

**PROVIDENCE ADRIFT**  
*a play at sea*

**by Jason Pizzarello**

*based on actual events*

Contact:

Jason Pizzarello  
917-414-4837  
jasonpizzarello@gmail.com

Represented by:

Leah Hamos  
Gersh Agency  
41 Madison Ave, 33rd Floor  
New York, NY 10010  
212.634.8153  
lhamos@gershny.com

### Characters

**CAPT** (Richard Harris), 30. Head of the ship. Has been given more responsibility than men twice his age. A reliable and kind man, but wrestles with himself.

**SARGE** (Robert Gomez), 29. Second in command. A large man of earnest actions and few words. Has every bit of the men's respect.

**LOMBARDI** (Dennis Lombardi), 33. An angry, stout Italian from Brooklyn. A worthy seaman and the guy you're glad is on your side.

**PREACH** (Mitchell Christian), 34. The crew's spiritual guide, unwavering in his faith.

**JEFF** (Jeffery Jefferson), 16. The goodnatured little brother, but not a fool.

**REGGIE** (Reggie Harrington), 20, Jeff's best friend. The intelligent fool.

**POPEYE** (Arnold McCrey), 46. Gnarled man of the sea. Seems older than he actually is. Suffers from a deep, relentless cough.

**MICK**, 30s. A lean and ragged Irishman.

### Place

The Pacific Ocean.

### Note

Although the men are in one small boat together, and some of the scenes take place concurrently, we are meant to hear them one at a time, as written. When not involved in the focused dialog, the other men are silently talking to each other, or busying themselves with the boat, or sleeping. These shifts can be achieved theatrically, with the flow of light and sound.

The shifts are indicated in the script by ////////////////.

*We had entered the Antarctic a year and a half before with a well-found ship, full equipment, and high hopes. We had suffered, starved and triumphed, groveled down yet grasped at glory, grown bigger in the bigness of the whole. We had seen God in His splendors, heard the text that Nature renders. We had reached the naked soul of man.*

—Sir Ernest Shackleton

*At sea a fellow comes out. Salt water is like wine, in that respect.*

—Herman Melville

**DAY 1.**

*Middle of the Pacific Ocean.  
Far off the coast of South America.*

*It's dusk and the sun is almost gone.*

*In the haze we hear sounds of raging waters and cracking timber. Spouts of water and the terrible moans of a sinking ship.*

*Over the final hissings and swirling waters, there is the shouting of a dozen men scrambling for their lives. It's chaos.*

*Six men have made it on a lifeboat. They're wet with shock.*

*A seventh man reaches up from the water and starts to climb in. It's POPEYE.  
He's too weak to do it by himself.*

*PREACH reaches over, helps pull him up — when LOMBARDI shoves PREACH hard.  
PREACH tumbles, and POPEYE splashes back in the water.*

**PREACH**

What are you doing? It's Popeye.

**LOMBARDI**

I don't give a shit who it is. This boat is full.

*PREACH moves to help POPEYE again, and LOMBARDI wrestles him away.*

*SARGE easily pulls them apart. He shoves LOMBARDI down.*

**SARGE**

Sit.

*Then, PREACH.*

**SARGE**

Stay.

**PREACH**

Pull him in, Sarge.

*POPEYE is coughing and hanging on to the side of the boat.  
SARGE looks to the CAPTAIN. He nods. SARGE pulls POPEYE into the boat.  
LOMBARDI reaches behind to the back of his pants.*

**SARGE**

Give it.

**LOMBARDI**

Give what?

*SARGE waits, puts out his hand.*

*LOMBARDI takes a gun from his waist gives it to SARGE. He checks for rounds.*

**LOMBARDI**

*(to Preach)*

You'll regret this. I swear by your God and mine.

*The shivering men sit in silence, catch their breath and watch their sinking Providence behind them. A vortex, then, as if she never existed, the ship is gone.*

*CAPT turns on his lantern and two other lights appear in the distance, bobbing, drifting away from each other.*

*Fade out.*

**DAY 2.**

*The next day. Dawn.*

*CAPT looks over the front of the boat, holding a lantern out to the open sea. SARGE is beside him, studying a map and making notations.*

*REGGIE and JEFF are huddled in the back. POPEYE tries to sleep.*

*CAPT holds up the lantern. Turns it off, then on. Off, then on. Waits.*

*SARGE and CAPT look out. Wait.*

*Far off, a light responds in the same way.*

**CAPT**

See that. All is not lost.

**SARGE**

They've drifted.

**CAPT**

Farther than I thought. We'll have to stay with them. *(Consulting the charts.)* We need to head... Southeast... Try and catch that westerlies wind before we can head East. Southeast to Ecuador.

**SARGE**

But that's over three thousand miles. *(quietly)* We'll never—

**CAPT**

We'll get spotted before then. The shipping lanes. It's our best shot.

**SARGE**

What about the South islands? They're closest.

**CAPT**

Those islands are... inhabited. By cannibals.

**SARGE**

We don't know they're cannibals.

**CAPT**

Well neither did The Nantucket. But they found out the hard way.

**SARGE**

Rumors have a way of drifting pretty far too. Three thousand miles is—

**CAPT**

We need to inventory the water and bread.

**SARGE**

Six gallons. Bread is...One, two, three, five and a half boxes of twelve.

**CAPT**

Five boxes? I thought...

**SARGE**

No. They sank.

**CAPT**

That's it?

**SARGE**

That's everything.

**CAPT**

Good, that's plenty. Just gotta make it last.

*CAPT and SARGE study the map and trace their route.*

**CAPT**

...Count it again.

**SARGE**

Alright.

*SARGE starts to reinventory the supplies.*

//////////

*LOMBARDI is tapping a piece of wood on the side of the boat and staring at PREACH.  
PREACH stares out.*

**LOMBARDI**

I dunno what you're doin, but I hope you're prayin.

**PREACH**

I am. (*quietly humming*) We need thee O We need thee. Every hour Lord We need thee.

**LOMBARDI**

*(overlapping the prayer)*

Better be prayin for forgiveness. Too many men on this boat as is and you go pullin in more. Tryin to fuckin kill us out here.

**PREACH**

You'd let our brother drown?

**LOMBARDI**

I want it to be known that I'm not splittin my portions with him (*Preach*) or him (*Popeye*.) Let it be known. Hear that, big Sarge. That old man is not touchin my portion.

**SARGE**

Who said anything about portions?

**LOMBARDI**

Okay, alright. I know what's going on here—

*LOMBARDI stands.*

**SARGE**

Sit.

*LOMBARDI sits.*

**LOMBARDI**

—Fuckin conspiracy, that's what.

**SARGE**

Why don't you just stop your mouth. Can't even think.

**LOMBARDI**

What do you need to think for? Preacherman is thinkin for all of us. Isn't that, right?

**PREACH**

Popeye can share my portion. Alright? How's that, Mr. Lombardi?

**LOMBARDI**

How's that? How's that you're so fuckin stupid? You compassionate little heart wants to bleed for him, so be it.

**SARGE**

Equal portions.

**LOMBARDI**

Oh now there are portions?

*LOMBARDI stands.*

**SARGE**

Sit.

*LOMBARDI sits.*

**LOMBARDI**

I'll divide em then, how's that?

**SARGE**

You don't like it on this boat?

**LOMBARDI**

What doya mean? This is my boat. I cut it loose.

**SARGE**

This is the Captain's boat, just as the Providence was the Captain's ship. You gotta problem with that - go take a swim, cool off. You gotta problem with that?

**LOMBARDI**

No problem, big Sarge.

**SARGE**

You gonna shut up now? So I can count.

**LOMBARDI**

I'm gonna pray, that's what I'm gonna do. We're all gonna pray. Give me your hand, Preacherman.

*PREACH just stares at him.*

**LOMBARDI**

Alright, I'll take my own hand.

*LOMBARDI holds hands with himself.*

**LOMBARDI**

There.



//////////

**JEFF**

That wave. I can't... ( *rubs his eyes* ) ...can't stop seein it. I've never seen anything so white.

**REGGIE**

No? You ever see an Albino?

**JEFF**

An albino what?

**REGGIE**

Person. There's no pigment or whatever you call it.

**JEFF**

Oh, I—

**REGGIE**

Albino chicks, man. They're kinda sexy. Not like a black person who lost some of their pigment or was born with half pigment. But like, a white person-Albino-chick. Mmm. Freaky. But sexy. You like that?

**JEFF**

White girls?

**REGGIE**

Albinos? Freaks, that sort of thing. Carnies, even.

**JEFF**

I've never seen water move like that, like a giant wall.

**REGGIE**

I bet you'd fuck a midget, wouldn't you?

**JEFF**

Uh, I don't know...

**REGGIE**

Not a dwarf, like with the normal-size heads but stunted everywhere else. Stubby fingers. But midgets. Small people. Little people.

**JEFF**

Aren't they *all* little people?

**REGGIE**

Well yeah. But midgets are in proportion.

**JEFF**

And you've...been with...a little person?

**REGGIE**

Not yet, man. Not yet.

**JEFF**

How short are midgets? I mean, at what height do you stop being a midget and are just a short non-midget person.

**REGGIE**

See this is why I love havin you around. You ask the important questions. Perfect. ...So when we get back I'll inquire about some little people, albinos even, and we'll get a bottle-a Jack and we'll see where the night takes us. It'll be good for you.

**JEFF**

*(Looking out over the ocean)* Where are we?

**REGGIE**

Who knows.

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**LOMBARDI**

*(to JEFF)*

That wave's still out there, ya know, circling to get us again.

**JEFF**

You think so?

**LOMBARDI**

I know so.

**REGGIE**

Don't listen to him. That wave is dead.

**JEFF**

*(to LOMBARDI)*

How do you know?

**LOMBARDI**

'Cause I've been 'round long enough to know if shit can stick, it will.

**JEFF**

Is that the Golden Rule?

**PREACH**

The Golden Rule is do unto others as you—

**LOMBARDI**

Fuck the Golden Rule. It's Murphy's law. If something can go wrong, you better fuckin grab your ankles, boy.

**PREACH**

—As you wish to be done onto you.

**JEFF**

Oh.

**LOMBARDI**

Murphy Murphy Murphy. Murphy's gonna getcha. With a big fat wooden dildo, if she can.

**JEFF**

Wouldn't you get splinters in your—?

**LOMBARDI**

That's the point.

**REGGIE**

Murphy's a ghost.

**JEFF**

She is?

**PREACH**

And you shouldn't let her haunt you, my boy.

**LOMBARDI**

Murphy's no ghost. Murphy's as real as—

**POPEYE**

*(coming out of his sleep, in a fit)* Ah, so what, you asshole? You maggot prick. You want to drown me. You want to hold my head under water—

*POPEYE grabs a broken piece of wood by his side and it's instantly at LOMBARDI's neck.*

**POPEYE**

Then do it!

*LOMBARDI just smiles. SARGE leaps up and grabs ahold of POPEYE and takes away the broken wood. SARGE sits him down and he goes into a coughing fit.*

**SARGE**

Why do you assholes keep standing up? What's so confusing about sitting?

**LOMBARDI***(to SARGE)*

Shoulda let him finish. Crazy old bastard.

*PREACH comforts POPEYE.*

**LOMBARDI**

Shoulda let him end me. Fuck it. Do it now, do it later, what's the difference.

Man, what the fuck are we doing out here?

Shoulda never been out this far. No fish is worth—

**CAPT**

My ship is gone.

*(He immediately has every man's attention.)*

Providence is gone. And I have to answer for that. Not any of you.

So that's the end of it. Understand?

Good. So here we are. On this tiny fuckin boat. It is what it is, right? It is what it is.

**LOMBARDI**

Sure, Capt.

**CAPT**

Sergeant Gomez and I have counted the water and food. And I've rationed. And I'm gonna keep track in my book here. See? And we're gonna make it last as long as..., well, as long as we need it to. Until we reach Ecuador or get picked up by a passing ship. So... until then...

**SARGE**

Don't fuck each other with any wooden dicks.

**CAPT**

I'm still Captain. And Sergeant Gomez is still Sergeant Gomez and he's gonna need your help building up the side of the boat here to better protect us against the waves.

**SARGE**

We're gonna need a sail.

**LOMBARDI**

We can use what's salvaged. It won't be pretty but it'll hold.

**CAPT**

Good. Make it.

*They begin gathering materials.*

**PREACH**

It wasn't your fault anyhow, Capt. That wave, she—

**CAPT**

Nevermind that wave. It's just us now. And we're here to do one thing: survive. Like we always have. ...Just on a smaller boat. Got it?

**REGGIE**

What about Murphy?

**CAPT**

Fuck Murphy.

**DAY 4.**

*Two days later.*

*SARGE and CAPT passing out food and water rations. Over the following, they carefully make their rounds, with SARGE doling out the food and CAPT taking account in his book.*

**SARGE**

Here ya go. Enjoy.

**REGGIE**

Is there tea today, or no?

**SARGE**

Later. There's salt water tea later.

**REGGIE**

Please note that I prefer my tea with biscuits.

**PREACH**

Biscuits and gravy. Turkey gravy. Amen.

**LOMBARDI**

You give me gravy I don't care if it's dog meat gravy.

**JEFF**

Dog meat is like dog food for people.

**POPEYE**

Horse meat is dog food. Horse meat is people food. Cat food is only cat food, and a cat can't be food.

**REGGIE**

Pussy's pussy, man.

**PREACH**

A cat can be food. A dog can be food.

**SARGE**

Goat, lamb, I get. Who's gonna eat dog?

**CAPT**

Some cultures consider it a delicacy.

**POPEYE**

The Chinese eat dog, have been eating dog for centuries, and never thought anything of it. Now they don't though. Know why? They're getting rich and rich people have pets like dogs and you don't eat your pets.

**LOMBARDI**

You don't eat your own pet. But you could eat your neighbor's pet.

**POPEYE**

I'd prefer the company of a pet over you.

**LOMBARDI**

And I'd eat your pet if I were home with a kitchen full of food.

**PREACH**

Not much of a threat. You don't even know what kinda pet he has. He could have a pet chicken.

**LOMBARDI**

It's still his pet and he still named it and I'd still eat it up right in front of his children.

**POPEYE**

I don't have any pets. No children either. Never did.

**JEFF**

I have a turtle. Edward. *Used to* have a turtle I guess.

**SARGE**

You still do.

**PREACH**

What kind, a snapping turtle?

**JEFF**

Box.

**POPEYE**

Turtles are dirty creatures. They carry salmonella.

**REGGIE**

I don't give a shit if it had rabies, I'd eat a turtle right now. Right outta its shell.

**JEFF**

That's cruel.

**REGGIE**

Make a turtle pie.

**SARGE**

Apple pie. That's the pie I want. *Warm* apple pie.

**JEFF**

I don't like my pie hot.

**POPEYE**

Only prudes like cold apple pie.

**JEFF**

I'm not a prude.

**POPEYE**

Then stick that pie in the oven, my boy.

**PREACH**

I'll take my pie a la mode.

**REGGIE**

What the fuck is ala mode?

**PREACH**

It means with ice cream.

**JEFF**

I've never heard pie called a la mode before.

**LOMBARDI**

That's cause you're from fucking Idaho. All you know is potatoes.

**REGGIE**

No it's 'cause only assholes say a la mode. Everyone else just says with ice cream.

**JEFF**

We have pies in Idaho.

**LOMBARDI**

Potato pie?

**JEFF**

No...Blueberry pie. For example. I like pies with crust.

**LOMBARDI**

All pies have crust! A crust is what makes a pie a pie. Even pizza pie has crust.

**SARGE**

Not key lime pie.

**REGGIE**

Key lime pie has crust, just not over the top.

**SARGE**

What about shepherds pie?

**JEFF**

Oh yeah. What about shepherd's pie, Lombardi? Didn't think of that, did ya?

**LOMBARDI**

It's not pie. No crust, not pie.

**PREACH**

Banana cream pie. That's my favorite. Except for peach cobbler.

**JEFF**

Is cobbler pie?

**PREACH**

Cobbler is cobbler.

**CAPT**

Every morning I try and eat a piece of humble pie.

*They laugh at CAPT's joke.*

**PREACH**

Okay good one, Capt.

**JEFF**

I ate pie for *breakfast* once. My mom, one day she packed me a piece of this pie for lunch, but this fat kid sat on it and mashed into, into... It was like soup. I felt bad because my mom never really did stuff like that...so I ate it anyway. For breakfast. With a spoon.

**CAPT**

Best meal of the day. I'm a traditional man myself. Scrambled eggs, toast, and a glass of orange juice.

**PREACH**

Buttermilk pancakes with maple syrup. Mmm, mm.

**SARGE**

Waffles. Homemade fluffy waffles.



**REGGIE**

Cinnamon buns. Now that's where it's at.

**CAPT**

Now we're back to dessert. Let's stay focused.

**JEFF**

Yeah. I love chocolate pudding. Or red Jello with whipped cream.

**SARGE**

Without the fruit in it.

**LOMBARDI**

I'll take a canoli over any other dessert on earth.

*REGGIE and JEFF bust up laughing.*

**LOMBARDI**

Someone please tell me they know about canolis.

**REGGIE**

Sure canolis. The Eye-talians make those right?

**LOMBARDI**

It's Italian not Eye-talian, you uncultured twat.

**JEFF**

What's in a canoli?

**LOMBARDI**

It depends. But most of time they're made with ricotta cheese.

**JEFF**

Cheese?

**LOMBARDI**

Yeah cheese. Sometimes you put chocolate chips in 'em.

**JEFF**

You put chocolate chips in your cheese?

**REGGIE**

Lombardi appreciates the finer things in life. You drink espresso, too?

**LOMBARDI**

I don't do anything where my pinkies gotta be in the air.

*REGGIE and JEFF pretend to be at a fancy restaurant. Pinkies in the air.*

**JEFF**

*(clears his throat)* Excuse me, waiter. Do you have any dick a la mode today?

**REGGIE**

Why, yes we do. Coming right in your mouth, Monsieur Lombardi.

**JEFF**

What did you say to me? Forget it, just bring me a fuckin cheese canoli.

*The men laugh. LOMBARDI sulks.*

**POPEYE**

My wife bakes the most miraculous macaroons. They're like butter. The best. I'm telling you, the best. I bought her an egg timer for her birthday two, maybe three years ago. She uses it for eggs. She loves her hardboiled eggs. They stink awful. But she won't use the timer for baking. It's an egg timer she says. For eggs. You want me to time cookies buy me a cookie timer.

**REGGIE**

Why does she need a cookie timer if the cookies are baked perfect?

**SARGE**

Let him finish. Go ahead, Pops. Finish your story about the macaroons.

**POPEYE**

About the macaroons?

**SARGE**

Yeah.

**POPEYE**

I don't know if it was much of a story.

**LOMBARDI**

You're right, it wasn't.

**PREACH**

It was beautiful story. The macaroons sound delicious. She makes the best ones, huh? When does she make them, on Christmas?

**POPEYE**

Oh, well. She'll make 'em on Christmas, sure. I don't know when she makes em exactly. But she'll make em from time to time. She gets cravings you know. She's got a sweet tooth. Ask her and she'll tell you I'm the one with the sweet tooth and I won't tell you otherwise. But considering it's just us here on this boat and there's no chance of her hearin I'll tell you. It's our little secret. We've got lots of little secret agreements like that. You young married guys will see. You'll develop your own. Little things that you don't speak about and are just understood. Little unmentionables. We have a whole closet full of unmentionables. But that's what bonds your souls together, these strings, and

overtime, they become intertwined and tangled in some kind of messy web, and you can't ever separate the strands, you're wound up and woven together. For this life anyway.

**LOMBARDI**

I thought you said your wife is dead.

*POPEYE stares at him. So what.*

**LOMBARDI**

"My wife died of the cancer seventeen years ago. May she rest in peace," that's what you said.

**POPEYE**

I know what I said, you greasy squid.

**LOMBARDI**

Were you lying?

**POPEYE**

You maggot shit.

**LOMBARDI**

Were you? No you weren't.

**POPEYE**

Yes she's fucking dead.

**PREACH**

What's your point Lombardi? Let him have his—

**LOMBARDI**

If she's so fucking dead then why are you talking about her in the present like she's aproned in some cozy New England kitchen bakin you sugar cookies.

**POPEYE**

She's dead! Yes. I don't see what difference it makes. She's just as alive as any of us. And just as dead.

**LOMBARDI**

You're nutty.

**POPEYE**

You get that, don't you? My beautiful Maggie, is...has been dead seventeen years from the cancer may she rest in peace...well she's *more* alive than us. Because we're worse than dead out here. We're nothing! We're phantoms. We don't exist. Do you get that? Do ya? We're nothing. Nothing.

*Another coughing fit.  
Silence from the others.  
And then breaking it:*

**SARGE**

Okay, so here's a joke...

There's a pancake, a sausage and a waffle. Right? Okay, and they're trying to figure out who's the best breakfast food. And the sausage says to the pancake "I'm the best breakfast food." And the pancake says "No you're not" and pushes the sausage outta the way. Then the waffle says to the pancake, "I'm the best breakfast food." And the pancake says "no you're not" and throws him in the fuckin ocean.

*Pause. Nobody laughs.*

**JEFF**

I don't get it.

**SARGE**

No? Not yet? Don't worry you'll get it tomorrow.

**REGGIE**

Are you fucking with us, Sarge?

**SARGE**

I'm not fucking with you. It'll hit you.

*As their anger builds, CAPT just shakes his head. He's seen this all before.*

**REGGIE**

C'mon just tell us.

**SARGE**

If I explain it now I'll ruin it. Don't worry, you'll get it.

**LOMBARDI**

We're not gonna get it because there's nothing to get.

**JEFF**

The pancake throws the waffle in the ocean? Why are they near an ocean?

**REGGIE**

What do you care where they are? Why is food talking? That's the question.

**SARGE**

Yes. But don't—

**PREACH**

It's a philosophical joke. It's a metaphor.

**SARGE**

Don't overthink it. It's not something you figure out.

**REGGIE**

Are you sure it's a joke?

**JEFF**

*(to Reggie)* Forget it, let's play some cards.

**LOMBARDI**

The only joke is on us.

**SARGE**

I promise, you'll get it. Sometimes you just gotta have faith. Right, Preach?

**PREACH**

That's not what they wanna hear.

**LOMBARDI**

You're right. It's not.

*JEFF has dealt some cards.*

**REGGIE**

I don't even care about that joke. It's not gonna bother me at all. I've stopped thinking about it completely.

**JEFF**

It's stupid. Whaddya say, Reggie? You in or not?

**REGGIE**

How come you always use my first name and everyone else is by their last name. Maybe I wanna go by Harrington.

**JEFF**

Because you're not Harrington, you're Reggie or Reg. And I'm Jeff.

**REGGIE**

Yeah but that's short for Jefferson.

**JEFF**

So call me Jefferson.

**REGGIE**

But you're not Jefferson, you're Jeff.

**JEFF**

Just like you're Reg.

**REGGIE**

You don't understand what I'm saying! My last name is Harrington and your last name is Jefferson. Correct?

**JEFF**

I'm a little confused, but I guess that seems—

**REGGIE**

And everyone calls you Jeff, short for Jefferson, your last name. So by that logic, I should be called Harry, short for Harrington.

**JEFF**

But you're not Harry. You're Reg or Reggie, Reg. You can call me by my first name if it makes you feel better.

**REGGIE**

You want me to call you Jeffery? Hell no. You're Jeff. Short for Jefferson. And that's that.

**PREACH**

What about me?

**REGGIE**

No disrespect, Preach, but we're not calling you Mitchell. You're Preach.

**PREACH**

Then call me by my last name.

**REGGIE**

What's your last name?

**JEFF**

You donno his last name?

**REGGIE**

You know what, no I don't.

**JEFF**

Christian.

**REGGIE**

Bullshit!

**JEFF**

Yup.

**REGGIE**

Bull. Shit.

*REGGIE looks to PREACH for confirmation.*

**PREACH**

It's Christian.

**REGGIE**

Seriously? Well that's just—you know—that's just—

**PREACH**

Ironic.

**REGGIE**

Yeah ironic.

**JEFF**

I like it. I think we should call you Christian.

**REGGIE**

No way, too weird. You're Preach, Preach. You're not a Christian.

**PREACH**

Yes I am, Reg.

**REGGIE**

You know what I mean.

**LOMBARDI**

An asshole by any other name is still an asshole.

**REGGIE**

Shut up, Lom-bardi. Or should I call you Dennis?

**LOMBARDI**

Say that to my face.

**REGGIE**

I just did.

**LOMBARDI**

Say it closer.

**REGGIE**

We're on a tiny boat.

**LOMBARDI**

Say it within reach.

**REGGIE**

You come to me.

**LOMBARDI**

I'm not moving anywhere. Sarge told me to sit, so I'm sitting.

**REGGIE**

You've got a good spot.

**LOMBARDI**

You're damn right I do and I intend on keeping it.

**REGGIE**

As soon as you die I'm going to take your spot.

**LOMBARDI**

Over my dead body.

**REGGIE**

Exactly. Over your dead body. That's what I just said.

**JEFF**

You think we're gonna die?

**CAPT**

Hey! Not a man on this boat is going to die.

**REGGIE**

What about half a man?

**CAPT**

No one.

**LOMBARDI**

We'll see.

**JEFF**

What does that mean?

**SARGE**

It doesn't mean anything.

**LOMBARDI**

Doesn't it?

**CAPT**

Stop your taunting, Lombardi.

**LOMBARDI**

I wasn't saying anything. It was Harrington that's harassing people.

**REGGIE**

You know what, Dennis...



**LOMBARDI**

Say that again and I'm pushin you overboard.

**CAPT**

That's settled then. Harrington will push Sergeant Gomez overboard for the bad joke.

**SARGE**

We'll see.

**CAPT**

Then Dennis you push Harrington overboard for starting the name argument.

**LOMBARDI**

With pleasure.

**CAPT**

And then Christian, you push Dennis overboard.

**PREACH**

No problem here.

**LOMBARDI**

For what?

**CAPT**

For peace and quiet.

**LOMBARDI**

Who's gonna push Popeye?

**POPEYE**

I'll push myself. I don't need any handouts.

**CAPT**

Well then it'd just be me, Jefferson and Christian.

**LOMBARDI**

Peaceful yes, but boring. What the hell'd you three talk about? God and all the good deeds to do in heaven?

**CAPT**

We wouldn't have to talk about anything. Or we could talk about anything we want without worrying about who's gonna push us overboard.

**LOMBARDI**

This boat is too crowded. I'm a problem solver, that's all. I was trying to be helpful, Capt.

**CAPT**

A most generous offer, thank you.

*CAPT moves over to sit next to JEFF.*

**CAPT**

Deal me in.

**JEFF**

Yeah?

**CAPT**

*(to the others)* Who else?

*The others, reluctant at first, move to the center of the boat to join the game. JEFF smiles and deals.*

**DAY 6.**

*Two days later.*

*CAPT is signaling to the other boat.*

*SARGE seems to be sleeping with one eye open.*

*JEFF and REGGIE are playing another game of cards.*

*POPEYE wakes into a coughing fit. They watch him until he stops then return to their game.*

**JEFF**

Do you believe in mermaids?

**REGGIE**

What do you mean, do I believe in them?

**JEFF**

Do you believe they exist?

**REGGIE**

Mermaids exist. What are you talking about?

**JEFF**

How do you know?

**REGGIE**

Let me ask you this: do you believe the ocean exists? Do you believe fish exist?

**JEFF**

Fish? Like just regular fish?

**REGGIE**

Yeah fish.

**JEFF**

Yeah.

**REGGIE**

So do I. Great.

**JEFF**

But what about mermaids?

*SARGE slides over and they deal him in.*

**REGGIE**

Of course they do, Jeffery. Mermaids are probably the most beautiful creatures ever created. They're also really horny. And love to have sex with men at sea.

**SARGE**

You can't have sex with a mermaid.

**REGGIE**

What?!

**SARGE**

You can't. That's nature.

**REGGIE**

Wrong!

**SARGE**

Really? Explain how it'd work.

**REGGIE**

Easy. You put it in her fish parts.

**JEFF**

What fish parts?

**REGGIE**

Fish parts. She has fish parts down there. For sex.

**JEFF**

Isn't it all...scaly?

**REGGIE**

There are parts without scales. Smooth parts. Lady fish parts.

**SARGE**

I didn't know that.

**REGGIE**

Mermaids are sex-ready, Sarge, why can't you see that.

**SARGE**

I'm just sorry you're corrupting poor Jeffrey's head, that's all.  
I fold.

*JEFF folds. REGGIE deals again.*

**JEFF**

Why do we gotta have sex with mermaids?

**REGGIE**

We don't. But if you wanna, you can.

**JEFF**

I don't know if I wanna.

**REGGIE**

Of course you do. Mermaids are sexy.

**JEFF**

What about the scales?

**REGGIE**

See, Sarge, some people on this boat, some with an ounce of intellectual curiosity, are considering the mermaid discussion in a real serious way.

**SARGE**

Uh huh.

**REGGIE**

Now what was your question about the scales, Jefferson?

**JEFF**

Uh, what about em?

**REGGIE**

I don't get it. Are you asking if they have scales? They're half fish, of course they have scales. On their bottom half.

**JEFF**

Well no, okay, like what kind of scales? Are they like those little fishy ones that are gonna flake off and be like all over you after you...you know.

**REGGIE**

After we fuck, Jeffrey? After the mermaid and I fuck?

**SARGE**

Are you fucking the mermaid or is the mermaid fucking you?

**REGGIE**

We're fucking together, Sarge. Jesus.

**SARGE**

I'd imagine you'd have to pin a mermaid down. Or catch her in a net or somethin.

**REGGIE**

She's not resisting! Okay?! She's not resisting.

**SARGE**

Why not? Doesn't she wanna swim away?

**REGGIE**

No! She swam up to me.

**SARGE**

You've really given this some thought.

**REGGIE**

Mermaids are kind and gentle and curious creatures.

**SARGE**

That you fuck.

**REGGIE**

That you *can* fuck.

**SARGE**

If you catch one. If you reel her in to your boat.

**REGGIE**

You're a disgusting pig. I don't fuck her on the boat.

**SARGE**

Where do you fuck her?

**REGGIE**

I have a tub below deck that I've pre-filled with salt water.

**SARGE**

Are you on a date? Are you dating this mermaid?

**REGGIE**

It's early to tell but...

**JEFF**

Yeah but do you get the scales all over?

**REGGIE**

Why are you obsessed with the scales?!

**JEFF**

The scales would be gross.

**REGGIE**

It's not scales like you're thinking. They're larger than regular fish scales. They're like beautiful silky silver dollars. And they don't come off, they stay on.

**JEFF**

That's good. I wouldn't want to have sex with something that sheds.

**REGGIE**

That's a fine rule.

**SARGE**

Would you fuck a dolphin?

**REGGIE**

Of course not! I have standards. Wait is the dolphin half lady?

**SARGE**

No that would make it a mermaid.

**REGGIE**

Incorrect. Mermaids are half fish. Dolphins are mammals.

**SARGE**

Just a regular dolphin then.

**JEFF**

I'd date a dolphin. Dolphins are good company.

**SARGE**

Would you fuck a *dead* mermaid?

**REGGIE**

What did she wash up on shore? That's fucking disgusting.

**SARGE**

I don't know if she washed up on shore, per se—

**REGGIE**

Wait, how long has she been dead?

//////////

*LOMBARDI slides over to CAPT, still signaling with the other boat and making recordings in his book.*

**LOMBARDI**

What'd they say?

**CAPT**

The other boat?

**LOMBARDI**

Yeah.

**CAPT**

They say... they're stranded at sea.

**LOMBARDI**

What'd you say back?

**CAPT**

I said good luck.

*CAPT smiles and signals something else.*

I also told 'em to slow their rations.

We spilt the supplies down the middle, more or less, but they're just...

**LOMBARDI**

Stupid?

**CAPT**

...Lacking the necessary discipline.

**LOMBARDI**

Maybe they think we're gonna be rescued.

**CAPT**

They could be right.

**LOMBARDI**

Shoulda told 'em to find their own way home.

**CAPT**

Yeah. Right.

**LOMBARDI**

We should cut 'em loose before they suck us dry.  
That's what I had to do with my wife, that leech.

**CAPT**

Did it work?

**LOMBARDI**

Backfired unfortunately. She tried to kill me.

**CAPT**

Oh. Didn't know you were married.

**LOMBARDI**

She's gone now anyway.

**CAPT**

I'm sorry to hear that.

**LOMBARDI**

I'm sorry too actually. I loved her most of the time...especially when she wasn't carrying anything sharp.

*LOMBARDI laughs in only the way he can. CAPT seems more concerned.*

She was a very determined woman. I loved that about her. It was your classic love story really.

*LOMBARDI lifts one side of his shirt.*

See that? Came at me with a butcher knife that time. Too many bloody marys after church.

*LOMBARDI pulls up another part of his shirt.*

This one was a hammer. I really hated it when she messed with my tools.  
She gave me two beautiful boys though. Before she went off the deep end. Seven and three. Good boys.

*CAPT lifts part of his pant leg.*

**CAPT**

See this line from the back of my ankle to my knee? Got that from my old lady.

**LOMBARDI**

Damn. What'd she hit you with?



**CAPT**

No, she set a bunch of snares around our property one summer. She was trying to catch a fox.

**LOMBARDI**

Did she?

**CAPT**

I suppose. Time will tell.  
Maybe one day I'll go back and find my land legs.

**LOMBARDI**

And give all this up? This glorious life at sea?

**CAPT**

Yeah, who am I kidding.

////////////////

**JEFF**

What about ghosts?

**REGGIE**

We went over this before. You can't fuck ghosts!

**SARGE**

What about if *you're* a ghost?

**REGGIE**

Then of course.

**JEFF**

I meant do you believe in ghosts?

**REGGIE**

Are you talking about hauntings?

**JEFF**

I just mean, do we become ghosts? Will we exist as ghosts when we die?

**REGGIE**

The Afterlife? Purgatory. Heaven? That whole thing. Or dirt to dirt?

**SARGE**

Reincarnation.

**JEFF**

Let's ask Preach. Preach, what happens when we die?

**SARGE**

They're talking about ghosts.

**PREACH**

I believe in the things that exist in this life. I believe in a spiritual afterlife. If you're asking about the supernatural—

**REGGIE**

Yeah yeah yeah, everyone believes in ghosts. But what we want to know is: do ghosts fuck?

**PREACH**

Do they—? Well, I— If ghosts exist...

**REGGIE**

They do.

**PREACH**

Then, I'd imagine ghosts to have a very active sex life, yes. Obviously.

**REGGIE**

See!

**PREACH**

Angels, on the other hand—

**REGGIE**

—are virgins. Obviously.

So, ghosts can have sex, but can they masturbate?

**PREACH**

Ugh... Probably not.

**REGGIE**

But angels can. Agreed.

**SARGE**

What about reincarnation? Could Reg here come back as a unicorn or a dolphin?

**PREACH**

A dolphin is a real thing. A unicorn is not.

**SARGE**

Then a dolphin.

**PREACH**

I do not believe in reincarnation. But I believe there are those that do.

**REGGIE**

The Indians.

**JEFF**

Feather or dot?

**REGGIE**

Both.

**PREACH**

The Hindu, they believe the life you live determines who or what you come back as. So if you're a very wealthy man in this life, then to learn to be humble, you come back as a beggar or a servant. And so you're always working to get closer and closer to a...completeness.

**REGGIE**

I'd come back as a dog.

**SARGE**

Karma's a bitch.

**REGGIE**

Haha. No. Dog's are loyal. Dogs are—

**SARGE**

Chinese food.

**JEFF**

What about cats — they have nine lives. I'd come back as a cat so I wouldn't have to keep dying.

**PREACH**

Sounds exhausting.

**JEFF**

It wouldn't be. It'd be freeing. Imagine not having to worry about death.

**SARGE**

We're all gonna die, kid. The rest is bullshit.

**REGGIE**

What's to worry about anyway. I welcome death. Most heroes do.

**JEFF**

You're my hero.

**REGGIE**

Of course I am. I'm my hero, too.

////////////////////

*CAPT puts away the lantern.*

**CAPT**

Think she's still out there?

**LOMBARDI**

Who's that, Sir?

**CAPT**

That wave. Our inevitable fate. Murphy, if that's what you call it.

**LOMBARDI**

Depends.

**CAPT**

Bullshit.

**LOMBARDI**

In that case... Murphy's always out there. Watchin. Waitin. To strike when you least expect it.

**DAY 9.**

*Three days later.*

*Dawn. Everyone is asleep.*

*POPEYE opens his eyes. He's been awake, waiting.*

*He sneaks over to the food chest behind CAPT and tries to grab a piece of bread. But he makes a NOISE and LOMBARDI wakes up. POPEYE scrambles but LOMBARDI can see what's going on and jumps up.*

**LOMBARDI**

Put that down you fuckin thief!

*And now everyone is waking up.*

*CAPT pulls his out the pistol and points it at POPEYE.*

**POPEYE**

I'm not doing anything.

**CAPT**

You put that food back.

**LOMBARDI**

Fucking shoot him.

**CAPT**

You put that food back. Right now.

*POPEYE puts the food back.*

**POPEYE**

I'm not doing anything.

**LOMBARDI**

Caught him red handed that greedy bastard.

*POPEYE begins to cough and sits back down.*

**PREACH**

What happened, Popeye? Were you stealing food?

**POPEYE**

I just...no.

**LOMBARDI**

Liar!

**REGGIE**

How much did he take?

**CAPT**

Sergeant. Count it.

*SARGE counts the rations. CAPT holds the gun on POPEYE.*

**JEFF**

He's sick. He just needed a little more.

**LOMBARDI**

Yeah, he's sick. He's gonna kill us all. You wanna give him your ration that's up to you.

**SARGE**

It's all there.

**PREACH**

He didn't take anything.

**LOMBARDI**

We should shoot him. Thief.

**PREACH**

Of course you'd want to shoot him.

**LOMBARDI**

Eating that food is the same as putting a bullet in your head.

**JEFF**

He didn't do anything.

**REGGIE**

Didya, Popeye?

**POPEYE**

I didn't. Mean to...I'm...hungry...I...I'm sorry.

**CAPT**

I know you're hungry. It breaks my heart. It does.  
But you touch that food again and I *will* shoot you. Understand?

*POPEYE nods.*

*CAPT lowers his gun.*

**CAPT**

That goes for everyone.

**DAY 11.**

*Two days later.*

*REGGIE, SARGE, and LOMBARDI are rigging up fishing lines, with hooks and lurers, that they sink in the water, pull out, check the line and sink again.*

**REGGIE**

Maybe the other boat caught something.

**LOMBARDI**

Doubtful. Half of them are half retarded.

**REGGIE**

Maybe the other half did.

**LOMBARDI**

The other half have shit luck.

**REGGIE**

Yeah well we haven't caught anything either so what does that make us?  
Damn this line.

**SARGE**

Let me see.

*SARGE switches lines with him and pulls REGGE's line up.*

**SARGE**

What time is it?

**REGGIE**

Ha ha. Yeah, what time is it.

**SARGE**

Do you know?

**REGGIE**

How should I know. Want me to make a sundial with my dick?

*SARGE squints up at the sky.*

**SARGE**

It must be about sixteen hundred.

**REGGIE**

Because of the sun? Okay, I get it.

**SARGE**

Maybe seventeen hundred.

*They squint at the sky.*

**REGGIE**

Ya think?

**LOMBARDI**

Seems to be going backwards if you ask me.

**REGGIE**

Time?

**LOMBARDI**

Everything. I'm waiting for the sun to unrise.

**REGGIE**

Yeah I bet you wish time was going in reverse. Then you'll be young and fertile again like me.

**LOMBARDI**

Naw, I'd still be old. I'd just lose time. That's what's happening here. Time is being stolen from me.

*He tugs on his line, throws it down.*

Fuck this.

*He crosses to the other side of the boat by himself.*

**SARGE**

Gimme that hook.

*REGGIE gives it to him. SARGE affixes the hook.*

**SARGE**

You know if you were in space you'd age slower?

**REGGIE**

What the fuck am I doing in space?

**SARGE**

Yeah you'd age slower because of the gravity difference. Not by much, but if you travelled light years, you'd come back and everyone'd be dead and gone. But you'd still be young. Now it's the opposite for us. By the time we get back everyone will still be in their prime, fresh faces intact, and we'll be wrinkled and grey.

**REGGIE**

And all my ladies will be shriveled and dried up. Dust balls in their pussies and shit...

*REGGIE cups a handful of ocean water and drinks it.*

**SARGE**

What are you doin, dumbass?

**REGGIE**

My lips are dry.

**SARGE**

You might as well drink some poison.

**REGGIE**

I'm not drinking it. I'm just puttin it to my lips.

**SARGE**

That water's got more salt than your blood. You keep drinkin it and your body's gonna seize up. You're gonna get more brain damage than you already got. Your kidneys are gonna shut down. And then you're dead. But, ya know, drink it if you want.

**REGGIE**

I wasn't drinking it. I'm not a dumbass, Sarge.



**SARGE**

The verdict's out on that.

**REGGIE**

Dammit what I wouldn't give for some toilet paper.

**SARGE**

What do ya need toilet paper for?

*REGGIE hangs his ass over the edge of the boat.*

//////////

*JEFF and PREACH are mending one of the sails.*

**JEFF**

My own memories are kinda blurry, but I know my father was a good man, I do. Ask anybody who knew him and they'll tell you the same. He was a good man. As good as they come. Do you think that's enough?

**PREACH**

Enough for what?

**JEFF**

To go to heaven?

**PREACH**

I, uh, I sure hope so.

**JEFF**

'Cause there was this preacher in my church who used to say that it doesn't matter what we think. Like it doesn't matter if I think my father was good, or my grandmother or whoever, even if she's a saint, she could still go to hell. Do you believe that?

**PREACH**

That's not up to me to say.

**JEFF**

I know you're not a real preacher but you're as close as we're gonna get, so what about hell? Do you believe some people go there, if they're judged to . 'Cause that just, I don't know, that sucks. Especially for someone like you.

**PREACH**

Who am I?

**JEFF**

If someone as good as you can go to hell, than I don't stand a chance. None of us do.

**PREACH**

Every man carries the weight of his own sins. And I carry my fair share.

**JEFF**

Sure, Preach. You're a real sinner.

**PREACH**

You think too highly of me, kid. You set me on a pedestal, but I'm just another man in this crew. Another man drifting along, mercy to the currents, directionless except for hope maybe, and a prayer. You, uh... You're a good kid. A good man. Your father would be proud.

**JEFF**

That's what you think. But it's not up to you. It's not up to any of us, right?

**PREACH**

Right. You're right. But still, you're leading a good Christian life. There's no need to be afraid of what awaits us.

**JEFF**

We talk about sex a lot, me and Reg.

**PREACH**

Okay.

**JEFF**

With mermaids and stuff.

**PREACH**

Mermaids?

**JEFF**

It's complicated. But yeah, I mean, I've never even had—you know I've been with girls and shit. Stuff. But, I've never, uh, you know. Can you believe that?

**PREACH**

There's plenty of time.

**JEFF**

And now we're on this boat. Stuck on this boat in the middle of the ocean and we're not gonna get back.

**PREACH**

Sure we are.

**JEFF**

I know we're not. I know I'm not.

**PREACH**

How do you know it?

**JEFF**

I just do.

Anyway how much good can you do on a little boat like this, right?

**PREACH**

We'll see.

//////////

**REGGIE**

*(still with his ass over the side of the boat)* After you've done your business, do you wipe standing or sitting? Front to back, back to front? Let's get to know each other, Sarge.

**SARGE**

I'm only answering your question because we're stuck on this boat.

**REGGIE**

Obviously. But you're intrigued because it's an intriguing fuckin topic no matter where you are. So what is it?

**SARGE**

I stand.

**REGGIE**

What? Do ya know that's not the normal way?

**SARGE**

It's just as normal as sitting.

**REGGIE**

No it's not! You're already sitting. Why get up? Just stay seated. Wipe. Why would you even think to stand?

**SARGE**

Don't think about it.

**REGGIE**

Do you lift your leg?

**SARGE**

No. A little maybe. I don't know.

**REGGIE**

Jeff! Do you wipe sitting down or standing up?  
*(to Sarge)* I bet he squats.

**JEFF**

*(without looking over)* I already told you I'm not talking to you while you're shitting.

**REGGIE**

Get over it.

**JEFF**

You know my policy.

**REGGIE**

Just answer my question. You don't have to look at me. Do you wipe sitting or standing up?

**JEFF**

I'm not answering that. It sounds like a trick question.

**REGGIE**

It's not a trick question. There's no wrong answer.

**JEFF**

There's always a wrong answer.

**REGGIE**

Pussy. What about you, Preach?

**PREACH**

I'm not sure I wanna—

**REGGIE**

C'mon!

**PREACH**

Fine. I sit.

**REGGIE**

Of course you do. The laws of nature demand it.

**LOMBARDI**

The laws of nature suggest you squat, actually. For the best intestinal positioning of bowel movement.

**REGGIE**

Lombardi, no one invited you into this.

**LOMBARDI**

It's the most natural position.

**SARGE**

Really?

**LOMBARDI**

Yes.

**SARGE**

Huh.

**LOMBARDI**

The Asians squat.

**REGGIE**

I'm not talking about squatting over a fucking hole in some rice patty. I'm talking about a toilet in the civilized world. We sit on toilets in our *bathrooms* and I'm asking whether or not you stand or sit to wipe your asshole. And yes, Jeffrey, I admit, there is a wrong answer.

**LOMBARDI**

We had a guy in my last crew who you used to squat on the toilet seat. His feet would be up on the seat, like this. (*He demonstrates.*)

**SARGE**

Bullshit.

**LOMBARDI**

No shit. Well, a little shit.

**SARGE**

Was he Chinese?

**LOMBARDI**

Asian something..

**SARGE**

Huh. So it was a cultural thing.

**REGGIE**

Wrong. It was not a cultural thing. A cultural thing would have been if he took to digging a hole because that's what he had back home. No, what he did was a cultural violation. He took our culture of perfectly good toilet seats and he shit on it. He literally shit on our culture.

**LOMBARDI**

I think he just preferred squatting.

**SARGE**

Apparently it's more natural.

**PREACH**

I sit when I pee.

**REGGIE**

Shut the fuck up.

**JEFF**

Why do you do that?

**PREACH**

It's more comfortable.

**REGGIE**

I can't believe this. As a man of God you should respect the gift He gave you, your gift of standing up and peeing. Don't be so ungrateful.

**PREACH**

I think it's a gift to have a toilet at all.

**SARGE**

Amen.

**POPEYE**

Why didn't a single one of you faggots say hello to my wife?

*Pause and then they all burst out laughing.*

**LOMBARDI**

What did you call us, old man?

**POPEYE**

...The least ya coulda done.

**SARGE**

Take it easy, Pops, you're just dreaming.

*SARGE goes to him.*

**POPEYE**

I'm not dreamin. Get your hands offa me.

**PREACH**

Were you visited by your wife?

**POPEYE**

Don't pretend like you don't know. Sure, you were all sleeping right? Bunch of faggots.

**PREACH**

We musta been sleeping if she visited you in the night.

**POPEYE**

Malarkey bullshit!

**CAPT**

We didn't see her, Popeye, where was she?

*POPEYE struggles and leans over the side of the boat.*

**POPEYE**

She was right here. She was so beautiful.

**CAPT**

She was in the water?

**POPEYE**

Of course she was in the fucking water you moron. That's where mermaids live!

*Everyone sorta laughs.*

**POPEYE**

In the fucking water. They have to.

She was young. So young. Her pale skin free of wrinkles. Every curve of her face was smooth. God just like I remember her. She...she glowed.

And then she slipped away. Back into the deep. She was offended by all, all of you. And your... your...

*POPEYE collapses.*

**CAPT**

Just rest now.

Someone give me a cap of water.

*Nothing.*

**CAPT**

Some fuckin water for him.

*JEFF pours a capful and gives it to CAPT.*

**LOMBARDI**

What a waste.

*CAPT puts it to POPEYE's lips. He drinks.*

*POPEYE is out.*

**DAY 14.**

*Three days later.*

*The middle of night. There is very little moonlight. Ominous clouds.*

*A raging storm. Howling winds. Furious waves pound the boat.*

*The sail has been ripped off its mast and its shredded remains dangle uselessly into the boat. Torrents of rain smash into the boat, tossing her around like a toy.*

*The men huddle in the center or hold helplessly onto the sides. They and their tiny vessel are truly at the storm's mercy.*

*This goes on and on.*

**DAY 15.**

*The next morning.*

*Calm after the storm. The sun is out and the clouds have moved on. The sea itself seems tired.*

*The men are still recovering and examining the aftermath.*

*SARGE takes down the rag of a sail.*

*POPEYE does not move.*

*PREACH checks him. He silently prays.*

*The others know what this means, and they begin to gather around POPEYE.*

*SARGE takes the tattered sail and the men slowly wrap POPEYE in it.*

*When this is done, they sit and listen to PREACH's prayer. We can not hear him.*

*They lift his body and slide it overboard and it disappears into the sea.*



**DAY 17.**

*Two days later.*

*REGGIE and PREACH are attempting to fix the broken mast and attach a new sail.  
But it's not working.*

**REGGIE**

Fuuucckkkkk!!!! *(and then to noone in particular:)* I'm fine, it's gonna work. I'm fine. Let's try again.

*PREACH and REGGIE keep working.*

*SARGE is counting rations. CAPT is marking in his book.*

*JEFF approaches them.*

**JEFF**

What happens when we run out of food?

**CAPT**

We have plenty of food.

**JEFF**

But what happens when we run out?

**CAPT**

We won't.

*JEFF waits for a better response. CAPT continues with his book.*

**CAPT**

How many is that?

**SARGE**

Eighteen.

**CAPT**

Fine. *(He flips a few pages.)* And today is the Eighteenth. That's funny. That's funny right?

**SARGE**

Sure.

*CAPT marks it.*

**JEFF**

Uncle John.

*CAPT stops.*

**JEFF**

How do you know?

**CAPT**

I... I just know.

**SARGE**

Because the Captain's rationed it. That's how.

**JEFF**

For how long?

**SARGE**

Long enough. End of questions.

**CAPT**

Don't worry about the food, Jeffery. People are hungry. We're all hungry. Plenty of people are hungry all over the world. Millions of people are sleeping in worse conditions than us, and have less food.

**JEFF**

Less?

**CAPT**

They're starving.

**LOMBARDI**

*We're starving. Can't you see that? We are starving. Even with Popeye's share divided between us.*

**CAPT**

I don't think like that.

**LOMBARDI**

Of course you do. I bet it was a relief when he kicked it. You knew exactly what it meant.

**SARGE**

You're outta line.

**LOMBARDI**

So do you, Sarge.

**SARGE**

What's your point?

**LOMBARDI**

Don't bullshit me, that's my point. Don't bullshit the kid either. Popeye's death was the best thing that coulda happened to us.

**PREACH**

How could you say that?

**LOMBARDI**

Because it's fucking true, that's how. That's why. We wanna survive. Captain, you want us to survive. I believe that.

**CAPT**

Of course.

**LOMBARDI**

So tell us what it meant for our rations.

*Pause. CAPT looks down at his book.*

**LOMBARDI**

You don't need to look in your book.

*CAPT closes the book.*

**CAPT**

It meant we'd each survive for three more days.

*Pause. LOMBARDI begins to pace.*

**SARGE**

Sit down.

*LOMBARDI stop pacing but doesn't sit.*

**LOMBARDI**

And that was two days ago.

**CAPT**

I understand our conditions to be what they are, Lombardi.

**LOMBARDI**

I get it. I get it. You don't wanna upset the kid.

**CAPT**

It's important to keep things in perspective.

**LOMBARDI**

And what perspective is that?

**SARGE**

Sit down, Lombardi.

**LOMBARDI**

No.

**SARGE**

Sit the fuck down.

*LOMBARDI sits.*

**LOMBARDI**

You wanna protect him. Like a child. He's a man. Aren't you, Jefferson?

**REGGIE**

Shut up.

**JEFF**

Yes.

**LOMBARDI**

Good, at least you know you're a man.

**CAPT**

My perspective is, my perspective is that this boat— things, they're not as bad as they feel.

**LOMBARDI**

My perspective, Captain, with all due respect, it that we're gonna die on this fuck—

**REGGIE**

—Just shut up, you asshole—

**LOMBARDI**

—this fucking piece of shit floating in the middle of nowhere. We're gonna—

**CAPT**

—We're not gonna die.

**LOMBARDI**

—*Die*. Yes we are. We're all gonna die. Get that kid? Because that's what everyone—every other *man* on this boat is thinking.

**PREACH**

Speak for yourself.

**SARGE**

Every man on this boat is thinking shut the fuck up. That's what we're thinkin.

**LOMBARDI**

Wanna know when we're gonna die?

**SARGE**

You're gonna die when one of us fuckin kills you.

**CAPT**

No one is killing anyone. No one is gonna die.

**JEFF**

Except for Popeye.

**CAPT**

Popeye was a sick man. No one else is gonna die.

**LOMBARDI**

Just wait.

**JEFF**

I know. I know we're gonna die. I have the same thoughts as the rest of you. Just cause I'm younger than you. You don't need to protect me, Uncle John.

**LOMBARDI**

See?

**JEFF**

When's it gonna happen?

**LOMBARDI**

Ten days.

**REGGIE**

We'll reach land before then. Won't we, Capt?

**LOMBARDI**

Nope. Not gonna last long enough.

**SARGE**

You don't know that.

**LOMBARDI**

But I do.

**SARGE**

The Captain is in charge of the rationing.

**LOMBARDI**

Is he?

**SARGE**

Yes!

**LOMBARDI**

Is he? Good. Then he knows we run outta food in five days.

**SARGE**

How do ya know that?

**LOMBARDI**

You're not the only one that can count, Sarge.

Five days worth. Plus an extra day for Popeye's portions. So six days, that's it. Six days. But he knows that. That's what he's rationed. He also knows how many more days we'll be at sea before we even have a chance, *a chance, with the wind and the Gods and all that shit on our side*, before we see land. He knows. And so do I.

**JEFF**

How many?

**LOMBARDI**

Fifteen. Fifteen days to see land. And that's bein generous. Six more days of food. Did ya calculate the subtraction on that, Sarge? Fifteen minus six is nine. Nine days without food. And that's assuming it rains again soon. Tell me what man survives that.

**REGGIE**

Is he right?

**CAPT**

Yes. Give or take.

**SARGE**

We can cut the rations.

**LOMBARDI**

We're already at the minimum. We're wasting away.

**CAPT**

He's right.

**LOMBARDI**

So what the fuck kinda rationing is that?

**JEFF**

What happens when we run out?

*No one says anything.*

What happens when we run out?

**PREACH**

The Lord will deliver.

**REGGIE**

Why'd he put us here, then, Preach?

**PREACH**

He works in mysterious ways.

**LOMBARDI**

I don't see anything mysterious about it. I saw your God. I saw Him when that wave smashed our boat to shit. Fuckin splinters like it was nothing. I looked into that wave and He, your God, looked back at me. And He spoke to me and do you know what He said?

**JEFF**

What?

**LOMBARDI**

It was clear as day.

*LOMBARDI gets in Jeff's face.*

He looked at me and said FUCK YOU.

*REGGIE pushes him away from JEFF.*

**LOMBARDI**

*(sitting back down)* That's right. He said fuck all of you. He wanted us dead. Dead. But here we are on this forsaken dingie. No control over our fate. This rag of a sail. We aint got shit out here. Bobbing in His great pool. At His mercy. And we can't do shit. We're gonna pay for all this shit we've done. We're all gonna pay. Just like Popeye.

**PREACH**

This is a test. That's all it is. A test of faith.

We're like the three Jews in the book of Daniel. Do you know it?

These men, they refuse to worship the King's statue and so naturally the King's decides to burn them to death. But when the King looks into the fire he sees the three men unharmed, not a hair on their head singed by the flames, and they walk away. See, the men, they refused to pray to the King's false idol, even knowing that their punishment would be death. Why? Because they knew God would save them. And He did.

I get it, Lombardi. You're in spiritual despair. You're not the only one. Human nature needs reassurance. But we have to find a way to keep our faith without it. Without reassurance of any kind. See, that's faith. We're not alone out here. He's watching us. Watching. And He is merciful.

**JEFF**

Where is He?

**PREACH**

Everywhere.

See that wave out there, the white foam on its crest. That's Him.

See the splinter in that board. That's Him too.

**LOMBARDI**

See the shit stain on what's left of my pant leg. That's Him.

**PREACH**

Yes. It is. The grotesque. The unbearable. The pinch you feel near your temples and the emptiness that aches in your guts. That's all Him.

**LOMBARDI**

Whatta guy. I'd love it if He would appear as a fuckin cheeseburger. For His starving faithful servants. Before they all fucking die. If that's not too much to ask. Or a gust of wind in the right direction. Or a passing ship.

**PREACH**

He hears your prayer.

**LOMBARDI**

Fuck Him. I don't need shit.

**PREACH**

Yes... well... He doesn't need you. And neither do we.

**DAY 19.**

*Two days later.*

*They've fixed the sail. But it hangs, limp.*

*The ocean is motionless and without life. And the sun blazes down on them.*

**JEFF**

I uh I've been... thinking about this. And we.  
We need to draw lots.

**REGGIE**

Draw lots for what?

**JEFF**

You know, draw lots.

**REGGIE**

What does that mean?

**JEFF**

We don't have a choice.

**REGGIE**

What the fuck are you talking about?



**PREACH**

To draw lots. The casting of lots to determine one's fate.

**CAPT**

No.

**SARGE**

Customs of the Sea.

**REGGIE**

Yeah but for what.

**SARGE**

To ensure fairness.

**PREACH**

"The lot causeth disputes to cease, and it decideth between the mighty."

**LOMBARDI**

I hate you.

**CAPT**

It's out of the question.

**JEFF**

And what's the alternative? We starve to death? We're already starving. I don't have to convince any of ya of that. And if doesn't rain, well, like Lombardi said, we can die of dehydration, too. We need substance, real substance. And where's the nearest land? Ecuador? How many miles away? Farther and farther we float. And so what are we hoping for? What? A passing ship still? I have a better chance of getting laid. I'm young and I have faith like you Preach but I'm realistic. I'm not in denial, Uncle. We need to be bold and ask ourselves: do some of us want to return home or do we all wanna die out here, wherever we are. Because that's what's happening. That's what will happen.

**LOMBARDI**

The kid's right. We gotta make a choice.

**REGGIE**

And what? What does that mean exactly?

**SARGE**

It means we choose which one of us will die.

**PREACH**

For the others.

**JEFF**

That's right. A sacrifice.

**REGGIE**

Yeah but then what. What happens next? If we can't say it, then we certainly can't do it.

**SARGE**

We draw lots again. To choose the man to do the deed and kill him.

**REGGIE**

Oh, okay, great. That's a great job. And then what? Then the rest of us eat the poor bastard?

**PREACH**

No one likes the idea of it, Reggie.

**REGGIE**

I like the ship idea. Honestly. I like the idea of being rescued by a passing ship. It could happen. What happened to that idea?

**JEFF**

You wanna risk it?

**REGGIE**

It could.

**JEFF**

We have to draw. Before we become too weak to do it. Or before there's nothing of us left to offer.

**REGGIE**

What about the other boat?

**SARGE**

They probably got less than us.

**LOMBARDI**

Fuck the other boat. We're on our own.

**CAPT**

They do. Have less than us. Rations *and* men. They're down to five. Larson died two days ago.

**LOMBARDI**

What'd they do with him?

**CAPT**

...I don't know.

**SARGE**

Captain?

Maybe Jeffrey's right. Maybe—

**CAPT**

I know. I know it!

**SARGE**

Right. So...

Maybe we can we vote on it?

*Silence. They all turn to the Captain.*

**SARGE**

Sir?

**CAPT**

It has to be unanimous.

**SARGE**

Fine. Unanimous vote. Lombardi?

**LOMBARDI**

Fuck it. I'm in.

**REGGIE**

Can't we vote anonymously?

**SARGE**

Preach.

**PREACH**

And let Him forgive us.

**SARGE**

Okay.

**REGGIE**

Okay?

**SARGE**

Okay I agree. Let's draw.

**REGGIE**

Dammit. Let's at least sleep on it.

**JEFF**

No. Now.

*REGGIE thinks. Looks at JEFF.*

**REGGIE**

Yeah, okay. This is... Okay, alright. If everyone else thinks...

**SARGE**

Captain.

**CAPT**

Everyone already? Down to me. The unforgiving minute. I, uh, I mean I have my reservations, which I suppose —No! What are we doing? It can't come to this. We haven't exhausted all our options. We have provisions. Think about what you're saying.

**LOMBARDI**

We're gonna die anyway!

**SARGE**

Sir, how do you vote?

**CAPT**

I'm the Captain. I vote No. We can't. We just can't. Not while we still... I just won't...let us come to that.

**DAY 22.**

*Three days later.*

*Night.*

*Everyone is asleep or shivering.*

*There is silence except for the gentle lapping of the waves on the side of the boat. The moonlight and stars. It's certainly beautiful and almost peaceful, then:*

*The boat is rammed by something underwater.*

*Some of the men stir and the boat is rammed again. Everyone is up now and panic starts to set in.*

*A third hit and they wait.*

*But just quickly as it started it ends.*

**DAY 23.**

*The next day.*

*Now that it's light, they see that the bottom of the boat is filling with water..*

**PREACH**

The bread.

*PREACH reaches down and pulls up a piece of wet bread.*

**SARGE**

Get it out! Get it out of the water.

*PREACH, REGGIE, SARGE and JEFF rescue the containers of bread which have been soaked with seawater. They carefully lay out the bread to dry.*

*LOMBARDI fishes around at the bottom of the boat.*

**SARGE**

What is it? Where's it leaking from?

**LOMBARDI**

There's a crack on the very bottom. Not too bad.

**REGGIE**

Okay, not too bad. That's good. We can deal with that. Right?

*CAPT has retreated to a corner of the boat.*

**LOMBARDI**

It'll sink us.

**PREACH**

We can board it up.

**LOMBARDI**

You can't board it up from the inside. There's nothing to nail into. It's gotta be fixed from the outside.

**REGGIE**

Okay no problem. Let's dock this baby and take a look. Or we'll pull it ashore that's better. I need to stretch anyway so this is perfect. Phew, well it could be worse. I mean we could be adrift in the middle of the fuckin ocean. Imagine that? Man, a leak out there would be like a death sentence. And here we are saving the fucking bread.

*REGGIE throws the piece of bread back into the water.  
A moment.*

**LOMBARDI**

I can fix it. I can swim underneath and hold a strip of metal on the outside while someone nails from this side. This way the nails will bend and hook the board.

**JEFF**

Under the water?

**LOMBARDI**

Yes.

**REGGIE**

What about the sharks? Or the killer whales or the squid or whatever the fuck that was.

**LOMBARDI**

I'm hoping they're gone.

**SARGE**

We should we wait.

**LOMBARDI**

For the boat to fill up?

**PREACH**

Are you sure this is going to work?

**LOMBARDI**

Am I sure? No I'm not fuckin sure. You wanna say a prayer instead?

**PREACH**

I'm gonna say a prayer either way.

**LOMBARDI**

Anybody else have any ideas? No? Okay then. Does someone else wanna go? No? Okay, then. Who's gonna hammer from this side?

**SARGE**

I will.

**LOMBARDI**

Fine.

*LOMBARDI takes off his shirt and grabs the metal scrap.*

**PREACH**

Are you sure you wanna do this?

**LOMBARDI**

Leap of faith, Preach.

*(to Sarge)* I'll tap when I'm set.

*SARGE nods.*

*LOMBARDI takes a deep breath and dives in the water.*

*They wait.*

*They wait. We hear a double knock on the bottom of the boat.*

*SARGE scrambles to get his nail set and hammers into a board.*

*Another knock. More hammering.*

*SARGE feels around for the leak.*

**SARGE**

I don't feel anything.

*They wait.*

*LOMBARDI comes back up to the surface.*

**LOMBARDI**

How'd that work?

**SARGE**

I think it did.

**LOMBARDI**

Good.

*REGGIE and JEFF help him back in the boat. LOMBARDI recovers.*

*They pat him on the back.*

*SARGE keeps checking for the leak.*

**SARGE**

I don't think it's leaking anymore. I think we're good.

*LOMBARDI shrugs. Maybe a little smile.*

**PREACH**

God is good.

**LOMBARDI**

Don't ruin the moment.

**REGGIE**

So I guess this means we can stay out here after all. Another fun day at sea!

**LOMBARDI**

What do ya think, Capt? Not too bad for an Eye-talian, right?

*CAPT is still in his corner.*

**CAPT**

The bread is ruined.

**JEFF**

No we saved it. All it has to do is dry.

**CAPT**

I'm telling you. It's ruined. It's soaked with sea water. It'll dry out and the salt will have condensed. It's worse than drinking the sea water itself!

**REGGIE**

What are you saying?

**CAPT**

I'm saying we don't have any food left. That's it. That's it...

**DAY 24.**

*The next day.*

*LOMBARDI snaps off a piece of wood and breaks apart six small sticks.  
Everyone watches him.*

**LOMBARDI**

Here they are.

*They stare at the sticks. Now it's real.*

**PREACH**

Before we do this, I... I'm the one who brought Popeye aboard and for that I take responsibility. I volunteer myself.

**LOMBARDI**

Fine with me.

**SARGE**

No fuckin way. That's not how it works.

**REGGIE**

Let's just get it over with.

*REGGIE snags one from LOMBARDI.*



**REGGIE**

I don't know what this is. Is this the short one?

**LOMBARDI**

No.

**REGGIE**

Oh. Good! I guess. Not that I want any of you to get a short one. But you know what I mean. I mean I'm relieved. That's all. That's a natural reaction.

**PREACH**

Just shut up, will you?

**REGGIE**

Right. Okay.

*PREACH takes his. Long.*

*SARGE his. Long.*

*Then CAPT. Long.*

*JEFF draws. Short.*

*LOMBARDI is left with the last long one.*

*JEFF stares at his short stick.*

*The others look down.*

*Silence.*

**JEFF**

And now we draw again right?

*Silence.*

**JEFF**

Right? Right?  
Someone answer me.

**PREACH**

I don't know what we do now.

**JEFF**

We said we'd draw straws, and we did and I got the small one.

**SARGE**

It's okay, Jefferson—

**JEFF**

And then we draw again to decide who is gonna pull the trigger. Right?  
I know it's right. It's what we said.

**REGGIE**

I know that's what we said, but we...we should—

**JEFF**

What?

**REGGIE**

We should redo it.

**LOMBARDI**

Draw again? For what? No one wants to die.

**REGGIE**

Yeah but it's not fair.

**LOMBARDI**

Why not?

**REGGIE**

'Cause... 'Cause... He's youngest.

**JEFF**

So?

**PREACH**

He *is* youngest.

**JEFF**

So what?

**REGGIE**

It's not right. It just doesn't seem right.

**SARGE**

I'd draw again.

**LOMBARDI**

Fair is fair. We drew lots. We all agreed.

**JEFF**

It was my idea.

**REGGIE**

And you still think it's a good one?

**JEFF**

Yes.

**REGGIE**

You wanna die?

**JEFF**

Of course not.

Lombardi is right. Fair is fair. I'm not special. Why, Reg, 'cause you're a few years older?

**REGGIE**

No, 'cause. I don't know. 'Cause you're you. You're...better. Than the rest of us.

**JEFF**

I'm not better than anyone. I'm not married. I have no children. I'm just the deck hand. I'm paid the least, so that should tell you right there that I'm worth the least. No one wanted to pick the short stick, including me. But I did, so...

**CAPT**

Give me your stick.

**JEFF**

No.

**CAPT**

I'm taking your place.

**JEFF**

No.

**CAPT**

I insist.

**JEFF**

No.

**CAPT**

I'm the Captain. It's an order.

**JEFF**

It's over.

**CAPT**

Then as your Uncle. You're my blood. And you're my responsibility.

**JEFF**

And you've watched over me.

**CAPT**

And now I will take your place. This is not your fate.

**JEFF**

My body and blood should buy you all a week, if you ration it. The extra week you need to reach Ecuador. What am I doing? We already went over this. We all agreed. It's settled. Thank you for the offer, Captain. Uncle. But it's settled. And I'm fine with it. I really am. Sarge, tell us a joke.

**SARGE**

A joke?

**JEFF**

Yeah a joke. To lighten the mood.

**SARGE**

Uh, what kinda joke?

**JEFF**

A funny one. How many kinds of jokes are there?

**LOMBARDI**

Haven't you heard his jokes? They're not the funny kind.

**SARGE**

Okay. Okay... Uh...

A man and a woman... were falling in love.

The man, he was a soldier and he received orders to deploy to war. Right? So on his last night before shipping out they had a really nice night together. Went out to a fancy dinner, the whole bit, and had a romantic walk down a pier. When they reached the end of the pier, the soldier got down on one knee and took out a ring. He said I will be gone one year. And when I come back one year from now I will meet you on this pier and marry you. So the girl took the ring and the next day he shipped out.

Exactly one year later the girl comes down to the very same pier and she waits all day. But he never shows. So at the end of the day she takes off the ring and throws it in the water.

Sometime later, a fishing boat owned by a very poor fisherman is fishing in that exact same area. And this fisherman is reeling in one of his lines, and what do you think was on the end?

**JEFF**

The ring?

**SARGE**

No, the waffle.

*JEFF laughs.*

**LOMBARDI**

I still don't think it's funny.

**JEFF**

I get it now. The waffle, from before.

**SARGE**

I told ya you would.

**JEFF**

Thanks, Sarge. That was a good one.  
Okay, give me the sticks.

*No one does.*

**JEFF**

C'mon. Give em up.

*JEFF takes the sticks back.  
He shuffles them then makes each man pick again.*

*This time REGGIE picks the short one.*

**JEFF**

It's you.

**REGGIE**

No. No, no, no. I can't.

**JEFF**

Shut up. Yes you can.

**REGGIE**

Then I won't.

**JEFF**

Yes you will. Unless you want to trade places.

**REGGIE**

Fine.

**JEFF**

Sorry you can't.  
(to Capt) Give me the gun.

**CAPT**

No.

**JEFF**

(to Sarge) Give me the gun.

*SARGE gives it to him.*

**PREACH**

The Lord is good and his mercy endures forever.

**CAPT**

I made a promise to your mother. That you would return safely. And what should I tell her now? No. I won't allow this.

**JEFF**

You tell my mother. That I died at sea. That I died so my brothers could live. That it was my idea to sacrifice someone for the rest and the man to be sacrificed happened to be me. And you tell her that you tried to stop me, but I refused to be dishonored. And that in my final moments I thought of her and all that she's done and that none of it was wasted. Because she shaped the man I am today. And I love her very much. That's what you tell her.

*JEFF gives the gun to REGGIE.*

**JEFF**

I'm glad it's you, Reg.

*JEFF braces himself against the side of the boat, looking away from the others.*

*REGGIE points the gun at him.*

**JEFF**

Make it quick, please.

*REGGIE immediately fires. It's done.*

*REGGIE collapses.*

*JEFF's body wants to slide overboard.*

*LOMBARDI and SARGE grab him and pull him back in.*

*CAPT is in shock.*

*PREACH prays.*

**DAY 32.**

*Eight days later.*

*The boat drifts.*

*LOMBARDI is running some calculations with a compass and the charts.*

*CAPT has retreated to a distant place.*

**CAPT**

You're not going to find what you're looking for.

**LOMBARDI**

We're off course.

**CAPT**

Don't you wanna know why?

**LOMBARDI**

I know why. 'Cause there's no damn wind in our favor.

**CAPT**

No do you wanna know why you're not gonna find what you're looking for?

**LOMBARDI**

Sure.

*CAPT gets very close to LOMBARDI, almost whispering.*

**CAPT**

'Cause what you're looking for is not on a map.

**LOMBARDI**

Oh no, Capt? And what am I looking for?

*CAPT is holding his pistol, and pointing with it. LOMBARDI starts to shift away.*

**CAPT**

*(at the map)* What you're looking for isn't on there.

*(Pointing out to the ocean)* It isn't even out there.

*(and now pointing the gun at his head)* It's in here.

*LOMBARDI very gently moves the gun down and away from CAPT's head. CAPT smiles and lets him.*

*PREACH and REGGIE sit silently.*

*SARGE is divvying up the last of rations, and gives them each a small morsel of meat.*

**SARGE**

That's it for today. So make it last.

**PREACH**

For today?

**REGGIE**

How're we supposed to make it last? Nibble at it?

**SARGE**

Or don't make it last. It's up to you. But that's all there is and that's all you're gettin'.

**PREACH**

Do you mean that's all there is for today or that's all there is, period?

**SARGE**

That's all there is. Period.

**REGGIE**

Tomorrow, a ribeye. With a parmesan crust.

**PREACH**

Stop that. I'm not playing this game.

*SARGE has moved on to CAPT.*

**SARGE**

Here, Captain.

**REGGIE**

Make it last. Or don't. There's a pot roast for breakfast first thing tomorrow. A pot of gravy. No a boat of gravy. That's what they're called right? Boats? A boat of gravy. That's amazing. I wish this was a boat of gravy.

**LOMBARDI**

*(Without looking up from the map)* No you don't.

**REGGIE**

Of course I do!

**LOMBARDI**

A boat of gravy would sink.

**REGGIE**

But what a way to go. Besides it wouldn't be a boat of gravy for long 'cause I'd drink it up. Are you two sayin' you wouldn't help me? Bullshit! If this boat was full of gravy you wouldn't have a taste? You're liars.



**PREACH**

I never said I wouldn't.

**REGGIE**

Right. Because you would.

*CAPT pushes SARGE and the food away.*

**CAPT**

If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run —  
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
 And — which is more — you'll be a Man my son!

*CAPT snatches the food back from SARGE and shoves it in his mouth.*

*SARGE gives a piece to LOMBARDI then eats a piece himself.*

*SARGE and LOMBARDI study the charts.*

**LOMBARDI**

We were here last night. I think. This morning we're here. About.

**SARGE**

Shit.

**REGGIE**

How are far away are we?

**SARGE**

Fifteen hundred miles. Give or take.

**PREACH**

We were closer days ago.

**SARGE**

Yeah.

**REGGIE**

So we're drifting. In the the wrong direction.

**LOMBARDI**

No shit.

**REGGIE**

So what're we gonna do?

**LOMBARDI**

Fucking die.

**REGGIE**

Are we gonna die?

**LOMBARDI**

That's what I just fucking said.

**REGGIE**

Capt, are we gonna die? After everything we've been through?

*CAPT is staring off.*

**REGGIE**

Captain?

*No response.*

**REGGIE**

*(to Preach)* What's he doing?

**PREACH**

I don't think he knows.

**SARGE**

We're not gonna die, alright? If we can catch a break with the prevailing winds, we can ride it up north of Ecuador. It's farther away but it could be quicker. If we can catch that current.

**LOMBARDI**

You mean if we didn't keep getting pushed away from that current.

**SARGE**

Right.

**LOMBARDI**

Except there's no way to do that.

**SARGE**

Given enough time.

**LOMBARDI**

We don't have time.

**SARGE**

Well we'll have to buy some.

*Silence.*

**REGGIE**

What does that mean?

**PREACH**

He means we need more food.

**REGGIE**

Oh no. NO! No I'm not doing that. Not again. We can't do that.

**SARGE**

We'll do whatever we need to do.

**REGGIE**

No. You didn't have to...you're not the one who...

**SARGE**

Neither are you.

*Silence.*

*And then a sound, something moving in the water. It sounds like...someone swimming.*

*They listen.*

**PREACH**

What is that?

*They lean over the back of the boat to see someone is swimming toward them.*

**SARGE**

Who's that?

**REGGIE**

What's he doing?

*The swimmer gets closer.*

**PREACH**

Over here!

**REGGIE**

I think that's Mick.

*The swimmer reaches the boat.*

**SARGE**

Help him.

*They try and pull the swimmer in and not tip over the boat. LOMBARDI and PREACH lean on the other side to counter the weight, while SARGE and REGGIE pull him in. They've lost a lot of strength and this is no easy task.*

*CAPT has been sitting at the far end, only watching.*

**PREACH**

Get his leg. Grab his leg.

*Half of the swimmer is in and they give one final pull, and fall into the boat in a human heap. All three are out of breath.*

*MICK sits up and breathes heavily. He has a bruise on his left cheek bone and could easily be mistaken for a criminal. He smiles often though and is instantly likable. He gives a wave to the others.*

**MICK**

Hiya. Thanks.

**SARGE**

What're you doing?

**MICK**

Just thought I'd drop in. How're ya guys? *(he looks around the boat)* Nice place. I love what ya done with it. Needs some flowers maybe. *Flores para los muertos, eh Sarge?*

**SARGE**

What're you doing here?

**MICK**

Is this all that's left of ya?

**REGGIE**

Now, yeah.

**MICK**

What happened to the kid?

**LOMBARDI**

You can't have any of our rations if that's why you're here.

**MICK**

Did I say that's why I'm here?

**LOMBARDI**

Well isn't it?

**MICK**

Yeah but you didn't even give me a chance to ask it proper.

**SARGE**

You should swim back. You can't stay. We ran out.

**MICK**

You ran out?

**LOMBARDI**

You heard 'em.

**MICK**

What do ya mean ya run out? You run out just now? Just as I asked.

**LOMBARDI**

Are you deaf, Mick, or just a dumb mick?

**SARGE**

(to *LOMBARDI*) I got this.

*LOMBARDI sits back down.*

**MICK**

Now look. Now look. This wasn't my idea. To swim all the way over here. Ya think I'm that dumb? They sent me. The other boat.

**SARGE**

Who sent you?

**MICK**

Sergeant Hoffman. He sent me on a mission, yeah? To ask our neighbors for a cup of sugar. That's all this is.

**SARGE**

I'm sorry.

**MICK**

What for?

**SARGE**

That we can't spare any.

**MICK**

I thought you ran out. Now you have some but not enough to spare any. Which is it?

**PREACH**

It's none of your business how we ration our food.

**MICK**

Aw, c'mon, preacher man. Brother.

**REGGIE**

Did your boat run outta food?

**MICK**

No. No. We didn't run out. We just thought we'd ask. Ya know as a precaution.

**REGGIE**

Is Danny okay?

**MICK**

Who?

**REGGIE**

Danny. Short kid. Red hair. Danny.

**MICK**

Oh. Danny. Danny is fine. He's a little thirsty probably. But yeah yeah. Danny is...a good one. I like Danny.

**REGGIE**

Uh huh. Okay, good.

**MICK**

Danny is...

**REGGIE**

What?

**MICK**

Danny is alright.

**REGGIE**

Okay.

**MICK**

Here's the thing. Danny's not gonna make it much longer. He's sick, coughing and on and on and on. Boils all over his face. Whatever you can spare, would just. Well, gee it'd go a long way.

**SARGE**

Sorry, Mick. No can do. Tell Sergeant Hoffman that I said so. He knows that I'd give ya something if I could. We just can't take care of any more.

**MICK**

Things are gettin bad over there. Ugly, ya know.

**SARGE**

I understand.

**MICK**

We don't have the Captain over there. Leadin us. *(to the Captain)* Aye sir.

*CAPT has just been staring off. No response.*

**MICK**

He alright?

**SARGE**

He's fine.

**MICK**

Nevermind anyway. We got Hoffman and he's good man, means well and all... it's just, he's not blessed with the kinda leadership found on this boat.

*He looks back at CAPT. Still nothing.*

**MICK**

Yeah. And you men are lucky, you don't understand that yet. But I see it. You're lucky. Ya got a good boat here. A strong crew. Maybe if you wouldn't mind letting me stay. Looks like ya got some room. Plenty. Let me stay, whatta ya say?

**SARGE**

Can't do that.

**MICK**

Maybe you should ask the Captain.

**SARGE**

Don't need to.

**MICK**

Assumed command have ya?

**SARGE**

Nope. Just know where he stands on things, that's all.

**MICK**

Do ya?

**SARGE**

Yup.

*LOMBARDI approaches SARGE and whispers something in his ear.*

**MICK**

What are ya whisperin, mate?

*LOMBARDI sits back down.*

**SARGE**

I think you should swim back to your boat now, Mick.

**MICK**

What did he whisper to ya?

**SARGE**

Nothing.

**MICK**

Nothin. Huh. Nothin, eh, Dennis?  
(*to Sarge*) He doesn't like me. Never has.

**SARGE**

Why's that?

**MICK**

Don't know. Got any good reason, Dennis, or you just. Just...

**LOMBARDI**

Yeah that's right, I just.

**SARGE**

Satisfied?

**LOMBARDI**

How'd you get that bruise?

**MICK**

Ya know, why ya always tryin to pick fights with everyone, weeman? Ya got the little fella complex, is that it? Pissed off at the world cause ya never found ye pot o gold? Or maybe your momma just yanked ya off her tit too soon leavin you thirsty for the rest of your life. Is that it, lover? Ya thirsty?

*LOMBARDI just laughs.*

**SARGE**

How did ya get that bruise, Mick?

**MICK**

Your daddy shoulda let you end up on the shower wall, instead of putting you in that wench you call a mother.

**LOMBARDI**

You're funny. I changed my mind. I like you.

**MICK**

Maybe we should shake hands. Make good on our new friendship.

*MICK sticks his hand out. LOMBARDI sits there and smiles.*



**MICK**

Forget it.

*MICK turns to PREACH.*

**MICK**

See how they're treatin me, Preach? Not the Christian way, now is it.

**PREACH**

Uh huh.

**MICK**

Things are bad over there, real bad. A few of em gone mad. Deliriously mad. They drank outta the sea and started hearin' things and seein' things that aren't there. I don't know how much longer—

**PREACH**

Everyone's being put to the test, my friend.

*A GUN SHOT is heard from the other boat.  
Everyone jumps and moves to look, but they're out of sight.*

**MICK**

See? Things are gettin worse, getting worse every minute. I can't go back there. Forget them. I won't take them anything. They're on they're own. I'm one of you know. I can just... I'll eat half a man's rations. A quarter.

*Another GUN SHOT from the other boat.*

*And then another.*

*MICK gets on his knees in front of PREACH, then SARGE.*

**MICK**

I'm beggin ya. Look, I'm beggin ya.

**SARGE**

Get up.

Get up.

*MICK gets up.*

**MICK**

Yeah you're right. I'll get up.

*MICK paces a bit.*

**MICK**

Fuck it.

*MICK makes a mad dash towards their stash of food, but not before CAPT FIRES his pistol into MICK's gut.*

*MICK collapses.*

*The other men slowly descend on his body.*

**DAY 37.**

*Five days later.*

*The other boat has disappeared.*

*The men (PREACH, LOMBARDI, REGGIE, and CAPT) attempt to protect themselves from the blazing mid-day sun.*

*SARGE is no longer on the boat.*

**CAPT**

*(to Reggie) C'mere, son, c'mere.*

*REGGIE inches over.*

**CAPT**

*C'mere, Jeffrey.*

*REGGIE looks over at LOMBARDI who shakes his head. REGGIE turns back to CAPT.*

**REGGIE**

*Yeah, what is it, Capt?*

**CAPT**

*You don't look good. You need sleep.*

**REGGIE**

*I know.*

**CAPT**

*I'm not gonna lie, I could use some myself. Come closer.*

*REGGIE does.*

**CAPT**

*Jeffery, my boy, did you know your mother used to make straw hats for me?*

**REGGIE**

No.

**CAPT**

She used to weave them by hand. It was an art the way her fingers moved. Like watching a master piano player. Except, you know, in the end you didn't have a song. You had a hat. More practical, if you ask me. If we had her hats now, we'd be saved from this sun, that's for sure.

**REGGIE**

Sounds nice.

**CAPT**

My big sister... And you. You were born. And now you're a fine young man. A good sailor too. You'll be captain of your own boat one day, no doubt. But Providence. She was my ship. She was. No more. You're my precious cargo. Haha, that's what your mother called you. And then I promised her I'd return you safely to her arms.

**REGGIE**

And you will.

**CAPT**

And I will.  
Do you know Kipling?

**REGGIE**

No. Is he a Captain?

**CAPT**

He's a poet.

**REGGIE**

I dunno him.

**CAPT**

Don't worry. There's still time.

*CAPT slips into a bit of a trance as he recites.*

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream — and not make dreams your master;  
 If you can think — and not make thoughts your aim;  
 If you can meet with triumph and disaster  
 And treat those two imposters just the same;  
 If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
 Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
 Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,  
 And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
 And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
 And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
 And never breathe a word about your loss;  
 If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
 To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
 And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
 Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
 Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;  
 If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;  
 If all men count with you, but none too much;  
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run —  
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
 And — which is more — you'll be a Man my son!

*CAPT collapses from exhaustion and falls into an unconscious sleep.  
 REGGIE holds him.*

**LOMBARDI**

Why don't you just tell him you're not his damn nephew?

**REGGIE**

I can't do that. It's all he's got. It's the only thing keeping him...ya know.  
 No I can't. It'd kill him.

**LOMBARDI**

He's dying anyway.

**PREACH**

We all are. No reason to take away a man's hope.

**LOMBARDI**

Hope of what?

**PREACH**

You're the one with the charts.

**LOMBARDI**

These charts. Yeah these charts haven't done shit. I've read them and I've studied them and I've charted our course. Ya know where we are? The middle of the fuckin ocean.

**PREACH**

That's where we started.

**LOMBARDI**

It's precisely where we started, where we are, and where we're gonna be when...

**PREACH**

When what?

**LOMBARDI**

When we're dead.

**REGGIE**

Besides it makes me feel good. That I can give that to him.

**LOMBARDI**

Give what to who?

**REGGIE**

That I can give hope to the Captain.

**LOMBARDI**

That's great, Reggie, but it's getting fuckin annoying so stop.

**REGGIE**

You're right. I'll stop. It's not fair. I'll stop.

**PREACH**

Aw let the kid be.

**LOMBARDI**

There're no kids on this boat.

**PREACH**

Let all of us be. You're such a bully. You're dying and you're still a bully.

**LOMBARDI**

You obviously don't understand tough love.

**PREACH**

Is that what it is?

**LOMBARDI**

Better than no love at all.

**PREACH**

I disagree.

**REGGIE**

You know what's really messed up though? I can't stop thinking about Sarge's wife.

**LOMBARDI**

So what?

**REGGIE**

I wanna stop. But I can't. I know it's terrible. But I can't help it. ...The way he described her to me. Her hair is ribbons of silk. And her breasts are firm and perky like a high school cheerleader. That's what he told me. Same with her ass. Sarge was an assman first and foremost, so I believe him... He asked me to, to...to find her if I survived. You know that? To find her and tell her he loved her and he was sorry for not coming back. She's not going to believe me, he says, that I'm dead, but you have to convince her it's true. And that I'm sorry.

And the poor guy's telling me all this, like as his dyin wish, and I'm telling him "yeah, okay, of course, Sarge, of course." And you know what I'm thinking the whole time? Yeah I'll talk to her for you and then I'm gonna try and comfort her, and seduce her and fuck her. Fuck her right there in his house. Probably on his bed. 'Cause she's gonna be all vulnerable and weak and needing a man's comfort. So I'll deliver the message alright. That's what I was fucking thinking. And I'm still thinking it. Can't get it outta my mind. Ribbons of silk, he said. I'm so fucked up. Murphy's comin for me next. I know it.

**PREACH**

Try and keep your conscience clear. Have you asked for the Lord's forgiveness?

**REGGIE**

I will.

**LOMBARDI**

He means before you fuck her. Ask for forgiveness before you commit the act. And then ask for it after and you should be good to go. Like it didn't even happen. Let me tell ya, man, it did happen. You did have those thoughts about fucking your dead buddy's wife. Yeah, you're a perverted scumbag. Just like the rest of us. Get over it and live with the scars. How's that for forgiveness? Feel better.

**REGGIE**

Kinda, yeah.

*LOMBARDI motions the blessings of the cross and puts his palm out to REGGIE.*

**LOMBARDI**

Go forth. And prosper. And fuck and lick and eat your buddy if he dies.

**PREACH**

It's true. We have endured. I don't know how, but here we are. The Lord gives us many unknown strengths.

**LOMBARDI**

You're like this broad I kept tryin to break up with and I kept tryin to be subtle and polite and shit, to not hurt her feelings, real amicable-like, hoping she'd just get the idea and that would be that. No ugly scene. But she was so goddamn clueless, she just left me no choice. Finally I had to spell it out and say you're fat and ugly and you give terrible head and just get the fuck outta here. Of course she was crying and everything but... message received. I mean you're dumber than that with all this God shit, you really are. What else does He have to do? He doesn't like you. He resents you. He hates all of us. God wishes he could go back and have a humanity abortion.

**PREACH**

So you do believe in God. You just don't like him.

**LOMBARDI**

Better than what you've got.

**PREACH**

What's that?

**LOMBARDI**

A God that has failed to exist.

*PREACH crawls over to the unconscious CAPT and calmly takes his pistol.*

**PREACH**

Do you remember how I told you about the book of Daniel? How the three men walked into the flames, to certain death, knowing God would save them.

**REGGIE**

Yeah.

**PREACH**

That's faith. Not through patience but through action. "Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends."

*PREACH lifts the gun to his head.*

**PREACH**

*(to Lombardi)* Don't waste the blood like last time with Sarge. Got it?

*As PREACH is about to fire, LOMBARDI leaps at him and the gun fires to the sky.*

**PREACH**

Let me do this.

Let me do it.

*PREACH tries to lift the gun to his head again, but LOMBARDI is holding his arm.*

*REGGIE watches on as they struggle, helpless but to cradle the unconscious CAPT in his arms.*

*Both men's hands are on the pistol and the trigger. It fires another shot up to the sky, then knocks out of their hands and into the water.*

*LOMBARDI releases PREACH and he watches the gun sink.*

*PREACH slumps back down into the boat. He begins to cry.*

**PREACH**

Why'd you do that, you shouldn't have done that.

**LOMBARDI**

Me? Why'd I—  
I don't know.

**PREACH**

You shoulda let me do it.

**LOMBARDI**

Stay with us. Stay with me. Just a little longer.  
Gimme your hand.

**PREACH**

What?

**LOMBARDI**

Gimme it.

*LOMBARDI takes PREACH's hand.*

**LOMBARDI**

*(to Reggie)* You too.

*LOMBARDI holds out his hand to REGGIE. He takes it.  
REGGIE takes the Captain's hand, as he sleeps.*

**LOMBARDI**

You wanna pray? Let's pray.

*PREACH shakes his head.*

**LOMBARDI**

No?

**PREACH**

You're a real asshole, you know that.

**LOMBARDI**

Okay, I know.



Let's just hold hands then. Alright?

*They do.*

Okay, good. Just hold on.  
Just like that.

*They hold.*

#### **DAY 40.**

*Three days later.*

*REGGIE, LOMBARDI, and PREACH sit slumped against the side of the boat as it drifts. They gnaw on some remaining bones. They've slipped into a silent maniacal trance.*

*CAPT lays unconscious against REGGIE.*

*A few moments pass before we hear:  
Muffled noises from somewhere close by. It's hard to make out exactly what it is. Seabirds?  
The men don't seem to notice.*

*But the noise gets closer and crisper and now we can hear it's the VOICES of several men shouting. CAPT snaps awake and listens.  
He musters the strength to stand. He sees a ship appear right beside them.*

*The voices snap into focus. "Hello! Hey! Hello there!"*

*CAPT stares in disbelief. Have they been saved? Is he dreaming?  
He shakes LOMBARDI and PREACH and REGGIE and tries to get them to notice, but they don't break out of their wasted trance.  
He shouts at them but he doesn't have a voice.*

*Exhausted, defeated, he finally collapses again.*

**BLACK OUT**

*End.*