

GALAPAGOS
(The Era of Hopeful Monsters)

by

Drew DeSimone

based on Galapagos (novel) by Kurt Vonnegut

WGA Registered (#2048517)

Drew DeSimone
Brooklyn, NY
646-504-4562
1drewado@gmail.com

OVER BLACK

Circle of light pulses wide. Reverberates as Kilgore speaks.

KILGORE TROUT (V.O.)
Are you truly this stupid boy? (hacks
a cough) What do you hope to learn
that you shouldn't already know?

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
Father, please. I--

KILGORE TROUT (V.O.)
You're still trying to save them!

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
Maybe she--

KILGORE TROUT (V.O.)
I'd rather be stuck a grave digger for
eternity than watch you dig in the
trenches / of humanity's underground.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
Please father.

KILGORE TROUT (V.O.)
Fine Leon! One more year. One!

Light collapses. Beat. Weak winds whistle over lapping waves.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
And so began my favorite story.

EXT. OPEN OCEAN - DAY

SUPER: 1 Year and 1 Day Later

SUPER: 2023

Rhythmic splashing approaches.

MARY HEPBURN, 55, swims in a t-shirt and hiking pants.

Far trailed by a swimmer dwarfed by a listing mega-yacht.

MARY'S POV: swims toward a flat beach, wave washes over her.

MEMORY FLASH: blue sky peeks through treetops. A KIRTLAND'S
WARBLER SINGS: chir-chir-che-way-o. Crimson tent zippers
open. Mary (27) crawls out.

END MEMORY FLASH

MARY'S POV: a whitecap slaps her face.

MEMORY FLASH: Mary sobs as nurses wheel a deceased ROY
HEPBURN, 59, out of a hospital room.

CUT TO:

Classroom empty, Mary packs a cardboard box on her desk.

END MEMORY FLASH

Mary struggles to stay afloat, head sinks under water.

MEMORY FLASH: her head asphyxiated in clear plastic.

END MEMORY FLASH

She recovers, breathes heavy. Looks back to the yacht.

MOMENTS LATER

Shallow surf. Mary trips, braces fall with her hand. Knuckles
bleed. She rinses. They bead again. A small brown finch with
cylindrical beak lands on her wrist.

MARY

Hello. And which of the fourteen
species are you?

Head cocked at Mary, the bird hops forward, sips the blood.

Mary giggles. Turns to find ADOLF VON KLEIST, 45, struggling
to his feet in the waves. He wears cargo shorts and a short-
sleeved naval-like uniform.

MARY (CONT'D)

(calling)

You say this is Rabida Island,
captain?

Hunched over, he nods.

MARY (CONT'D)

Well, I hate to tell you, but you are
wrong again. This is Santa Rosalia.

The finch flies off.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
How do you know?

MARY
(scanning the beach)
A little bird told me.

EXT. GALAPAGOS ARCHIPELAGO - DAY

FLYOVER OF SANTA ROSALIA: a small, barren island covered in basalt. Few trees. Short, tangly shrubs struggle out of hardened, shimmering lava. No rivers, lakes or ponds.

EXT. SURF - DAY

Captain wades, crooked handmade spear held above his head.

Mary guides a blind teen, SELENA MACINTOSH, 16, toward shore. Selena wears tinted welding goggles, timid with every step.

Ahead, HISAKO HIROGUCHI, 27, silk blouse drenched, tugs a raft of teak decking and blankets nestling a newborn baby.

The baby coos, fair skin, fine black hair - same as Hisako's.

MARY (O.S.)
Hisako. How's she doing?

Hisako yells back in Japanese (undecipherable) - overwhelmed.

Captain thrusts spear into water. Pulls out - nothing. Hurls it in frustration. Plunges dangerously close to Selena.

SELENA
Ahhh. What is that?!

Mary glares at him. Beat. Her eyes drift to the open ocean, consider another "way out".

EXT. BEACH - DAY

A huge, warted, dragon-like creature basks on a rock.

One eye on the animal, Mary slogs bundles of sticks and brush. Reinforces a small enclosure. Her lips and skin are dry and cracked. They haven't had food or water for a week.

MARY
They don't seem to be afraid of us.

From inside, the baby wails. Down slope, the captain pouts.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

Look at it. We're the ones that should
be afraid.

The reptile shoots a creamy fluid from an upper set of
nostrils. Mary's stare freezes.

MARY

Maybe we could kill him. To eat.

Camera reveals the marine iguana is, at most, the size of a
house cat. Mary moves toward it. It doesn't move.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (O.S.)

I'm not getting near that thing.

MARY

(under her breath)

Maybe we should kill and eat you.

HISAKO (O.S.)

Mary! (in Japanese) Come here. The
girl has fainted!

EXT. DUNES - DAY

Above a different beach. A small girl, A'AUPA, 6, long brown
hair and radiant blue eyes, creeps behind a cactus tree.

Nearby, two blue-footed boobies enwind in a mating dance.

A'aupa glides around the tree. Clasps her fingers around a
bird neck, strangles the booby.

Her twin sisters watch. Next tallest to smallest: L'OR,
unimpressed, LIR'A, famished and LAR, amazed. They look much
healthier than the others.

LAR

bonduuuum. elo mor, A'aupa!

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

It wasn't until a couple of weeks
later that anyone knew the girls were
even on the island.

MARY (V.O.)

Girrrrls? It's okay. You can come out.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DAY

On catwalk, the captain and Mary tiptoe over broken plastic. Fluorescent light bulbs dangle from the ceiling, flicker. A circuit box is partially torn out of the wall.

MARY

Girr--

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

They're not on the ship. They could
have tried / to swim--

MARY

Giiirrrrls. They may not know how to
swim. They don't know what I'm saying.

Captain looks at his phone. Low battery. No service.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The Kanka-Bonos have always been
excellent swimmers.

MARY

Anything?

He grunts.

MARY (CONT'D)

Why don't you go try the radio again
while we're here. I'll keep looking.

Captain exits.

MARY (CONT'D)

Try the engines too! Maybe you can get
us off this shoal.

She scoffs. Spots something on the ceiling.

MARY'S POV: a long tube hangs ripped from the ceiling. Mary's eyes trace down its length. Find a noose over darkness below.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Selena rests against the enclosure, wet rag over her forehead and goggles. Hisako struggles with the baby's rag diaper.

Using her whole body, Mary labors to carry a long wooden plank. Drops it near a pile of brush and driftwood. It's much too large to use in another enclosure. She stands on the

board, bends it from one end, trying to snap it in half.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (O.S.)

It shouldn't be that big.

The Captain sits nearby watching Mary fail.

EXT. BUSH - DAY

Feverish, the captain hides behind a tree, following L'or and Lir'a who carry orangey land iguana kill.

In a clearing, A'aupa weaves rope from strips of animal skin next to a thatch shelter and a brook trickling through basalt.

The captain slugs behind a tree. Eyes widen - he spots the spring. Screams. Bursts out waving his arms. The girls scamper. He drops to all fours, gulps from the brook.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Today humans don't require freshwater.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Next to the enclosures a small fire ambers. Charred, half-eaten land iguana carcasses lay in the sand.

INT. MARY'S BEACH ENCLOSURE - NIGHT

Mary covers herself with a blanket. The captain lies next to her. Roof unfinished, they stare at the stars.

Suddenly the captain reaches for Mary. Her body mummifies as he pulls her in - kisses her. She doesn't move. Captain retracts. Mary scooches away.

MARY

No.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

Okay.

He returns his attention to the sky.

Mary lays further away now. Eyes point upward, worried.

MARY'S POV: few clouds, stars by the millions.

Audio fades in:

BBC ANCHOR (V.O.)

We bring you live to a private location outside of Rome, where the emergency panel on global food production has convened. Dr. Richard Mooreland, Senior Advisor to the UN is addressing the group.

DR. MOORELAND (V.O.)

Abnormal rainfall and seasonality, related to rising temperatures over the last thirty years has drastically decreased food production in certain latitudinal bands. These ripple effects of climate change have caused many to stockpile national products--

Moans and groans from around the room.

DR. MOORELAND (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Severely impacting the health of net importing nations...and complicating trade negotiations.

Stars fade to television static, tune in to:

A chaotic scene inside World Food Program office, Paris.

FRENCH TV REPORTER (O.S.)

(in French)

For the last week the World Food Program Headquarters has been under constant scrutiny as representatives from over 50 nations have shown up demanding assistance.

Local Ecuadorian news coverage of martial law.

LOCAL ECUADORIAN NEWSCASTER

(in Spanish)

It has been twenty-one days since neighboring Peru declared bankruptcy, and a military junta took control of the government, claiming local and regional assets by force.

BBC World News broadcast.

BBC ANCHOR

Riots on the streets of Bangkok and Jakarta broke out overnight, joining
(MORE)

BBC ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Lima, Bogota, Athens and Istanbul, as bankrupt nations become desperate for ideas on how to feed their people.

Live outside As Salam International Hospital, Cairo.

ALJAZEERA REPORTER

The newest strain of Ebola has now killed over twenty-five thousand people in the M.E.A. and parts of Europe. Vaccines have proven ineffective against the Aswan strain, and without additional funding, local health workers are unlikely to receive the protective equipment necessary to slow its spread. Though, some senior scientists around the world aren't concerned. Dr. James Barra formerly headed up the US's Virus Response Force in 2020.

Barra interview video.

DR. JAMES BARRA

People have this idea that Ebola is really dangerous. The fact is it hasn't been really bad for us; it's not very contagious. It's deadly, yeah, but really only transmissible at late stages. When people are pretty close to dying anyway. Now, Ebola crossed with something like the Measles or Mumps. That would be a scary idea.

Cuomo Primetime on CNN.

CHRIS CUOMO

The CDC confirmed rumors today that they have, once again, not been allocated budget to develop comprehensive pandemic prevention strategies. A shocking federal cut revelation as the US government prepares to break records with its latest stimulus package. This one likely to contain trillions of dollars earmarked for the cement and airline industries. And, is said to include new subsidies for manufacturers

(MORE)

CHRIS CUOMO (CONT'D)
capable of supporting growing military
efforts. Speaking under the condition
of anonymity one CDC senior official
told CNN:

CDC OFFICIAL (V.O.)
(voice disguised)
With current environmental and
economic conditions, this is a recipe
for a truly global health disaster.

CHRIS CUOMO
Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN's Chief Medical
Correspondent, added:

Video of Gupta.

DR. SANJAY GUPTA
Especially with the number of
malnourished people now the highest
it's ever been in human history,
without attention; serious resources
allocated to new disease control, it
seems the perfect storm scenario just
got a little more perfect. Perhaps the
scariest thing is we have no idea what
a new disease could look like. We may
not even recognize a new threat until
it's too late.

Fade to static then stars.

SUPER: *it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of
foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of
incredulity,*

SUPER: *it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of
despair.*

SUPER: *Charles Dickens (from 1812 to 1870)*

SUPER: **GALAPAGOS**

INT. MARY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Close on Mary's eyes, red and tear-logged. We hear a
television tuned to Spanish language news: riots, gunshots.

Mary tears at her t-shirt. Slaps the thermostat. Paces.

SUPER: Guayaquil, Ecuador

SUPER: One Week Earlier

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

One million years ago humans had great big brains that were capable of all types of ideas. Mary Hepburn hadn't left her room since arriving to the Hotel El Dorado two days ago, and her brain was telling her--

MARY

(whispering)

You are my enemy. Why would I carry such a terrible enemy inside me?

EXT. DOCK - DAY

Muggy seaport surrounded by marshland. A pudgy, balding WILLARD FLEMMING, 40, sweats profusely in a three-piece suit.

Purchases a ticket at a kiosk framed by the same mega-yacht. Above the ticket windows a large sign reads "The Nature Cruise of the Century".

Ship's railings decorated with inaugural ribbons. Hull stenciled in elaborate cursive: "*Bahia de Darwin*". Photographs from the Galapagos: a blue-footed booby, a jet black wingless bird, a giant saddleback tortoise, and an enormous marine iguana chomping on seaweed.

A banner, "Welcome VIP Guests" is strung between two poles over the gangplank.

INT. MARY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mary tugs at her hair, catches herself in a mirror.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

A high school science teacher for 27 years Mary suffered her students' groans during lectures on reproduction, warning them how insanely easy it was to get pregnant. And, she watched as most fell asleep while she explained evolution.

Mary screams.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Anitquated High School Science classroom. Periodic table. A plastic dinosaur skeleton. Posters of strange, beautiful animals on every wall. Mary weaves through students at desks.

MARY

The Galapagos finches are one of the most famous studied examples of natural selection.

She scans the room.

MARY (CONT'D)

Adaptive radiation. Who remembers what that is?

Mary's eyes dart around, trying to infuse energy into her students. She continues weaving.

Stops next to MICHAEL, 16, who's texting.

MARY (CONT'D)

Michael. What do you think?

Puts his phone in his pocket.

MICHAEL

Is that like chain migration?

Students laugh. Mary smiles. Walks to the front of the room.

MARY

Not at all. Georgette?

She waits patiently as GEORGETTE thinks.

GEORGETTE

The Cichlids! The fish in the African lakes.

Mary smiles.

INT. MARY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mary stares at herself with hatred.

MARY

Given the choice between a brain like you and the antlers of an Irish Elk, I'd take the antlers of the Irish Elk.

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

A male Irish Elk strides through the forest - majestic. Stops, raises his head, miraculous rack on full display.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Irish Elk had antlers the size of ballroom chandeliers. They were fascinating examples, Mary used to tell her students, of how tolerant mother nature could be of clearly ridiculous mistakes made by evolution.

The elk startles. A small pack of wolves approach. Elk breaks into a sprint.

Wolves chase, catch up to the elk on a hill. The elk's antlers entangle in branches, he splays himself. Helpless and handcuffed, the wolves circle.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

These animals survived for two and a half million years despite having antlers too large, unwieldy for fighting or self-defense, and unable to seek food or cover in thick forests or heavy brush.

INT. MARY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Suddenly Mary has a thought - did I lose that too?

Lunges to the bed, rummages through her carry-on.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

But the worst thing Mary's big brain had done was fill her head with the idea that she had to come to Guayaquil despite another global financial crisis, conflict erupting in the region, and the near certainty that The Nature Cruise of the Century would be canceled.

Mary collapses on the bag, rocks.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Her checked suitcase had also been stolen at the airport, along with most of the clothes she had carefully selected to wear on the celebrity-

(MORE)

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
laden eco-cruise.

MARY (V.O.)
They'll laugh at you, think you're
crazy and pitiful. Your life is over
anyway. You've lost your husband and
your job, you don't have any children
or anything else to live for, so just
put yourself out of your misery.

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Mary walks off stage wearing a red gown, with a large plaque
under her arm. 100 people dressed to the nines stand by round
tables applauding.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
2023 had started out promisingly for
Mary. She was named her school's
Teacher of the Year for the seventh
time, and the superintendent had
presented her with a plaque
celebrating her 27 years of
distinguished teaching.

Mary returns to her table, gets a kiss on the cheek from her
husband. Roy, tall and dapper, wears a vintage tuxedo. He
smiles, tears in his eyes.

MONTAGE:

Mary and Roy hike through a red spruce forest. A golden
retriever with red collar plods ahead of them.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Mary and Roy were active, great lovers
of the outdoors.

They work in their small, backyard garden. The golden
retriever sleeps in the yard.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They ate healthy, and loved the
challenge of growing rare fruits and
vegetables. Cape gooseberries. Sea
kale. Maypops and shiso perillas. They
were best friends.

They walk on the sidewalk in their rural neighborhood,
holding hands. Reach their modest house. The golden retriever

waits on the front steps.

The tag on his collar reads "Donald".

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Roy was Donald's best friend too. A
 neighbor's dog. But, animals loved
 Roy, and he and Donald were near
 inseparable.

END MONTAGE

A stream of people visit Mary at her table. She greets each warmly. Roy gleams with pride for his wife. She's a bit uncomfortable with the attention. He glances to her as if this knowledge is a secret between them.

EXT. MAIN DECK - DAY

From the deck of the *Bahia de Darwin*, first mate HERNANDO CRUZ, 37, watches a taxi pull up.

Captain von Kleist steps out. Dressed casually, blonde hair unkempt, blue eyes bloodshot, he carries a suitcase.

HERNANDO CRUZ (O.S.)
 Good morning, captain. How was your
 trip?

The captain walks by without acknowledging him. Crew members hurry in the background hiding kitchen appliances, computer monitors, food, and welding equipment.

HERNANDO CRUZ
 Sir, we have a situation that I need
 to talk with you about.

von Kleist ascends a staircase.

HERNANDO CRUZ (CONT'D)
 Captain--

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
 I'm sure, whatever it is, you have it
 under control, Cruz.

HERNANDO CRUZ
 No, sir. You don't underst--

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
 Cruz. Just smile and...well, just take
 (MORE)

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (CONT'D)
care of it. I'll be in my stateroom.

He disappears inside.

INT. CREW BEDROOM - DAY

Door swings open, Cruz enters. Slugs toward his desk, looks down to a picture of his family: he plays in the sand with his two young sons, his wife smiles from a lounge chair.

INT. CAPTAIN'S STATEROOM - DAY

The captain enters, throws his suitcase on the bed, removes a bottle of scotch.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION - DAY

An employee stands behind the Hotel El Dorado front desk scrolling through her phone.

INSERT: Front desk computer displays short list of guests:

Room 701: ANDREW MACINTOSH

Room 603: MARY HEPBURN

Room 604: ZENJI & HISAKO HIROGUCHI

Room 333: WILLARD FLEMMING

ROOMS AVAILABLE: 196

INT. MACINTOSH HOTEL SUITE OFFICE - DAY

ANDREW MACINTOSH, 60, sits at a desk, reading his laptop screen, cellphone in hand.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
Above Mary Hepburn, Andrew MacIntosh
was working. Macintosh, a financier,
had inherited a great deal of wealth.
And, was always fishing for
opportunities to invest.

INSERT: Laptop screen. Web page shows info on the location and ownership of Ecuadorian oil fields. Email opens with an offer to purchase Hotel El Dorado.

MacIntosh sits back in his chair, smiles.

INT. MACINTOSH HOTEL SUITE BEDROOM - DAY

Selena MacIntosh lays on the bed texting next to her seeing eye dog, KAZAHK, a German shepherd wearing a red leather, studded collar. She wears designer sunglasses with mirror coating.

INSERT: Smartphone screen. Instagram. Gallery of pics from luxurious travels: private planes, Greek islands, Manhattan penthouse views. Opens text chain with Vanka. A series of selfies: Selena in different pairs of sunglasses. A message from Vanka populates: "3 then 1 but let's see what you get on the boat".

SIRI

Three then one but let's see what you get on the boat.

SELENA

(into phone)

So ok to post number 3 question mark.
Send.

MacIntosh enters on the phone. Collects a newspaper from the bedside table.

MACINTOSH

(on phone)

Get the El Dorado first. As soon as possible. I want to buy it cheap.

SIRI (O.S.)

Instagram. Post on March second. Three thousand two hundred sixty-seven likes. Message from Vanka: yes.

MacIntosh walks back to the office.

MACINTOSH (O.S.)

(on phone)

We'll wait to move on the oil and timber until I'm back. Did you finish the research? (listens) Good. Transfer four hundred to the Guayaquil account. (listens) That's all it should take. (listens) There's not going to be a cruise. None of the passengers are even in Ecuador.

INT. HIROGUCHI HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Hisako chases ZENJI HIROGUCHI, 29, around the room in designer maternity wear, berating him while painting her nails.

HISAKO

(in Japanese)

There is nothing I like to eat in this hotel. Why am I supposed to believe the ship will be any better?!

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Next door to Mary were Zenji Hiroguchi, a tech genius, and his very pregnant wife. Zenji was widely regarded as being one of the smartest men in the world. And it was *his* fault that they had, in effect, become MacIntosh's prisoners on this trip.

INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Andrew MacIntosh and Zenji sit in a private booth. Zenji holds his smartphone equidistant from MacIntosh's mouth and his own ear, listening carefully to MacIntosh.

INSERT: Phone screen, a translation app. English words turn to Japanese underneath an audio waveform.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The two met while MacIntosh was in Tokyo on business.

MacIntosh pauses.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

MacIntosh made short work of convincing Zenji, objectively one of the most technologically intelligent people in the world,

Zenji asks a question. MacIntosh answers, then waits for Zenji's next move. Zenji extends his hand to MacIntosh. A deal has been made. Both men smile.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

that he was stupid for taking a salary at a company where his brilliance would only be tolerated. Instead MacIntosh suggested that they go into
(MORE)

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 business together, and promised Zenji
 would be a billionaire by year's end.

MacIntosh mouths the word "Billions".

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Back then the idea of a billion
 dollars was a lot of money. Not today.
 Today it's meaningless. Money that is.

INT. HIROGUCHI HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Hisako continues to barrage Zenji.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 Zenji agreed without consulting his
 pregnant wife. MacIntosh also insisted
 they take a vacation on The Nature
 Cruise of the Century where they would
 discuss business plans by day, and
 mingle with movie stars and world
 leaders by night.

MACINTOSH (V.O.)
 It's going to be another Davos.

HISAKO
 (in Japanese)
 I don't like him. I don't trust him,
 Zenji. He has tricked you.

ZENJI
 (incredulous, in Japanese)
 Tricked me?! Tricked me. He has freed
 me! To finally be able to create what
 I want to create!

Gobsmacked, Hisako holds her stomach.

HISAKO
 (in Japanese)
 What about me, and what we have
 finally created?!

Zenji slumps in a chair. Checks out. Hisako continues.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 Hisako had always planned on being a
 full-time mother and wife. But,
 Zenji's sperm had other ideas.

(MORE)

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Fortunately, his salary provided for
years of advanced fertility
treatments. That finally paid off.

HISAKO
(in Japanese)
Zenji! Zenji!? Are you listening to
me?

He looks up. Hisako screams.

HISAKO (CONT'D)
(in Japanese)
Get out! Just get out!

EXT. GUAYAQUIL STREET - DAY

Tracing through a residential neighborhood, crowds of people
beg for food outside a market. Police shove with riot
shields, threaten with batons. Parents protect children.

MONTAGE:

A man flees a bodega cradling a bunch of bananas. He's chased
by the store owner pointing a gun.

Inside a mobile phone store, shelves are bare. Front door
smashed in.

An elderly woman drops a few coins on the sidewalk, and a
scramble for them turns into a brawl.

The sliding door of a rusted aluminum shack rattles - someone
is locked inside.

INT. ALUMINUM SHACK - CONTINUOUS

A'aua scampers across the dirt floor, digs in the corner.

A'AUPA
d'arde vol. vol!

L'or and Lar collect plastic bags and empty bottles.

Starving, Lir'a crouches against a wall holding her stomach.

A'aua unfurls a rag revealing a small stone flake knife. She
uses it to pick the lock, slides the door open.

A'AUPA (CONT'D)
 (whispers)
 oson ave asam.

Peeks out the doorway, leads her sisters outside.

A'AUPA (O.S.)
 kahla li.

The *Bahia de Darwin* is visible through a barred window in the back wall.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 Ecuador was mostly lava and ash, and could not support food for seventeen million people. Now bankrupt, people had begun to starve. Neighboring Peru and Colombia had been bankrupt for fourteen days. Their people's hunger was already much worse.

EXT. HARBOR - DAY

Nearby the *Bahia de Darwin* an old freighter, anchored in the harbor. On deck crew members sit in lounge chairs playing cards, scrolling through their phones, and napping.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 The only other ship in Guayaquil was a rusty Colombian freighter, stranded unable to purchase fuel. Chile and Brazil and Argentina were also bankrupt. And Indonesia and the Philippines and Pakistan. And India and Thailand and Italy and Ireland and Turkey. Others hadn't admitted they were in trouble yet. Some never would.

EXT. GUAYAQUIL STREET - DAY

The girls hurry from alleyway shadows, underneath barbed wire, onto a main street - empty. Automatic weapons fire in the distance followed by screams.

A'aua yanks at a market door. It's locked. The next storefront door is barricaded with cinder blocks and scrap metal. A dog shouts inside.

They run passed one chained-up door after another. L'or spots a door cracked open, motions to A'aua.

Cautious, A'aua approaches, looks inside.

A'AUPA
jalor.

She creeps in. The others follow close behind.

INT. MARY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mary's eyes open wide. She darts up - freezes.

MARY
I have a brain tumor.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
It wasn't surprising that Mary had
come to this conclusion as it was only
two months earlier that she had lost
her husband to cancer.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Mary sits on the edge of Roy's bed. He's attached to wires
and tubes.

ROY
We Hepburns are extinct as the dodoes
now. And, the Irish Elk, ivory-billed
woodpecker, Tyrannosaurus rex,
Smallpox? (smiling) George Washington.

Mary smiles back - she can't help but fall in love with him
again.

ROY (CONT'D)
I want you to promise me something.

He gestures. She leans in. He whispers in her ear. Mary
scoffs. Catches his stare - he's serious.

She smiles - understands. Tears well. She takes his hand.

MARY
I promise, Roy. I promise.

INT. HEPBURN KITCHEN - DAY

A dark, empty house.

On the refrigerator, two tickets and a brochure for The
Nature Cruise of the Century.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

It had been Roy's idea, a surprise to Mary, to go on the cruise. They were actually one of the first to sign up.

The brochure shows a black bird with a long skinny neck perched on a rock jutting out of the ocean next to a volcanic island. The *Bahia de Darwin* sails in the background.

EXT. VOLCANIC ISLAND - DAY

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The bird chosen to represent the cruise was jet black and had, still has, a neck as long and supple as a snake. But the oddest thing about the bird was it appeared to have no wings.

The bird dives in the water.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

The bird pursues a school of small black fish.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

In fact its wings were tiny and folded flat against its body so that it could swim as fast and deep as fish could. It was called the Flightless Cormorant.

The bird catches a fish.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It could go where the fish were while most other birds had to wait for fish to come to the surface before plunging down on their prey.

EXT. VOLCANIC ISLAND - DAY

The cormorant swallows the fish with two quick undulations of its neck. Fans its tiny wings.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Somewhere along the line of evolution the ancestors of this bird must have begun to doubt the value of their wings.

INT. HEPBURN KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary and Roy sit at the kitchen table, heads hanging. Donald lays in between Roy's feet.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

In March of 2023, shortly after Roy had been laid off from the factory, Mary was notified by her school that she too had been deemed excessive. Roy's company, the biggest in their small town, had shuttered. Most moved their families in search of new jobs.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Mary packs the contents of her desk into a cardboard box.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Suddenly there were almost no children to teach.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Mary sits in front of a desk crying. Roy stands behind her, hands on her shoulders. Stares out a window.

A doctor leaves the room, closing the door behind her.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Then Roy Hepburn was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor.

INT. HEPBURN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mary and Roy lay in bed under the covers facing each other. Mary's ears and eyes sponge all of Roy.

ROY

I can hang on at least that long, Mary.

MARY

Roy, you could have years. That's not the point.

ROY

Just let me take the cruise with you. I want to see penguins on the equator. May, Mary, that's not that far away, is it?

Shaking her head, Mary cries.

MARY

No.

EXT. HEPBURN HOUSE - NIGHT

All the lights in the house are out except the bedroom.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

You probably didn't know there were penguins on the equator. They were skinny little things underneath their headwaiter's costumes. They had to be. If they had been swaddled in fat like their Antarctic relatives they would have roasted to death on the Galapagos. Like the Flightless Cormorants, these birds had abandoned aviation in order to catch more fish.

INT. MARY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Resolved, Mary saunters to the closet door. Slides it open revealing her red gown hanging in dry cleaner's plastic.

She slumps against the closet's back wall.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Loud, upscale Manhattan dinning room. Every table filled.

Tucked in the corner, away from windows, MacIntosh dines with two men and a woman.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The Nature Cruise of the Century wasn't always a star-studded eco-cruise.

A short, stubby man, BOBBY KING, 42, wades through a sea of people crowding the entrance. He spots MacIntosh.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

At one time it was a difficult sell for Bobby King, the creator of the cruise. Only a handful of people had signed up, and the only one of note was Andrew MacIntosh. King feared he'd have to cancel the cruise that he'd sunk his reputation into.

At the table with MacIntosh are Gary Knell, president of National Geographic, actor Sandra Bullock, and governor Andrew Cuomo.

BOBBY KING

Mr. MacIntosh. I'm sorry to interrupt your dinner, sir. My name is Robert King. I'm the creator of The Nature Cru--

MACINTOSH

Mr. King, of course. It's a pleasure to meet you. I'm looking forward to seeing the Galapagos.

BOBBY KING

Yes, sir. (pauses) Sir, if I may ask. Why did you decide to visit the Galapagos via the *Bahia de Darwin*?

MacIntosh laughs.

BOBBY KING (CONT'D)

I'm surprised is all. I'm told you have your own yacht. That it's as big as our ship. / You could visit the Galapagos any time you wanted.

MACINTOSH

Bigger.

(smiling)

There may be nothing special about the *Bahia de Darwin*, Bobby, but there certainly is something special about the Galapagos.

With his eyes, MacIntosh gathers the others' attention.

MACINTOSH (CONT'D)

Do you know how much damage has been done to the shellfish population of the Galapagos by ignorant tourists?

MacIntosh nods towards Knell.

MACINTOSH (CONT'D)

And the same boots crush camouflaged nests of marine iguanas. Tourist's greedy fingers pick up the eggs of boobies. They'll even cradle a seal pup. Unable to resist its cuteness.

(MORE)

MACINTOSH (CONT'D)

And, what do you think happens to that pup when it's returned to its mother?

MacIntosh looks at each of them. Bullock is in pain.

MACINTOSH (CONT'D)

It starves to death. Because its smell has changed. Its mother will no longer nurse it. All for the sake of a photograph. No tourist should go ashore without a trained naturalist and guide. (to Bullock) So, there you have it, Mr. King. I'm setting a good example. (to King) And hoping others will follow.

Beat.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

It was a joke that this man would present himself as a conservationist. So many of his companies were grotesque destroyers of the environment. (beat) And, our Minsky Moment had long passed.

INT. HOTEL EL DORADO BAR - DAY

Willard Flemming now wears a safari outfit from the gift shop, price tag still dangling from the hat's brim. He inspects the vantage from different stools before choosing one on the corner of the bar.

BARTENDER

You know, you still have the price tag on that hat?

Flemming doesn't miss a beat.

WILLARD

Name's Willard Flemming from Saskatchewan. That's Canada. I'm going on The Nature Cruise of the Century.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

But, his name wasn't Willard Flemming. His name was actually James Wait. Flemming was just the most recent version of Wait - a new character designed to bait a rich woman into

(MORE)

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 marriage for long enough to suck her
 dry of all her wealth and then
 disappear. Wait had thus cultivated 11
 such targets. And, he was on the run
 from the latest one right now.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Elevator doors open and Andrew MacIntosh exits just as Zenji Hiroguchi bursts out the stairway door.

MACINTOSH
 Zenji! Just the man I want to see.

Zenji ignores him, walks briskly through the lobby toward the entrance.

EXT. HOTEL ENTRANCE - DAY

Fifty people gather around the hotel. Some attempt to enter and are stopped by soldiers with automatic weapons.

Hotel staff install sand-filled, plastic barriers around the driveway.

People call out for food, for help. Fathers and mothers with starving children beg hotel employees.

From his second floor office window, SIEGFRIED VON KLEIST, 59, the tall, well-manicured hotel manager, watches.

Hotel doors slide open. Zenji slips through, MacIntosh in pursuit.

MACINTOSH
 Zenji! Is something wrong?

A MOTHER with two young children stops a SOLDIER.

MOTHER
 (in Spanish)
 I am very hungry. My husband is
 hungry. Our children are hungry!

SOLDIER
 (in Spanish)
 I'm sorry. The food inside is for
 hotel guests only.

More starving people arrive. An older man carries a radio

tuned to the local news.

A'aupa, L'or, Lir'a and Lar squeeze through a sea of ankles and calves. Crouch behind a barricade where the mother continues to plead with soldiers as they pass by. Another walks away from her, the girls sneak behind him and skirt into the hotel.

EXT. CLOUD FOREST - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Sticky mist clings to dense canopy over a small wooden house.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Before coming to Guayaquil the Kanka-Bono girls had no idea of hunger like this despite living their entire lives in what most big brains would call a primitive society.

Behind the house two women clean wild vegetables in basins of water, tear meat from the bones of a small rabbit.

Beside them, Lir'a and Lar (4) make a game of organizing food on wooden platters.

A'aupa emerges from the forest carrying two plate-billed mountain toucans by the tail feathers. Lar runs to her, grabs one of the birds. Examines it.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The Kanka-Bonos lived in cloud forests sheltered by the western slope of the Andes Mountains. They had done so for hundreds of years.

EXT. CLOUD FOREST - NIGHT

Spaced out, encircling a fire, 3 women and two men dance. Perfectly synchronized in motion, each rotates their shoulders around their spine swinging their arms freely. Each swing begins and ends with the locking of neighbors' hands for the briefest of moments.

Children sit watching their parents dance.

KANKA-BONOS

(singing)

el

evor medra lomor

KANKA-BONOS (CONT'D)

el. ella.

evor medra lomor

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

They lived almost completely out of touch with the rest of the world.

The dance stops. Standing still, the women raise their arms above their heads, eyes turn to the stars. The men pair with women. Leaving one woman alone. She exits.

The men squat their bodies toward the ground, outstretch their arms like wings, palms up. Shuffling, they circle their partner raising their arms in rapid wooshes, as if lifting the weight of the atmosphere around her.

KANKA-BONOS

(singing)

el

evor medra lomor

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The lore of the Fire Dance of the Kanka-Bonos was famous around the world even though it was secret; irreproducible by outsiders. The dance was rumored to be an invocation of fertility between women and their mates pledged to care for children together.

INT. LARGE WOODEN SHELTER - DAY

Adults and children lay motionless in squat beds.

The KANKA-BONO CHIEF, 68, bends over a young woman. Whispers in her ear. Brings a wooden spoon to her lips. She slurps with effort.

In the corner, PASTOR, 62, in street clothes, stands in shadow, watches.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The Kanka-Bonos were a peaceful people. They were a resourceful and intelligent people. But, they were helpless against the devastation that was unraveling in their community.

(MORE)

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Once numbering in the thousands, less
 than 100 were left, all in this one
 small community ravaged by disease.

The chief approaches pastor.

KANKA-BONO CHIEF
 l'ogui parson ev diplom.

SUPER: *I need to speak with you in private.*

INT. CHIEF'S CABIN - NIGHT

Lit by candle, adorned with fur rugs and animal shrines: the
 capuchin monkey, the ocelot, the red brocket deer.

The chief and pastor sit leaning over a fire.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 The Kanka-Bono Chief realized his
 people were doomed, and while he could
 not save them all, he could send his
 grand daughters away with the hope
 that they could learn a new life
 somewhere else. He now once more
 trusted a man who had come to his
 village one morning two years ago from
 the outside world.

With tears in his eyes:

KANKA-BONO CHIEF
 el darde lo volera sale es per branzo
 cardem.

SUPER: *Take my granddaughters out of this place, and find a
 new life for them.*

PASTOR
 (reluctant)
 l'o--

KANKA-BONO CHIEF
 l'et tivol. ev vol.

SUPER: *They are healthy. For now.*

Pastor fidgets.

KANKA-BONO CHIEF (CONT'D)
 d'arde o el quaychi. bonduum el amor
 lo volera. aa l'amor el.

SUPER: *Take them to your city, but promise me that you will care for them, like we have cared for you.*

Torn, the pastor stares at him. Then nods.

PASTOR
 bonduum.

SUPER: *Promise.*

EXT. GUAYAQUIL SIDEWALK - DUSK

Speed walking, the girls struggle to keep up with the pastor, who hides his face from passers by.

PASTOR (O.S.)
 (anrgy)
 vaxo!

SUPER: *Come on!*

Catching up, Lir'a tugs on the pastor's arm.

LIR'A
 Pa'ma. Pa'ma!

SUPER: *Grandfather!*

INT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

Antique, patterned couches and chairs. Brass lamps. The pastor follows RODRIGO, 39. Looks back at the doorway, flicks his head, points to a corner. The girls hurry in. Rodrigo scowls. All but A'aupa shake with nerves.

RODRIGO
 Who are they?

Pastor weighs different ideas.

RODRIGO (CONT'D)
 I'm surprised to see you, (scoffing)
 pastor.

PASTOR
 Yes, well. I was hoping to make up for that.

Rodrigo winces.

PASTOR (CONT'D)

The girls are...these girls are mine.
And they could prove very resourceful
(beat) for us.

RODRIGO

Us?

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Two years earlier the pastor had fled
Guayaquil after having been accused of
embezzling money from the church, and
using his access to young children to
run a large group of beggars and
thieves with this man. They had been
so successful that all of South
America had heard of the *Hijos del*
Mendicante.

PASTOR

Mendigos, ladrones--

RODRIGO

Putas?

PASTOR

(hesitant)

Si.

Rodrigo ponders the pastor's offer, leers at A'upa.

EXT. ALUMINUM SHACK - NIGHT

Rodrigo shoves A'upa inside. She falls to the dirt floor
where her sisters cower.

He slams the door shut. Locks it.

EXT. GUAYAQUIL STREET - DAY

Zenji turns a corner, trying to evade Andrew MacIntosh.

MACINTOSH (O.S.)

I have some great news I'd like to
discuss with you.

MacIntosh rounds the corner, fumbles with his phone.

Zenji stops.

ZENJI
(in Japanese)
Leave me alone.

Walks away. MacIntosh follows.

MACINTOSH
What's the matter? Is everything
alright?

Zenji runs.

ZENJI
(in Japanese)
Leave me alone. Leave me alone!

MacIntosh runs after him.

MACINTOSH
I have great news! Dammit.

Zenji ducks down an alleyway.

EXT/INT. ALLEY - DAY

MacIntosh sprints in behind. Zenji stops.

MacIntosh catches his breath. Zenji spies a cracked door.
Peaks in.

A cavernous room dimly lit by a blue emergency panel.
Fragments of torn cardboard boxes scatter the floor. Exposed
electrical wires hang from the ceiling.

Zenji adjusts his eyes.

In the corner a metal cage is partially covered by pieces of
plywood. Two small, golden eyes stare out. A soft whimper is
heard.

Zenji turns, walks passed MacIntosh.

MACINTOSH
Let's go back to the El Dorado. Hotel.

Zenji ignores him. MacIntosh idles behind. As Zenji reaches
the corner, BANG!

MacIntosh's body collapses to the ground, shot in the back of
the head. Zenji turns back to the doorway. BANG! BANG! He's
shot twice in the chest.

A soldier rustles through his pockets, takes his wallet, and then MacIntosh's, plus his phone and watch. Scampers away.

Beat. Running footsteps approach.

Siegfried von Kleist stops at the sight of MacIntosh and Zenji motionless on the ground.

He checks their pulses - dead. Pauses. Takes out his phone and dials - busy signal. Hangs up, dials again - disconnected.

Gunfire erupts. Siegfried darts up, looks around. Shots ring out again, followed by screams nearby. Siegfried sprints off.

INT. MARY'S HOTEL CLOSET - DAY

Mary sits against the back wall of the closet. Fingers pull on the clear plastic of the dry cleaning bag.

She slips the bag over her head, bunches it around her neck and twists, tighter and tighter. Plastic suction to her mouth. Eyes flicker shut.

INT. EXHIBITION HALL - NIGHT

Under fluorescent lights hundreds of people buzz about. A banner near the entrance reads:

WELCOME QUILTERS OF THE WORLD

to the FOURTH ANNUAL

INTERNATIONAL QUILTING FESTIVAL

- Berlin -

INT. EXHIBITION BOOTH - NIGHT

A pale young woman sits on a stool massaging her temple.

Her GERMAN MOTHER, 54, attends to her.

GERMAN MOTHER

(in German)

Go home and get some rest. I'll take care of the booth.

Mother helps her toward the exit. They pass a radio in another booth:

GERMAN NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
(in German)
The novel Ebola virus originating in
the Democratic Republic of Congo has
now killed 20,000 people worldwide.

Near the elevators a small crowd looks on as a medic takes
the vitals of a pregnant woman who has fainted.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

The same young woman from the booth is held by her HUSBAND. A
GERMAN DOCTOR reviews test results.

GERMAN DOCTOR
(in German)
I'm sorry. I wish I had a better
explanation. We're going to run some
more tests, but it's nothing typical.

HUSBAND
(in German)
I don't understand. She is clearly
sick. Could this have something to do
with the pregnancy?

The doctor is confused.

HUSBAND (CONT'D)
We found out three weeks ago that
we're going to have a baby.

Doctor checks his reports.

GERMAN DOCTOR
(in German)
You're pregnant?

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
In 2023 human beings had much bigger
brains. But for all their brain power
and ideas, they were still susceptible
to attack.

INT. MARY'S HOTEL CLOSET - DAY

Muffled, a Kirtland's Warbler sings: chir-chir-che-way-o.

Mary's eyelids pop open through the plastic suctioned to her
face. She chokes for air.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
Not from larger, traditional
predators, but from much smaller ones.
Some that humans had no idea about.

Mary tears a hole in the plastic, gasps.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DUSK

Mary exits the stairway, strides for the entrance. Catches a
glimpse of something strange at the bar.

Wait surrounded by the Kanka-Bono girls. He feeds them bar
snacks like pigeons at a park bench.

She approaches.

MARY
Bless your heart.

WILLARD
What? (notices Mary) Oh. Yes. They
were hungry. Very hungry. I couldn't
let them starve. I don't think they
speak English.

MARY
Have you tried anything else?

Mary crouches to win their attention.

MARY (CONT'D)
Hola. Donde esta to madre?

Nothing.

MARY (CONT'D)
Ou est ta mere?

A'upa's eyes flick toward Mary, continues eating.

WILLARD (O.S.)
Allow me to introduce myself. My name
is Willard Flemming.

Wait reaches for Mary's hand.

WILLARD
I own a canola seed and soybean
conglomerate based in Saskatchewan.
(beat) Canada.

MARY
Mary Hepburn.

Wait takes Mary's hand and kisses it.

WILLARD
It's a pleasure to meet you, Mary.
What brings you to Guayaquil?

MARY
Um. I'm here because of the cruise
that's...my husband bought us tickets
for The Nature Cruise of the Century.

WILLARD
Your husband?

MARY
Yes. Well, he's...Roy. His name was
Roy.

WILLARD
Oh. I'm very sorry to hear about your
loss. I've recently been widowed
myself.

Mary nods.

WILLARD (CONT'D)
Are you o.k.? Are you (carefully)
taken care of?

MARY
Oh, yes.

PULL BACK WIDE OUT OF EARSHOT

Wait flirts. Mary blushes.

CAMERA PIVOTS INTO:

Entrance doors slide open, Siegfried von Kleist rushes in.
Notices Mary and Wait, charges to them.

SIEGFRIED
Excuse me. Excuse the interruption.
Mrs. Hepburn, and Mister...

WILLARD
Flemming. Willard Flemming. (extending
his hand) I own a canola seed and
(MORE)

WILLARD (CONT'D)
soybean / conglomerate based in
Saskatchewan.

SIEGFRIED
(taking his hand)
I'm sorry, Mr. Flemming. Are you a
guest of the hotel?

WILLARD
(offended)
Yes. Miss Hepburn and I are going on
The Luxury Cruise of--

SIEGFRIED
Well I'm afraid the situation in
Guayaquil is no longer safe for our
guests, I apologize but you'll need to
leave immediately.

MARY
Leave?! Go where?

SIEGFRIED
Yes, Mrs. Hepburn. I will escort you
to the airport.

MARY
But I'm supposed to sail--

SIEGFRIED
Mrs. Hepburn, please. I'll explain
more in the van. But, I fear that our
guests are in danger if they stay in
Guayaquil any longer, and therefore I
must do my best to protect you.

Mary nods.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
Now, may I ask you to do me a favor
while I pull the van up front?

MARY
Yes, of course, Mister...

SIEGFRIED
von Kleist. Siegfried von Kleist. I am
the Manager of the Hotel El Dorado. Un
minuto por favor.

He darts to the front desk. Directs an employee, points to the front driveway, takes two new key cards from a drawer.

The Kanka-Bono girls scrounge behind the bar.

Siegfried returns to the bar, hands Mary the cards.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)

Would you go upstairs and collect Mrs. Hiroguchi and Miss MacIntosh? I've written their room numbers on the cards.

Mary nods, exits.

Siegfried spots Lar climbing behind the bar.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)

Are they with you?

Wait shakes his head.

EXT. HOTEL ENTRANCE - DUSK

Heavily guarded, soldiers barely hold at bay a mob of hundreds of people.

Soldiers escort Siegfried (on the phone), Mary, Wait, Hisako, Selena (w/o sunglasses), Kazahk, and the Kanka-Bono girls to a van.

SIEGFRIED

(on phone, in Spanish)

Can you get four at least? (listens) I don't...It doesn't matter...they don't have to be together (listens) or the same flight.

A news bulletin begins over a radio in the crowd:

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

This just in. Bobby King has just released a statement in New York City. The highly anticipated Nature Cruise of the Century to the Galapagos Islands has been cancelled! The cruise was the first aboard the *Bahia de Darwin*, a luxury vessel supposed to carry many American and international celebrities and politicians.

The crowd erupts into a frenzy, overpowers the guards, storms the hotel.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In other news, scientists have traced the mysterious illness being referred to as Disease X to a gene-editing laboratory in California. A lab where some of the first in-home genetic alteration kits were developed. To date the disease has caused 500 miscarriages in Berlin, Paris, London and Los Angeles.

INT. VAN - DUSK

Mary locks the door.

SELENA

Father?! Father!? Are you here?!

HISAKO

(into phone, in Japanese)

We need to find Zenji! / I'm not leaving without my husband!

SIRI

We need to find Zenji. I'm not leaving / without my husband.

SIEGFRIED

Your husband and your father are already at the airport waiting for you.

The mob shakes the van.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

Stop! Please stop. I don't want anyone to get hurt.

SELENA

(into phone)

Call Dad.

The phone rings.

Rocks clang against the van.

SIEGFRIED
 (on phone, in Spanish)
 What? Say that again. (listens)
 Horiguchi. H-O-R-I...

A window shatters. Mary shelters the girls. Hisako pulls Selena in. Selena feels for Kazahk. Wait clutches his chest.

Siegfried starts the engine, propels the van through the crowd, slowly.

People jump on the hood. One pokes his head in the broken window.

Siegfried looks back to find the man's hand coming through the window. He slams his foot on the gas, lurches the van forward.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
 (on phone, in Spanish)
 Can you take it from the hotel
 registry?!

Rioters roll off the hood and jump out of the way of the speeding van.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
 (on phone, in Spanish)
 Ok. Ok. I understand. Thank you. Thank
 you.

He hangs up. Van clears the crowd.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
 (collecting himself)
 Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope that will
 be the last...of that. But, please
 fasten your seatbelts. (fiddles with
 center console). I've been able to
 secure you all flights leaving Ecuador
 tonight, and...the air conditioning is
 now working. Based on my experience
 you will be at a comfortable
 temperature within two minutes.

Wait, hands cemented to his chest, struggles to breath.

MARY (O.S.)
 Willard!

EXT. DOCK - DUSK

The *Bahia de Darwin* hums quietly, decks empty.

A crew member emerges, skips down the gangplank, toaster oven under his arm. Runs into darkness.

First mate Cruz (in street clothes) descends stairs from the 01 deck. Walks off ship with a suitcase.

INT. BRIDGE - DUSK

Captain von Kleist, short-sleeve white uniform shirt draping untucked over cargo shorts, sits on the bridge staring out the window.

Near empty bottle of scotch in his hand. Hums *Waiting for the End of the World* by Elvis Costello.

EXT. DOCK - DUSK

A hulking man with a large wrench saunters on the dock, makes his way up the gangplank.

Another creeps toward the stern of the ship, kitchen knife in-hand.

A group of four men dressed in all black jog down the dock. Followed by an even larger group. Within seconds the *Bahia de Darwin* is inundated with scavengers.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The ship's crew had already taken all of the food, and most of the electronics when they abandoned ship. Anything that they could sneak off with without making too much of a scene. Not that the captain had any idea what was going on.

INT. SHIP HALLWAY - DUSK

Captain von Kleist belts out of tune:

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

(singing)

Waiting for the end of the world.

(mumbling) We were waiting for the end of the world. Dear Lord!

INT. SHIP'S GALLEY - DUSK

Starving men and women raid every cupboard, drawer and refrigerator.

A teenage boy bursts out of the walk-in fridge with two cartons of milk in his hands. One is stolen by a woman. He cradles the other with both arms, escapes.

An man unscrews the microwave from the wall.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DUSK

Long, rectangular light fixtures, fluorescent bulbs illuminate room of elaborate catwalks and spiral stairs over two huge engines. In every crevice people crawl, search, remove anything of value. They pull at the engine blocks, scale the walls, detach light fixtures.

On a catwalk a skinny young man opens a control panel. Unsure, he tries to pull it off the wall, first with his hands, then pries at it with a metal bracket.

It begins to come loose. Resumes yanking with his hands. Yank. Yank. Yank. Blackout.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

OVERHEAD

Hundreds scurry off the ship shielding prizes. Life raft containers roll off deck. The zodiac cranes off.

All lights on the ship cut off.

Colombian freighter produces the only light in the harbor.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

In the dark, men and women stab the marine teak helm, remove and dismantle computer equipment.

INT. CAPTAIN'S STATEROOM - NIGHT

Captain von Kleist passed out on the floor.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

OVERHEAD

Swarm of people dissipates into the night.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The last time the *Bahia de Darwin* had looked this barren was just after my colleagues finished its construction. Weeks after a one-ton I-beam, failing to have been secured by my friend Jimmy, fell and took my head clean off.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Two MiG-29 jets fly in formation above the Andes Mountains.

EXT. TRUJILA'S JET - NIGHT

Peruvian flag and "*Capitan Trujila*" stenciled below cockpit.

CAPTAIN TRUJILA

(in Spanish)

Setting target for Baltra Naval Base.

INT. VERA'S JET - NIGHT

CAPTAIN VERA adjusts instrumentation.

INSERT: Cockpit computer screen shows target, Guayaquil International Airport.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

One jet maintains northern course. Other banks westward.

INT. VERA'S JET - NIGHT

CAPTAIN TRUJILA (V.O.)

Nada?

CAPTAIN VERA

Nada.

CAPTAIN TRUJILA (V.O.)

(in Spanish)

You're saying there is nothing better than sex with a woman?

CAPTAIN VERA

(in Spanish)

For a man, no. Correct. Do you have a better idea?

CAPTAIN TRUJILA (V.O.)
(in Spanish)
Target acquired. (beat) Bomb's away.

EXT. TRUJILA'S JET - NIGHT

Thick metal doors open, bomb extends in to the air, and releases.

INT. VERA'S JET - NIGHT

Vera's face, steady.

CAPTAIN VERA
Bomb's away.

INT. SHIP HALLWAY - NIGHT

Captain von Kleist plonks down the hall. Flicks light switch - nothing.

Ascends a staircase, opens door to the bridge.

In tatters. He laughs. Saunters to the helm.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Siegfried speeds down a dimly lit road. Through the windshield, horizon intersects with a line of planes taking off.

They pass a carjacking on the side of the road. Gunshots.

Suddenly there is an explosion just beneath the horizon followed by a cloud of dark smoke. Siegfried slams on the brakes.

MARY (O.S.)
(in passenger's seat)
What was that?

SIEGFRIED
The airport.

Siegfried u-turns, accelerates. Hisako wakes up.

Siegfried dials his phone - no signal.

HISAKO
(in Japanese)
Where are you going? You said Zenji is
(MORE)

HISAKO (CONT'D)
at the airport.

Speaks in to her phone.

HISAKO (CONT'D)
(in Japanese)
Are we going / to the airport?! You
said my husband was at the airport.

SELENA
What's happening?

SIRI (O.S.)
Are we going to the airport? You said
my husband was / at the airport.

SELENA
Are we at the airport?

MARY
Where are we going to go?

SIEGFRIED
Willard needs help. The ship is
nearby, and will have a medical
officer on board.

SELENA
The ship?! I thought you said my
father was at the airport? (into
phone) Call Dad.

Phone to ear - nothing.

SELENA (CONT'D)
Siri, Call Dad! (listens) What's going
on?

Mary puts her hand on Selena's arm, turns to Hisako, takes
the phone from her.

MARY
(into phone)
I'm sure your husband, and your
father, are ok. They are at the
airport. But, Willard needs help
immediately.

She looks to Siegfried - unsure.

SIRI (O.S.)
 (in Japanese)
 I'm sure your husband and your father
 are ok...

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Vera's jet banks right, circles the airport engulfed in flames.

INT. VERA'S JET - NIGHT

Vera's eyes.

CAPTAIN VERA
 (in Spanish)
 I take that back.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

The van races down the driveway, honks its horn. Siegfried skids to a stop near the gangplank. Jumps out.

Walks toward the ship, scans the decks - dark, not a soul in sight. The zodiac dangles from the crane.

SIEGFRIED
 What is...

A door on the 02 deck flies open, out bursts Captain von Kleist, singing, laughing, stumbling.

Mary steps out of the van.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
 Adolf?

Captain von Kleist stops, bends his gaze toward Siegfried, then the van, stumbles forward continuing to hum.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
 Adolf...

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
 Siiiiiegfried. My broth--

SIEGFRIED
 Adolf, there has been an explosion at
 (quietly) the airport. / I was taking
 these people there. They were supposed
 to be guests on your cruise.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
Yes, quite beautiful (burps)
(catching up)
Yes, yes. Welcome on board.

Captain von Kleist waves them on, stumbles inside.

SIEGFRIED
One of them has had a heart attack,
and needs to see your doctor!

From the doorway, he waves them on board again, closes the door behind him.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
(perplexed)
My brother. He was supposed to be your captain. (sarcastic) Apparently he's taking the news badly.

Mary and Siegfried help the others on board. Wait leans on Mary.

SIEGFRIED (CONT'D)
I'm going to the airport to see if I can be of any assistance. I'll be back by morning and--

MARY
Go ahead, Mr. von Kleist. We will manage here. I'll get Willard help, and take care of the girls. Please try and find their families.

SIEGFRIED
Of course. I'll be back as soon as I can.

Siegfried speeds away.

INT. VERA'S JET - NIGHT

Banks left, Guayaquil becomes visible in the plane's flight path.

INSERT: Cockpit computer screen radar searches for a target outside of Guayaquil. Locks on a blip in the harbor.

CAPTAIN VERA
(in Spanish)
Target acquired.

Decreases speed and altitude.

COMMAND (V.O.)
(in Spanish)
Understood. Locked on naval ship,
Bahia de Darwin. Over.

INT. SKY LOUNGE - NIGHT

Mary enters, surveys room twice before spotting Captain von Kleist melted into a plush chair.

MARY
Captain.
(no response)
I haven't been able to locate any of
your crew. We have a man who is in
need of medical attention. And, I'm
sorry to be a burden--

Captain laughs. A massive explosion rocks the ship violently.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

Tipping from the shock wave, the ship's bow line slips off its cleat. Zodiac floods. Its line, and the stern line snap as the ship levels.

INT. SKY LOUNGE - NIGHT

Mary braces herself underneath a window. Captain, floppy, but unfazed in the chair.

Mary stands. Out the window the freighter is ablaze.

MARY
Captain! We need to get out of here!
That's the second explosion. They're
getting closer.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
We can't go anywhere. We have no
power.

MARY
What do you mean you have no power?

Captain shrugs.

MARY (CONT'D)
Well don't you have a backup?

He stares, stupefied - do we have a backup?

MARY (CONT'D)

A ship like this. Surely you have a backup generator. (to herself) Roy always had a backup.

Tears well in Mary's eyes.

EXT. LAKE - DAY [FLASHBACK]

In their small Bass Tracker, Roy rips at the motor's pull cord, laughing hysterically.

Mary sits near the bow, smirking.

INT. SKY LOUNGE - NIGHT

Captain jumps out of the chair.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

Stay here.

INT. SHIP HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Door sign reads "Engine Room".

Lights flicker back to life. Buzz of electricity courses through the ship. Door swings opens, captain emerges.

EXT. MAIN DECK - NIGHT

Captain peers over side railing - stern line missing. Bow line hanging limp. Zodiac, detached, upside down in water.

Ship drifts 100 meters off the dock. He skips back inside.

Propellers churn. Ship skidaddles into the dark.

INT. CDC LABORATORY - NIGHT

Cell cross-section comes into focus. Needle pierces, injects liquid.

DOCTOR BUREN, 46, looks through microscope eyepiece next to a computer searching DNA code, search title: "Disease X".

DOCTOR VANBAR (O.S.)

Sir, I have spread predictions for the western hemisphere.

Vanbar hands Buren a folder.

DOCTOR BUREN
How bad is it?

Opens folder. Reads.

INSERT: Graph titled "Disease X - Known Spread Centers". 30 exponential growth curves.

DOCTOR BUREN (O.S.)
(to himself)
So many already?

Flips page.

DOCTOR VANBAR
Looking into client travel...Morocco,
Egypt, Japan, Chile, Germany...Iran.
53 countries probable so far.

Magnitude hits Buren.

DOCTOR BUREN
Active cases in how many right now?

DOCTOR VANBAR
At least 30. / My phone's been buzzing
nonstop.

DOCTOR BUREN
Shit.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

The *Bahia de Darwin* drifts, nothing in sight.

SUPER: *The ship, a fragment detached from the earth, went on lonely and swift like a small planet.*

SUPER: *Joseph Conrad (from 1857 to 1924)*

INT. BRIDGE - DAY

Captain in pilot's chair gazes off the bow. Mary enters.

MARY
Willard needs a doctor. Maybe an
operation. I don't know. (beat) He's
weak, and could have another heart
attack at any moment! (no response) We
(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)
have no--

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
Willard...It will be fine.

MARY
No. He is not fine. It is not fine.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
What do you suggest we do?

MARY
It may not be safe to go back to
Guayaquil. But, what is the next
nearest port?

The captain nods.

MARY (CONT'D)
Have you been able to reach anyone on
the radio?

Surprised she's asking, he gestures to the helm.

MARY (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Other cities could be under attack
too.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
(laughing, to himself)
Attack?

MARY
What?

He squints, then nods.

MARY (CONT'D)
So, where are we?

The captain returns his gaze far off the bow. He has no idea
where they are.

Then, suddenly he jolts forward.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

On the horizon - a flash of white light where water meets sky
directly underneath the sun.

INT. BRIDGE - DAY

Captain moves to the wheel, rustles through a pile of nautical maps. Chooses one. Mary watches, curious.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
The Galapagos!

Mary moves toward him.

MARY
That's our best bet?

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
We're nearest Genovesa...or San
Cristobal. We'll split the difference.

Mary moves closer.

MARY
How far are they? How soon can we be
there?

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
Not far.

Mary studies the map.

He grabs the wheel, measures the sun with his index finger and thumb.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (CONT'D)
We'll reach them tomorrow afternoon.

Adjusts their heading.

MARY
Really? How do you--

She stops herself. Looks at the captain, the sun, the map.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
The island of Baltra has a naval base
and a hospital.

INT. GUEST STATEROOM - DAY

Wait lays motionless on a bare mattress, pale and weak. Mary sits on the edge of the bed.

WILLARD
(mumbles)
Please, Mary.

Mary leans in.

WILLARD (CONT'D)
Give me your hand.

MARY
(softly)
Every time I do, you won't give it
back.

He tries to speak, strains. Mary takes his hand.

WILLARD
Please, Mary. I'm scared. (beat) Marry
me.

Mary's caught off guard.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
Confronted with an unexpected question
of such magnitude, from a man whom she
barely knew...

WILLARD (O.S.)
Marry me.

Mary remembers something.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
but not wanting to deny a dying man
his last wish, Mary agreed.

MARY
Okay.

INT. GUEST STATEROOM - NIGHT

Wait lays propped against the headboard. Hisako stands over
the bed. In a corner, Selena holds Kazahk by the leash.

Captain steps into place. Mary approaches. Hisako tears up,
escapes. Kazahk guides Selena to follow.

Captain's eyes on Mary - a glimpse of concern. We've never
seen this from him before.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The captain married Willard Flemming
and Mary Hepburn on May 5th, 2023 at
7:30pm.

Wait smiles.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The ship had not found San Cristobal
or Genovesa. And, there was no help
for James Wait. His heart had
deteriorated and he had already lost
blood flow to much of his body. Wait
died at 9:35pm that night, shortly
after being wed to his twelfth wife.

EXT. AFT MAIN DECK - DAY

Famished. Hisako opens a storage locker - empty. Selena feels
around the inside of an empty water cooler.

INT. BRIDGE - DAY

Mary follows the captain with her eyes - embarrassed for him.

He shuffles through a large pile of charts.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The ship had left no water, no food.
And Mary had begun to wonder if
finding land was now entirely up to
chance.

The captain adjusts the ship's heading, pauses, adjusts it
again.

MARY

Should we turn around? Could you
retrace your steps?

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

I'm aiming for Fernandina (correcting
himself) Isabela! Isabela.

He checks the heading again. Using both his hands, pinches
the sun, traces the sky to the horizon.

Mary, too drained to hold it in, burps a laugh.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (CONT'D)

With the sun in the...where it is
(MORE)

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (CONT'D)
now...the idea is...

She exits.

EXT. 02 DECK - DAY

Mary steps to the railing - nothing but green water to the horizon.

Her eyes - she's given up. Looks down. Flat calm.

Fingers grip the railing. One foot steps onto a rung. A locker door slams below.

SIRI (O.S.)
No service.

Mary looks to the 01 deck. Selena clacks at her phone. Hisako mumbles to herself, cradles her ballooning belly.

SELENA (O.S.)
Kazahk? Kazahk!

INT. CREW QUARTERS - NIGHT

Dark. Hall door opens, Mary leans in. Sees four shadowed bunk beds, rustled blankets piled on top. She is about to leave when:

One of the piles moves. She steps in, lands on a red leather, studded dog collar.

Yanks a blanket back to find Lar underneath. She voraciously spades raw meat off a bone with her front teeth.

Bulges move underneath the other blankets. Mary pulls back another: Lir'a chomps away at a juicy chunk between both hands. Blood dried around her mouth cements fur to her lips.

Nauseated, Mary back peddles out of the room. Dryheaves.

EXT. MAIN DECK - DAY

Delirious. Selena (wearing the welding goggles now) and Hisako lean on the side railing. Hisako peers out over a green frothy, overcast sea.

HISAKO
(in Japanese)
Zenji...Zenji is the smartest man I've
(MORE)

HISAKO (CONT'D)
ever known. He is o.k. He's got to be
o.k. He's too smart. He's too
valuable. There must have been a
warning at the airport. (to Selena) He
left because of me. He has to be o.k.
It wouldn't be fair. He wants to build
things that help people. He loves
children and animals. We were so happy--

SELENA
My father never told me I was a
burden. He's spent my whole life
trying to give me the experiences he's
had.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Tropical fish. MacIntosh scuba dives toward a bleached reef.
Selena, in tinted diving goggles, trails behind him. Her
wrist attached to his ankle by nylon rope.

SELENA (V.O.)
One time he took me scuba diving at
the Great Barrier Reef.

EXT. MAIN DECK - DAY

SELENA
You could have told me we were
swimming in gelatin the way the water
felt. So slow and cool. Full of life.

Hisako stares at Selena - she doesn't understand, but feels
sorry for her.

HISAKO
Ah. Ow! Ahhh!

Hisako clutches her stomach, reaches for Selena.

HISAKO (CONT'D)
Oww. Oww.

Crouches to the deck.

SELENA
Hisako? What is happening? Are you
o.k.?

HISAKO

Get Mary.

EXT. MAIN DECK - DAY

Hisako lays on her back, knees tent a towel. Covered in sweate, head propped on Selena. Breathes fast and heavy. Mary coaches.

Mary reaches underneath the towel. A newborn screams.

Mary hands the newborn to Hisako.

Hisako cradles the baby. She cries nervously.

Mary does her best to smile.

MARY

What will you name her?

Hisako doesn't understand.

MARY (CONT'D)

(pointing to Selena)

Selena

(pointing to herself)

Mary

Mary points to the newborn.

HISAKO

(in Japanese)

I don't know. I don't have a name.

A'aua watches from the deck above.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Mary and the captain locked in a screaming match. Mary rushes the helm, examines the maps.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (O.S.)

We will see Pinta on the horizon by morning. And, if not Pinta, then Genovesa.

MARY

Pinta! Genovesa! Marchena?

She traces the islands on the map, chiding him.

MARY (CONT'D)

Baltra? Fernandina! Where are we!? You have no idea!

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

Pinta and Genovesa are very close to Baltra.

MARY

Where are we?!

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

(vindictive)

Mount Ararat.

Incredulous, Mary holds her breath. Lets out an untethered scream. Storms off the bridge.

EXT. 02 DECK - CONTINUOUS

Mary bursts outside, slams the door behind her.

There's not a cloud in the sky, and yet very few stars are visible through the ship's halo of ambient light. The ship's engines buzz. Wind whistles. Waves lap.

MARY

We're lost. Just admit that we are lost! You couldn't find land if--

She restrains herself.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

I watched Mary descend the stairs from the bridge toward the stern of the boat. She was walking with such energy, I couldn't take my eyes off her. She almost ran to get there, as if she was in a hurry; descending another set of stairs only to climb up the main mast. It didn't seem like it was her, the speed and ease she climbed that narrow ladder with, possessed by something.

A faint white disc of light appears in front of Mary, just above the horizon.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And then it happened. When she was about three quarters of the way up. A
(MORE)

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 strange weather pattern. Almost
 electrical in nature. Mary didn't seem
 to notice it at first.

Moving closer, the light forms concentric circles around a
 white hot center.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Now standing in the crow's nest and
 looking directly past it, still Mary
 didn't react to the light. (beat) Then
 I realized she couldn't see it.

The circles of light reverberate.

KILGORE TROUT (O.S.)
 Leon.

The layers of circles mark the depth of a cosmic tunnel. At
 its center, a tall, slender apparition (KILGORE TROUT, 60)
 with a long gray beard appears. He's haggard, smoking a
 cigarette. Ambient sound fades away.

LEON'S POV:

KILGORE TROUT
 Leon...

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 Father? (narrating) Once again I was
 confronted with the question.

KILGORE TROUT
 (mocking)
 You've had your year, Leon. It is
 time.

No answer.

KILGORE TROUT (CONT'D)
 (stern)
 You turn me down this time, boy, and
 you won't have another chance for a
 million years!

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 A million years? (narrating) I felt
 myself take a step in his direction. I
 was a blue-footed booby at the start
 of his dance.

KILGORE TROUT

Keep moving, boy. It's no time to be coy.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

But I haven't completed my research. (narrating) I had chosen to become a ghost because the job carried with it the benefits of being able to read minds, tell the truth about people, be many places at once, and have access to all accumulated human knowledge.

(to Kilgore)

Father, give me five more years.

KILGORE TROUT

Five more years!? Ha! Just one more day, dad. Just one more month, daddy. Just one more year, pop.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

But I'm learning so much.

KILGORE TROUT

Don't lie to me again boy. Did I ever lie to you?

Beat.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

What, are you a god now?

KILGORE TROUT

(hard medicine)

No. I am still nothing more than your father. And five years isn't nearly enough time for you to learn what you hope to learn. (beat) This once beautiful and nourishing world is diseased, boy. Epidemic undetectable! Cancers grow for the sake of growing. People who can't help themselves let alone others...deal from minute to minute with no problem more substantial than their own. And it's all hidden, Leon. / In plain sight.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

The Era of Hopeful Monsters, right dad?

Kilgore laughs.

KILGORE TROUT

What do you hope to do about it!? Why do you want to watch this!?

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

(narrating)

I felt myself take a step back. (to Kilgore) We are not untethered from nature.

KILGORE TROUT

You're just like your mother!

A muffled wailing is heard.

KILGORE TROUT (CONT'D)

You think human beings are good, and will eventually solve all their problems (belittling) and make Earth into a Garden of Eden again.

The wailing is heard again, louder and clearer.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

We do what we know without always knowing why.

A women sobbing, then haughty laughter is clearly heard. Ambient sound rushes back in.

MARY (O.S.)

Thank you! Oh. Thank you. Land! Captain! I can see land!

Mary points far off into the darkness. A small black peak barely visible.

Leon looks back to the light and his father - both gone.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Captain spins the wheel, increases speed toward the shadowy figure. Mary rushes in.

MARY

Can we navigate in the dark? Perhaps we should wait until morning.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

Nonsense.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Ship motors in the dark. Silhouette of land appears closer and closer.

A sharp crash, the ship bounces, slides across a long shoal to a grinding halt.

EXT. MAIN DECK - DAWN

Captain and Mary look out over Santa Rosalia island. Mary holds two empty water bottles and rope.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

It is Rabida Island. Of course.

Hisako approaches cradling the baby. Mary takes a close look at her - she's healthy.

HISAKO

(into phone, in Japanese)

I will name her Nyla.

SIRI

I will name her Nyla.

Mary takes the phone.

MARY

(into phone)

The captain and I are going ashore to look for food and water. Can you watch over Selena and the girls?

The captain heaves the tattered piece of nylon rope tied to the cleat over the side of the ship. Ladders over.

SIRI (O.S.)

(in Japanese)

The captain and I are going ashore to look for food and water. Can you watch over Selena and the girls?

Hisako nods.

Mary ties the bottles around her waist and follows him. Hisako watches, then goes back inside.

Beat.

The Kanka-Bono girls emerge, climb down the rope.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Aerial view of the ship as Mary, Captain, and (different path) the four girls swim toward shore. Camera drones out to reveal the full island in the distance, ship leaning on the shoal. Drones out. The whole of the Galapagos. The South American coast. All the way out to view the Western Hemisphere of Earth from space. Planet spins.

On Europe, drones in on Paris.

Camera traces through street riots, into a hospital. Overcrowded maternity ward. Doctors hustle. A wing full of sick, pregnant women, overflowing into cots in hallways.

SUPER: **2024**

In the lobby, women and their husbands push and shove for counter space at check in. The headline on a television news channel reads: "L'Eruption d'une Nouvelle Daladie X". A FRENCH REPORTER talks over chaos outside the hospital.

FRENCH REPORTER

(in French)

2023 saw 33% fewer births around the world. With the death rate jumping to twelve persons per one thousand, the global population remained stagnant. Analysts believe the human population will shrink in 2024 if a cure for Disease X is not found soon.

Camera traces down looted streets. Fires. Gunshots. Drones out, Paris smolders. Drones out. Planet spins.

On North America, drones in on San Francisco.

SUPER: **2025**

Boarded up waterfront buildings. Empty streets. Water laps up against a barren pier.

High rise buildings. Sparse (only) men on the streets, to and fro in power suits.

CNN studio, overlooking the Golden Gate bridge.

CUT TO:

CNN broadcast. Ticker reads: "Jan 14, 2025 - Global Birth Rate Plummeting. Still no cure."

CNN ANCHOR

Recent weaponization of the airborne strain of Disease X has drawn the US in to additional conflict in the MEA and Eastern Europe. While health organizations scramble to contain the spread of the disease, millions of men still refuse to work from home as the US is locked in the country's worst depression in over 20 years. Doctor Buren, chief epidemiologist at the CDC joins us from his home to discuss the health ramifications. Hello doctor. Thank you for joining us. I understand you've confirmed the origin of Disease X, but there was something surprising about your findings.

Split screen: Dr. Buren and a global heat map of "Disease X Incidence" burning across the planet.

DOCTOR BUREN

(nodding)

It seems the core of the virus, a relatively short sequence of RNA, has been present in our population for much longer than we originally believed.

CNN ANCHOR

What exactly does that mean? How long?

DOCTOR BUREN

About fifteen years, possibly, according to our analysis.

CNN ANCHOR

Fifteen years? So, why has the disease started to have this effect now?

DOCTOR BUREN

That is a difficult question, one that probably has a lot to do with science that we don't understand. The virus most likely started out as a simple piece of code. As it became

(MORE)

DOCTOR BUREN (CONT'D)
transmitted to more and more people,
mutated perhaps, hybridized maybe, it
took on new function. But it's not
like other contagious diseases that
we've seen.

CNN ANCHOR
I see--

DOCTOR BUREN
Environmental conditions, human health
metrics, changes in our immune
system...these are all possible
trends. Ideas that could be linked to
a virulent tipping point.

CNN ANCHOR
And, what is being done to stop it?

DOCTOR BUREN
(shaking head)
There is no vaccine yet. (beat) That
is why I'm here. To employ the UN,
and governments around the world to
prioritize this. We can't fight wars
and rebuild stock exchanges if we're
not here. As you know our planet lost
over 2 million people in the last
year.

CNN ANCHOR
Doctor Buren, how serious--

DOCTOR BUREN
That's net. At least 2.2 million more
people died than were born.

CNN ANCHOR
How serious of a threat is this?

DOCTOR BUREN
It's binary. Life or...it's the
biggest we've faced. It threatens the
existence of our species.

CNN ANCHOR
Thank you Doctor Buren. And best of
luck with your continued research.

Split screen ends.

CNN ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Next we take you outside Sydney, Australia where CNN correspondent Andrea Jennings spoke with several women about the impact the disease has had on them.

Video of Jennings in Sydney suburb. Surrounded by a group of protestors waving signs, chanting: "Live YOUR Life!" and "My body. My vessel."

ANDREA JENNINGS

The vibe is grim here outside of Australia's largest city. While many inhabitants of Sydney have fled to help reduce their chances of contracting Disease X, protestors have stuck around to make sure government fertility treatments are held in check. I spoke with a woman still hoping to get pregnant, a native of Tarago, who recently lost a child after 6 months of pregnancy.

EXT. AUSTRALIAN BUSH - DAY

Remote road outside of Tarago. Dry, scortched earth. Lake Bathurst nearly parched.

ANDREA JENNINGS (V.O.)

I understand you've started taking an experimental drug still being tested in hopes of combating the disease? / Are you concerned about your health?

TARAGO NATIVE (V.O.)

Yes.

Well no. What's the point of life, if mothers can't have babies?

Dusty road. Three black Range Rovers, tinted windows, stop next to an abandoned house.

SUPER: **2026**

Armed guards escort DOCTOR MASSADA, female, 36, and DOCTOR ARBAE, male, 38, who carry insulated box briefcases and zippered, black leather binders.

They enter the house. Guards survey the perimeter.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY

A guard escorts doctors to a bathroom. Inside the shower stall, a secret door. Down a dark stairway.

INT. SECRET LABORATORY - DAY

A LT. GENERAL greets them.

LT. GENERAL

Doctor Massada. I've been informed we lost another two this morning.

DOCTOR MASSSADA

How many does that leave us?

They walk past empty rooms with blood-stained hospital beds.

LT. GENERAL

Eleven.

DOCTOR ARBEE

Eleven?!

LT. GENERAL

A.I.S. is looking for more outside of Sydney. But, it's more difficult now.

DOCTOR MASSSADA

They're fleeing.

DOCTOR ARBEE

Where?

LT. GENERAL

The coast, farmlands. Wherever there is still food. We're tracking them.

They stop outside a doorway. Inside the room, pregnant women on hospital beds connected to machines.

DOCTOR ARBEE

Don't they understand the importance of what we're doing?

DOCTOR MASSSADA

They don't trust us.

Massada turns, reveals a door labelled "Cloning".

LT. GENERAL

I need an update on our progress.

DOCTOR ARBEE

It appears the virus is way ahead of us. All attempted cloning has failed, sir.

Unzips binder: "Confidential Memo - US State Department."
Page full of DNA sequence abbreviations, all marked "NO MATCH".

DOCTOR ARBEE (O.S.)

The Americans think the disease is attacking a sequence of unknown function.

INT. VAULT - DAY

Boxed rack of microtubes and flash drives. Cover label:
"Complete Genomes - *Homo Sapiens* (Human)"

LAB TECH places box in refrigerated safe. Tens of the same box stacked on a shelf.

DOCTOR HOWIE (O.S.)

Thank you, Kurt. Perhaps this will prove useful one day.

LAB TECH

It has been my honor, Doctor Howie.

SUPER: Svalbard Seed Vault - Island of Spitsburgen

Dr. Howie reviews a report as the two exit. Graph showing Global Population projections out to 2049 show a sweeping decline to zero.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

Iron doors jut out of rock. Camera drones out.

Dr. Howie and Kurt exit vault.

Drones out. Snow cover receded to mountain peaks. Drones out.

World spins. Noticeable sea level rise, massive wildfires burn in California and Australia, a hurricane system bellybands the African continent. Rain forests burns in Brazil.

SUPER: 2027

Above Florida, a SpaceX rocket approaches.

CAPTAIN SIMPSON (V.O.)
KSC-1, this is Sentinel.

INT. SPACESHIP - DAY

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER (V.O.)
Go ahead Captain Simpson.

CAPTAIN SIMPSON
Davis is detecting some abnormalities
in our control system, but we seem to
be locked out. Are you running
diagnostics?

Behind the captain, an astronaut jumps between computers.

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER (V.O.)
Everything looks normal down here.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

Spaceship explodes.

Camera follows pieces of rocket as they rain down on
California coast.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO PIER - DUSK

Water submerges the same pier from 2025.

Explodes by fiery falling shrapnel.

INT. CNN STUDIO - DUSK

Same CNN anchor, aged beyond the years.

CNN ANCHOR
I've just learned that yesterday's
SpaceX mission to exo Goldilocks 7 has
ended in disaster. (Beat) This was the
third such attempt after two Martian
colonizations cost hundreds of lives.

Anchor stands. Pull back. Camera unmanned. Studio empty.

CNN ANCHOR (CONT'D)
Over the last five years the birth
(MORE)

CNN ANCHOR (CONT'D)
 rate across our planet has plummeted
 by 85 percent. We are 18 million fewer
 than we were last year. (beat)
 Scientific ideas to recover crop yield
 have failed to catch up with our
 runaway climate. (beat) Without the
 ability to reproduce...human
 laboratory testing to combat the
 Xaphan Disease has failed. (beat)
 Following the CDC, UN laboratories,
 established in response to the 2023
 pandemic announced this morning that
 they have been dis--
 (removes mic pack)
 Dissolved.

Walks off set.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREETS - NIGHT

Tracing through. Empty and dark. Cracks grown over with long,
 thick vines.

Coyotes sniff around. Buildings crumble.

Waterfront. Waves lap against weathered storefronts.

Zoom in on water.

SUPER: *In spite of everything, I still believe people are
 really good at heart.*

- Anne Frank (from 1929 to 1944)

EXT. OPEN OCEAN - DAY

Light fractures through silty water over rocky brown reef. A
 green sea turtle. A playful sea lion. Small schools of black
 reef fish zip near the sandy bottom.

Mary (60) propels herself on an angled descent, follows a
 school of yellow-tailed surgeonfish, long, thick spear in
 hand. A black shadow flashes past her; a flightless cormorant
 dives steeply.

Mary exhales through her nose, uprights her body, cocks the
 spear 90 degrees above her head. Fires, pierces a fish.

A'aua and L'or (11) spear fish nearby.

EXT. DUNES - DAY

Mary and the girls carry their catch and spears.

SUPER: **2028**

L'or demonstrates for Mary: she points down at the sand just in front of her feet.

L'OR
(looking to Mary)
l'et chi...

SUPER: *If they are here...*

She cocks the spear just above her head angled straight down. Thrusts.

Mary nods.

L'or squats close to the ground, points in front of her.

L'OR (CONT'D)
(whispers)
l'et chi...

Cocks spear behind her ear, parallel to the ground. Thrusts forward.

Grins, dangles her many fish.

Mary smiles - in awe of the eleven year old's skill.

MARY
(struggles with the language)
a...asam

SUPER: *I...*

Mary presents the Namaskara hand gesture, saying "Thank you" to L'or, and then A'aupa,

MARY (CONT'D)
asam...gignu omprom...?

Dangles her fish.

SUPER: *I...again...to learn?*

A'AUPA
j'a'cutta?

A'auapa points to one of her fish.

A'AUPA (CONT'D)
j'a'cutta

SUPER: *Yellow-tailed Surgeonfish*

Mary practices L'or's technique.

MARY
j'a'cutta?

A'auapa shakes her head. But, it's clear to her now. She points again to her fish, then to Mary's same fish.

A'AUPA
li svesh es svah j'a'cutta. (points to
Mary) elo mor gigni a lati.

SUPER: *His flesh and bone make him a Yellow-tailed Surgeon. You are thankful we taught you to fish.*

She smiles. Points to L'or. Motions with the spear.

A'AUPA (CONT'D)
lati, lati. gigni a lati.

SUPER: *To fish. To learn to fish.*

Mary sponges her words and display.

They continue walking through the dunes.

A'AUPA (CONT'D)
gigni a mon-mu gigni na noso. jal etra
gignu es gignu (smiles) ev bran gooza

SUPER: *Our grandmother taught us that learning doesn't stop. It must happen again and again. In small pieces.*

Mary translates the words the best she can, slowly, in her head. As she pieces them together - she stops. Arrested in adoration of the strength and wisdom in the Kanka-Bono girls.

She trails off the girls' path, walks toward two thatched shelters. Calls to them.

MARY
farlo, A'auapa! farlo, L'or.

The girls wave.

INT. HISAKO'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Selena (21) rests her ankle, wrapped in a makeshift cast.

Nyla (5) runs in, playfully hugs Selena. Selena frightens.

NYLA

Selena?

Selena pulls her close - as if Nyla protects her.

Mary enters carrying two charred fish, serves Hisako (32) and Selena.

NYLA (CONT'D)

Momma?

HISAKO

Yes, Nyla?

NYLA

What kind of fish is this we're eating?

HISAKO

(embarrassed)

I don't know.

SELENA

Nyla, you should ask Mary.

Nyla looks to Mary.

MARY

This is called a Yellow-tailed Surgeonfish. It's a special fish.

Nyla's eyes widen.

MARY (CONT'D)

Sometimes they swim in schools...in groups. But other times they decide to swim alone. Have you seen them swimming?

Nyla scrunches her face. Selena saddens.

MARY (CONT'D)

Do you want to know why they have yellow tails?

Nyla's face lights up again.

NYLA

Can I come fishing with you next time,
Mary?

Mary waits for Hisako - nothing.

MARY

I think that would be a good idea.
(beat) Selena...would you like to try
again?

SELENA

How could I?

MARY

I will teach you when you're feeling
better. A'upa has taught me a lot /
I'm sure the girls--

SELENA

(afraid)
With spears?

MARY

Well yes...

HISAKO

(in Japanese)
Beasts.

Mary doesn't understand, but knows it's not good.

SELENA

No. No. I'm not...I couldn't do that.

MARY (O.S.)

Okay, well maybe you would like to
come to the cove with us anyway.

Selena smiles politely - maybe - but really, no.

EXT. BUSH - NIGHT

Mary carries a cooked fish and a wooden jug.

Approaches a small thatched hut. A flame flickers through the
entryway.

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

The captain (50) lays on a wooden bed, legs and arms atrophied. Eyelids heavy.

Mary enters, Captain startles. She places the fish by his feet. Captain follows her every move with his eyes waiting for the perfect time to grunt.

She replaces the water jug by his bedside. Sniffs him. Satisfied, leaves.

EXT. SPRING - NIGHT

Lit by firelight, Mary examines the outside of A'aupa's thatch enclosure. It has grown.

The roof is firm and thick, and overhangs the tall mud walls by two feet.

A'aupa draws a line in the earth around the shelter, where the roof overextends to.

A'AUPA
(slowly)
el amor murez sim fo ariiz. tivol
gigna'a. el omprom?

SUPER: *A simple change protects the foundation from rain water. It will last longer. Understand?*

MARY
bez. elo mor.

SUPER: *Yes. Thank you.*

They walk toward the fire.

A'AUPA
darle j'a'cutta a captain?

SUPER: *Did you share fish with the captain?*

MARY
bez bez

SUPER: *Yes. Of course.*

The Kanka-Bono girls sit around the fire peeling charred fish from bone. L'or throws her hands above her head - recounting a story.

L'OR

Ahhhhhh

She runs around the fire. Drops to all fours. Pantomimes gulping water with her hands.

L'OR (CONT'D)

antium arfa el (laughs) el li tivola
vol hacha. hacha! a Mary.

SUPER: *He would still be hungry now, if it weren't for us!
And Mary.*

Everyone laughs.

Lir'a steals L'or's fish. L'or gives chase.

MARY'S POV: follows them through the fire glow, around their settlement, into the darkness of night, and back again. The Kanka-Bonos are at home on Santa Rosalia.

But, darkness still lurks in Mary.

MARY

elo mora asam. farlo...(remembers the
word) branzenas.

SUPER: *Excuse me. Goodnight, girls.*

A'AUPA

farlo, Mary.

SUPER: *Goodnight.*

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Mary gazes at open ocean - she's in pain. Waves run up around her ankles, feet buried in the sand.

Steps into the water.

Deeper. Up to her chest. Deeper. The water laps against her chin--

NYLA (O.S.)

Mary!

Mary startles, looks back. Nyla steps into the surf.

NYLA

Mary. What are you doing? Fish--

MARY
Swimming, sweetheart. Just taking a
little swim.

She wades back toward her.

MARY (CONT'D)
What are you doing out here by
yourself?

Meets her on the beach.

MARY (CONT'D)
You shouldn't be out by yourself at
night.

NYLA
Why?

MARY
Well, it could be dangerous.

NYLA
(curious)
Mommy's not worried.

Mary smirks.

NYLA (O.S.)
She says I'm a miracle. It wouldn't
make any sense for anything to happen
to me after all the trouble she went
through to create me in the first
place.

Mary chuckles.

MARY
Who could argue with that.

The two walk up the beach holding hands.

MARY (CONT'D)
But still, let's be careful. You're
important to me.

EXT. MARY'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Thatch shelter, next to Hisako's. Both lie in darkness. We
hear sobbing from inside Mary's.

INT. MARY'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Curled on her side, she squeezes her eyes - trying to stop her tears.

MARY

It's been five years...and it still hurts, Roy. (scoffs) I don't know if you can hear me.

EXT. MARY'S SHELTER - NIGHT

MARY (O.S.)

(determined)

It will never be the same without you.
(beat) But, I can't hope to find you yet.

In the distance, next to the profile of the volcano, the light from the Kanka-Bono fire burns.

EXT. SALT MARSH - DAY

Rolling bracken field.

SUPER: **2033**

Nyla (10) mucks through carrying fish. Mary (65) follows with more catch.

Nyla rolls a log from mud, reveals a bleached shell.

NYLA

Mary!

Runs to Mary holding out the shell.

NYLA (CONT'D)

Is this...?

MARY

Yes.

Nyla examines the shell - left behind by a small land snail.

MARY (O.S.)

A reminder of how adaptive one can be if we find our niche.

NYLA

Can I keep it?

MARY
Yes, but if you ever find a living
one, please leave it be.

NYLA
Okay.

They hike up a slope.

NYLA (CONT'D)
What's niche?

MARY
(smiling)
Yours...is Santa Rosalia, apparently.

A giant Galapagos tortoise plucks leaves from the branches of
a tree.

MARY (CONT'D)
(as they pass)
Remember, Georgeanna and Oscar are
only a last resort.

NYLA
I know Mary. I remember the story.

MARY
Lonesome--

NYLA
George

A second tortoise ambles in the background.

EXT. DUNE SHELTERS - DAY

Nyla tends to the fish over a fire.

She serves Hisako (37) and Selena (26).

SELENA
Where was your catch from today?

NYLA
The cove past the highlands. The open
water was too rough to fish in today.

Mary watches from afar - resolved. Nyla is mature enough now
to care for herself and the others.

SELENA
Have you been there before?

NYLA
Oh yes. (excited) It's the one next to
the muck fields. I found this!

Hands her the land snail shell.

NYLA (CONT'D)
Careful. It's very delicate. Not many
of them left. And we saw Georgeanna.

MARY
I'm going to take a walk...I may be
gone for a while.

NYLA
Want company? Selena and I are almo--

MARY
No. Thank you.

Beat.

NYLA
Okay, Mary. Be safe.

Nyla winks.

MARY
Goodbye, Selena. Hisako, goodbye.

SELENA
Bye.

Hisako nods.

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Mary lugs 10-lb rocks to the cliff's edge. Waves crash below.

Ties rope around rocks. Measures a length of rope up and
around her waste. Drops rope - sinking device prepared.

Steps to the edge, looks over. Frothy sea waves. Marine
iguanas flop from rocks, playing in the turbulence.

Mary's ready to jump, but has to say one more goodbye.

EXT. KANKA-BONO SETTLEMENT - DUSK

The girls (16) perform the fire dance of the Kanka-Bonos.

Mary arrives, takes a seat on a nearby log, careful not to disturb. Her face tense, she waits.

MOMENTS LATER:

Her eyes check in on the girl's rhythmic movements.

MARY'S POV: They twist rapidly, back and forth, faster and faster - possessed by years of practice. The blur of movement glows through the fire. It's beautiful. Mary's face relaxes.

She looks to their shelters, and the spring - reflecting on her time on the island. A rack of dried fish, earthen tools and hand-woven rope by a doorway. A rain-water basin. The expertly crafted roof.

KANKA-BONOS
(singing)
el. ella.

evor medra lomor

The girls come to a stand-still, extend their arms to the sky...but cannot continue. There are no Kanka-Bono men.

CLOSE ON MARY'S FACE

Her breath stops. Then, a curious look releases over her face - an idea that changes everything.

RACK FOCUS TO THE CAPTAIN'S HUT

A tiny flicker of light in the distance.

EXT. BUSH PATH - NIGHT

MARY
You understand why I have to do this?

Nervous, debating her impulse, Mary zigzags toward the captain's hut, now dark.

MARY (CONT'D)
Promise?

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

The captain (55) sleeps.

Mary enters. Gets into bed with him. He wakes - shocked.

Mary hesitates. Kisses him. He doesn't move.

She retracts.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

No.

Mary's eyes - stuck.

EXT. WINTER PALACE, ST. PETERSBURG - NIGHT

Gigantic internal square. Devoid of life. Eerily quiet. Cold.

MONTAGE:

Similar scene - Plaza de la Constitución, Mexico City.

Syrian battlfield at dawn, skeletons, abandoned years ago.

Iranian mass graves. Rows of white plastic covered burial plots in background. Foreground: abandoned graves, skeletons protrude from dirt.

Indonesian countryside. Brown terraces of dead rice fields abandoned years ago.

Canadian canola seed field at dusk - a huge, thick mat of dead, dusty flowers.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Tracing through rolling fields, lit by moonlight, old stone walls, a farm house. Toward:

SUPER: **Norwich, England**

On the outskirts of a small town, a simple brick building.

INT. EARLHAM LABORATORY - NIGHT

A young scientist, scribbles on graph pad. Calculations:

"2033 birth rate ~ 0.02/1,000 --> 0.01

death rate ~ 14+/1,000 --> **18/19!**

population delta = -82 million

Scientists eyes, forlorn.

She looks through a microscope: shriveled embryos.

EXT. BUSH - DAY

Mary (68) carries water and fish on path to captain's hut.

SUPER: **2036**

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - DAY

Captain (58) sits propped up in bed.

Mary enters. Captain looks skeptically at her.

Plops fish on bedside table, replaces water, sniffs captain.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
I dont need another bath!

Follows her with his eyes as she exits.

EXT. CACTUS FOREST - DAY

Finches, mockingbirds, hawks flutter.

A'aua (19) crouches. Crab walks. Arm flashes up.

A'AUPA
hosaaa

Behind her: L'or, Lir'a, Nyla (13), and Lar freeze in mimicked postures.

A lava lizard hotfoots through brush.

Mary watches several yards behind.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Hisako (40) pulls Selena (29) with her.

HISAKO
(angry)
Nylaaa? Nyla?!

SELENA
Maybe she is home. Where--

HISAKO

Home!? Don't call it home!

SELENA

I'm sorry, the...hut? (scared) Where are we?

HISAKO

On the beach! We were just there. She's always back by this time. / I'm hungry.

SELENA

I'm hungry.

Yanks her back in the direction they came.

HISAKO

You can't do anything without me.

SELENA

(hopeful)

Do we have some fish at hom-- the hut?

HISAKO

Nylaaa!?

EXT. VOLCANIC SLOPE - DUSK

The girls prod down the volcano. Nyla carries two dead lizards by the tails.

Mary spots the captain's hut. A flame flickers inside.

MARY

farlo, branzenas. farlo, Nyla.

She breaks off, walks toward his hut.

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

Captain sleeps. Bedside flame flickers.

Mary enters.

MARY

Hello Adolf.

Captain startles awake.

MARY (CONT'D)

I just wanted to check in to see if
you needed anything.

Captain, verkleempt.

MARY (CONT'D)

(moves to leave)

Okay--

He grabs her arm.

EXT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

Sky transitions to morning.

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - MORNING

The captain lays on his back swaddled in blankets. Eyes shut,
grins.

Mary tiptoes out.

EXT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - MORNING

Mary exits - a tinge of regret.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Mary (35) and Roy (39) wait on pins and needles for a
FERTILITY DOCTOR's response.

FERTILITY DOCTOR

I'm sorry, Mrs. Hepburn. I think we've
exhausted our options.

ROY

So, you're telling me that unless we
have another twenty-five thousand, we
aren't having children?!

MARY

Roy, please.

FERTILITY DOCTOR

(carefully)

Mr. Hepburn, I'm not--

MARY

It's ok. We'll be ok.

ROY

Mary, you want children. I want us to have children.

MARY

Roy, sweetheart, there are far more important things. And, I want you.

Beat.

FERTILITY DOCTOR

Mrs. Hepburn. Just so you know, the additional treatment I mentioned it's...new. So, I'm not suggesting anything, just trying to give you an idea of your options. I know how difficult this is.

MARY

Thank you, doctor. I have my students. And, Roy, you have me...and Donald. We'll be fine.

EXT. DUNES - DAY

Mary approaches the shelters. Walks by hers, enters Hisako's.

EXT. SURF - DAY

Mary stands in the surf up to her knees, holds Hisako at arms length.

HISAKO

No. I can't. I'm not able to raise a child.

MARY

The Kanka-Bonos will raise him. I will--

HISAKO

I am not a mother.

No!

MARY

You're capable of much more than you think. Please. I'm not able to get pregnant.

HISAKO

Neither am I! I should never have. Zenji. (in Japanese) Zenji was the only reason I could in the first place. And, I lost him.

MARY
What about Nyla?

HISAKO
(in Japanese)
Nyla is not mine. She is her own.
(embarrassed)
I do not belong here.

INT. HISAKO'S SHELTER - NIGHT

HISAKO (V.O.)
Neither does Selena.

Selena (29) sits on the floor listening to Nyla paint. Nyla spreads charcoal and gray mud with her fingers, the shapes of fish line a smooth piece of driftwood.

NYLA
This one, the red-lipped batfish has legs. You didn't like the way it tasted, but...(beat) Would you like to go swimming with the turtles tomorrow?

SELENA
No.

Nyla's hands, covered in soot and mud. She exits.

Selena searches for a familiar sound.

SELENA (CONT'D)
Nyla?

A small beetle crawls on Selena's knee.

SELENA (CONT'D)
Ahh!

Swats at her leg, misses the bug.

SELENA (CONT'D)
Ahhhh!

Nyla returns, sets down a pail of water.

SELENA (CONT'D)
What is it?! What's on me?!

NYLA
It's ok. Hold still. Let me get it.

Calmly removes the beetle.

Mary enters.

MARY

Nyla, may I speak with Selena alone,
please?

EXT. HISAKO'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Nyla sits, examines the beetle.

SELENA (O.S.)

What are the chances a child of mine
would be blind?

MARY (O.S.)

I...don't know. I can't say.

Beats.

SELENA (O.S.)

I can't bare the idea of another human
disabled as / me, here.

MARY (O.S.)

Selena, you are not--

SELENA (O.S.)

It would be my fault! (beat) It
shouldn't be me. I should be with my
father.

Beats. Mary exits - frustrated. Sits next to Nyla. Nyla hands
her the beetle, removes the land snail shell from her pocket.

NYLA

Why are my mother and Selena so
unhappy here?

MARY

Their lives were different before they
came to Santa Rosalia.

NYLA

But, you're happy here. Aren't you?

Beat. Nyla waits for an answer.

MARY

We are all just...we do what we *know*,
without always knowing why.

EXT. KANKA-BONO SETTLEMENT - NIGHT

Lir'a teaches Nyla the Kanka-Bono dance. Slowly rotating, clapping hands with her and Lar.

She raises Nyla's arms to the stars. Lar demonstrates too. Lir'a plays the part of the male, wooshes around Nyla.

INT. A'AUPA'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Close on A'aupa's face - doesn't like what she's hearing.

MARY (O.S.)
tivul chi santa rosalia?

SUPER: *Are you happy here?*

A'AUPA
tivul chi, sasa. tivola li
branza...ave captain?

SUPER: *Yes, we are happy. But, why must I do this...with the captain?*

MARY
no ave captain, no. ave asam. asam es
el. (beat) jalir el etra no catum. no
el, asam, no volera. no chi santa
rosalia. (beat) no branza lium.

SUPER: *Not with the captain. With me. After you, there will be no one else. No more anyone here. There are no males.*

A'aupa contemplates.

MARY (CONT'D)
el gigni no. jalor el. tiva--

SUPER: *You wouldn't have to do anything with the captain. Only with me. But,*

A'AUPA
la branza chi?

SUPER: *I could have a child?*

The gravity hits her.

MARY
darlum darla

SUPER: *Yes. Possibly.*

Beat.

MARY (CONT'D)
gignuum lo...el tivul kah lium branza?

SUPER: *I would try. Is that something you'd want?*

She thinks.

A'AUPA
antlum etra diplom kanka-bono'o darle

SUPER: *This could be the new land of the Kanka-Bono?*

MARY
(carefully)
no bonduum, darla (beat) asam per etra
vol kanka-bono

SUPER: *There are a lot of challenges. But, I think it already is.*

A'AUPA
el etra? omprom

SUPER: *Why do you want to do this?*

Mary struggles.

MARY
maxcille ta antullum...ev parson kanka-
bono

SUPER: *That is difficult for me to explain. Especially in Kanka-Bono.*

She laughs - hoping A'aupa will let her off the hook.

MARY (CONT'D)
onduu asam

SUPER: *Trust me?*

Close on A'aupa's face. She studies Mary.

INT. SHIP'S GALLEY - DAY

Covered in dust and rust. Mary searches drawers and cupboards - trying to remember where she saw them.

Opens a cabinet - empty.

Closes the refrigerator door. Spots something out of the corner of her eye.

Bends over in the oven cutout.

INSERT: a one-ounce glass bottle of strawberry flavoring, with screw-top dropper.

She examines the bottle - no cracks. The screw-top dropper, completely intact.

Grabs a box packed with plastic wrap, an empty egg carton, exits.

EXT. KANKA-BONO SETTLEMENT - DAY

Lar peels back the skin of a dead seal. Cuts strips of fat, skin and fur. Hands them to Mary.

MARY

elo mor.

SUPER: *Thank you.*

A'aupa watches while replacing thatch on her roof.

L'or brings Mary two marine iguana skins.

A'aupa's eyes track Mary as she departs.

INT. MARY'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Mary lays the seal and iguana skins on a table alongside the dropper bottle, plastic wrap, a lighter, and a single condom in its wrapper. Surveys her supplies.

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

The captain lays in bed, eyes shut, same smug grin.

Mary rushes to put her clothes on, flees the hut. Captain stands - surprised.

INT. MARY'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Mary lays on her back. Hand crosses frame carrying an elongated glass dropper with a thin, thread-like extension.

Knees bend upward. Both arms in between her legs. Hands

hidden. Her neck and head hover as if straining in "dead bug".

Her eyes search for what her hands can't find.

She rocks her weight forward into a squat, hands busy between her legs.

CLOSE ON MARY'S FACE

Tense. Relaxes, looks toward her hands - got it.

A small satchel on the bedside table coated with seal fur. Mary snatches it.

Rushes out.

INT. A'AUPA'S SHELTER - NIGHT

A'aupa lays in a wooden bed beside a fire. Side table holds a pitcher of water and extra blankets.

Mary rushes in hugging the satchel against her chest. Stops.

Siezed by A'aupa's stare. Mary acknowledges her concern.

Lir'a and Lar join them. Watch uncomfortably.

Mary opens the satchel.

INT. A'AUPA'S SHELTER - NIGHT

A'aupa sleeps. Mary sits by her side.

L'or stands against the wall, protective.

Lir'a and Lar sleep on the ground next to the bed.

MARY

(laughing quietly, to herself)
If only I had thought of doing this
when I was still teaching. I would be
in a cozy state prison right now
instead of on this godforsaken island.

EXT. BUSH - DAY

A female red-footed booby collects flowered vines and twigs. Pads the walls of a nest.

SUPER: **3 months later**

MARY (O.S.)
 el svesh tivol murezm ev agooz ev
 svesh. no tivola kah branza,

SUPER: *Your body constantly prepares for the egg inside of you, and when you're not pregnant,*

Mary and A'auapa watch the booby from afar.

MARY
 asya madya el svesh farluum ra no
 oqui. sa jalor aruuz sa.

SUPER: *once a month it must release the extra material. That is why the bleeding happens.*

A'auapa nods.

MARY (CONT'D)
 el antlum vol asya madya?

SUPER: *And, you're sure it's still been happening every month?*

A'AUPA
 bez.

SUPER: *Yes.*

MARY
 etra omprom el ave branza. l'et d'arde
 gignu

SUPER: *Okay. That is how we will know when you're pregnant. We'll try again.*

Mary looks to A'auapa for committment. A'auapa nods matter-of-factly.

The booby continues to build.

MONTAGE:

Inside hut, Captain pours himself water, watches Mary slip shorts on, flash out. He's curious.

Mary leaves A'uapa's home - she's still not pregnant. Wheels turn in her head, sees Lir'a repairing the fire pit.

Mary rushes from captain's hut. Beat. He follows her.

Lir'a, nauseous. Sisters and Nyla look on - anticipating - as Mary examines Lir'a. Asks her a question. Lir'a shakes her head. Mary, turns to A'aupa, shakes her head.

EXT. BUSH - DAY

Mary, Nyla and the girls watch the same red-footed booby feed a chick in the nest. Nearby, the father pecks at and pushes another chick away.

L'OR
(angry)
gigni vol etras?

SUPER: *What is he doing?*

She moves to intercede. Mary holds her back.

MARY
sale no amor ta branza. tivola amor
chi branza

SUPER: *It is natural for them to promote the survival of one baby.*

LAR
no omprom. gigni?

SUPER: *Why do they do that?*

MARY
maxcille, gigni darla no hosha, no
ma'ma aruuz, tivola oqui tivol li

SUPER: *In difficult times, when they do not have enough food, or the weather is bad, they have to choose.*

L'or taps Mary on the shoulder.

L'OR
l'antulum vol

SUPER: *It's my turn.*

Beat. Mary nods.

EXT. KANKA-BONO SETTLEMENT - NIGHT

The Kanka-Bonos enter their homes.

Next to them, a new thatch shelter has been constructed. Mary

and Nyla enter.

CAMERA PIVOTS TO REVEAL:

Hisako hides behind a dragon tree, spies them.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Selena and Hisako wade into the ocean holding hands. Deeper and deeper until the back of their heads disappear.

EXT. SALT MARSH EDGE - DAY

Flamingos stilt around in a shallow bay.

Two burial plots on a hillock.

Nyla cries, held by Mary. Lar takes her hand.

A'aupa, L'or and Lir'a stand behind them.

INT. L'OR'S SHELTER - NIGHT

L'or sleeps. Mary sits by her side.

Softly sings *Helplessly Hoping* by Crosby, Stills and Nash.

MARY
(singing)

They are one person. They are two
alone. They are three together. They
are for each other.

A'aupa sits against the wall watching.

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

SUPER: **2038**

Captain (60) sleeps. Giggles are heard outside the hut.

He wakes. More giggles.

EXT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

He exits, looks around. Nothing.

Laughs from the spring. Captain tiptoes.

Spies Lar and Lir'a (21) sprinkling each other with water.

Captain's eyes roll, then track something odd.

A'aupa approaches the stream attending to L'or's every step.
L'or's belly - a partially inflated balloon.

Captain's eyes widen. Face flushes with embarrassment.

The girls play in the water. Even L'or smiles when sprinkled.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Mary (70) circles Nyla (15) sitting in the sand.

NYLA
(slowly)
l'omprom arfa spada o d'arde zerum
ra...

SUPER: *I understand how to use my front teeth to take meat off...*

She looks to Mary for help.

MARY
Good! gigni means to learn, l'omprom
is "I understand". And "off the bone"
is...

NYLA
svesh?

MARY
svah. d'arde zerum ra svah. gignu--

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (O.S.)
Mary!

He plods down a dune.

MARY
Captain? Be careful.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST
Oh shut up!

Reaches her.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (CONT'D)
How dare you?

MARY

What? What's the matter?

Stares sober into her eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)

lomor parsa, Nyla. l'et jalor ol
volas.

SUPER: *Good work, Nyla. I'll see you back home.*

Nyla leaves.

MARY (CONT'D)

What do you want?

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

Never again Mary!

MARY

Adolf, if you could just--

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

I saw her, the one that's pregnant.

MARY

Yes, and?

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

And how do you suppose that happened?

MARY

Captain--

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST

I know how it happened, Mrs. Hepburn
Flemming Kanka-Bono! Never again! I
hope you're happy.

Mary smiles.

CAPTAIN VON KLEIST (CONT'D)

You know at first I thought she was
sick. (dissatisfied) But they were
laughing.

MARY

(disgusted)

Never again.

EXT. L'OR'S SHELTER - DAY

L'or moans and screams from within.

MARY (O.S.)
pappas. pappas! (beat) el etra, L'or.
pappas ev li.

SUPER: *Push. Push! You can do it, L'or. Push for me.*

L'or screams.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
lomor lomor. kazech chi far.

SUPER: *There you go. Here it is.*

Long grunts, again and again.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
gignu!

SUPER: *One more!*

L'or moans, releases.

Silence.

A'AUPA (O.S.)
oson murez?

SUPER: *What's wrong?*

MARY (O.S.)
li duumbo.

SUPER: *I'm sorry.*

Beats. Mary exits swaddling a newborn - tiny and motionless.

INT. L'OR'S ENCLOSURE - DAY

L'or sobs. Nyla and her sisters console her.

EXT. SALT MARSH CEMETERY - DAY

Tears stream down Mary's face.

A small dirt mound next to the other two plots.

MARY
Ahhhhhhh!

Flamingos flap heavy to flight.

MARY (CONT'D)
We're only hurried guests then?! Is
that it?!

The captain hides behind a tree watching her.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Deserted. Large digital signs, national debt monitor, all
black - long turned off.

A decomposing coyote carcass.

EXT. AKSHARDAM COMPLEX, DELHI - DAY

Pink limestone domes. Grounds deserted.

The Lodhi Gardens, Humayun's Tomb - deserted.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF JOHANNESBURG - DAY

Simple mound building - The Cradle of Humankind - grass long
overgrown then deceased, left to turn to dust.

EXT. SANTA ROSALIA CLIFF - DAY

Same 10-lb rocks, still tied to now stale rope.

Mary marches toward.

Ties rope around waste. Drags rocks to the edge. Steps off--
captain grabs her arm, pulls her back.

They stare at each other.

EXT. KANKA-BONO SETTLEMENT - DAY

L'or (23) fills a pail of water from the brook.

Lar's shelter. Bellows from inside.

L'or rushes in.

SUPER: 2040

INT. LAR'S SHELTER - DAY

L'or kneels beside the bed. Mary (72) attends to Lar. She writhes with contractions.

MARY
el oqui hosa. hosa

Lar, rigid, in pain. Scared.

A'aupa takes her hand.

MARY (CONT'D)
(calmly)
parson o li.

Beat.

LAR
l'inzon.

MARY
l'omprom. l'omprom. l'et ev tivola.
(pointing to her own chest) l'amor
branza.

A'AUPA
(to Mary)
l'onduu

Camera traces outside.

EXT. KANKA-BONO SETTLEMENT - DUSK

MARY (O.S.)
Push, Lar. Push.

Dusk turns to night as camera traces through a dragon tree, the worn bush path to the ocean, the fire pit ablaze, the brook, and complex of thatch homes, landing back on Lar's. Silence.

A newborn baby cries from inside.

INT. LAR'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Mary unveils the newborn from beneath a sheet tented by Lar's bent legs.

Pauses, looks at the child - amazed.

Carefully hands the baby to Lar.

MARY
l'et um lium.

SUPER: *It's a boy.*

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
It had been 17 years since they fled
Guayaquil and became stranded on Santa
Rosalia. 16 years since the captain
gave up trying to fix the ship's
radio.

L'or, Lir'a, A'aupa and Nyla (17) approach the bed.

Lar stares at her son. Then, looks at Mary:

LAR
Nero. parsa vol Nero.

SUPER: *His name is Nero.*

Beat.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
They had no contact with the outside
world, and no idea what what was going
on in it. No idea what became of
Guayaquil. No idea how far reaching or
destructive *World War 3* had become. No
idea of the state of the dollar. No
idea why they hadn't been rescued.

INT. CAPTAIN'S HUT - NIGHT

The captain (62) lays in the dark - arms crossed, wrapped in
blankets and fur, eyes shut, blonde hair neatly brushed.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
The captain would join Selena and
Hisako soon after Nero was born.

Camera traces outside. Mary leads a procession. A'aupa, Nyla
and Lir'a carry flowers. L'or, a torch. Lar, her newborn
baby, blonde haired, blue eyed.

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
In 17 more years Nero and Nyla would
become the ancestors of every human
living on Earth today.

EXT. BASALTIC BEACH - DAY

A flat horizon divides green sea from blue sky. Green waves lap gently against a smooth, sloping black rock.

A skinny Galapagos penguin waddles to the water's edge. Tilts its neck, peers into the water, plotting a move.

CLOSE ON PENGUIN

A flash of slick, brown fur emerges from the water. Long, narrow jaw of serrated teeth clamp around the penguin's neck.

The hunting creature violently shakes its muscular, tapered neck and head. Short, fine fur throws water everywhere as it kills its prey.

Drops the limp penguin. Large blue eyes survey the water. The creature disappears to the sound of a splash.

SUPER: **1002023**

Splashes. Light, sloppy footsteps approach. Trailed by a faster set.

J'ACOLE (O.S.)
darle ave li ca'tia, Mar'laque.

PULL BACK

Three never-before-seen bipeds approach the dead penguin. A tall, slender adult, j'Acole, 21, the hunter. His son (Pedra'l, 4) trails his daughter (Mar'laque, 6), smaller versions of their father. Their shoulders, broader than a fur seal, support no arms. Only small, short flipper-like hands with nubbins for fingers, folded flat against their bodies. They wobble on two legs webbed from torso to knees. Claw-like nails protrude from long, thin feet. j'Acole and Pedra'l have tufts of blond hair on the crowns of their heads.

J'ACOLE
Pedra'l, arfa el spada o kazech zerum
ra a svah. (laughs) Mar'laque, jal el
ca'tia. li o gigni.

SUPER: *Use your front teeth to pry the meat off. Mar'laque, let your brother do it. He has to learn.*

He surveys the area as his children feast. An patch of olive skin in the center of his face puckers as he takes a deep breath in.

J'ACOLE (CONT'D)
 l'is spada no arfa? el gignuum a
 antium a Irish Elk?

SUPER: *What good are his teeth if he doesn't know how to use them? Do you remember the story of the Irish Elk?*

EXT. GALAPAGOS ARCHIPELAGO - DAY

FLYOVER OF SANTA MARIA ISLAND: Much larger than Santa Rosalia. Taller volcano, higher elevations covered by lush cloud forest, just like the western slope of the Andes Mountains.

On the shore, salt marshes, and dense mangrove forests.

EXT. MANGROVE FOREST - DAY

A large, white boobie nests deep within the mangroves.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 Today there are far fewer land iguanas on the Galapagos, and the blue-footed boobie no longer dances. They live in remote parts of the islands, and look much more like their cousins, the masked booby.

Black discs surround its darting eyes, which nervously scout for predators.

EXT. SURF - DAY

A marine iguana swims in shallow water, bushel of flimsy green seaweed in its mouth. Scampers up the beach, disappears into dune brush.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 Marine iguanas no longer bask in the sun, exposed. But their stomachs have developed the ability to digest raw seaweed.

Nestled underneath thick shrub, a marine iguana spits salt cream out its upper nostrils.

EXT. HIGHLAND CACTUS FIELD - DAY

Hundreds of Galapagos tortoises munch on cactus leaf.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Hammerheads circle at the Devil's Crown rock outcropping.
Flightless cormorants pierce the water left and right.
Hundreds of colorful fish fill the water.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Like the hammerhead shark, flightless
cormorants have remained relatively
unchanged. Sharks and whales are the
top predators again. Humans have a
life expectancy of only about 27
years.

EXT. ROCK OUTCROPPING - DAY

J'Acrole and his children join their mother. They bask in the
sun. More humans hunt and rest with their families nearby.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

As a result there isn't any poverty or
famine. Currency doesn't exist. In
fact the assignment of value, even the
word for money, has become a common
joke. Or, in some cases used to pay a
simple compliment. Diseases still
exist, but they are far less prevalent
or likely to reach pandemic
proportions.

EXT. FOREST'S EDGE - DUSK

Tree line glows from the ebbing sun, front lit by fire light.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

Human skulls are narrower now.
Smaller. Streamlined to cut through
water. (beat) There was only so much
that could be fit in there.

A group of twenty humans dance around the fire. Shoulder to
shoulder, they each spin with precision. Claws scratch the
earth in pirouettes. Stop in unison, merging hands with their
neighbors. Pivot in the opposite direction.

Females skypoint. Males pair off, crouch in front of their
mate. Outside the circle children watch.

KANKA-BONOS

(singing)

el

KANKA-BONOS (CONT'D)

evor medra lomor

el

evor medra lomor

el. el

evor medra lomor

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

So, nature let the big brain go. Some
might have said humans are less
intelligent than they were. I wouldn't
say that, but--

Frame floods with white light.

Beat.

KILGORE TROUT (O.S.)

Leon...

Beat.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)

(laughing)

I'm ready, father.

FADE TO BLACK

A phone rings.

INT. HEPBURN KITCHEN - DAY

An iPhone on the kitchen table - it rings again.

Mary Hepburn (54) enters, answers the phone.

MARY

(sweetly, but she's busy)

Hello?

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

Hello. Is this Mrs. Hepburn?

MARY

Yes. Who is this?

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

My name is Robert King, ma'am. I'm the creator of the Nature Cruise of the Century.

MARY

Oh. Well, hello Mr. King. What can I--

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

Hello, Mrs. Hepburn. I understand that you and your husband will be sailing with us. We are delighted to have you.

MARY

Yes, yes. We are very much looking forward to the trip.

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

That's wonderful, Mrs. Hepburn. Is Mr. Hepburn in?

MARY

No, I'm sorry. Roy's at work.

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

I see. Well...you'll have so many wonderful things to see and experience on the Galapagos. And on the *Bahia de Darwin*. It is quite the ship!

MARY

From the look of the website it--

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

I'm calling because we'd like to do a profile on you and your husband for the build up toward the cruise, and I was wondering if you could tell me about yourself, and your husband?

MARY

Oh...

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

Did your husband serve in the Armed Forces, ma'am?

A dog barks, scratches at the back door.

MARY

No, sir.

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

I'm sorry?

Mary lets Donald in.

MARY

Sorry, Mr. King. It seems our
neighbors' dog is looking for Roy too.
But, no. Roy didn't serve--

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

Any famous ancestors or relatives? /
What does he do for work?

MARY

(chuckling)

Um. No. Not that I'm aware of.

She enters the living room, a stack of students' papers on
the coffee table. Sits.

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

Any awards that you could tell me
about? Anything remarkable?

Donald jumps up, lays his snout on her lap.

MARY

I guess we are simple people, Mr.
King. I've been a teacher at the high
school my entire career, and Roy, Roy
has worked for the same company for
nearly 30 years. We don't really think
about awards.

Beat.

BOBBY KING (V.O.)

I understand, ma'am. Well, thank you.
Enjoy the cruise.

Mary hangs up.

The television tuned to CNN. Anderson Cooper reports on
headline: "FEMA GOES BROKE."

ANDERSON COOPER

...making FEMA the fifth government-
funded agency to suffer budget
failure. We go live to Florida where
Jim Acosta is with Trey Davis, owner
(MORE)

ANDERSON COOPER (CONT'D)
 of a 5,000 acre farm in Colquit
 County, one of the counties hit
 hardest by three consecutive years of
 catastrophic hurricanes. Jim?

Davis is already schooling Acosta.

DAVIS
 People ask why we deserve more help
 when people in the cities, people on
 government assistance, aren't.

Next to Davis, his wife KAREN, 29, cries.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
 The difference is we feed the country.

ACOSTA
 Karen, tell us what you're feeling
 right now.

KAREN
 It just hurts. I put more hours and
 work into this farm than I do with my
 family.

Mary's face - compassion for the Davis family. Angry about
 our failings.

She picks up some of the papers, looks down to one before her
 eyes float off the page again, distracted.

LEON TROUT (V.O.)
 A couple of weeks before graduation
 Mary found out that the senior class
 had dedicated their yearbook to her.

A copy of the 2022 High School Yearbook sits on the coffee
 table, next to the papers.

INSERT: Inside cover of yearbook - photo of Mary teaching,
 surrounded by engaged students, smiling, orating to them -
 this job is important to her and she loves doing it. Caption:
 "Mother Nature Personified".

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 There are no tombstones on the island
 of Santa Rosalia. The ocean has taken
 all to use as it will now. But, if
 there were a tombstone there for Mary
 (MORE)

LEON TROUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Hepburn, it would surely read the same
as the inside cover of that yearbook.

Close on Mary's smiling face in photo.

FADE TO BLACK

UNDER CREDITS:

INT. MARY'S HOTEL CLOSET - DAY

Close on Mary's face - stunned.

She fingers the dry cleaning bag covering her red gown. Slips
it over her head.

Through the plastic her eyes shut.

INT. TENT - DAY

Sunlight floods through closed eyelids.

Filters through the crimson nylon of a small tent. Mary (27)
sleeps, eyes flicker as she awakens.

A Kirtland's Warbler sings in the distance: chir-chir-che-way-
o. She sits up.

SUPER: **May 12, 1995**

Mary unzips the tent to reveal a sunlit clearing in a dense,
green forest.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Cloudless sky peeks through treetops as they rustle in the
wind. The bird calls again.

Mary pursues.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

She walks, listening for the bird. Hears its call again,
quickness her pace.

Crosses a stream, weaves through dense trees. Stops mid-
stride-- surprised to discover the source of the bird calls:
Roy (31).

He quickly puts a finger to his lips, asking her to remain

quiet. He smiles, points to a tree branch revealing the Kirtland's Warbler.

It sings. But Mary can't take her eyes off Roy.