

THE THEATRE MADE IN PARADISE

Artistic Statement

This play imagines an early attempt to start a theatre in America in the 1600s by people who were compelled by their humanity to be inclusive, appreciative of others, tolerant of new ideas, and respectful of Mother Earth. The play springs from Elizabethan reality and the imagined world of Shakespeare in The Tempest, the Wampanoag culture of Cape Cod, and the global social reality of the times. It is performed by a diverse company of actors who live in the present and yearn to have a more inclusive theatre in America.

ABOUT THE PLAY

CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

ASKAMABOO – Young matriarch in Wampanoag family, Massasoit’s wife. 28 years old.

REBECCA STANFORD – Wanted to be an actor in the Globe Theatre in London, but married the Puritan John Stanford. 25 years old.

GEORGE GREENE – An actor from the Globe Theatre who escaped London as times grew worse for the theatre. Modeled on Nathan Field. 32 years old.

FERDINAND – Bosun (double-cast with Massasoit).

STEPHANO AFRICANUS – A devout Christian who has been raised and is Rebecca Stanford’s indentured servant. 20 years old.

JOHN STANFORD – A Puritan leader, husband to Rebecca. 35 years old.

MASSASOIT – A nephew of the great Chief of the Wampanoag, husband to Askamaboo. 25 years old.

PURITANS – offstage singers (double-cast with Askamaboo, Rebecca, and John)

SETTING

In the hold of the Golden Hart, and different parts on the shore of Cape Cod in the Fall of the early 1600s, before colonies took hold and slavery was established.

NOTE: I recommend that the play be performed in a story-theater style, a sort of Elizabethan magical realism.

SYNOPSIS

At sea in a storm in the early 1600s, Rebecca Stanford, the wife of an abusive Puritan leader, discovers an actor on board, George Greene, whom she knew in London. He is sailing to the new world disguised as a Pilgrim to start a theatre in Jamestown, after the Globe Theatre didn’t hire him to replace Burbage. Rebecca’s husband, John Stanford, finds the copy of The Tempest they are reading. Believing the storm is conjured using spells from the play, he accuses George and Rebecca of being witches and has George put in chains. In the storm, Rebecca is washed overboard and thought to be dead, but she floats ashore on Cape Cod and hides. She discovers John Stanford has left George and Stephano, her indentured servant from Africa, on the beach to force them to confess that they are conjurers. While hiding in the woods, Rebecca is befriended by Askamaboo, and together they gain the freedom of George, Stephano, and Massasoit, who was captured by John Stanford, and they all flee into the woods. George, Rebecca and Stephano watch the Puritan boat sail away. They feel lost in the New World until they are invited to stay in the Wampanoag’s village for the winter, where they plan to start the Paradise Theatre while working their day jobs gathering firewood and digging out canoes.

THE THEATRE MADE IN PARADISE

Prologue

ASKAMABOO enters and speaks to the audience.

ASKAMABOO

A long time ago, strangers came to our shores. They had stories from their far-off land which they told in a way and in a language that our Wampanoag ancestors knew nothing about. The Bible? Shakespeare? We knew nothing about them, and they were ignorant about our ancestors and our stories of ghosts and tricksters. Some of these strangers were willing to learn what we knew, and some of us were willing to learn what they brought with them. Tonight, we'll show you the little known story of actors who came to these shores to plant and nurture a theatre here on this stage called Mother Earth.

ASKAMABOO offers a prayer to Mother Earth and exits.

ACT I, Scene 1

On board the Golden Hart. Night. The acting company enters and forms a ship's prow. They begin to rock side-to-side in an increasingly violent storm. Then they swirl around the stage together, shushing the audience to secrecy, and end with their backs to them. GEORGE enters the hold of the ship with his flotation device, which is a whale's bladder, and his script of The Tempest. He hears someone coming and hides it under the bladder and ducks into the darkness. REBECCA enters looking for the script. She finds it and begins to read as though committing it to memory, then hears someone coming, and puts it under the bladder and hides. GEORGE follows her.

GEORGE

(whispering)

Rebecca.

FERDINAND enters.

FERDINAND

What are you doing in the hold of the ship?

GEORGE

(falling to his knees)

I'm praying.

FERDINAND

Praying. The storm is getting worse, and you're needed on deck.

GEORGE

It's drier down here.

FERDINAND

We need all hands on deck to jettison cargo. Now.

GEORGE

God will protect us from sinking if we pray.

FERDINAND

I'm ordering you to the deck before we do.

GEORGE

What's the use? We've been lost for nearly two months at sea. We're out of provisions, and now we're a mile from shore. The Captain's talking about heading back to sea which will surely get us sunk!

FERDINAND

He is the Captain.

GEORGE

I am praying to our Captain in Heaven! (falling to his knees) Go! Keep our ship from being swallowed by the waves!

GEORGE raising his hands to heaven.

GEORGE

Dear Lord! Hallowed be Thy Name! Please watch over us, better than this bosun does!

FERDINAND

Damn Puritans!

FERDINAND exits. The ship heaves to the side. REBECCA falls out from her hiding place. GEORGE blocks her from exiting.

GEORGE

(whispering)

You're here.

REBECCA

You knew I couldn't stay away. What do you want?

GEORGE

I'm going to start a theatre in the New World, and I want you to be part of it.

The ship heaves.

REBECCA

We may not survive the storm.

GEORGE blows air into the whale bladder.

GEORGE

I have created a floatation device made from a whale's bladder.

REBECCA

A bladder.

GEORGE

Tonight we can jump overboard and float to shore. We're only a mile away.

REBECCA

You know that I'm married.

GEORGE

To a Puritan. Does your husband know that you once played Eve in my Masque of Eden?

REBECCA

Shh.

GEORGE

And that everyone loved your portrayal of Eve and wanted to be your Adam?

REBECCA

If he finds out I'm talking to an actor, he'll have us burned at the stake!

GEORGE

I'm a Pilgrim and a carpenter.

REBECCA

You are Nathan Field of the Globe Theatre. He once went to the Globe before he was saved.

GEORGE

That hypocrite!

REBECCA

He could have seen you playing there.

GEORGE

We have to jump ship before he recognizes me. Please, Becky, come with me. We'll find happiness in Jamestown.

REBECCA

Jamestown?

GEORGE

Where I'll start my theatre.

REBECCA

They say Jamestown is a swamp.

GEORGE

If Burbage and Shakespeare can start their theatre in a London swamp, I can start mine in Jamestown. Did Stephano tell you I had a copy of The Tempest?

REBECCA

Yes.

GEORGE entices her with his copy of the script, which he gives her.

GEORGE

William's finest play and a window into the New World.

REBECCA

(attracted to it)

Where did you get it?

GEORGE

I copied it.

REBECCA

Stole it?

GEORGE

Shakespeare's dead. Burbage is dead. Prospero and Miranda must live.

REBECCA

You think you can play Burbage's role?

GEORGE

Of course! And you, Miranda.

REBECCA

You'd cast a woman in the role?

He gives her the script.

GEORGE

Yes! We're free from the tyranny of the English laws that kept you from Shakespeare's plays. Will you join my company? We've sighted land. We'll jump overboard and float to shore.

REBECCA

What about Stephano?

GEORGE

I've asked him, but he's sensitive about playing spirits, women, and fools. He thinks he's a Puritan.

REBECCA

He's not.

GEORGE

You know that for a fact?

REBECCA

He was kidnapped from Africa and forced into servitude. He plays roles that Shakespeare never thought to write. Do you have money?

GEORGE

I have gold.

REBECCA

We'll need to be paid.

GEORGE

Of course.

REBECCA

Where did you get gold?

GEORGE

I borrowed it.

REBECCA

Will we have an equal share in the company?

GEORGE

Of course. Shall we read a scene to see if you still love acting?

REBECCA

You know I do.

GEORGE

But are you committed to your art?

REBECCA

(taking off her bonnet)

Of course I am. Where shall we take it from?

GEORGE

Here.

GEORGE is given his Prospero's magic cloak by someone from the company.

GEORGE

Imagine that we are on the island of Bermuda. Our production will be set in the place from which Shakespeare took his inspiration. The seas and the thundering skies fairly rock the land, but we are safe above the turmoil.

The ship lifts and tilts.

GEORGE

Enter Prospero and Miranda.

REBECCA

(tossing the script aside)

If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek,
Dashes the fire out. O, I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer: a brave vessel,
Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,
Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
Against my very heart. Poor souls, they perish'd.

GEORGE

Excellent! We'll jump overboard tonight after the sun sets.

REBECCA

I want an up-front fee. For Stephano and me.

GEORGE

When we get to shore.

REBECCA

Sometimes you are slow in paying actors. For example, when I played Eve for you.

GEORGE

My gold is safely hidden until I get ashore. I'll give you an apple for the time being.

REBECCA

You have fresh fruit? It's been months.

GEORGE

Here.

He takes an apple handed to him by a company member.

GEORGE

I'll pay the rest in gold when we start our theatre. Agreed?

REBECCA

I agree.

REBECCA bites the apple.

REBECCA

Ow! It's a prop!

GEORGE

It's all I have.

REBECCA

My lip is bleeding!

GEORGE

I'm sorry. It's the apple from the Masque of Eden. Don't you remember? It's the same one. (giving her a handkerchief) I would never ever want to hurt the sweetness of your lips.

STEPHANO

(off, whispering)

Mistress Stanford?

GEORGE

It's Stephano.

STEPHANO enters.

STEPHANO

You're here.

GEORGE

Enter Ariel. Hast thou perform'd to point the tempest that I bade thee?

STEPHANO

No.

GEORGE

Your line is: To every article.

STEPHANO

(to George)

My line is: (to Rebecca) Master John is looking for you. He's searching all over the ship.

REBECCA

(getting her bonnet)

I can't let him find me.

STEPHANO

He's very angry. What happened to your lip?

He gently touches her lip.

STEPHANO

Did Master John do this?

REBECCA

I bit it by mistake. I have some wonderful news. We're going to start a theatre.

STEPHANO

We are?

GEORGE

In a few hours, we're swimming to shore.

STEPHANO

Swimming?

REBECCA

George has made a floatation device.

STEPHANO

It looks like a whale's bladder.

GEORGE

It is. You'll play Ariel, the spirit of freedom, in The Tempest.

STEPHANO

I am not Ariel, or a woman, or a fool.

GEORGE

"How now? Moody? What is't thou canst demand?"

STEPHANO

From you? "My liberty!"

GEORGE

You know your line!

STEPHANO

And I know that Prospero enslaved Ariel and I don't want to be anyone's slave in life or in a play.

GEORGE

But we'll double cast you as Ferdinand, who is Miranda's love interest played by Rebecca.

REBECCA

Wouldn't you like that?

STEPHANO

(to Rebecca)

If Master John finds you with Mr. Greene, he'll beat us both. We'll go to your quarters and read the Bible together and he'll find us, praying.

REBECCA and STEPHANO start to exit.

JOHN

(off)

Stephano!

REBECCA

He's here!

GEORGE

Holy Lord!

They scramble to hide, fall flat on the floor and realize it doesn't work.

GEORGE

Kneel!

GEORGE takes off his cloak and puts it on the floor.

GEORGE

Kneel upon Prospero's magic cloak and pray with me!

ALL fall to their knees on the cloak.

GEORGE

O, Lord, we beg of Thee please, please we beg of Thee....

JOHN, seasick, enters as the ship rolls. He kneels with them.

GEORGE

Deliver us from every evil, as You did Jonah, when You spake unto the whale that swallowed him, and the whale vomited Jonah forth on to the shore...

JOHN retches.

GEORGE

...slimy from the sour smelling fish guts.

JOHN retches again.

GEORGE

Wretched from the stench—

JOHN

Amen!

ALL

Amen.

STEPHANO

Master John. Let me help you to the deck.

JOHN

No.

STEPHANO

You could use the fresh air.

The ship rolls.

JOHN

(to Rebecca)

Why are you in the hold of the ship?

REBECCA

I came down to see if our belongings were dry and found Mr. Greene.

JOHN

Why is his cloak on the floor?

GEORGE

To kneel upon, sir, to pray.

STEPHANO

(to John)

Master, I think it would be good if you went on deck.

JOHN

Show Mr. George Greene to the Captain and tell him I found him praying with my wife, when he was ordered to the deck.

STEPHANO

Sir.

JOHN

I want him put in chains. Do as I say.

GEORGE

Sir, if I may be so bold.

JOHN

Take him.

As the ship rolls, GEORGE and STEPHANO exit.

JOHN

What happened to your lip?

REBECCA

Nothing. I bit it. You smell of vomit. Let go of me.

JOHN

Did Mr. Greene touch you?

REBECCA

He did not.

JOHN

Did he promise, like the serpent, to open your eyes so you could be “as a god and know all things?”

REBECCA

I am not your slave. We were praying.

JOHN

Where is your Bible? Where? Show me!

REBECCA

Over there. I brought my Bible. It’s over there in the dark. (pointing) Not there.

He finds the script.

JOHN

The Tempest. By Shakespeare. There are conjuring spells in this play.

REBECCA

My Bible is somewhere. Perhaps Stephano took it.

JOHN forces her to her knees.

JOHN

Is Mr. Greene an actor?

REBECCA

No! John. John. Please. I beg of you in the eyes of God! Oh, Jesus.

He pushes her down.

JOHN

The two of you will stand trial and either be released from Satan’s clutch or be burned at the stake for conjuring this storm with the spells in The Tempest.

The ship rolls. They are thrown off their feet and there is a loud cracking sound from off. FERDINAND enters.

FERDINAND

Mr. Stanford! A beam has cracked! Come now, sir!

JOHN

Coming.

FERDINAND

We're taking water.

COMPANY enters falling to their knees in prayer. GEORGE'S hands are tied behind his back. FERDINAND calls to sailors on deck.

FERDINAND

Lay her a-hold, a-hold! Set her two courses off to sea again; lay her off!

COMPANY

To prayers, to prayers!

FERDINAND tries to get people up to help, but they immediately move to somewhere else to pray.

FERDINAND

You fools! Have you a mind to sink?

COMPANY

Mercy on us! We'll split apart!

FERDINAND

Work then! Work! All hands on deck!

REBECCA

Is my only Paradise in Heaven?

FERDINAND

Two courses off to sea!

REBECCA

Where are Stephano and Nathan?

COMPANY

We're lost! We're lost!

FERDINAND

Lay her off! You'll drown us all!

REBECCA

Dear God, help us find our way to shore!

A monstrous wave rises above the COMPANY which causes them to drop their prayers and succumb to its power. The COMPANY swirls around REBECCA, as though they are the roaring waters. She sinks below the sea, struggles back to the surface, gasping for air, then sinks again. Her Puritan dress and bonnet are washed from her as she rises once more and grasps the whale bladder, which is floating near her. The ship pitches into darkness and she is separated from the COMPANY and floats away clutching the whale bladder. The wind howls. The sea turns into a forest by the beach.

ASKAMABOO enters looking for her husband.

ASKAMABOO

Last night, my husband, Massasoit, told our village that he saw a giant canoe struggling in the storm. Then he saw the Woman of the Sea, who enticed the giant Moshup away from his wife, run out of the ocean into the trees with a piece of the moon. My village thinks he's a fool. They're ready to move for the winter, and they want me to leave him behind. But I think he's run off with another woman, like Moshup did, and I'm not putting up with it. I am the sachem of my village, and he'll not be making a fool of me.

ASKAMABOO exits.

STEPHANO

The east? That's the east. I come from England and before that Africa.

JOHN

(from off in the distance)

Don't let him get away! Hold him!

MASSASOIT

Who is that?

STEPHANO

That's my master.

MASSASOIT

Massa? That's funny. I am Massasoit.

STEPHANO

Mastersoit?

MASSASOIT

Massasoit. I am Massasoit. He's Massa?

JOHN

(off)

Don't let him get away!

MASSASOIT

His skin is wompey (white) like the skin of the Woman of the Sea that I saw last night. She disappeared into the woods like him.

STEPHANO

I don't know what you're saying.

MASSASOIT

Last night. She was wearing all white carrying a piece of the moon. A big round piece.

STEPHANO

(looking out for John)

You better go. He might kidnap you.

MASSASOIT

Maybe he's looking for her. My wife and village thought I was making up a story. They laughed.

STEPHANO

(miming as best he can)

I'm worried for you. My master is very angry because he lost his wife in the storm. When he's upset, he takes his anger out on other people in the name of God.

MASSASOIT

You seem frightened.

STEPHANO

He will take it out on people weaker than him. I know. I was taken from Africa by people like him.

MASSASOIT

Come on.

STEPHANO

You go.

MASSASOIT

We'll go to my village. Hub hub hub.

MASSASOIT starts to exit. JOHN enters and ambushes him. Unseen by the three men, REBECCA looks out from behind a bush shocked at what's happening.

MASSASOIT

Matchaumaquot! (he stinks) You smell like shit! Get off me!

STEPHANO

(to John)

He's just wants to be our friend!

MASSASOIT

(to John)

I'll rip your fucking testicles off!

JOHN

Savage! Stay still! (to Stephano) Give me the rope! (to Massasoit) You are mine now! Do you hear me?! Still! Or I'll slit your throat.

MASSASOIT is subdued.

JOHN

(to Stephano)

The rope! Get it! Over there!

JOHN ties MASSASOIT's wrists together.

MASSASOIT

My uncle is a sachem.

JOHN

Shut your mouth or I'll cut your throat!

MASSASOIT

My wife will find me and bring warriors against you.

JOHN punches MASSASOIT in the stomach.

STEPHANO

He's trying to tell us something.

JOHN

Savage!

JOHN starts to hit him again. STEPHANO comes between them.

STEPHANO

No! He won't hurt us. We came to the New World to establish a home for Christian values. You're angered and upset by the death of your wife.

JOHN

She was punished by God for conjuring with George Greene.

STEPHANO

The Congregation hasn't voted.

JOHN

The trial will prove it.

STEPHANO

But until then, we must accept the suffering our Lord gave us and not turn around and make others suffer.

JOHN

Hm. I'll need another slave to work with you.

STEPHANO

I'm not a slave. By English law, I am an indentured servant to your wife.

JOHN

Who is no longer living.

STEPHANO

She left money to maintain my indentureship for two years until I'm free.

JOHN

Her money now is mine. You serve me.

STEPHANO

I serve Christ.

JOHN

You are a slave to Christ.

STEPHANO

That is a phrase in the Bible.

JOHN

We come to this land to make it Christ's dominion, you will be a slave, like I am, to its creation.

STEPHANO

But....

JOHN

Move away from him.

STEPHANO

Mrs. Stanford would never allow me to be enslaved—

JOHN

Stand away from him! We need to get back on the ship. We'll tie him to a tree at the burial ground. There are urns of wheat there, which we'll take back to God's children who need fresh food. (Taking a handful of corn out of his pocket and showing it to Massasoit) Wheat to feed God's children!

MASSASOIT

Corn! Where did you get it?

JOHN

No more gibberish!

MASSASOIT

Matta. Matta. (no, no) You took corn from my ancestors' graves! My father is buried there.

JOHN

I'll cut your tongue out, if you're not quiet.

STEPHANO

(moving between them)

You won't hurt him. I'll keep him quiet.

JOHN considers a moment and relents.

JOHN

Bring him along.

STEPHANO

(to Massasoit)

You have to go peacefully with us.

MASSASOIT

Abbamocho. (the devil)

STEPHANO

(whispering)

When we go back to the ship, your tribe might find you and you can escape.

MASSASOIT

Why do you lower your eyes to him and look straight into mine?

JOHN

Come! Before he takes you in with his Satanic eyes.

STEPHANO

(lowering his voice)

I promise I won't let him hurt you.

JOHN

Come!

JOHN, MASSASOIT and STEPHANO exit. REBECCA appears from behind the bush watching them go down the beach and into woods. She is dressed in a corset, branches and a squirrel skin cap and clutching the whale bladder. Hiding behind the bladder, she dashes to another tree, as though a spirit carrying a piece of the moon, and hides.

REBECCA

(to herself, not to audience)

If the Puritans settle here, they'll make this Paradise their New England and banish theatre altogether. I'll be an actor delivering soliloquies to trees, babbling dialogue with

the brooks, and playing to creatures in the woods who won't understand what I say. I must find a way to free Stephano and get George ashore. Perhaps that man who is dressed like Adam will help me.

REBECCA exits to the woods.

ACT I, Scene 3

Next day. Another part of the beach. Afternoon. JOHN STANFORD leads, with a pistol and carrying a sack, followed by STEPHANO carrying Rebecca's Bible. He escorts GEORGE whose hands are tied behind his back.

JOHN

(to George)

Kneel.

STEPHANO

Sir, I am innocent.

JOHN

(to Stephano)

The congregation will allow you back on the ship, if you burn his evil play. If you do not, we will leave you ashore and sail without you.

STEPHANO

But—

JOHN

It was not my choice. The Congregation voted on it. (to George) As for you, I will be back in the morning to ask you one last time for your confession. If there is none, you will be burned at the stake.

GEORGE

And if I do confess?

JOHN

I'll ask them to burn you because you're a liar. If you from crimes would pardon'd be, find God to set you free!

JOHN exits to the boat.

GEORGE

He desecrates Shakespeare!

STEPHANO

You destroyed me! And Rebecca! I'm burning The Tempest.

GEORGE comes between him and the play.

GEORGE

You will not! She lived for the day she could act in The Tempest.

STEPHANO

Now she's dead because of it. She was the sweetest kindest girl in all of England, innocent as the morning dew.

GEORGE

She was.

STEPHANO

All she wanted was to live a simple life in a little cottage outside of London. And you destroyed her.

GEORGE

She never had a simple life. Mistress to Lord Pembroke? Marriage to a Puritan? She was meant for the stage.

STEPHANO

As Eve in your Masque of Eden?

GEORGE

It's not my fault the Globe Theatre wouldn't hire her. I did when I could.

STEPHANO

You tempted her and then crushed her dreams.

GEORGE

She said that?

STEPHANO

Yes.

GEORGE

I'm devastated.

STEPHANO

I loved her! More than you ever did or ever could!

With Rebecca's Bible, he kneels in prayer.

STEPHANO

May she rest in peace.

GEORGE

I'm sorry you lost her. I'm sorry I did. I'm sorry the English stage did. She was such a wonderful woman and actor. We can't destroy the only thing that meant something to her. We have to stand up to the men who abused her.

STEPHANO

You can stand at the stake. I have her Bible and I'll be free in two years.

GEORGE

You think your Master Stanford will give you freedom? The King of England legalized slavery in the colonies this year and started trading in Africans. We need to get back on the ship to get my gold.

STEPHANO

You have gold?

GEORGE

It's on the ship sewn into the whale's bladder. When I get it, I will negotiate with John and buy your contract to release you from your indentureship. I'll give you your freedom.

STEPHANO

Where did you get gold?

GEORGE

I borrowed it.

STEPHANO

Borrowed from whom?

GEORGE

An aristocrat. He's sponsoring my company.

STEPHANO

Does he know it?

GEORGE

He will after I start my company in Jamestown.

STEPHANO

Jamestown.

GEORGE

It's struggling to survive, because it has no theatre. Did you know that The Tempest was inspired by an actual shipwreck that happened on an island not far from Jamestown? We're going to do the play in its natural habitat. People all around the world will sail across the Atlantic's broad way to see it. And at the end of the play, their imaginations will be fired up with the beauty created by our theatre. We'll be famous around the world and be able to sail anywhere we want!

STEPHANO

You think you're Prospero.

GEORGE

Of course!

STEPHANO

Can you fly us back onto the ship now? Why stop there? Why not to England? Or Africa? I can't believe you.

GEORGE

Then be a slave. Your master should have named you Othello. A black man brought down by the treachery of a white. A tragedy. Why don't you eat the food they've left us? The biscuits have worms, but if you scrape them off, they're edible.

STEPHANO looks at the bag.

STEPHANO

They're not going to let you back on the ship.

GEORGE

I have a plan. We have a shipload of Puritans for an audience. We have to convince them I'm a Puritan.

STEPHANO

They convicted you.

GEORGE

Not if I find God. I'll confess my sins and show that I can convert Natives. If they see that, they'll vote against John Stanford. We'll find a stick that looks like a cross. There's a whole forest of trees. Surely God created one in the shape of a cross. Look there. (falling to his knees) Oh, dear God. It's a sign. (whispering to Stephano) Pick it up. Hold it over me. Go on.

STEPHANO picks up the stick. GEORGE bows before the cross and acts repentant.

GEORGE

We'll perform a pantomime. The Masque of a Saved Sinner. Puritans want to see a sinner being saved. Hold it up higher.

STEPHANO

It's sacrilegious.

GEORGE

Not if it saves my life. Now come on, untie me.

STEPHANO

What?

GEORGE

You believe in freedom, don't you? We have to find your friend, the Native you told me about.

STEPHANO unties him.

GEORGE

With him, we'll show how we can convert a wild "Caliban" into a God-fearing Christian.

STEPHANO

He's not a Caliban.

GEORGE

I know. He's a human being like you and me, but in the Puritan's mind, he's a heathen and needs to be saved. Will you help me enact my pantomime?

STEPHANO

I'm not an actor.

GEORGE

You say that but you're always putting on a show for your Master John: Yes, sir. No, sir. Isn't that acting?

STEPHANO

To survive.

GEORGE

Welcome to the theatre! Come. On our knees.

GEORGE holds up the cross towards the ship. They kneel together.

GEORGE

We thank our glorious benefactor for our newfound purity in our new found land. "All hail, great master! Grave sir, hail! I come to answer thy best pleasure; be it to fly, to swim, to dive into the fire, to ride on the curl'd clouds, to thy strong bidding task your servant and all his quality." Let us find our Caliban. Away.

GEORGE exits to the woods doing a jig. STEPHANO takes Rebecca's Bible and follows refusing to sing or dance.

ACT I, Scene 4

In the woods. Later that afternoon. The actor playing JOHN enters carrying MASSASOIT on his back, their arms interlocked behind them. He plants himself as a tree and his arms become the rope holding MASSASOIT captive. MASSASOIT tries to free himself. ASKAMABOO, his wife, enters from the forest.

MASSASOIT

Thank the Great Spirit you found me. There is a whole tribe coming in a winged-canoe!

ASKAMABOO

You tell our whole village you saw the Woman of the Sea, our ancestral spirit, and then I find you chasing one of their women.

MASSASOIT

I was not.

ASKAMABOO

I found your tracks.

MASSASOIT

I was trying to capture her to show the village she was stealing what looked like a piece of the moon.

ASKAMABOO

I spotted her. She is a ratty haired woman in rags carrying what looks to me like a whale bladder.

MASSASOIT

Untie me.

ASKAMABOO

I should leave you here. You think you're the giant Moshup who goes looking for the Woman of the Sea. Do you think I'm an ugly old scold like Moshup's wife? That's what the village is whispering about me.

MASSASOIT

Of course, I don't. I came to the shore when it was storming, and when the moon broke through the clouds, I saw what looked to me like the Woman of the Sea. This morning, I saw others. They could take our land after we move for the winter.

ASKAMABOO

No one will take land from the Wampanoag. The Mohawk and the Narragansett tried.

MASSASOIT

These alien intruders are different.

ASKAMABOO

So, you chase after their women.

MASSASOIT

That's not what I was doing. You act like you're such a great sachem, and everything is under your control. You plant more cornfields every year than we need and have me dig out new canoes just so you can gain status and become the most powerful sachem. You think we're stronger than we are.

ASKAMABOO

If you were a warrior like your uncle, I would be stronger. You could have stood up to them instead of chasing their women.

MASSASOIT

Just untie me. They'll come back, and they could take me away like Squanto.

ASKAMABOO

Like Squanto.

MASSASOIT

Yes, like Squanto!

ASKAMABOO

He wasn't chasing their women.

REBECCA

(softly off)

Hello? Hello?

ASKAMABOO

Ah.

MASSASOIT

It's her.

ASKAMABOO

Let's see how attracted you are to your Woman of the Sea.

MASSASOIT

They'll kidnap me. The others could be right behind her.

*ASKAMABOO hides by going between his legs into the trunk of the tree.
REBECCA enters stealthily hiding behind the whale's bladder.*

REBECCA

You're here. I saw you on the beach.

MASSASOIT

Mauncheake. (get out of here)

REBECCA

I come in peace. I will rescue you from the Puritans.

MASSASOIT

Mauncheake!

REBECCA

I won't hurt you. I'll untie you. (with gestures) I. Untie. You. With my hands.

She approaches him to untie him.

MASSASOIT

Mattanit! (evil spirit) Abbamacho! (the devil)

He struggles to avoid her.

REBECCA

All right. I won't harm you. I know we have a language barrier, but I come in peace?

MASSASOIT

Mauncheake!

REBECCA

It must be what I'm wearing. You're bare-chested like Adam in the Bible. I'm practically wearing armor. I'll costume myself like you. So I can be like Eve to your Adam.

REBECCA begins to undress. Unseen by them, ASKAMABOO appears shocked.

MASSASOIT

Stop! Askamaboo! I don't know her! I've never met her before!

ASKAMABOO goes behind the tree.

REBECCA

There's no reason to be so upset.

MASSASOIT

Get away from me! Mauncheake! Abbamacho!!

REBECCA

All right, all right. I'm just an actor, (makes a grand actorly gesture) which I would love for you to be too, so we could put on The Tempest. (gestures thunder and lightning) You could play Caliban (growls aggressively) "You taught me language, and my profit on 't / Is I know how to curse." I'll play Miranda (acts sweetly) "How beauteous mankind is! / O brave new world That has such people in 't!"

MASSASOIT growls at her.

MASSASOIT

Go back to where you came from! Abbamacho!!

REBECCA

That's Caliban. Perfect. (she growls)

*Off-stage in the distance, there is the singing of a Crusader hymn.
<https://vimeo.com/60904845> with the lyrics from "Come unto these yellow sands".*

MASSASOIT

Askamaboo! They're coming to get me.

REBECCA

It's the Puritans singing one of their hymns. I won't let them take you. They can't take me. I'll go with you.

REBECCA tries to untie MASSASOIT.

MASSASOIT

Askamaboo! She'll take me away!

REBECCA

We can escape to Jamestown.

MASSASOIT

What are you going to do with me?

ASKAMBOO enters behind REBECCA and grabs her covering her mouth.

ASKAMABOO

(whispering)

Keep your hands off my husband!

REBECCA

(muffled)
Oh! Who are you?

ASKAMABOO

I'll take you back to my village. And deal with you there.

MASSASOIT

Untie me.

ASKAMABOO

You will stay and I'll get warriors to help.

MASSASOIT

You can't just leave me here.

ASKAMABOO

We have their Woman to trade for you. Wait till our village sees her.

REBECCA

Don't hurt me. Please.

ASKAMABOO

(to Rebecca)
Pick up your piece of the moon. The village needs a good laugh.

REBECCA

I will do whatever you want.

ASKAMABOO drags REBECCA, carrying the bladder, into the woods.

GEORGE

(off)
This way.

STEPHANO

No, it's this way.

GEORGE, holding up a cross, and STEPHANO enter. MASSASOIT tries to blend into the tree.

GEORGE

I think we're lost.

STEPHANO

He was around here somewhere.

Maybe he got away. GEORGE

I feel like we're being watched. STEPHANO

His village must be near. GEORGE

Is that him? There he is. STEPHANO

It's you. You came back. MASSASOIT

(gesturing)
I came back to help you. STEPHANO

Please untie me. MASSASOIT

(gesturing like Rebecca did)
I'll untie you. STEPHANO

You speak the same language as the woman. MASSASOIT

Don't untie him yet. GEORGE

(to Stephano, emphasizing the iambic foot)
Who is he? Please. You have to help me! Please! MASSASOIT

He speaks in iambic pentameter. GEORGE

(to Stephano)
What is he going to do to me? Please help! MASSASOIT

Tada dada dada dada dada. GEORGE

MASSASOIT

Keep him away!

GEORGE

We can double cast him as Ferdinand! If we find an actress who can play Miranda—

A muffled sound from the bush. REBECCA appears and is pulled back down. STEPHANO turns to look.

STEPHANO

What is that?

MASSASOIT

Askamaboo. I need your help.

GEORGE

It could be his people! An audience!

STEPHANO

Or Master John! We have to untie him.

STEPHANO starts to untie him.

GEORGE

No. Stop. He could run away.

STEPHANO

What do you expect?

GEORGE

For our play, he has to act like he's tied up. He has to learn how to be an actor.

MASSASOIT

Actor?

STEPHANO continues to untie MASSASOIT.

STEPHANO

I'm sorry you don't doesn't understand the difference between a human being and an actor.

MASSASOIT

Actor.

GEORGE

Yes. Actor. Are you an actor? (makes a grand gesture)

MASSASOIT

(to Stephano)

He's from the same tribe as the woman. Actor. (makes part of the gesture)

GEORGE

Yes! Actor!

MASSASOIT

(to Stephano)

I'll take you to her. My wife captured her. Askamaboo. We'll make a peaceful exchange.

STEPHANO

He's trying to tell us something.

GEORGE

He wants to be an actor.

MASSASOIT

Actor.

GEORGE

What luck!

I have a play! The Tempest! (gestures thunder and lightning)

MASSASOIT

(making the sounds of thunder and lightning)

Tempest!

GEORGE

We need a woman to play the role of Miranda? (makes feminine gestures)

MASSASOIT

(sweetly)

Miranda? Dada dada dada.

GEORGE

Glory be to God! We lost our Miranda and need to recast the role.

Muffled sounds from the bush.

STEPHANO

Someone's there.

MASSASOIT

Actor.

GEORGE

Actor! Is there an actor in the bushes?

STEPHANO

It's getting dark. We have to get back.

GEORGE

An actor in the bush could be worth two in the hand.

STEPHANO

What if it's John? Or a wolf. Or bears.

GEORGE

Right. We'll go back to the beach to play our play before it's too dark. I have gold on the ship! We'll make our way to Jamestown.

GEORGE starts singing his hymn version of "Come unto these yellow sands" and exits leading them with a Puritanically repressed jig.

STEPHANO

Everything is all right. He won't hurt you.

MASSASOIT

He's a funny guy.

STEPHANO

Puritans don't dance. Actors do.

MASSASOIT

They're fools like my people think of me.

GEORGE tries to get them to dance and MASSASOIT tries the step. MASSASOIT and GEORGE dance their exit. STEPHANO exits after them.

ACT I, scene 5

Another part of the woods. ASKAMABOO enters holding REBECCA who has a squirrel tail stuffed into her mouth.

ASKAMABOO

You were trying to take my husband away!

REBECCA

(muffled)

Please! I mean no harm.

ASKAMABOO takes the squirrel tail out.

ASKAMABOO

(pointing in the direction of her husband went)

Why did you undress in front of my husband?

REBECCA

Oh! You have the fury of Lord Pembroke's wife!

REBECCA getting to her knees.

REBECCA

Let me explain. It was a mistake.

ASKAMABOO

Your warriors took my husband! Massasoit! My husband!

REBECCA

Massasoit.

ASKAMABOO

Massasoit! Mine!

REBECCA

Massasoit. (pointing at Askamaboo) Mine!

ASKAMABOO moves towards REBECCA, who prostrates herself.

REBECCA

Please forgive me!

ASKAMABOO

I can't see how my husband took you for the Woman of the Sea. You haven't braided your hair for weeks. Get up!

REBECCA

What?

ASKAMABOO

Get up! I don't like to see women grovel.

REBECCA

Please don't kill me.

ASKAMABOO

It's not my way to hurt people.

REBECCA

My feet are killing me. I'm cold. I'm hungry.

ASKAMABOO makes a motion and magically a bearskin floats in carried by the actor playing MASSASOIT.

ASKAMABOO

You look cold. Take the bear skin.

ASKAMABOO offers the bearskin to REBECCA.

REBECCA

For me? (taking it and wrapping herself in it) Thank you. Oh, thank you.

ASKAMABOO

I have to go and get my warriors, but I like to travel when the moon is higher. And you're slowing me up. Here, cranberries.

REBECCA

Crabapples? They're small.

ASKAMABOO

They're not poison. Try them.

REBECCA

Thank you. Mm. Different.

ASKAMABOO

(laughing at her reaction)

Bitter. Try this dried squirrel meat instead.

REBECCA

Mmm. Veal. This is good.

ASKAMABOO

(digging and collecting kindling)

I will dig you a hole in the sand for a fire so my husband will smell the smoke and know I haven't abandoned him. My husband is a very difficult man, and he gets under my skin and I have a sharp tongue. But I don't want him to be another Squanto.

REBECCA

Squanto?

ASKAMABOO

Squanto.

REBECCA

There was a Squanto in London. He visited the Queen. Squanto.

ASKAMABOO

Squanto was kidnapped and taken across the water and then he came back speaking another tongue.

REBECCA

Squanto.

ASKAMABOO

Squanto went crazy. His wife left him and most of his village died because of the fever. He lost all his land because it was his wife's.

REBECCA

Drawings of Squanto in London showed his costumes with beautiful beadwork like yours.

ASKAMABOO

Wampum.

REBECCA

Wampum.

ASKAMABOO

I like to wear my wealth, so people know that I can help them. I have land that I plant from the Mashpee River to Popponesset Bay. My husband's uncle is the great Sachem Massasoit. If my Little Massasoit doesn't learn to be a great warrior, I'll never be a Sachem. He's not always wrong. He tells people there are evil spirits and they laugh, but when they get sick with a fever which chews at their body like a wolf, they are frightened. They think the spirits are abandoning us, and his stories increase their fears. The Spirit of the Bear will watch over you tonight. I'll be back in the morning, and we'll

trade you for Massasoit. I know you won't try to escape. You have nowhere to go and there are bears in the woods.

ASKAMABOO growls like a bear and laughs at her joke. She wraps the bearskin more tightly around REBECCA and gets up to go.

REBECCA

Are you leaving me? We have to go down to the beach, when it's dark. We're going to start a theatre and if you joined, women would have a greater say in how it's run.

ASKAMABOO

You will stay here. I'll be back in the morning.

REBECCA

I feel we understand each other.

ASKAMABOO

Let us offer thanks.

O Great Spirit

I thank you today.

As the prayer is given, REBECCA follows the movements to learn.

I thank you for Mother Earth

REBECCA

(trying to pronounce)

Mother Earth.

ASKAMABOO

I thank you for Grandmother Moon

REBECCA

Grandmother Moon.

ASKAMABOO

I thank you for Grandfather Sun

REBECCA

Grandfather Sun.

ASKAMABOO

Thank you for leading me to my husband. Massasoit.

REBECCA

Massasoit. Mine.

ASKAMABOO

Mine.

ASKAMABOO exits. REBECCA goes to the fire.

REBECCA

I wonder why Shakespeare gave Prospero magical powers to do good, but Caliban and his mother Sycorax only could do evil. The people here, who are so different from us are as good as we are from what I see. If all the world is a stage, surely that should be in a play. Oh, I'm so tired. Will there ever be a theatre in Paradise? I'll sleep awhile, perchance to dream. (whispering into the forest after Askamaboo) Thank you for the fur.

REBECCA pulls the bearskin around her and falls asleep.

ACT I, scene 6

Rebecca's Dream. REBECCA struggles in her sleep. STEPHANO, MASSASOIT, GEORGE and JOHN enter and encircle her. ASKAMABOO enters and REBECCA suddenly awakens.

ASKAMABOO

A long time ago, a woman and her children slept in a theatre in a place called Paradise.

STEPHANO and MASSASOIT lie down beside REBECCA. REBECCA enacts ASKAMABOO's story.

ASKAMABOO

The children were sound asleep and their mother sat by the fire.

MASSASOIT/STEPHANO

Fire. Fire. Fire. Etc.

ASKAMABOOO

Suddenly she saw a ship sailing toward shore. And two sailors walked across the water to her doorway.

JOHN and GEORGE appear to her as apparitions.

ASKAMABOO

She asked them what they wanted and they said....

JOHN

May we come in? Our clothes are wet.

GEORGE

And we are chilled to the bone.

JOHN/GEORGE

We need to warm ourselves by your fire.

MASSASOIT/STEPHANO
(frightened, huddling together)

Fire. Fire. Fire. Etc.

ASKAMABOO

She invited them in and as she watched them, she noticed that she could see right through them, -- as if they were ghosts shimmering in the flames!

MASSASOIT/STEPHANO

Fire. Fire. Fire. Etc.

ASKAMABOO

Her fear of them increased, but since she was brave, she held her ground and said nothing. Finally, the men spoke.

JOHN

Do you want all the things that all the wampum in the world can give you?

ASKAMABOO

She didn't answer.

GEORGE

Do you want all the things that all the wampum in the world can give you?

ASKAMABOO

The woman looked at her children and thought of their growing up. She looked at the men and said, Yes.

JOHN

All you have to do is go behind your wigwam to your planting fields.

GEORGE

Beside a rock you will dig a hole and find your wampum.

JOHN

It is in a Book, a Good Book, so says our Lord.

GEORGE

It is in a play with the stuff of dreams for the stage.

JOHN/GEORGE

They thanked her for the warmth of her fire and smiled to each other and said good-night.

JOHN and GEORGE hide in the shadows as evil-spirited ghosts.

ASKAMABOO

The woman took her hoe and went outside and began to dig, thinking of her children and all the wampum she could give them to ensure their future. Every time she stuck her hoe into the ground, she heard her children cry out.

Her children cry out.

ASKAMABOO

She rushed indoors to see what their trouble was. They were soundly sleeping in their blankets. Again she dug with her hoe.

Her children cry out.

ASKAMABOO

Again her children cried out. She rushed inside. She decided to stay with her children and wait till the first light to return to the digging place.

JOHN and GEORGE stealthily enter and steal the Bible and the play from the hole and exit gleefully with them.

ASKAMABOO

In the morning, she went to her field with her children and found her hoe where she left it. But she could see that others had been there. They had taken her wampum that her ancestors told her was planted there. She gathered her children together and told them in whispers that the greatest treasure she could leave them was her land. And they should keep their stories planted in the soil and nurtured in the wisdom of Mother Earth so they could all live again and play on her stage in Paradise. The woman and her children, whose village was by the Mashpee River, continued living there through good times and bad for a long, long time.

MASSASOIT and STEPHANO exit. ASKAMABOO wraps the bearskin around REBECCA and lays her down to sleep.

ASKAMABOO

O Great Spirit, I thank you for the night!

ASKAMABOO exits. REBECCA cries out in her sleep and sits up in terror. She looks around and gathers the bearskin around her and hugs the whale bladder. She crawls into the darkness as the lights fade to black.

ACT II, Scene 1

*Dusk. On the beach. GEORGE, STEPHANO and MASSASOIT enter.
GEORGE carries the cross. STEPHANO carries the bag. MASSASOIT's
hands are untied.*

GEORGE

There. See. Ship.

MASSASOIT

Evil spirited people.

GEORGE

I won't try to pronounce your word for it. But in English it's ship.

MASSASOIT

Ship!

GEORGE

Good! We have to do our play for them so I can get my gold on the ship.

MASSASOIT

Ship!

MASSASOIT sits without waving.

STEPHANO

He doesn't like the people on the ship.

GEORGE

(sits beside Massasoit)

We don't like the people on the ship. They're shits.

To demonstrate GEORGE makes a fart sound with his armpit.

GEORGE

Shits!

MASSASOIT

(imitating)

Ship shits!

GEORGE

(controlling his laughter)

Shshsh.

MASSASOIT

Ship! Shits!!

GEORGE

(laughing)

Shshsh.

MASSASOIT

(laughing)

Ship! Shits! Chickachava! (kiss my arsehole)

GEORGE

Chickachava!

STEPHANO

This is not the way to show them we're bringing a person to Christ.

GEORGE

Right. Right. Okay. This is our play. Stephano is going to sing a hymn for us.

STEPHANO

Wait a minute. You can sing one of the songs from the Tempest.

GEORGE

They might hear the words.

STEPHANO

It's disrespectful using a hymn to pretend you're a Puritan.

GEORGE

How stupid of me. I'm thinking like a witch. (to Massasoit) My gold is on the ship.

MASSASOIT

Ship shits!

GEORGE

He agrees with me. (to Massasoit, pulling him closer) This is my plan.

MASSASOIT

We're like pukwudgies in the woods. Do you know about the pukwudgies?

GEORGE

Pukwudgies?

MASSASOIT

Pukwudgies. (acting like one) They are little people in the forest. You don't have to be afraid of them, and if you talk to them nice, they bring you good luck. But they can be mean.

GEORGE

You are a natural.

MASSASOIT

We need to be mean pukwudgies scheming to do some bad tricks on the evil-spirited people on the ship!

GEORGE

(to Stephano)

He understands! He has to come with us to Jamestown.

STEPHANO

Master John told me he wants to make him a slave!

GEORGE

I won't let that happen. I promise. You have to trust me. Look. I'll mumble the words of Ariel's song to hymn music.

STEPHANO

You have to promise me on pain of death that you will not let him on board.

GEORGE

I do. Don't worry. We have to build a fire. (to Massasoit) We need to build a fire so they can see our play. Fire.

GEORGE mimes a fire's flames in the sand.

MASSASOIT

(imitating him)

Flowers grow in the forest not on the beach.

GEORGE

You put sticks together. Pile them up. Warm your hands. Fire.

MASSASOIT

(laughing)

Oh! I thought he meant flower. (to Stephano) He's a funny guy. (saying it in English with correct signing) Fire.

GEORGE

Yes! Fire! Fire! A ship, a fire.

MASSASSOIT

Tadadada. A ship, a fire.

GEORGE

(with a grand actor gesture)

An actor.

MASSASSOIT

(with a gesture)

Actor.

GEORGE

(hitting the sand)

On a stage!

MASSASSOIT

(hitting the ground with his foot)

On Mother Earth!

GEORGE

They have a word for stage.

MASSASSOIT

Mother Earth!

GEORGE

Mother Earth! Let me explain the play. You will fetch firewood like in Shakespeare's play The Tempest.

GEORGE makes thunder and lightning and MASSASSOIT imitates.

GEORGE

(waving the cross in the air like a wand)

Prospero, played by me, wants to convert you to Christianity, and we're going to make it look like we do. You will play Caliban.

MASSASSOIT

Caliban. (growls)

GEORGE

Yes!

MASSASSOIT

(to Stephano)

You? Miranda? (sweetly) Tada dada dada.

I will not!

STEPHANO

He won't play a woman.

GEORGE

Or a fool!

STEPHANO

(to Stephano)
Why can't you be more like him? I'd rather he comes to Jamestown than you.

GEORGE

We won't take him on the ship!

STEPHANO

He'll be a Christian in their eyes.

GEORGE

They'll kidnap him like Squanto.

STEPHANO

Squanto?

MASSASOIT

Squanto. You've heard of Squanto?

GEORGE

Squanto.

MASSASOIT

We'll make you as famous as Squanto.

GEORGE

Squanto was really messed up by the evil-spirited people. I'm not going to make his mistake and go with the ship shits.

MASSASOIT

He knows about Squanto and the ship shits.

STEPHANO

Not good.

MASSASOIT

GEORGE

All right. We'll cross that bridge, when we get to it, but I have to get back on the ship. We need to build a fire.

MASSASOIT

Fire. All right. Ponesanto. (start a fire) We need little wood and big wood.

MASSASOIT gets up and goes and picks up the cross.

MASSASOIT

And some medium wood. Like this.

GEORGE

Glory be! (to the ship) He's found religion!

MASSASOIT

You have to break it up into smaller pieces.

MASSASOIT starts to break it across his knee. GEORGE catches him.

GEORGE

No! No! It's our cross! (taking the cross, to Stephano) My God, look. Three lanterns on the ship. We've got their attention. Our play must begin!

GEORGE swirls the cross around in the air. STEPHANO reluctantly gets on his knees. GEORGE mumbles the words to dour hymnal music.

GEORGE

Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Courtsied when you have and kiss'd
The wild waves whist:
Foot it featly here and there;
And, Holy Spirits, the burthen bear.
Hark, hark!

GEORGE bows and then lifts his hands to heaven to show MASSASOIT what to do.

GEORGE

Bow. Wow.
The watch dogs bark:
Bow. Wow.

PURITANS

(singing, off)

Amen.

GEORGE

(to the ship)

He's saved!

MASSASOIT

(laughing in mockery, bowing and wowing to the cross)

Bow. Wow. Bow. Wow. Dogs chase sticks for fun, but we don't worship dogs.

MASSASOIT barks and chases GEORGE for the stick.

GEORGE

No, no. Oh, God, please save us! Shsh! We must pray!

STEPHANO

They'll burn us at the stake for your mockery!

GEORGE

Kneel. Come. Sit.

MASSASOIT, playing along, sits. GEORGE pulls MASSASOIT close. GEORGE holds the cross in front of them reverently.

GEORGE

I will take you to the netherworld where spirits live and bring you to the way of the cross.

(as a dirge)

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes...
...Say what thou seest yond.
What is't? A spirit?
Thy Father! He speaks to you?

GEORGE holds the cross before them. MASSASOIT doesn't get what GEORGE seems to expect.

STEPHANO

(to George)

What you fail to realize is what it feels like to kneel on a beach on the shores of Africa looking at the slave ship.

MASSASOIT

Ship!

STEPHANO

I was chained to the deck, and I saw them carry a body out of the hold. My father. They carried him like cargo to the side of the ship.

MASSASOIT

Ship!

STEPHANO

And threw him over. Full fathom five my father lies, of his bones are coral made. We must not let them take him or he will never return home!

MASSASOIT

Bow. Wow. Bow. Wow.

GEORGE

(calling out to the ship)

We have brought a Native to God and saved him from sin! (to Massasoit) Lift your hands in praise. (to ship) Glory be to the name of God!

MASSASOIT

Bow. Wow. Bow. Wow.

PURITANS

(off, singing from the ship)

Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God and man the Son, etc.

MASSASOIT

You, my friend, Stephano, you are not like the ship shits. You speak from the heart. You are welcome to my village.

STEPHANO

I wish I could understand your words.

GEORGE

He's saying, Thou hast done well, fine Ariel!

MASSASOIT

I have some advice. (taking the cross) You need to burn this! My people don't want dog worshippers bow wowing around our burial grounds.

GEORGE

(to the ship)

He has found the way of the Cross!

MASSASOIT

Dogs dig up corn from the gravesites like the ship people do. (pawing the beach) They dig and have no respect for our ancestors.

GEORGE

(to the ship)

Dear God! He's a preacher!

MASSASOIT

(to George)

Get rid of this! Burn it! Burn it in the fire!

MASSASOIT pantomimes fire.

GEORGE

(to the ship)

The fires of Hell!

MASSASOIT

Fire! Fire! Now listen. I'm getting really hungry. We'll collect wood for a fire, and then I'll show you where we can find namohs.

He pantomimes a stabbing motion with the cross and points into the woods.

MASSASOIT

Spear namohs!

GEORGE

He wants to go on a crusade!

MASSASOIT

Spear namohs for food.

GEORGE

(to the ship)

He wants to take the cross to his people! And plant the cross on the shores of the new Jerusalem!

STEPHANO

No. I think he's saying he has food.

GEORGE

Food? You have food?

MASSASOIT

Namohs. Come with me.

GEORGE

Namohs!

MASSASOIT exits.

GEORGE

(to Stephano, holding him back)

Wait! Wait.

STEPHANO

After we find food, we'll let him go.

GEORGE

What? You see how much they like him. We'll give him a share in the company.

STEPHANO

No!

GEORGE

All right! I'll play Caliban and Miranda! You'll be Ferdinand and Ariel! Is that what you want!?

Suddenly, MASSASOIT re-enters with a scream and stabs the cross into the ground. He pantomimes lifting the spear out of a stream at the end of which is a wriggling fish. He pantomimes fish with his hand. He takes it off and eats it.

MASSASOIT

Come! I know where we can spear namohs. Namohs. To eat.

STEPHANO

Fish!

MASSASOIT

Namohs!

STEPHANO

Namohs.

GEORGE

(collecting their things)

Show us the best springs! The land! The berries to pluck! Every fertile inch! (To ship on his knees, sotto voce) And you can stay on board and eat your biscuits with worms! (to the ship) Glory be to God!

GEORGE, STEPHANO and MASSASOIT exit to the woods, singing, howling and holding the cross high. There is a distant singing of a joyous hymn from the ship. <https://vimeo.com/60904845>.

PURITANS

Fair is the sunshine,
Fairer still the moonlight,
And all the twinkling starry host; etc.

Lights to black.

ACT II, Scene 2

Later that night. In the woods. JOHN enters, carrying a lantern with his pistol raised.

JOHN

Who's there?

REBECCA, in her bearskin, enters unseen by him. She approaches him from behind stalking him like a bear in search of prey.

JOHN

You think you have fooled the Puritans on the ship, but I've been watching. I know you're there. I know what you are up to. In the morning I will tell them. Stephano? If you come with me now and confess to the others, and I will see they spare you. I have a pistol and I will shoot.

He touches the fur behind him, and starts to move away.

JOHN

A bear! Dear God!

She growls at him and moves towards him. He fires his gun and exits rapidly.

REBECCA

What powers I have with this disguise! O, sweet Paradise, I am home at last.

REBECCA crawls under a bush, wraps her bearskin around her and pulls her whale bladder to her. STEPHANO enters stumbling tipsily in the dark.

REBECCA

It's Stephano!

STEPHANO undoes his pants to pee.

REBECCA

Pssst.

STEPHANO

(looking down to see what he's hearing)

I've had too much to drink.

REBECCA

Pssst.

STEPHANO

But in the morning, I'll be back on the ship and be free.

REBECCA

Psst.

REBECCA crawls towards him, disguised as a bear.

REBECCA

Stephano.

STEPHANO

Who's there?

REBECCA

It's me.

STEPHANO

A bear!

REBECCA

Shhh.

STEPHANO

Oh, my God, is this my fate?

STEPHANO falls to his knees expecting to die.

REBECCA

No! It's me.

REBECCA drops the bearskin from her shoulders.

STEPHANO

It is!

REBECCA

Yes.

STEPHANO

You're alive.

REBECCA

Shh. John is in the woods.

STEPHANO

He is?

REBECCA

Over there.

They clumsily embrace and kiss.

STEPHANO

I can hardly believe it.

REBECCA

I've been in the woods for days wanting to talk with you.

They kiss.

STEPHANO

I thought you drowned.

REBECCA

I was washed ashore.

STEPHANO

A miracle!

They kiss again.

STEPHANO

I have good news. Last night, we convinced the Puritans that George is a God-fearing Christian.

REBECCA

George?

STEPHANO

They'll take him back on board, despite what John wants. George has gold on the ship. He can buy my indentureship from you, and with the money we can sail back to England and build a cottage outside of London like we dreamed. What's the matter?

REBECCA

I can't go back on the ship. John thinks I'm dead.

STEPHANO

Dear God, what was I thinking?

REBECCA

We'll make our way to Jamestown. We'll be free to be in love.

STEPHANO

There's no way that we could walk there.

REBECCA

Then we'll stay here. I met a woman who gave me this bearskin. Her husband is the man you captured. Hopefully they'll take us in.

STEPHANO

And we'll live in the woods.

REBECCA

This can be our Paradise, our Garden of Eden. We'll begin at the beginning.

STEPHANO

Like in the Bible.

REBECCA

Yes.

STEPHANO

We'll be God's children in Paradise. Just us.

REBECCA

Yes.

STEPHANO

You and me.

REBECCA

Yes.

They kiss.

REBECCA

And George. We'll start our theatre here. We can do pantomimes.

STEPHANO

He wants to go to Jamestown where people speak English and know Shakespeare.

REBECCA

We'll change his mind. I had a dream last night that we were in a play in a story. It was told by the woman I met. The Bible and The Tempest were buried in the ground to grow. They were wampum.

STEPHANO

Wampum.

REBECCA

Things of great value that had to grow anew. The ghosts of George and John took them from the woman, so they would never grow on her land, even though she wanted them to be nurtured in her soil. That would make a play that could be told in any language for anyone.

STEPHANO

I don't see how planting the Bible could make it better.

REBECCA

You have to get George and your new friend. I believe he's my friend's husband. I want you to take George's whale bladder to show him I'm here.

STEPHANO

His bladder?

REBECCA

Yes.

STEPHANO

You have his bladder?

REBECCA

It's how I floated ashore. It saved my life.

STEPHANO

Dear God! It has his gold in it.

STEPHANO looks for the gold in the whale and finds the bag.

REBECCA

I have his gold?

STEPHANO

There's so much.

REBECCA

He was telling the truth. He really can pay us. Oh, I have so many ideas. Go tell him to come here now. I can't be seen by the Puritans. Go on.

STEPHANO

What if he still wants to go to Jamestown. It seems to me he's scheming to get me and my friend on the ship so we become his actors. You can't trust George. He's looking for someone to take your role of Miranda.

REBECCA

No.

STEPHANO

There may not be a script anymore. George told me he was going to burn it to show the Puritans he's a good Christian.

REBECCA

Did he do it?

STEPHANO

John told him it had to be.

REBECCA

Did he?

STEPHANO

His play has created so many problems for us.

REBECCA

You have to go back and make sure he doesn't.

STEPHANO

I was hoping you would forget about the theatre.

REBECCA

What are you saying!?

STEPHANO

We could teach people to read Bible stories.

REBECCA

You have to support me on this.

STEPHANO

Mistress Stanford.

REBECCA

I'm not your mistress anymore.

STEPHANO

And I am not Ferdinand or Ariel.

GEORGE

(off)

Stephano!

REBECCA

You're no longer Stephano, either. You're a prince that was born in Africa long ago. Ukawsaw.

STEPHANO

Ukawsaw Gronniosaw.

REBECCA

My African prince, who was miscast as a servant. In the new world, we'll start again. You can be Ukawsaw and Ferdinand and Othello and Adam, who stayed with his Eve even after God abandoned her. You stayed with me at Lord Pembroke's house and Holland's Brothel and in the Puritan household of Hell. And now we're back in Paradise. We can start all over again.

They kiss and embrace.

STEPHANO

We could teach people to read scripture like you did me. We'll read the story of Adam and Eve.

GEORGE

(off)

Stephano! Are you there?! The Puritans are coming from the ship!

STEPHANO

If he stays, he'll make us do a Shakespearean version of Adam and Eve. Adam will kill his Eve like Othello did Desdemona. Caliban will rape Miranda.

REBECCA

Oh, Ukawsaw, do you love me?

STEPHANO

Yes.

REBECCA

In The Tempest, Ferdinand says to his Miranda:

“O you,
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best!”

STEPHANO

Yes.

REBECCA

Aren't I made of every creature's best?

STEPHANO

Yes.

REBECCA

But it's only through the theatre that I can be my best in every creature I play.

STEPHANO

If he takes you away from me.

REBECCA

He won't.

STEPHANO

How do I know?

REBECCA

You have to trust me. You know what it is to be denied who you are.

STEPHANO

Yes.

REBECCA

And how exciting it is to have the chance to be who you are.

STEPHANO

Yes.

REBECCA

Now is our chance. Nathan is a carpenter, an actor, a director, and a producer. With him we can create a place to be who we are. Go. Tell George I'm here. Take the gold so he knows he can stay.

STEPHANO

And if he doesn't want to? He may take the gold and go to Jamestown.

REBECCA

I'll talk to him.

They kiss.

STEPHANO

I don't want to share you again with anyone.

REBECCA

Go. God says, it is "not good that a person is left alone," so come back soon.

STEPHANO

I'll be back for you.

STEPHANO with the gold exits to the beach. REBECCA with the whale exits into the forest. There are the sounds of drums in the distance. ASKAMABOO appears, directs offstage warriors to hide, then exits. Black.

ACT II, Scene 3

On the beach. Drumming is closer. MASSASOIT is asleep by the dying embers of a fire. GEORGE tries to wake him. STEPHANO enters.

GEORGE

Where were you?

STEPHANO

Just peeing.

GEORGE

They are lowering boats to come ashore. I tore off a blank corner of The Tempest and charred it in the fire to make it look like I burned the whole manuscript.

STEPHANO

You didn't burn it as you promised?

GEORGE

If we burn plays for the Puritans, they'll next think they can burn actors. (trying to wake him) Massasoit.

STEPHANO

I've decided I want to go with him before they get ashore.

GEORGE

What?

STEPHANO

I'll teach the Natives how to read, with Rebecca's Bible, in memory of her.

He gets the Bible.

GEORGE

If John catches you, he'll whip you. I'll teach you carpentry when we build our stage in Jamestown.

STEPHANO

I don't feel right being a part of your theatre.

GEORGE

Why?

STEPHANO

You stole your gold, didn't you?

GEORGE

I borrowed it from a cousin of the Earl of Pembroke.

STEPHANO

Stole it.

GEORGE

Yes.

STEPHANO

Wouldn't it be better to start your theatre without stolen gold?

GEORGE

Be an amateur company? I pay my actors.

STEPHANO

If they find you stole—

GEORGE

They'll thank me for building my theatre in the wilderness where they'll get rich trading in fur and fish. They'll beg me to be a patron of our theatre.

STEPHANO

That's all the more reason I can't be part of your theatre.

GEORGE

What reason?

STEPHANO

They are the men who made coral of my father's bones.

GEORGE

You can play Othello to show the treachery--

STEPHANO

I don't want to be in a Shakespearean tragedy. I want to live in Paradise and teach the people here to read the Bible. There are two men in armor with blunderbusses in the boat. When these pious men of Zion land, all your Ariels and Calibans will be enslaved! And Prospero burned!

GEORGE

All of a sudden, you're a Puritan again. We'll get to Jamestown where the Puritans will be outnumbered by the cavaliers who love Shakespeare. I'll teach you how to love acting.

STEPHANO

The only role I want to play is Adam in Paradise.

STEPHANO tries to wake MASSASOIT.

STEPHANO

Massasoit.

GEORGE

All right, we'll start with the Mystery Plays, but you'll need an Eve. We can find women in Jamestown. Pocahontas had sisters.

STEPHANO

No! Rebecca is the only Eve I ever wanted to know or ever will know.

GEORGE

You have to move on.

STEPHANO

I will.

GEORGE

Good.

STEPHANO

That's why I'm going with him.

GEORGE

The Puritans will accuse me of letting you go.

STEPHANO

Massasoit.

GEORGE

Just wait until I get my gold. I'll settle your service.

STEPHANO

Massasoit.

MASSASOIT

Oh. My head. What were we drinking? The drumming in my head.

STEPHANO

Look.

MASSASOIT sees the boats approach the shore.

MASSASOIT

Oh. My people are getting ready to attack. That's what their drumming means. There is going to be a war.

STEPHANO

(to Massasoit)

I want to come with you.

GEORGE takes ahold of STEPHANO.

GEORGE

They'll blame me for your escape!

He grabs STEPHANO by the ankle.

GEORGE

I have a plan!

STEPHANO

Let go.

GEORGE

I will, but you have to help me escape their punishment letting you get away.

STEPHANO

How!

GEORGE

Push me and knock me down so they see I tried to stop you.

STEPHANO

(pushing him away)

No! If they catch us, they'll punish us worse than you!

GEORGE

Then something else! We have to show them! I'll tell them you went to convert the Natives. Pray with me. One last time! (to Massasoit) Bow wow. Bow wow in front of the cross.

MASSASOIT

No more bow wows.

GEORGE

Please!

GEORGE falls on the ground crying and gnashing his teeth. STEPHANO and MASSASOIT reluctantly kneel. GEORGE scrambles to his knees.

GEORGE

O, Almighty God of Playwrights and Actors, I am but a poor player in need of lines. I will live in your will as I did in Will's will...

JOHN appears at the edge of the forest. MASSASOIT kneels.

GEORGE

...if You help me escape this terrible tragedy.

STEPHANO

Amen! We have to go!

MASSASOIT

Bow-wow. Bow-wow. Come.

MASSASOIT starts to exit followed by STEPHANO. JOHN steps from behind a tree pointing his pistol at them. The drumming in the distances crescendos during the scene.

JOHN

So in your time in the wilderness you taught a savage to desecrate the cross.

GEORGE

He was bowing, sir. And wowing. (demonstrating) Bowing and Wowing.

JOHN

Stay on your knees. Nathan Field.

GEORGE

You must be mistaken.

JOHN

Get down!

GEORGE

I am George Greene.

JOHN

Last night, the people on the ship—

MASSASOIT

Ship!

JOHN

--were fooled by your play, but I was in the woods nearby. I heard those songs at the Globe. You played the Prince of France once.

GEORGE

But, sir...

JOHN

I saw you hide the book of spells on your person.

GEORGE

The spells are gone. The words returned to the thin air as smoke. Sir, the charred remains...

JOHN

I saw you burn one page from it before you hid it on your person. (takes out a rope) Stephano, tie him up. We will burn him for his Satanic worship.

GEORGE

I brought the savage to Christ.

JOHN

Tie him up!

STEPHANO

Sir.

JOHN

Do as I say.

STEPHANO

This is not England.

JOHN

Did you hear my command?

STEPHANO

We are in not in England, sir.

JOHN

Do as I say!

STEPHANO

In the eyes of the Lord---

JOHN

Tie him up!

STEPHANO

I am no longer English. I am Adam and I am going to live in Paradise.

JOHN

You are my indentured servant under the common laws of England.

STEPHANO

There are no laws in Paradise except God's.

GEORGE

(starts to circle John and others adjust)

And we don't know that He talks exclusively to you.

JOHN

Stephano?!

GEORGE

You are surrounded by men who are living outside the law!

MASSASOIT

Men like him must be fought.

JOHN points gun at MASSASOIT.

GEORGE

There is no need to shoot him!

JOHN points the gun at GEORGE.

STEPHANO

I will not tie him up!

JOHN points gun at STEPHANO.

JOHN

(to Stephano)

Do as I say!

GEORGE

Ariel! Caliban!

JOHN points gun at GEORGE. GEORGE tosses cross to MASSASOIT.

GEORGE

Namohs!

MASSASOIT yells and moves towards JOHN. JOHN points the pistol at him. STEPHANO grabs the pistol. It fires into the air. MASSASOIT lifts the cross and stabs JOHN.

MASSASOIT

(standing over John, pushing the cross into him)

I burn more fiercely than your fire stick!

JOHN

Savage! Murderer! Murderer!

GEORGE falls to the ground and calls out to the people on the ship.

GEORGE

Don't kill me! Please don't kill me!

STEPHANO takes the Bible.

MASSASOIT

(to Stephano)

What is he doing?

GEORGE

I don't want to die! Please don't kill me!

STEPHANO

He's acting!

MASSASOIT

Acting?

GEORGE

Have mercy on me!

MASSASOIT

Actor. (putting on an act, he lifts the cross) I will kill you!

GEORGE

No! No!

MASSASOIT stabs the sand by GEORGE and drops the cross and laughs.

MASSASOIT

You are a crazy.

GEORGE

(aside to them)

Run now run! Before they reach the shore!

STEPHANO

(to George)

I found your gold on the beach. It's only right that you have it. Good luck with your theatre in Jamestown.

STEPHANO drops the bag of gold next to GEORGE.

GEORGE

My gold! My gold!

STEPHANO

Goodbye.

STEPHANO and MASSASOIT exit. Suddenly, JOHN grabs GEORGE by the ankle.

JOHN

You're a witch!

GEORGE

Me, sir?

JOHN

I will tell the Congregation.

GEORGE

I tried to stop them! (breaking loose and getting the pistol, shouting into the woods) Vile hag-seed! I will tear you limb from limb! I will battle you to the death! Get back! Back! (to John) I frightened them off.

JOHN

Dear God, you were terrible as the Prince of France. You could never play Falstaff.

GEORGE

Sir. I saved your life.

JOHN dies.

GEORGE

Oh. Sir? Pull yourself together. All the strength I have is in my charms. I will not end in despair. Spirits enforce, art enchant. (He picks up his script.) I will have my stuff of dreams. (to Puritans in the boats) He is dead! He confided in me his dying wish: We must sail to Jamestown immediately!

GEORGE picks up his bag of gold.

GEORGE

Wait. How did my gold float ashore without my whale bladder? Stephano took Rebecca's Bible and cast himself as Adam, so he must have an Eve. And is that Eve, Becky?! Did she get ashore with my bladder and my gold?! (to the ship) You can go on without me! I will start my theatre here!

GEORGE exits, taking with him the gold, pistol, bag, script and cross. Lights to black. Drumming in the distance begins and crescendos, then stops. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahiWyFE4E2c>

ACT II, Scene 4

ASKAMABOO and REBECCA appear from the bushes and watch their men run down the beach towards them.

ASKAMABOO

The Spirit of the Bear is finally in Massasoit.

REBECCA

My husband was a cruel man.

ASKAMABOO

Your canoe with its great white wings is flying away.

REBECCA

It is a beautiful day.

ASKAMABOO

You better go now. You don't want to be left behind.

REBECCA

Thank you very much. You are so kind. We would be happy to stay with you.

ASKAMABOO

You understand things very well.

MASSASOIT and STEPHANO enter at a run.

STEPHANO

He's dead.

REBECCA

He was going to kill you.

STEPHANO

There was no other way.

REBECCA

I know.

MASSASOIT

The man I killed was going to kidnap me like Squanto was.

ASKAMABOO

You had to defend yourself and you did. Hopefully they'll never come back. Once these two leave we'll go to our winter home.

STEPHANO

(to Massasoit)

I brought the Bible to share with you.

MASSASOIT

What's this?

STEPHANO

A Bible is a book with stories that are given to us by God.

STEPHANO raises his hands to the heavens.

MASSASOIT

Bow wow.

STEPHANO

Bow wow. We will teach you to read. (to Rebecca) Come let us give thanks with a real prayer.

He gets on his knees and offers his hand for her to kneel beside him.

REBECCA

Where is George?

STEPHANO

He's going to Jamestown.

REBECCA

Without us?

STEPHANO

He stole that gold from Lord Pembroke.

REBECCA

But Ukawsaw—

STEPHANO

I gave him the gold and he wanted to go to Jamestown.

REBECCA

I'm his Miranda.

STEPHANO

We must give a prayer of thanksgiving for this day.

REBECCA

But....

STEPHANO extends his hand to REBECCA. REBECCA reluctantly kneels.

STEPHANO

Our Father, Who art in Paradise,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth,
As it is in Paradise....

MASSASOIT

(overlapping with prayer)

Isn't it funny how they pray on their knees to their Spirit?

ASKAMABOO

Should we get on our knees out of respect?

MASSASOIT

No. They do crazy things across the water.

STEPHANO

Excuse us. We are guests in your house. Will you join us in prayer? Bow wow.

MASSASOIT

No bow wow.

ASKAMABOO

We have a long walk ahead of us, and you have a long journey across the water. We wish you well and a safe journey.

ASKAMABOO and MASSASOIT start to exit.

REBECCA

They're saying good-bye.

STEPHANO

You're leaving us?

REBECCA

We want to go with you.

ASKAMABOO

What are they saying?

MASSASOIT

I don't know.

ASKAMABOO

Did you ask them to come with us?

MASSASOIT

It's your decision.

ASKAMABOO

It wouldn't work out. She has no family. No land. He looks like he can hunt.

MASSASOIT

They can help clear the fields and dig out canoes in the Spring.

ASKAMABOO

Oh, so you can give them all your work.

MASSASOIT

Yes. To earn their way.

ASKAMABOO

Let me think about this. She has to leave the whale bladder. The village will laugh at you, if they see what you thought was a piece of the moon.

MASSASOIT

Put the moon down. Down.

STEPHANO

I think he wants you to put down the whale bladder.

REBECCA tosses it aside.

MASSASOIT

(explaining to Stephano)

I told everyone that was a piece of the moon.

ASKAMABOO

(laughing)

A whale's bladder!

MASSASOIT

I must have been out of my mind.

MASSASOIT, REBECCA and STEPHANO laugh, too.

ASKAMABOO

They can stay with us but it's not going to be easy. (to Rebecca and Stephano) The village might not accept you. You don't know our language, our ways, our stories.

STEPHANO

(to Rebecca)

What do you think she's saying?

REBECCA

I don't know, but I think she's saying we can go with them.

MASSASOIT

You can come with us. Come. Hub hub hub.

REBECCA

But wait. We can't leave without George.

STEPHANO

He went back on the ship.

REBECCA

Do you know that?

STEPHANO

He was begging with them to take him.

REBECCA

If he gets on the ship, he'll get them to take us.

STEPHANO

We can't. They saw what I did. They'll arrest me. We'll make this our Paradise.

GEORGE

(off)

Wait! Wait for me!

REBECCA

George!

STEPHANO

No!

REBECCA

(calling out to him)

We're here!

REBECCA, followed by STEPHANO, exit.

ASKAMABOO

It's one of the men from the ship.

MASSASOIT

It's all right. He's an actor.

ASKAMABOO

Actor?

MASSASOIT

They're a peaceful tribe. They're different from the evil-spirited people on the ship. We'll have some fun.

ASKAMABOO

We have to get back to our village.

MASSASOIT

I'll show you. Hide!

*MASSASOIT puts on the bear skin, and he and ASKAMABOO hide.
GEORGE and REBECCA enter, followed by STEPHANO.*

REBECCA

Oh, I'm so glad you are with us.

GEORGE

And you! You're alive! Oh, my Becky!

REBECCA

I thought I'd never see you again.

GEORGE

And you!

REBECCA

I'm so sorry I took your whale. I didn't know it had your gold.

GEORGE

What does it matter! It saved you!

REBECCA

Yes! And we're saved by.... Where did they go?

ASKAMABOO and MASSASOIT rise up and circle them in a game. MASSASOIT begins to growl. GEORGE sees the bear and staggers away in fright. STEPHANO sits in despair.

GEORGE

Oh! Spare me! Oh!

GEORGE falls to his knees and MASSASOIT reveals himself.

MASSASOIT

(laughing)

Actor!

GEORGE

(laughing)

Yes! Actor!

REBECCA

Are you all right?

GEORGE

He scared me half to death. (to Massasoit) Your bear is marvelous! I am so happy to be alive! You have to be in our company!

REBECCA

Yes.

GEORGE

(turning to Stephano)

But you! You didn't tell me Becky was alive!

REBECCA drops GEORGE.

REBECCA

You didn't?

STEPHANO

You wanted to go to Jamestown.

GEORGE

Not without you and Becky!

REBECCA

(to Stephano)
I can't believe you didn't tell him!

GEORGE

(physically attacking him)
You led me to believe she was dead!

STEPHANO holds up the Bible in defense.

GEORGE

You accuse me of stealing gold and plays, and then you steal my actors.

REBECCA

Stop!

GEORGE and STEPHANO struggle over the Bible.

REBECCA

You won't fight! You'll listen to me!

GEORGE

We didn't sail across the ocean to tell Bible stories to people.

STEPHANO

You want people to be monsters and fairies, and not be who God made them!

REBECCA

Listen to me!

ASKAMABOO

(overlapping)
You, men! (grabbing the Bible, to George) Do you think you're Moshup, the giant? Let me tell you, you are not. He warned us against the white man and I am watching you. Let her talk and do what she says to do.

MASSASOIT

The women have spoken. Do what the Life-Givers say!

REBECCA

(to Askamaboo)
Thank you. (to Stephano) You lied to me.

GEORGE

Thou shalt not lie.

STEPHANO

I was wrong. I'm sorry. (Falling to his knees.) Our Father who art--

REBECCA

Stop! Why!?

STEPHANO

I was afraid of losing you. After all those years of protecting you from men - Lord Pembroke, Master John – now him. If you went to Jamestown with him, I would lose you forever.

GEORGE

(coming between them)

He's hopelessly in love with you.

REBECCA

(pushing George aside)

I always thought so, until a moment ago.

STEPHANO

I love you.

REBECCA

There's nothing in the Bible that says you lie to the one you love. I lied to John. I lied to the Earl of Pembroke, but never to you.

STEPHANO

I'm sorry. I'll do anything to make up for it.

REBECCA

I don't know if you can.

GEORGE

(coming between them)

I think I have the solution. If you played Ferdinand in my production of The Tempest—

MASSASOIT makes thunder and lightning.

GEORGE

Yes! Ferdinand gets the girl every time. Isn't that what you want?

STEPHANO

(pushing George aside)

In reality, yes. But not in a play.

REBECCA

This isn't the man I know.

STEPHANO

I don't know what to say.

GEORGE

I don't think he's ready to play Ferdinand.

REBECCA

(pushing George aside)

On the ship, I asked you to find if George had anything to read. I was hoping that when we reached the new world, we could discover truths about ourselves through the theatre.

GEORGE

He'll never be able to play "thus humble ever."

STEPHANO

I am thus humble ever.

GEORGE

It's easy to say you're "thus humble ever" as though you're Ferdinand. But can you act him? There are lots of people who would like to be an actor.

MASSASOIT

Actor.

GEORGE

There you have it.

REBECCA

You have to audition.

STEPHANO

All right. I will.

GEORGE

(to Stephano)

Do you remember the lines in the proposal scene on the ship when you played Miranda to my Ferdinand? (showing him the script) From here. You can warm up if you like.

REBECCA leads STEPHANO in a relaxation exercise.

ASKAMABOO

(to Massasoit)

What are they doing?

MASSASOIT

I think they're saying good-bye to the life they had on the ship and hello to the life they want to have here.

GEORGE

Pardon us. Actors are so temperamental (showing Massasoit and Askamaboo the script) This is the proposal scene from Shakespeare's The Tempest.

MASSASOIT thunders and lightnings along with GEORGE.

GEORGE

It's a very tender moment when all of Prospero's dreams—

GEORGE waves an imaginary wand in the air and MASSASOIT imitates.

GEORGE

Yes! Prospero's dreams are coming together in an act of love between his daughter Miranda—

MASSASOIT

(sweetly)

Tada tada.

GEORGE

Yes. And the young prince Ferdinand. (to Massasoit) After this, I would like you to read for Ferdinand. I have gold to pay actors, and we're going to be very rich. We're taking it from here. I know you'll love it.

He gives the play to MASSASOIT.

GEORGE

(to Stephano and Rebecca)

All right. Let's review the events leading up to this moment.

GEORGE confers with REBECCA and STEPHANO. ASKAMABOO and MASSASOIT look at the Bible and script as strange objects.

MASSASOIT

(to Askamaboo)

What do you think these are?

ASKAMABOO

Whatever they are, they create trouble. Do you remember the story I used to tell you about the sailor-ghost? He promised to bring a poor old woman all the wampum in the world if she dug up her backyard. And then the sailor digs it up and steals it from her?

MASSASOIT

She loses all her wealth.

ASKAMABOO

It is better if these stories are buried and nurtured in our soil. Maybe Mother Earth will make them richer. Bury them.

MASSASOIT

They're going to get upset.

ASKAMABOO

We'll tell them the Pukwudgies took them and gave them back to Mother Earth.

MASSASOIT

I explained about Pukwudgies, but I don't think they got it. Mother Earth is way above their understanding.

ASKAMABOO

If they stay with us, sooner or later they'll have to learn about them. Hide them under a rock.

MASSASOIT, moving like a Pukwudgie, hides the Bible and script under a rock. REBECCA sees him do it and smiles.

MASSASOIT

(to Rebecca)

Shshsh.

REBECCA looks to ASKAMABOO and smiles.

ASKAMABOO

Shshsh.

GEORGE

All right. We're ready to begin. Rebecca. We'll do the scene here. (to Massasoit and Askamaboo) If they do well, I'll ask you to hold your applause till the end of the scene.

GEORGE demonstrates applauding.

GEORGE

(to Stephano and Rebecca)

Are you ready? Take it from "My husband, then?"

REBECCA

My husband, then?

STEPHANO

(overly dramatic, falling to his knee)

Ay, with a heart as willing
As bondage e'er of freedom: here's my hand.

REBECCA

And mine, with my heart in 't. And now farewell
Till half an hour hence.

STEPHANO

A thousand thousand!

REBECCA

It doesn't feel right with him on his knees.

STEPHANO

She's right.

REBECCA

We're joining together as equals.

GEORGE

I want you to play it like you're in Lord Pembroke's aristocratic world.

STEPHANO

(to Rebecca)

Let's do it more like Adam and Eve, when she's giving the apple to him.

REBECCA

Yes!

GEORGE

There are other people waiting to audition for your role.

STEPHANO

I'd rather not do it your way.

REBECCA

Neither would I. Let's do what he says and try it like Adam and Eve.

GEORGE

All right! Let me see it.

They play the beat this time with true love.

REBECCA

My husband, then?

STEPHANO

Ay, with a heart as willing
As bondage e'er of freedom: here's my hand.

REBECCA

(holding out her hand as though with an apple in it)
And mine, with my heart in't. And now farewell
Till half an hour hence.

STEPHANO

A thousand thousand!

MASSASOIT sits by the place where the Bible and script are hidden.

GEORGE

Excellent! (to Askamaboo and Massasoit) We can applaud. (applauding)

ASKAMABOO and MASSASOIT stare back at him and smile.

ASKAMABOO

Why is he clapping his hands together like a sea lion?

MASSASOIT

Maybe he thinks seals would like it. I don't get it.

GEORGE

You didn't like it?

ASKAMABOO and MASSASOIT shrug, not understanding.

ASKAMABOO

We have to go. We're wasting daylight.

GEORGE

When you know the play, I'm sure you'll like it.

MASSASOIT

We have to go back to our village.

GEORGE

There are roles to audition for. Where is my script?

ASKAMABOO

He is looking for his wampum.

REBECCA

Wampum.

ASKAMABOO

You can have all the wampum in the world if you look within yourself, and at the world around you.

GEORGE

What is she saying? If I find my script, maybe we could try the Caliban scene.

ASKAMABOO

A pukwudgie came.

GEORGE

What?

REBECCA

They're trying to tell us something.

MASSASOIT

(acting like a pukwudgie)

A pukwudgie.

GEORGE

Pukwudgie.

REBECCA laughs and starts acting like a pukwudgie with MASSASOIT looking around for hidden things.

MASSASOIT

(acting like a pukwudgie)

A pukwudgie came in this way and then went that way.

ASKAMABOO

(expressive, like a storyteller)

The pukwudgies can be very mean.

ASKAMABOO growls. REBECCA growls. MASSASOIT growls.

ASKAMABOO

Our tribe has a giant hero called Moshup. He created the land of the Cape where we come to live in the summer. It's said that the pukwudgies killed him.

MASSASOIT

Pukwudgie. (growls with Rebecca)

GEORGE looks out to the ship sailing away.

STEPHANO

They took the Bible, too.

REBECCA

What's the matter?

GEORGE

All of a sudden, I feel like I want to go someplace where English is spoken and there are Shakespearean villains.

STEPHANO

And a Bible. Where's my Bible?

REBECCA

Maybe the pukwudgies took it, too.

GEORGE

Our ship has sailed.

REBECCA

There's no going back.

GEORGE

(fiercely, trying to understand)

What is a pukwudgie!?

STEPHANO

They're not in the Bible.

REBECCA

The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself dissolve.

GEORGE

Dissolve?

STEPHANO

Are you saying our Paradise is lost!

GEORGE

The insubstantial pageant fades?

REBECCA

Leaving not a rack behind.

STEPHANO

In the beginning was the Word. We can't live without words.

REBECCA

We have to let them go.

GEORGE

No.

STEPHANO

No.

REBECCA

Yes.

ASKAMABOO and MASSASOIT nod in agreement. GEORGE and STEPHANO fall into each other's arms and sob uncontrollably.

REBECCA

Last night, I dreamed that two sailors came to Paradise with a Bible and a play that was buried in a women's backyard where they were nurtured by Mother Earth.

She sits next to the hiding place and puts her hand on it.

REBECCA

The men promised her if she found them, she would have all the riches in the world. But when she went looking for them, they were gone. The men had stolen them from the Earth. There was nothing but an empty hole. Last night, when I woke up from my dream, I realized that the richness that we have in the stories we bring with us need to be nurtured by our Mother. Until we learn a new tongue and find new stories to tell so they will be a part of all of us, we need her help.

GEORGE

Are you speaking English?

STEPHANO

You're talking about the Bible.

REBECCA

Those books only remind us of where we have been, not where we are and where we're going. If we create theatre in Paradise, it's not enough to do Shakespeare or read stories

from the Bible. Those words are only seeds. If we plant them respecting the people who live here, we will grow new stories nurtured by Her wisdom.

She reveals the Bible and the play.

MASSASOIT

Tada dada dada dada. Actor!

ASKAMABOO

Actor.

REBECCA

Actor!

STEPHANO

Actor!

REBECCA gives the play and the Bible to ASKAMABOO.

REBECCA

We will make theatre in Paradise! We'll make up stories from the stuff of dreams, enact a history that never was and a future that never will be until we bring it into being. We'll imagine a better world through the stories we enact.

ASKAMABOO

The Winter is coming on. We will be back in the Spring and we'll learn what Mother Earth has given us.

MASSASOIT

In the Spring, I'll teach you how to cut down trees and dig out canoes.

GEORGE

Di-ow-can-o?

MASSASOIT

Dig out canoes. And fish for namohs.

GEORGE

Namohs!

ASKAMABOO

If you're not careful, he'll get you to do all his work.

GEORGE

All his work!

ASKAMABOO

He'll tell you great stories about the pukwudgies from his trickster imagination. At our pow wows...

GEORGE

Bow wows?

MASSASOIT

Pow wows.

ASKAMABOO

He'll teach you how to dance.

MASSASOIT

Dance.

GEORGE

Dance?

MASSASOIT demonstrates. GEORGE, REBECCA and STEPHANO try the step and get into it.

ASKAMABOO

Finally you found people as crazy as you!

MASSASOIT

May the ship shits never return to our shores.

GEORGE

Ship shits.

MASSASOIT

Chickachava!

GEORGE

Chickachava!

MASSASOIT

We will dance this Fall (slapping the sand) On a stage!

STEPHANO

On a stage!

REBECCA

On a stage!

GEORGE

On a stage!

ASKAMABOO

On Mother Earth!

ALL

On Mother Earth!

ASKAMABOO

The sun is up.

MASSASOIT

We are the First to Know the Rising Sun. Hub hub hub.

ASKAMABOO

We know the way!

Exeunt, on a run. Music begins. The COMPANY enters singing and dancing to a Native rhythm.

ALL

Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Courtsied when you have and kiss'd
The wild waves whist:
Foot it featly here and there;
And, Holy Spirits, the burthen bear.
Hark, hark!

Bow. Wow.
The watch dogs bark:
Bow. Wow.

They all celebrate bowing and wowing and raising their hands upward to the sky. All exit, except ASKAMABOO who comes forward.

ASKAMABOO

During the Winter, we enjoyed life around the fire. After two seasons of planting and hunting and harvesting, George started on a journey in a canoe which the village helped him make. He was headed to England to share our stories. He disappeared over the horizon and was not seen again. Massasoit died from the sickness that came with people from Europe. Stephano married Rebecca and they had many children most of whom ended up in Bermuda. After the Puritan's defeated the Wampanoag in King Philip's War, they were sold like many of our people into slavery. Many of my descendants live today on Martha's Vineyard. This play of ours only suggests how our stories and our

love of our mother tongue could be the way to live amongst each other on Mother Earth - our paradise – given to us by our Creator.

ASKAMABOO leads a blessing and exits. Lights to black.

THE END