**SIGHTINGS**

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PRODUCTION DRAFT

SETTING:

There are four different states within this world:

1. **The present** of the ‘big night out’ from 9pm to 5.30am. This occurs at Mo’s sister’s house (where Chili is living) and at the club.
2. **The threshold** when the ancestors can whisper / speak to the living and the living can feel/ hear / see them.
3. **The crossing** when the ancestors take on a body to be with the living or where there is a clash between the living’s internal world and the ancestor’s world.
4. **The leopard** which represents the journey to freedom

CAST:

**Young Nora** (aged 18)

**Old Nora** aged ninety-nine (but still has the energy of a 9 year old) - grandmother to young Nora.

**Riki** (aged 18)

**Gwen** (aged 18) is played by Mo.

**Chili** (aged 18)

**Mo** (aged 40) Chili’s mother

**Scene 1: THE LEOPARD**

*Sound of a furious leopard trapped in a cage. She pounds backwards and forwards throwing herself at the metal bars while breathing heavily, growling and roaring.*

**Scene 2: THRESHOLD**

*Stark white light.*

*Three young women (young Nora, Riki and Chili) run across the space in different directions.*

 *Gasping.*

Young Nora: Spiked?

Riki: Spiked.

Chili: No.

*Gasping*

Young Nora: No.

Riki: Fuck,

Chili: Fuck.

*Gasping.*

Young Nora: Oh Fuck!

Chili: Spiked

*They fall to the ground.*

*A haunted humming begins as Old Nora and Mo cross the threshold.*

Old Nora: Breathe.

Mo: Breathe.

Old Nora: Breathe.

Mo: Breathe.

Old Nora: Breathe.

Mo: Breathe.

Old Nora: Breathe.

Mo: Breathe.

*The girls begin to recover their breathing.*

*Warm light illuminates the girls.*

*.*

Young Nora: The place where the oceans meet.

Riki: Green rolling hills.

Chili: Blooming pohutukawa.

Young Nora: Te hononga o nga tai.

Riki: The smell of damp earth.

Chili: Raining red stars in the warm breeze.

**Scene 3 PRESENT (1am)**

*Loud club music.*

*Riki, young Nora and Chili are having the best night out.*

*When hearing their favorite music:*

Riki/Chili / Nora: Yass!

Riki: Let’s go! Hurry up.

*They take over the floor and dance together with a group karaoke.*

*It is so much fun and they are so happy.*

***Scene 4 THRESHOLD***

*Mo looks down at Chili.*

*She sings a lullaby and old Nora continues to softly hum the lullaby as Mo speaks.*

Mo:The hardest part of being a mother is letting go. I

 remember the first time I took her to the airport to

 go and stay with her Father. She was 16 months old

 and she reached up to take his hand, and

 turned back to me to wave. I froze that moment in

 time, in my brain, her reaching up and taking his

 hand and walking away. She’d not been walking for

 long and still tottered from side to side, on her

 chubby little legs. I felt the grief in my body. I said

 to myself: this is the first time you say goodbye. But

 you will never stop saying goodbye. And no matter

 how old she gets, it will always be painful.

**Scene 5: CROSSING**

*Old Nora and Mo watching.*

*A physical piece that represents the anxiety inside Young Nora’s head, and the numbness she shows on the outside.*

*We see frenetic physical movement, Young Nora is climbing at the walls, she’s trapped, she wants to get out. There’s noise, it’s so loud, we see her shouting, she’s angry, but the music is too loud.*

*Every time she finds some height, she falls again.*

***PRESENT (9pm) at Chili’s house.***

Riki: Nora! Oh my gosh! You’re famous! What happened?

 People keep messaging me. Mum saw you on the

 news. She was freaking out on the phone. Kept

 telling me to come home. She said something

 happened at your house. Nora?

*Nothing from Nora*

Chili: You can tell us Nora. Who did it? Was it your Dad?

Y Nora: My Dad. My Dad. He….

***CROSSING:***

*She’s off again. It’s too much. She can’t say the words. She is running and falling inside the anxiety.*

***PRESENT (9pm) at Chili’s house:***

Y Nora: I knew straight away.

 A black cloud hanging

 Smoke billowing out.

 Sticks at the back of your throat.

 Can still taste it now.

*She smells her cardigan.*

*Riki:* Is Aksha alright?

Nora: Yes, she’s with Mum.

*She throws the cardigan off.*

 Let’s go!

Riki: Aye? Go where?

Y Nora: Out. Let’s go dancing!

Chili: Dancing? Now?

*Beat. Riki and Chili look at each other.*

*Old Nora and Mo look at each other.*

*Riki and Chili speak at the same time.*

Riki: O.k.

Chili: NO!

*Riki looks at Chili. Oh damn she’s said the wrong thing.*

Young Nora: Yes! Yes yes yes! Let’s go for a boogie. Fuck it!

I just wanna let loose! Have fun and not think

about anything with my stank face!

*Cut to simultaneous ‘No Nora’ speech at same time from Chili.*

 You’re a fuckin’ pussy Chili. What’s wrong with

 you? You never used to be like this. I’m going

 out and you are both coming WITH ME!

*Chili is talking over Young Nora, Riki watches the hurricane they create together, she pulls out her rosary beads. She finds conflict very stressful.*

Chili: No Nora. No Nora. No Nora. NO! You’re in

 shock. You can’t go out when you’re like this.

 It’s not safe. You need to go back and find your

 Mum. You’re so stubborn! I’m not coming. This

 is a really bad idea!

Nora: HE BURNT THE HOUSE DOWN! OK? WE’VE

 GOT NOTHING LEFT! NOTHING!

*Silence.*

Riki: I’ll come Nora

*Beat while Chili decides.*

Chili: Fine. But we stay TOGETHER. O.k? That’s the

 rule. Nobody gets left behind.

*Riki, Chili, and Young Nora shake on it*.

ALL: Nobody gets left behind

**Scene 6 LEOPARD**

*Gwen creeps across the land making a percussive soundscape with her feet and breath. It is an ancient sound. The sound of the hunt. She is in a school uniform, with a satchel over her shoulder. Around her neck is a shark tooth necklace. She moves stealthily, like an animal, as if she’s trying not to frighten someone or something. But she is also scared.*

*She kneels down, her eye fixed on something in the bushes. Without breaking eye contact, she empties her satchel. At the bottom is a bundle of newspaper. She pulls it out and unwraps it, it is methodical the way she unwraps the package. From inside she holds up a piece of meat.*

*The leopard growls.*

**Scene 7 PRESENT (10pm)**

*The girls are each doing their getting-ready rituals at Chili’s house.*

Young Nora: Climb the Eiffel Tower.

Chili: I’d sit my ass at a Chinese Restaurant and eat

 as many pork and chive dumplings as

 humanly possibly. Then down a gallon of

 chocolate milk till I was as fat as a whale.

Young Nora: Eah, your head is as fat as a whale already,

 so all good, you’re halfway there.

Chili: Whata ya say sticky Riki, wanna come be a

 dumpling stuffed whale with me?

Riki: Fuck off! Anything to do with whales, you

 can count me the fuck out, thank you very

 much.

Chili: Oh that’s right, Riki can’t stand whales ever

 since she found out she looks like one.

Riki: Shut up! Whales are like slow moving water

 tanks. They are like giant death machines.

 My scariest dreams are ones with whales in

 them. I’m underwater and they’re swimming

 over the top of me and I can hear that freaky

 sound they make:

 NNNNNGGGGGGGUUUUUUUUUUUU (*she*

 *makes whale sounds)* and then I’m being

 squashed up against a wharf, or a rock, or

 the worst. The worst is when I’m being

 squashed between two whales! A mama

 whale and a baby whale and I’m going “No!

 No please! Have mercy! I am also a mammal!

 I also, like you, sucked milk from my

 Mother’s titties. I, like you, was born from

 my mother’s vagina, not an egg.” But I have

 to say it in whale language, which,

 inexplicably in my dream I can speak, so it’s

 kind of like:

 NGUUUUUUUUUNGUUUNGUUUUUUUUUU

*More whale sounds, but acting out what she is trying to*

*communicate*.

 And I’m trying to find an eye, so that I can

 connect with the Mama whale, you know? So

 that she can identify with me, but I can’t find

 the eye, and that, I think, is the thing that

 freaks me out the most about whales. It’s

 that it’s really hard to find their eyes. I don’t

 like anything without readily recognizable

 facial features.

*Silence after this outburst.*

Y Nora: I think you should have a shot Riki

*Riki takes a shot.*

Chili: So what would you do?

Riki: I don’t know. I’d probably go to my Mum’s

 house in Hamilton East and cry with her on

 the couch.

Chili: It’s supposed to be aspirational Riki, ya know,

 something that makes you laugh, not wanna be

 depressed and shit. C’mon girl, get with it.

Riki: Oooooooh. Ok. Ummmmm. Well I would win the

 biggest amount of Lotto possible and be

 networked with a lot of people that have high

 positions to make my “End Homeless Revolution”

 project come alive and get up and running. And

 then I’d go to my Mum’s house in Hamilton

 East and she’d make me my favorite food.

 Spaghetti Bolognese with budget pasta, dolmio

 sauce and frozen mixed veges . Forget al dente.

 My mum doesn’t know what that means.

YNora: My Mum’s never going to talk to me ever again.

Chili: Same.

*Young Nora and Riki look at Chili. Chili pours a shot. They all drink in silence*.

**Scene 8 CROSSING (11.30pm)**

*Chili, Y Nora and Riki are waiting for an Uber.*

Chili: Uber’s here.

Nora: Let’s go! Let’s go.

Riki: Shotgun.

*They climb in and Mo is driving them.*

Mo: Stars are out tonight.

Young Nora/Riki: No no no no no! Don’t start talking

 about stars driver!

Chili: Shut up you two! Rude! Yes sistah.

 Continue.

*Beat.*

Mo: I’m taking it, you like what happens up

 there?

Young Nora: She doesn’t just like it…

Riki: If the sky were a boy, she’d have

 pashed him a thousand times by now!

Chili: I love what goes on up there. I love

 stars, planets, everything!.

Mo: There’s so much out there, pure and

 unknown….

*Groans from Young Nora and Riki*

Chili: Exactly! Moving perfectly in their orbit,

 Totally unaware of the shit fest

 happening here on earth.

*Beat. Enough said. No. She’s got more to say:*

 And boy can it be shitty huh? Every week,

 this persons acting like a dick, this

 countries being an asshole, these

 people dying, these people getting richer.

But I figure that the universe is so vast

and infinite, that all the shit happening

down here can’t be so bad. Like the

universe will totally forgive us for being a

bunch of little bitches, because we’re just

a speck in it all really. Ya know?

Riki: Yeah, we know! We’ve heard it all

 before! Talk faster man!

 *Chili does not pay attention to Riki. She is still engrossed in talking to Mo, who is listening attentively.*

*Chili:* And even though sometimes it’s hard to

 find the good bits. Like reeeeeally

 hard. That’s why I look up there. Because

 you’ll always find something good. A

 puzzle, a question, a phenomenon.

 My Mum always said: “We all need a

 good thing, and if we don’t have one, we

 need to find one”

*Mo smiles*.

Riki: That’s us. Shot driver.

*The girls pile out of the car, leaving Chili inside.*

Nora (to Chili): Let’s go girl!

*Mo whispers:*

Mo: You’re my good thing Chili.

***Scene 9 – PRESENT Club (12.15am)***

*Old Nora is watching as young Nora stands in the club toilets, looking at herself in the mirror. The music is throbbing in the distance.*

*Young Nora takes a greenstone from her pocket.*

Nora: Found this on the fireplace

 Hidden in the ash.

 It belonged to my grandmother.

 Mum says that the black dots are the tears

Of those she left behind.

But she’s never far away.

*She polishes the greenstone on her clothes and kisses it.*

*Old Nora sings a waiata.*

 When I saw what’d happened to the house I

 couldn’t stand it.

 I told her it was her fault.

 If only she’d been brave enough to go!

 And she said that I was too young to understand

 And I said that she was too old to be so stupid

 And she told me not to talk to her like that

 And I told her to shut up

 And then she exploded

 Just exploded.

 She was crying and shouting

 And I couldn’t bear it

 I ran and ran and ran.

 She’ll never forgive me.

*Old Nora places her hand on Young Nora’s shoulder.*

*Young Nora feels Old Nora’s presence but she cannot see her.*

***Scene 10 PRESENT club (1.30 am)***

*Later at the club the girls are dancing and it is too loud to hear what they are saying.*

*Riki has her eyes closed as she is taken by the music.*

*Nora flirts with someone and goes off with him to the bar.*

*Chili attempts to shout over the music.*

Chili: What’s Nora doing?

Riki: What?

Chili: She’s gone to the bar with that guy.

*Chili points at Nora.*

Look!

*Riki looks across at Nora and then pulls Chili so that she cannot see Nora and starts dancing only with her.*

Riki: I love this song! Come on! Dance!

*She pulls out her phone to take a selfie of the two of them.*

***Scene 11 THRESHOLD***

*Old Nora and Mo circle the girls.*

Mo: Too busy taking pictures to see what’s happening.

Old Nora: ‘They are our seeds of hope’ – that’s what my

 grandmother said – ‘each carrying the traces of our

 ancestors’.

*She sees her grandmother now.*

 She is always here – standing beside me – with her

 mother and her mother and her mother. I am

 ninety-nine years old and can still do push-ups!

*Beat.*

 It’s a hundred years since my story began. Since this

 female body came into the world. How do you

 measure a life? Some days you fancy doing the cat,

 some days you do the cat and the dog.

*She pulls out a tape measure and measures the audience.*

 Is it inches or centimeters? Ha! I’ve lived through

 two world wars. Times of hope and fear. These

 young ones have no idea. They forget the past. Mind

 you, there have been enormous changes. We are

 now led by a woman with a baby! How amazing is

 that?

*Beat.*

 My husband knew how to listen.

 He was a droopy-eyed boat builder called Trevor.

 He called me his stubborn little donkey! And he

 had a motorbike with a side-car!

*She uses her hands over her eyes to make goggles.*

 Every Sunday we would speed down country lanes

 with the wind in our hair and joy in our hearts*.* He

 loved the simple pleasures – playing with the

 children, time in our garden, breakfast in bed.

*She stares forwards wistfully.*

 He never got to see this land. I came here when I

 was sixty-six. I followed my daughters and

 looked after the grandchildren. I loved watching

 them become themselves.

*She stares at Young Nora.*

 I’ve missed seeing this one grow.

 I didn’t think she’d remember me.

*She smiles down on her.*

 You’ll be right darlin.

*She becomes distracted.*

 It’s her mother I worry about.

 She’s too good for him.

 But I should never have said anything

 You’re screwed if you do and screwed if you don't!

*She pulls out her arm to stare at her watch*.

 Almost time for my brandy and ginger.

*She smiles* again.

 Nothing better than a tipple in the middle of the

 afternoon!

*Twinkle in her eye* *as she addresses the audience.*

 But you can mind your own!

**SCENE 12 PRESENT (2.15am)**

*Club music is pounding.*

*Riki and Chili are dancing.*

*Chili shouts over the music*

Chili: We said we’d stay together! Fuck she sucks at

 keeping promises!

*Riki pretends not to hear her and continues dancing*.

 Why’s she doing this?

*Riki smiles and continues dancing.*

Riki: What?

Chili: Nothing.

*They continue dancing and Chili stares into the corner.*

Chili: I think she’s going with him?

Riki: What?

Chili: Nora’s leaving with that guy!

What the shit, looks like she’s falling all over him.

*Chili goes to approach Nora. Riki turns to see.*

Riki: Chill out Chili!

*Riki starts giggling.*

Chili: Okay thank you 2pac. Nora! She’s waving at us the

 rude dude, does she think she can just up and leave

 like that?

*Is Nora waving or is she drowning?*

Riki: Bye Nora! Have fuuuun!

Chili: I think we should just check if she’s all good.

Riki: Leave her alone. You’re not her keeper!

*They continue dancing and Chili stares at the door.*

***Scene 13 LEOPARD***

*Gwen creeps across the land again with the same percussive / breathing sounds*. *She moves stealthily, like an animal, as if she’s trying not to frighten someone or something.*

*She kneels down, her eye fixed on something in the bushes. Without breaking eye contact, she empties her satchel. At the bottom is a bundle of newspaper. She pulls it out and methodically unwraps a lamb chop. She nervously edges it forwards.*

Gwen: Here girl, here you go. You’re getting skinny. You

 need to eat something.

*She stands slowly, and backs away****.***

I’m glad you’re safe. There was a big group out last

night, searching for you. I thought they would catch

you for sure. They found your footprints in the

tannery, down by Motions Road. My dad was there,

he came home drunk. He’s different when he’s with

other men. Louder.

*She stands still, staring into the bush.*

 My Dad’s the one who taught me about animals.

 Well, fish really. We’re a big fishing family. Last

 summer he taught me how to tickle trout. His Dad

 taught him, knee deep in the Ngaruroro river, down

 in Hawkes Bay. He taught me at home, out here.

 Dug up a turnip from the vege garden and gave me a

 lesson.You keep your palms up, fingers limp. Like

 grass in the current. You start at the tail. Then rub

 your fingers gently, gently up its belly. Then once

 you’ve found the gills….Grab it and pull! The best

 thing about fishing is you don’t have to look at each

 other. The best thing about not looking at each

 other is you can say things that are hard to talk

 about.

 You don’t need to be afraid of me. And I’m not

 afraid of you.

 Eat. Eat.

*She backs away and stares into the bush.*

*The leopard growls.*

***Scene 14 CROSSING club (12.30am)***

*Riki and Gwen stand in the club toilets they are not looking at each other. Different music throbbing in the distance. Riki is busting.*

Riki: Excuse me, is there someone in there?

*She bangs on the toilet door*

 Is there anyone in there? Oh. Ok. My mistake. Good.

*She stands back against the wall, glances at Gwen*

I love your costume. What are you? Like, a naughty

 schoolgirl?

Gwen: Yes I am actually.

*Riki:* It’s very cool. I like it.

*Beat.*

I love toilet conversations. You always meet the

 nicest girls when you’re in the toilet, waiting. I also

 like to have conversations while I’m on the toilet.

 Like, on the phone. It helps me to take my time,

 sometimes I rush the toilet. And that’s not good for

 me. I usually call my Mum when I’m on the

 toilet. We have a good old catch up while I do a

 good old….The other day I had blood in my um, my

 what do you call it? Stools? Yeah stools. And I called

 my Mum. I was like “Mum I think I might be dying,

 I’ve got blood in my …..” and she was like “How

 many times have you been number twos today?”

 and I was like “5 or 6 times” and she was like “5 or 6

 times? What? You’ve been number twos 5 or 6

 times? Why?” Well I had my exams that day so I was

 quite nervous. Anyway, turns out I needed to be a

 bit more gentle down there because I was

 just rubbing it raw basically. So nothing to worry

 about.

Gwen: Your Mum’s a clever lady.

Riki: Yeah. She knows everything. I think I probably need

 to move out.

Gwen: Why?

*Beat.*

Riki: ‘Cos sometimes I feel like I can’t breathe in that

 house. She never stops asking questions.

*Beat.*

 But I’m also scared of leaving.

Gwen: That’s normal.

Riki: You reckon?

Gwen: Yes I reckon. You’re afraid of what’s out there.

Riki: Yeah I guess so. I had this great aunty who’s like a

 legend in my family. She became an explorer. She

 wasn’t afraid of anything. When she was my age –

 or maybe even younger- she made friends with a

 leopard that’d escaped from the zoo. It came from

 India, they built a cage for her, but she escaped. No

 one could figure out how she’d done it, they got

 experts in, no one could explain it. But they found

 each other. Aunt Gwen and the leopard. She was

 the only one that wasn’t afraid.

*Pause. Gwen smiles*.

Gwen: Everyone’s afraid of something. I look at

 the ocean and think: it’s too big. There’s such a

 small fraction that we can see. There are whole

 landscapes, entire worlds underneath the water that

 we can’t even imagine.

Riki: Yeah I hate the ocean. I hate everything about it.

Gwen: That must be hard here. The sea surrounds you.

Riki: I love the land. I love having my feet on something

 solid.

Gwen: You learn most when you are out of your depth.

Riki: What do you mean?

*Gwen is gone.*

*Riki looks around.*

You meet the nicest girls in toilets.

**Scene 15 THRESHOLD**

*Chili is doing karaoke. Mo watches her.*

MO: She came home from her Dad’s one time. It was

after her thirteenth birthday. She walked up to the

 car and her hands were balled up into fists. She

 wanted to fight with me. It was such a sudden

 change. One day to the next. She didn’t want

 me anymore. God it was so hard. I just had to love

 her more.

*Mo sings to Chili, who can’t hear her*

**Scene 16 PRESENT (4am)**

*Young Nora is sitting in the bath at Chili’s house. She is fully clothed. Chili and Riki are beside the bath. Nora is finding it hard to get her breath back to normal like at the start.*

Chili: What happened? Nora tell us what happened.

*Nothing from Nora.*

Riki: That’s ok. Maybe she just needs some time out? You

 know?

*Chili ignores her.*

Chili: Nora. You have to tell us. Who was that guy? What

 happened outside? NORA!

Nora: Why did you let me go?

Chili: What? You weren’t exactly screaming for help.

Riki: You waved goodbye.

Nora: I was trying to tell you that I felt weird --- so dizzy!

 I can’t remember anything!

*She starts gasping.*

*Chili and Riki together with Nora and Mo exchange worried glances.*

***Threshold:***

*Riki:* Breathe deeply Nora.

Mo: Breathe

Old Nora: Breathe

Chili: This is why we stick together. This is why we should

 *always* stick together.

Riki: Just leave her alone for a minute Chili

Chili: I’m talking to you too Riki. Fucking Queen of not

 noticing shit. I knew something was up and you

 fucking told me it was all good. And now look what’s

 happened! I knew something was wrong, but you

 didn’t give two flying fucks about Nora!

Riki: I cared about Nora having a good time without you

 tryna play mum. Just cause *your* mum died doesn’t

 mean you have to go try be ours!

Nora: Shut up Riki! Chili’s right. We should have stayed

 together. I don't know what happened. I just

 crashed out!

Chili: But we only had one shot.

Riki: I had two.

Chili Andyou’ve never been like this before.

*Beat*.

Nora: I had another drink at the bar. He bought it.

*Beat.*

Riki: Do you think it was spiked?

*They suddenly realize what has happened and panic.*

*Gasping.*

Young Nora: Spiked!

Riki: Spiked.

Chili: No!

Riki: No.

*Gasping*.

Young Nora: No.

Riki: Fuck.

Chili: Fuck.

*Gasping.*

Young Nora: Oh Fuck!

Chili: Spiked.

***SCENE 17 Threshold.***

Old Nora/ Mo: Breathe, breathe, breathe, breathe, breathe.

*They begin to sing and pull the bath in a loop across the space with the girls inside.*

*They are moving them away from anxiety.*

*Nora speaks to Young Nora as Mo hums. Young Nora can feel her presence but cannot see her.*

 How do you measure a life?

 There is never enough time

 To say the things that should be said

 And do the things that should be done

 We put it off till it is too late.

*She stops pulling for a moment and speaks to Mo.*

 He was always good with the details. I tend to

 focus on the big picture. But he was always

 good at breaking it up, looking at the smaller

 pieces and deciding the next step. That’s why

 he was so great at his job. Designing blueprints

 and plans for big boats. He was a draftsman.

 For our fifth anniversary, he drew me the most

 intricate map of our house underneath the

 castle. He took me on a treasure hunt under

 beds, through linen cupboards and over table

 tops. It ended under our lemon tree, with

 bowls of creamed rice, buttery shortbread and

 freshly picked bluebells. Always good with the

 details.

*Mo smiles and stares at Chili.*

*Mo:* It’s only ever been me and her

 Chili’s Dad didn’t want to be a father

 And I had to fight to make it work.

 Every day was a struggle.

 My sister looked after her.

 Seven flats in five years.

 I was a cleaner at the hospital

 And made a lot of friends.

 We looked out for each other

 So it was a great job.

 When I got sick

 They all came round

 But she took care of me.

*Old Nora whispers to young Nora.*

Old Nora: I am following your shadow

 Working out the distance

 Remembering our name.

 We all need a home

 A place to feel safe.

*She takes out a compass from her pocket and places it around Young Nora’s neck. Young Nora closes her eyes and relaxes.*

*Mo sings to Chili as she makes beautiful movements with her hands. It’s as if she’s leaving her fingerprints in the air around her.*

*Chili begins to echo these movements and speaks to the girls.*

Chili: I got my hands from my mum. She gave them

 to me when I was born. Not kissing my own ass

 or anything, but they’re pretty hot aye.

 Two bits of flesh and bone that are capable of

 so much. People have built rockets, composed

 symphonies and written poetry through

 their hands. Mine are skinny. Long but strong.

.

 They’ve got the attitude and the curve of

 Beyonce. Meaning they’ll slap the shit outta

you if you talk shit to me. I never used to think

about them much till I saw that my Dad had

short chubby Danny DeVito hands. They didn’t

look anything like mine. Don’t know what I

got from him?

 *Beat*

Hands are a pretty weird thing to get from

your mum, like they’re a strange thing to get

passed down ya know. Mum just says be

grateful I didn’t inherit her stretch marks or fat

laugh.

*Mo smiles. She takes a small telescope from her pocket and places it around Chili’s neck.*

Chili: For the longest time, I thought we might share

 the same fingerprint. I would touch everything,

 imagining I was leaving a piece of her there.

*Old Nora whispers again to Young Nora who still has her eyes closed.*

Old Nora: I wish you could have met my Trevor.

 You would love his creamy rice pudding!

*Now speaking again to Mo.*

 He died in 1938. It hurts something awful to

 lose your soulmate. Like part of your body has

 been ripped away**.** It’s hard to walk straight or

 see clear.  I found myself having to be my own

 company. But that’s what we do isn’t it. We

 pick ourselves up, shake ourselves down and

 carry on.

Mo: (staring at Chili) Because we have to. We simply have to.

Old Nora: You did a good job Mo.

*Old Nora circles young Nora and they move together.*

Riki: What are you doing Nora?

*Nora opens her eyes and stares at old Nora.*

Young Nora: I could hear your voice.

Riki: What?

Old Nora: I am always here.

Young Nora: Nora?

*Old Nora smiles.*

*Young Nora takes the greenstone from her pocket.*

Young Nora: I think this is yours.

*Riki and Chili look at each other.*

Old Nora: You have to go back.

Young Nora: I told her to leave him so many times.

Old Nora: She is very stubborn.

Young Nora: Like you.

Old Nora: And you - little donkey!

*They both smile*.

Riki: Who?

Old Nora: Don’t let him come between you. That’s what

 happened with your Mum and me. And then

 I ran out of time.

Young Nora: But she’s trapped. She’ll never escape.

*Riki is staring all over the place.*

Old Nora: No. I can see. The house has gone and she is

 ready. She needs you now.

Young Nora: But I ---

Old Nora: Find her and talk.

 She has to know what happened to you.

Young Nora: But ----

Old Nora: Your Mum is a power-house, she will

 understand. She works all day, gets things

 done and then sleeps. She walks the walk and

 has zero time to talk shit.

*They smile.*

Young Nora: She’ll be right.

Old Nora: And so will you.

Riki: Who are you talking to Nora?

***Scene 18 CROSSING***

*Distorted club music.*

*The women become five girls -* ***A, B ,C, D, E*** *- dancing and singing in the middle of a joyous night out.*

*They start to flock together becoming* ***one girl moving.***

*She speaks directly to the audience.*

GIRL: So we met in

A: a bar B: a social C: a work place D: a friends house Young Nora: a club

 And I thought you were

A: Interesting B: Cool C: Funny D: Hot Young Nora: Cute

And we talked a bit and you bought me a drink and asked me if I wanted to go to a party. And I thought

 A: Hell yes! B: Ok C: Why not? D; May- be. Young Nora: I need some fresh air.

 And so we went out the door and one kiss

 A: Became a touch B: Became a feel C: Became a squeeze D: Became a grab. Young Nora: Became a thrust.

And I wasn’t sure.

 A: I felt strange B: was uncomfortable C: wasn’t into it D: Couldn’t breathe. Young Nora: Wanted to go back to my friends.

 So I tried to cool off, move away, pull back, but you wouldn’t let go. I tried to

 A: Say sorry but I have to go now B: wiggle away C: Say I don’t want to do this D: Push you back. Young Nora: Say no.

But you wouldn’t listen and I didn’t know what to do. I felt:

 A: Unsure B: Lost C: Strange D: Anxious Young Nora: and dizzy

*The girl falls to the floor in slow motion*.

 DIZZY, DIZZY, VERY DIZZY.

Silence. Stillness.

*The girl sits up and speaks*

GIRL: I woke up outside on the pavement. What had happened? I ran and ran and ran.

*She jumps up quickly and separates into the five girls again who begin to walk fast in multiple directions around the space gasping for breath. They each pull out mobile phones.*

A: Mum are you up?

B: Mum are you awake?

C: Can you talk to me Mum?

D: I am alone on the street

Nora: I need to talk to you Mum.

*Silence. They put their phones away and begin to circle.*

Chili: Did you tell her what happened?

Riki: She’d never let me go out again

Mo: She’d be devastated.

Old Nora: She’d feel responsible.

Young Nora: I have to talk to her.

Silence.

Chili: Are you going to report him?

Riki: He has to learn to listen.

Mo: Who will believe her?

Old Nora: She has to speak out.

*The humming begins, Old Nora and Mo cross the threshold and are gone.*

**Scene 19 PRESENT (5.30am)**

*Riki, Nora and Chili are lying close together on the ground staring at the stars.*

*Chili is using her telescope.*

Chili: Neutron stars are some of the densest,

 thickest stars that are born from the explosive

 death of bigger stars … a supernova event.

 They’re proof not all bad things lead to worse

 things. Do you know about the celestial sphere

 that surrounds you? It’s an imaginary

 dome around the earth, with you as the center

 point… You’re the observer, therefore you’re

 the focal point. Or what about the zenith? It’s

 the point on the celestial sphere straight

 overhead of an observer. When you move so

 does your zenith.

*Silence. Riki sits up.*

Riki: When I went away last year, on the school trip

 something happened. When I got there, it was

 like, the darkness got in somehow. I don’t

 know how to explain it. But I lost myself, I got

 swallowed up by this big, black hole. I’d always

 had anxiety, you know, got a bit panicked

 about things sometimes, but this was

 different. My personality started to flake off

 me, like, personality dandruff. It fell around

 me and landed on the floor.

*Nora and Chili sit up and face her. This is the first time we see them really connecting as they talk.*

 I started to stay inside my room, I stopped

 talking to people, I stopped looking. I got lost. I

 started to think that if I could come home, the

 darkness would stay behind. I started to

 imagine coming home, to my Mum’s house,

 walking in the door, crawling into her bed, and

 going all the way back. Crawling right

 up inside her and sleeping again in her womb.

 Young Nora: My Mum was a good girl

 Never crossed the line

 Never made waves

 Always wanted to please

 That’s how she married my Dad.

*.* She came to everything – every practice, every

 match, every event – she was always there.

 Even when her face was covered in bruises,

 she still managed to get me to my show.

When she was pregnant with my sister she

 started to miscarry. The doctor told her to

 carry on and it would take its course. But she

 decided that she would not lose that baby. She

 took two weeks off work and lay with her feet

 in the air. Her name is Aksha – it means

 blessing from God. When we were little we

 would climb into her bed fighting to snuggle

 up closest.

Chili: I was buying plastic fish slippers in Thailand

when I heard. She was moving towards her

own supernova.

*Beat*.

Get home! Get home! I just have to get home.

Focus on her face, her boney arms, her skinny

fingers, her hearty laugh.

*Beat.*

 But I was too late.

*Silence.*

Riki: Sorry.

*Beat.*

Nora: No I’m sorry.

*Beat.*

Chili: Me too.

*They all smile.*

*Chili looks up at the stars again.*

Chili: I like to think that maybe she’s my zenith now.

 She’s the point on that sphere that’s right

 above my head, following every step I make.

Riki/Chili/Nora: Yeah.

*Beat.*

Chili: We could go together to make the report?

Riki: If that’s what you want?

*Beat.*

Young Nora: Yes. That would be great.

**Scene 20 LEOPARD**

*Sound of leopard growling.*

*Gwen moves like the leopard and circles Riki, Nora and Chili as she tells this story.*

*They see her for the first time and are wide-eyed but curious.*

Gwen: The leopard roamed the city.

 People saw her, crossing the roads.

 Men went out at night to hunt her down.

 She walked and walked. She survived.

 But I knew her days were numbered.

*Beat.*

 They found her standing in black sand on the West

 coast. The men surrounded her and one had a gun.

Beat.

 She stared at them proudly and then turned

 And waded into the waves.

*She places the shark’s tooth around Riki’s neck and creeps away.*

*Beat.*

Chili: She wasn’t scared.

Riki: She swam away.

Nora: She escaped the inescapable.

*They smile and stand as one.*

Chili: The sun’s coming up.

*They watch as the sun rises.*

Riki: Climbing over the hills.

Nora: Te hononga o nga tai

*Blackout.*