

AQUARIUS DREAMING

A MOSAIC

L. FOX

H. AL KOWSI

SCENE 1 (YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE GOOD)	4
1.1.1 - THE STARTING LINE -	4
1.1.2 - AQUARIUS DREAMING TITLE CARD -	5
1.1.3 - SHADOW PLAY -	6
THE RIVER CHANGELESS	7
1.1.4 - HOME MOVIE, NAT'L AQUARIUM -	8
1.1.5 - BLUEBEARD 1 -	8
1.1.6 - WBAL NEWS 1 -	8
1.1.7 - PROSECUTION EXHIBIT 10B -	9
SCENE 2 (YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WALK ON YOUR KNEES)	11
WE RAN THE FROG HOSPITAL	13
SCENE 3 (FOR A HUNDRED MILES THROUGH THE DESERT, REPENTING)	20
1.3.1 - ORGANIC SOAP 1 -	20
1.3.2 - WBAL NEWS 2 -	20
1.3.3 - BROS TRAILER 1 -	20
1.3.4 - PROSECUTION EXHIBIT 11C -	21
1.3.5 - BLUEBEARD 2 -	21
SCENE 4 (YOU ONLY HAVE TO LET THE SOFT ANIMAL OF YOUR BODY LOVE WHAT IT LOVES)	26
LAST OF THE OLD GODS	26
SCENE 5 (TELL ME ABOUT DESPAIR, YOURS, AND I WILL TELL YOU MINE)	33
1.5.1 - REHOBOTH NEWS -	33
SCENE 6 (MEANWHILE THE WORLD GOES ON)	37
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE	37
SCENE 7 (MEANWHILE THE SUN AND THE CLEAR PEBBLES OF THE RAIN ARE MOVING ACROSS THE LANDSCAPES)	42
1.7.1 - UNDER WALSER HSC -	42
1.7.2 - ORGANIC SOAP 2 -	42
1.8.3. - IGNORAPHAN -	42
1.7.4 - PROSECUTION EXHIBIT 11F -	43
1.7.5 - BROS TRAILER 2 -	44
1.7.6 - WBAL NEWS 3 (CHUCK) -	45
1.7.7 - THE TRIP -	46
SUPERHIGHORGANISM	46
1.7.8 - BOH COMMERCIAL -	47
ALL THINGS	47
SMALL THINGS	48
1.7.8 - BROS TRAILER 3 -	52
1.8.9 - BLUEBEARD 3 -	52
1.8.10 - "INTERMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT" -	53
1.8.11 - AN INTERRUPTION -	53
SCENE 1 (OVER THE PRAIRIES AND THE DEEP TREES, THE MOUNTAINS AND THE	

RIVERS)	55
2.1.1 - UNDER WALSER, THE END -	55
2.1.2 - TRAFFIC -	55
WILD GEESE	55
TANK BANGER	57
SCENE 2 (MEANWHILE THE WILD GEESE, HIGH IN THE CLEAN BLUE AIR, ARE HEADING HOME AGAIN)	59
2.2.1 - BEHOLD THE JELLYFISH BALLET -	59
SCENE 3 (WHOEVER YOU ARE, NO MATTER HOW LONELY)	60
CONSIDER THIS	61
SCENE 4 (THE WORLD OFFERS ITSELF TO YOUR IMAGINATION)	66
2.4.1 - NEEDLEDROP PARODY -	66
2.4.2 - BROS TRAILER 4 -	66
2.4.3 - PROSECUTION, ADDITIONAL EXHIBIT -	67
2.4.4 - WBAL NEWS 4 -	68
2.4.5 - ORGANIC SOAP 3 -	68
2.4.6 - NO PANTS EGGS -	70
2.4.7 - A BUS STOP -	70
SCENE 5 (CALLS TO YOU LIKE THE WILD GEESE, HARSH AND EXCITING)	72
2.5.1 - AJA LOOP -	74
THE ACID JAZZ APOCALYPSE	75
SCENE 6 (OVER AND OVER ANNOUNCING YOUR PLACE)	78
DROWN THE RATS	81
2.6.1 - THE REVERSAL -	82
SAVE THE BAY	84
SCENE 7 (IN THE FAMILY OF THINGS)	88
2.7.1 - SEA ROLL -	88
BALTIMORE 2027	91
2.7.1 - WBAL 5 -	93
2.7.2 - UNDER WALSER WYATYG -	94
2.7.3 - BLUEBEARD 4 -	94
2.7.4 - GRUNDLEHAMMER PARODY -	94
2.7.5. - THE DATE -	94
THE RIVER CHANGELESS REPRISE	95

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ROBIN WALSER - Ex-TV Host, current Bagel Artist, future Prophet.
 CARMINE SEELING - Marches to their own drummer. Robin's BFF.
 LOREN IPSUM - Robin's coworker and crush. Radical in every way.
 EA - Assyrian river god. Flooded the world once, will do again.
 AHAB - Charismatic ecoterrorist and leader of the Aquapunks.

STARBUCK, STUBB, and FLASK - Aquapunks; idiots.
 NAT, BO, and BEE - The Chesapeake; singers and expositers.

ENSEMBLE - Cast of thousands.

*BLUE HIGHLIGHT indicates material that will be filmed and shown
 on the wall of screens*

VIDEO CAST

WALTER CRANKSHAFT - Serious newscaster. Really, guys.
 CHUCK WOOD - A carpenter on the news. Wow!
 SYD EFFECTS - Doing their best to speed through a drug ad
 WERNER HAPPY-ZOG - Documentarian narrating while stoned
 ANT FANTA - Upset click-farm music reviewer
 ADOZEN PLAIN - The bagel maker, makin' bagels on the news. Wow!

BLUE CATFISH - Exactly what it says on the tin.
 PRODUCER - Two lines of being a bummer offscreen.

BLUEBEARD - Your most overdramatic friend fucking up a big break
 JUDITH - An unsure actress making some real decisions
 WIFE 1, 2, 3 - A united front against Bluebeard

BELA AND BARTOK - The world's most poetic soap opera leads

OL' THUNDERTHROAT - Give me your best movie trailer voice
 RILEY - Gold Night Protag
 SUZY AND CHARLIE - Computer That Loves Protags
 LES, AMANI, AND LAURA - American Vamp Protags
 LEMPIRA AND YURITZI - Lempira Protags
 LEAD AND GRUNDLE - Grundlehammer Protags

ACT 1

SCENE 1 (YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE GOOD)

(A COUCH is CS. Behind it, the wall of screens. A figure is asleep on the couch, one leg slung over the arm. ROBIN (older). Mostly unseen. A snore.)

1.1.1 - THE STARTING LINE -

A swirling screen, like we are emerging from the deep sea—imagine every ocean-themed children's show intro ever—and a title card, UNDER WATER WITH ROBIN WALSER, in cheerful, PBS-style font.

(ROBIN (younger) is standing behind an aquarium, looking through the glass and water—their face is distorted. They smile, and maybe it hovers between silly and uncanny. Then they pop their head up over the edge of the tank.)

ROBIN

Ahoy there, sailors! Didn't see you come in! Welcome back to Under Water with me, your aquatic aficionado, Robin Walser! And today, I've got a very special friend to introduce you to.

(Inside the tank is a BLUE CATFISH, well-whiskered, swimming around lazily (a puppet). The camera zooms in on BLUE CATFISH.)

ROBIN

A whole bunch of diverse species call our beautiful Chesapeake Bay home, you can bet on that! But sometimes, we get uninvited houseguests who stir up trouble. This here is our troublemaking friend, the blue catfish—say hi, Blue!

BLUE CATFISH *(In a comical fish baritone:)*

Hi everybody.

ROBIN

The natural habitat of the blue catfish—their home—is the muddy Mississippi River, but in our Chesapeake Bay, the blue catfish is...well, I'm sorry, friend, but you're an invasive species.

BLUE CATFISH
An invasive species?

ROBIN
No two ways about it. In the 1970s, some folks who liked to fish for blue catfish brought some to the Bay, and, well, things just got out of hand.

BLUE CATFISH
So-rry.

ROBIN
It's okay, bud! It's not your fault.

(ROBIN looks at the camera. All compelling earnestness, which we will see from someone else, later.)

ROBIN
You know, sailors, our planet-and our marine biospheres-are carefully balanced things. Sometimes, when people go poking around and stirring things up, it throws the whole system out of whack! So it's our responsibility-as sailors who love our beautiful seas-to take care of these places, and to try and tell our friends and neighbors, hey! Don't go messing things up! Our friend Blue here, he's not a bad guy at all. It's those fishermen who were the problem-folks just not thinking about their actions! *(Eye twitches:)* And that kind of thinking will someday destroy everything! Fuck them and their shitty fucking-

(ROBIN throws a small tantrum as a producer tries to calm them down. The footage blurs. Something is taking it over.)

EA
Wavechild. Can you hear me?

1.1.2 - AQUARIUS DREAMING TITLE CARD -

(The television starts going nuts, images of the Chesapeake and of fish and, very specifically at some point, of geese flying by. It swirls with colors and interference, the Ur-Show, what they watched in the ziggurats at Ashur on a rainy day before

Philo Farnsworth plowed the rows that ordered programming. This is our show, and it is good. Behold the title card.)

(Onstage, ROBIN sleeps fitfully. An alarm clock flashes silently. THE CHESAPEAKES are onstage, assembling, slowly, the Equal Bites set. They are humming THE RIVER CHANGELESS. One wheels out BILLY THE PROPHETIC TROUT. CARMINE sneaks out, gives one of the CHESEPEAKES a kiss on the head, and ruffles ROBIN'S hair as they pass.)

1.1.3 - SHADOW PLAY -

(Soon, the screen zooms out to reveal that it is a TV in a shadow play. It illuminates abandoned party hats, ribbons, presents. Into it appears a great fish with the head of a man, a mighty beard and ancient crown. The child sits up.)

EA

Helloooooo wavechild. You don't have to wake up; they don't call it the seabed for nothing. Sleep, and in slumbering, dream. This is an age for dreaming. Aquarius ascends and disturbs the endless cycle of Luna. I am its steward, you its prophet, and the drama of the flood must be played once more.

(The shadows play the story of the flood in its many ways.)

Almost every river culture tells of the day when the rains came and never stopped. The cities drowned, the trees drowned, the very mountains drowned. But before the deluge, every time, stood a small human who warned them. They said, every time, we have been filthy, we have been wicked, we are doomed. And every time, they were ignored and watched the great submersion of all things. You are the small human who will warn them. It is the natural order of things, an ending, and I spawn endings in the rain like an apocalyptic frog.

I am responsible to those waters; I am their steward and their shepherd. The whales sing songs in praise of me. I know what the coelacanth knows, and I am friend to the worms that clean the deep and the dead. Do you understand, Robin?

You get up on your little screen and talk about "ocean life". There is no other life. All life comes from the ocean, and to it shall return. All things are water on the water planet, and all rivers run to the sea.

You have been chosen. Not like a hero, and barely like a prophet, though we will call you that. Your sacred duty is to be right, and to be ignored. For this, you shall be rewarded with a wish. Happy birthday, Robin. On another birthday of yours I shall return to bring the beginning of the work, and come with a present of endless possibility before we enact the great morality play of the inundation.

ROBIN

But why me?

EA

Because you're on television, dummy.

ROBIN

Are you god?

EA

I am one of them; I am EA.

(Somewhere on screen, a door closes and fails to open again.)

THE RIVER CHANGELESS

THE CHESAPEAKES *(sung)*

THOSE RESTLESS YEARS
AND ENDLESS DAYS
OF OPEN DOORS
AND TIDES AT PLAY
I HAVE NOT FOUND THAT RIVER CHANGELESS
WHERE I'LL WASH THESE PAINS AWAY
AND I
MAY NEVER
WASH THESE PAINS AWAY
THOUGH WE
WILL ALWAYS

OURSELVES WASH AWAY

1.1.4 - HOME MOVIE, NAT'L AQUARIUM -

(A shot of ROBIN in the NAT'L AQUARIUM-kids laughing, low rumble of a crowded space. We see ROBIN at a table with a sign on it, "Signings with Robin, 10 AM - 12 PM!" There's a line-not ridiculous, but crowded-of kids and their parents. ROBIN is talking to a kid with a ORCA WHALE PLUSHIE, explaining some fun fact. Close in on ROBIN-they recognize the camera op, smile.)

1.1.5 - BLUEBEARD 1 -

(Ripped away from what we have seen, we go to a bad production of Bluebeard. The set is mostly appleboxes.)

BLUEBEARD

(Overdramatically.)

Once upon a time...

Where did this happen?

Outside? Or within?

(Something in the background crashes to the ground.)

BLUEBEARD

(Taking off the beard, striking a pose.)

Yeah, see, but that can't happen during an actual show.

(Muttering offstage:) Right, but because the materiality of it rather cuts the whole point. What if people get confused about what's real and what's not?

1.1.6 - WBAL NEWS 1 -

(A mugshot of ROBIN, looking terrified, tired, grieved. WALTER recites:)

WALTER CRANKSHAFT

-Walser, an established young star-(Static:)-arrested today in connection with a series of ecoterrorism-related firebombings along-(Static:)-3 dead, 15 injured-(Static:) Walser has plead "not guilty" -(Static:)- has asserted that they were coerced into these actions by the leader of this group, alias

Ahab-(Static:)- unknown. For their extensive cooperation with state and federal authorities Walser's sentence was reduced, and authorities remain on the lookout for Ahab-(Static:)-

(Equal Bites is assembled. THE CHESAPEAKES tip the couch-ROBIN slides off, fully dressed beneath, and half-sleepwalks into place. [They] find the counter, and lay their head down on their folded arms. On the counter is a little dry-erase board with a sign that says "It's an Equal Bites team-member birthday! Tip!!!" BILLY THE PROPHETIC TROUT, a fortune-teller machine that is one of those wall-mounted dancing fish with a weird mystical hat inside a glass display box.

1.1.7 - PROSECUTION EXHIBIT 10B -

(ROBIN is on a shitty couch with the AQUAPUNKS-FLASK, STARBUCK. A bong, beer cans, and stolen kisses swap back and forth. Someone's shithole apartment with a window view of a dirty back alley. But the sky is a killer blue.)

STUBB (o.s., a terrible Attenborough impression)
-natural environment-a rare and horrifying species which can be found only in the 2100 block of St. Paul street-

ROBIN
-Stubb I am so serious your British accent makes me wanna commit regular terrorism-

FLASK
I hate the British.

AHAB (o.s.)
And who could blame you? Stubb, baby, I'm ready for my close up-

(The camera swings-before we get to AHAB, ROBIN laughs and pushes their hand in front of the camera, pulling it over. STABUCK's head is in their lap. STUBB has been ad-libbing nature doc commentary throughout. There is a table behind the action with the sort of visible explosive-building materials. An edit has been done to highlight/circle these materials.)

ROBIN

Nonono, I get the close-up, I get the close-up, it's literally on my resume, I am a current star of the local silver screen—

STUBB

Halyard, you are a whore for the spotlight.

ROBIN (*to camera-then, calling o.s.*)

Actually, I'm a whore for— hey, Ahab?

SCENE 2 (YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WALK ON YOUR KNEES)

(The footage freezes. LOREN looks at ROBIN, then disappears into a back room. BILLY THE PROPHETIC TROUT begins chugging out a ticker tape fortune—ROBIN shuffles over to BILLY to tear away the fortune.)

ROBIN (reading)

"This whole act's immutably decreed. 'Twas rehearsed by thee and me a billion years before this ocean rolled. Fool! I am the Fates' lieutenant; I act under orders." *(mumbling and fading off)* Billy why are you calling me a fool that's so mean...

(ROBIN starts to nod off standing up. The fortune flutters to the floor as LOREN emerges from the back room, cheerfully holding two metal trays.)

1.2.1 - ROBIN SAMPLES -

(A bunch of samples/things calling ROBIN's name, "Wake up!", etc.)

(LOREN smacks the trays together. A mighty crash. TVs turn off.)

LOREN

ROBIN! *(Leaning in:)* Wakey wakey, flood, fire, earthquakey. Apocalypse right the hell now. It's only seven AM.

ROBIN

Urghj.

LOREN

You've always been my most verbose coworker. Also.
(Throwing up a handful of everything bagel seasoning.)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

(A vigorous hug.)

ROBIN

You remembered!

LOREN

How could I forget? We've been slinging bagels now at a feminist bagel shop for three years together. I've made you incredible bagel sandwiches every time you failed to get the rights to your show back. You've made me fancy coffees every time my car's gotten towed.

ROBIN

Do you just love illegal parking or something?

LOREN

I do. I really do. Sleepless night of partying?

ROBIN

Nothing like that. Thursday bummers I guess. Ha.

LOREN

I did not know there was such a thing as Thursday bummers.

ROBIN

Thursday bummers. Scientific fact. *(Before LOREN can ask something:)* Actually I've been having these weird dreams.

LOREN

Ooh, what flavor of weird? Like, your former Executive Producer is speaking to you in Danish? Or pervert dreams?

ROBIN

Ha ha. Nah. It's like. Memories. Lots of doors. All closed.

LOREN

Seek and ye shall find; ask and it shall be opened. The word of the Loren, Ipsum Dolor.

ROBIN

I am not opening anything but presents today. The doors can take care of themselves, they have that Jim Morrison guy, they'll be alright.

LOREN

A present it is, then! I'm going to put on my band's new album after this order.

ROBIN

Oooh, hell yeah, let's hear it.

LOREN

Really?

ROBIN

Yes. Yeah. Yeah, of course, man.

LOREN

Oh shit! Yeah, okay, hang on, let me—

(BAND starts tuning up. LOREN pops a CD into the cafe's stereo.)

LOREN

Excuse me if I sing along. I wrote most of the words.

(During the song, ROBIN and LOREN serve customers. They do pretty good. They balance each other easily.)

WE RAN THE FROG HOSPITAL

LOREN *(sung)*

THERE WAS AN UNDERCURRENT OF QUEERNESS

THAT WE TRIED TO IGNORE.

WE DIDN'T DO A GOOD JOB

BUT WE DIDN'T DO SO POOR, SO AS TO

SPEND OUR TIME ON SOMETHING

THAT JUST WOULD'VE MADE US BORED.

JUST DIDN'T FIT IN WITH THAT

SUMMER LOT WE'D SCORED.

WE WERE

SAVING THE WORLD

SAVING THE FROGS

ONE BB PULLED OUT AT A TIME

AND THOUGH IT WASN'T A BIG POND

WHERE WE TRIED TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT

I SWEAR THAT 'LIL THING HELD THE WHOLE MOON EVERY NIGHT

WE RAN THAT FROG HOSPITAL

AFTER A BOOK I GOT FROM MOM
IT WAS ALL 'BOUT FEMALE FRIENDSHIP
BUT IT JUST KEPT RAMBLING ON
UNTIL IT ASKED WHO WOULD STILL DO GOOD
WHEN WE WERE DEAD AND GONE
AND I THOUGHT
IT HAS TO BE ME
IT HAS TO BE US
IT HAS TO BE ALL OF US

SAVING THE WORLD
SAVING THE FROGS
ONE BB PULLED OUT AT A TIME
AND THOUGH IT WASN'T A BIG POND
WHERE WE TRIED TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT
I SWEAR THAT 'LIL THING HELD THE WHOLE MOON EVERY NIGHT

AND I GUESS THE BIT 'BOUT SEXUALITY WAS OVERBLOWN
WE TRIED HAVING SEX AT A PARTY BUT FELT LESS TOGETHER THAN ALONE
SO WE JUST LAID OUT UNDER THE STARS INSTEAD
NAMED ALL THE FROGS AFTER THE MOVIE STARS THAT POPPED UP IN OUR
HEADS
THERE WAS

LEO-FROG-O DICAPRIO AND KATE FROGLET TOO
GWENETH FROGTROW, CALISTA FROGHART, AND FROG AFFLECK TO NAME A
FEW
FROG DAMON, LL FROG J, SARAH MC-FROG-LAN
NOT TO MENTION THE MOST FAMOUS BACK-FROG BOYS

SAVING THE WORLD
SAVING THE FROGS
ONE BB PULLED OUT AT A TIME
AND THOUGH IT WASN'T A BIG POND
WHERE WE TRIED TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT
I SWEAR THAT 'LIL THING HELD THE WHOLE MOON,
HELD THE STARS, THE DREAMS WE'D DREAM SOON,
IT HELD THE WHOLE DAMN ENDLESS SKY THERE EVERY NIGHT

(LOREN and ROBIN have ended up in some kind of sweetheart will-they-won't-they thing. They take the breath-ROBIN breaks away first, a little too overcorrectively urgent about it-then turn back to their tasks. LOREN is smugly assembling an extremely beautiful bagel with cream cheese and lox. Maybe even capers.)

LOREN

Why did you know so many of the words?

ROBIN

So, maybe I check your bandcamp once in a while. Every now and then.

LOREN

HELL YEAH! You should come hear me sing at Club Ecco in Canton on Friday. I have a stack of flyers. If you want one.

(LOREN exits, leaving the bagel behind. ROBIN gazes at it with a totally inordinate amount of love.)

ROBIN

(To self, mocking:) "Thursday bummers," fucking hell... *(Then:)* Wow, that is a gorgeous bagel.

LOREN *(o.s.)*

You can have it! Happy birthday! I'll make another!

(Sounds of LOREN vanishing deeper into the back room. ROBIN reaches for the bagel-and the AQUAPUNKS tumble into Equal Bites. They all have blue ski masks that they begin ripping off and hiding. STUBB and FLASK have a heavy box between them that they set noisily on a table, cursing about it.)

STARBUCK

Hey can I get uhhhhhhhhh mermaid bagel with a pap schmear, chives and garlic, and an order of depo-tots.

ROBIN

(Not taking the order at all)

Uh huh. You want anything to drink with that, Starbucks? A grande frappuccino with extra whipped cream, maybe?

STARBUCK (*seething*)

Har-dee-har-har, you KNOW it's StarBUCK, Robbie.

ROBIN

I'm on the clock. The clock? I am so on it. Please leave me alone so I can continue to be on this clock in peace. It is seven in the morning. I have a shift on my birthday. I am dealing with enough. Behold the clock I am on.

STUBB

Can you stop talking about how on the clock you are it sounds like you're fucking the clock.

ROBIN

Do you come here to torment me? Do you get off on my suffering?

STARBUCK

Can't a person enjoy a delicious mermaid bagel and some depot tots? Are we not among God's creatures entitled to a little fucking brekkie.

(A cop car passes by outside and all three of them stop dead until it's gone.)

STARBUCK

Flask, can you wait in the car? I'm triple-parked.

FLASK

I hate waiting in the car...

STARBUCK

You also hate sunny days, children, balloon animals—

ROBIN

—smoking outdoors, vaping indoors—

STUBB

—traffic cops, spaghetti—

FLASK

I hate when you guys list things.

ROBIN

Flask. Do you like anything?

FLASK

(After a beat:)... "Tank Banger", by Pelagic Deep, off of their Eel Spawn album.

STARBUCK

Can you please have something normal to say for once. Go wait in the car and listen to your evil tunes. *(to ROBIN:)* Robbie, I was not, in fact, kidding. Can I also get a sesame with just butter, one poppyseed with all the fixings, and a breakfast sandwich on an English muffin. And an oat milk latte, and a flat white, and a black coffee with one sugar, and a second oat milk latter but with a little bit of lavender. Chop chop, bagel czar. We are in a hurry.

(FLASK is exiting as ROBIN punches in the order, sighing. STUBB sits down at the table with the box on it. The box visibly twitches—STUBB throws an arm over it, hard. On "little bit of lavender," ROBIN hesitates.)

ROBIN

Lavender?

STARBUCK

Yes. C'mon, Robbie, don't have all day.

ROBIN

I thought—

STARBUCK

Aw, don't think, you'll pull something.

ROBIN

None of you guys—none of you like the lavender.

STUBB

Eugh. Tastes like old lady perfume.

(ROBIN's level of panic is steadily increasing.)

ROBIN

I like lavender, and- and-

STARBUCK

Well, who do you *think* it's for, Halyard, baby?

(FLASK yells through the door.)

FLASK

STARBUCK THE TOW GUY IS HERE AND HE'S BEING SHITTY.

STARBUCK

Flask so help me GOD-

ROBIN

IS AHAB HERE?! Okay, you need to leave, right now.

STUBB

You know Ahab. He's always right around the corner.

FLASK *(o.s.)*

HE'S HOOKING UP THE TOW BAR STARBUCK I HATE THE TOW BAR.

STARBUCK

GOD I hate management, okay, let's go, let's go, let's-

(STARBUCK drags STUBB offstage, leaving the box behind.)

LOREN *(o.s.)*

Hey! You can't be back here!

(FLASK busts in from the other side of the stage, through the kitchen door, panting, evidently having run all the way around. They stand panting, hands on knees. Audible wheeze.)

ROBIN

What the fuck—?

FLASK

(Straightening, grabbing ROBIN's shoulders:) Halyard take the box and go right now.

ROBIN

Flask, I'm not— I'm not Halyard anymore—

FLASK

Take it and go! *(A beat:)* Happy birthday, Halyard. We didn't forget. I hate forgetting.

(FLASK runs offstage again. An audible altercation is happening outside on the street between STARBUCK, STUBB, and TOW GUY.)

TOW GUY *(o.s.)*

I been working this city fifteen goddamn years and I have never seen a goddamn triple park in a bus lane—

STARBUCK *(o.s.)*

Well SORRY that INNOVATION doesn't EXCITE YOU.

(ROBIN looks panicky—and then, as if compelled, they grab the BOX and run out the opposite side of the stage. Sounds of altercation fade. LOREN emerges with the flyer.)

LOREN

Damn, it was buried in my locker— *(Looking around:)* Robin? You left your bagel—

(LOREN pauses, then picks up the bagel and takes a bite. BILLY THE PROPHETIC TROUT spits out a fortune, which LOREN collects.)

LOREN *(reading)*

"There is no folly of the beasts of the earth which is not infinitely outdone by the madness of men." *(Beat:)* Billy.
Lighten up.

SCENE 3 (FOR A HUNDRED MILES THROUGH THE DESERT, REPENTING)

(CARMINE sits on a couch facing the audience, "watching" TV, flipping through channels, bored and playing with a "Chekov's Classic Mk2 ForeshadowingX10 Scope" speargun. Inexplicably, BILLY THE PROPHETIC TROUT is here, a little offside the couch, as if he is also watching.)

1.3.1 - ORGANIC SOAP 1 -

(Rose petals descend on a stark white stage where two people are having dinner.)

BELA

Can't we stay like this forever, in this moment?

BARTOK

We are already altered by it.

1.3.2 - WBAL NEWS 2 -

(Screen flashes "REENACTMENT" as three gorgeously made-up people steal a clearly fake fish.)

WALTER CRANKSHAFT

-with their leader waiting in a secure location the Aquapunks then proceeded to heist one of the world's rarest fish: Car-asshole-ius Oral-atus-*(Yelling in the studio:)* That's not it's- No, I am mad! You people do this to me all the time. *(Muttering:)* Starbuck, Stubb, Flask? These are fucking cartoon characters. Do we have the composite of Ahab? Put up the fucking composite-

(A COMPOSITE SKETCH of AHAB appears on the screen. AHAB is very clear drawn by a really, really bad caricature artist. [They] have really cool sunglasses. And a harpoon.)

WALTER CRANKSHAFT

THERE IS NO WAY THEY FUCKING LOOK LIKE THAT-

1.3.3 - BROS TRAILER 1 -

(Onscreen text: YUKON WORM RODEO)

OL' THUNDERTHROAT

THIS SUMMER.

RILEY

I came here to mine gold and ride giant worms, and there is NO
GOLD WHATSOEVER!

1.3.4 - PROSECUTION EXHIBIT 11C -

(More grainy camcorder footage, this time outdoors, in the dark. FLASK is unspooling some kind of wire along the edges of the foundation. An after-effects highlight on the wire, with an arrow. Evidence! Resume. AHAB, in the distance, is arguing in tense, hushed tones with ROBIN about something, but we can't quite make it out.)

FLASK

I hate when you film our criminal enterprises.

STUBB (o.s.)

You're gonna want these memories someday!

FLASK

I also hate when you try to predict my nostalgic impulses.

(A shout—a SECURITY GUARD offscreen. Swearing, FLASK and STUBB flee—STARBUCK is in a shitbox car, waiting. AHAB shouts. There's a thump, a thwack. ROBIN shoved onto the screen by AHAB, who is unseen but close behind.)

AHAB

—can't hesitate! You jeopardize the whole thing when you fucking hesitate! I know you're better than that, Halyard—

ROBIN

You didn't have to hit him so hard—

1.3.5 - BLUEBEARD 2 -

JUDITH

(Reading the script.)

So, what, I just keep going deeper and deeper into his psyche
and then I die?

BLUEBEARD

Well, I think it's a little more complicated than that.

JUDITH

I don't want to die. Judith should run away and. And go be a kayak guide. I think that would be better.

BLUEBEARD

Then what's the point?

JUDITH

I don't know. Isn't that for you to figure out? The show isn't called "Judith".

(BILLY prints out a fortune, which CARMINE, without looking, reaches over and retrieves.)

CARMINE *(Reading:)*

"In Jesus' name no more of this." Yeah, that production of Bluebeard really tanked. Haha. Tanked. Like fish tanks? Billy, you just get me.

(ROBIN enters, struggling with the BOX from 1.2.)

ROBIN

A hand?

CARMINE

Always! Anything for the birthday buddy!

(CARMINE yanks it singlehandedly onto the coffee table.)

CARMINE

What sort of fresh mystery is this, chum? A new specimen for the collection? Exotic life support? One of those body pillows with the cute boys on them?

ROBIN

No clue. Did you feed the fish? Did you give Gene Ween her medicine?

CARMINE

Not a chance, freshly arrived from and wearied by the front myself. Been fighting phragmites on the banks of every creek from here to Annapolis! But enough of my reedy entreaties. What yonder mysteries hide within this cardboard box?

ROBIN

Don't touch it. Or-maybe touch it. The Aquapunks came by the store today. They had it with them and...left it behind. They had to fight the tow truck guy.

CARMINE

Those enigmatic, semiaquatic, polyamorous scoundrels! They took advantage of your weakened Thursday bummers defenses! What if there are DRUGS in there, Robin?

ROBIN

Carmine, you do drugs.

CARMINE

And I don't HOLD ONTO them, like some kind of Self Storage for Suckers!

ROBIN

I don't know. (*Beat:*) Flask gave it to me. Super adamant I take it from them. But it seemed important. Like maybe Flask wasn't supposed to give it to me.

CARMINE

I say to you, amigo; trust me. Look, when your show got canned because of the eco-crime thing, who did you trust to help argue on your behalf?

ROBIN

That wasn't—it wasn't that simple—

CARMINE

And when you got arrested because of those nautical no-good-nick's whole explosion mess, who bailed you out?

ROBIN

You did, I know.

CARMINE

YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT! And now those same barnacle brains burden you with a box and you're just going to leave it there? C'mon pleaaaaaase please I wanna knoooooow.

ROBIN

Well... *(Beat:)* Shit. Shit! Okay. We'll open it up. We'll open it up and see.

(CARMINE proceeds to take a massive diving knife, very carefully cutting a single point; the box then completely falls apart. In it is a very unusual FISH, clearly flopping its last.)

CARMINE

I hardly nicked it! Great White, it's some kind of fish. *(He inspects it briefly:)* It has a belly button. I don't know what that means.

ROBIN

Uh! Oh shit, uh-

(ROBIN hauls it onto the floor, clears its gills, listens for a heartbeat, gives compressions briefly, and then, out of ideas, tries giving mouth to mouth before rolling away, choking.)

ROBIN

SOMETHING JUST CRAWLED INTO MY MOUTH!

CARMINE

Right. Enough of that, then.

(CARMINE lines up the shot through a door offstage, gives the fish a mighty chuck, and it splashes, offstage, into the tub.)

CARMINE

Well, that was going to be an evening bath, but I think it's a good start, is what it is. Huh. *(Patting ROBIN on the shoulder:)* Comrade. Friend. Rest. I will google whatever the hell that thing is and figure out if the tub needs marine salt or something. You are shaken, not stirred. Happy birthday, chum.

Don't you worry about a thing. By morning, everything will be different! (A beat:) Besides, we need to be at Club Ecco on Friday. If I have to watch you fail to ask out Loren again I'm going to be quite upset.

ROBIN
Aygurhs.

CARMINE
You always were my most verbose roommate.

(ROBIN exits, moaning and generally poorly off. CARMINE shakes their head before exiting themselves.)

SCENE 4 (YOU ONLY HAVE TO LET THE SOFT ANIMAL OF YOUR BODY LOVE WHAT IT LOVES)

(The set transitions to the bathroom, something glowing in the tub. The CHESEPEAKES enter. BILLY is naturally also there, chilling. ROBIN enters cautiously, toilet-bound. The fish from 1.3 pops up on the ledge, gasping demonically. ROBIN falls backwards and backs up rapidly. The CHESEPEAKES, in ceremonial Assyrian garb, grab them, anointing ROBIN.)

ROBIN

Oh god, oh god, I'm dreaming, I must be dreaming.

EA

Hello again, Wavechild. Behold.

(The bathroom door literally opens to show the full EA puppet, as the screens show the same. BAND hauls ass into:)

LAST OF THE OLD GODS

EA *(sung)*

WHEN TEMPLES WITHERED AND GODS DID GASP
I ALONE REMAINED
WHOLE, UNSPOKEN, THOUGH SCARS BETOKENED
MY UNENDING DOMAIN
BUT THE RIVERS RUN DRY AND HERONS CRY
SONGS OF THE EARTH IN PAIN
AND SO I RETURN SO MEN MAY LEARN
TO FEAR THE ENDLESS RAIN

I AM EA

(chorus: Assyrian chanting)

I AM KING BENEATH THE WAVES

(chorus: Assyrian chanting)

THERE IS NO FOE TO ME BELOW

TO MY WHIMS THE SALT IS SLAVE

I AM EA

(chorus: Assyrian chanting)

I SOAKED THE WORLD IN FLOOD

(chorus: Assyrian chanting)

THE ARK WAS BUILT ON MY COMMAND
AND SAILED UPON MY BLOOD

THIS PRESENT FORM TO EARTH RETURNED
MY GILLS HAVE WAVED THEIR LAST
BUT HERE INSIDE YOUR PUNY MIND
I WILL RESURRECT THE PAST
WE'LL RECONSTRUCT YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS MUCK
TO MAKE YOU FIT TO BE
A PROPHET WHOLE IN TALES UNTOLD
OF THE CARNIVAL OF SEA

I AM EA!

(chorus: Assyrian chanting)

YOUR MIND IS FORFEIT TO ME

(chorus: Assyrian chanting)

FOR YOUR LOVE OF FISH, I'LL GRANT ONE WISH
THE LAST YOU'LL LIVE TO SEE

EA! (EA!)

RULER OF ALL THAT'S WET!
MY SUBJECTS SWIM AND FIGHT AND CRAWL
AND HEAVE AGAINST THE NET!

EA! (EA!)

TITAN OF THE PRESSURED DEEP!
I'VE THRONES IN BRACKISH TIDAL BAYS
IN TRENCHES WHERE GIANTS SLEEP!

*(To BAND:) GIVE ME SOMETHING RIPPING, BOYS! (Villainous laughter
as BAND goes into a solo)*

(chorus: more Assyrian chanting)

(chorus: EA! (EA!))

(spoken) OH, IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK!

(chorus: EA! (EA!))

(spoken) IT GETS CRAMPED, BEING IN A FISH

(chorus: EA! (EA!))

(spoken) WE'RE GOING TO DO SOME MENTAL RENOVATION

(chorus: EA! (EA!))

(spoken) KNOCK DOWN A FEW WALLS

(chorus: EA! (EA!))

(spoken) YOU MIGHT EVEN LIKE IT!

EA! (EA!) x 3

(EA faces ROBIN. The CHESEPEAKES offers EA a towel and a cigar.)

EA

Pretty good number, eh? Worked on that one for half a millennium, thereabouts. Still polishing that choral stuff—
(Sees BILLY, and waves:) Oh, hey, Billy-boy, how's it floating?

(BILLY spits out another fortune. One of THE CHESAPEAKES grabs it and reads.)

CHESAPEAKE

(Reading:) "wassup dawg"

ROBIN

What is haaaaaaaappening.

EA

Old Fin-ito himself! Happy birthday, Robin! Got your wish stamped and ready for you with the dotted line! All you have to do is start going "The end is near!" on your show, and we're in business.

ROBIN

You're...real?

EA

Kid, it's only been. What, a year?

(A CHESEPEAKE whispers something.)

Twenty two years? Boy were we off with those initial estimates.

Yes, real, wavechild. Real and ready to rumble. Here, let me give you a taste of what we've got here.

(Scenes of a cardboard town labelled "Rehoboth Beach" obliterated by a tidal wave.)

EA

Whammo! I hope your wish didn't involve a town in Delaware. It's gone now.

ROBIN

Oh my god.

EA

Just a little flex. *(Puffing on the cigar:)* You seem upset.

ROBIN

Of course I'm upset! How many people did you just kill?

EA

I'm going to kill a lot more before this is over. *(Puzzled:)*
You seemed more about this before. Did something change?

ROBIN

Over twenty two years? I think they might have, yeah! I joined some weird apocalyptic cult telling people that I had seen you in my dreams and we were going to end the world, and then I lost my show about it, and then YOU NEVER CAME BACK! I helped the fucking FBI prosecute people I knew, AND NOW YOU SHOW UP?

EA

Did you say you lost your show?

ROBIN

I SURE DID!

EA

Well, that's going to make this hard, then. Damn. Uh.

(Papers being flipped in front of him. He sighs.)

Okay. We'll have to get you ready. You can't exactly pull off "apocalyptic preacher" as you are. We'll buff up your chutzpah, have you schmoozing with the best, draft a good speech or two, and WHAM-O! It's all underwater, and you get to live it up on Atlantis. We'll go streetcorner style, guerilla.

ROBIN

I don't want to flood the world. I don't want people to die.

EA

Well, what do you want? You still have that wish, you know, it says-

ROBIN

I WANT A DATE WITH MY COWORKER LOREN.

(ROBIN smacks a hand over [their] mouth. EA pauses.)

EA

You...okay, you want to marry your...coworker?

ROBIN

No! No. No, I just want a date. You know, a shot. I'll ask [them] and I just. I want the answer to be yes. I think it can be. Is that fucked up? Oh man. This is all so fucked.

EA

Oh. Uh. *(Thinking, then gentler:)* Are you sure you don't just want money? I mean, that's typical. You're asking for love here.

ROBIN

Not like, true love or anything. Just a shot. Is this stupid. Oh my god.

EA

No, no, I get it. It's just unusual. *(Hesitating, then:)* The date thing, that's on the table. *(To a CHESEPEAKE:)* Can we re-run the selection points here? Thank you, Natty, you've been doing great. *(Turning back to ROBIN.)* No show, no flooding the world. I chose you when you were young for a reason. What happened?

ROBIN

I don't know! How would I know? Do you think if I knew, I would have let it happen? That show was everything I ever wanted! I was a KID, and I made it! I did it! What was I supposed to do when it fell apart?

EA

Alright, alright. *(Beat)* I remember you loving this stuff like I did. You know, the all of it. The first time I came, you told me all about your oyster reef.

ROBIN

Yeah, we did it for the show. Chicken wire and concrete. I remember— we were saving something. Something without a face, you know, something you can't say, "oh, that's cute" about, right, but oysters have all this, this complex sensitivity. You know they're tuned in to the lunar cycle? With the tides? They're in the web of things. They're, they're listening and responding.

EA

I know. In the quieter eons I like to lie in the reefs and watch those little shells open and close, so slow you almost can't see it. Very meditative.

(BILLY, who is next to the sink, beeps and prints something out. CHESEPEAKES grab it and read.)

CHESEPEAKES

"Give the kid a break, you old Assyrian goldfish."

EA

Alright, fine. Tell you what. We're going to put you through seven doors; personality tests, to help you grow, really put forward what you're capable of. At the end of it, you'll get your date, and I bet you'll feel a lot better about things and decide that Yonkers would look better underwater.

ROBIN

I hate Thursdays.

EA

It's a Thursday?

ROBIN

Thursdays used to be my air day. Before I—

EA

Yeesh. You have really changed. This is gonna be a lift. Ready
for a rapid transition?

(CREW has already begun assembling Equal Bites around them.)

ROBIN

A rapid transition?

SCENE 5 (TELL ME ABOUT DESPAIR, YOURS, AND I WILL TELL YOU MINE)

(ROBIN is suddenly sitting in Equal Bites with CARMINE. LOREN is serving THE CHESAPEAKES. BILLY is occasionally spitting fortunes at them, as though they are all having a chat. On the whiteboard, "Tip!!! It's the Right Thing To Do! Do the Right Thing! <3")

1.5.1 - REHOBOTH NEWS -

(A TV in the background is showing a news report of Rehoboth Beach, devastated, silently.)

CARMINE

(Sipping coffee:) That is a hell of a dream, chum.

ROBIN

Uh. You don't think I'm going crazy?

CARMINE

Going? Friend, you are going, going, and gone. But look, the only direction a loco-motive goes is forward! If you're crazy, steer into the skid! They call it a manifesto because you manifest-o it into existence! Seize the means of deconstruction! *(Straightening:)* Did mister prehistoric fish-sticks tell you what you needed to do to make that wish start happening?

ROBIN

I don't really think it's like that—

(The AQUAPUNKS burst in, angry and nervous.)

LOREN

Oh, for fuck's— hey, you guys aren't welcome in here! We are STILL finding sardines from that last stupid stunt—

STARBUCK

Is there a lost and found in here?

LOREN

Yeah. And on the subject, you guys can get lost—

ROBIN

Nice— got— um— good zinger, Loren!

(ROBIN groans and drops their head into their folded arms. CARMINE pats their head. STARBUCK motions to STUBB and FLASK, who leap over the counter and start rummaging underneath.)

LOREN

Jesus! This is a huge health code violation! We have open cream cheese back here and NONE of you have hairnets!

STARBUCK

Did anybody leave a big box in here? Yesterday? Really big obvious cardboard box?

LOREN

No. Leave.

FLASK

I hate uncooperative attitudes.

STUBB

You guys got security cameras? Because we came in with a box. The box was here. So where is the box—

LOREN

I didn't see one! Robin?

(All heads turn to ROBIN—even THE CHESAPEAKES. A long beat.)

ROBIN

Um.

(STARBUCK lunges. CARMINE is up, stands between them and ROBIN.)

STARBUCK

Where the fuck is that box?! You think I'm fucking kidding around here?

ROBIN

Why was there a dead fish in it??

FLASK

...oh, it wasn't supposed to be dead.

(STARBUCK pulls out a little gutting knife. CARMINE pulls out previous huge diving knife.)

CARMINE

Easy, cowboy.

STARBUCK

This doesn't involve you, Carmine. *(Hissing at ROBIN:)* It's in your dreams now, isn't it? In your head?

ROBIN

What did you do to me?!

STARBUCK

Oh, it got you. *(A beat, then, smiling in a bad way:)* Good. Good! Fucking great! Maybe you'll get it together again! Maybe you'll be just like what you used to be, oh captain, my captain. Still a whore for the spotlight. Good fucking luck, you little-

(ROBIN lunges forward and gets a good whack to their head with the handle of STARBUCK'S knife. CARMINE, hollering, attacks, dragging all the AQUAPUNKS offstage singlehandedly. LOREN hops over the counter, runs and locks the door, flips the sign to CLOSED, and begins tending to ROBIN. THE CHESAPEAKES bid BILLY farewell, and begin to change the scene behind ROBIN / LOREN.)

LOREN

Jesus, Robin! What the hell were you thinking?

ROBIN

I think...I think maybe I've had enough.

LOREN

Yeah. I get it. Well, probably one of the braver things I've seen you do. *(Beat:)* Pretty fucking stupid, too. Try not to make a habit of rushing people with knives? Do not bring fists to a knife fight.

ROBIN

One time thing, promise. *(Then, woozily:)* Okay. Think imma pass out now.

LOREN

Oop. Right on. *(Beat, holding their head:)* This would be so nice if you weren't possibly bleeding into your brain.

(ROBIN passes out. LOREN exits as EA enters. A DOOR SOUND IS HEARD-ONSCREEN, A DOOR OPENS. The stage is set with rocks with chains on them.)

SCENE 6 (MEANWHILE THE WORLD GOES ON)

EA
WAKE, PROPHET!

ROBIN
Don't be mean, I have a concuss-cussiocon—I hurt my head.

EA
Look, we're really working on a tight timeline here. Welcome to the "face your fears" part of the personality improvement program.

ROBIN
And this will help me get a date with Loren.

EA
Uh. We're, we're working on that. Okay, here comes the number, try to keep up, there will be a test.

(THE CHESAPEAKES enter, shedding jackets to reveal they've been dressed Grecian the whole time. BAND kicks off.)

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE

CHESEPEAKES *(sung)*
BY ORDER OF KING CEPHEUS
YOUR FATHER AND YOUR LORD
WE'RE ORDERED NOW TO BIND YOU HERE
FOR CETUS THE ABHORRED
WHAT ARE YOU TO DO
WHEN THE VERY GODS THEMSELVES
DEIGN YOU AS A SACRIFICE
TO ROARING ROCKY HELLS
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT TO SAY THE LEAST
FOR WHO CAN BLAME THE STARS
FROM AQUARIUS TO ANDROMEDA
DOOMED IS ALL YOU ARE

ROBIN *(sung)*

I GUESS I WAS HOPING FOR BETTER
 I GUESS THIS IS WHERE I BELONG
 I GUESS THAT NO ONE IS COMING
 I JUST WASN'T THAT STRONG

*(Horns and bells sound. Lights rise. Waves crash. By god, there
 [they] are; Carmine! Admittedly, not exactly in the garb of
 heroes, but in work boots and waders.)*

CARMINE *(sung)*

YOU'RE STILL TRYING TO FIND YOUR FEET
 BEEN SEARCHING ALL ALONG
 BUT THE WORLD IS ALWAYS CHANGING
 AND THE ROAD YOU WALK IS LONG
 YOU AND I WE'RE LIKE A PAIR
 SO EVEN WHEN I GO
 OUR BODY'S MAY BE FAR APART
 BUT IN YOUR HEART PLEASE KNOW

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT WITHOUT YOUR SHIELD AND SWORD
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
 BUT YOU DO HAVE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD

I'VE NEVER PUT MUCH STOCK IN FATE
 OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT
 THE WORKD IS ALWAYS CHANGING
 BUT YOU KNOW WHERE I'M AT
 SOMEDAY WE'LL LIVE SEPARATE LIVES
 THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT GOES
 BUT EVEN IF WE DRIFT APART
 IN YOUR HEART PLEASE KNOW

ROBIN AND CARMINE *(sung)*

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT WITHOUT YOUR SHIELD AND SWORD
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
 BUT YOU DO HAVE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD

I WAS

OUT THERE IN THE WILDERNESS
 MAKING MY OWN PATH
 BUT SOMETHING IN ME ALWAYS TUGGING
 I KNEW THE WAY BACK
 THROUGH THE DARK DAYS
 THROUGH THE HARD WAYS
 LONG PAST THE DAYS WE SHARED
 THEN I MET YOU AND I KNEW YOU. IT WAS LIKE A BREATH OF AIR

ROBIN, CARMINE, CHESEPEAKES *(sung)*
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT WITHOUT YOUR SHIELD AND SWORD
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
 BUT YOU DO HAVE TO TAKE IT
 MABYE FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT
 KEEP ON TRUCKING ON THE PATH YOU FORGED
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
 BUT YOU DO HAVE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD

*(Song transitions into an end phase as CARMINE tosses ROBIN a
 little sword and they get ready to fight.)*

CARMINE
 Excelsior, chum! We're going to make this myth-take back into
 fiction!

ROBIN
 Oh god, what horrifying things lurk in my subconscious mind?

*(A HUGE ROAR shakes the theater, and LOREN enters, operating...a
 rather smaller KILLER WHALE puppet.)*

ROBIN
 AHHHH!

CARMINE
 Right, I think you're misremembering this myth, Robin.

LOREN
(As WHALE:) REMEMBER ME, ROBIN? I HAVE COME FOR MY VENEGANCE!

ROBIN:

Shamoomoo, please! I got too old for you!

CARMINE

This seems a tad more personal than your unshackled id..

LOREN

YOU FEARED BEING SEEN AS WEAK. YOU FEARED LOVING SOMETHING YOU
THOUGHT YOU SHOULDN'T. I WAS SOFT AND PROTECTED YOU FROM THE
DARK, BUT ONE NIGHT, YOU LEFT ME. AND THE NEXT. BOTH OF US MORE
ALONE THAN WE BEGAN.

CARMINE

Ohhh! I get it. *(Putting down the sword:)* Pick up that whale,
Robin! Give it a big ol' fuckin' hug! Love on that man-eating
orca! Say you're sorry!

(ROBIN hugs the puppet. THE CHESAPEAKES sing an angelic chorus.)

ROBIN

I shouldn't have left you. I missed you.

LOREN

IT IS CRUEL TO BE FORGOTTEN, BUT CRUELER STILL TO BE FORSAKEN BY
THOSE YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR. REMEMBER THIS.

(EA stomps back onstage as LOREN takes off the puppet / exits.)

EA

Hmmm. Believe it or not, this was really supposed to be the
violence-of-action bit. You were supposed to slay your past,
that sort of thing.

(CARMINE gives ROBIN a side-hug.)

CARMINE

Well, fuck that. No comrade of mine will have the stuffing torn
out of them by an indignant bit of their wayward memories, not
even in their own head.

(Everyone, minus ROBIN and EA, begins exiting and clearing up the set.)

ROBIN

So, that's what these are going to be like?

EA

Not all of them. Opening different doors in your mind takes many different keys, you follow? C'mon, bud, lots to do, time's a-wasting, world's a- hm, there's no good way to loop "undrowned" into that. Let's get you back on your feet.

(As ROBIN exits, EA grabs one of THE CHESAPEAKES.)

EA

Maybe I'm just a muddied old god, but I'm remembering someone else. Someone else in this body. Can we run a check on Ahab?

(Groovy BLACKOUT.)

SCENE 7 (MEANWHILE THE SUN AND THE CLEAR PEBBLES OF THE RAIN ARE MOVING ACROSS THE LANDSCAPES)

(CARMINE sits on a couch facing the audience, "watching" TV again, channel-surfing and smoking a bong. The speargun from earlier has googly eyes and a bow tie. BILLY is j-chillin' by the couch again.)

1.7.1 - UNDER WALSER HSC -

(ROBIN is presenting sea-life facts while holding a horseshoe crab.)

ROBIN

-a miracle of evolution, living here in Baltimore! And we'll take a look at where they call "home" right after this break.

(BILLY prints a fortune. CARMINE reads.)

CARMINE *(Reading:)*

"I try all things, I achieve what I can. "

1.7.2 - ORGANIC SOAP 2 -

(Rose petals descend.)

BARTOK

We will be for ourselves alone.

BELA

Your love is incorrigibly banal.

(Rose petals descend again)

1.8.3. - IGNORAPHAN -

(People doing normal, daily things in slow motion.)

SYD EFFECTS

-feeling down about the state of the world, have your doctor see if Ignoraphan is right for you. Side effects may include

confusion over chaotic weather patterns, ignorance of previous levels of wildlife, failure to perceive that other crises have climactic causes at their root, addiction to fast fashion, extreme dietary modifications due to reactionary sentiment, sympathy with nostalgic causes due to physical discomfort, doomscore-

1.7.4 - PROSECUTION EXHIBIT 11F -

(A continuation of the scene from earlier. STARBUCK driving. STUBB, and FLASK are in the backseat. SOMEONE is in the passenger seat, either AHAB or ROBIN-unclear. STUBB is filming out the window and watching STARBUCK, who, with one hand, is holding a cold can of some appropriate bevvy to SOMEONE's wrist.)

AHAB (?)

-sprained it for sure. Can we stop by the CVS, I want to pick up a brace-

STARBUCK

On it.

AHAB

Thank you kindly, lover.

(FLASH elbows STUBB and the camera frame jostles.)

FLASK

Come on, turn it off.

STUBB

I haven't got the money shot yet!

ROBIN (?)

I'm sorry.

AHAB (?)

And some ibuprofen. I need my wrists, for various purposes.

(With an uninjured wrist SOMEONE ruffles STARBUCK's hair. STARBUCK leans into the touch. STUBB, via camera, catches FLASK

watching, looking pained—it is clear how reward and punishment operate here. ROBIN and AHAB's lines overlap, blur.)

ROBIN (?)

I just wasn't—I wasn't ready. I'm sorry.

AHAB (?)

Turn signal, Starbuck.

STARBUCK

We're ecoterrorists.

AHAB (?)

And on the road we have to be incognito—

FLASK

I hate people who don't use their turn signals.

ROBIN (?)

Ahab, can you please—?

FLASK

But I also hate people who...submit to the establishment
and use their turn signals?

AHAB (?)

Halyard we will discuss this—

(Interrupting them, a distant BOOM. STUBB whips around in time to catch a fireball rising from an industrial skyline. Everyone in the car starts whooping. Freeze-frame on the fire.)

1.7.5 - BROS TRAILER 2 -

OL' THUNDERTHROAT

THIS SUMMER.

SUZY

(In an inexplicable English accent:) Blimey! My time ladies
can't teach this cyber-bummer how to love!

CHARLIE

(A toaster with Mike's voice:) Mother why is the universe so cold.

1.7.6 - WBAL NEWS 3 (CHUCK) -

(A segment about carpentry, "Wood Chucking with Chuck Wood," silently playing in the background)

(ROBIN enters, disheveled and holding a stuffed orca.)

ROBIN

Hfhsjf.

CARMINE

You always were my most verbose roommate. Pull up a seat, chum, and take a puff on the Chesapeake steamer. You need a break.

ROBIN

Head?

CARMINE

Not today, no. *(Beat:)* OH. Yeah, no, your X-rays came back clean, you'll be fine. Just a bit groggy, said the good doctor. Siddown.

ROBIN

Speargun?

CARMINE

Pointdexter. I needed a buddy.

(ROBIN sits and takes a hit as the screen volume goes back up.)

CHUCK

-because you see, the thing about making something is that just as you change it, via making, the making changes you. You become someone different for having chosen what to make and hope to make it, which is why it's important to love what it is you choose to create, and love creating it.

(CHUCK looks directly at the camera.)

So now, we're gonna get weird with it.

1.7.7 - **THE TRIP** -

(A DOOR OPENS. Things transition to a David Attenborough-esque nature documentary that slowly spins out into colors and kaleidoscopic images. The BAND, similarly, starts slowly and flows into SUPERHIGHORGANISM.)

SUPERHIGHORGANISM

WERNER HAPPY-ZOG

(spoken-sung, sung-spoken)

THE CHESEPEAKE BAY IS ONE OF MANY
 FERTILE NATURAL WETLANDS THAT HUMANITY HAS
 OVER THE GREAT CYCLE OF CIVILIZATIONS
 CHOSEN TO SETTLE IN AND MAKE THEIR HOME
 IT IS NOT A RESIDENCE FOR THEM ALONE
 BUT ALSO FOR COUNTLESS SPECIES OF FISH AND FROG, MOLLUSK AND
 MAMMAL, GREAT TREES AND TINY INSECTS, AND
 BIRDS
 THOUGH THEY MAY MORE OFTEN THAN NOT IGNORE IT
 THE HEALTH OF HUMANITY IS DEPENDENT UPON THESE NEIGHBORS
 THEY RELY UPON THEM FOR THE CLEANLINESS OF THE WATER
 THE STRENGTH OF THE SOIL
 THE FOOD ON THEIR PLATES AND
 THE VERY GROWTH OF THEIR SOULS
 FOR THOUGH THEY WOULD DENY IT
 AND MANY DO
 THE TURN OF A FIN
 THE WAVING OF THE GRASSES IN THE WIND
 THE ANGLING OF A WING
 THE BUZZ OF CICADAS ON A HOT NIGHT
 ARE THE FOUNDATIONAL SENSORY EXPERIENCES UPON WHICH WE BASE
 JOY
 SERENITY
 AND FELLOW-FEELING
 FOR ALL THINGS
 AND NOW FOR A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

(The band stops as WILDLIFE ENSEMBLE, led by THE CHESAPEAKES,

begins creeping onto the stage.)

1.7.8 - BOH COMMERCIAL -

(A door opens to find a good ol' boy drinking a Natty Boh with some fishing rods in hand. The camera cuts to EA, mounted on the wall, zooming in. He then turns to the camera.)

EA

THE FOURTH DOOR IS OPEN!

(ALL THINGS begins as the WILDLIFE ENSEMBLE bursts mainstage.)

ALL THINGS

WILDLIFE ENSEMBLE *(sung)*

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL
ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL
ALL THINGS WILD AND WONDERFUL
ALL IN ALL, YOU'RE ALL, THAT'S ALL

AND AS I
WALKED ALONG THE RIVER
I STARED UPON THAT DISTANT SHORE
AND AS I
WONDERED AT ITS TURNING
IT SANG TO ME OF SOMETHING MORE
IT SAID
"WHERE IS IT THAT YOU'RE GOING?
AND ARE YOU ALREADY THERE?
HAVE I NOT BUILT A BANK FOR YOU
TO LIVE IN CASTLES IN THE AIR?"

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL
ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL
ALL THINGS WILD AND WONDERFUL
ALL IN ALL, YOU'RE ALL, THAT'S ALL

IT'S ALL HERE!
IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN
IF YOU'VE EYES ENOUGH TO SEE

IF YOU KEEP 'EM WIDE
 THEN YOU MIGHT NOT MISS
 THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

WHERE IS IT YOU'RE GOING
 (DID YOU EVER REALLY GIVE)
 AND ARE YOU ALREADY THERE
 (GIVE PEACE A CHANCE)
 WHAT IF ALL YOUR KNOWING
 (DID YOU EVER REALLY GIVE)
 DIDN'T MEAN YOU REALLY CARED
 (GIVE PEACE A CHANCE)

ALL THINGS, ALL THINGS
 ARE YOU NOT
 ALL THINGS, ALL THINGS
 YOU WERE BORN
 ALL THINGS, ALL THINGS
 IN DUST RETURNED
 ALL THINGS, ALL THINGS

(ENSEMBLE and CARMINE go off into the audience and exit that way, still singing, leaving ROBIN to their own devices.)

ALL THINGS, ALL THINGS... (until end)

(ROBIN, slowly, rises. They look at their wall of fish tanks for a while. Feed the fish during the song. Tidy the apartment. This is a moment to demonstrate care—a picking-up of life, of space, and, you know, of self. BILLY prints out a fortune.)

ROBIN *(Reading:)*

"I know not all that may be coming, but be it what it will,
 I'll go to it laughing."

SMALL THINGS

ROBIN *(sung)*

SMALL SOUNDS
 YOU ONLY HEAR WHEN YOU LOOK DOWN.
 SMALL THINGS
 YOU ONLY SEE WHEN YOU STOP TO THINK.

AM I STILL ME?

WHEN ALL THAT'S LEFT IS WHAT'S LEFT BEHIND
 IT'S THEN YOU'RE FORCED TO SEE
 THAT FOR ALL YOUR ENDLESS ENERGIES, FANTASIES REMAIN FANTASIES
 THE STORYIES THAT WE'VE TOLD OURSELVES
 ARE FINALLY GETTING OLD, AND NOW
 WHAT'S HERE IS JUST WHAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN
 AROUND ANYHOW

JUST THE SMALL BITS
 YOU IGNORE WHEN YOU MOVE TOO QUICK
 THE SMALL THINGS
 YOU ONLY SEE WHEN YOU STOP TO THINK.
 WHAT DO I THINK?

ON SECOND THOUGHT, AND THEN AGAIN,
 MAYBE EVEN THIRD OR FOURTH
 IS IT REALLY SO UNPLEASANT AS TO TARNISH YOUR SELF WORTH
 TO MAKE A LIFE THAT'S FOUNDED
 ON A TRUTH THAT'S FIRM AND GROUNDED?
 TO LIVE AND THRIVE AND BREATHE IN
 SOMETHING REAL

WHERE EVEN SMALL PARTS
 CAN BE DONE WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART
 ALL THOSE SMALL THINGS
 YOU ONLY SEE WHEN YOU STOP TO THINK.
 AND SO BEGIN

CHOOSE TO DO THE DISHES
 DUST THE BOOKSHELVES, FEED THE FISHES.
 DON'T IGNORE THEM OUT OF BOREDOM
 THERE'S A WORLD OF THINGS. WORK TOWARDS THEM!
 WHEN THE WATER'S HOT, THE PLATES ARE CLEAN
 YOUR ROOMMATE DOESN'T SEEM SO MEAN.

IT STARTS OUT SMALL BUT SEE HOW MUCH IT'S WORTH!
 CAN'T WE DO THE SAME FOR ALL THE LIFE ON EARTH?

'CAUSE IN THE COSMIC SCALE OF SKIES AND STARS

WE'RE ALL MORE CLOSE THAN WE ARE FAR
EVERYTHING THAT YOU'VE HELD DEAR
IS ALL HERE ON OUR PALE BLUE SPHERE

IT MIGHT SEEM BIG BUT ALL IN ALL
IT'S REALLY RATHER SMALL

WE'RE ALL JUST SMALL THINGS
THE SAME AS ALL THINGS
AND THAT'S OKAY

*(ROBIN glows with a new light. [They're] specifically feeding
and paying attention to the betta from earlier.)*

ROBIN (*Sung, to the tune of Joline:*)
Gene Ween, Gene Ween, Gene Ween, Gene Wee-een-

*(CARMINE, stumbling back in the door with one of the ENSEMBLE,
still in their wildlife outfit, notices this new light.)*

CARMINE
Woah there, chum! You've got-hang on. (*To ENSEMBLE:*) It's
not you, lover-friend, this just isn't your native range.
Go make some birder's day. Night. Whatever.

*(CARMINE gives ENSEMBLE a drunken smooch on the forehead. The
ENSEMBLE member exits. CARMINE shakes ROBIN down, smiling.)*

CARMINE
What light through yonder Robin's-eye breaks! Strange, but
welcome. Hello again, you.

ROBIN
Hey. Thanks. I don't know, actually. I can't articulate it. One
of those things. I'm just-Carm, I am feeling better. Maybe just
about Gene but. Also about me. About it all. I think maybe this
is gonna be a good year of being alive.

CARMINE
One of these days I'd like to meet this brain-fish of yours and
shake his salty hand. He's doing a number on you. Many numbers!

ROBIN

It's crazy. I just—I feel more here. I feel like I can make choices, and do them, you know what I mean? Does that—

(A WINDOW BREAK sound-effect. ROBIN action-hero rolls, grabs the SPEAR GUN, and fires it offstage. A yelp and a groan. FLASK stumbles onstage with a harpoon protruding from their arm and a ski mask in their hand.)

ROBIN

Oh shit. Oh shit. Oh shit.

CARMINE

(Grabbing keys:) I'LL START THE CAR GET BANDAGES AND DO THAT.

ROBIN

Holy shit holy shit are you okay.

FLASK

I hate it when people ask if I'm okay. *(Then, briefly shaking their persona:)* Uh. No. No, this hurts, like, a lot.

ROBIN

Shit. Shit, shit, hold still. *(Bandaging:)* Flask, what the fuck is going on?

FLASK

I dunno, man, it's all leagues above my pay grade. We got a message. From Ahab. They've been sending us messages. We haven't seen them since—well, since—you know. They've got us doing freakier shit all the time and they said we had to “check the countdown clock on the bomb” and when I asked “hey man what the fuck does that mean” they said “go see if Robin is making it rain yet.”

ROBIN

What does that even...what? *(A beat:)* Making it rain...

FLASK

No clue. I just—I don't know what the fish thing was, but I was...scared of Ahab having it. The way they acted about it. How...gleeful they were. It made me...I dunno, it just made me scared. You used to be good at scary things. There's, you know. Cops. Stress. And there's some stuff with the fish, I guess. Big deal fish stuff.

ROBIN

Big deal fish stuff. Right. *(Looking at the bandage:)* That's good enough, let's get you to the car.

FLASK

If you were like this when we were blowing up that Aramco office, shit, we woulda KICKED ASS. Where did this whole badass action-adventure Robin thing come from?

(ROBIN looks very closely at FLASK.)

ROBIN

There's a fish-shaped god in my head trying to get me a date.

(FLASK looks blankly for a second, then smiles.)

FLASK

I love it when Robin gets weird. Woo! Ow.

1.7.8 - BROS TRAILER 3 -

(A Twilight filtered series of offices, cutting quickly.)

THUNDERTHROAT

THE ROMANCE OF THE SUMMER

LES

I'm a predator...but without you I'm nothing.

(LES starts making out viciously with VARNEY. ORLOK and LIONCOURT are already making out in the background. Cut to AMANI and LAURA.)

AMANI

I don't want to live like this anymore!

LAURA

You don't have to. (*AMANI and LAURA kiss more gently before LAURA breaks away:*) Wait. What am I going to tell my mom?

1.8.9 - BLUEBEARD 3 -

WIFE 2

we're onboard with the kayak guide thing, actually.

BLUEBEARD

You're kidding.

WIFE 1

No, one hundred percent. It's all about this man's inner darkness, and the universalization of it-

WIFE 3

And that can't be right!

WIFE 2

We're not having with this Freudian stuff. "The rot at the core of all things", yeah, we know. Let's go kayaking about it.

WIFE 1

Not us though. We're in a canoe.

1.8.10 - "INTERMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT" -

(*THE CHESAPEAKES* emerge onstage. Above them, an animation plays in the style of that old-time "Let's all go to the lobby" animation, but instead of dancing snacks it is various species of fish and marine wildlife. *THE CHESAPEAKES* sing "Let's go out to the lobby" and do a little dance. Ends on a little button, they strike a pose, grin-)

1.8.11 - AN INTERRUPTION -

(*AHAB* holding a camera to face themselves, walking in heavy rain.)

AHAB

—on? Hello? Hello—hello, to the people of Baltimore, and America, and the world! My name is Ahab. I am your doom by drowning. All my means are mad, my motive and my object sane; the saving of the Earth, without you on it. Most of you, in fact. I, I am a water-cooled, prophet-motivated suicide machine, and all of you are coming with me.

I come to you with a message: shit is about to get fucking real. So you—yeah, you, in the front, and you, row ten, hi there, and everyone in the audience—go get some snacks, buy some beer. It might be your last, and soggy popcorn is hardly any good anyway. Brace yourselves. (*AHAB grins:*) I always know where my audience is. We'll see you in...fifteen? Bye for now. Man, it's really coming down, huh?

(*THE CHESAPEAKES look concerned.*)

END OF ACT I

ACT 2

SCENE 1 (OVER THE PRAIRIES AND THE DEEP TREES, THE MOUNTAINS AND THE RIVERS)

2.1.1 - UNDER WALSER, THE END -

(Slow zoom in to ROBIN at [their] desk, hands folded, working very hard to not cry.)

ROBIN

-and I want to say, to everyone out there, thank you for watching. I can't tell you what it has meant to me, what it means that I was able to—to get to do this. I'm so lucky. So...to all you creatures out there, great and small, plankton to whales: I love you. Thank you.

([They] fail, and cry.)

PRODUCER

Robin, this is the last episode, kid, you've got to-

ROBIN

(Sobbing:) But what do I do now?

PRODUCER

Après moi, le deluge. Move home and watch some TV. We have to finish-

2.1.2 - TRAFFIC -

(What it says on the box)

(ROBIN helps FLASK into the back seat of a car. CARMINE is driving, looking harried. THE CHESAPEAKES or onstage, making themselves up for TANK BANGER. FLASK watches them.)

WILD GEESE

THE CHESAPEAKES *(sung)*

I'VE SEEN ALL THERE IS TO SEE

THIS IS ALL THERE IS
 I WILL NOT FEEL GUILTY
 FOR BEING WHAT I'VE BEEN
 AND THOUGH I'M DRAINED AND WASTED
 I HEAR THEM LOUD AND CLEAR
 THE SOUND OF AUTUMNS TASTED
 COMING HOME, MY DEAR

[SPOKEN, QUIET]

MARY OLIVER I LOVE YOU

FLASK

Are those angels? Am I dying?

CARMINE

You're not dying, you're bleeding a lot. They feel similar,
 sure, but leaky does not equal liquidated. Hang on, almost
 there, kid.

FLASK

Halyard—

ROBIN

I'm not—.

FLASK

Halyard, you from—from when you were us. I have two final
 requests.

ROBIN

Okay, Flask. What?

FLASK

Don't tell Stubb and Starbuck but I still have the pictures from
 when you were hanging out with us in a shoebox under my bed.
 It's labelled "Hardcore Pornography." I know we were all doing a
 lot of drugs and the sex wasn't all that great but I still miss
 you sometimes.

ROBIN

That's—wow. Incredibly sweet for someone with a harpoon
 sticking out of their shoulder. That I put there.

FLASK

Nah, fuck it. Cool way to die. And I can drum left-handed if live! Since I am, though—dying—can you, uh, hook up the Bluetooth and put on Tank Banger.

ROBIN

For fuck's sake Flask you use one of your dying wishes to bum the aux cord?

CARMINE

Do it! Just do it!

FLASK

NOT THE REMASTERED ONE, EITHER, I CAN TELL.

(They fall back as heavy metal starts playing. THE CHESEPEAKES look like The Ramones. They sing!)

TANK BANGER

THE CHESEPEAKES *(sung)*

DELTA P KILLLLLLLLLLLLLLLS!

UNHOLY DIVER!

DRUNK ON YOUR NITROGEN BACCHANALIA

CAN YOU FEEL THE PULL OF WICKED DEEP?

BYFORD DOLPHINS DANCING AS YOUR FAILURE

DRAGS YOU DOWN TO WHERE THE BLACK GOLD SEEPS!

TANK BANGER, ARC WILDER

ENDLESS BLUE FOR FILTHY GREEN

TANK BANGER, MASKED LIAR

BABES ON PIPELINE OIL WEAN

UNHOLY DIVER!

YOUR FINS CHURN TRASHY DEPTHS, POLLUTED WATERS

WHAT WILL CLEAN THE STAINS OF YOUR BLACKENED SOUL?

SUNKEN BELLS ARE TOLLING LOUD FOR THEE

THE OCEAN CALLS HER CHILDREN HOME

TANK BANGER, ARC WILDER
 ENDLESS BLUE FOR FILTHY GREEN
 TANK BANGER, MASKED LIAR
 BABES ON PIPELINE OIL WEAN

PUNK OUTFIT / CARMINE / FLASK (sung)

TANK BANGER, TANK BANGER
 TANK BANGER, TANK BANGER
 TANK BANGER, TANK BANGER
 TANK BANGER, TANK BANGER
 TANK BANGER, TANK BANGER
 TANK BANGER, TANK BANGER

(In the middle of this chaos, FLASK has worked themselves up into such a fit that they rip the harpoon out of their own shoulder, screaming. ROBIN passes out. CARMINE exits. A CHESEPEAKE pulls a fortune from Billy, who is nearby with a Red Cross on his front.)

THE CHESAPEAKES

"Swerve me? The path to my fixed purpose is laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run. Naught's an obstacle, naught's an angle to the iron way!"

(All Exit.)

**SCENE 2 (MEANWHILE THE WILD GEESE, HIGH IN THE
CLEAN BLUE AIR, ARE HEADING HOME AGAIN)**

2.2.1 - BEHOLD THE JELLYFISH BALLET -

(The background looks like the background, it's the stuff in front.)

BALLET OUTLINE

- JELLYFISH DANCERS come on and play a bit.
- They wake ROBIN, who is embarrassed to be part of their games at first but learns fast and becomes more graceful.
- ROBIN is hesitant when the DANCERS discover FLASK in a heap on the stage, but they plant a polyp puppet on [them], which quickly matures to a larva puppet, and then another JELLYFISH DANCER.
- They all play the games they had from earlier, confident and accepting.

SCENE 3 (WHOEVER YOU ARE, NO MATTER HOW LONELY)

(Applause. EA shows up and immediately eats one of the JELLYFISH DANCERS. The Equal Bites set is being assembled in the background, including BILLY.)

EA

Excuse my snacking, I missed lunch. Hiya, Billy.

ROBIN

Oh, THAT'S inconsiderate. Even if this is a dream, right? Flask is probably fine.

EA

Yep. You passed out with the whole harpoon-shoulder business. You've been passing out a lot lately—we've been leaning on the blood supply to your brain.

ROBIN

HEY.

EA

Relax, has it not been working?

ROBIN

I haven't managed to ask Loren out yet, so. No. And I'm, okay, to be honest, I'm not totally sure about this apocalypse—

EA

Hm. How's about we practice, then? I've had this door up my sleeve for a second now, hang on. You were really on the money there, shooting Flask, but I'd say you dropped the ball a little not pulling it right on out. Bo, number five, please!

ROBIN

You're not *supposed* to pull them out!

EA

Of course not! But your failure to act didn't come from your careful consideration of proper first aid, it came from fear,

and fear cut off your better judgement! Fear cut you off from yourself. The version of you that would've known what to do.

ROBIN

That's not fair. That's really not fair.

EA

(Getting alarmingly close.)

Did I say this would be fair. I have a responsibility, Robin. Everything that swims, floats, and drifts in the oceans, the rivers, the creeks, the fucking puddles in the parking lot. I am their steward. I owe them everything. I am sworn to protect them. "Fair" doesn't figure into any of this. You MUST act. You as my prophet MUST ACT. *(A beat:)* Where are you, kid? I know you're here. Captain?

ROBIN

What?

EA

Well, anyway. Would you like capers or no capers?

ROBIN

What?

(THE CHESEPEAKES roll out a giant styrofoam clamshell container as the Jellyfish dancers sing out in angelic chorus. It opens, and there's LOREN, dressed fully as a bagel with cream cheese and lox in imitation of the Birth of Venus. A table with two chairs is hustled out. CONSIDER THIS tunes up and in, a silly number with serious bits.)

CONSIDER THIS

ROBIN (*sung*)

I SUPPOSE SINCE IT'S A PRACTICE RUN
I'LL TRY AND HAVE A LITTLE FUN AND
MAYBE TRY A LINE OR TWO
IT'S JUST THAT I'M A LITTLE SHY
AND THOUGH I THINK I'LL CATCH
[THEIR] EYE
THE TRICK IS IN THE COMING THROUGH

LOREN (*sung*)

GIVE IT A SHOT
COME IN HOT!
I'M JUST A DREAM YOUR TALKING TO
I'LL LEND AN EAR
I'M JUST A SCHMEAR
OF YOUR LIBIDO'S MIXED UP BREW

TELL ME IS THAT ALL YOU'VE GOT?
WE WORK IN A COFFEE SHOP

SAVE ME PLEASE
THOUGH I'M CREAM CHEESE
SOME SALMON AND SOME CHIVES
YOU'VE TURNED A QUESTION OF FUN
INTO A DEEPER, DULLER ONE

THIS IS GOING TO BE HARDER THAN
I THOUGHT

CONSIDER THIS!
I'M OFF THE APPS HAVING A FIT
I LIKE YOU AND I GIVE A SHIT
BUT THE WORDS FILL ME WITH DOUBT
WE CAN JOKE AND LAUGH AND DANCE
AND SING

WELL
DO YOU WANNA GET COFFEE SOMETIME?

ALRIGHT FINE
I'VE BEEN ATTRACTED TO YOU FOR A
BIT
AND I'D LIKE TO SEE IF WE CAN FIT
SOME OF OURSELVES INTO EACH OTHER'S
LIVES

THIS IS GOING TO BE HARDER THAN
I THOUGHT

CONSIDER THIS!
I'M OFF THE APPS HAVING A FIT
I LIKE YOU AND I GIVE A SHIT
BUT THE WORDS JUST WON'T COME OUT
WE CAN JOKE AND LAUGH AND DANCE AND
SING

BUT ROMANCE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT
THING
CONSIDER THIS, CONSIDER THIS,
CONSIDER THIS!

NOT BAD!

A LITTLE WEIRD

NOW THAT'S DERIVATIVE

MHMM

BIG TALK

BEGGAR'S CAN'T BE CHOOSERS
AND THOUGH I'M ALL FOR DATING
LOSERS
PLEADING IS SOMETHING OF A...TURN
OFF

WHAT COULD THE RIGHT WORDS BE!

CONSIDER THIS!
I'M OFF THE APPS HAVING A FIT
I LIKE YOU AND I GIVE A SHIT
BUT THE WORDS FILL ME WITH DOUBT
WE CAN JOKE AND LAUGH AND DANCE
AND SING
BUT ROMANCE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT
THING
CONSIDER THIS, CONSIDER THIS,
CONSIDER THIS!

OH

BUT ROMANCE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT
THING
CONSIDER THIS, CONSIDER THIS,
CONSIDER THIS!

LET ME TRY AGAIN
YOU LIGHT MY SOUL ON FIRE!

I'M ENFLAMED BY MY DESIRE

I'M JUST A HUNK A HUNK OF BURNING
LOVE!

I ADORE YOU

I IMPLORE YOU

WON'T YOU JUST GIVE ME A SHOT?

WHAT COULD THE RIGHT WORDS BE!

CONSIDER THIS!
I'M OFF THE APPS HAVING A FIT
I LIKE YOU AND I GIVE A SHIT
BUT THE WORDS JUST WON'T COME OUT
WE CAN JOKE AND LAUGH AND DANCE AND
SING
BUT ROMANCE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT
THING
CONSIDER THIS, CONSIDER THIS,
CONSIDER THIS!

I WANNA HUG YOU
HOLD YOU

YEAH?

KEEP TALKING

RRRRR

A SHAME

HOW COY

I'M SURE IN MY BREAST MY HEART
IS STIRRED

BUT THOSE AREN'T WORDS I HAVEN'T
HEARD

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER, ROBIN, FLY
LIKE A BIRD!

CONSIDER THIS!

I'M OFF THE APPS HAVING A FIT
I LIKE YOU AND I GIVE A SHIT
BUT THE WORDS FILL ME WITH DOUBT
WE CAN JOKE AND LAUGH AND DANCE
AND SING

BUT ROMANCE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT
THING

GO FOR IT, KID.

KNEAD YOU

SQUEEZE YOU

BEND YOU OVER

KISS AND PLEASE YOU

BUY YOU THINGS

GET OLD WITH YOU

FLY TO GREECE

AND KATHMANDU

I'VE A CURSE THAT MAKES MY TONGUE
TWIST IN REVERSE

MANGLE THOUGHTS AND PAINTED VERSE
ABOUT

THE WAY I'D LIKE TREAT YOU RIGHT
AND SLEEP WITH YOU LIKE EVERY NIGHT

CONSIDER THIS!

I'M OFF THE APPS HAVING A FIT
I LIKE YOU AND I GIVE A SHIT
BUT THE WORDS JUST WON'T COME OUT
WE CAN JOKE AND LAUGH AND DANCE AND
SING

BUT ROMANCE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT
THING

ONE MORE SHOT

OKAY

I HAVE HAD A STANDING INVITE
WHERE CARMINE'S TENDING BAR TONIGHT
[THEY] SAID [THEY'VE] GOT A TWO TOP
THERE

WITH THE BEST BURRATTA ANYWHERE

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED ITALIAN FOOD
BUT NEVER WANTED TO INTRUDE
BY GOING SOLO FRIDAY NIGHT

UH HUH
OOO!

SO IT WOULD BE TO MY DELIGHT
IF YOU COULD JOIN ME THERE AT NINE
WE'LL EAT AND LAUGH AND HAVE SOME
WINE

TEXT YOU BACK
THRIFT WITH YOU
MAKE YOU SMILE WHEN YOU'RE BLUE!

I'LL WALK YOU HOME
KISS YOUR HEAD
MAYBE STAY WITH YOU INSTEAD?
TEXT YOU BACK
THRIFT WITH YOU
MAKE YOU SMILE WHEN YOU'RE BLUE!

CONSIDER THIS, CONSIDER THIS,
CONSIDER THIS!

CONSIDER THIS, CONSIDER THIS,
CONSIDER THIS!

(ROBIN and LOREN begin viciously making out in the middle of the stage as THE CHESAPEAKES drag them apart with various improvisations about there being no time for fantasizing. Various crew and everyone else begins clearing up the stage for another transition. ROBIN stands there huffing as EA comes over.)

EA

(Mulling:) This is really what you want. Huh. It's the same passion, just. Redirected. Still with fire, but warming instead of burning. You really have changed. How do you feel?

ROBIN

I feel—okay, I feel really good about that. Hell yeah. Hell yeah! I'll just—wait, where am I now?

EA

Oh, you're passed out on the couch.

ROBIN

(Suddenly woozy:) Oh. I am?

SCENE 4 (THE WORLD OFFERS ITSELF TO YOUR IMAGINATION)

(CARMINE sits center stage in the apartment, drinking something. ROBIN's head is in their lap. CARMINE strokes ROBIN's hair, while ROBIN holds Shamoomoo.)

2.4.1 - NEEDLEDROP PARODY -

(Reviewing The Aquapunk's latest album.)

ANT FANTA

Yeah, it's kind of hard to parse lyrically. They keep talking about using an Assyrian God that Robin Walser told them about to kill everyone and flood the planet. And I would love to say "it's a metaphor," but-

(Lyrics from songmeaning.com pop up, "confirmed by Ahab")
 "It's not a metaphor, we're going to do this." I mean, what the fuck, guys. This is a much worse effort than Rainbow Warlords in that eco-rock space, it's clear that Robin's "Ahab" identity or stage name or whatever-

2.4.2 - BROS TRAILER 4 -

(Black screen with "Rostro De La Nacion" in serious font, cutting to LEMPIRA in full face paint and no shirt, with reading glasses, interviewing YURITZI in Spanish.)

THUNDERTHROAT

[TONIGHT ON ROSTRO DE LA NACION]

LEMPIRA

[What opinions for peace are available to the Lenca people?]

YURITZI

[Well, there are several peaceful paths-]

(LEMPIRA slams a macuahuitl on the table.)

LEMPIRA

[None, just as I thought. War it is.]

2.4.3 - PROSECUTION, ADDITIONAL EXHIBIT -

(AHAB and ROBIN are sitting together in what appears to be the hallway of a police precinct. Angle of the footage suggests a security camera. A date and time stamp at the bottom but both are unreadable. Audio is bad, and subtitled. We can't quite tell which is ROBIN, which is AHAB, save for the subtitles.)

AHAB

So. What was the point, then?

ROBIN

Don't do this. Please.

AHAB

You don't tell me what to do, or when to do it. What was the point, Halyard? Of all of it? If you were just going-

ROBIN

I can't be-

AHAB

-to stab us all in the back?

ROBIN

You guys-you guys pressured me! You guys did that!

AHAB

You wanted this. You wanted it. And then you got scared of the consequences. Sometimes we take falls for each other. Sometimes, someone has to make a sacrifice for the cause.

ROBIN

Don't give me that bullshit. I know about sacrifice-

AHAB

No you don't. Loss isn't the same thing as sacrifice.

ROBIN

I'm not doing this anymore. I can't do it. I don't believe in, in taking life, Ahab. I can't believe that anymore. I can't. I can't. (Beat:) What the fuck have you sacrificed?

AHAB

Plenty. (Beat:) And now, I'm sacrificing you.

2.4.4 - WBAL NEWS 4 -

(WALTER interviewing ADOZEN PLAIN, *Equal Bites'* bagel-maker. ADOZEN pulls a bagel up from a boiling pot.)

ADOZEN

-out of the water. Look at that! See, people talk about centering, how important the middle is. I don't buy that. A good bagel has a hole, and everything important about it is on the edges. But if it didn't have a hole, it wouldn't be a bagel. Everything that matters happens outside, but the inside is what defines it.

2.4.5 - ORGANIC SOAP 3 -

(Rose petals descend.)

BELA

I can't imagine loving who you are.

BARTOK

Keep some room in your heart for the unimaginable.

(BILLY THE PROPHETIC TROUT, hanging out by the couch, prints out another fortune, which CARMINE carefully retrieves as the screens go back to **x.x.x, FISH TANK DEFAULT**)

CARMINE

"...to the last I grapple with thee; from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake I spit my last breath at thee." Woah. Ominous, Billy. Real ominous.

ROBIN

Mmmm. Fed the fish? Gene Ween meds?

CARMINE

I fed them. I promise.

ROBIN
Flask okay?

CARMINE
Better. A badass scar and a tall tale to tell. Relax, chum. I
gotchu. *(Beat:)* Halyard, was it?

ROBIN
Urgh. Ahab was really all-in on oceanic monikers. I picked out
Halyard. You know, rope that moves the sails. Ahab was good at
making me feel...like everything I'd lost—was somebody's fault,
and I had a, a *purpose* in that way. [They have] that thing. When
I was with [them] I was integral. I thought so, anyway.

CARMINE
I know. Some people have that shitty magic. I don't
think...well, hm. I think [they] didn't make you integral. I
think [they were] just...good at putting a spotlight on the fact
that you already are.

ROBIN
Emphasis on "urgh." Fuck. I'm concussed! What's today?

CARMINE
Friday. Weekend ho! Birthday's come and gone

(ROBIN is up fast.)

ROBIN
Is it Friday already? I have to go to the show. I have to tell
Loren—

CARMINE
Wait a minute now, hang on—!

(ROBIN is getting [their] coat on, fixing [their] hair.)

ROBIN
No, no it's okay, I want this. I need to do this. I'm. I'm going
to ask Loren out. I have a plan. Do you trust me?

CARMINE

Of course, Robin. I always have.

ROBIN

Good. Yeah. You have. I love you, Carmine.

CARMINE

Love you too.

(They hug. CARMINE regains their bearings some.)

CARMINE

Well! No sense in dilly-dalling, then! A lion does not concern itself with head injuries or hallucinations of fish! Go get 'em, first-mate-of-my-heart! Who knows what Loren could be doing now?

2.4.6 - NO PANTS EGGS -

(LOREN in their apartment kitchen from the waist up and behind.)

LOREN

(Singing, frying an egg, playing with a mirror.)

No pants eggs,

No pants eggs!

Standing at the counter makin' no pants eggs.

Stage makeup,

Fun makeup!

Standing at the counter doin'

(Oil sizzles.)

Fuck!

Eggs with lashes,

Eggs with lashes-

2.4.7 - A BUS STOP -

(As most of the apartment set is cleared away. ROBIN approaches a bus stop, and we hear the sounds of a bus departing. A PERSON is sitting at the bus stop, a comically large newspaper covering their face. BILLY is also here.)

ROBIN

HEY! HEY HEY HEY WAIT! WAIT!

(The bus is immune to persuasion. ROBIN passes the awning of the bus stop, panting.)

ROBIN

Fuck.

(BILLY THE PROPHETIC TROUT prints out a fortune.)

ROBIN

Hey Billy. *(Reading:)* "God, God is against thee, old man; forbear! 'tis an ill voyage!"

AHAB

(Chuckling:) I always liked that line.

ROBIN

Wait. Wait—

**SCENE 5 (CALLS TO YOU LIKE THE WILD GEESE, HARSH
AND EXCITING)**

(Darkness. ROBIN slouches on the bench. The whole cast has been herded out onstage by FLASK, prodding them. FLASK, as well as the rest of the AQUAPUNKS, have put on disguises to blend in with the ensemble. AHAB is dressed as EA, emerging from behind ROBIN, shadowing over them and just out of ROBIN's view. AQUAPUNKS force ENSEMBLE into uneasy bows.)

ROBIN

What's happening? What's going on?

AHAB

(As EA:) Congratulations, Robin! You did a great job and served as my prophet! The doors have been opened! It's time to flood the world now!

(A crew member starts to tie ROBIN's hands up.)

ROBIN

But...no. No? This isn't right. Ugh, my head...what...I was at the bus stop. What are we doing?

AHAB

(As EA:) We are fulfilling our prophecy! I am so proud of you, Robin-you have been such a fine prophet. Now it is begun. Now the rains will fall.

ROBIN

No! This isn't how it's supposed to go! What does killing everybody do?! What does that solve?!

AHAB

The ends, friend, are so beautiful.

ROBIN

And I didn't get my date with Loren! I didn't get to ask for my date with—

(AHAB pauses, then takes off the disguise.)

AHAB

You asked the great god of the oceans for a date with Loren? *(To ALL:)* Call it! Fuck off! *(To AUDIENCE:)* Just a second, folks.

(The AQUAPUNKS herd the ENSEMBLE offstage, exiting with them. ROBIN and AHAB are mostly alone onstage, save for THE CHESAPEAKES, distanced, humming some ominous underscoring.)

AHAB

Christ. You really know how to throw away an opportunity. How is Ea doing your noggin, the good ol' boy?

ROBIN

Why can't you just leave me alone?

(AHAB leans in, close. ROBIN doesn't recoil. There is something powerfully earnest about AHAB-something upsettingly sincere.)

AHAB

Halyard. Halyard, I missed you. Don't you remember dreaming together? About eco-friendly, geo-thermal-powered volcano lairs? Monologues about recycling?

ROBIN

I was lost, Ahab. I was afraid. And you took away the only thing I ever wanted to do. You took advantage of that. Of me.

AHAB

You did that yourself. You made your choices. But me? I saw you. I saw the better version of you. *(Turning away:)* It begins with a fish. A fish with a belly button that, legend says, has a god living inside it. MRIs reveal some strange, strange things in its fishy head; who knows how to get them out? Why, our good friend Stubb, the neurophysicist.

ROBIN

Wait, really?

AHAB

They have a doctorate. You were the only one without one, Robin, do keep up. There really is something about academia that drives people to leather and ecoterrorism. And Starbuck has their PhD in Ancient Theologies. [They] know what's happening to you. What should have been happening to me. God. I'm so suited for the gig: a perfect self-knowledge, a fundamental desire to see the world drowned, a little discipline, and hey presto! The apocalypse and its champion. (*Leaning into ROBIN:*) And then somebody fucked up somewhere.

ROBIN

Don't— don't be like this.

AHAB

There's a Judas in our house. You would never take that box. You'd never be bold enough to just pick some damn thing up.

ROBIN

You don't know that.

AHAB

I do know that, Halyard. I know you very well.

(*Kneeling again.*)

This is something you wanted once too. Don't you remember? And I wanted to ask, for-old time's sake—if you'd be so kind as to volunteer.

ROBIN

Volunteer?

AHAB

Of course, old friend. (*Gesturing to the band:*) Boys, don't fail me now.

(*Band starts THE ACID JAZZ APOCALYPSE. This is AHAB's moment.*)

2.5.1 - AJA LOOP -

(*Kaleidescoping patterns and occasional reversals of who appears to be onstage doing what.*)

THE ACID JAZZ APOCALYPSE

AHAB (*sung*)

GOD LOVES A SAXAPHONE AND THE FLOOD!

EVER SINCE THERE'S BEEN A DAWN, THERE'S BEEN A TWILIGHT TO MATCH
THERE WAITS A HEATED OVEN FOR EVERY CHICKEN EVER HATCHED
TRAGEDY IS BUILT IN
THE FOUNDATION ALWAYS FAILS
NO DISCIPLES WITHOUT JUDAS
AND NO MIRACLES WITHOUT NAILS

EVER SINCE MAN CORDONED OFF FROM NATURE AS IT STANDS
HE DOOMED HIMSELF TO WRACK AND RUIN UPON TAR-BLACKENED SANDS
EVERYTHING THAT BURNS AND SMOKES WILL CHOKE US IN THE END
WHAT'S MORE IT WILL BE WELL DESERVED FOR OUR FOCUS ON DIVIDENDS

BUT HEY!

IT'S OKAY!

IT'S THE ACID JAZZ APOCALYPSE

NO ONE MAKES IT OUT ANYWAY

HEY!

IT'S ALRIGHT

SHAKE YOUR ASS A LITTLE BIT, WE'LL DROWN THE EARTH TONIGHT

POLLUTION IS A SIN, IT IS THE FIRST AND LAST
SINCE EVE THREW AWAY THAT APPLE CORE, WE'VE ALL BEEN NAUGHT BUT
TRASH

WE TAKE AND TAKE FROM OCEAN'S DEEP BUT ALL WE HAVE TO SHOW
IS ALIENATION FROM EACH OTHER, A VICIOUS STATUS QUO
PERHAPS WE COULD STILL BE FORGIVEN IF FOR LOVE OUR WORLD HAD
EVER STRIVEN

FOR UNITY AND KINDNESS TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBORS THAT WE FAIN ADORE

BUT HEY!

IT'S OKAY!

IT'S THE ACID JAZZ APOCALYPSE

FLIP THE SWITCH, BOMBS AWAY!

HEY!

IT'S ALRIGHT

GO GRACIOUS, WHY DON'T YOU, INTO THAT WET NIGHT

[VARIOUS HEYS, BIG ENDING.]

(A graphic of a door opening behind ROBIN signals the end of the song if it wasn't clear already.)

ROBIN

Holy shit, no! No! Oh my god, cut the music! What the fuck, Ahab? I'm not going to be voluntarily party to global genocide because "humans mess things up." Oh my god!

AHAB

It isn't like you didn't used to think like that.

ROBIN

YEAH AND IT WAS FUCKING CRAZY! I WAS SCARED AND ALONE AND NEEDED YEARS OF MEDICATION AND PSYCH HELP AND I GOT BETTER! I GOT BETTER! WANTING IT ALL TO GO AWAY WAS A SICKNESS! WHEN DID EVERYONE GET OKAY WITH THAT? I LOVE MY FRIENDS! I LOVE MY COWORKERS AND GENE WEEN AND MY FISH AND THE DISHES IN THE SINK AND MY BEAT UP COUCH AND MY APARTMENT AND MY OLD TV SHOW, AND I'M NOT THAT PERSON ANYMORE, BUT WHEN I WAS I, I, I LOVE FLASK I LOVE STUBB I LOVE STARBUCK I LOVE—

AHAB

God, Halyard. It's going to be the hard way, isn't it.

(AHAB, with a surprising tenderness, puts their hand on the back of ROBIN's head. In a deft motion, there's duct tape over ROBIN's mouth. ROBIN stares. But the resistance is mixed—not entirely resistance.)

AHAB

Would've been nice, you know? If you remembered yourself. If you remembered us. So be it.

(AHAB takes off their jacket and gives it to ROBIN, gently lifting the hood over [their] head.)

AHAB

Here. Looks like rain. Come on, Halyard. Let's go.

(AHAB takes ROBIN by the hand. ROBIN is taken to the edge of the stage, where the AQUAPUNKS receive [them]. Smiling. BILLY prints out a fortune. It flutters to the floor. AHAB returns, picks it up. Sits and leans against BILLY's cabinet.)

AHAB

"There is a wisdom that is woe; but there is a woe that is madness." Ah, Billy. What do you know?

(AHAB sings a solo chorus of ACID JAZZ APOCALYPSE as THE CHESAPEAKES underscore him with some humming. Meanwhile, the scene changes...)

SCENE 6 (OVER AND OVER ANNOUNCING YOUR PLACE)

(We're outside The Ecco Club. CARMINE is sitting on one of those Baltimore benches that says "The Greatest City in America," smoking a cig, worriedly. LOREN enters and approaches CARMINE. At the approach of an audience, CARMINE turns the persona back up.)

LOREN

Hey! You're here, as ever.

CARMINE

Mine is the presence that anchors the inimitable aura of the surprise show! I am holding up The Vibe.

LOREN

Fuck yeah, brother. Thank you for your service. Psyched for tonight—put new strings on my mandolin two weeks ago and now they are perfectly warmed up. You seen Robin yet? I thought [they] were coming.

CARMINE

No. They were supposed to be here already. With you, in fact. They said they had something they wanted to talk to you about.

LOREN

You know, I've had a little crush on them for a while. And I've been hoping they'd ask me out.

CARMINE

You don't want to do the asking?

LOREN

I know what I want. Not afraid of it. But I think...

CARMINE

[They're] afraid.

LOREN

Yeah. And I need to know they're, you know. Gonna be able to get through that kind of fear. (A beat:) I don't know, it feels

crazy, that they're so afraid, right? Because I watched them on TV, and I thought, "Wow, it must take a lot of guts to do what you love and turn it into something you can share with everyone." Every time we put on a live show I want to barf a little. But Robin was always just—so excited, it looked like. And then...well, you know. You can't be—I mean, you can't be afraid, to do...the other stuff [they] were doing, right?

CARMINE

No. No, I think that's actually fear. Very profound fear.

LOREN

It's action. It's—I mean, it took something.

(CARMINE's bravado begins to slip.)

CARMINE

I'm worried about them.

LOREN

What do you mean?

CARMINE

I would never doubt the impossible, the implausible, the downright absurd. You know me. Yes? But there are...elements of this story that don't make sense.

LOREN

Say more.

CARMINE

Why hasn't anybody found Ahab yet?

LOREN

Cops are incompetent?

CARMINE

Always true! But...I don't know. I can't put my finger on it. There are just...times they're away, won't say where they've been. Which, you know, of course, we are all entitled to our privacies! But Robin—we tend to not keep secrets from each

other. And sometimes...I look at Robin, and I can't find Robin.

(As they speak, THE AQUAPUNKS run by, in a messy pack. FLASK, bandaged, subdued, lingers for a second with CARMINE and LOREN.)

FLASK

Hey. Um. I hate...having to confide in people. But I think
you guys need to come inside. Please.

LOREN

What?

(As the trio argues among themselves, ROBIN (?) walks by, in AHAB's coat, with the hood. AHAB follows behind, quiet, unnoticed by the trio.)

FLASK

I'm serious, guys. Something is—

(STATIC SCREECH from inside. A VOICE, over a shitty microphone:)

ROBIN (?)

WE ARE THE AQUAPUNKS. WE ARE HERE WITH A MESSAGE. THE END IS
NIGH. THE RAINS WILL FALL. YOU MAY SEEK YOUR HIGH GROUNDS. BUT
THERE WILL BE NO HIGH GROUNDS. YOU MAY FLEE TO YOUR SHIPS. BUT
THE SEA WILL EAT YOU. IT IS TIME.

(CARMINE, LOREN, and FLASK speed offstage. A RAPID TRANSITION!)

SCENE 6 (IN THE FAMILY OF THINGS)

(CARMINE, LOREN, and FLASK run in from the opposite side of the stage. Sprint! Band gears up for the AQUAPUNKS' hit single, DROWN THE RATS. ROBIN, hooded, is onstage, tied to a chair. BILLY is in the back with pieces of paper on his glass to make him look angry. AHAB is at the mic. Is that who was speaking?)

DROWN THE RATS

STUBB

1 2 3 4!

STARBUCK *(sung)*

KILL EVERY BILLIONAIRE
BURN EVERY FACTORY
IT ALL MUST GO
WATCH THEM AS THEY FLEE THE SHIP
CATCH THEM IN YOUR HANDS
SEE THEIR DIRTY MINDS
DROWN THEM IN THE SEA

AQUAPUNKS *(sung)*

DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS
DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS
DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS

STUBB *(sung)*

HERE THEY STAND
THEY'VE MADE THE EARTH A HOLE
A BILLION HANDS
BUT THE SAME SHIT SOUL

AQUAPUNKS *(sung)*

DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS
DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS
DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS
DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS
DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS
DROWN THE RATS DROWN THE RATS

(STARBUCK begins a crazy guitar solo. At the very end of it, AHAB whips off ROBIN's hood and STARBUCK goes for their throat with a knife. ROBIN looks like they're screaming in defiance.

LOREN and CARMINE in the audience begin lunging toward the stage, CARMINE with their hands out—UNARMED. Suddenly, it is very quiet. AHAB has turned around. Everyone else is frozen.

AHAB kneels in front of ROBIN.)

AHAB

Halyard. Come home.

ROBIN

I can't. I can't. I can't do it. I don't believe in this.

AHAB

I know you can do it. I believe in you.

ROBIN

No you don't. You don't even like me.

AHAB

Wake up, baby. You are me.

2.6.1 - THE REVERSAL -

(You have been Fight Clubbed. The screens replay all the PROSECUTION footage. Wherever AHAB was referenced, we see ROBIN alone, talking to the air.)

AHAB

You would deny me? You would deny us?

ROBIN

EA! EA, HELP ME! PLEASE

(EA walks out onstage in his own pool of light.)

EA

There you are! Oh captain, my captain, wavechild of my choosing-

ROBIN

No! No! It can't be like this! I didn't—I wouldn't have wanted those things! I wouldn't have done that to people! Oh God, oh my God—

EA

See, wavechild, you did want those things. There was great anger in you. There was fury. You saw the world with such a clarity. Not clarity—a lens, a clear lens, but your own lens. You saw what was. The casual malice of people. The ignorance.

ROBIN

Please help me. Please. I can't—this is too much.

EA

And you saw such beauty, being trampled for the whims of a few men, and by the gentle thoughtlessness of the many. You watched them put sport fish in the waters and kill those careful worlds for their own entertainment. What recourse did you have but fury?

ROBIN

It couldn't have been—

EA

It's hard, to love as you do. It makes you afraid. You were afraid to love, because you saw destruction coming to your beloved. Your anger, it was also fear. And you were born, Ahab. You were forged.

(AHAB is standing behind ROBIN, looking hopeful. There is a beautiful light on them.)

AHAB

I'm ready. I've been waiting. I'm ready.

ROBIN

(Bellowing, rocking the chair:) NOOOOOOOOO!

2.6.2 - THE CHAOS -

(The screens are thunder-hurricane footage, trees bent sideways, or whirlpools in the deep ocean. Lighting over water.)

(The band tunes up into SUPERORGANISM-MAN. Guitars wail like the wind.)

SAVE THE BAY

ROBIN (SCREAMED)

ENOUGH!

I AM THE PROPHET OF THE DREAD GOD EA!
 I AM THE FORGIVING HAND THAT CATCHES AND RELEASES!
 I AM THE SERVANT OF THE STEWARD OF THE SEA!
 I SAY ENOUGH!

(EA looks-surprised. In the background, the WILDLIFE ENSEMBLE is moving-emerging from the wings, watching, curious.)

ROBIN (CHANTING)

IN THE CHEMICAL DARKNESS OF AGES PAST
 WHEN THEN DID DIE THE GREAT EELGRASS
 THE RUNOFF, THE BOATS, THE ACIDIC SEA
 DID KILL THE BAY OF ANNABEL LEE

WE DID NOT DESPAIR OF WHAT HAD BEEN WROUGHT
 OF ENDLESS WARS AND BATTLES TO BE FOUGHT
 TO GROW IT ALL BACK, TO SEED WITH NEW LIFE
 THAT WHICH LAY UNDER MAN'S CARELESS KNIFE

ROBIN (SUNG)

SO WE WORKED
 AND WE PRAYED
 DRANK WHISKEY LIKE WATER
 AND SUNK OUR DAYS

GREW THE GRASS
 THE OYSTERS FROM BABES
 SAVE THE WORLD, SAVE THE WHALES,
 SAVE THE BAY

(The WILDLIFE ENSEMBLE is less curious and more determined, moving towards ROBIN.)

AND SOMEDAY WE'LL ALL DRINK RYE AND EAT LIKE KINGS
ON CRABS FROM THE HARBOR DOWNTOWN
WE'LL LAUGH AND SAY HEY DO YOU REMEMBER THOSE DAYS
WHEN WE THOUGHT THE WORLD WAS FALLING DOWN

WHEN WE SHOUTED AND SCREAMED
AND MARCHED TO THE DRUMS
HAND IN HAND AND SIDE BY SIDE
SHOUTING "IF YOU WANT A FIGHT, BOY, HERE IT COMES."

ROBIN and ENSEMBLE (SUNG)

SO WE WORKED
AND WE PRAYED
DRANK WHISKEY LIKE WATER
AND SUNK OUR DAYS

GREW THE GRASS
THE OYSTERS FROM BABES
SAVE THE WORLD, SAVE THE WHALES,
SAVE THE BAY

*(The WILDLIFE ENSEMBLE has freed ROBIN and are all hooting,
stomping, and clapping along.)*

AHAB
YOU CAN'T STOP EA! YOU CAN'T STOP WHAT'S COMING!

ROBIN
I don't have to. I just have to stop you.

*(ROBIN leaps at AHAB, who has a knife. They fight. They stop for
a second and are alarmed as BILLY, near ROBIN, prints a message,
and a loud thump is heard from his tray.)*

ROBIN (Reading:)
"Stop bringing fists to a knife fight."

(ROBIN shakily draws a revolver from the slot below BILLY.)

AHAB
What the fuck do you think you're doing with that.

ROBIN

Nothing. I would never never be bold enough to just pick some damn thing up.

AHAB

Halyard. Put the gun down.

EA

Prophet what are you doing.

ROBIN

Some self-improvement. Don't worry, Ahab. It's all in your head.

(ROBIN blows AHAB's head the fuck off. The WILDLIFE ENSEMBLE goes nuts and starts tearing the EA puppet apart. ROBIN drops the gun. It vanishes. CARMINE and LOREN appear onstage. The AQUAPUNKS are nowhere to be seen.)

CARMINE

Chum. Buddy. Pal. Why are you covered in blood.

ROBIN *(Cool:)*

It's just oil. From the engine of my loco-motive. *(It breaks. Whispering, scared:)* It was a whole Fight Club thing. I'm never going to look at Brad Pitt the same ever again.

LOREN

ROBIN!

(They hug, briefly and violently. Maybe LOREN is a little teary, or ROBIN.)

LOREN

Holy shit, dumbass! You know when I said "come to the show" I didn't mean as part of whatever the fuck that was! What even was that? Are you—?

(ROBIN seizes LOREN by the arms.)

ROBIN

Please go out with me. Whenever. Tomorrow. Or the next day. No, actually, tonight, after this show. We'll go get drinks until the bars close at two AM and then we'll talk about our lives and pet a street cat on somebody's stoop until the sun comes up. I think you're beyond gorgeous and funny and I want to clean up the harbor and the bay and the whole ocean just so we'd have something gorgeous to sit on a bench in front of wherever we went. I was scared but this is more important than being scared.

You are. And I am. And everything. I don't mean to beg, I just-Loren-

(LOREN leans in and kisses ROBIN, deeply and with no small amount of affection. ROBIN kisses back, accepting and doting already, proud.)

LOREN

Yes, I will go out with you. After this show. I will get drinks with you until the bars close and-

(ROBIN passes clean out.)

SCENE 7 (IN THE FAMILY OF THINGS)

(The EA puppet lays to one side on a mostly empty stage. EA the actor, and whoever else was helping them, are sitting and eating popcorn.)

2.7.1 - SEA ROLL -

(A medley of documentary footage, home movies of an even younger ROBIN looking around the National Aquarium, and ROBIN on the set of UNDER WALSER.)

(BILLY is there and prints a fortune.)

OTHER PUPPETEER

"Wow this mindscape is pretty chill dude."

EA

I could not agree more, Billy my man.

(The video continues as the waves get turned down on ROBIN's entrance. EA offers a raised hand—chummy.)

EA

Hey, fella of the hour! Siddown.

(ROBIN sits.)

ROBIN

What are we watching?

EA

You. Everything. Everything, as seen by you. Perspective, maybe that's the word. I always have had a prophet before doing what I do for perspective. *(Thinking:)* I have a responsibility to the things of rivers and ponds and pools. People are bad for them. End of story. The story of people ends. There you go. But. I'm not merciless, you know. I don't want people to suffer. But you have to be responsible for your choices. You have to accept responsibility.

ROBIN

Oh, no. I understand. So you still think that the flood is the way to go?

EA

Unless you have a better idea.

ROBIN

In that case, I need you to give me hand with something.

EA

Sure, why not. I'm a helpful god. What have you got?

(ROBIN hands over a little fish tank. GENE WEEN swims inside.)

EA

A...betta fish?

ROBIN

Not just any betta fish. That's Gene Ween, true survivor and worshipper of EA. Take care of her while I prophet for you, would you?

EA

Oh, I see. Well, that's-

ROBIN

So here's her food; this is good stuff, you can't just use any flakes, it's a pinch every other day. Blood worms for treats, and here's the medicinal salts she needs for her gill issues.

OH! And the vacuum for the sediment-

(EA begins laughing. It's a good sound; he gets the joke. ROBIN smiles easily. It was always going to work.)

EA

THERE it is. The perspective. All things great and small, huh?

ROBIN

We had a whole number about it, you were in a beer commercial.

EA

That was a fun one. Boy! We made you some fun doors. It's been an age since I've enjoyed myself with a prophet! "A date with my co-worker". All things great and small. *(Snapping:)* Liked your show, by the way, watched your memories of it. You had that magic. Good at making people love things.

(He sighs, considers something. Doesn't say what. Then, after a beat, pulls out a cigar, reading glasses, and a clipboard.)

EA

Alright. If flooding the world is out, we'll have to find another Q3 major project. I have an allotment of miracles to get through and they're not going to use themselves.

(ROBIN looks at the clipboard.)

ROBIN

The zebra mussel thing could really stand a miracle, though a mass die-off in any case would—

(EA hugs ROBIN. ROBIN slowly returns the affection. [They] break, EA clearly proud.)

EA

You know what—get outta here. There'll be plenty of time for work later. Enjoy yourself a little. Wake up, Robin!

(The samples from the beginning of the show play as the set shifts back to under the pier; they are still at the concert, though now most of the attendees are in their various wildlife costumes. CARMINE is standing next to ROBIN.)

ROBIN

Ahh!

CARMINE

Loren is about to go on! I thought you might not want to miss it, seeing as you've got a red hot date. Also, I think you might be iron deficient, what with the repetitive fainting, comrade.

ROBIN

We should get one of those little fish. The iron fish. To put in food. When you cook. For the iron. Sorry. I'm—it's been a long day. Thank you, Carmine. I couldn't have done it without you.

CARMINE

Bet your ass you couldn't have. (*Suspicious:*) Are you...you?

ROBIN

Yeah. I am.

(LOREN ends up onstage with the actual band, playing acoustic/mandolin (if possible) for BALTIMORE 2027.)

BALTIMORE 2027

LOREN (*sung*)

WHERE IS IT THAT YOU'RE GOING?

AND ARE YOU ALREADY THERE?

I'VE LIVED THROUGH THREE REVIVALS OF THE INNER HARBOR

EACH ONE WORSE THAN THE LAST

I WATCHED THE WHOLE DAMN CITY MOVE TO TOWSON AND FREDRICK

AND DAMN NEAR HALF MOVE BACK

I'VE SEEN THE HARBOR BLUE GREEN AND GRAY AND SLICKED WITH

OIL THAT SHONE LIKE THE SUN

I'VE SEEN EVERY ANIMAL THAT LIVES IN THE BAY ON THE STREET

EVEN ONES SUPPOSEDLY GONE

SO WE'LL RAISE OUR FLAGGING SAGAMORE SPIRITS

AND HAVE A LITTLE BIT OF SHOT TOWER GIN

WE'LL HAVE EKIBEN TAKEOUT AND PARTY AND MAKEOUT

FROM BROOKLYN UP TO HAMILTON!

WE'LL SING-

LOREN / CHORUS (*sung*)

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

ALL THINGS WILD AND WONDERFUL

ALL IN ALL, YOU'RE ALL, THAT'S ALL

LOREN (*sung*)

IT'S ALL HERE!
IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN
IF YOU'VE EYES ENOUGH TO SEE
NOTHING TO FEAR
IF YOU'RE OUT WALKIN
IN ROLAND HILL OR GREENMOUNT STREET

I'LL SHOUT IT FROM THE ROOFTOPS IF NO ONE ELSE WILL
I'LL HOLLER TILL MY LUNGS ARE SORE
IN EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US IS A WILD AND PRECIOUS THING
IT CRAVES THE SEA AND SOIL AND MORE
IT ACHES FOR ENDLESS LOVING HANDS, TENDER SENTIMENTAL HEARTS
SO WEAR THEM ON YOUR SLEEVES
GRAB A SHOVEL GRAB A FRIEND, FORGET YOUR BRUNCHY WEEKEND PLANS
GO AND PLANT SOME GODDAMN TREES!

WE'LL SING-

LOREN *(sung)*

WHERE IS IT THAT YOU'RE GOING?
AND ARE YOU ALREADY THERE?

WHAT IF IF ALL YOUR KNOWING
DIDN'T MEAN THAT YOU REALLY CARED

WE'RE GOING TO MAKE LIKE TOP GUN
AND HAVE SIGN UPS IN THE LOBBY

DON'T FORGET WHAT WE'VE TRIED TO
MAKE YOU FEEL HERE
THIS WAS A LOT OF WORK BY SOME
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE

ALL WE ARE SAYING
IS GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

DID YOU EVER REALLY GIVE
GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

ALL THINGS
BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL
ALL CREATURES
GREAT AND SMALL

ALL THINGS
WILD AND WONDERFUL
ALL IN ALL, YOU'RE ALL,
THAT'S ALL

CHORUS *(sung)*

ALL WE ARE SAYING
IS GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

DID YOU EVER REALLY GIVE
GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

ALL WE ARE SAYING
IS GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

DID YOU EVER REALLY GIVE
GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

SING WITH US!

WHERE IS IT THAT YOU'RE GOING?
AND ARE YOU ALREADY THERE?

WHAT IF IF ALL YOUR KNOWING
DIDN'T MEAN THAT YOU REALLY CARED

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL
ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL
ALL THINGS WILD AND WONDERFUL
ALL IN ALL, YOU'RE ALL, THAT'S ALL

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL
ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL
ALL THINGS WILD AND WONDERFUL
ALL IN ALL, YOU'RE ALL, THAT'S ALL

(Show pretty much ends, everybody going nuts. The screens come on a final time as the band keeps playing the song but the cast for the most part are doing bows.)

WALTER

For the curious public, we have the following updates on the characters people truly loved and cared about in Aquarius Dreaming. Black Sea Bass had a successful spawning season and ate several tasty ghost crabs before ultimately being hooked during a boyscout jamboree.

[Other similar, very silly epilogues for the wildlife ensemble with NO mentions whatsoever of the leads]

2.7.2 - UNDER WALSER WYATYG -

ROBIN

Until next time, kids! And don't forget: wherever you are, there you go.

PRODUCER (O.S.)

Cut! That's not—

2.7.3 - BLUEBEARD 4 -

(The whole cast getting together equipment for the kayaking trip, in costume and looking at a big map.)

2.7.4 - GRUNDLEHAMMER PARODY -

(The GRUNDLE and LEAD sit somewhere backstage, watching a monitor. The GRUNDLE has a BOH in every hand.)

LEAD

I think things turned out pretty okay, all things being equal.

GRUNDLE

I think it needed more guitars.

LEAD

You've said that about every show for the past eighteen years.

2.7.5. - THE DATE -

(ROBIN and LOREN on their date, trolling around Baltimore.)

THE RIVER CHANGELESS REPRISE

CHORUS (*sung*)

THOSE RESTLESS YEARS
AND ENDLESS DAYS
OF OPEN DOORS
AND TIDES AT PLAY
I HAVE NOT FOUND THAT RIVER CHANGELESS
WHERE I'LL WASH THESE PAINS AWAY
AND I
MAY NEVER

*(Eventually, LOREN and ROBIN end up at a table center stage,
looking hungover. Table waaaaaaay too fancy.)*

LOREN

How did we end up at Gertrude's. Can you afford any of this?

ROBIN

No. We're going to have to run. I don't even know what "en
papillote" IS—

(EA appears, human form, now in a tie.)

EA

Good morning! Here are our drink specials, I'll leave you to
peruse. In the meantime, for an appetizer, would you care for
the chicken or the fish?

FIN.