

Heroines of Chaos

Full length stage drama in one act

by

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** Cast of Characters **

DELBEE: (Female, around 20) Zsófi's granddaughter. Acts as storyteller.

ZSÓFI: (schoolgirl 18, then later in 20s, 30s) Transylvanian ancestry, Head Prefect turned environmental activist, and later, a mother. Her father was Kamil, a name used in Arabic, Turkish, Pashto, and Kurdish. Her mother spoke Hungarian.

YUVAN Ivaskow: (male 57, later in 60s, 70s) Zsófi's great-uncle, an engineer.

ALTAN: (male, 20s) Mongolian migrant fruit-picker. Asiatic eyes. Buddhist. No English. Mispronounces 'f' as 'p'. Talent for throat-singing.

TAMARA Ivaskow: (schoolgirl, 16, then later 20s, 30s) In the epilog, Tamara appears in her 80s but hooded or veiled. US immigrant. Daughter of LARA. Tamara has never met her grandfather (Yuvan).

INNA: (female, about 45) of Russian extraction.

FERENC: (male, 20s to 40s) Zsófi's cousin.

SARA: (female, mid-forties) Yuvan's friend.

VAIMITI: (Female, 20s, very pregnant) A native Kiribati islander, a cleaner. In one scene only. Little dialogue.

SALVADORI: (Male, 24, later in forties, parents from El Salvador) Neighbouring orchardist and bee-keeper.

COLONEL: (male, over 60) reporter, wears distinctive military beret and campaign ribbons, plus a PRESS jacket.

HAWAIIKI: (girl, 16, from Kiribati. Sara's ward. Hawaiki has Tikopian ancestry and wears a large, prominent Tikopian pendant around her neck.

GABRIELA: (female, 18, Salvadori). Salvadori's daughter.

ODVAL: (Female, as baby, and in 50s) Zsófi's child. Has Asiatic eyes. No dialogue.

MEN: (Four, for various peripheral roles) Four men who menace Zsófi. A press-photographer, a soldier, a newsreader, a realtor, stretcher-bearers, and so on.

** SCENE **

Aotearoa and Europe.

Because there are many scene changes, a minimalist approach is adopted: no scenery, a bare stage, minimal props, but good lighting and sound. A storyteller is used to set and describe some scenes. A podium, a bar-table, a few chairs, a car tyre a stretcher, and a shovel should be available. Some scenes are short and slick changes are needed to keep up the pace.

** TIME **

TIME

Main storyline 2022-2043. Epilog 2092. A storyteller is used to keep track of the timeline.

Ballpark running time: two hours.

Actual dialog: about 45 minutes.

** Scene **#1

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: ACCESS TRACK - DAY.
A platform or podium might be used to indicate the farmhouse verandah. Pieces of cardboard on small chairs to simulate the headstones; a tyre to symbolize a vehicle. In the area representing the orchard, is a picking ladder with extended anti-roll feet.

AT RISE : ZSÓFI, female, 18, stands at head of track. Zsófi is bare-legged with sensible school shoes, and wearing English-style private-school uniform, an elegant, pin-striped blazer with a PREFECT badge, and a straw boater with a flat brim and crown. She's holding a bunch of chrysanthemums. Zsófi checks her mobile, and waits. She does not smile. As storyteller, DELBEE comes and stands at the front of stage, to one side.

DELBEE

Hi there. My name's Delbee, and this is the story of my grandmother, Zsófi. It begins here, at the head of a gravel track. Behind me, nestled among trees on a slight knoll, stands an old clapboard colonial farmhouse with an extensive front verandah. There's a cherry orchard with ripe fruit, and there's a carport, which shelters an electric, two-seater farm utility vehicle. There's also a private garden of remembrance, with a new headstone for Zsófi's mother there, and her ashes... And, here comes a monster off-road V8 diesel SUV, roaring up the unsealed track, belching stinking black diesel exhaust fumes.

(Offstage chorus make SOUND of monster diesel off-road sports utility vehicle.
SOUND: HONK! HONK! A car-door slams. YUVAN, male, 57, Polish, enters. He wears a dark business suit, with a red tie, and a red peaked cap. Zsófi wrinkles her nose, coughs, waving away acrid fumes.)

YUVAN

How long have we got?

ZSÓFI

A few years, I think.

(Exasperated, Yuvan throws
his hands up.)

YUVAN

What? I meant, how long're you off school for?

ZSÓFI

All day. I'm on bereavement leave.

YUVAN

Then why the school uniform?

ZSÓFI

It's for Mum.

(Zsófi is suddenly upset.
Yuvan puts an arm round her.
Zsófi shakes his arm off.)

YUVAN

A few years? What did you think I meant, Zsófi?

ZSÓFI

The weather. A few years, till it goes completely haywire
and we can't fix it.

YUVAN

That's enough doom-mongering!

ZSÓFI

I'm not! It's legit. I have to live with it. Willy-nilly.
It's the biggest thing in my life.

YUVAN

Okay, Zsófi.

(Yuvan tries to placate her,
but Zsófi snorts:)

ZSÓFI

Zsófi (cont'd)

If we get heavy rain at harvest time, it splits the cherries open, and ruins the crop!

(Yuvan holds up both hands to stop her.)

ZSÓFI

And if there's not enough frost in winter, we get no fruit at all! And the bees -

(Yuvan cuts in.)

YUVAN

Zsófi, okay, okay.

(Yuvan leads off toward a small area surrounded by a low, white-painted picket fence. Zsófi follows slowly.)

(PRIVATE GARDEN OF
REMEMBRANCE - DAY. Yuvan and
Zsófi stand side by side
before the headstones, and
Zsófi's mother's ashes. Zsófi
tries to hold back the tears.
)

YUVAN

Our Father, who art in -

(BANG! The SOUND of a
scare-cannon in the cherry
orchard. Zsófi jumps.
Offstage chorus quickly clap
fingers together and caw to
make the SOUND of many
flapping wings, twittering,
birds screeching. Zsófi
groans. Then PING! Yuvan's
mobile.)

YUVAN

Sorry, Zsófi. Another outbreak. Code red.

(Sound of anguish, groan from
Zsófi.)

ZSÓFI

Uncle, you promised my father.

YUVAN

I'll be back, Zsófi.

(Yuvan puts his arm around
Zsófi. Zsófi shrugs him off
again. Yuvan gives up. He
begins to walk away, then
turns.)

YUVAN

You know how to pick cherries, Zsófi?

(Zsófi snorts.)

ZSÓFI

Of course!

YUVAN

I'm an engineer, Zsófi.

ZSÓFI

It all depends on the color, and the variety. They stop
ripening as soon as they're picked ...

(But Yuvan is striding off
back to his monster off-road
sports utility vehicle. Yuvan
turns, and waves goodbye to
Zsófi. Zsófi ignores him.
SOUND: Car-door slamming. The
vehicle roars off down the
farm access track, leaving a
trail of black exhaust fumes
mixed with dust. Zsófi
coughs, and waves the fumes
away.)

ZSÓFI

Bloody diesel!

(Zsófi lays the chrysanthemums on the grave, then stands. She takes her boater off, and lets the breeze ruffle her hair. Zsófi checks the sundial on the way up to the house.)

(VERANDAH - DAY. Two walking poles are propped in the corner. Taking her shoes off, Zsófi goes inside. From offstage comes sound of Zsófi in distress, muffled wails, heavy thumps. The wailing ebbs, and finally there is quiet. BANG! SOUND: many flapping wings, twittering, birds screeching. The farmhouse door squeaks open slowly. Zsófi comes out again, wearing dark sunglasses to brave the world, carrying her mobile, and waving the keys to the UTV. Zsófi blow-kisses the graves, then mutters, as she heads offstage.

ZSÓFI

Cm'on, Zsófi! You can do this!

(Exit Zsófi. Sound: TOOT! TOOT!)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#2

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: SAME ACCESS TRACK -
NIGHT. Moonlight.

AT RISE : No-one on stage.

(LIGHTS suddenly illuminate the path to the house. Zsófi enters, followed by ALTAN, in Mongolian clothing, carrying a large bag of belongings. Altan looks around, as if bewildered. Zsófi goes up to Altan and holds out her hand.)

ZSÓFI

Passport?

(Altan digs it out and hands it over. Zsófi digs a torch from her pocket and checks it.)

ZSÓFI

Aha. Temporary work visa.

(Zsófi pockets the passport, and then wanders over to the gravestones, and kneels. Altan eventually follows, unsure what else to do. He looks down at Zsófi and realises she is weeping. He kneels down beside her. Altan begins to sing a Mongolian lament from his throat. Zsófi wails.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#3

SETTINGS: SAME CHERRY ORCHARD - DAY.
Sunshine.

AT RISE : A picking ladder with extended
anti-roll feet. Altan is near the
top; Zsófi on the grass below.

ZSÓFI

Altan?

(Zsófi holds out her hand.
Altan hands some cherries, by
the stalks, down to Zsófi,
who inspects. A small cart
with cardboard punnets stands
next to Zsófi, in the shade.
Zsófi puts the ripe cherries
in one hand, shows them to
Altan, who nods. Zsófi eats
one happily, and puts the
others in a punnet. Zsófi
shows Altan the unripe ones,
waggles a finger, shakes her
head, and hands them up.)

ZSÓFI

Eat!

(Altan tastes them, shakes
his head, and spits them out.
They move on to the next
tree, and check some
low-hanging fruit. Altan only
picks ripe ones. They high
five.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#4

SETTINGS: Approach road to a few simple huts thatched with palm fronds by the sea - DAY

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front of the stage, to one side

DELBEE

Hi everyone. Delbee again. You may have been wondering why Yuvan had to leave so suddenly, and what he meant by code red. So, it was an outbreak of a deadly virus on an island in Micronesia. Imagine a tiny village by the sea. There are a few simple fishing boats on the beach, but no humans in sight. Out along the access road is an approaching cloud of dust, caused by three canvas top Landrover jeeps flying WHO/UNMEER-flag. The convoy slows and halts outside the village, and Yuvan, steps out of the command vehicle at the rear,

(Yuvan, wearing his red peaked cap, enters, carrying a drone and laptop. He flies the drone over the village. Three men from the convoy also enter: they are wearing hoods, facemasks and goggles, and carry a stretcher, and a flame-thrower. They head off across the stage into the village. Yuvan uses short-wave radio and his laptop to track and communicate with them.)

YUVAN

What? One dead in the first hut? What's your guess as to the cause of death?

(Pause.)

YUVAN

What? Bloodshot eyes? Faint pulse, barely breathing? Pneumonia or virus? Nipah? Yes, take a blood sample first.

(One patient is stretchered
across the stage from the
village toward the jeeps.
Then the stretcher-bearers
head back into the village
with an empty stretcher.)

YUVAN

What? Yes, same procedure. They're all dead in the third
hut? How many?

(Pause. Stretcher-bearers
carry a second patient across
the stage toward the jeeps.)

YUVAN

Four? Four dead already! Yes, take blood samples first,
and then build a pyre so we can burn the bodies.

(Pause. Yuvan uses the laptop
to manipulate the drone.)

YUVAN

What? Yes, you'll have to burn all the huts, there's no
alternative.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#5

SETTINGS: SCHOOL NETBALL COURT - DAY.

AT RISE : There is an after-school practice game in progress. Two teams of fifteen/sixteen-year-olds, each wearing different colored bibs. One of the players is TAMARA (16, born in the USA, with part-Polish blood) wearing the CENTRE bib. Throughout, Tamara speaks with a Wisconsin drawl. The referee on the sideline is Zsófi, in uniform with boater, whistle, and PREFECT badge.

(Delbee comes on and stands at the front of stage, to one side.)

DELBEE

Hi. You may be wondering about the Nipah virus. It is generally associated with fruit bats, the mortality rate is over forty percent, and yes, there is the odd outbreak. But meanwhile, back in New Zealand, at a private school somewhere.

(Tamara, near the shooting circle, throws the ball. PEEP!)

ZSÓFI

Footwork!

(Tamara sees Zsófi on the sideline, paddling her extended arms up and down in front - the footwork-fault gesture. Tamara looks down at her foot, which is over the white shooting circle line. She shakes her head in disbelief. Tamara hands the ball over to the opposing team.)

(Tamara holds the ball and hesitates for more than three seconds. PEEP!)

ZSÓFI

Held ball!

(Tamara looks across at Zsófi, who raises one hand high with three fingers extended. Tamara looks frustrated. Tamara hands over the ball again.)

(Tamara obstructs an opposing-team player. PEEP!)

ZSÓFI

Obstruction!

(Zsófi holds out both arms in front, palms facing. Tamara looks perplexed, but hands the ball over again.)

(A long blast on the whistle. Game over. Then, a short peep on whistle. Tamara looks over at Zsófi, who beckons Tamara over. Tamara approaches Zsófi.)

ZSÓFI

What's your name, girl?

TAMARA

Tamara. Tamara Jackson.

ZSÓFI

American?

TAMARA

Yup.

ZSÓFI

Oh, is that why? It's not basketball! It's netball.

(Tamara frowns.)

ZSÓFI

No dribbling, no contact. And centre must stay outside the shooting circle.

(Tamara looks dejected.)

ZSÓFI

Look, you've got the ball-skills. You could make the school team.

(Zsófi smiles at Tamara.)

ZSÓFI

Which part of the US?

TAMARA

Door County. Wisconsin.

ZSÓFI

What's that like?

TAMARA

Ya know, lots of orchards.

(Zsófi vocalises sudden acute interest.)

ZSÓFI

Cherry?

TAMARA

Sure.

(Zsófi's face is pleased and

smiles.)

ZSÓFI

Know how to pick cherries?

TAMARA

Sure.

ZSÓFI

Awesome! I need experienced fruit-pickers. This weekend, my place. Minimum wage. Yes?

TAMARA

Sure.

ZSÓFI

Friday, bring your weekend gear. You'll be sleeping over at my place.

(Tamara nods.)

ZSÓFI

We can go over the netball rules together, eh?

(Tamara smiles.)

TAMARA

Ya know, I'd like that. ...

ZSÓFI

Of course.

(Zsófi waves goodbye with her fingers, and wanders away, then looks back with a smile before heading toward the car park. Tamara stares after her.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#6

SETTINGS: SUBURBAN KITCHEN - NIGHT

AT RISE : LARA Jackson née Iwaskow (34, an American-religious conservative, but solo mother) is dressed conservatively in black. Tamara, still in netball gear, sits at the table on a stool, and watches.

(Lara prepares dinner for Tamara.)

TAMARA

Ya know, it's just pickin' cherries, Mom.

LARA

I must speak with her mother first.

TAMARA

Ya know, Mom, both her parents are dead already. Zsófi lives on her own.

(Lara snorts.)

LARA

I will not have you consorting with harlots, girl.

(Tamara rolls her eyes, but best not to argue. Gently:)

TAMARA

Ya know, Zsófi's not a harlot, Mom.

LARA

Honor thy mother! Lift up thine eyes unto the hills.

(Lara stands there, praying away with her eyes closed. Tamara tiptoes away.)

LARA

Lara (cont'd)

Dear Sweet Lord Jesus, we pray for our daughter Tamara.

(Tamara escapes on tiptoes,
leaving the door ajar.)

LARA

May she find sweet solace in Thy arms.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#7

SETTINGS: SAME GIRLS' SCHOOL: CAR-PARK -
DAY.

AT RISE : Zsófi, holding a dandelion, stands
by her EV (use two chairs, a tyre)
checks her mobile, and waits.

(Tamara, carrying her
satchel, and a weekend bag,
arrives and looks round for
Zsófi. Tamara spots her.)

TAMARA

Zsófi! Zsófi!

(Zsófi looks up, and waves.
Tamara goes on over. Zsófi
kisses the dandelion, and
presents it to Tamara. Tamara
laughs lightly, and curtsies.
The two girls have a brief,
chaste hug. Tamara puts her
bag and satchel on the UTV.
Zsófi gestures Tamara toward
the nearside. Tamara gets in.
Zsófi mimes closing the
passenger door. But it does
not shut properly.)

ZSÓFI

Oh dear, the door won't shut.

(Zsófi pretends to use her
butt to shut the car door.
Eager, Zsófi gets in, and
they drive off together.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#8

SETTINGS: SAME CHERRY ORCHARD - DAY.

AT RISE : Zsófi, Tamara, and Altan with straw hats, and strap-on front buckets, are picking cherries, mostly using A-shaped ladders with wide foot-extensions on large ground-sheets.

(Periodically, they carry the pickings to a small, old packing shed and cool-store beside the orchard.)

(TIME-LAPSE SEQUENCE. TIME PASSES: they keep picking, drink from water bottles from time to time, right until SUNDOWN. Then they pack up, eat on the verandah, quiet, exhausted, but content. The girls sleep in the farmhouse: Altan outside. SUNRISE. Tamara brings out breakfast for Altan. They pick cherries all day. They pick cherries, pause in the shade to drink water, then pick more cherries, repeat.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#9

SETTINGS: PRIVATE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE AS
BEFORE - DAY

AT RISE : Zsófi stands by her mother's
grave, Tamara by her side. Delbee
stands at the front of the stage,
to one side, as before.

(Delbee exits.)

DELBEE
Hi, a month has passed. The harvest is over. But Tamara
still comes and sleeps over at the weekends.

ZSÓFI
It's just my mother's ashes.

(Tamara gives Zsófi's arm a
squeeze.)

TAMARA
Wow! She was young.

ZSÓFI
Breast cancer. The worst thing is: I can't talk to her
now.

(Tamara gives Zsófi a hug.)

TAMARA
Ya know, you have me now.

ZSÓFI
And I have an orchard.

(Zsófi leads the way up
toward the house.)

TAMARA
Ya know, Leviticus says: thou shalt not lie down with man
kind.

ZSÓFI

You come up with the weirdest things, sweetie.

TAMARA

Zsófi, you've kept Altan on, eh?

ZSÓFI

He's a good worker. Why not? Are you jealous?

(Tamara looks away, then
tucks her arm inside
Zsófi's.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#10

SETTINGS: BAND ROTUNDA IN TOWNSHIP PARK -
DAY.

AT RISE : Zsófi stands alone, by the path in
front of the rotunda, holding up a
placard: 'SCHOOL STRIKE FOR
WEATHER' (cf. Greta Thunberg).
Delbee stands at side of stage.

DELBEE

Hi. As you see, my grandmother did street protests. Here
she is in the local park, at the band rotunda.

(Delbee exits. A woman, INNA,
enters, carrying a placard 'I
STAND WITH UKRAINE'. The
woman stops some meters from
Zsófi, gives a small wave and
raises her placard.)

(TIME PASSES. Both protesters
move from one leg to the
other. People come and stroll
by without paying attention.
Soon, a press photographer
arrives. He wears a
bulletproof vest and takes
photos of Zsófi. Eventually,
Inna and Zsófi exchange
glances.)

INNA

Coffee?

ZSÓFI

Gladly.

(Inna and Zsófi exit.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#11

SETTINGS: INSIDE A COFFEE SHOP - DAY Inside
an old warehouse/factory unit that
has been converted into a coffee
shop. A bar-table.

AT RISE : Zsófi and Inna are standing,
leaning on the bar-table, on which
are two china coffee mugs. Their
placards are stacked aside.

 INNA
So, my family's from Prokhorovka, near Kursk, in Russia.

(Inna is suddenly
grief-stricken. Zsófi touches
Inna's arm to console her.)

 INNA
They were turfed out by the Fascists in nineteen
forty-three.

(Inna wipes away her tears.)

 INNA
I'm so sorry: as a young girl, I was brought up near Chop,
on the Hungarian border.

(TIME PASSES: Zsófi and Inna
continue talking, chatting,
animated.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#12

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: VERANDAH - NIGHT
[AS BEFORE]

AT RISE : Zsófi and Inna are leaning against
the balustrade, staring out into
the night. A light comes on in the
darkness, then goes off again.
Delbee stands at the front of
stage, to one side.

DELBEE
And we're back at the farmhouse again.

(Delbee exits.)

ZSÓFI
Altan sleeps out under the stars.

INNA
Is that what you want, Zsófi?

ZSÓFI
Not sure if I can do this, I'm just a girl.

INNA
Is this the first time, Zsófi?

(Zsófi giggles.)

ZSÓFI
Of course not. It's like: I do want to be happy. It's the
chaotic weather gets me down.

INNA
Zsófi, why worry?

ZSÓFI
Because it matters, to me, to my generation. It'll fuck
everything up.

INNA
When I was a young girl, in Soviet times, the future
looked very black. But it all came right in the end.

ZSÓFI

Zsófi (cont'd)

You're not taking me seriously, Inna.

INNA

Are you sure, dear girl, that you're not just upset about losing your mother?

ZSÓFI

It's not that.

(Inna sighs.)

INNA

Zsófi, can you put it to one side for now?

ZSÓFI

Not really. Inna, I'm just so angry, because people don't listen. They just don't want to know.

INNA

It was like that in Soviet times, Zsófi. Till Chernobyl.

ZSÓFI

The nuclear accident?

(Inna nods, and takes both
Zsófi's hands.)

INNA

Nuclear idiocy, more like. Out there are evil men, who don't want people to know the truth.

(Zsófi nods. They seem to
have reached some mutual
understanding. Inna gives
Zsófi a good hug. Inna opens
the farmhouse door, and
gestures Zsófi inside.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#13

SETTINGS: SAME GIRLS' SCHOOL: PROJECTOR ROOM
- DAY. A high table, on which stands a projector. Two charts are on display, one for summer, the other for winter. Both represent the Weather forecast for 2090: changes in mean temperature compared to present day. In general, summer temperatures rise by three to four degrees, but much less near the East coast on the island closer to the pole. Winter temperatures rise less.

AT RISE : Zsófi, in school uniform, is leaning against a high table by the projector, busy making notes, glancing up at two charts.

(The end-of-class school bell rings. Pause. Then: KNOCK, KNOCK! Tamara enters, wearing school uniform. Tamara carries her satchel. She studies the charts.)

TAMARA

Science, eh?

ZSÓFI

Weather projections for two thousand and ninety.

(Zsófi walks over to the temperature charts.)

ZSÓFI

This one's summer, the other one winter. It should get warmer here.

TAMARA

Cool, eh.

ZSÓFI

Actually, not cool. Hot.

(Zsófi switches the projector to show two rainfall charts for 2090. In summer, the North Island will be distinctly drier; and in winter, some parts will be drier; but much of the South Island will be forty percent wetter.)

ZSÓFI

Rainfall: summer and winter. Here in Te Matau a Maui it'll get drier.

TAMARA

What's with all this rainfall down south?

ZSÓFI

Drought in summer; flooding in winter. Or just plain vanilla weather chaos.

(Zsófi switches the projector again to show a graph of global CO2 emissions around COVID period.)

ZSÓFI

Carbon dioxide emissions during COVID. Worldwide.

TAMARA

Wow. They went right down, eh!

ZSÓFI

Yes, it looks like that. But in fact, they only fell eleven percent.

(Zsófi begins packing her stuff up. Tamara smiles.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#14

SETTINGS: SAME CARPARK - DAY [AS BEFORE] AT
THE GIRLS' SCHOOL.

AT RISE : No-one on stage.

(The two girls enter on one
side, and carry their bags to
the UTV on the other side.)

ZSÓFI

Cherries need frost. Up here, we barely get one frost day
per year now. So we use chemical sprays instead.

(They reach the UTV.)

TAMARA

Whatever.

ZSÓFI

Whereas down in Otakou, it's cooler, so there's no need.

(Zsófi goes to the driver's
side, and Tamara goes to the
passenger side.)

TAMARA

Where's Otakou?

ZSÓFI

On the other island. Closer to the South Pole.

TAMARA

So what?

ZSÓFI

Who knows? Maybe there's a tipping point in the weather.

TAMARA

Ya know, they said that was all a hoax.

ZSÓFI

Who told you that? Where's the evidence?

(Tamara looks puzzled. Zsófi
thinks what to say next.)

ZSÓFI

We'll find out one day - our generation.

(Zsófi walks round and gives
Tamara a hug.)

ZSÓFI

I'm just worried about the orchard.

TAMARA

Ya know, I just don't feel it, Zsófi. I just want to do
stuff, somethin' excitin'.

(Zsófi frowns.)

ZSÓFI

But will we get enough rain this year, next year?

TAMARA

Shit, Zsófi, just grow date palms and olives instead.

(Zsófi blows a raspberry,
exasperated.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#15

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: VERANDAH - DAY

AT RISE : Zsófi and Tamara stand in
deshabille. On the table are mugs,
and a teapot. Delbee stands at the
side of stage.

DELBEE

We're back at the farmhouse again: three months later.

(Delbee exits.)

ZSÓFI

There's a street protest coming up, do you want to come,
Tamara?

TAMARA

Sure. I'd love to.

(Zsófi stops to think.)

ZSÓFI

It's no good coming just to be with me. Your heart has to
be in it.

TAMARA

I just want to see what all the fuss is about.

ZSÓFI

Okay. On that basis.

(Tamara nods agreement.)

ZSÓFI

Look, I know it's hard for you. You were brought up to
believe in God and Money. Give it time.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#16

SETTINGS: BAND ROTUNDA IN PARK - DAY [AS
BEFORE]

AT RISE : Zsófi is on the rotunda, holding a
microphone, delivering her rousing
speech. Tamara watches from the
front row. Delbee stands at the
front of stage, to one side.

DELBEE

Hi. In those days, there were SCHOOL STRIKE street
demonstrations all around the world. Teenagers in
school-uniform and young people filled the streets,
marching in protest, calling for action to counter weather
chaos. Some held placards entitled: THERE IS NO PLANET B.

(Delbee exits.)

ZSÓFI

... Who is to blame? Not us consumers. It's the suppliers,
the companies, the politicians. The bankers that finance
them. If nothing else, they have mislead us.

(The crowd, and Tamara,
applaud wildly. A man wearing
a PRESS body-armor vest takes
photos via a long range lens,
pointing it at Zsófi.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#17

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: VERANDAH - NIGHT.
Two Nordic-style wooden walking poles stand in the corner.
Cyclone.

AT RISE : Throughout this scene: very heavy rain. SOUND of wind howling and thunder, and streaks of lightning. Tamara and Zsófi stand together in night-attire, near the balustrade, staring out into the night. SOUND of flooding water, gurgling, racing across the farm and orchard. Delbee stands at side of stage.

DELBEE

Hi. Let's move on to twenty-twenty-three. It's high summer in New Zealand. That year, there were three weather events in close succession: Cyclone Hale, in January, which lasted four days; then eight days of heavy rainfall; and then Cyclone Gabrielle, which lasted another four days. Almost all country roads in the Gisborne area were closed, and villages cut off for weeks. Eight bridges were destroyed, and the area suffered major damage, with landslides across roads, lost embankments, and extensive flooding. There was major flooding in Auckland too. Cars were abandoned. There were people out in the rain in pyjamas, desperately trying to stop basements flooding. Some houses were swept away. Some people died.

(Delbee exits.)

ZSÓFI

That sounds like flooding. I'll have to check what's going on.

(Tamara looks at the mobile phone in her hand.)

TAMARA

No signal!

(Tamara flicks the outdoor

light switch.)

TAMARA

Power's out too.

(Zsófi goes inside, and comes
out carrying a flashlight.)

ZSÓFI

There's a wood-burner stove on the back porch. Use it and
make some tea. I'll be back.

(Zsófi turns to go, then
stops, pauses, and faces back
toward Tamara.)

ZSÓFI

No, be an angel and make soup instead!

(Tamara salutes.)

TAMARA

Yes, Ma'am!

ZSÓFI

I've gotta find Altan.

(Zsófi tinkles a laugh, gives
a farewell wave, using only
her fingersg, and grabs the
walking-sticks. Tamara grabs
Zsófi's arm as if to stop
her.)

ZSÓFI

I'm going in.

(Zsófi plunges off and
disappears into the rain.
Tamara watches, looking
worried, then goes inside.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#18

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: VERANDAH - DAY.
Daybreak. Towels are now stacked
on the table, alongside soup
bowls.

AT RISE : Tamara waits anxiously on the
verandah. Throughout this scene:
SOUND of wind howling, rain,
floodwater, and thunder. FLASHES
of lightning.

(Altan comes into sight,
wading through floodwaters.
He splashes up the steps,
barefoot, followed by Zsófi.
Both are soaking wet.)

TAMARA
I've been so worried! Where were you?

(Zsófi's teeth are
chattering. Altan is cold and
shuddery. Zsófi takes her
raincoat off, and peels
Altan's T-shirt upwards.)

TAMARA
There's a billy of hot water on the fire. I'll run a warm
bath.

(Tamara goes inside.)

ZSÓFI
Altan! Come!

(Zsófi takes Altan by the
arm. He is shivering
uncontrollably. Tamara calls
from offstage.)

TAMARA

Tamara (cont'd)

Bath's ready!

(Zsófi leads Altan inside.)

(LATER: SCENE LIGHTING
TEMPORARILY OFF. THEN ON
AGAIN.)

(Tamara comes out with a huge
tureen of soup, and biscuits,
and puts all on the table.
Zsófi and Altan come out in
dry clothes, ravenous.)

ZSÓFI

We were trapped for hours on the roof of the packing shed
by the floodwaters.

(All three begin soup with
bread. Tamara weeps in
relief.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#19

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: VERANDAH - DAY.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at stage-front, to one side.

DELBEE

A long month has gone by. Yuvan's sports utility vehicle roars up the track, billowing diesel smuts. The vehicle fishtails momentarily in on the silted, muddy track.

(SOUND: sports utility vehicle roars. Pause. The car door slams.)

(Yuvan appears, wearing muddy gumboots.)

YUVAN

My God! Silt everywhere, it's like a wasteland. The orchard's a mess.

(Yuvan shakes his head in disbelief at the devastation - silt everywhere, trees bent over and dying, flood damage.)

YUVAN

YOOHOOO! Zsófi! I've got kai!

(Zsófi and Tamara appear from behind farmhouse, mud-bespattered, exhausted, with spades. They are both wearing gumboots. They have been shovelling silt. They stop, and Zsófi's face contorts with anger.)

ZSÓFI

Get that stinking diesel off my property, Uncle!

YUVAN

What?

(Yuvan begins unloading
stackable plastic trays
stacked with food supplies,
vegetables, water, tins.
Zsófi squelches across to the
monster off-road sports
utility vehicle, followed by
Tamara. Zsófi speaks quietly
with venom)

ZSÓFI

Fucking diesel!

(Yuvan is perplexed.)

YUVAN

But I'm here to help.

ZSÓFI

Fuck off!

(Yuvan stares. Tamara stares
at Yuvan, then puts a hand on
Zsófi's arm, a silent plea
for calm.)

TAMARA

Zsófi, let me handle this. Go inside and get yourself
cleaned up, eh!

(Zsófi simmers, then stomps
off leaving Yuvan and Tamara
standing by monster off-road
sports utility vehicle.
Tamara turns to Yuvan. She
stares at him, looking
puzzled.)

YUVAN

What's up with Zsófi?

TAMARA

Ya know, it's not about Zsófi. It's about you, eh. The thing is ...

(Tamara shifts her weight
from one foot to the other.
And then blurts out:)

TAMARA

Are you my grandfather?

(Yuvan stares at her,
dumbfounded.)

YUVAN

What?

TAMARA

Are you my grandfather?

YUVAN

Do I look like your grandfather?

TAMARA

Yep.

YUVAN

Uh huh.

TAMARA

Ya know, Yuvan, my mother's maiden name is Ivaskow.

YUVAN

Aaah.

(Tamara jumps up and down,
and offers her hand. Yuvan
shakes it automatically, then
wanders off and back in a
circle. They begin walking
back up to the farmhouse.)

TAMARA

You knew about me, eh?

YUVAN

(He looks puzzled.)

Not a peep out of your mother. How did you recognize me?

TAMARA

Social media. I'm looking for you all the time since I was thirteen years old. Ya know, I just want to know who I am.

YUVAN

Not my place to interfere.

(Yuvan stops to look at Tamara, as if he cannot quite believe they are related, or wants to check. He looks like a stunned fish. They walk slowly towards the farmhouse. Yuvan keeps peering at Tamara's face.)

(Altan appears from behind the farmhouse, wearing gumboots, and carrying a spade. He sits on the verandah steps. Zsófi comes out. Tamara whispers to Zsófi. Yuvan comes slowly up the steps. Zsófi goes inside. Tamara pours mugs of tea. Yuvan holds out his hand to Altan.)

YUVAN

G'day. My name's Yuvan.

(Altan, whose English is very limited, looks puzzled, but shakes Yuvan's hand.)

ALTAN

Altan.

YUVAN

Why did you come to Aotearoa?

ALTAN

Altan (cont'd)

Why?

(Yuvan nods.)

ALTAN

Dzud.

YUVAN

Dzud?

(Zsófi comes out, scowling.)

ZSÓFI

Droughts, winter storms, and extreme heat. It killed all his goats and horses.

(Yuvan looks at Zsófi.)

YUVAN

You don't want the diesel here, sweetie, because diesel emissions are one cause of weather chaos?

ZSÓFI

What took you so long? You old goat!

(Yuvan holds up one hand in quasi-stop position: enough!)

YUVAN

Now I understand.

ZSÓFI

No, you don't. You don't understand the time lag.

YUVAN

What time lag?

ZSÓFI

It'll be ten years before we feel the full effect on the weather of your stinking diesel fumes. Ten years of pollution in the pipeline!

YUVAN

Who cares? I won't be here.

(Yuvan shrugs.)

ZSÓFI

You say that you love me? No, you don't. Just - sod off!

(Tamara hugs Zsófi from behind, arms and all. Zsófi is wild. Yuvan steps away. Then nods in agreement.)

YUVAN

Okay, I'll leave it at the gate next time. It won't happen again. I promise.

ZSÓFI

And no plastic either!

(Tamara gradually releases Zsófi and stands between them. Zsófi goes inside, letting the flyscreen door slam. Tamara offers Yuvan a biscuit. Zsófi comes out again, calmer. Zsófi growls:)

ZSÓFI

Better hug your sodding granddaughter, before it's too late, Mister Yuvan.

(Yuvan stands and opens his arms, Tamara hugs. Altan finishes his tea, walks away down the access track. Zsófi goes after him, and catches up. She smiles at him. Tamara breaks off and watches Altan and Zsófi together, a thoughtful expression on her face.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#20

SETTINGS: CHERRY ORCHARD: AFTER CYCLONE -
DAY. The same afternoon. There is
a gate into the orchard. Much
damage is evident: silt is
everywhere, and the trees clearly
unhappy, or broken.

AT RISE : No-one on stage.

(Zsófi and Yuvan, followed by
Tamara, all wearing farm
boots to get through the
silt, trudge to the cherry
orchard. Yuvan is carrying a
shovel. Yuvan opens the gate,
and gestures Zsófi through.
Zsófi balks.)

ZSÓFI

No, you go. I don't have to go first, just because I'm
female.

(Yuvan goes through first,
looking exasperated. They all
move through. Yuvan digs a
hole in the silt down as far
as the original grassy
topsoil to determine how deep
the silt is.)

YUVAN

The silt's less than five centimeters deep.

ZSÓFI

The plants should grow through that.

YUVAN

Just fix the fencing, Zsófi, and replant with something
more robust.

ZSÓFI

There's not enough in the kitty.

YUVAN

Then go the bank, sweetie, and borrow. You have good

Yuvan (cont'd)

equity.

ZSÓFI

Even if the banks lent me the money, I couldn't afford the repayments.

(Zsófi shakes her head in despair.)

YUVAN

I suppose I could buy it off you, darling girl. As is, where is.

ZSÓFI

Me? Your darling girl? No way.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#21

SETTINGS: FARMHOUSE ONE: VERANDAH AND ACCESS
TRACK: AFTER CYCLONE - DAY.

AT RISE : Yuvan is waiting near his monster
monster off-road sports utility
vehicle (which is just offstage),
tired but thoughtful.

(Tamara comes out of the
farmhouse, carrying her
overnight bag.)

TAMARA

Drop me home now, Grandpa.

(Yuvan grimaces and nods. He
opens the passenger door, and
tosses the bag in. The pair
head off in the monster
off-road sports utility
vehicle. SOUND of car doors,
roar of diesel engine.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#22

SETTINGS:

AT RISE :

INNA

INNA

Brought you a plate.

ZSÓFI

Inna! You came!

ZSÓFI

I'm not running the generator. Must live without gasoline.

INNA

Me neither. Lord knows when we'll get anything for the emergency generator again.

ZSÓFI

My head's in a whirl.

INNA

What's going on?

ZSÓFI

Plan A is to reinstate and rebuild.

INNA

But?

ZSÓFI

Money, and weather chaos. The orchard's munted for a few years to come.

INNA

Long-term?

ZSÓFI

Who knows? Probably worse.

ZSÓFI

I'll show you, Inna. Cherries only keep ten days, even with refrigeration.

ZSÓFI

We're here. Our main market is Tāmaki Makaurau a five-hour road-trip. There's no rail.

INNA

So?

ZSÓFI

The cherries go by truck, diesel truck.

INNA

(Female)Understood, Zsófi: let's work it out together.
Right now.

ZSÓFI

By the way, since the last street protest, I've been
getting all these hate-Emails.

INNA

Really? I haven't had any.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#23

SETTINGS: SUBURBAN KITCHEN AS BEFORE - NIGHT

AT RISE : Lara is cooking. Tamara is standing there, her gaze on the floor.

LARA
Listen, you little harlot, thou shalt have no dealings with thy grandfather!

TAMARA
Ya know, it was an accident, Mom. It won't happen again, eh.

LARA
It shall not.

LARA
For the evil man has no future; the lamp of the wicked shall be extinguished.

TAMARA
Ya know, God's dead, Mom.

LARA
Wash your mouth out, you harlot!

TAMARA
You're the victim of a conspiracy, Mom.

LARA
Don't try and blind me with science, you slut!

TAMARA
A conspiracy that's lasted two thousand years, eh.

LARA
The Lord maketh me lie down on green pasture. He leadeth me into still waters.

LARA
I shall not want. Thy rod shall comfort me.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#24

SETTINGS: WOMEN'S GYM - NIGHT. With door to the street outside.

AT RISE : Inna and Zsófi are using adjacent rowing machines. Delbee stands at the edge of stage.

DELBEE

A few weeks later. Inside a local gym for women.

ZSÓFI

(Female) They wouldn't give me any finance. They said I'm too young, too inexperienced, unqualified ...

INNA

Sweetheart, you're intelligent and determined.

ZSÓFI

The man said I should appoint an estate manager to run everything.

INNA

And?

ZSÓFI

I can't afford that. We're not big enough. It's a family-sized orchard, not thirty hectares plus.

INNA

And what was the manager like?

ZSÓFI

Yucky.

(Zsófi speeds up, reliving her anger.)

ZSÓFI

(Female)

Wish I'd worn trousers.

INNA

We've all been there, darling. Well, that's enough. I'll run you home.

(They stop rowing and start

to leave and open the door
onto the street. A man with a
big camera and a night lens,
starts taking photos of the
two women.)

ZSÓFI

That man over there's taking photos of us. What the hell's
going on!

INNA

Surveillance. We're on someone's radar.

(The photographer makes his
escape. SOUND: a car door
slams. Squeal of tyres.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#25

SETTINGS: Same farmhouse: on verandah - DAY.
Early morning.

AT RISE : Zsófi and Inna, in deshabelle, are
drinking coffee over the table.
There is a MAP on the table, too.

ZSÓFI
We have electric again. Hallelujah!

(Zsófi goes inside and brings
out breakfast on a tray.)

INNA

(Zsófi hesitates, and points
to Cromwell in Otago.)

ZSÓFI
We move to Otakou, where the weather's better in the long-term.

INNA
And the marketing?

(Zsófia is not sure.)

ZSÓFI
Five hours by truck gets us to Otautahi. It's a smaller
market, a third of the size.

INNA
But the operation's more sustainable?

ZSÓFI
I think so. If they rebuild the old coastal railroad.

INNA
So what's stopping you?

(Zsófi stops to ponder.)

ZSÓFI

Money. I'd have to find a buyer for this place here, and then some.

INNA

(Decisively.)

ZSÓFI

There's a future there. Hope.

INNA

Go for it.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#26

SETTINGS: SAME CHERRY ORCHARD: AFTER CYCLONE
- DAY. Some trees are bent over,
down. There is still silt over the
grass in places.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front corner
of the stage.

DELBEE
It is now June, the start of winter.

(Yuvan and Zsófi appear and
walk around the orchard,
inspecting the damage from
the cyclone.)

ZSÓFI
What about Plan B then?

YUVAN
Plan B? What's that?

ZSÓFI
I'll sell this orchard and buy another one in Otakou. The
weather should be better there.

YUVAN
Sweetie, can you afford it?

ZSÓFI
No.

YUVAN
I can get you the money.

ZSÓFI
What?

YUVAN
I'll buy this farm here. I brought the contract with me.
You'll be free to buy an orchard somewhere better.

(Zsófi and Yuvan exchange a
long stare, with mixed,
uncertain, reactions.)

YUVAN

You're so young, sweetie.

ZSÓFI

When I was twelve, Uncle Yuvan, you kept coming to see - my father.

(Yuvan looks awkward.)

ZSÓFI

But now I'm nineteen. I can cook. I can ride. And cherries I know.

(Yuvan turns back toward the farmhouse.)

YUVAN

Then come to the house, sweetie, and sign the contract. It's for the best.

(Zsófi follows, puzzled.)

ZSÓFI

What do you want my orchard for, Yuvan?

YUVAN

I can fix it up; sell it on. And I'll help you find a better orchard, sweetie. I promise.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#27

SETTINGS: PRIVATE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE -
NIGHT

AT RISE : Zsófi and Tamara, both with farm
boots, are standing next to Yuvan,
all facing the gravestones. Zsófi
holds chrysanthemums. Yuvan stands
holding three candles, Tamara a
lighter.

ZSÓFI
It's Halloween, the day of the dead.

(Zsófi places a chrysanthemum
for her grandmother.)

ZSÓFI
My grandmother Kata escaped after the uprising in
fifty-six. Then, two years in a refugee camp. Then, a free
ticket to Aotearoa. She jumped at it. Otherwise ...

(Zsófi wells up.)

ZSÓFI
Rest in peace, Granny.

(Zsófi places a chrysanthemum
for her father.)

ZSÓFI
Rest in peace, Dad.

(Zsófi places a chrysanthemum
for her mother.)

ZSÓFI
Rest in peace, Mum.

(Yuvan briefly touches
Zsófi's shoulder.)

YUVAN

My own father was in the Polish air force. Then the British Royal Air Force. The big war. God rest his soul.

ZSÓFI

Men! All they do is fight: fight over territory and females.

(Yuvan squeezes Zsófi around the shoulders. Zsófi shakes him off. Zsófi lights the candles, and places one on each grave. They stand there awhile.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#28

SETTINGS: Same farmhouse verandah - NIGHT

AT RISE : Yuvan, Zsófi, and Tamara are
returning from the memorial plot.

(They come up the steps, and
remove their muddy footwear.
Zsófi is still pissed off.)

YUVAN

I can fix my last will and testament, so that Tamara
becomes the major beneficiary.

(Zsófi grunts, and goes
inside. Then, she comes out
again, with a teapot. Tamara
goes inside and fetches mugs.
Tamara puts a hand on Zsófi's
shoulder in an effort to calm
her. Tamara then turns the
radio on.)

NEWSREADER

In Tanzania, the government has declared an outbreak of
the Marburg virus disease.

(Yuvan turns the radio off.)

ZSÓFI

What about the graves?

YUVAN

Dis-inter the ashes and transfer them to the new orchard.

(Zsófi smiles.)

ZSÓFI

And a sweetener.

(Zsófi grunts.)

YUVAN

You go to Uni, Zsófi, and study something relevant to farming. And I'll pay your fees.

(Zsófi whispers with venom.)

ZSÓFI

It's my fucking life.

YUVAN

Sweetie, get this weather nonsense sorted out once and for all.

ZSÓFI

I bloody decide what to bloody do with my life.

(Disconcerted, Yuvan looks at Tamara.)

TAMARA

And me? Your granddaughter?

YUVAN

You too.

TAMARA

And you're payin', eh?

(Yuvan lays the contract papers on the table. To Zsófi:)

YUVAN

I'll leave the contract here, sweetie. You'll sign in the end, you know.

(Yuvan makes to leave. Zsófi goes inside. Yuvan pulls his boots on.)

YUVAN

How old are you now?

TAMARA

Seventeen, eh.

YUVAN

Old enough.

(Yuvan nods and wanders down the steps into the darkness. Yuvan starts his Ute, and all its lights come on. He toots the horn twice, and makes off down the driveway. Zsófi comes out. She's calmer now.)

(Zsófi comes close to Tamara, wraps and holds Tamara's arms behind Tamara's back. Tamara lifts her lips toward Zsófi.)

ZSÓFI

You little minx.

TAMARA

We're kin now, eh.

ZSÓFI

Yuvan's my great uncle.

TAMARA

Ya know, relatives can kiss.

(Zsófi kisses Tamara on the lips. Zsófi's mobile pings, and she checks the new message.)

ZSÓFI

It's from Ferenc, my cousin in Romania.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#29

SETTINGS: CEMETERY IN ROMANIA - NIGHT.
Candles are lit on some graves already. At the front, there are headstones for: Kovácsné Vilma 1897-1960; Kovács-Szabó Ulrika 1919-1993. Kovács-Szabó Tünde 1949-2021.

AT RISE : Quiet, apart from dogs barking, pigs grunting, hens squawking in the distance.

(Day of the Dead. Families come, they light candles, stand in respect, and later drift away.)

(Ferenc in military camouflage, with Ukraine armband, enters, carrying candles and a lighter. Ferenc lights one candle on each family grave in turn.)

FERENC

Mother, Grandmother, Great-grandmother, forgive me, I volunteered to fight in Ukraine. I'll be gone for some time.

(Ferenc's phone pings, and he checks a photo from Zsófi, and texts a reply:)

FERENC

I'm off to Ukraine. Forgive me, my dear, sweet girl.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#30

SETTINGS: EUROPE: frontline in Ukraine,
Robotyne - DAY. Ammunition boxes
lie around. A camouflaged
water-cooled heavy machine gun is
set up on a tripod, overlooking
the fields.

AT RISE : Lt. Kovács (Ferenc, 21) grim in
snow-camouflage, with helmet and
blackened face, nametag KOVACS,
and white and blue armband uses
NATO field glasses, to scan the
snow-covered fields. Another
soldier, wearing the same armband,
slumps exhausted. Delbee stands at
the edge of stage.

(SOUNDS of war throughout
this scene: explosions,
gunshots.)

DELBEE
Ukraine. Twenty-twenty-four. February.

FERENC
They're coming! They're coming!

(The soldier jumps up,
removes the camo netting,
checks the machine gun, then
begins firing long bursts.
BANG BANG BANG BANG ...
Ferenc opens a new box of
ammo, feeds ammo. The soldier
keeps firing, and firing
non-stop, till almost all the
ammo is gone. The soldier
checks ammo boxes, puts
protective gloves on, unclips
the machine gun for
transport, and takes the
tripod off. Ferenc uses the
glasses to scan the fields
again.)

FERENC

Drón! T-72 Tank!! Back! Run already!

(Ferenc picks up the tripod.
The soldier heaves up the
heavy machine gun. Ferenc
nods, it's time to run. Both
begin to exit the roofless
cottage. The SOUND of an
incoming artillery shell,
flash, and explosion. Cut to
black.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#31

SETTINGS: KIRIBATI: Lagoon beach resort:
outside beachfront unit - NIGHT.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at front edge of
stage. There are two chairs and a
table on the patio outside. A
patio light is on.

DELBEE

Now we are on Kiribati Island in the Pacific Ocean. There
is nowhere on the island more than two meters above
sea-level. The beachfront holiday unit here is by the
lagoon on Kiritimati island.

(Delbee moves off-stage.)

(Yuvan and a younger woman,
SARA, of East European
ancestry, around 40 and
fashionably dressed, enter
together, carrying one bag
each. Throughout, Sara has
watchful eyes, and is always
watching, usually with a hard
expression, as if she is a
trained operative or foreign
agent.)

SARA

Not much above sea level, is it?

YUVAN

That's what I paid for.

(They go inside and dump the
bags. Then come out again,
with drinks.)

YUVAN

You're welcome to come and stay, Sara.

SARA

uh, maybe. It's a bit remote from the fashion world.

YUVAN

It's just - well, if this gets serious, we might need some kind of agreement.

SARA

But, Yuvan, you don't do family; you don't do relationships.

YUVAN

It's different now. I have a granddaughter. I want her to inherit.

(Yuvan sips water.)

YUVAN

She's the last of my line, my only family. I'll do whatever it takes to stay onside with her.

(Yuvan stands, and takes his glass inside. Sara follows, turning the patio light off. From inside the unit comes the tinkle of laughter.)

(SCENE LIGHTING TEMPORARILY OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out. Then sun comes up and lighting returns as for daylight. The next morning.)

(A much pregnant local islander, a young female cleaner, VAIMITI comes on stage, with a trolley and cleaning materials, and knocks on door. Yuvan opens the door dressed for beach, and steps out, followed by Sara, who smiles when she sees Vaimiti is very pregnant, and stops.)

SARA

Sara (cont'd)

Hey there girl, have you decided on a name yet?

VAIMITI

Hawaiki.

SARA

What a lovely name!

(Yuvan waits, and then
wanders off toward the nearby
beach.)

(Time passes: Sara and
Vaimiti chat. SCENE LIGHTING
TEMPORARILY OFF : BLACK-OUT :
Black-out.)

(Yuvan comes back to fetch
Sara.)

SARA

... And I hope it all goes well for you, Vaimiti. Send me
a photo, please. My card's on the table inside.

(Sara rejoins Yuvan, and
slips her arm inside his.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#32

SETTINGS: Original farmhouse: verandah -
DAY. Early morning.

AT RISE : Yuvan is sitting, waiting, and
drinking a small coffee. His
backpack and hiking boots are on a
spare chair. Nordic walking-poles
are in the corner. The radio is
on. Delbee is at front of stage.

DELBEE

One month later: back in New Zealand. At the same
farmhouse.

(Exit Delbee.)

NEWSREADER

In Uganda, the government is racing to contain a deadly
outbreak of Ebola.

(Zsófi comes out, with her
backpack and hiking boots,
and turns the radio off
before sitting down. Yuvan
gets up, remains standing.)

ZSÓFI

Lemon and ginger, Uncle, no sugar, please.

(Yuvan nods, and goes in.
Yuvan returns with coffee,
lemon/ginger, and a
croissant. Yuvan offers the
croissant. Zsófi gives a
little head-shake.)

YUVAN

It would only take a couple of hours by plane.

(Yuvan sits and begins to eat
the croissant.)

ZSÓFI

What about the manifesto, then, Uncle?

YUVAN

The teenage transport boycott?

ZSÓFI

No going on planes, on buses, or in cars, unless they're electric.

YUVAN

It would have to be worldwide. Otherwise, it won't make a difference.

(Zsófi is suddenly dejected,
grumpy.)

ZSÓFI

Why didn't you oldies stop the weather chaos, Uncle?

YUVAN

To us, cars and planes were normal: wonderful inventions!

(Zsófi stands and paces up
and down.)

YUVAN

Why go by train, when you can fly? Nobody told us there was a problem!

ZSÓFI

Twelve hundred tons a second.

YUVAN

What?

(Yuvan stands, staring at
Zsófi, bemused.)

ZSÓFI

That's the total of carbon dioxide emissions. Worldwide. Day and night. Every second. Twelve hundred tons.

YUVAN

So? It helps the plants grow. Anyway, it's just a number.

ZSÓFI

It's up sixty percent on nineteen-ninety. It's been getting worse all the time. Except during COVID of course.

YUVAN

What were we supposed to do? Give up everything? Live with no money?

ZSÓFI

Just stop oil! One child per family! Eco-commissars!

YUVAN

But that's not what people want, you silly girl!

(Zsófi turns away and leans
over the balustrade.)

ZSÓFI

Humans don't want wars, either.

(Yuvan pulls out a map of New
Zealand from his own bag,
spreads it on the table, and
takes out a pencil.)

YUVAN

Okay. By bus. Then by train, by ferry to the other island,
then by train again, and then we'll hire an electric car.
All told: it'll take two days.

(Yuvan traces the route from
Kirikiriroa [in upper North
Island] southward, and
circles Cromwell in the South
Island.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#33

SETTINGS: OTAKOU FARM: High Pasture - DAY.
SOUTH ISLAND, NEAR CROMWELL.
Winter snow.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front of
stage, to one side.

DELBEE

It's two days later. On the other island, nearer the South Pole. It's winter, so there is snow everywhere. A realtor is showing them the high pasture.

(Delbee exits. SOUND: three
car doors slam. SLAM! SLAM!
SLAM!)

(Realtor's arrives with
Zsófi and Yuvan. Realtor, an
older male, points out the
boundaries. Zsófi and Yuvan
take photos.)

ZSÓFI

Altan would be so happy here. It'd be just like home for him, with goats, ponies and a yurt.

YUVAN

So, the high pasture's a leasehold block, with strict limits on stock units.

ZSÓFI

Yuvan, Yuvan, this is the place. I just feel it.

(Zsófi goes to give Yuvan a
hug. Yuvan takes advantage.
This time, with the realtor
watching, Zsófi lets him.)

ZSÓFI

Oh, please, Uncle Yuvan, can we?

(They walk back toward the

vehicle, and get in. Zsófi
smirks. The SUV moves slowly
off toward the valley below.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#34

SETTINGS: OTAKOU FARMSTEAD: VERANDAH - DAY.
The verandah should be on the opposite side of the stage to the original farmhouse. It is a wooden farmhouse with brick chimney and lean-to verandah. There is also a small stone shed. Beside the shed is a RED BRICK FORGE.

AT RISE : Snow.

(Zsófi and Yuvan arrive.)

ZSÓFI
So this is the new farmhouse and verandah.

YUVAN
There's a few winter paddocks in the valley.

ZSÓFI
We'll need certified soil test results.

(Yuvan nods.)

ZSÓFI
But there's a stream for water. It'll take five years for the cherries, to grow and become productive.

YUVAN
But what about my money?

ZSÓFI
Who cares? I can put my heart and soul into this one.

(Zsófi stands close, and lets
Yuvan hug her again.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#35

SETTINGS: Original farmhouse: verandah -
DAY. Back to original verandah
position on stage.

AT RISE : Inna, in deshabelle, is seated.

(Zsófi, also in deshabelle,
comes out with a omelette
pan.)

ZSÓFI
Would you like some omelette, Inna?

INNA
Why not?

(Zsófi doesn't know how to
answer this question.)

INNA
... So what did the counsellor at school say?

ZSÓFI
Oh, she said 'depressed'. But I'm not. I've just got no
magic solution to weather chaos.

INNA
Why not?

ZSÓFI
I don't see how can we meet the deadline for zero
emissions.

(They eat.)

ZSÓFI
Some major oil producers are outside the Paris Agreement.

(Zsófi puts her fork down,
and frowns.)

ZSÓFI

I don't see how to fight them. I'd just ... -

INNA

- you'd fall out the window during a police search, girl.
Oh, yes!

(They both smile.)

INNA

It was like that in the Soviet era. People weren't happy.
But it doesn't mean they were depressed. You have grief,
girl, yes. Who wouldn't?

ZSÓFI

So what now?

(Zsófi raises both palms.)

INNA

It must come from the people. The Soviet era ended because
people had had enough.

(Zsófi tidies and stacks the
plates.)

ZSÓFI

So ... an oil boycott.

INNA

Why not?

ZSÓFI

Because of the Turkmenistan problem.

INNA

What problem?

ZSÓFI

Ninety-five percent of their exports is oil and gas. And
it's all desert there. Seven million people all told.

INNA

(deadpan!)

Plenty of room in Siberia. We have holiday camps there.
Problem solved.

(Inna shrugs. They both laugh.)

(Inna goes inside and comes out again dressed, ready to go. She pauses, tears welling in her eyes, and takes hold of both of Zsófi's hands.)

INNA

So it's time for you to fly the nest. I'll miss you. But I'll survive. After all, I'm a woman, and I'm Russian.

(Inna kisses the back of each of Zsófi's hands in turn.)

INNA

Nothing is forever.

(Zsófi wipes away a tear.)

ZSÓFI

Plastics are forever.

(Inna smiles through her tears.)

INNA

That's so you! Text me. Whenever. I'm still your girl, your friend.

(Inna turns, and walks down the steps, looks back and waves farewell. Zsófi waves with her fingers, her other hand wiping away tears. Inna turns and raises a clenched fist salute. Zsófi forces herself to do likewise.)

ZSÓFI

Love you!

(Zsófi blows a kiss.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#36

SETTINGS: Otakou farmstead as viewed
earlier: verandah - DAY. Clearly
NOT the original farmstead.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front of the
stage, to one side.

DELBEE

It's now May twenty-twenty-five. We're at the new
homestead in Otakou.

(Delbee remains on stage.
Zsófi, Altan, and Yuvan
enter, each carrying a bag or
suitcase. Zsófi runs up the
steps and unlocks the
farmhouse door, then turns,
and holds out her arms to
welcome Yuvan, who trudges
toward her. Altan unloads his
one bag of belongings.)

DELBEE

Again, time passes, as they settle in to their new life.
The girls start university; Altan herds goats on the high
pasture, and lives in a yurt there. They all begin to
establish a new cherry orchard. The leaves fall. Then snow
falls. Then spring again with blossom, leaves. And so time
moves onward to the year twenty-twenty-eight.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#37

SETTINGS: Otakou farmstead as before:
verandah - DAY.

AT RISE : Tamara, and Zsófi, seated,
studying.

 ZSÓFI
We had a lecture on rabbit infestation the other day,
Tamara.

 TAMARA
Ya know, Zsófi, rabbits are all over the alpine pasture.

 ZSÓFI
Exactly. We'll have to do something.

 (Yuvan comes out of the
farmhouse.)

 YUVAN
You need to get a gun-licence, Zsófi. And we need a secure
gun-locker. A small calibre bolt-action rifle with a noise
suppressor and a night-scope. Then we can shoot rabbits,
and make rabbit stew. Why not? I can teach you to shoot.

 ZSÓFI
I suppose so. It's better than using Pindone poison.

 (Yuvan goes in again. Zsófi
gets up and goes for a
stroll, Tamara follows her.)

 TAMARA
... What's in your assignment, Zsófi?

 ZSÓFI
Eco-commissars. The relationship between the natural world
and business. We're at loggerheads.

 (Zsófi clenches both fists,
holds them in front of
herself, and punches them
together.)

TAMARA

It's more like a runaway train.

(Tamara stops and turns to
Zsófi.)

TAMARA

(female) Ya know, Zsófi, I've been meanin' to ask: do you
want children?

ZSÓFI

No!

(Zsófi stops, Tamara walks on
a bit, turns and waits.)

ZSÓFI

What kind of world would they grow up in?

(They walk on together, arm
in arm.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#38

SETTINGS: A band rotunda in a park - DAY

AT RISE : There are various protesters of all ages (mostly offstage), and Tamara onstage. This time the placards and banners read: "NO TO GDP". Zsófi is on the podium, with a microphone, miming, as she gives a rousing speech.

ZSÓFI

It's not 1800! It's 2032! There are now eight billion of us. And there are limits to growth! There're limits to the exploitation! We must change the economic system!

(She raises a clenched fist;
the crowd likewise,
chanting.)

PROTESTERS

No to GDP! No to GDP!

(A man wearing a facemask,
and a bulletproof vest begins
taking photos of Zsófi with a
telephoto lens.)

(The street protest is over.
The protesters disperse.
Zsófi strolls toward the
exit. A man in business suit,
but wearing dark sun-glasses
and a surgical facemask bumps
into her forcefully. Zsófi
staggers under the impact,
and falls to the ground.)

BUSINESSMAN

Wake up, girl, or you'll get hit.

(The man walks away. Then two
men wearing pig's head masks,

red shirts, and swastika
pendants approach. They
stroll nonchalantly past
Zsófi, who is still lying on
the ground. Then they stop
and turn around to stand over
her.)

(Shaken, Zsófi looks up at
them. Wary now, she gets back
to her feet, and staggers
away.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#39

SETTINGS: Otakou farmstead as before:
verandah - DAY. Summer, post
harvest: late afternoon/evening.
The French doors are open. A
celebration with buffet is laid
out. This scene is intended to be
memorable light relief in what
would otherwise be a somewhat
bleak story. The actors should
genuinely enjoy some dancing or
singing together. Music can be
'from the radio' or live onstage:
ideally, east European or asiatic
folk music.

AT RISE : Yuvan, Altan, and Sara are sitting
at the verandah table waiting.

(Salvadori, a neighbor and
bee-keeper, appears on the
driveway, Yuvan stands and
welcomes him.)

YUVAN

Salvadori! Welcome, welcome to our little celebration. I'm
glad you could make it. How're your bees? How's your
orchard? How's the family?

(Zsófi and Tamara come out of
the farmhouse, dressed to
party, but each also wearing
a square academic cap.
Everone else stands and
applauds.)

ALL

Hurrah! Hurrah!

(Zsófi and Tamara toss their
caps in the air. Yuvan
exaggeratedly bows to Zsófi.)

YUVAN

Yuvan (cont'd)

Zsófi Kovács.: Master of Ecology

(All applaud. Yuvan bows to Tamara.)

YUVAN

Tamara Ivaskow: Master of Horticulture.

(All applaud. Yuvan is close to tears.)

YUVAN

I am so proud, so proud of you both.

(SOUND: Traditional village dance music. All dance some kind of simple village line dance. Smiles and joy.)

(Eventually, Yuvan and Sara wander off into the house. Zsófi then looks at Salvadori, steps up to face Tamara very closely, takes hold of both of Tamara's hands, and holds them behind Tamara's back. Tamara does not resist. Tamara faces Zsófi with slightly open lips. Zsófi almost kisses Tamara on the lips, but hesitates. Salvadori watches intently. Altan wanders away.)

(Eventually, Zsófi kisses Tamara on the cheek next to the lips. Zsófi slowly lets Tamara go. Tamara quietly smiles at Zsófi and does not step away. Salvadori wanders off out toward the orchard. Zsófi goes after him. Tamara

steps back, turns, and begins
to help clear up the buffet.
Then, Zsófi comes back and
suddenly appears in front of
Tamara.)

TAMARA

What's up?

ZSÓFI

I can't dance. I can't do this anymore.

(Tamara tries to give Zsófi a
hug. Zsófi shakes her off.)

ZSÓFI

No! A hug isn't going to fix this.

(Tamara desists, puzzled.)

TAMARA

Zsófi, you still think the human species is worth savin',
don't you?

ZSÓFI

Why not?

TAMARA

We just mess up the planet. It's in our nature, eh.

(Zsófi stares at Tamara, deep
in thought.)

TAMARA

Ya know, maybe that's the answer you're looking for, eh?

ZSÓFI

No, I don't think so, well, not yet.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#40

SETTINGS: Disused warehouse with table and chair. There is a glass of water on the table near the podium. There is a fire-exit door or sign near the podium.

AT RISE : Colonel COLONEL, reporter wearing a business suit with campaign medals, plus a military style beret, is seated. Zsófi, now 28, dressed for credibility in a business suit, is standing on a podium, giving an interview, and answering questions.

COLONEL
... We can't beat weather chaos, without global cooperation and world peace.

ZSÓFI
Absolutely, Colonel.

COLONEL
How will you achieve that?

(The colonel's eyes stray
down Zsófi's figure.)

ZSÓFI
Colonel, you and I both know world peace is not going to happen. Chaos prevails.

COLONEL
So what's the plan?

ZSÓFI
First, if we stopped using fossil-fuels overnight, the global supply chain would collapse, wouldn't it, Colonel?

(The colonel watches as Zsófi
leans forward to sip water.)

COLONEL
Absolutely, Ma'am.

ZSÓFI

But weather-chaos is gradually undermining agricultural food production.

COLONEL

So what, Ma'am? We'll be fine.

ZSÓFI

Yes, Colonel. But people living in megacities won't be fine.

COLONEL

Not our problem, Ma'am!

(Time passes. SCENE LIGHTING
TEMPORARILY OFF : BLACK-OUT :
Black-out.)

ZSÓFI

... so Aotearoa may be swamped by boatloads and boatloads of refugees.

COLONEL

What, then, is the solution, Ma'am?

ZSÓFI

We cannot just machine-gun them.

(Zsófi pauses for a sip of
water.)

ZSÓFI

And there's no way we can support them all.

(The colonel raises one
hand.)

ZSÓFI

Colonel?

COLONEL

Why not just let the next generation deal with it?

ZSÓFI

I am the next generation.

COLONEL

The answer, Ma'am, is carbon collection and storage, just get the carbon sucked out of the atmosphere.

ZSÓFI

Why hasn't that been done already, Colonel?

COLONEL

I can't say, Ma'am.

(Time passes. SCENE LIGHTING
TEMPORARILY OFF : BLACK-OUT :
Black-out.)

ZSÓFI

... and non-essential air traffic would be banned.

COLONEL

What about the invisible hand -

(BANG! THUMP! The noise comes
from double doors behind the
audience. The doors burst
open. A Viking-man wearing a
horned helmet, and carrying
an American flag bursts into
the conference chamber,)

VIKING

Freedom! Democracy!

COLONEL

Wrong flag, wrong Capitol, Rambo.

(Two men in black come in,
spot Zsófi, and head towards
her. Zsófi quickly uses the
fire exit at the side to
escape. The Colonel blocks
the fire exit and delays the
men.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#41

SETTINGS: Outside the fire exit door, on the sidewalk.

AT RISE : Zsófi is standing outside the fire exit door.

(Zsófi looks both ways, like a hunted doe, then begins to run, glancing behind her. The men come out of the fire exit door and give chase. Zsófi dumps her mobile in a garbage bin. The men give up the chase, and retrieve her mobile instead.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#42

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: in the
 orchard - DAY. Two or three
 beehives on stage. A peaceful
 orchard, with beehives, toward
 dusk following a sunny summer day.

AT RISE : Delbee stands near the front of
 stage, to one side.

DELBEE

It's now 2033, and the girls are checking beehives in the
new orchard.

(Delbee exits. Tamara and
Zsófi come on stage, wearing
white beekeeping suits. They
stop to drop the veils; then
walk together to the hives.
Tamara is holding a smoke
puffer.)

(The girls approach one hive
from the side, Tamara puffs
smoke, as Zsófi gently
removes the lid, and draws
out one frame. Some cells
show medium-dark wax.)

ZSÓFI

Looks good! Brood wax is always darker.

TAMARA

Magic! We'll have to check one more, eh.

(The girls replace the frame
and lid, and move on to next
hive.)

ZSÓFI

Wish we were on the Chathams. No Varroa mites there, eh.

(Zsófi turns, lifts her veil,

smiles, then drops the veil.)

TAMARA

We should have borage beds dotted around the orchard, eh.

ZSÓFI

Good idea. Borage'll attract wild bees, too.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#43

SETTINGS: Europe: a sandy beach - DAY. At the top of the beach is a Red Cross tent. Waiting on the shore line is a small boat to evacuate patients to a hospital ship waiting offshore. The stage can be empty, just representing the empty beach, with the wings on one side representing the hospital tent, and the wings on the other side representing the waiting boat.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front of the stage, to one side.

DELBEE

Hi. The action now moves to Europe, to a sandy beach near a Red Cross hospital tent. There is a small boat waiting on the shore, waiting to evacuate wounded patients to a hospital ship, which is waiting offshore. Artillery fire and explosions can be heard in the distance.

(Delbee exits. SOUND: distant artillery fire and explosions.)

(Four stretcher-bearers appear, evacuating one patient from the Red Cross hospital tent toward the waiting small boat. On the stretcher is Ferenc, eyes closed, now gaunt, his face streaked with dirt and dried blood, but still wearing military fatigues with a Ukrainian armband.)

(Still on a drip, Ferenc is being stretchered across the beach, when the stretcher-bearers stop.)

STRETCHER-BEARER

Stop! Wait up, guys! Listen, lads!

(SOUND: whirr of drones
approaching. The
stretcher-bearers look up and
around wildly.)

STRETCHER-BEARER

Drone! Drones, they're gonna bomb the hospital! Let's go!

(SOUND: heavy machine-guns
fire continuously from here
on:
RAT-A-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT.)

(They carry Ference to the
waiting boat. Machine gun
fire continues.)

(SOUND: explosions from Red
Cross tent area.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#44

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah - NIGHT. Table and chairs as before, plus a rocking-chair.

AT RISE : In the quiet gloaming of the evening, Tamara, in long linen skirt, wide leather belt, lace-up bustier plus linen poncho sits on the rocking-chair, swaying to and fro gently. Altan pours tea. Zsófi (straw hat and butcher's apron) is cooking venison on a charcoal-barbeque.

(Yuvan emerges from inside the farmhouse, bringing plates and cutlery, then goes back in and fetches salad on a tray. The radio is on.)

NEWSREADER

Under new regulations, all milk must be tested for H5N1 bird flu.

(Yuvan turns the radio off.)

YUVAN

We'll think of something: we always have.

ZSÓFI

People have been saying that for years. It's just bullshit.

YUVAN

Then what're you fighting for, Zsófi?

ZSÓFI

For the future, for the children, you duckwit!

(Yuvan goes inside.)

TAMARA

I know, Zsófi, that you want to save the natural world;

Tamara (cont'd)
and I love you for it.

(Zsófi smiles, and plates up
some venison and hands it to
Tamara.)

TAMARA
But even if you, darling, were to speak with world leaders
in person, - and to the Pope - nothin' would change. It's
all been tried and done before.

ZSÓFI
A girl's gotta do what a girl's gotta do.

TAMARA
Thanks. Just don't go breakin' your heart, eh.

(Tamara tastes the venison
and nods approvingly.)

TAMARA
The alternative is revolution, eh. Or nothin'. We're out
of time. We need Plan B: a refuge. .

(Zsófi shakes her head, lips
compressed, shaken by truth.)

TAMARA
Let the rest of them go to hell, eh.

(Zsófi pays attention to the
barbeque.)

TAMARA
People don't want to give up the consumer lifestyle, eh.

ZSÓFI
It's a ticking time-bomb.

(Zsófi shakes her head
despairingly.)

ZSÓFI

And we're next?

TAMARA

If insects took over this planet sometime in the future,
so what? Why are we so special? If our species went
extinct, a better species would evolve.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#45

SETTINGS: Micronesia: Nauru island.
IMMIGRATION AUSTRALIA: REGIONAL
PROCESSING CENTRE. There are huts.
One hut is marked with a red
cross.

AT RISE : Possibly some detainees wandering
around.

DELBEE

Delbee stands at the front edge of the stage, to one side.

DELBEE

We're now on Nauru Island, in Micronesia. That's where the
regional processing centre is for people wishing to enter
Australia.

(Delbee exits. Ferenc,
assisted by a Red Cross
worker and another detainee,
takes his first steps using
crutches, wincing. Then
again, with the help of just
the Red Cross worker and a
stick, limping badly.)

(A government diplomatic
official, wearing a
New-Zealand-flag badge, and
carrying a clipboard,
approaches Ferenc and they
begin talking. The diplomat
makes notes, and nods.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#46

SETTINGS: Otakou farmstead: in the orchard -
DAY. Summer harvest time.

AT RISE : Tamara and Zsófi work together
picking fruit. They are both
wearing ventilated straw hats and
linen in the heat. They have front
buckets strapped on, and
periodically they empty them into
trays standing on tables in the
shade. Yuvan and Sara, also
dressed for the hot sun, are
further along, some distance away,
using A-frame ladders, and helping
each other to pick fruit.

TAMARA

Ya know, growin' just one crop makes us too vulnerable,
Zsófi. Storms, drought, pests, diseases. We must
diversify.

ZSÓFI

But cherries is what I know.

TAMARA

Ya know, if the weather keeps changin', Otakou'll become
subtropical and frost-free, eh.

ZSÓFI

So?

TAMARA

Let's start plantin' a few macadamias this year, and see
how they go, eh.

ZSÓFI

Macadamia? They're tropical, and coastal!

(SOUND of a drone whirring,
as it passes overhead, turns
and hovers.)

TAMARA

There's that drone again, eh.

ZSÓFI

Don't look up, Tamara! Face recognition!

(The girls hide under a tree.
The drone moves away.)

TAMARA

There's macadamia growin' in Waiharakeke.

ZSÓFI

Okay. Let's do a trial. You're the farm-boss, darling
girl.

(Zsófi shrugs her shoulders,
and moves on.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#47

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah - DAY.

AT RISE : Delbee is at the front of the stage, to one side.

DELBEE

Summer turns to winter. The stream flows and rises, then falls. In the orchard, leaves fall. Later come snow flurries, and after that, the snow settles. Months pass. The snow melts and spring sets in with blossom. Then summer: the stream dries, the grass turns brown. It's now 2040.

(Yuvan, Tamara, Zsófi come out of the farmstead onto the verandah, bringing afternoon tea.)

(SOUND: the crunch of tyres on the gravel driveway. The slam of a car door; a second door slams.)

(Sara, now around fifty, comes up the driveway. She waves; and is followed by HAWAIIKI, girl, 16, from Kiribati, in school uniform. The newcomers come up the steps.)

SARA

This is Hawaii; she's from Kiribati.

HAWAIIKI

Hey there, everyone.

SARA

I'm her legal guardian, while she's at school here.

ZSÓFI

Hi, Hawaii. I suppose Kiribati's crowded, and close to

Zsófi (cont'd)

sea-level. Tea?

HAWAII

Yes please. My mother hopes to move here too. There'll be an evacuation soon.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#48

SETTINGS: CENTRAL OTAKOU GIRLS' HIGH:
SCIENCE CLASSROOM - DAY.

AT RISE : Delbee is at the front of the stage, to one side. The class consists of seventeen to eighteen-year-olds, variously dressed in black and white using non-synthetics. Leather shoes with leather soles. No wifi, nor other computers, nor mobile phones. The students include Gabriela and Hawaiki. The teacher is Tamara.

DELBEE

It is spring term at the central Otakou high school for girls. In the car-park, there are no petrol/diesel vehicles. Instead there are just a few electric cars, and also electric golf-carts, electric quad- bikes, and two or three traps, that is, a light two-wheeled carriage with springs. And bicycles in the bike racks.

TAMARA

Okay, girls. Bees.

(Hawaiki stands.)

HAWAIKI

The female, the queen, lives for several years, Ma'am; but the male drones for only six weeks.

(As Hawaiki sits, Gabriela jumps up.)

GABRIELA

The queen mates when she is five days old, Ma'am, and only once in her whole lifetime.

HAWAIKI

The drones die after mating, Ma'am. It kills them.

(Students giggle and knock on desks. Hawaiki waits.)

HAWAIIKI

Colony collapse disorder, Ma'am. If more than three percent of the bees are infected, the whole colony collapses.

TAMARA

Exactly. Just imagine, girls, havin' an alien the size of a grapefruit stuck on your back between your shoulders, suckin' blood.

(Gabriela raises a hand.)

GABRIELA

Do they infect humans, Ma'am?

TAMARA

Not yet.

(HAWAIIKI raises a hand.)

HAWAIIKI

Why don't we just kill them all then?

TAMARA

They'd just come back stronger, like with antibiotics. Better to use a bee species that is naturally resistant.

(HAWAIIKI raises a hand.)

HAWAIIKI

Why don't we do that then?

TAMARA

It's not that easy. Bees are not just cheap migrant labor workin' in a factory!

(Gabriela raises a hand.
Tamara nods.)

GABRIELA

But Ma'am, we need bees to pollinate fruit and citrus, lemon, lime, and rhubarb.

TAMARA

That's your challenge.

(Gabriela breaks protocol,
exclaiming.)

GABRIELA

What do you mean, Ma'am, my challenge?

TAMARA

People of your age.

(Hawaiki stands.)

HAWAIKI

Excuse me, Miss: whose fault is it, that we're in this
mess now?

(Tamara smiles. The other
students begin knocking
knuckles on desks in time
with each other. Tamara holds
up both hands in a
stop-gesture. The knocking
stops.)

TAMARA

It's not your fault, girls. It was the post-war generation
that -

(The school bell rings for
end of class.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#49

SETTINGS: Auckland airport: inside building:
immigration desk - DAY. High table
to serve as desk.

AT RISE : Ferenc, with one stick, is waiting
at the head of the queue. An
official is standing at the high
table.

(The immigration official
beckons Ferenc forward. Using
one stick, he hobbles
forward, presents his travel
documents, which are
eventually stamped.)

OFFICIAL

Welcome to New Zealand, sir. As a political refugee, you
have a five-year residence visa. Please contact your
sponsor, Zsófi Kovács, regarding your living arrangements.
After five years here, you may apply for citizenship. Walk
on, Sir. Enjoy your freedom!

FERENC

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

(Ferenc moves slowly toward
exit.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#50

SETTINGS: A disused warehouse, with a whiteboard, and seats for reporters.

AT RISE : Colonel sits on the front row. Zsófi stands nearby, facing the board, in the middle of her presentation. She turns, faces Colonel.

ZSÓFI

Okay. Off the record then.

COLONEL

Agreed, Ma'am.

(On the whiteboard, Zsófi draws Baja California Peninsula, top right. At bottom left, she draws the Australian east coast, plus New Zealand.)

ZSÓFI

Let's imagine this is the Pacific Ocean.

(Zsófi holds out the board-marker pen to the Colonel.)

ZSÓFI

Now Colonel, please draw a tennis ball, floating in mid-Pacific.

(Colonel comes forward, takes the pen. He stands uncomfortably close to Zsófi, invading her own space.)

ZSÓFI

According to scale.

(Colonel stops, puzzled at the impossible task. Zsófi eases away from him.)

COLONEL

Where're we going with this?

ZSÓFI

Eight billion bacteria live on the tennis ball. That's us. The tennis ball is like our planet. It's our lifeboat in space.

(Zsófi erases the land, and begins a new drawing.)

ZSÓFI

Here's our own G3 dwarf star, as seen from outer space.

(She puts a tiny red dot on the whiteboard.)

ZSÓFI

Now let's look at how many souls are clinging to our lifeboat.

(Zsófi then draws a graph on the whiteboard. Along the bottom, left to right, she marks the years 1800, 1900, 2000, 2022. The vertical Y-axis shows global population, from one to eight billion. Large label: HUMAN POPULATION.)

(Zsófi then draws a 'hockey stick' curve, with the stick at 1.0 billion in 1800, slowly rising to 1.6 billion in 1900, and a sudden kick up to eight billion in 2022.)

ZSÓFI

Zsófi (cont'd)

In eighteen hundred, the population was sustainable. By nineteen hundred - it wasn't.

(Colonel looks puzzled.)

ZSÓFI

Humans had come to rely on coal. And today, on oil and gas.

COLONEL

So what's the solution?

ZSÓFI

Massive controls and regulations.

COLONEL

Those regulations would be gone by lunchtime! We need a techno breakthrough instead !

ZSÓFI

Colonel, in your dreams, Sir. It's a bit late for that already.

COLONEL

So what's the alternative?

ZSÓFI

Let's cut the population instead; let's cut the rich; let's cut out the billionaires.

COLONEL

Good luck with that, Ma'am.

(Colonel returns to front row, and stares at Zsófi.)

ZSÓFI

It's not goatherders in the Hindu Kush that are destroying the planet, is it?

(Colonel remains standing, holding the back of the chair.)

COLONEL

One personal question, Ma'am?

ZSÓFI

Depends.

COLONEL

Do you have children yet, Ma'am?

(Zsófi shakes her head.
Colonel moves toward her
again.)

COLONEL

If you were my granddaughter, Ma'am, I'd want you to have
one baby.

(Zsófi, shaken, clenches
fist, bites her lower lip,
nods.)

ZSÓFI

Interview's over, Colonel.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#51

SETTINGS: City Street outside warehouse used for interview - DAY. A grimy service door, almost swallowed by the shadow of a towering office building.

AT RISE : A photographer is waiting at the front of stage, to one side, opposite the service door. At the front of stage, at the other side, are hiding two men in black.

(SOUND: The door creaks open. Zsófi, now hooded, comes out of the stage wings, and looks around. She's hesitant, like an animal emerging from its den. Her eyes dart back and forth, scanning faces, cars, details.)

(Zsófi begins to walk down the sidewalk, keeping close to the buildings. She passes the glittering facade of a high-end department store, its windows reflecting distorted images of the street. She avoids eye contact with everyone. She glances furtively backwards over her shoulder.)

(In front of her, Zsófi suddenly spots the photographer, who is taking photos of her. Zsófi turns around and heads back in the other direction. But the two men-in-black emerge to block her path.)

(Zsófi turns again and runs
off into the stage wings
opposite the service door.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#52

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah -
NIGHT. The radio is on.

AT RISE : Zsófi and Tamara are leaning over
the balustrade.

NEWSREADER

With the threat of pandemic, all borders are being c
losed immediately, and all air traffic diverted away.
Travel around the country will be restricted to essential
services only.

(Tamara turns the radio off.)

TAMARA

That sounds like COVID all over again, eh?

ZSÓFI

Sure does. By the way, I've changed my mind. I'm thinking
of having a baby.

TAMARA

Oh! Why the change?

ZSÓFI

It's my body screaming: baby! Baby! Baby! All the time.

TAMARA

Baby fever!

(SOUND: the whirr/buzz/whine
of a drone approaching. The
drone descends and hovers.
Zsófi stands in front of
Tamara. Tamara turns her face
away.)

ZSÓFI

It's that drone again.

TAMARA

Bastards. Who are they?

ZSÓFI

The question isn't who, but why?

(SOUND: The drone lifts up
and away into the distance.)

ZSÓFI

Don't you want me to have a baby?

TAMARA

(Female) It's fine. I just didn't see this comin', eh.
Let's get the spare room ready.

(Tamara goes and hugs Zsófi.)

TAMARA

What about saving the world?

ZSÓFI

They can save themselves. It's the pandemic. Nature
strikes back! But do what you will. I need to start
knitting.

TAMARA

What? You were such a firebrand, Zsófia!

ZSÓFI

Clothes for baby, bootees ...

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#53

SETTINGS: AUCKLAND: RAILWAY STATION:
PLATFORM - DAY

AT RISE : Platform manager with cap and
whistle stands checking train
about to depart.

ANNOUNCER

The train now standing at platform one is the Northern Explorer. The train is about to depart for Wellington. It connects with the inter-island ferry, and the Kaikoura Express to Christchurch. Because of the pandemic all services are being suspended. This is the last train South! Final call! Platform one.

(PLATFORM MANAGER, whistle to mouth, checks around. SOUND: train doors closing. Ferenc appears at head of platform, hobbling with a stick. Whistles blow. At the last moment, the PLATFORM MANAGER sees Ferenc, and holds the train while helping Ferenc board. More whistle-blowing. The doors close, and the train moves off.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#54

SETTINGS: Hospital car-park: field hospital
 tents - DAY. The emergency room
 entrance is guarded by security
 guards, who are wearing facemasks.
 There is a notice: NO ADMITTANCE.
 PANDEMIC. INFECTIOUS.

AT RISE : A nurse in full personal
 protection gear is waiting to deal
 with arriving patients.

(Two stretcher-bearers
approach the nurse, bringing
a new patient.)

NURSE
No, no! The hospital is closed, and we have no room in the
car-park. We are not accepting any more patients. There is
no testing, no treatment, no vaccine. There is nothing
available here. Take the patient away and do not come
back. Save yourselves while you can.

(Two stretcher-bearers stop
and begin to turn around.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#55

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah -
DAY.

AT RISE : Zsófi is sitting outside,
peacefully crocheting a baby
shawl.

(Ferenc limps slowly up the
farmstead driveway using one
stick. Ferenc stops and waves
the stick high, then moves
on, a little closer, and
stops. Hallooos:)

FERENC

Zsófi! Zsófi! Zsófi!

(Zsófi is startled, looks up,
wondering. Then screams:)

ZSÓFI

Ferenc? Ferenc?! Ferenc!

(Zsófi rushes to Ferenc,
screaming with joy.)

ZSÓFI

It's you? You're alive?

FERENC

Of course.

(They hug and hug amid
tears.)

ZSÓFI

I thought you were dead.

(Tears roll down his cheeks.
Zsófi screams with joy.)

FERENC

Why do you live out here, behind God's back?

ZSÓFI

It's our refuge.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#56

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah -
DAY [later]

AT RISE : Zsófi and Tamara are quizzing
Ferenc. Zsófi keeps
touching/squeezing his arm. Yuvan
pours tea. Sara stands, watchful
as ever.

(Altan brings biscuits from
inside the farmhouse.)

ZSÓFI

And Europe?

FERENC

Drones everywhere. Every city. Recon drone; robot drone.
Drone against drone. Killer robots. Robot killers.

(Ferenc sighs. His hands are
shaking.)

FERENC

You can't even go shopping in the daytime. The shelves are
empty, anyway.

(Ferenc takes a biscuit.)

FERENC

Electricity? Water? Often not.

(Ferenc shakes his head.)

ZSÓFI

Where is all this? Eastern Europe?

FERENC

All over. I can't be sure, because the news is all
propaganda now.

(Ferenc sighs again.)

FERENC

Orcs still advancing from the East. Bombed-out cities.
Radioactive fallout. A leak, an accident, or dirty bombs,
I don't know. Just chaos.

(Ferenc puts his head in his
hands.)

FERENC

Right then. I'll take overwatch tonight. What have you
got? A rifle? Night goggles?

ZSÓFI

There's no need.

FERENC

You've had drón scouting you, haven't you? Next comes
enemy action.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#57

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farm: track from high pasture - NIGHT.

AT RISE : Zsófi is making her way down homeward, using a flashlight.

(The only sound in the quiet of the night is of the crunch of her footsteps on the gravel. SOUND: Then: the noise of a big diesel. Two headlights appear, coming toward her. Zsófi stops.)

(SOUND: car doors slam! Out jump four masked men in their late thirties, who look like professional assassins. They move toward her. Zsófi backs away.)

(SOUND: whizz of a bullet. A bullet snickers the ground between Zsófi and the men. The men immediately drop to the ground like professional soldiers.)

ASSASSIN

Someone's shooting! Tracer!

(Zsófi runs away back up the track into the darkness. SOUND: Whirr as another bullet hits the ground near the prone men, who promptly begin to wriggle and roll back toward the SUV.)

(One man gets in and reverses

the SUV while the others
shelter and run alongside.
The SUV turns round, the men
outside pause, peering.)

ASSASSIN

Ambush! Retreat!

(The men jump on board as the
SUV drives off.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#58

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: near the beehives - DAY. Toward dusk following a sunny summer day. The orchard is now partly in macadamia. Banks of bee-hives as before, but no buzzing, no bees to be seen.

AT RISE : No-one on stage.

(Tamara and Zsófi, wearing white beekeeping suits, enter and walk together toward the hives, carrying smoke puffers.)

ZSÓFI

The macadamia look good.

TAMARA

Yes, they're easier to bring to market.

(They reach the first bank of hives. No sound of bees.)

TAMARA

Where're the bees?

(Together, they lift off the lid on the first hive. Tamara pulls out the first frame and inspects it. They lift and drop it back. Then the second, and third. Tamara ponders.)

TAMARA

There's somethin' wrong here, eh. We have capped brood cells, just like normal, but no worker bees!

(Tamara keeps pulling out more frames one at a time,

and puts them back, until she
finds one with the queen.)

TAMARA

Aah! Here's the queen.

(Tamara shows the frame to
Zsófi, and then replaces it.
They move on to another hive,
and repeat the process.)

TAMARA

Why haven't these hives been robbed?

(They move on to another
hive, and repeat the
process.)

ZSÓFI

Why does that matter?

(Tamara looks grim.)

TAMARA

Maybe it's colony collapse disorder. Shit! Shit!

ZSÓFI

What?

TAMARA

Go and get Salvadori!

(Zsófi looks nonplussed.)

TAMARA

Just tell him: colony collapse. Yes, go rightaway!

(Zsófi strides off toward the
hills.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#59

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: in the
orchard near the hives - DAY
[later]

AT RISE : Tamara (mask and sunglasses),
Ferenc, and Salvadori stand
watching, their faces etched with
worry.

SALVADORI

TAMARA
We'll burn them all today. Ya know, three new hives'd be
wonderful, Mister Salvadori. Thank you so much.

(IF SAFE: Zsófi pretends to
light the hives and black
smoke appears.)

(Tamara holds out her hand to
Salvadori. Salvadori gives
Tamara a hug. Tamara cries.)

SALVADORI
I pray to God the disease does not spread.

(Salvadori departs. Tamara
turns to Zsófi.)

TAMARA
We should switch to blueberries, eh.

ZSÓFI
What, another change? More replanting? Why? Why
blueberries?

TAMARA
Ya know, Zsófi, bumblebees'll do the pollination.

ZSÓFI
So what?

TAMARA

Ya know, Zsófi, bumblebees don't live in hives, so there's no colony to collapse, and less risk of Varroa mites.

ZSÓFI

Shit! And where do we get blueberry bushes from?

TAMARA

That'll be your job, Zsófi, eh.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#60

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah -
DAY. Sun-up.

AT RISE : Zsófi stands in front of the
verandah, dressed like a heroine
going on a quest, holding a
questing stick. Tamara, Hawaiki,
and Ferenc watch from the
verandah.

TAMARA
Your quest, Zsófi - should you choose to accept it - is to
seek out, and brin' back blueberry bushes.

(Zsófi raises a clenched fist
like a true heroine.)

ZSÓFI
From beyond the plains of Mordor!

TAMARA
Wait up. I'll come with you!

(Tamara grabs her gear from
inside the house, and
re-emerges. She squeezes
Ferenc's shoulder in
farewell. Zsófi leads off
down the track. Tamara
follows.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#61

SETTINGS: On the track to Cromwell - DAY. On the quest.

AT RISE : Zsófi is walking along the dusty track. Tamara is somewhat behind. A wind is blowing dust in their faces. SOUND: the wind howls, and both girls struggle.

TAMARA

Wait up, Zsófi. Wait up!

(Zsófi waits for Tamara to catch up.)

TAMARA

There's a plant nursery on the way into town, eh.

ZSÓFI

What?

(The wind abruptly dissipates.)

TAMARA

Ya know, we just need to choose which varieties, and they'll deliver to our doorstep on electric golf carts.

(Zsófi laughs.)

ZSÓFI

Quests aren't what they used to be.

(Zsófi steps forward, then turns back to Tamara.)

ZSÓFI

The other thing is : Salvadori is growing olives. There's a big demand for them. None are coming in from overseas.

TAMARA

Tamara (cont'd)

It's too wet for olives here.

ZSÓFI

Not this year. And we just had two years of summer drought.

TAMARA

I'm not convinced, ya know.

ZSÓFI

Olives can self-pollinate. They're not reliant on bees.

TAMARA

Let's give it a go, eh. Try different varieties. See what works, eh.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#62

SETTINGS: Otakou: same farmstead: verandah -
DAY

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front edge of
the stage, to one side.

DELBEE

Hi. Time passes. The blueberry bushes are delivered and
planted. Then, small olive trees are delivered, and
planted. Winter comes, summer passes, the bushes and trees
grow. The orchard is in macadamia, blueberries and olives.
It is now 2041. The pandemic continues to dominate
people's lives. Sometimes, ambulance personnel find the
people are dead already; they bring out the bodies on
stretchers, and burn the bodies on the street.

(Delbee exits the stage.
Zsófi comes out onto the
verandah just as Yuvan comes
up the steps.)

ZSÓFI

Ah, Yuvan! I'm just wondering... Could you make some kinda
small cot, Uncle?

(Yuvan stops, taken aback.)

YUVAN

What?

ZSÓFI

A small cot, Uncle, could you make one? Please.

(Dawning realization on
Yuvan's face. His mouth opens
and closes. Tears well up,
and begin to trickle down his
cheeks. His voice is soft.)

ZSÓFI

Yes, Zsófi, I'd be proud to. Very proud.

(Yuvan sobs gently.)

ZSÓFI

And stick around, Uncle.

(Yuvan nods through tears,
beaming.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#63

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah -
DAY. First light.

AT RISE : Ferenc, leaning on the
balustrade, is using NATO
field-glasses to scan the terrain
for snipers. Instead, he spots
something on approach road.

FERENC

Tamara! Come already!

(Tamara emerges from inside
the house, wearing striped
pyjamas. Ferenc silently
hands her the field-glasses.)

FERENC

On the track. Someone is lying there, collapsed. It might
be Yuvan.

(Adjusting the field-glasses,
Tanara looks.)

TAMARA

Hard to tell. Hmm. Wait up, Ferenc.

(Tanara goes inside the
farmhouse, and comes out
again.)

TAMARA

Yuvan's not in his room. He was supposed to get back last
night. I hope to God it's not the plague.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#64

SETTINGS: Same Okatou farm: memorial plot -
DAY. Setting sun. Three
headstones, as before, moved from
original farm, plus a crude wooden
cross for Yuvan.

AT RISE : Zsófi, Tamara, Hawaiki, Ferenc,
all masked, stand mourning.

 ZSÓFI

Even beyond death, Great-Uncle Yuvan, there'll be a place
for you in my heart. We shall miss you, more than you
know. I just wish you could have seen your granddaughter.

 (They turn away, begin to
meander back to the
farmhouse. Tamara and Zsófi
cling together, crying.
Ferenc trails.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#65

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah -
DAY. Early summer. Sunset.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front edge of
the stage, to one side. Tamara,
Zsófi, Hawaiki, and Ferenc are on
the verandah. Zsófi is early in
her second trimester, but showing.
Cool linen skirts, linen tops on
the women.

DELBEE

Hi. By this time, the Thwaites glacier in Antarctica has
collapsed. As a result, sea-levels are rising, but by less
than half-a-meter.

(Delbee exits. Hawaiki pours
tea.)

ZSÓFI

The ice-wall is melting faster than predicted.

HAWAIKI

But what about the pandemic, Zsófi? There's a new strain.

ZSÓFI

Hospital's too risky. We'll have to do a home-birth.

HAWAIKI

Have you decided, Zsófia, on a name for the baby?

ZSÓFI

Odval. We'll call her Odval. It means chrysanthemum.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#66

SETTINGS: Same Otakou farmstead: verandah - NIGHT. Late summer. On the verandah are a patio rocking chair and verandah swing. The radio is on. This scene involves childbirthing, which can take place behind a short privacy screen backing the verandah, as if indoors. The flooring is old, wooden tongue-and-groove. Much fresh blood thereon.

AT RISE : Zsófi lies behind the screen, exhausted. She has just given birth. The newborn, still slick with amniotic fluid, lies on Zsófi's chest. Zsófi looks very pale and exhausted. Tamara, Hawaiki, Ferenc are all there.

NEWSREADER

The government has today confirmed that there will be no border restrictions which affect the tourist industry. Some reports state that world population has now fallen below five billion. Temperatures in Otakou are expected to reach thirty-four degrees tommorrow.

(The fly-screen door squeaks open, and Hawaiki comes out of the house. She looks distracted and worried. Hawaiki turns the radio off, and goes back inside.)

TAMARA

Zsófi! It's your baby girl, Odval, look!

(Tamara gently rubs the baby's back. The baby splutters and wails. Zsófi does not stir. Her eyes begin to stare. Tamara picks up baby Odval and wraps her in a towel.)

TAMARA

Oh! The placenta's out already. Here, Zsófi, you hold baby.

(Zsófi is unresponsive.
Tamara looks at Ferenc, who
is inspecting the placenta
amid a spreading pool of
blood on the floor. Tamara,
very worried, cradles baby
Odval.)

FERENC

Zsófi's bleeding bad.

TAMARA

Hawaiki, massage Zsófi below the navel!

(Hawaiki is unsure exactly
what to do, and she seems
ineffectual.)

ZSÓFI

No, lower, Hawaiki! It's to help the womb contract, and stop the bleedin', eh.

(Tamara has both hands full.
Hawaiki massages Zsófi's
lower abdomen gently. Tamara
shakes her head.)

TAMARA

Ferenc, check the placenta real quick!

(Ferenc gets up. Zsófi goes
limp.)

FERENC

It's all there. But Zsófi's bleeding out! We're losing her!

TAMARA

Keep massagin', Hawaiki!

(Tamara checks the baby
again. Odval wails.)

FERENC

It's not working! Zsófi's still hemorrhaging.

(Ferenc checks for Zsófi's
pulse.)

FERENC

Hawaiki, take baby now! Tamara, pressure on the lower
abdomen!

(Tamara hands baby Odval over
to Hawaiki, who cradles her.
Ferenc starts CPR. The pool
of blood spreads. Zsófi's
soul departs.)

(SCENE LIGHTING TEMPORARILY
OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(Ferenc stumbles out of the
house, blood on his knees,
wiping blood off his hands.)

FERENC

Shit! Shit! Shit!

(Tamara comes out, less
bloody.)

TAMARA

Baby's fine. Hawaiki's got her.

(They stand, hands on the
verandah balustrade, staring
blankly into the darkness.
Tamara begins to sob. Ferenc

puts an arm around her, then
two, and holds Tamara. SOUND:
wail of the newborn baby from
inside the house. Tamara
breaks away.)

TAMARA

I'll make formula, eh. She needs feeding right quick.

(Hawaiki appears holding the
swaddled baby.)

TAMARA

Let her suckle, Hawaiki. We'll both have to try to
breastfeed.

HAWAIKI

Oh!

(The women go inside.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#67

SETTINGS: Otakou: the same farmstead:
verandah - DAY. Sunrise. There are
two Nordic walking poles leaning
in the corner of the verandah, and
a tokotoko, a traditional ornate
walking stick reserved for Maori
elders.

AT RISE : Ferenc stands, leaning on the
balustrade, looking out over the
orchard.

(Tamara and Hawaiki come out
of the farmhouse. Hawaiki
carries Odval, the new-born
baby, in a linen sling.
Tamara carries a backpack.)

TAMARA
We're off to the high pasture.

(FERENCE barely acknowledges.
Hawaiki picks up the tokotoko
walking stick. Tamara uses
the Nordic hiking poles.)

FERENC
To Altan, eh?

TAMARA
Yes. Then to the Yazidis, ya know.

HAWAIKI
One of the girls there is breastfeeding her baby. Maybe
she can give milk to Odval, too.

(The women set off.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#68

SETTINGS: Otakou: the same farm: on the high
 pasture - DAY

AT RISE : The yurt-tent stands in the
 distance. There are goats nearby.
 Altan stands gazing into the
 distance as Hawaiki and Tamara
 approach.

(SOUND of goats bleating.
Tamara and Hawaiki enter.
Hawaiki hands Odval over to
Altan to hold. Altan smiles.)

ALTAN

Odval.

(Altan looks at Tamara.)

ALTAN

Zsópi?

(Tamara shakes her head.
Hawaiki takes Odval back.
Tamara, tears rolling down
her cheeks, stands in front
of Altan, holding each of his
hands tightly.)

ALTAN

Can I go and see her now?

TAMARA

Ya know, Altan, she didn't make it. She bled out. She lost
too much blood, eh. We just couldn't stop the bleeding.

ALTAN

She's dead?

(Tamara nods. Tears spill
onto her cheeks. Tamara pulls
Altan toward her, and buries

her head on his chest.)

TAMARA

It's just you and me now. ... And Ferenc.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#69

SETTINGS: Otakou: the same farm: memorial plot by the track - DAY.

AT RISE : Delbee stands at the front edge of the stage, to one side. The rain is heavy and relentless. There are four large umbrellas, and four mourners. Three headstones, as previously, their inscriptions blurred by the downpour. SOUND: background music: a lament in Mongolian style. Add new headstones: Ivaskow Yuvan 1964 - 2041 Zsófi's Great-uncle Kovács Zsófi 2005 - 2042 Odval's mother. Candle in the wind. Rest in peace heart-mine. Tamara, in black, and hooded, stands cradling baby Odval in her arms. Odval is six months old. Ferenc leans on his stick. Hawaiki and Altan stand close together, each handling their grief in their own way.

DELBEE

Six months have passed.

(Delbee exits. Ferenc salutes through tears. Then, Hawaiki reaches across to Tamara and gently takes Odval. Tamara picks a dandelion.)

TAMARA

A candle in the wind. Rest in peace my dear sweetheart.

(Tamara places the dandelion on Zsófi's grave. Pause. Hawaiki presents the baby to Altan. Altan smiles at last.)

ALTAN

Milk? Goat?

HAWAIKI

Yes, yes. Milk.

(Altan joins in the lament,
his voice a low, mournful
drone that echoes the tragedy
of the past months.
Eventually, Altan trudges
back in a different
direction, up towards the
high pasture. The others walk
slowly toward the farmhouse,
clinging together for
support.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#70

SETTINGS: Otakou: same farmstead: verandah -
NIGHT. SOUND of wind blowing. One
rocking chair. A chair. Tibetan
Buddhist artefacts sit on a small
table, including a Tibetan singing
bowl. Also, NATO field-glasses. In
the corner stand the Nordic
walking poles, and the tokotoko
walking stick.

AT RISE : Ferenc is dozing on the rocking
chair. Hawaiki is on the swing
seat, reading in the light of a
single bulb. Tamara sits hooded,
in a yoga pose on the floor.

(Ferenc mumbles in
Hungarian. He suffers with
bad dreams of war:
post-traumatic stress
disorder.)

TAMARA

(Female) Ya know, Hawaiki, I've never seen the land here
so dry before. This summer, the whole landscape is
parched, isn't it? Everything has turned brown and tinder
dry, eh?. You can smell the dust everywhere, as it
squirrels along in the breeze.

(Hawaiki looks up.)

HAWAIKI

We'll be okay. Thank God we still have water in the dam,
and electricity for the irrigation system.

(Ferenc is dozing, twitching
and mumbling incoherently.)

(Then, suddenly, Tamara
sniffs the air, and quickly
stands up. She bongs on the
singing bowl. SOUND: BONG!

Then she slaps Ferenc heavily
on the shoulder. Hawaiki
snaps the book shut, and
rushes inside.)

TAMARA

Ferenc! Wake up! Wake up! Smoke!

(LIGHTING: ON THE SIDE OF
HILL: Begin with red glow
behind a dark hillside.)

(ON VERANDAH: Ferenc slaps
his own cheek, and stands
quickly, sniffing warily.)

FERENC

Stand to, lads!

(ON VERANDAH: Tamara calls
inside, her voice sharp:)

TAMARA

Hawaiki! Bring Odval! We need to go! Now! Real quick!

(Tamara shakes Ferenc:)

TAMARA

Set the livestock free, Ferenc!

(LIGHTING: ON HILLSIDE: in
the darkness, flames erupt
and spread.)

(ON VERANDAH: Tamara goes
inside. Tamara speaks from
off-stage.)

TAMARA

Tamara (cont'd)
Hawaiki! Hawaiki! Yes, immediately!

(Tamara comes out, bringing
Hawaiki, who is clutching
Odval tight to her chest.)

(LIGHTING: ON HILLSIDE:
wildfire spreads wider,
taller, and closer.)

(ON VERANDAH: Tamara grabs
tokotoko, and the
field-glasses. The two women
run off into the night.
Ferenc goes inside, his gait
uneven.)

(LIGHTING: ON HILLSIDE: a
wall of flames fills the
darkness.)

(ON VERANDAH: As if at war,
Ferenc returns with a
gun-belt slung diagonally
over one shoulder and a
pistol, then limps off slowly
into the dark.)

(SOUND: BANG! BANG! Gunshots
mingle with the crackle and
roar of the fast approaching
wildfire.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#71

SETTINGS: Rock outcrop on hillside
 overlooking Otakou farm - DAY.

AT RISE : Tamara, Hawaiki and baby Odval are
 huddled together on the rock
 outcrop. The tokotoko
 walking-stick, and walking-poles
 lie on the ground. Also the NATO
 field-glasses.

ALTAN

Tamara! Tamara!

(Altan comes from the high
pasture, bringing tea in one
steel container, and goats
milk for the baby in another.
Hawaiki feeds Odval, her
movements gentle and
reassuring. Altan puts his
arms around Tamara. Tamara
wails.)

TAMARA

The whole orchard is burnt; the farmhouse has burnt down.
All that's left is the small stone shed.

ALTAN

Ferenc?

TAMARA

I don't know.

(Altan takes Odval, and
cradles her. Hawaiki uses the
NATO field-glasses. She sees
burnt-out orchard, burnt-down
farmhouse. Hawaiki sees burnt
grass, and a charred body by
the now-roofless burnt-out
small stone shed.)

HAWAIKI

I can see a body by the stone shed.

(Hawaiki hands Tamara the field-glasses. Tamara checks.)

TAMARA

We'll rebuild. Somehow. We've done it before.

(Suddenly Hawaiki points.)

HAWAIKI

Drone! Drone!

(Hawaiki grabs the field-glasses back, and sees a two-seat high-wing electric aircraft flying up the valley. The spotter plane flies overhead, and circles the survivors. They all wave. Hawaiki uses the field-glasses again. She sees two troopers riding electric military quad-bikes along the track into the valley.)

HAWAIKI

There's two quad-bikes coming on the track! It's two soldiers. The cavalry are here!

TAMARA

Holy Mother of God!

(Tamara starts to sob. She is relieved, but at the same time, grief-stricken about Ferenc. Hawaiki pulls Tamara close, and holds her tight, as best she can.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#72

SETTINGS: Otakou farm, now burnt: near the small stone shed - DAY. The shed roof is burnt off. The inside of the shed is visible. There are four old office fire-proof safes, still intact, raised off the floor on wooden platforms.

AT RISE : No-one on stage.

(Tamara and Hawaiki come onto the stage. Hawaiki is carrying the baby Odval, and wearing a large neck pendant.)

TAMARA

The roof of the shed has burnt off. Let's go inside and check the seed-bank.

(The two women go inside the stone shed.)

(Tamara opens one of the safes. Inside are several thick Ecology/Horticulture textbooks. Also: lots of brown paper bags, rolled and clipped airtight with wooden clothes pegs, and labelled with date and vegetable name, for example: Rocket, Tarragon, Onion. Tamara pulls out a packet, sniffs it. Hawaiki sniffs too. Then Tamara puts it back.)

TAMARA

Yippee! Our seed-bank is saved! We can replant the vegetable garden.

(Tamara pulls out a textbook,

and flips through it.)

TAMARA

You'll have to learn all this, Hawaiki!

(Tamara shuts the safe door,
the two women go outside.)

HAWAIKI

I'll go and get the Yazidis and Salvadoris to help.

(Hawaiki sets off along the
track. Hawaiki turns, smiles,
waves.)

HAWAIKI

We shall survive!

(In the distance, Gabriela
comes into sight. Hawaiki
stops, and Tamara walks up to
stand by her.)

(Gabriela reaches Hawaiki and
Tamara.)

GABRIELA

You need help, Miss?

TAMARA

Yes. But ya know, there's no food and nowhere to sleep,
eh.

(Gabriela waits.)

TAMARA

Gabriela, go back and beg-borrow some tools, eh. Then we
can start a vegetable garden.

GABRIELA

Okay. I'll bring some nice young men to help, too.

(Gabriela sets off back the
way she had come.)

TAMARA

Let's head up and hunt rabbits, Hawaiki. I'll carry Odval,
eh.

(Tamara and Hawaiki set off,
up toward the high pasture.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#73

SETTINGS: Otakou farm, now burnt: near the
 small stone shed - DAY.

AT RISE : No-one onstage.

(Gabriela, two strapping
young men, and Salvadori
appear on track in the
distance. There are two small
wheelbarrow-carts. On the
carts are hand tools,
mattocks, large two-man
push-pull hand-saws, shovels,
and spades.)

(From the high country come
Tamara and Hawaiki, weary but
resolute, with dead rabbits
slung over their shoulders.
Hawaiki is still wearing the
large neck pendant. Both
women wave. The others wave
back.)

(The two groups meet. Hawaiki
and Tamara unload the
rabbits.)

HAWAIKI

There you go, rabbit for tonight and tomorrow.

(SCENE LIGHTING TEMPORARILY
OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(The young men, and women,
are finishing the build of a
rough lean-to shelter outside
the stone shed. One side is
half open and faces the
red-brick forge.)

(The forge is now covered by large stone to protect against rain. Salvadori and Tamara help, walk around, organize, discuss.)

(Hawaiki and Gabriela drag in brush from the unburnt high country for bedding and shelter.)

(Sunset. Men and carts leave. Tamara too. Hawaiki, still wearing the Tikopian PENDANT, and Gabriela wave farewell. The two girls will overnight in the shelter.)

(The girls light the fire in the forge and begin to roast a rabbit.)

(A branch has been forced through a skinned and gutted rabbit. Kahoa holds one end of the branch, the other rests on the large stone, so the rabbit roasts. Gabriela huddles in shelter, watching.)

(Hawaiki takes the rabbit off the fire, slices meat off it, hands Gabriela a portion, and tries one herself.)

GABRIELA

It tastes good to me!

HAWAIIKI

Sure does. Nothing like rabbit!

GABRIELA

That's a lovely pendant, Hawaiki. Where did you get it?

HAWAIIKI

It belonged to my grandmother's great-grandmother.

(Tamara takes it off, and
hands it to Gabriela.)

HAWAIIKI

She lived on a small island called Tikopia. She got pregnant as a teenager. So she was banished.

(Gabriela inspects the
pendant.)

GABRIELA

What a beautiful heirloom!

HAWAIIKI

In those days, Tikopia was over-populated.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#74

SETTINGS: OTAKOU ORCHARD - DAY. The replanted orchard is thriving. It is harvest time again. Dotted around are raised vegetable beds, and beehives.

AT RISE : There are young women, men, and teenagers, all picking fruit. All are dressed Amish-style in linen and leather, with straw hats. Among them are Delbee and Odval, who is now about fifty.

(Delbee turns and comes to the front of the stage.)

DELBEE

Hey there. Fifty years have passed. The orchard, the vegetable beds, and the bees are all thriving. It's my story now. I am Odval's daughter. I am Zsófi's granddaughter.

(Delbee walks back and joins the others working in the orchard.)

(An elderly hooded woman in Buddhist nun, red linen robes, leaning on tokotoko walks in the orchard. Her face is hidden by the hood [or large straw hat with veil], but it is Tamara, now 86.)

(Odval, now about fifty, who bears a striking resemblance to Zsófi, approaches and gives Tamara a gentle hug. Odval takes her arm, and together they head off stage toward the family burial plot

near track. They are followed
by: DELBEE, Zsófi's
granddaughter, 17, in linen,
plus a ventilated wide-brim
straw hat. She holds her
baby, Zsófi's
great-grandchild, in her
arms.)

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE)

** Scene **#75

SETTINGS: Otakou farm: family burial plot by track - DAY. The burial plot is now covered in dry sand. No grass. HEADSTONES as before, plus a new headstone: Lt. Kovács Ferenc 2002 - 2042, with an old steel helmet on top, on which is painted a much-faded Ukraine flag.

AT RISE : The same elderly hooded woman (Tamara) stands in front of the graves, leaning on the tokotoko ceremonial walking-stick, with a dandelion in her other hand. Odval and Delbee with her baby stand beside her.

(They stand in front of Zsófi's headstone. Tamara's fingers loosen. The dandelion falls onto Zsófi's grave.)

TAMARA

We were so young then, eh?

(Tamara sighs - wistful, love long-past.)

TAMARA

You have a great-granddaughter, Zsófi. Ya know, she reminds me of you. Every day.

(There's a catch in Tamara's voice.)

TAMARA

Ya know, I keep smilin' at her. Just like you would, eh?

(The sound of several deep yoga-style breaths.)

(SOUND: a peal of thunder.)

TAMARA

Delbee, this stick belonged to my grandfather: you can have it.

DELBEE

No, thanks. That post-war generation was shit. I'd've rammed that walking-stick right up inside Grandpa's arse.

TAMARA

(Female)I still don't understand my mother. I told her: we were supposed to be gardeners, gardeners of what God created. But no, she wouldn't listen. Let her burn in hell for ever, plus a day.

DELBEE

There must be other survivors.

TAMARA

Yes. In Norway, Tasmania, Alaska, Canada, The Andes, Terra Del Fuego. In Siberia. Who knows?

(Pause.)

TAMARA

Like mayflies, our species has already had its magic moment in the sunshine.

(Pause.)

TAMARA

Not that it'll change anythin'.

(SCENE LIGHTING OFF : BLACK-OUT : Black-out)

(END OF SCENE.)

(END OF DRAMA.)