Sound good?
...I miss you?

MARINA

Do I believe you?

TAKAROA

Another plane disappeared –

DOUG

Have a safe flight?

TAKAROA

Plane crash in Australia -

DOUG

Hope you get this message. Good night...

*(A phone is heard being plunked in the water.
Doug fades away, exiting.)*

TAKAROA

Plunk! You throw a metal voice-box in the water. Your husband is in my ocean.

DOUG

I love you...

MARINA

You could never be home.

*(Doug exits. Takaroa exits. Lights return to the
present.)*

Like...you could never be home.

MEI-LEI

Like men could *ever* make a home. They make cute little *nests*...until you grow too big for their branches. Like Takaroa. If he was lonely and I was lonely, sure. We'd *nest*. Celine Dion always put him in the mood. But he was...not the fisherman I once loved. So I sang my songs for other men. Christopher Columbus, Blackbeard, two hundred fishermen in Canada! That was my record. Before Takaroa found out. He took away my singing. He took away my nest. He took away my home.

MARINA

Did he want to...*nest* with other women?

MEI-LEI

They didn't want to see his branches. They just...drifted away.

MARINA

How?

MEI-LEI

If Takaroa couldn't *nest*...he'd make me sing him to rest. I'd borrow his scepter for a spell, turn them into sea creatures, and they'd forget all about this life.

MARINA

So what if we found new homes? Turned into seahorses or something?

MEI-LEI

I prefer sea wasps. One sting could kill you in a minute.

That's heartless.

MARINA

That's jellyfish.

MEI-LEI

(A slam is heard. Takaroa booms above.)

Mei-Lei!

TAKAROA (O.S.)

Sir?

MEI-LEI

E tātou manuhiri. *[We have guests.]*

TAKAROA (O.S.)

What's that mean?

MARINA

Guests. Probably some gods over for dinner.

MEI-LEI

Me he haumarua ia tae noa ki kua riro rātou. *[Make sure she's safe until they're gone.]*

TAKAROA (O.S.)

Well...looks like I'm in charge of keeping you safe.

MEI-LEI

(She unlocks the cage.)

Take the spiral staircase up to the fifth floor. There's a crack in the rocks that leads to an old tunnel. Sneak through it and out of the palace. Look for a trail of debris and follow it back to the crash site. I'll grab the scepter from Takaroa and meet you there.

(Marina embraces Mei-Lei. Mei-Lei uncomfortably pushes her away.)

Thank you.

MARINA

(Marina exits. Mei-Lei closes the cage. A rumble is heard.)

And we'll sting everyone.

MEI-LEI

(Lights fade out.)

Scene 7

(Lights fade up on Doug, Kai, and Takaroa at a dinner table in Takaroa's undersea parlor.)

DOUG

Nice place. The glass and the coral, you make that?

TAKAROA

My wife.

DOUG

Is she a sea goddess too?

TAKAROA

She's gone.

DOUG

Oh. Well. You, uh...have a giant swimming pool!

TAKAROA

You know what I find particularly humorous? Human scents. Russian spirits. Chinese herbs. Americans, though. Bull. shit.

KAI

E mātau āna tātou i tāna wahine koe. *[We know you have his wife.]*

(Beat.)

TAKAROA

My wife was *stolen* from me, you insignificant *taint*.

DOUG

American Airlines Flight 13 crashed over your waters, uh...sir.

KAI

And a missing woman was seen with you. An American. Where is she?

TAKAROA

Sharks, gulper eels, colossal squids - any number of creatures could've taken a person.

KAI

But you did.

DOUG

According to a jellyfish –

KAI

A *sentient* jellyfish -

TAKAROA

There is no such thing -

DOUG

With all due respect, a sea god could, in theory, make a sentient jellyfish.

TAKAROA

A sea god could also kill you.

KAI

Or a sea god *could*, in practice, become a coward.

(Pause.)

Tell me about LAN Airlines Flight 800 from Sydney to Chile. 200 people died.

TAKAROA

I heard there was turbulence -

KAI

Two hundred *one* were on that flight. A female passenger was never recovered.

TAKAROA

Oceanic whitetip sharks. You know how they *enjoy* plane crashes.

DOUG

You mean they *enjoy* feeding frenzies. They don't discriminate. I saw that on -

KAI

I'll conduct this investigation, ta.

(To Takaroa)

And then there's Malaysia Airlines Flight 360 -

TAKAROA

Suicide by pilot -

KAI

Air Canada Flight 3 to Tokyo -

TAKAROA

Couldn't handle a cyclone -

KAI

Air New Zealand Flight 52! Auckland to Fiji! Clear skies! One hundred Kiwis drowned. My *partner* was the missing passenger!

(Pause.)

She disappeared. Snatched in broad daylight along with the other hundred Kiwis - *your* people. That were *supposed* to be safe.

TAKAROA

I'm sorry I couldn't get to them in time -

KAI

Don't you *dare* feed me your sorries! Feed me *why* she was the *first* in a long line of "accidents". Where every missing woman on every missing flight has gone. Why you have perfectly intact planes below the Pacific, oh *great* god of the ocean. Great god of *my* people. Who *never* answered me. Until *now*.

(*Silence.*)

Where. Is. She.

TAKAROA

MEI-LEI! THREE KING CRABS AND SOME SEAWEED!

(*Mei-Lei enters, serving everyone crabs and seaweed.*)

MEI-LEI

Oh good! People who aren't watching their figures!

(*Doug and Kai stare at Mei-Lei.*)

I know. *Shocker.*

KAI

Who else are you hiding back there?

MEI-LEI

Just some crabs waiting to be eaten! And some wonderful entertainment -

TAKAROA

Thank you, Mei-Lei -

MEI-LEI

You like the song from Titanic?

DOUG

My wife sang it at karaoke one night. Brought the bar down.

MEI-LEI

I bet she did more than that.

TAKAROA

Tell them about the two hundred Canadian fishermen you killed with that song.

MEI-LEI

I can't help it if a mermaid singing about how her heart will go on is *intoxicating* for drunk men. That they enter your ocean, crying for joy in my sweet release before they suffocate. Wet and *hot*.

(*To Doug.*)

But I'm under Takaroa's "silent treatment." Pity. Your wife would've loved it.

KAI

She was missing from the plane.

DOUG

Her name was Marina -

MEI-LEI

Marina. What a *fetching* name. Tell us more -

TAKAROA

Where's that entertainment?

MEI-LEI

I can't sing anything anymore. Remember?

TAKAROA

(hitting her head with his scepter)

Now you do. *Sing.*

MEI-LEI

With pleasure.

(She sings. It puts Takaroa and Doug to sleep throughout, but magnetizes Kai. Takaroa struggles until Mei-Lei's last word.)

MEI-LEI

GOOD NIGHT, DAMSEL
PILLOWED CLOUDS AHEAD
RAINDROPS FALLING
SUMMON YOU TO BED

(Mei-Lei takes his scepter. Takaroa falls asleep.)

While Marina and I have business with the dead.

KAI

It was *you*.

MEI-LEI

Excuse me?

KAI

When I recovered the black box from the Air New Zealand crash...that was *your* song on the recording. Before the plane went down. When Kris went missing. Where is -

(Mei-Lei holds out the scepter toward Kai, who begins losing breath.)

MEI-LEI

...I only gave her what she wanted.

(Mei-Lei exits. Kai recovers, checks her arm.)

One hour.

KAI

(Kai exits after her. Doug and Takaroa cuddle, sound asleep. Lights fade out.)

ACT TWO

Scene 1

(Lights go up on the wreck. It starts for a moment in darkness, until a glow begins to permeate the space. The Jellyfish enters. It feels the wreck with its tentacles. It even comes up to the audience, looking at them, until:)

Bloooop.

JELLYFISH

(It sets the black box down, then gently touches it with one tentacle. As the recording goes, it begins to drift like a hypnotic airplane. Deceptively pacific.)

PILOT (V.O.)

We are uhhh...currently cruising over the South Pacific Ocean. Current closest city is Adamstown in the Pitcairn Islands. Nothing but islands in the middle of the great Pacific, clear skies to the City of Angels...

(The pilot's recording fades away as music is heard. A phantasmal light shines on Marina, slowly exploring the bodies in the wreck as she heads toward the Jellyfish. As Marina sings, the Jellyfish becomes transfixed with her and slowly heads toward her.)

MARINA

GOOD NIGHT, GOOD NIGHT, EVERYONE
SINK BELOW THE TIDE
COME TO SWEET COMMOTION, I RESIDE
GOODBYE, GOODBYE, EVERYONE
NO STORMS ABOVE YOUR HEAD
COME TO SLEEP WHEN YOU ARE DEAD

(The music fades out.)

It was the most beautiful song. And all I could think about was Doug. Before we died.

JELLYFISH

Bellooooooo... *[You're so beautiful...]*

MARINA

Here to pay your respects?

JELLYFISH

A-bloooooop. *[To you.]*

MARINA
That's...good, I guess. Can I ask you something?

JELLYFISH
Bloop. *[Of course.]*

MARINA
What's it like to be a jellyfish?

JELLYFISH
(traveling sounds)
Whishy - whishy - whishy - whishy -

MARINA
You can travel wherever you want, but what do you feel?

JELLYFISH
(mimicking a beating heart)
Glub-glub, glub-glub, glub-glub -

MARINA
But you don't have a heart or a brain or a memory or anything like that, just -

JELLYFISH
A-wheeeeer, a-wheeeeer, a-wheeeeer... *[We can live and sing and dance...]*

(It tries to dance with Marina, but it ends up stinging her. She winces. It backs off. She examines it.)

MARINA
I saw something on Animal Planet -

JELLYFISH
Blooop? *[What's Animal Planet?]*

MARINA
It's this television channel where humans watch you. You didn't live very long.

JELLYFISH
Wheer a-whooooooooooooa bloop - *[We live a loooooooooooooong time -]*

MARINA
The jellyfish came together at the end, in the full moon -

JELLYFISH
Bah-looooooooooooo... [It's soooo romantic...]

MARINA

And they loved. And they spawned... And they died.
Is that what would happen to me?

(Pause. The Jellyfish tries to caress Marina, but she backs away – definitively.)

JELLYFISH

Blooooooooooop. *[I'm sorry.]*

MARINA

You don't even get to raise children, you don't get to *experience* what a future holds, you're just...jellyfish or death. Stuck. Just...a lonely Marina.

(Marina breaks down. The Jellyfish tries to put its tentacle around her, but thinks better of it.)

JELLYFISH

Blooooooooooop.

MARINA

Bloop?

JELLYFISH

Glub-glub. *[No-no.]* Blooooooooooop.

MARINA

Blooooooooooop?

(The Jellyfish instructs Marina to follow along, which she does throughout, with greater energy.)

JELLYFISH

Blooooooop? Blooooooop. Blooooooop? Blooooooop.

(When Marina understands the breathing:)

BLOOOOOOooooooooOOOOOOOOooooooooop.

(Mimicking a gust of water from blowhole.)

WHISH.

(Marina mimics it gloriously.)

Bloop! Bloop-bloop! *[Yeah!]*

(It reenacts a swimming humpback whale, diving into the deep, swimming great distances, gulping air, and finally, breaching with one great crash:)

BloooooooOOOOOOOp? CRIIISSSSSSHHHHH. Woooooowwwww.

(Marina mimics it, enjoys it so much that she collapses with laughter. The Jellyfish follows.)

You think I should become a whale?

MARINA

Whishy-whishy-whishy, bloop? [*What a silly idea, right?*]

JELLYFISH

(*She considers. It's a **great** idea.*)

Thank you.

MARINA

(*Mei-Lei enters with the scepter.*)

You ready? I've got -
Why are you here?!

MEI-LEI

(*Noticing the Jellyfish.*)

BLOOP. [*OH NO.*]

JELLYFISH

(*The Jellyfish exits in record jellyfish time.*)

Did it say anything to you?

MEI-LEI

Bloop?

MARINA

Good.

MEI-LEI

I think we should be whales.

MARINA

That's...a lot to ask for.

MEI-LEI

But they're *so* much more!

MARINA

Yeah. They're air-breathers. That's a *huge* sacrifice. You would need bodies -

MEI-LEI

We have an airplane full of people -

MARINA

The metal and bones offer us a skeleton. But we need blood from the sea, elements of

MEI-LEI

air, a soul beyond all three! And that's to make *one* whale.

MARINA

So *we'll* be one whale –

MEI-LEI

No. I say we sting everyone. We'll be so deadly, no one will touch us!

MARINA

No more dead bodies –

MEI-LEI

We're not going to *feel* for them -

MARINA

How can we feel for dead bodies if we're going to be dead inside?

MEI-LEI

We'd still be alive –

MARINA

We'd drift alone. And the moment we feel love, or crave sex, or need to touch someone else? We'll kill it. Or we'll love it, then kill ourselves. How is that any different than how we've been living?

(Beat.)

We could *sing*. To the children we raise. To soothe ourselves in our body. And we don't have to sting! We'd be *huge!* No one would touch us! And we could travel so much faster – up and down any ocean! Eat *anything*. Finally breathe fresh air, into our warm blood. We can live above and below the water. See the world. The whole world could be our home, Mei-Lei.

(Long pause. Mei-Lei wraps the black box around Marina's neck.)

MEI-LEI

The songs and screams inside...they will be our air.

(Lights go out on them.)

Scene 2

(Lights go up on Doug and Takaroa, still cuddling in the parlor. A warning alarm beeps. Doug wakes up gasping for air. It sounds a little like crying. Takaroa wakes up with a start. He notices that his scepter is missing.)

TAKAROA

Marina! Would you quit crying, you juvenile - !

(He notices Doug gasping. He begins to exit away from Doug, but...he watches him. And returns.)

Easy there. Let me -

(Doug backs away.)

I can't help you if you keep floundering like -

(Doug starts losing energy.)

Then I'll wait until you turn into a corpse.

(Doug looks to Takaroa. Takaroa kisses him, injecting him with breath. The alarm stops. It's strange between them.)

It's coconut-scented, I know.

DOUG

Bullshit.

TAKAROA

Which is what your mouth tastes like.

(Doug pulls a knife on Takaroa.)

DOUG

Where is she.

TAKAROA

You think you can kill me with that little thing? Please. I blew breath into you.

(He goes to leave. Doug stabs Takaroa in the back.)

WHAKA! [FUCKER!]

DOUG

Uh...yeah! Don't, uh. Fuck with me. Whaka. Where's Marina.

TAKAROA

Mei-Lei's probably going to turn her into something I can't even fathom!

(Doug goes to exit.)

Where do you think you're going?

DOUG

Taking her back home -

TAKAROA

Not a chance! I saved her!

DOUG

You stole her -

TAKAROA

You lost her!

DOUG

You can't keep what doesn't belong to you!

TAKAROA

What *belongs* to you. As if *you* suffered -

DOUG

I was waiting at home with flowers. I made dinner plans. I did the laundry, I had clean fucking underwear and -

TAKAROA

Day and night, she longed for you on both sides of the Pacific Ocean. *I* listened. And then she dropped your voice in *my* sea. She chose the Pacific over *you*.

(A light shines on Marina as a stewardess, at the water's edge. The sound of the plane's interior.)

Clear skies above. Blue seas below.

MARINA

Ladies and gentlemen, the Captain has turned on the fasten seat belt sign. We ask that you return to your seats and keep your seat belts fastened. Thank you.

TAKAROA

And for the briefest of moments, I let Mei-Lei take her stage.

(Mei-Lei enters, singing.)

MEI-LEI

GOOD NIGHT, DAMSEL
PILLOWED CLOUDS AHEAD

(Marina is transfixed.)

RAINDROPS FALLING

(Oxygen masks are heard descending.)

SUMMON YOU TO BED...

(Marina descends, heading toward Mei-Lei. The plane is heard descending. A light also shines on the Jellyfish who is entranced by Marina's voice, then wishes toward her. It is without the black box.)

MARINA AND MEI-LEI

GOOD NIGHT, GOOD NIGHT, EVERYONE
SINK BELOW THE TIDE
COME TO SWEET COMMOTION, I RESIDE
GOODBYE, GOODBYE, EVERYONE
NO STORMS ABOVE YOUR HEAD
COME TO SLEEP WHEN YOU ARE DEAD

(Right before Marina and Mei-Lei meet, the lights go out. The plane is heard crashing in the water. Lights slowly fade up on the Jellyfish, alone.)

JELLYFISH

Bloop? Bloop?

(Mei-Lei is seen dragging Marina's body on the ground. Mei-Lei is also carrying the black box. The Jellyfish and Mei-Lei meet. She hands the black box to the Jellyfish.)

MEI-LEI

Don't let anyone know it exists. Or Takaroa will evaporate you.

(Mei-Lei continues on with Marina. The Jellyfish holds the black box and looks ahead, opposite where Mei-Lei is dragging Marina. The Jellyfish then "bloops" the chorus of the lullaby into its black box, then drifts toward the wreck and exits. Lights return to Doug and Takaroa.)

TAKAROA

I made sure she was home.

(Doug attacks Takaroa like a wild beast. In spite of his injury, Takaroa puts up a fight.)

DOUG

WHERE IS SHE?!

TAKAROA

Far away from you!

DOUG

YOU WERE AFRAID OF ME!

TAKAROA

I will *never* be afraid of you!

DOUG

YOU SELFISH, PATHETIC MONSTER!

(Takaroa unleashes his full wrath on Doug.)

TAKAROA

I offered Marina the *world!* Just like the rest of them! I gave them my three hearts! I gave them *everything!* And do they stay?! They never stay! They only -

(Doug screams for him to stop. Takaroa lets go.
Long pause.)

DOUG

What kind of god makes people disappear? What kind of god inflicts pain upon his people –

TAKAROA

You are *not* my people –

DOUG

What kind of god fills his ocean with the *dead*. What kind of god floods me with paperwork, crash after crash, searching for bodies, for *nothings* in this fucking ocean when all I wanted was to be home with Marina. What kind of god takes my home away.

(Pause.)

TAKAROA

My brother caged me under the waves. Scared me with his storms long ago, into the home I made for my wife, and did she stay?
No. She ran away. And so did my children - *my* people, evolving into *your* people - all of them, running away from me to the rocks. Only to come back and pick off my pearls, dredge up their brothers and sisters by scales, by shells, by strands, by sharkfins - like oil from my ocean, and what do I have left? *This*. The very *lonely* of my ocean.

(Beat.)

Maybe...maybe I call out from the depths. Maybe I sing my song across the surface. Maybe some bird, some woman will listen.
What if I make her quit her wings? Make her lose herself from her lonely nest, after being tired of waiting for her lover?
Maybe she will smile at my song. Maybe she will lift me from my ocean. Maybe she will save me from my *self*.

(Beat.)

But she flies away. Disappears. They all disappear in puffs of water.
And what kind of god am I.
All the world I provide, and still...all I have is an empty nest. An empty home.
I am the god of a lonely home.

(Pause.)

DOUG

But she can't disappear if we get to her in time -

TAKAROA

You cannot bring her home –

DOUG

If we get to her in time - if I breathe into her like you breathed into me, you could help me do that –

TAKAROA

I cannot turn her into someone like you.

DOUG

Then I'll love whatever she can become! I'll even *die* if I have to –

TAKAROA

You wouldn't –

DOUG

I *would*! Or you'll turn me into whatever she can become!

(Pause.)

TAKAROA

...If there's time.

DOUG

Then let's go.

(They exit. Lights shift.)

Scene 3

(The deep ocean. Kai enters with her light, searching the ground for prints. A rumble is heard. Her light goes out.)

KAI

Dammit!

*(We hear Kai's cries creep in the dark. Her cries turn to gasps for air. Her alarm goes off. The Jellyfish enters, brightening the dark ocean floor. It's crying. It notices Kai grasping for breath. The Jellyfish goes to touch her, but Kai backs away. It shocks the water near her instead. She gains a little breath. The Jellyfish mega-shocks the air **around** Kai's head. Kai breathes normally. The alarm stops. They regard each other.)*

Ta.

(The Jellyfish wishes away.)

Don't leave me alone, please! I...I don't know where to go.

(The Jellyfish touches Kai's light with its tentacle. It turns on. Kai examines the Jellyfish carefully, noticing that it does not have the black box.)

Where's the black box?

(The Jellyfish wishes away, but Kai stops the Jellyfish in its tracks.)

You're supposed to have it! Where is it?

JELLYFISH

A-whish bloop - [*I miss her -*]

KAI

Stop wishy-blooming! It was *your* responsibility! Where is it?

JELLYFISH

(sadly singing scales)

Bloop-bloop-bloop-bloop-bloop-bloop...a-booooooom. [*She's gone.*]

(Beat.)

KAI

The black box you had...it's the last memory hundreds of people will have of their loved ones and –

JELLYFISH

(Looking at the black box no longer there.)

A-crisshhh... A-crrrrriiiiiisshhhh... [*She's in the wreck. And...I want to die.*]

(It reenacts floating to the surface and evaporating. Dying. Wanting to die. Long pause.)

KAI

When Kris disappeared? I dreamed she wasn't dead. That she was only sleeping and maybe she'd wake up. Rise from the water, wash up on the beach. Every night I'd wait for her to come home, after *days* of searching the deep for any sound, any sight of her and...she never answered.

That black box you had? I didn't find hers for *three* years. And you know what I heard? A song. The screams of the passengers. I thought I heard Kris. I *thought* I heard...

JELLYFISH

Memory?

KAI

Yeah. But I heard nothing. Because a god and some *mermaid* took her away. They don't get to take away our answers. They don't get to take away our memories.

(Pause. Kai pets the bell of the Jellyfish.)

Please. Take me to the black box.

(After a moment, the Jellyfish exits. Kai closely follows behind.)

Scene 4

(Lights go up on the wreck. The space feels ready for a dark oceanic ritual. Marina is front and center, the black box around her neck, ping-pong like a heart monitor. Mei-Lei holds the scepter.)

MEI-LEI

We offer skeletons of metal and bone for a body.
Some creature of the sea, we'll find for our blood.
The screams in a black box will make songs for our air.
And a soul from the beyond will arrive.
We'll surrender our senses in a cyclone:
No sight, no sound, all numb to the world.
Let's give ourselves to the storm ahead.
Let's give ourselves between living and dead.

Xi feng juan qi nan lai de bo lang,
Xiang yi zhi chi zha feng yun de jing.
Chuan po cang qiong,
Zhui zhu tai yang.

(in Chinese)

*[Winds from the west, waves from the south, rise
from the deep,
Like leaping whales into the air, into the sun,
Into the heavens above...]*

*(As Mei-Lei continues chanting, a light shines on
Marina as she floats toward it. The pings grow
stronger.*

*What happens next is swallowed up in a storm of
percussion, a dance of a sea-battle:*

- Kai and the Jellyfish enter. They take in the ritual.

*- The Jellyfish desperately squishes toward Marina,
but is swept in the current of the ritual. It is stuck
hypnotically orbiting Mei-Lei, making dying
"bloops", like a heart beating its last pulses.*

*- Kai tries to engage with Mei-Lei, but Mei-Lei
ignores her. She is in full trance. Kai steps in. She
is also swept in the sacrificial current, struggling
for breath in Mei-Lei's orbit.)*

I've got sea-blood. I've got land-bone.
I've got scare-breath. And I've got spirit!
But we must have more. We must have more.
We must have the god to complete the form.

(in Chinese)

Dao wo men zhe li lai ba, hai shen,
Rang wo men hui gui zi you.
hai yang, lu di, kong qi wo men sui yi yong you.
Dan wo men xiang zai geng guang kuo de hai yu ao you.

*[Come to us, O God of the Sea,
Come to us and set us free.
Give us ocean, land, and air.
Give us more than more can
bear.]*

(The storm rages:

- Doug and Takaroa enter. They take in the ritual.

*- Doug rushes for Mei-Lei. Naturally, he is swept
up in the deathly current.*

- Takaroa stands his ground.

The pings in the black box are troubled. The breaths are erratic. The lights seem to waver.)

What is it, Takaroa? Terrified?
This is what you've made of us in your loneliness.
We claw for dear life, we return with our talons –

TAKAROA

Don't do this -

MEI-LEI

Don't do this, he says. But we *are*. We want to be whales.
Set us free, Takaroa. You know the words.

(Takaroa doesn't respond. Mei-Lei grabs the scepter and wields it at Takaroa. He struggles to breathe.)

You have three beating hearts. Three of your lovers left swirling in a storm, like lonely leaves in a whirlwind. Where is *your* sacrifice, Takaroa?

(He refuses. He is racked with pain.)

I can make eternity *unbearable* for you. Make you crawl on your tongue. Make you still with pearls chained around your throat forever. Would you like to live that way, great octopus of the sea?

(He shakes his head. Mei-Lei leans the head of the scepter toward Takaroa's face, like a microphone.)

Then say. The words.

TAKAROA

...Tamariki o Takaroa – [*Children of Takaroa -*]

MEI-LEI

Yes –

TAKAROA

Maremare me te Tohorā i – [*Jellyfish and Whales -*]

MEI-LEI

Summon your children –

TAKAROA

Te arata'i ia rātou – [*Guide them -*]

MEI-LEI

Guide them with your words –

TAKAROA

Whaka –

*(Takaroa grabs the scepter. Mei-Lei and Takaroa wrestle for control of the scepter, breaking the spell. The pings are more erratic; Marina is **gasping** for breath. Doug slowly swims toward Marina; the*

*Jellyfish weakly follows behind. Both breathe hard.
Kai slowly shakes out of her spell.
Takaroa and Mei-Lei battle for the scepter. At the
tail-end of the struggle, Takaroa finally wrests the
scepter from Mei-Lei...right as Kai rushes to stab
Mei-Lei in the heart with her knife.
Doug and the Jellyfish finally reach Marina. Lights
shift on them as they reach the sea surface.
Then, Mei-Lei collapses in the deep water below,
painfully reaching toward Marina.)*

MEI-LEI

Don't leave me...please...

KAI

Where's Kris?

JELLYFISH

Bloop? Bloop. Bloop? Bloop – *[Breathe in? Breathe out. In? Out.]*

DOUG

I'm here –

MARINA

Who - are - you - ?

JELLYFISH

Glub-glub...GLUB-GLUB - *[No... NO...]*

DOUG

Why isn't she breathing?

KAI

Why isn't she answering me?!

JELLYFISH

BLOOOOOooooooooooOOOOOOOooooooooop...

(Marina follows along, weakly.)

DOUG

No, that's not what you want. You want to go home. I'm here, Marina -

MARINA, JELLYFISH, MEI-LEI

(staggered, wailing throughout)

BLOOOOoooooooooOOOOOOOooooo –

(Doug tries to breathe into Marina throughout. It doesn't work. The Jellyfish calls out to Marina in whale-speak.)

TAKAROA
(to Mei-Lei)

Turning into a whale?! Sacrificing the land, sea, air, beyond all three! You expected me to sacrifice *myself*?

MEI-LEI

It's what she wanted –

KAI

WHERE IS SHE?!

MEI-LEI

I was jealous. She was...Jellyfish. *Crissssssssshhhhhhh. Kris.*

TAKAROA

You...turned Kris into a -

MEI-LEI

(pointing toward the Jellyfish)

Bloop.

KAI

No. No. No-no-no - KRIS! KRIS, IT'S ME! KAI! STAY WHERE YOU ARE! I'LL GET YOU!

(Kai exits.)

MEI-LEI

Please. Takaroa. We are all dying inside. It is time to let go. You know the words.

(A heartbreaking pause.)

TAKAROA

Metal and bone make a skeleton of land.
The jellyfish, blood and tissue of water.
Songs and screams in the lungs of a black box,
And the ghost of a loved one, a soul forgotten.
Forgive into form, sing into being,
Breaching to sunlight...and goodbye.

(Chanting.)

Tamariki o Takaroa,
Maremare me te Tohorā i
Te arata'i ia rātou, whakaora ia rātou,
Waiata rātou i te ora hou
A kia manwa rātou anō.

[Guide them, save them,]
[Sing them a new life,]
[And let them breathe again.]

(A hole of sunlight opens offstage. Mei-Lei rises and swims to meet Marina. The sound of Takaroa's children – devil rays, whales, squids, sharks, the whole ocean – rises from the depths as lights shift on Marina. The Jellyfish strips Marina of her black box, handing it to Doug. Once Mei-Lei meets with Marina, the Jellyfish strips them of their garb, revealing new humpback whale skins. Mei-Lei and Marina hold hands, swimming into the sunlight, while the Jellyfish follows like a wedding train. Mei-Lei and Marina sing a whale song; the Jellyfish follows with its dying bleeps. Lights on Takaroa go out. The ocean sounds disappear into the distance. Doug struggles to reach Marina.)

DOUG

MARINA! No! Come back! Please - !

(Sunlight shifts to sunset. Doug collapses toward the ground.)

Maree... Nahh... Hehh.... Plee - plee...

(A wave crashes. All that's left is Marina's dress, floating onto the shore, covering Doug like a blanket.)

Scene 5

(Sunset. A beach. Waves gently crash underneath. Doug gasps for air in his sleep, then wakes up.)

DOUG

(with a start, shivering)

Marina?!

(He looks out to the ocean. Kai enters.)

Where are we?

KAI

Some island. Cropped up out of nowhere. Nothing but stones.

DOUG

Are we dead?

KAI

Dead? I *saved* you! You've been the one dead *staring* at the ocean all day. But with your quiet and my craft -

(She takes the black box from Doug and uses an instrument to tinker with it.)

All it takes is a shock in the right place. A shocker. Can you believe it?

DOUG

Yeah.

KAI

It's not *yeah*. It's affirmative! It's - !

(A shock.)

There!

(There's nothing but static.)

No. No-no. No-no-no, no, no, no, NO, NO, NO! After finding the plane, after dealing with every fucking thing under the ocean, we have *nothing*?!

DOUG

But...Marina's dress. We have her dress.

We have her dress, we have the black box, we have the plane,
The plane! The plane is still down there - !

KAI

There is no plane! There is no fucking plane! That plane is *gone*. No sign of it on the radio, on the news, on anyone's lips – not a *drop* of anything except two buggers with a wackadoo story who have *nothing*!!!

(In an outburst, she slams the black box on the ground. Silence.

All we hear is the crashing of surf. Seagulls.

Doug stares out at the ocean, clutching Marina's dress.

After a moment, Kai reaches for the black box. She clutches it.

After a spell...)

She's gone. She's really gone.

(Doug looks at Kai. Kai looks at Doug.

"I'm sorry for your loss" is etched on their faces.

After a while, there are no seagulls.

There is the faint whale song on the horizon.

Doug and Kai watch the horizon.

They're close.

A final wave crashes.

The world disappears to black.

End of Play.)