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Creating Community in a Space of Strangers: Sea Shanties in Theatre

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CREATING COMMUNITY IN A SPACE OF STRANGERS: SEA SHANTIES IN
THEATRE

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree Bachelor of Arts
with Mahurin Honors College Graduate Distinction
at Western Kentucky University

By

Cassandra Merena

April 2023

CE/T Committee:

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ABSTRACT

Theatre is more than watching actors in the present. It can bring a magic into the room that connects us to a tangible ride of emotions. Sea shanties, a widely known variety of maritime singing, is purposely meant to bring its singers together. I wrote and directed an original one-act play structured around its repetitive beats, to create a communal feeling that will deem a sea of strangers a community for that day. The songs curated were specifically chosen to achieve that sense of community—songs that allow moments of reflection, toe-tapping, humming, and recognition. *Phantom Pains* is about a captain who dies at sea and is unable to move on from the guilt of losing his daughter. Until he meets Florence, his granddaughter. Florence gets the family she never had, but soon begins to live her life for the dead and not herself. It's a play about facing what you're afraid of, learning to let go, and becoming your true self.

While engaging with the audience through song is not new in the musical theatre world, drawing heavily from sea shanties is an innovative approach and tactic when building bridges between strangers and actors alike.

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Melissa and Steve Merena, who have always encouraged me to dream, write, and dream again. I also dedicate this work to my friend and college roommate, Sarah, who was there for it all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I must enthusiastically thank Michelle Dvoskin for her time, patience, and probing questions. She has seen this project from the very beginning and was kind enough not to laugh at the ridiculous first draft I presented with pride. From our weekly meetings over the course of two semesters, I learned from her the difference between the bone and muscle of a story, character, and life. She was also instrumental in the musical development of my original shanties, for which my poor actors would have been subjected to off-key singing as a guide instead of sheet music.

Thank you to Jessica Folk who has been a part of my writing career since I was a baby freshman. Without her classes, her encouragement in the exploration of genre, I would have never considered myself a playwright. Her positivity and critical eye have always made me eager to share my work with her—from my first reading of *Phantom Pains*, I could tell from her response that she understood the soul of it and why I was writing this piece. Her continued support for my project gave me confidence and courage as my staged reading approached.

Of course, this reading would not have been possible without the help of some amazing actors who jumped right in despite what entails a theatre major's schedule. They brought my characters to life, and I am so fortunate to have worked with them.

I would also like to thank the Honors College for their help in the development of *Phantom Pains*, but specifically I'd like to thank Chris Dimeo. Their speedy email responses always calmed my worries over the capstone, and I was grateful to see them in the audience.

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CREATION

During the height of the pandemic, loneliness was an issue created by quarantine for people across the world. I became inspired to write a play that engaged audiences and generated a sense of community among each other. The actual inspiration for *Phantom Pains* (which for a long time was simply referred to as *The Sea Shanty Play*) came from Gen Z's most beloved app: Tik Tok. At this time, TikTok had garnered a lot of attention for appealing to people of all ages. Suddenly, sea shanties made a massive comeback, and anyone, even those not entirely adept at singing, could join in on the fun. These created a nostalgia for simpler times, something many desperately wished for during the pandemic. Among the 6 billion views using #SeaShanty, I began to see another trend on TikTok. Makeup artists had already established an outlet to showcase their range of skills from glam to monster-like incarnations. The newest idea was to use UV body paint to create multiple characters or villains. From there, I started to slowly piece together the beginning of my story. I saw a crew of ghostly sailors singing songs of their past, whose skulls glowed under the moonlight.

I chose theatre as the agent to engage in community because of how self-exposing it is. There is no privacy when sitting around a thrust or arena stage. You can watch someone directly across from you have the exact same reaction to a swordfight or quickly wipe their tears when a mother sacrifices her children. The actors are also physically present. Their actions, while scripted, are subject to outside variables (laughter, applause, a cell phone ringing, an understudy being used) as opposed to a film that is forever

constant. A theatre performance will always be unique to that audience, as it cannot be 100% replicated. This is why a sense of community can be such a powerful tool in the production of a play and should be utilized for the audience's unique, collaborative experience.

In Jill Dolan's book, *Utopia in Performance*, she brings up the term *communitas* coined by Victor Turner:

“[It] describes the moments in a theatre event or a ritual in which audiences or participants feel themselves become part of the whole in an organic, nearly spiritual way; spectators' individuality becomes finely attuned to those around them, and a cohesive if fleeting feeling of belonging to the group bathes the audience” (11).

Sea shanties hold a type of power that makes a company, even an audience of strangers, feel connected. They are simple, rhythmic, and repetitive. More importantly, they are accessible to everyone—meaning anyone could sing it. I wanted to ground my play on this basis to create a freeing atmosphere among the audience. When they left, they would leave as a community having shared this experience—a song collectively stuck in their head to sing on the way home. The selection of songs were specifically chosen to achieve that sense of community—songs that allow moments of reflection, toe-tapping, humming, singing and recognition—effectively enhancing their experience of the play because of their awareness of the audience's active presence.

In the very first sketches of *Phantom Pains*, I immediately gravitated to a sea shanty called *Leave Her, Johnny*. The original context of the song is about sailors leaving their ship, but I re-envisioned its purpose as a plea for a father to leave his family behind. First, when his daughter is lost at sea, and second, when he's keeping his granddaughter from living her life. With a rough sketch of who my protagonist was, and a vague vision

of a plot point, I dove into my protagonist: Captain Johnny. However, as I sat down trying to surmise that this Captain's story was substantial enough to carry an entire play, I soon realized that he was quite boring. I felt almost pained to part ways with him as a protagonist, like I was betraying the very concept of my piece. The decision to focus on Florence, his granddaughter, took many weeks to come to. But conceptually, it made most sense to focus on Florence (who is alive) when a major factor of the play involves letting go of the dead and living in the present. While Cap does find peace, he became more of a subplot since you cannot move the plot much more forward with a dead protagonist.

Once I had a clearer outline, with division in scenes, themes, and characters, I began to research about sea shanties as way to form the rest of the story. The practice of sea shanties to engage sailors during the laborious days of maritime work has long been used since at least the 1500s—though it was shaped into what we are more familiar with during the 19th century (Royal Museums Greenwich). Altogether they have a colloquial, call-and-response structure, led by a 'shantyman' who sets the rhythm. According to Royal Museums Greenwich there are two types for pulling: (1) short drag shanties (for short bursts of pulling) and (2) long haul/halyard shanties (for longer, sustained spans of pulling). When sailors were pushing or pumping, a Capstan (for continuous, easy effort) was sung.

I primarily relied on *The Shanty Book Part 1* (2021) and *The Shanty Book Part 2* (2021) by Richard Runciman Terry as sources for authentic songs with lyrics and sheet music included. *Leave Her, Johnny* and its reprise were adapted to reflect the plot more succinctly. *What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor?* was a must have on the setlist. By far it is the most recognizable, and arguably the most fun. I specifically chose it to

create an engaging atmosphere that would encourage the audience to participate. *Fire Down Below* and *Sing Fare You Well*, though likely not well-known to the average person, were selected because of their catchiness and easiness to learn in the moment. At the beginning of my capstone, I did not envision the audience singing while at the play (rather afterwards, only humming in the moment), as I was writing I realized a shift in tone and opportunity for audience involvement. The first half of the play's songs are sung largely by the crew—with an enthusiastic tone given that there's celebration for reunified family. The more voices added (ie. the audience), the more engulfing the music is, and communal the space. Having witnessed this during rehearsals, I can attest to how tempting it was to join in. During the second half, the crew moves on, and only Roscoe and Cap are left. The tone becomes dismal, and songs more personal. So, it was intentional to use unknown songs, as these were solely for the characters. *Florence's Song* was an original I wrote to metaphorically show the passing of the torch to Florence (the tradition of singing being continued), and act as a healthy homage to the dead. When I did an initial table read with the actors, I was surprised by how heavily we dissected the meaning of who sang which part. Originally, Florence and Adah sang it together, until the last verse was taken over by Florence. It changed to Adah opening (as an acknowledgement/support of grief for Florence), then Florence joining (to show them as a united, strong couple that both loved the crew), to Florence finishing the last verse (to metaphorically release herself, her grandfather, and the show).

Another authorial choice I made early on was how I approached the language. Attempting to write in a pseudo-Victorian manner bogged down the dialogue and sincerity of the piece. However, keeping the time period in the early to mid-1800s was

integral to how I wanted to address queerness, and in a larger context, otherness within a community. Florence's sexuality and fear of what society thinks about her is her biggest inner struggle and conflict that she must overcome. Therefore, I chose to set *Phantom Pains* in an alternate universe. This allowed for a modernized speech that is free of contemporary colloquialisms and is slightly more refined. It echoes that of a previous era yet is still easily digested by an audience. The accessibility of the language opens the door for the viewer to relate better to the characters and consider present-day problems the queer community still faces with otherness.

After a small table read, *Phantom Pains* was scheduled for two performances. One being part of WKU's Theatre Department's Rising Artist Series that included a talkback on November 12, 2022. The second was unplanned in my capstone proposal, but ultimately showed me the potential *Phantom Pains* has as a radio play. It was performed on November 13, 2022, on WKU's radio station Revolution 91.7 FM. Due to an actor's unfortunate absence, I read Florence's role. To prepare for the readings, I designed a poster, gathered actors, provided scripts and copies of sheet music, and directed two rehearsals.

REFLECTION

The most important question is, are sea shanties effective in creating a sense of community? Was *communitas* felt? To an extent, yes. If we're going by my expectations provided in my initial proposal (humming, tapping), then the play as it is, can do that. But, when I was in the first rehearsal and I got to hear how loud, entertaining, and boisterous the crew could be—my number one goal changed to getting the audience to sing along. I encouraged the actors to tap their feet or clap on their thighs, not only to help find a tempo but to remind them to have fun (especially with the first few songs). The *communitas* I felt that first rehearsal, the transformation I saw from simple singing to hearty chanting, and the desire to join in, is what I want the audience to experience.

During the talkback, the audience was asked if they sang at any point. While they did hum and tap along, they didn't know that that was a convention they could break. This I understood, and realized I hadn't considered as an obstacle. Theatre decorum is a collective agreement, to break it could be considered rude. To motivate audience participation in the future, it was suggested the lyrics are provided in the playbill. One audience member said they knew two of the songs but didn't feel confident in the words despite the repetition. So, providing lyrics, whether that be in the playbill or projected on a wall, seems to be the best route. However, not all songs would be provided. Such as the first time *Leave Her, Johnny* is sung, but the reprise would be welcomed for audience involvement. Because at this point, they know the character, know that Johnny needs to move on, and can tell him so by singing with the crew.

What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor? lyrics would of course be passed out, and I've decided to extend the amount of the song sung. It was cut off too early in the script, and the audience would have the most fun singing this one. *Fire Down Below* and *Sing Fare You Well*, would be in the playbill as well. However, Roscoe's solo of *A Hundred Years on the Eastern Shore* and Florence and Adah's duet of *Florence's Song* are pivotal moments to the characters that need to be sung only by them.

Another key point I took from the talkback was that Florence's fears, and history with the town and her mother need to be revisited. Essentially, there were no tangible stakes felt or properly developed fears. While I did receive a comment that Florence's *actions* made sense given that her life experiences are all she knows, I gathered that what exactly was holding back Florence from living her life was muddled. And perhaps that's because while developing her character, I myself could not decide on the *why*. Is her problem internal? An emotional conflict of being unable to accept herself as queer. External? Too afraid of what society will say. A combination of the two? She grew up without a father, saw how society treated an unconventional family, an unconventional woman (her mother) and doesn't want to subject herself to that? All these questions bubble up in the play, but I need to give more evidence, memories, and feelings to substantiate their presence. And make clear what scares her the most.

A professor in the audience, suggested that I research spinsters to further understand the two women's place in society. I plan on doing so, I think at this stage it can only aid the piece to hear accounts of women who lived alone. *Phantom Pains* is not a historical piece, nor tries to be; however, echoing what has already happened to queer or independent woman might provide me with a better understanding on what Florence is

facing. In the future, I plan on looking into Boston Marriages as well, though Florence and Adah do not have the affluence typically associated with that term.

Overall, I do believe that this concept was a success, as it was well received by both actors and audiences alike. The storyline is strong, the flow is smooth, and the characters convincing. Even though the stage directions were only read aloud not acted out, the audience felt that the vision could be clearly visualized. During the staged reading, the lights were kept at a constant blue to simulate that of a blacklight for future productions—it was felt that it maintained a balance between serious and fun. So, for now, I will stick to my original creative pitch of using blacklight and glow-in-the dark sets and make-up to fabricate a place of limbo (so long as it does not impact the sincerity of the show).

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

As a matter of sanity, I will be hiring professional help to revamp the sheet music to *Florence's Song*, and to *Leave Her, Johnny* since those are adapted or original works. My respect for music directors doubled during rehearsals, as I so desperately wished I could read the sheet music I supplied to the actors. I am of course proud of the fact that I wrote a song with no musical background, but I consider it to be a prototype.

In addition to a stage play, *Phantom Pains* has potential as a radio play. This was unexpectedly, a welcome surprise. The sea shanties transferred well over the mic, and the dialogue was straightforward in following who was speaking. I believe the radio play would work best as a one act, because a second act that explores the life of the crew would be overwhelming to keep track of.

My abilities as a writer and director have grown exponentially from this project. Now having had the experience of hearing the piece performed live, working with actors, and even reading for a character on the radio, I realize that *Phantom Pains* is a much larger piece than it currently is. It needs a second act (1) for Florence's background to be further explored, (2) to have space for the level of theatricality I want from the set and make-up, and (3) to expand on individual crew subplots. The audience was interested in the crew and why they were stuck for so long; a second act would allow me to delve into their storylines and fully flesh them out as people rather than voices carrying a song. For this project, one act was what I needed to find where I stand with the direction of *Phantom Pains*. It was the biggest project I've ever completed in conjunction with time

constraints and class work; therefore, one act was realistic in achievability. But now that I've spent months practicing to outline, edit, question, scrap, outline again, ask about each character's wants, fears, actions, edit, edit, edit, pitch my project, ask for a grant, conduct a rehearsal space, write sheet music, cast, go on the radio and problem-solve...I feel confident that *Phantom Pains* is worth the expansion, time and revision.

PHANTOM PAINS: THE FULL SCRIPT

CHARACTERS

FLORENCE	24, female. CAP's estranged granddaughter. Drowning.
ADAH	20s, female. Is willing to risk it. Pronounced /eɪdʌ/.
CAPTAIN JOHNNY	50s, male. What a hard man to define. A Captain, a father...is there a difference?
ROSCOE	40s, male. CAP's right-hand man. A sounding board in a world of unrest. Well-groomed for a sailor, and a dead one at that.
MARCELLA	20s, female. Played by FLORENCE. CAP's daughter. She's OK, she was always ok. Non-Speaking role.
CREW MEMBER 1-6	As long as they're dressed as a sailor, I don't care who's under the beard.

A wonderfully diverse cast of all shapes and sizes is enthusiastically encouraged.

MAKE UP

This play will use glow in the dark make up to distinguish the dead. Their skulls and skin are outlined in neon colors, their clothes too. You cannot miss the dead. Black light will illuminate all scenes that include ghosts.

SETTING

The entirety of the play takes place at the ship's crash site, a deserted tail- end of a beach. Broken bits of the ship will be scattered everywhere. A mast, some part of the deck, half barrels, and splinters. This too is outlined in glow in the dark paint.

TIME

An alternate universe that resides somewhere in the early to mid-1800s.

SCENE 1

The middle of a catastrophic thunderstorm. The sound of waves floods the senses, it is constant and quickens the pulse. No one should be on deck in a storm like this.

While the CREW does have on their face paint, their clothes should be regular. No blacklight is used in this scene.

CAP bursts onto stage, frantically searching. ROSCOE barrels behind him. They have to strain to hear one another. They walk in wild, uneven steps, gripping to anything that has a nail in it. A particularly bad wave rams them.

ROSCOE

Captain! We need to stay below deck.

CAP

Marcella! Marcella!

ROSCOE

She's probably in one of her nooks. She'll come out after the storm.

CAP

(looking overboard)

I already checked her spots. She's not there!

(cupping hands around his mouth)

Marcella!

ROSCOE

There's nowhere for her to go, she's on the ship, sir. You'll find her later. But please Captain if we don't go now, we'll be washed out. She's a smart girl, she'd know not to be out here.

CAP

I'm not leaving my daughter.

ROSCOE grabs CAP's arm, trying to pull him in the direction of the hatch for below deck. CAP breaks free and punches ROSCOE.

ROSCOE

Damn it, come with me.

CAP

(CAP shoves him roughly)

I don't have time for this.

ROSCOE runs into CAP, pushing him like a bulldozer, backwards. He yanks CAP by the collar.

ROSCOE

JOHN. Marcella isn't here. You want to help Marcella? Then stay alive and get downstairs.

CAP

(reciprocating the collar grab)

Tell me to stop lookin' again and I'll throw you overboard myself.

A nasty round of thunder rumbles. Two or three crew members come to stage, one of them is helping MARCELLA balance. They're heading in the direction of the hatch.

CREW MEMBER ONE

Captain, we found her. Let's go.

CAP

(relief flooding his voice)

Oh!

A loud groan comes from the ship. A wave hits, knocking everyone around the stage. MARCELLA vanishes in a flash. The crew member once holding her realizes her absence first. He scans the deck and immediately gets up to look overboard.

CREW MEMBER ONE

Marcella!

All scramble to the side.

CREW MEMBER TWO

Oh god.

CAP begins kicking off his boots and anything heavy.

CREW MEMBER ONE

You can't, you can't.

CREW MEMBER TWO

Captain, she's already a hundred yards out, there's no way you'll be able to swim to her, let alone carry her back with these waves.

CREW MEMBER ONE

How can you heave her back up? The ladders been swept.

CREW MEMBER TWO

You'll drown.

CREW MEMBER ONE

She's already gone.

CAP is about to jump; he already has one leg over the edge.

ROSCOE

LEAVE HER, JOHNNY, LEAVE HER
OH, LEAVE HER, JOHNNY, LEAVE HER

ROSCOE, CREW MEMBER ONE

THE WAVES HAVE COME AND THE SAILS HAVE SUNK
YOUR DAUGHTER'S HAND HAS GONE

ROSCOE, CREW MEMBER ONE AND TWO

YOUR HEART MAY BEAT BUT I KNOW IT LEAPT
LEAVE HER JOHNNY, LEAVE HER

FOR THE VOYAGE IS DONE AND THE WINDS DO BLOW
AND IT'S TIME FOR US TO LEAVE HER

OH WE'LL LEAVE HER WRONG AND WE'LL LEAVE HER POOR
LEAVE HER WITH A GRAVE ON THE OCEAN FLOOR

BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE
FOR THE REEF'S A-DRAWING NIGH

At some point during the song, CAP has stepped down from the ledge. Now, he opens out his arms and leans onto the boat's side until his feet lift to drop to his death. The crew immediately grabs him and bring him back to the ground.

Black out.

A moment. The sound of a ship crashing onto rocks.
The waves begin to ease.

SCENE 2

We are on a beach, the back end, the way back that no one comes to because the water is far off and all there is, is unenjoyable sand and craggy rocks. But decades ago, the water *was* here, and a ship crashed.

FLORENCE, visibly upset, runs onto the scene, dressed in a mid-1800s dress. She pauses at what's around her, a broken helm, netting, rotted wood, perhaps the bow. Whatever is there, it has sunk into the environment and made home for crabs.

ADAH

Florence!

ADAH runs onto stage, more out of breath than FLORENCE who has begun to hurry in the opposite direction. ADAH grabs her wrist.

ADAH

We are not running people.

FLORENECE

Actually, we are. We are. Because the person you want me to be, to act as... would have to run. You are asking me to be a running person.

ADAH

I haven't asked you anything yet. Let's have a conversation, talk to me, look at me.

FLORENCE

(not in a disgusted way, just conflicted)

That back there felt conversation enough.

ADAH

We don't have to run. Our day to day can remain as always. You don't have to worry. You will tailor and I will wash. You'll read the newspaper out on the stoop, and I'll squabble with you about the day's foolishness. Balls will come and go, and fishermen will offer us clams to fix their seams. But, in private... our business...

FLORENCE

I've always adored your optimism. But Adah, I can't think like this. I can't dream like you. Fantasies are for men. You know why? Because they get to write them down. Their dreams get printed and circulated, while our dreams are dictated by their ink.

ADAH

Please don't just close the subject on me.

FLORENCE

But this isn't a subject. Not for me.

ADAH

Don't use other people as an excuse! You're just scared.

FLORENCE

Well of course I'm scared! They already talk enough as it is about our visits. There are too many...too many things to talk about. A shared blanket in the park...a look for too long, my eye on you and not the three suitors who have danced with me all night!

ADAH

Florence.

FLORENCE

They would destroy us. I would destroy you. So, I can't.

FLORENCE goes to leave. ADAH grabs her wrist and spins her into a kiss. FLORENCE is immediately receptive and is lost for a moment before she gently stops ADAH. FLORENCE, traces ADAH'S lips, she then leans forehead to forehead but speaks the next lines staring at the wrist ADAH hasn't let go of.

Thank you for saying you love me, but that's the last time I want to hear those words.

A gust of wind, the moon comes out in full brilliance. They separate. Darkness and then we are filled with blacklight. The shapes of CAPTAIN JOHNNY and his CREW materialize. They have changed into the same clothes as scene one that have now been weathered from the crash. Their clothes are outlined in glow in the dark paint.

The women stand a bit away but not in fear.
FLORENCE is cautious though and pulls ADAH
with her—a little ways back—to avoid being
seen.

CAP

Another year boys. Drink it in while you can.

ROSCOE

Aye Captain! What a sad lot we are.

CREW MEMBER FIVE

If I'd known I'd get stuck with such a sad lot, I'd have at least died with a book in my
hand.

CREW MEMBER SIX

Ya can't read.

CREW MEMBER FIVE

I've had 25 years to learn. And I honestly think that's why I won't pass on.

CREW MEMBER THREE

(good heartedly)

What a stupid reason!

CAP

We'd be a lot less sad if those barrels of rum hadn't dried up.

A raucous laugh from the crew.

CREW MEMBER ONE

No Captain,

(yelling over the cheers)

better to have it perfume the air than have it right in front of a sailor that can't even drink
it!

More agreement.

CREW MEMBER FOUR

(feigning thinking)

Oh what's that old ditty?

CREW MEMBER THREE

Oh come now, don't tell me you've been dead so long you can't hold a tune!?

CREW MEMBER FOUR

(grinning)

Dead or not, I'd never forget. Tell me boys!

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE DRUNKEN SAI-LOR,
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE DRUNKEN SAIL-OR,
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE DRUNK-EN SAI-LOR,
EAR-LY IN THE MORN-ING?

ALL

HOO-RAY AND UP SHE RI-SES,
HOO-RAY AND UP SHE RI-SES,
HOO-RAY AND UP SHE RI-SES,
EAR-LY IN THE MORN-ING.

ADAH begins to creep forward; she likes the song.
FLORENCE however looks uncertain if they should
stay.

CREW MEMBER FOUR

PUT HIM IN A POT UNTIL HE'S SOBER--

CREW MEMBER THREE

That's not the words ye dung beetle. Long-boat!

CREW MEMBER FOUR

PUT HIM IN THE LONG-BOAT UNTIL HE'S SOBER
PUT HIM IN THE LONG-BOAT UNTIL HE'S SOBER
PUT HIM IN THE LONG-BOAT UNTIL HE'S SOBER
EAR-LY IN THE MORN-ING.

ALL

HOO-RAY AND UP SHE RI-SES,
HOO-RAY AND UP SHE RI-SES,
HOO-RAY AND UP SHE RI-SES,
EAR-LY IN THE MORN-ING.

CREW MEMBER FOUR

PULL OUT THE PLUG AND WET HIM ALL OVER,
PULL OUT THE--

CAP sees FLORENCE and ADAH.

CAP

(strangled)

Marcella?

The blacklight retracts to just the crew. Silence.
Heads whip to the women. CAP makes way through
the men.

Marcella?

CAP

He hugs her fiercely.

Oh. No I—

FLORENCE

The next three lines are said over each other.

CAP

(frantic)

--Thank God. I'm so sorry I didn't go in. I'm so sorry.

--Sir?!

ADAH

He cups her face.

--There's been a mistake.

FLORENCE

CAP

How are you alive? I love you.

ADAH places a hand on CAP's arm.

Her name is Florence.

ADAH

FLORENCE steps away, close to ADAH.

I think you have me mistaken for my mother, sir. We look quite alike.

FLORENCE

Mother?

ROSCOE

Yes, my mother was Marcella.

FLORENCE

It's like looking at her reflection.

CAP

ADAH

How does a crew of ghosts know her?

CREW MEMBER ONE

Because she's one of us!

The other members elbow him for joining in.

ROSCOE

She's Cap's daughter.

FLORENCE

Oh!

(head popping up in realization)

Does that mean...you're Captain Johnny?

ADAH looks at FLORENCE in surprise. The girls wait for confirmation, but CAP remains in stunned silence.

ROSCOE

(clearing his throat)

Yes. Forgive him, even I'm having a hard time believing you aren't Marcella. Where is she? She was gone in a flash, we thought for sure...

FLORENCE

She managed to make it to a rock by the reef. She climbed it and waited out the storm.

ROSCOE

In that water! The waves were 15ft high.

FLORENCE

The next morning, a fisherman spotted her and took her back to town—thought she was a mermaid.

CAP

(almost to himself)

She's been here all this time?

FLORENCE

After that, she never went on the water again.

(to CAP)

She wrote you letters. To tell you where she was. Are you really Captain Johnny?

He nods dumbly.

She always wondered where you were. But if you're here, then I guess your ship didn't make it through the storm. She never would have even known you were here, she stayed as far from the beach as possible.

ADAH

Today's your death day?

ROSCOE

Aye. The way you talk about her...is she...

FLORENCE

She passed two years ago.

CAP

Is she like us? Is she stuck?

FLORENCE

No. She made peace with the things in her life, and while she wondered about you, she lived her life well. I'm sorry if seeing me gave you hope.

CAP

No. No. It's good. That's good.

A silence.

CREW MEMBER THREE

So, the captain's a grandfather! What an old man.

CREW MEMBER TWO

Run now Florence, we've only got one night a year. He'll talk y'er ear off till y'er begging the moon to come back and whisk his ass away.

CAP

Hey!

CREW MEMBER SIX

Say now, who's your father miss?! Marcella would have had to find a man awful fast if me math's, right? You look young, but old enough to match the time the young lass was on board.

FLORENCE

Er, well. I don't have a father.

CAP

How do you mean?

FLORENCE

(reluctant)

She was pregnant on the ship.

CAP

I had one rule: to stay away from my daughter. Which one of you lousy fuckwads knocked up Marcella? I'll kill you all!

The CREW scramble back, making accusations to one another.

CREW MEMBER FOUR

You sick bastards.

FLORENCE

No! No, it was someone who befriended her when your wife died. While she was waiting for you to come home for the funeral. She didn't know she was pregnant until after she had been separated from you.

CREW MEMBER THREE

What did she tell people?! That you were a miracle child gifted by the sea gods and she was a maritime virgin Mary?

FLORENCE

She lied to the town and said that her husband was onboard that night too, working for you. Said she watched him get swept overboard before she was.

ADAH

(in a hushed whisper)

You were supposed to keep that secret to the grave!

FLORENCE

Who are they going to tell?

ADAH

That's a good point.

ROSCOE

Did she get remarried, to take care of you?

FLORENCE

Mama liked being a widow, she professed her undying devotion to him multiple times, so she could raise me on her own. She managed to find jobs as a maid in exchange for housing. She was a very good mother.

ADAH

Though the town--

FLORENCE

--She stood her ground and died a happy woman.

CAP

Well, alright then. So long as it worked out. I suppose I didn't realize...how unorthodox she could be.

ADAH laughs.

ADAH

(sheepish)

Sorry.

CREW MEMBER FIVE

Well, I sure learned a whole other side to the captain's sweet daughter tonight. Her head was always in a book, I thought of asking her to teach me to read. If only I had met her a month earlier, who knows, maybe I'd be literate *and* the cap's son-in-law!

ROSCOE

I'd be careful with that mouth or cap just might teach ye a different kind of lesson.

(to ADAH)

You wouldn't happen to be another of Cap's long-lost granddaughters, would you?

ADAH

Oh no, I...I'm...a friend.

FLORENCE

Adah's my neighbor.

CAP

We only have a day, but will you stay?

FLORENCE

Of course.

CAP

Roscoe, you've got the best voice of us all, sing us a song. My granddaughter should know something about being a sailor!

ADAH

What more can two women be?

ROSCOE

I heard, before. Your fight.

ADAH jumps to her feet. Dropping the net.

I've been on a ship since I was 16, there are more things you see below deck than you do on land. I'm not here to frighten you.

ADAH

Did anyone else hear?

ROSCOE

No. I always appear first. First to die, first to rise. Coming into physical form doesn't happen at once though. I had no idea it was Marcella's daughter out here being swooned. That was a shock.

ADAH

Are you going to tell captain Johnny?

ROSCOE

No. Adah, you forget that I am dead. You're the one in charge here. I haven't seen a living person in over two decades. You can come and visit us in a year from now, but I am anchored to this spot until I pass on. So, for selfish reasons, I would like the company. However, I also believe that the dead should not mix with the living.

ADAH

(nodding into CAP's direction)

But he seems so happy with her. You don't think he should get to know her?

ROSCOE

Ah, you make me seem like a bad friend. In truth...no I don't. I don't think that ghosts have anything they *need* to know at all. Other than how to let go. But the world is so tantalizing, it's hard to do that. Him over there, acting like he'll see her again, learn about her life, watch her age and get to hear her make all the mistakes he's made...is worse than if who he saw tonight really was Marcella.

ADAH

I don't follow.

ROSCOE

Because now he'll want to do those things. And dead things do not want. Only living things do that. Look around at all these men. Why do you think they're here? Why do

you think Marcella passed on right away? Our death day comes, and we are rewarded with a day on earth. How freeing. How wonderful that something in our soul is still alive and so we have the opportunity to accomplish that want, that dream, all so that we may spend the rest of the year yearning for one more day. Just one more day. You cannot be dead and alive at the same time. You cannot want and be dead. You cannot hope and be dead. So, we're given limbo instead until we learn to move on.

ADAH

You've been in limbo for 25 years though, wouldn't him meeting Florence give him some kind of closure?

ROSCOE

A death day is not a miracle for families to reunite.

ADAH

You're awfully pessimistic.

ROSCOE

(a change in beat)

Tell her what you want. If you die today, make it so that you don't need limbo.

ADAH

I already told her what I want.

ROSCOE

You told her how you felt. There's a difference.

He looks back over to CAP and sighs.

Hey cap! The sun's already risen and gone down again. I suspect our time's almost up.

CAP and FLORENCE begin to walk downstage. He pulls her in for a great, big, fatherly hug.

CAP

Promise me, you'll come back. A day isn't enough.

FLORENCE

I promise. This has been wonderful. You're no longer a story I'd hear about at dinner. I feel like this is a sign...Y'know I used to send letters to you too. I'd slip one in with mama's.

CAP

Keep doing that. Write down all the things you do this year, so that I don't miss a single thing. I want to hear it all. I'm not going anywhere.

FLORENCE
(smiling)

I will.

CAP
Adah, you'll take care of my girl, won't you?

ADAH
Always.

FLORENCE's smile falters, she looks away. ALL
gather around the girls.

ROSCOE
Ladies, how about a song before you go.

They nod.
(to the CREW)
Fare you well!

The girls join in on the Hoo-raws and then
eventually the parts they begin to recognize. The
blacklight is in full effect.

ROSCOE
FARE YOU WELL, I WISH YOU WELL

CREW
HOO RAW AND FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
FARE YOU WELL TILL I RETURN

CREW
HOO RAW SING FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
O FARE YOU WELL MY BONNY YOUNG GEL

CREW
HOO RAW AND FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
O FARE YOU WELL MY BONNY YOUNG GEL

CREW
HOO RAW SING FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
AS I WALKED OUT ONE MORNING FAIR

CREW
HOO RAW AND FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
IT'S THERE I MET A LADY FAIR

CREW
HOO RAW SING FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
AT HER I WINKED I DO DECLARE

CREW
HOO RAW AND FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
AT HER I WINKED I DO DECLARE

CREW
HOO RAW SING FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
UP ALOFT THIS YARD MUST GO

CREW
HOO RAW AND FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
UP ALOFT THIS YARD MUST GO

CREW
HOO RAW SING FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
I THOUGHT I HEARD THE SKIPPER SAY

CREW
HOO RAW AND FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
ONE MORE PULL AND THEN BELAY

CREW
HOO RAW SING FARE YOU WELL.

The sailors have begun to send the girls off. A final hug between CAP and FLORENCE. They should be off-stage before the song ends.

ROSCOE
FARE YOU WELL, I WISH YOU WELL

CREW
O FARE YOU WELL.

ROSCOE
FARE YOU WELL TILL I RETURN

CREW
O FARE YOU WELL.

CREW MEMBER ONE
Captain, I'm happy for ya.

CREW MEMBER TWO
Aye, seeing Marcella in the sea haunted me. I think it's haunted us all. But she was alright captain. That little thing was alright. She didn't need us sailors feelin' sorry for her after all.

Murmurs of agreement. Some pats on CAP's back.

CAP
I got lucky, getting a sad lot like you. A captain's dream crew!

Some cheers. The CREW begins to make their way offstage, some humming along to Sing Fare You Well. CAP and ROSCOE stand alone.

She was alive, Roscoe. All this time. I'm a grandfather.

ROSCOE
Listen, Johnny. Tonight, was an incredible thing but—

CAP

(cutting him off)

--I wasn't there for her growing up, always on this damn ship. And I wasn't there for her when she fell into the water. But I'll be there now. For Marcella, I'll look over her as best I can, that's what she'd want.

ROSCOE

Wait—

CAP

Finally, there's some hope in this life.

A gust of wind. The moon flashes bright. Blackout.
The faint sound of waves.

SCENE FOUR

A gust of wind. A flash of the moon. A year has passed. FLORENCE and ADAH walk onto the stage. THE CREW minus CREW MEMBER ONE and TWO appear and they all swarm the girls in a celebratory hug. They ALL move about the stage then exit.

A gust of wind. A flash of the moon. ROSCOE is the first to be seen, he waits on a rock. FLORENCE enters carrying a book and a newspaper. ADAH, behind her has a blanket. THE CREW appears, FLORENCE spots CREW MEMBER FIVE and excitedly shows him her things. They ALL exit.

A gust of wind. A flash of the moon. FLORENCE and ADAH enter, chatting idly. THE CREW appear, now missing CREW MEMBER FIVE and an additional two members. CAP runs to FLORENCE and picks her up to spin her. ROSCOE goes to ADAH'S side and they talk. They ALL exit.

A gust of wind. A flash of the moon. ADAH enters. She seats herself by the rock ROSCOE often sits by, he appears. They don't talk, there's no need to. FLORENCE comes running in, apologetic she's late. The rest appear. Only one or two crew members should be left. They ALL exit.

A gust of wind. A flash of the moon. ADAH and FLORENCE enter. FLORENCE has a basket of flowers; ADAH has a blanket. She lays it out on the floor. They begin sorting the flowers by color.

FLORENCE

If we dry these, they'll look nicely with a ribbon wrapped around.

ADAH

I don't like dried flowers.

FLORENCE

Really? Why?

ADAH

The color's not as strong anymore. Isn't the beauty of a flower its color?

FLORENCE

I thought it was the smell.

ADAH

(smiling)

You've been like that since we were kids.

FLORENCE

Like what?

ADAH

Liking what is not the obvious choice.

FLORENCE

Doesn't everyone like how flowers smell.

ADAH

Well, yes. But they do not say that's what makes them beautiful.

She picks up a flower and places it in FLORENCE'S hair.

See when I look at this flower, I cannot help but think how beautiful it is. Yellow suits you.

FLORENCE

You and your words.

ADAH

Yes...and what about your words. What color suits me?

FLORENCE

(immediate)

Purple.

ADAH

(laughing)

I've hardly worn purple a day in my life! What made you choose that?

FLORENCE

The lavender you use to keep your pillows fresh. The scent stays in your hair. When I...see purple, I cannot help but think...how...

(she stops)

Uh, never mind. I'm being silly.

She picks at more flowers, abashed. A silence.

ADAH

Florence.

FLORENCE

(not looking at her)

Hmm.

ADAH

What would happen if they didn't come?

FLORENCE

They're coming. We just got here a little early.

ADAH

Right, and let's say they don't come.

FLORENCE

What are you getting at? What do you mean?

ADAH

I mean us. If they didn't show up tonight, would you say yes?

FLORENCE takes the flower from her hair. She stands up.

FLORENCE

That's not the reason I said no. I said no before we even met the captain. Please don't bring this up again.

ADAH

Maybe it wasn't the reason you said no at first. But now you act as though you're content with the way things are. As though having them fixes things, replaces things.

FLORENCE

What's wrong with how things are?

ADAH

Johnny isn't your father.

FLORENCE

I'm well aware of that, thank you.

ADAH

Dead is dead, Florence. Limbo or not. You can't escape reality by pretending he's been your father all along. You can't change what people said about your mother and you cannot change what they said about you.

FLORENCE

I'm not trying to do that! The town doesn't even know he exists.

ADAH

But you wish they did! If you found out he passed on tonight, would you really be untroubled?

FLORENCE

Of course, I would. I want him to have peace!

ADAH

I don't believe you would be. Because then that would mean it's just us again, and you're terrified of what others might say.

FLORENCE

I'm not using him as some sort of crutch. He's family, all I'm doing is visiting him.

ADAH

If he's family, a man who you've met five times, then what am I? What am I to you?

FLORENCE looks as though she's about to say something.

Why can't you answer?

FLORENCE

I don't want to lie to your face.

ROSCOE appears. ADAH sees him and bolts in his direction. She keeps running though.

ROSCOE

Is everything alright?

FLORENCE

I need a moment. Would you go talk to her?

He gives a short nod. Blackout.

SCENE FIVE

A gust of wind. The moon shines again. A year has passed. The set has become even more weathered. Metal has rusted and barrels have sunk further into sand. ROSCOE appears first, then CAP. ROSCOE takes a seat on a rock or some part of the ship that's left. He watches as CAP paces impatiently.

CAP

Why isn't she here? Normally they greet us right away.

ROSCOE

Relax, Johnny.

CAP

It's not like her to come late.

ROSCOE

Then maybe she's not coming.

CAP

Why would you say that? You grow more pessimistic each year.

ROSCOE

Maybe it's time you start expectin' her not to come.

CAP

You're being an ass.

FLORENCE walks onto stage. She's older now, her hair is up and braided. She has a conflicted look about her.

FLORENCE

Sorry I'm late. I was handling something, couldn't step away.

She goes over to give CAP a hug. She gives one to ROSCOE too.

CAP

That's alright, love.

ROSCOE

Adah's not with you?

She turns away.

FLORENCE

She's not coming.

CAP

Oh that's too bad.

ROSCOE

(a beat)

Was she what you were dealing with?

FLORENCE

It doesn't matter. Sing me a song. Something to make me laugh.

CAP

Well hold on, tell me what you've been up to first?

FLORENCE

The same as always. The same as last year and the year before and the years before that. My life is quaint and common and under the radar. I do not ruffle feathers. I read, send letters to potential customers, eat and sew. Sing me a song.

CAP

And you talk to Adah.

FLORENCE

Yes, and I talk to Adah. And Adah talks to me. We talk...sometimes we say too much. She says the things I can't. She says them for me with so much ease that it frustrates me.

ROSCOE

If Adah already knows what you want to say, is it really so scary to say it out loud then?

FLORENCE gives ROSCOE a questioning look.

CAP

Did something happen?

FLORENCE

She's moving to the city, where everything is larger with more people who have less time to know or care about her business. She's been inquiring for jobs for some months now, and finally received a decent enough offer to support herself.

CAP

You can still visit her. A friendship as strong as yours doesn't simply end.

FLORENCE

I don't have that kind of money to travel back and forth as I please. Besides, I've spent every day of my life with Adah, how can I go to only seeing her a handful of times. I don't understand why she's doing this. She's choosing to leave.

ROSCOE

She's choosing to leave? Or are you leaving her? Go with her.

CAP

What!

ROSCOE

She asked you to go with her, didn't she? This is what she wants.

CAP

Are you insane? This is her home. She can't uproot her life for..for...She just said she wouldn't have the money to come back. Florence, I know you care deeply for Adah but isn't it time you settled to have a family. This might be the perfect chance for you to focus on yourself. I want to see you happy.

FLORENCE

I don't know. I don't know. When I picture myself...Adah *is* family though.

CAP

Family doesn't leave. She can't give you the life I'm talking about. Sure, you see her every day, but who do you go home to Florence? Don't you want someone to-to be with, to grow with? *That's* life.

FLORENCE

Well, I wouldn't say I've imagined...is having a husband really so fulfilling? Mama never needed one. No matter what she faced in life, she was constant in this belief.

CAP

I am at fault for that. I made absences seem normal.

FLORENCE

You were working.

CAP

I set us on a path to accept holes in our life as though they're natural. Marcella grew up without a father and so did you. But I'm here now and I'm not going anywhere. Stay.

ROSCOE

Don't make decisions based on the dead, Florence, when you're not dead yourself.

FLORENCE

I feel like I'm being split. I love you both...I love. I couldn't just leave you two.

CAP

I will always love you.

ROSCOE

(to CAP)

You're being selfish.

CAP

I'm her grandfather. She has no one else to lean on, I'm looking out for her.

ROSCOE

What's there to lean on? You're dead Johnny! Tell me, what's there to lean on?

FLORENCE

Let's calm down. I haven't made any decisions.

ROSCOE

That's the point! It's been six years, stop coming!

Oy!

CAP

Roscoe?

FLORENCE

Don't think and just go. You have no obligation to us---

ROSCOE

Roscoe!

CAP

--go be free and get the hell off this beach.

ROSCOE

Almost in a begging way (not rough), he pushes her forward until FLORENCE begins to run offstage. She exits.

Florence! Wait, come back!

CAP

(turning to ROSCOE)

What the hell was that for?

ROSCOE

It's for her own good. Yours too. When are you gonna wake up Johnny?

CAP punches him. ROSCOE swipes CAP's legs and CAP ends up on his back. CAP sits up but stays seated.

She's not going to come back! I promised Marcella I would look after her.

CAP

ROSCOE surges at CAP and wrestles him back down to the ground. He gets a tight hold on CAP whether by pressing on his chest or wrists, but either way ROSCOE is hovering over CAP to make these lines count.

You're talking about a promise that never existed, that marcella never asked of you. You forget that marcella raised that girl without your help, Florence is already grown. She doesn't need you to look after her for one night of the year. She gets you one day, and

ROSCOE

that means I stay in limbo another 364. We could have passed on, but I'm stuck with you because I know what will happen if I leave. You'll stay here alone until the day she dies and it's my fault!

CAP

What?

ROSCOE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry that I stopped you from jumping in after Marcella. I'm sorry that I'm the reason you're in limbo. You would have been fine if you died knowing you did everything you could to save her, but I was too selfish to watch you do it. But now you're pulling Florence down with us, and it's as though I'm watching her drown.

CAP reaches around ROSCOE's back and gives him a hug. ROSCOE stiffens in surprise.

CAP

I haven't been a very good captain, have I? It was my decision not to jump in.

The two release and sit up.

Truth be told...I love the idea of Florence. Of a family. I abandoned Marcella as a child. I missed when she grew up and I missed the rest of her life when I died. My eyes have been clouded for too long, I mistook the fact that our crew stuck together in death as deep loyalty. I've kept you all waiting.

ROSCOE

(composed)

I told you a long time ago that I'd follow you anywhere, even into the afterlife. This isn't what death is supposed to be though. We can't have one foot in both worlds. We died over 30 years ago.

CAP

I'm sorry, old friend. I'll be back before the moon changes.

CAP leaves. ROSCOE is alone.

A HUNDRED YEARS ON THE EASTERN SHORE
O YES O.
A HUNDRED YEARS ON THE EASTERN SHORE
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
IN THE BLACK BALL LINE I SERVED MY TIME
O YES O.
IN THE BLACK BALL LINE I SERVED MY TIME
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

A HUNDRED YEARS IS A VERY LONG TIME
O YES O.
A HUNDRED YEARS IS A VERY LONG TIME
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
A HUNDRED YEARS HAVE PASSED AND GONE
O YES O
A HUNDRED YEARS HAVE PASSED AND GONE
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

FLORENCE appears. She's less distraught than before. She waits a few moments before getting the courage to walk over.

FLORENCE

Roscoe. I know you don't want to see me.

ROSCOE

(in sad way)

You came back. It's like you're tethered to him...I know what that's like.

FLORENCE

He's family.

ROSCOE

Your relationship with him is unnatural. You've reversed the cycle and now ignore the living in favor of getting to know the dead. You may as well be one of us.

FLORENCE

What good is it to get to know the living? They all leave or die. Adah's all I've ever had in this town. But I know what will happen. I know how you're treated when you're different. My mother was ostracized, facing criticism for raising me on her own, and she always refused to let it get to her, but what about me! Who had to listen to her be talked about as though she were some criminal, some cruel mother who refused me a father? She followed her heart and people never let her forget it. And I can't understand how she didn't care!

ROSCOE

It's good to care. To feel and be scared. I doubt Marcella didn't care. But let me leave you with this. You don't have to be dead to be in limbo. You know, I was there the day your grandfather got married. I met Marcella the same time Johnny did, we were fresh off a four-month journey, she was two weeks old. A little old thing. It's scary how much you look alike. Do you expect Adah to do that? Stand by your side when you get married. Fastened to the pieces of yourself you leave behind only in glances?

FLORENCE

Adah wouldn't.

ROSCOE

Adah wouldn't what, wait? I waited. You'd be surprised how long people will wait. Why do you think your mother didn't get stuck?

FLORENCE

I don't know, if I was her, I would have been angry all the time, constantly having to justify myself.

ROSCOE

I'll tell you a secret. Those voices, the one's I know you're so worried about, the one's that tell you what you shouldn't want. What you're not allowed to ask for, to do, to be, to say. If you start listening to them in life, don't expect them be quiet in death.

He holds her firmly by the sides of her shoulders.

ROSCOE

Goodbye.

FLORENCE

Wait but, it hasn't been a day yet.

ROSCOE

I don't need it. It's time I get going.

A pause as she realizes what he means. From the background, CAP appears, he is not noticed.

FLORENCE

Oh. Oh. I'll miss you, Roscoe.

She leans into him, speaking into his chest.

I'll be honest, sometimes I secretly hoped I'd visit and one day, no one would be here, so that I'd know you found peace.

He smiles. A gust of wind. Lights fade as ROSCOE exits but FLORENCE and CAP remain. FLORENCE sits somewhere among the set, contemplating. CAP watches. Slowly, the crew begins to line up behind him. He doesn't turn to see them, his focus stays on FLORENCE. Finally, ROSCOE joins the end of the line. He is the furthest from CAP. Only the lineup sings and are bathed in blacklight.

CREW

OH, THE TIMES WAS HARD AND THE SPIRITS LOW
LEAVE HER, JOHNNY, LEAVE HER
AND THE ACHE WAS BAD AND THE GUILT DID FLOW
AND IT'S TIME FOR US TO LEAVE HER
LEAVE HER, JOHNNY, LEAVE HER
OH, LEAVE HER, JOHNNY, LEAVE HER
FOR THE VOYAGE IS DONE AND THE WINDS DO BLOW
AND IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO LEAVE HER
I THOUGHT I HEARD THAT OLD WIND SAY
LASS IS FINE, TAKE YOUR PAY
FOR THE PASSAGE WAS LONG AND THE GUILT TOO STRONG
BUT WE'LL LEAVE HER RIGHT, RIGHT WHERE SHE BELONGS
OH, LEAVE HER, JOHNNY, LEAVE HER WITH A GRIN
FOR THERE'S MANY A WORSE WE'VE SAILED IN
BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE
FOR THE OLD MAN'S MOON'S A-DRAWING NIGH

The lineup step backwards into the darkness and exits. CAP, still not having moved from his spot, lifts a foot, and at the last moment turns in the direction of the crew. He exits. FLORENCE bolts up. Black out.

SCENE SIX

If possible, A curtain comes down, covering the set. No blacklight is used. A mid-18th century couch is placed on stage. A gust of wind, flash of the moon, a year has passed. FLORENCE and ADAH enter and sit down. FLORENCE reads the newspaper while ADAH seems content to rest her eyes a moment.

Oh.

FLORENCE

Hmmm?

ADAH

It's been a year hasn't it?

FLORENCE

ADAH

Oh, yes. Do you wish we had gone back?

FLORENCE

No, I'd much rather spend our anniversary here.

ADAH

You've got your days mixed up, that's tomorrow.

FLORENCE

Adah, I remember what day it was very clearly. I ran half the beach on my bare feet. It was the middle of the night.

ADAH

Yes, the night...of the next day. In the wee hours of the morning, you came knocking at my door.

FLORENCE

Absolutely not, we were together before midnight.

ADAH

Your memory is hazy because we spent so many days packing your things with mine. That's alright though, I wrote it all down. We can check if you like.

FLORENCE

No, no. We'll celebrate twice. Today I'll give you your present.

She reaches behind her and pulls out a clothing box. ADAH, enthusiastically opens it. She pulls out a deep, royal purple, winter cloak. She is a bit dumbstruck.

ADAH

This is too much, it's gorgeous.

FLORENCE

It had a few tears that helped me haggle down the price. Hopefully my sewing doesn't stick out too much.

ADAH pulls her in for a hug.

ADAH

Thank you. I love it, I'll wear it all year round!

FLORENCE

You'll sooner faint of heat stroke.

They laugh a moment.

I'll get you one suited to each season, in plum, violet, lavender. Any shade.

ADAH

On the condition that it be purple?

FLORENCE

As long as it's purple.

FLORENCE pulls her in for a kiss. They look out to the audience.

ADAH

Shall we sing them a song?

ADAH:

O SAILORS OF THE SEA
MAY YOU REST IN PEACE
ROLL UP THE SAILS, HAVE A PORTLY FEAST

ADAH AND FLORENCE:

O SAILORS OF THE SEA
MAY YOUR RUM BE STRONG
HANG UP YOUR HAT, SING AN OLD SHANTY SONG

O SAILORS OF THE SEA
MAY YOUR SPIRIT SWAY
FORGET YOUR MAP, CUT YOUR ANCHOR AWAY

FLORENCE:

O SAILORS OF THE SEA
MAY YOU REST IN PEACE
BE AS FREE AS THE WIND, YOUR SOUL IS RELEASED

THE END.

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