

FUGUE STATE

*a play
by Cara Winter*

CHARACTERS

NARRATOR (*a white female*)

THE SOLDIERS:

BEN (*white male, 30+*)

JOHN (*white male, 20-30*)

DAVID (*white male, 20-30*)

THE CHILDREN (to be played by adults):

JUAN (*brown, male or male identifying*)

SARAI (*a different brown, female or female identifying*)

KEVIN (*black, male or male identifying*)

OLIVIA (*sort of white but not really, female or female identifying*)

NOTE: The NARRATOR is always on stage; when she is not speaking, she is watching and listening.

SCENE ONE

LIGHTS UP stage right, where the NARRATOR stands.

NARRATOR: 'Fugue State', *definition*: a rare psychiatric disorder characterized by reversible amnesia for personal identity, including the memories, personality, and other identifying characteristics of individuality.

Pretty cool, huh? Yeah, I got that from Wikipedia. You're welcome.

Reversible. Amnesia. For personal identity, including memories. The Amnesia of *Who You Are...* but *reversible*. A Fugue State. Lucky you, ALL OF YOU! You're inside *a fugue state*, right now...

LIGHTS UP stage left.

NARRATOR: Welcome to one of the many *Make America Great Again Detention Centers of America, Now Great Again*.

This one is in Nevada, or... California? Wait, New Mexico; I don't know, it's somewhere in the fucking desert. It's hot during the day, freezing cold at night; vast, and dry, no water. A wasteland in every direction, you get the picture.

This particular *Make America Great Again Detention Center ...s of America, Now Great Again ...* is empty, has been for months, and months. It was once full of men, women and children, illegals, but are no longer. Here. *No longer here*, at the Center (*laughs*). We didn't *murder* them... at least I don't think so. Anyway.

But to call it 'empty' is something of an overstatement; a few have stayed behind, hiding. A handful of children, squirreling themselves away, like rats in the sewers, except not, except out in the desert. They have been on their own for so long, they're a little like wild animals... with slightly better vocabularies. But otherwise like wild animals in almost every way, except that they are human children.

Here, actually, let me introduce you to them, before you get completely lost. This –

JUAN enters; he is eating something hungrily, perhaps knowing at some aloe he found; he winces as it is so terrible, but he's too hungry to stop.

Is Juan, he's *brown*.

(beat)

This –

SARAI enters; she tries to figure out which direction to face, then kneels down to pray.

Is Sarai, she's a different brown.

KEVIN enters; this land is so foreign to him, and he is so lost emotionally, he just stares.

This is Kevin! He's, um... well, he's black, isn't he? And this is Olivia –

OLIVIA enters; she goes to where Sarai is praying, and watches her with fascination.

Who is *sort of* white, but not really... it's complicated.

So, that's everyone. But not *completely*; there are three more people in this story. But ...I mean, they're the sort that wake up every morning in a bed, have coffee, brush their teeth, and kiss their wives goodbye, so... they'll be more capable of introducing themselves.

In fact, I may let them take over for a while. See what happens.

(to The Children)

Shoo!

(The Children run and hide)

I love doing that.

SCENE TWO

SXF: Crickets. In the distance, a semi-truck passes.

A man (BEN, white, 30-45) walks into view. He wears plain clothes but has a still, steely, military-like disposition. He carries a Nintendo 3DS, and a brown paper sack.

Another man (JOHN, white, 25-30 in a uniform) enters behind him, tapping him on the shoulder.

The men whisper fervently to each other.

BEN: What are you doing?

JOHN: Forgot to give you this.

John hands Ben a gun.

BEN: No. No way.

JOHN: Just take it.

BEN: There isn't even anyone out here.

JOHN: Trust me, they're out there. At least three or four of 'em.

BEN: Fine, whatever... but if they're just kids, I'm not gonna even need that.

JOHN: Dude, I'm tellin' ya: even though you can never be too careful.

BEN: Fine, Jesus...

*Ben takes the gun, and tucks it inside his pants pocket.
John exits.*

Ben sits down on some piece of trash or other, then sets down his backpack. From it, he produces a Nintendo, and starts to play.

SFX: The sounds of the Nintendo

A few moments pass.

Finally, we see a child's head (JUAN) appear behind Ben.

Ben grabs his backpack and produces a bag of potato chips and a bottle of water. He tries to eat with one hand, and continue playing the game with the other.

Juan approaches him with extreme caution, licking his lips...

With one hand still on the game, Ben pops a chip in his mouth with the other.

BEN: Shhhhhhhhit...

Juan is interested in this grown-up who plays a child's game. He watches him intently.

Finally, Juan decides it's safe enough... and moves slowly to Ben's side, grabs the bottle of water, and chugs.

Ben is startled.

BEN: Oh. Hello.

Ben looks at the child for a moment, then returns to focusing on his game.

Again, he tries to play with one hand, while reaching into the chip bag with the other.

JUAN: You gotta keep both hands on that thing, or else you're gonna miss the—ah! No, yeah, you've gotta catch those... oh, you're running out of time -- watch out! Watch out, you're gonna ---

The game goes 'boooo-bleep-bleep' indicating Ben has lost.

JUAN: --lose. Moron.

Ben shrugs, smiling. He offers the Nintendo to Juan. Without a moment of hesitation, Juan snatches it and starts to play.

Two other children (KEVIN and OLIVIA) emerge from their hiding places, drawn by the sounds of the game. Kevin wants to approach the man, but Olivia holds him back. They whisper to each other.

OLIVIA: Wait, wait, wait!

KEVIN: It's okay! Juan's playing, come on, just lemmie see!

OLIVIA: No. No grownups. Only kids. Grownups are the ones who beat, or shoot or rape... or *get* beaten and then shot, sent away or shot, or raped and then sent away... but not before they are raped, again... no grownups, no grownups, no!

The Narrator enters.

NARRATOR: Woah, woah, woah... sorry to interrupt; to be honest, I wasn't going to come back, so soon. But, I had to, I mean... what she said? That's not right... that's... that's just her imagination. Gotta be. Right? Like, what's that expression, "Out of the mouths of babes?" Oh, wait... that's about true things. What I mean is... *kids*... am I right?

OLIVIA: I am super thirsty, though.

The Narrator turns her attention to Olivia.

Olivia and Kevin both get down on all fours, and creep close enough to see the whole scene.

KEVIN: Chips! Look, Olivia! It's fucking Chiiiiiiips...

Kevin runs and slides (as if into home base) beside Ben.

OLIVIA: O.M.G., shit, mister, can I have some?

Ben nods. Olivia slides up next to Kevin, and both of them eat and drink with enthusiasm.

KEVIN/ OLIVIA: Gimme that! / Lemmie have some! / OMG, so good...

SFX: Nintendo bleeps

JUAN: YES!!!

The children are in heaven.

After a few beats, SARAI emerges. She wears a tattered headscarf, and she carries a dead rabbit over her shoulder. She is the most elder of the children. She stops cold, and drops the rabbit.

SARAI: Stop!!! All of you! Back to your hiding places, you idiots, this could be a trap!

From out of nowhere, JOHN and a second soldier (DAVID, 25+) enter with guns pointed at the children.

DAVID: Freeze, you little shits.

SARAI: SEE?? SEE?? YOU IDIOTS!! MORONS!!

DAVID: I said fuckin' freeze, you assholes.

JOHN: You're all coming with us.

LIGHTS OUT

In blackness:

SXF: Gunshot

SCENE THREE

Narrator appears in a spotlight.

NARRATOR: So, I don't want to upset anyone. In the audience, here. Because you're such a nice, good-looking audience. But I do need to fill you in on just a couple salient details; not *show* you, that would be cruel. No, just tell you. SO, yes, what you just heard was a gunshot.

See, one of the children tried to run away, and David, the one soldier who said "I said fuckin' freeze, you assholes!" like, like he's Rambo, or something... well, he shot one of the *brown* children. IN the FOOT, just in the FOOT, to prove a point. Jesus, they're not animals! They're not... not *Nazis*. They're just white, all-American guys who get paid to... never mind.

LIGHTS UP on the full stage.

The actors are arranged to suggest that they are all in a van. David, Ben, and John are in the front (David drives), and the children are in the back.

JUAN is seated on the floor; a bloody T-shirt is wrapped around his foot. He sniffs, then wipes his nose, as he plays Nintendo. Apart from the sniffing, all is silent. The actors indicate the movement of the van.

OLIVIA: Smooth ride.

The children all look at her.

OLIVIA: What? I'm just saying. It's a Mercedes sprinter van. It doesn't get much better than this.

SARAI: We're all gonna die, you know.

KEVIN: That's a stupid thing to say. Everybody dies, *eventually*.

JUAN (*to his game*): Haa!! I beat the level! I now have Power, the Ultimate Power!! Ouch! Ow, ow, ow....

Everyone looks at Juan, and his foot.

KEVIN: Alright, my turn. Give it here.

JUAN: No.

KEVIN: Give it here!

JUAN: NO.

KEVIN: Look, you piece of shit, it's my turn!!

OLIVIA: Just give it to him. Batteries are gonna die soon, anyways.

Juan begrudgingly hands Kevin the Nintendo. More silence.

Up front, Ben is looking out the window, at nothing in particular. But something within him stirs.

DAVID: Shit.

JOHN: What is that?

DAVID: Shit...

JOHN: What IS that?

DAVID: That's a sand storm, you turd.

JOHN: Why must you always be so verbally abusive? *(beat)* So, now what?

DAVID: Roll up the windows.

David rolls up his window.

JOHN: *(to Ben)* Dude, roll up your window.

DAVID: Roll up your window, douche. Douche, roll up your -- BEN!

BEN: Hmm? Oh, shit.

Ben rolls up his window.

DAVID: Woah.

BEN: What is it?

DAVID: Traffic ahead is totally stopped, man, look at that.

JOHN: Probably can't see cause of the storm.

BEN: Just pull over.

DAVID: Ya think?

David pulls the van over, and shuts off the engine.

How long do you think we'll be here?

DAVID: Hell if I know.

BEN: How long til it reaches us?

DAVID: Jesus Christ, do I look like a weatherman to you?

They all watch, wide-eyed.

After a few moments, Ben unbuckles his seatbelt.

BEN: I should check on the kid with the foot.

DAVID: What, now?

BEN: Yes, now.

DAVID: Fine...

David hands Ben the keys.

Ben gets out of the van, and shuts the door. He takes a second, at the side of the van. He looks ahead to the dust storm, then goes to the back of the van and opens the doors.

BEN: Kids. Psst! You're free. I'm letting you go. Now run, get out of here!

OLIVIA: Run?

JUAN: What?

SARAI: Run, where?

OLIVIA: It's the fucking desert.

BEN: Shh!! Just run! Get away from here!

OLIVIA: But, Juan can't run. His foot.

BEN: I'll carry him. Come on, get out ... come on!

The children hesitate; they don't trust him.

BEN: Look, I'm sorry about before, with the Nintendo and the chips, okay? I'm sorry I was ever a part of this. But I've changed my mind, and I just want you all to get ...home, or ...away from here, somewhere safe. Okay? I promise, no more tricks, now just get out of the van?!

DAVID: What the fuck are you doing?!

David stands, gun drawn. Ben puts his hands in the air.

DAVID: Give me your gun.

BEN: I don't know what you think you heard, but—

DAVID: Give me your gun, you son of a bitch!

BEN: John-boy is right, your language...

DAVID: Get out your gun, *slowly*, put it on the ground, and kick it over here.

Ben doesn't move. David points his gun at Ben's head. Ben looks down, then slowly reaches back for his gun, places it on the ground, and slides it over. David catches the gun under his foot.

JUAN: GOD DAMN IT!!!

Everyone looks at Juan. He raises the Nintendo.

JUAN: Batteries are dead.

David glares at Ben, then motions towards the van with his gun.

DAVID: Get in.

Ben starts to move toward the front.

DAVID: Not up there, moron, in the back with the other little shits!

Ben doesn't move; they exist in a stale mate for a moment.

BEN: So, this is it, huh? This is your life. Such a big man, so brave—

DAVID: It was your life, too, up until, oh, I don't know, twenty seconds ago!

BEN: , to arrest and deport innocent children—

DAVID: There's no such thing as innocent! Now get in the fucking van!

Ben doesn't see any options; he climbs into the back of the van, and David mimes closing the van doors, then locking them.

He walks around to the front of the van, and climbs back into the driver's seat.

JOHN: Where's Ben?

DAVID: He was gonna let them go.

JOHN: NO. WAY.

DAVID: Yeah, just caught him telling them to run off! Fucker...

JOHN: Woah...

DAVID: Could you do me just the tiniest little favor, maybe, and shut the fuck up?

SFX: The sound of sand hitting the van.

JOHN: Shit.

DAVID: Yeah, it's getting real, now.

JOHN: This is kinda freaking me out, right now...

DAVID: Yeah, yeah, just sit tight. *(crossing his arms)*

John puts his feet up on the dash.

David smacks his leg. John puts his feet back down.

Lights dim on the front of the van, shifting focus shifts to the back of the van.

SCENE FOUR

The children are huddled together, looking at Ben.

Ben is breathing hard; he's realizing all of a sudden how much trouble he might be in.

He sits down, cross-legged on the floor of the van, and covers his face with his hands.

One by one, starting with Olivia, they creep over to Ben and start investigating him. He's startled at first, but lets them look him over. They check all of his pockets.

Kevin finds Ben's cell phone; he takes it and holds it aloft over his head.

KEVIN: Score!!!

The other children all beg and plead for (and physically try to get) the phone, but Kevin holds on to it.

KEVIN: FINDERS!!! KEEPERS!!!!

Everyone backs down, unhappy.

Kevin fiddles with the phone for a second, then realizes it's locked.

KEVIN: Code?

Ben isn't able to speak.

KEVIN: Jesus, you're worse than Juan.

Kevin grabs Ben's hand and places his index finger on the touch ID pad.

KEVIN: YESSSS.

SARAI: What are you gonna do, call your mommy?

KEVIN: Ug, no! And... that is UNCALLED FOR!!!

BEN: Might not be any service out here, anyways...

KEVIN: Tell her to shut up about my mother!

SARAI: I take it back, jeezus.

Kevin dials a number, but can't get the call to go through. He stands up, tries the number from another spot in the van, then again, with no luck.

Kevin throws the phone back to Ben, sits cross-legged away from the others, and puts his hands over his face.

Olivia has crossed to Ben during this, and she whispers to him.

OLIVIA: He was probably actually trying his mother.

BEN: Where are your parents, anyhow? Why were you alone in the desert?

OLIVIA: *(laughing)* This guy...

SARAI: What?

JUAN: What did he say?

OLIVIA: This guy kills me! He asked where our parents are; why we were in the desert!

JUAN: No, he did not.

BEN: I did, actually.

All four children laugh and point at Ben for his stupidity. They laugh, and laugh, and laugh... until the laughter dies down and silence takes hold again.

JUAN: Why isn't the van moving?

OLIVIA: Does it matter?

SARAI: A blessed reprieve.

KEVIN: Maybe the van's broken down?

BEN: Do you want me to try and find out?

SARAI: Probably bad news, like always.

KEVIN: How would you do that, anyhow?

BEN: I dunno... maybe I could get the guard's attention? We could make some noise, back here...

JUAN: No. NO! No more guards! Haven't you done enough!?

OLIVIA: Yeah. Less we see of those guys, the better, don't you think?

BEN: Good point.

The group quiets themselves.

Juan swipes Ben's phone and starts looking at it.

JUAN: Got any games on here?

BEN: No.

JUAN: Stupido!!! This is so boring, it's lethal.

Juan tosses the phone back to Ben, and the children slowly assume a state of boredom. They remain bored for some time.

Suddenly, Kevin takes the phone from Ben, looks for what he wants, then turns on the video camera. (The phone will get passed from child to child during the scene, landing finally with Olivia by the time it runs out of power, below).

KEVIN: I know! Let's play Detention Center!

JUAN: Ooooo!!!

SARAI: YES.

OLIVIA: Why would you want to play that, you idiot-head?

KEVIN: It'll be fun. Him. (*points at Ben*) He's our newest detainee.

BEN: Sure, alright.

Kevin points the camera at Ben; suddenly, Kevin is his interrogator.

The children arrange themselves like a death panel, adopting mannerisms, accents, etc. of adults they've come in contact with.

KEVIN: Question #1: WHY DID YOU COME TO THE UNITED STATES?

BEN: I... I was born here.

SARAI: Errr!!!! WRONG.

OLIVIA: Next contestant!

BEN: Wait, I...

KEVIN: You have won the golden ticket already, you are not allowed to compete.

SARAI: Me, next, my turn!

JUAN: Always me, me, me.

KEVIN: #2: WHEN DID YOU ENTER THE UNITED STATES?

SARAI: I don't know, because I'm a kid, and time means nothing to me – BOOM!

At this point, the phone runs out of charge. Olivia, who has been filming, throws it across angrily at Ben.

OLIVIA: Ugh! Why does everything have to run out of charge!

JUAN: Next question! Next question! Next question!

KEVIN: You then!! *(pointing to Juan)* WITH WHOM DID YOU TRAVEL TO THIS COUNTRY? DID YOU TRAVEL WITH ANYONE YOU KNEW?

Juan was, until this point, sort of excited... but this question goes through him like a bullet.

KEVIN: Juan. Juan!!

Juan is lost in thought. He can't answer.

OLIVIA: God damn it, Jesus Christ, he came with a coyote. Like you know, not the wild animal, the other kind of coyote, you know, the raping kind?

BEN: What?

OLIVIA: Oh, yeah, they all rape. I mean, that's their thing, that's why they do it, so they can have easy access. And for the cash. It's kind of a win-win. For them.

BEN: Did you come here with a coyote?

OLIVIA: YOU'RE NOT THE ONE ASKING THE QUESTIONS!! Kevin?

KEVIN: *(to Sarai)* You! QUESTION #3: WHAT COUNTRIES DID YOU PASS THROUGH?

SARAI: Let's see... I think Molvia was one of them. That's a country, isn't it?

OLIVIA: Do you mean Bolivia?

SARAI: No, MO-livia.

OLIVIA: There's no such thing as Molivia.

SARAI: Yes there is, that's a place I passed through, on the way to America!

OLIVIA: No, you didn't, you came here on an airplane, so how could you have passed *through* Bolivia?!

SARAI: MO-LIVIIA.

KEVIN: STOP!! Jesus Christ, you're going to kill me with this. *(he turns to Ben)* YOU: HOW DID YOU TRAVEL HERE? *(Ben just stares)* Come on, asshole, those two don't even know basic geography, and Juan's in some kind of trance—

JUAN: I'm not in a trance!

KEVIN: So, you're it, you're the only one left to play.

BEN: Okay. I ...walked?

Kevin just shakes his head.

BEN: I didn't walk?

Kevin squints at him.

KEVIN: How can you not know this stuff?! You came... on *La Bestia*!!

At the sound of this word, all of the children get really excited. Even Juan starts to snap out of it.

CHILDREN: La Bestia!!! La Bestia!!!

Kevin narrates to the audience as the children act it out...

KEVIN: La Bestia ... it is the Beast. A great, churning freight train that you have to run like hell to catch up to... sometimes children are thrown onto it by their mothers and fathers.... others hurl themselves at it, hoping against hope to make it.... it is a gauntlet you must run, to catch your freedom... you must throw yourself onto La Bestia, and if you survive that, you ride it all the way to America...

But there are horrors on board, worse than being pulled under La Bestia's wheels, your limbs or hands or heads chopped off... that would be kinder. Predators of every kind lurk in the darkness between the cargo cars... thieves, drug runners, smugglers, and again with the rapists... if you survive La Bestia, they say, 'you come out like a *zombie*.'

The children all become like zombies. They all start moving towards Ben, as if they're going to eat his face... and he can't take it.

BEN: STOP!!! STOP!!!! STOP!!!

They stop when he shrieks loudly enough.

OLIVIA: Jesus. Pussy.

The children all laugh at Ben.

KEVIN: We were only playing.

SARAI: Sheesh, you'd think he'd never heard of a hell on earth, before.

The children's game is over, though, ruined. Ben feels badly for getting freaked out. He turns to Kevin.

BEN: So, what's the next question?

Kevin isn't playing anymore; he just tells him.

KEVIN: Oh, yeah, um... DID ANYTHING HAPPEN ON YOUR TRIP THAT SCARED OR HURT YOU?

There is a long, long silence.

BEN: How... did ... all of you ... get to the United States?

OLIVIA: The 'United States' – pshaw.

SARAI: The concept itself is absurd.

There is another brief silence.

JUAN: Does it matter? We're not staying.

OLIVIA: The point is, we don't belong.

KEVIN: The point is, we're not wanted.

SARAI: The point is, we are everywhere and nowhere, at once. Don't you see?

BEN: But... no... I feel like ...like there's been a terrible mistake. You don't belong on this journey, you belong... I'm going to tell the guards.

JUAN: NO!!

OLIVIA: Enough with the guards! What, do you think they'd feel anything? Think with their hearts instead of their muscles? Their brains don't even work; I've seen it before. They're not human, they're like the Golem.

BEN: But--

SARAI: Not everything can be fixed! *Not everything can be fixed!*

There is another brief silence.

SARAI: I was coming to live with my grandparents. I was going to become a citizen. Go to school. And someday my parents would join us. But, then... these... men came, in the airport. They asked me my name, and about my hijab, and then... that was it. They took me to a jail, of sorts. And then down here, to the desert. *(beat)* I think it's because they think I want to blow something up. *(beat)* I don't want to blow up anything. I just want to go home. *(beat)* Sometimes, I imagine my grandparents are still at the airport. Standing there, just waiting for me. Holding each other, slowly turning to bones, and then, finally to dust... in the wind, where there are no tears. Only rain.

There is another brief silence.

KEVIN: Jesus Christ, that's depressing!

BEN: What about you, Kevin? Why are you here?

KEVIN: Why should I tell you? Why are you so curious, all of a sudden?

BEN: I ...don't know.

OLIVIA: He's curious because he's a human being!

SARAI: Because he suddenly has the time on his hands to be curious.

JUAN: Because suddenly he's one of us.

There is another brief silence.

JUAN: I'm bored again.

KEVIN: Let's play something else!

OLIVIA: Like what?

SARAI: I want to play, I want to play...

JUAN: But there's nothing to play *with*.

SARAI: I know, let's play with him!

Sarai points at Ben.

BEN: Me.

OLIVIA: Yes! School! Let's play school! And you'll be the teacher.

KEVIN: YES!!

JUAN: No, no, no! Screw that! *(beat)* I don't know how to play school.

OLIVIA: Yes you do, it's the easiest thing in the world. You just do whatever the teacher tells you to do.

KEVIN: *(to Ben)* You! You are the teacher!

BEN: I ...

KEVIN: Shut the fuck up, you're the fucking teacher.

BEN: Alright then.

All the children arrange themselves into a row, cross-legged, on the floor of the truck; one of the children shows Juan where to sit.

They look expectedly at Ben.

JUAN: *(to Kevin)* Now what do we do?

KEVIN: We wait for the teacher to tell us what to do. *(beat; to Ben)* That's your cue, dumbass.

BEN: Okay... um, well, what do you want to learn about?

SARAI: I wanna learn about aliens. *(beat)* Space aliens, not illegal aliens.

OLIVIA: Nah, tell us a story!

JUAN: I want to learn about animals!!

KEVIN: I want to learn about cause-and-effect versus correlational interpretation, when interpreting data from research into cross-cultural human relations.

Everyone looks at Kevin.

KEVIN: What? I'm a precocious reader.

BEN: I have an idea...I could teach you about... the founding fathers, and the...

Everyone is listening, but Ben can't continue.

BEN: You know what? Never mind, I can't teach you anything. I don't know anything worth knowing.

The kids are all crestfallen.

OLIVIA: I have a better idea anyway! Let's play ... graduation.

KEVIN: Perfect! All the glory with none of the work!

JUAN: What's a graduation?

BEN: It's when you're done with school, and you start your life as an adult.

JUAN: Okay!

OLIVIA: Okay, so we'll all line up... I saw my aunt's graduation video, so I know what it looks like. *(to Ben)* You're going to shake our hands, and give us our diplomas.

BEN: *(smiling)* I can do that.

OLIVIA: And I think you call each of our names, before we step up to you. *(to the kids)* And you guys, when they call your name, step up, get your diploma, shake his hand, then you go like this. *(miming moving the cap's tassel from one side of the cap to the other)*.

JUAN: What's that?

OLIVIA: It's moving the stringy thing from one side to the other. It means you're done being a kid and you'll be a grownup with a job and stuff.

JUAN: Cool.

OLIVIA: Okay, everybody ready?

BEN: Wait, wait... I don't know your names.

SARAI: I'm Sarai.

KEVIN: Kevin.

OLIVIA: Olivia.

JUAN: Juan.

Ben nods to each of them.

Then, they line up as in a procession, and stand, poised.

As Ben says each child's name, the children step up and accept their "diplomas" – Olivia is very dignified, Kevin is super

excited, Juan is solemn and quiet, and finally Sarai, who seems to be silently praying.

OLIVIA: Now, somebody needs to give a speech!

KEVIN: That would be me.

OLIVIA: Why you? Why not me?

SARAI: Or me! I should anyways, I'm top of the class.

JUAN: I think I should give it, because I just do.

BEN: Should I say a few words?

OLIVIA: OH, would you?!

SARAI: Yes, yes!!

OLIVIA: Let's all be seated to hear what our... teacher?

BEN: Teacher.

OLIVIA: Favorite teacher ... has to say about graduating.

Everyone falls quiet as Ben starts to speak.

BEN: Ladies and gentlemen... graduates... congratulations. I'm so proud to be here today to recognize these hardworking, talented... thoughtful and caring students, as they ... complete this ... journey of ... high school? (*Olivia nods enthusiastically*) ... high school, and head out into the world... to begin their adult lives. As a community, we are so proud to have watched each of these ... individuals grow ... into young men and women...

Ben is just gathering his thoughts, when Olivia interrupts, thinking he's done.

OLIVIA: Yay!!!

JUAN: Cool.

SARAI: Good job!

KEVIN: Well, that was anticlimactic.

OLIVIA: What's next?

KEVIN/ SARAI / JUAN: Oh! Oh! / My turn to pick! / Oh, I have an idea.

SARAI: I haven't gotten to do anything yet, and I have a really good idea.

BEN: Let's let Sarai choose next.

Sarai hops up and down.

SARAI: Okay, somebody's going to get married.

KEVIN: MARRIED?

SARAI: Not you, hombre.

OLIVIA: Can I get married?!

SARAI: Yes, you... and Juan... you're going to get married. And I'll officiate.

KEVIN: Good word.

SARAI: Thank you. So: there are many different kinds of weddings. But all of them have to do with God, so it's all really the same. But we have to pick one, or I'll say the wrong thing. There's Christian weddings, Muslim weddings, Jewish weddings...

JUAN: Christian, if... *(turning to Olivia)* ... if that's OK with you?

OLIVIA: Sure. *(to Sarai)* Just don't say anything about the blood of Christ; that part skeeves me out.

Sarai starts arranging the children.

SARAI: Okay, you guys, come over here... and you, come next to me... and no seeing the bride before the wedding, right?!

Olivia hides behind Ben.

BEN: Who am I?

SARAI: You could be the cantor.

OLIVIA: NO! No, he's... the father of bride.

*Olivia locks her arm through Ben's. Silence falls.
Suddenly, there is a grown-up feeling from the children, as though they are now adults.*

Olivia and Ben start walking slowly, as though down an aisle, towards Juan and Sarai.

SARAI: She looks so beautiful.

JUAN: That, she does.

Olivia and Ben reach the 'altar'.

SARAI: Who gives this woman—

OLIVIA: *(whispering loudly)* Oh! I should have mentioned this before, I don't want to be "given away", I want to... to just have him give me a kiss on the cheek, and go.

SARAI: Oh, Okay, Sorry!

Ben turns to Olivia, and leans in to give her a kiss on the cheek, but suddenly she feels shy, uncertain.

BEN: How about a high-five, instead?

Olivia considers this.

OLIVIA: No it's okay, a simple, fatherly kiss, that's the way it should be.

BEN: Okay.

Ben kisses her sweetly on the forehead, then steps back.

SARAI: Dearly beloved... we are gathered here today to witness the wedding of Juan... and Olivia... who was not given away by her father because she is not property.

Ben smiles, but the children are very solemn.

SARAI: Juan. Do you take Olivia to be your lawfully wedded wife? To have and to hold, from this day forward? In sickness and in health. For better for worse, for richer for poorer, as long as you both shall live?

JUAN: I do.

SARAI: Olivia. Do you take Juan to be your lawfully wedded husband? To have and to hold, from this day forward? In sickness and in health. For better for worse, for richer for poorer, as long as you both shall live?

OLIVIA: I do.

KEVIN: *(whispering to Ben)* Fucking hell, they're not gonna kiss, are they?

SARAI: By the powers vested in me by the state of... where the hell are we?

BEN: God only knows.

SARAI: By the powers vested in me by the state of God Only Knows, I now pronounce you husband, and wife! You may kiss the bride!!

Juan blushes, hemming and hawing. Olivia, sensing his shyness, leans in and kisses him on the cheek.

Everyone except Kevin bursts into applause.

KEVIN: Gross.

BEN: *(slapping him on the back)* Buck up, camper; might be you, next!

KEVIN: So long as the next thing we play isn't "Maternity Ward"!

Juan is still very much in character.

JUAN: I'd like to celebrate my wife, and this wedding, with a dance.

SARAI: Yes, dancing after is very traditional.

OLIVIA: *(to Juan)* May I have this dance, my husband?

JUAN: Yes, wife.

SARAI: But, we need music. *(to Ben)* Can you sing...?

BEN: ...I guess. But what do I sing?

SARAI: Yes, we need a song.

OLIVIA: *Our* song. Think, *think*.

BEN: I can't think of ... ugh.

JUAN: Dude, you're letting us down.

BEN: All I can think of is this song from an Adam Sandler movie.

JUAN: Who the hell is that?

BEN: Never mind.

OLIVIA: Is it a sweet song? Is it about love?

BEN: Yeah, but... I mean, Adam Sandler wrote it...

OLIVIA: So?

BEN: He's sort of a silly person... I don't know if it's appropriate.

OLIVIA: Just sing it! Sing it, please.

BEN: Let me see if... if I can remember it.

"I wanna make you smile whenever you're sad
Carry you around when your arthritis is bad
Oh, all I wanna do is grow old with you.

Juan and Olivia start to slow dance.

*Sarai taps her legs with her hands to give the song
a little rhythm. Everyone starts swaying along.*

Um,

"I'll get your medicine when your tummy aches
Build you a fire if the furnace breaks
Oh, it could be so nice, growing old with you."

Ben pauses, trying to remember the bridge.

Oh--

"I'll miss you,
Kiss you,
Give you my coat when you are cold.

Need you,
Feed you,
Even let ya hold the remote control.

So let me do the dishes in our kitchen sink
Put you to bed if you've had too much to drink.

The swaying and rhythm stop, as the song slows.

Oh, I could be the man who grows old with you.
I wanna grow old with you."

SARAI: Kevin, are you crying?

KEVIN: I'm not crying, you're crying.

Ben nods to the married couple.

OLIVIA: That was beautiful.

SARAI: Shew, seriously.

KEVIN: Silly or not, that Adam guy knows how to write a fucking song.

BEN: Yeah.

SARAI: How do you even know that song? By heart, like that?

BEN: Oh, I ...wanted to learn it so I could... sing it to this girl I knew, and then... I never did.

Beat.

JUAN: So depressing, this one!

SARAI: How did you learn it?

BEN: By watching the movie it was in.

OLIVIA: Oooo, the movies! Juan, I would like to go to the movies. That's one of things you do, when you're growing old together, is go to the movies.

JUAN: Wife, I will take you to whatever movie you would like to see. Your choice.

OLIVIA: But I don't know what's playing, husband!

SARAI: Let's find out, everyone form a line. You, (to Ben) you're selling tickets...

BEN: Alright.

The children form a line.

JUAN: Hello, good sir, what's playing at the theater today?

BEN: Let's see... um... *Goodfellas*.

JUAN: What's that about?

BEN: Well, it's about these really bad guys, these gangsters...

KEVIN: Hmm.

OLIVIA: No, so sick of bad guys, I want good guys. What else?

BEN: Um, I don't know... the ...*Smurfs* movie? Though if you expect me to act that out, I have no idea what it's about.

SARAI: What about the movie with the pretty song in it?

BEN: Oh, *The Wedding Singer*? That one, I know front and back; it's all about this guy who sings at weddings, but he's kind of not so great at it? And the girl he likes is marrying someone else.

The children stare at him in disbelief.

KEVIN: It's almost like he can't help it.

BEN: What kinds of movies do you like? Um, action, animation... scary movies...

OLIVIA: Ooo, maybe a scary movie?!

BEN: Oh, I've got it. You're in for a treat; today, you're all seeing *Jaws*.

OLIVIA: *Jaws*?

BEN: It's about a killer shark terrorizing a small beach town... you're gonna love it.

KEVIN: I saw some of this thing called *Sharknado* at the Detention Center; is it like that?

BEN: Jesus, no. *Jaws* is a *great* movie, a classic. Full of suspense, action, bromance... you'll love it.

KEVIN: 'Bromance'?

JUAN: Sounds sketchy.

OLIVIA: It sounds perfect; *Jaws*, it is.

JUAN: Two tickets to *Jaws* for my lady, and myself.

BEN: Great, that'll be ...ten dollars.

Olivia hugs Juan's arm a little.

Kevin takes this in. It's a small gesture, but it's kind, and comforting, and something within him stirs. He steps up to Ben, but then glances behind him.

KEVIN: Hi, um, two tickets to *Jaws*, please.

SARAI: Are you buying my ticket?

KEVIN: Sure. If you...

SARAI: Sure, if you...

KEVIN: Sure. Yeah.

BEN: Ten dollars, please.

Ben pretends to give them all tickets.

Then, the children arrange themselves into the 'theater'. As if he's the screen, they watch Ben.

Ben will, more and more, attempt to act out the movie.

BEN: Okay, *Jaws*... okay. So, the movie was shot on Martha's Vineyard, so... imagine Martha's Vineyard.

The children stare blankly.

KEVIN: Yeah, you're gonna have to be more specific.

BEN: Just imagine this quiet, beautiful island; but not tropical, it's in the Northeast. But it's summer, so there are sandy beaches and cottages, and sunshine every day. And people go and stay with their families there on vacation, mostly. To play in the sand and swim in the ocean.

SARAI: Huh. Sounds nice.

BEN: So, we open on this beautiful beach, at night. Oh, but they don't call it Martha's Vineyard in the movie, they call it Amity. Anyways, it starts on this beach, where a young woman and her man-friend are about to go skinny dipping... that's... swimming late at night. So she goes out there, and it's peaceful and she's happily swimming. But then..."Duh-dut. Duh-dut.Duh-dut"...

OLIVIA: What is he doing?

JUAN: NO clue.

BEN: That's what the music sounds like, when the shark is swimming near someone, about to strike. (*faster, as he treads water*) "Duh-dut. Duh-dut.Duh-dut"... We see her feet, treading water. Her head above water, calling to her friend to come into the water. Then! She's yanked downward, real quick-like. Not all the way under, just a little. At first she's not scared, just surprised, confused. Then, she goes under again, and comes up, and screams... she's being attacked by something, and her screams are just blood-curling! And you never see the shark, just her, being thrashed back and forth in the dark water, while her drunken friend is passing out on the beach. And you never see the blood, you never see the shark, one second she's screaming and fighting for her life, and the next second, she's just gone. And all is quiet. And her friend lies on the beach, completely oblivious, that she's been eaten, swallowed whole.

JUAN: Cool.

BEN: So, next day, this woman's remains wash ashore, and the coroner declares she was eaten almost entirely by a shark. Course, the Sherriff, he's a family man, a small town guy, he's worried about everyone's safety! So he says, 'we gotta close the beaches, there's a killer shark on the loose...' But the Mayor and everybody else is like, "No, we can't close the beaches, it'll kill the town!"

OLIVIA: Why?

BEN: Because the whole town's economy is built around the summer tourists who come to play on the beaches... everyone would lose all their money if the tourists all went home.

KEVIN: So it's welfare of a few versus the welfare of the many? Or, is it the powerful class allowing the poor underclasses to be preyed upon by a man-eating shark because money is king?

BEN: Um, I don't know? Some... combo of that, I guess. Anyways... so back and forth they go; the Sherriff on one side, trying to save the people... and the Mayor and his cronies on the other, endangering everyone by not closing the beaches. So, then, the Sherriff calls in the help of this oceanographer, Hooper; he was the one who confirmed that the girl was killed by a shark, to begin with. Sherriff and Hooper decide, they've got to get help hunting this shark, so it can't kill anybody else.

OLIVIA: Hm. I feel bad for the shark.

BEN: Don't; he's the antagonist.

JUAN: I feel like the Mayor is the antagonist.

KEVIN: I feel like Capitalism is the antagonist.

SARAI: I feel like the Sherriff is the antagonist. Or human encroachment on wildlife areas...

BEN: The *shark* is the antagonist, okay? The *shark* is *eating* the *people*!

The children consider this.

KEVIN: Fine. Proceed.

BEN: Anyways, so-- oh, and I forgot, before they go out hunting for the shark, the Sherriff's son's on a little boat with his buddies, in the water...and then someone spots the shark, right next to them. And again, there's that music... 'Duh-dut, duh-dut, duh-dut...' and then the boys get freaked out and fall into the water... and this man, in another little boat, he's pulled under water by the shark. And there's blood everywhere, just like spurting out of the water... and the whole time, again, you never see the shark, you just know from the music that it's there, and then... you see the Sherriff's son again... his face, he's so scared... and then, under water, a severed leg floats to the bottom of the ocean... 'Duh-dut, duh-dut, duh-dut...' then, back on shore, his friends and his dad are dragging the boy out of the water, lifeless... but then we see that both of his legs are there. It was the man's leg floating, before... the boy is alive, in one piece, just in shock.

JUAN: What's 'shock'?

BEN: It's when something happens to you, or you see something, and your brain kind of just shuts down. You can't think or move or feel anything; it's a defense mechanism, an instinct, to play dead.

JUAN: Like the possum?

BEN: Exactly.

JUAN: Yeah, I think I know what that's like.

The children consider this, too.

OLIVIA: So, then, after the Sherriff's son bit, then they go shark-hunting?

BEN: Yes... and the Sherriff asks this salty, old fisherman, Quint, known for being able to hunt sharks to take them. And he agrees; and they all climb onto his boat, called the Orca, and go shark hunting.

JUAN: Another name for the Orca is 'Killer Whale'.

BEN: I ...did not know that, but thank you. So the three of them go out in the ocean to hunt this killer shark. *(he winks at Juan)* With their killer-whale-ship. It's a rickety old thing, but sturdy. And Quinn is sly, strong, resourceful. And a little scary, himself, like a shark, himself, in a way. And late that night, he tells them a story, as they're waiting for the shark to come back, about being on a Naval ship in the middle of the ocean that sank, torpedoed by the Japanese...

SARAI: More blood, I suppose.

JUAN: Of course.

BEN: (quoting) "Eleven hundred men went into the water... the vessel went down in twelve minutes... didn't see the first shark for about a half an hour...very first light, chief, first sharks came cruising. So we formed ourselves into tight groups... like the Battle of Waterloo, and the idea was the shark come to the nearest man, that man he starts poundin' and hollerin' and sometimes that shark he go away... but sometimes he wouldn't go away. Sometimes that shark looks right at ya. Right into your eyes. And the thing about a shark is he's got lifeless eyes. Black eyes. Like a doll's eyes. When he comes at ya, he doesn't even seem to be livin'... 'til he bites ya, and those black eyes roll over white and then... ah then you hear that terrible high-pitched screamin'. The ocean turns red, and despite all your poundin' and your hollerin' those sharks come in and... they rip you to pieces."

KEVIN: Again, you know this, by heart?

SARAI: Did you learn it for another girl?

BEN: No, just... I must seen it a million times.

OLIVIA: I've changed my mind; the Japanese were the antagonist.

KEVIN: Shush, I have to hear what happens next.

BEN: While they're waiting on the boat, that night, for the shark... they're listening. And they're hearing all kinds of eerie stuff, ocean sounds, you know? And one time, they hear something and the Sherriff says, "What's that?" and the oceanographer says, "It's a whale..." and then Quint sings,

"Farewell and adieu unto you Spanish ladies,
farewell and adieu to you ladies of Spain..."

Then, Hooper starts singing this old sea shanty:

“Show me the way to go home, I’m tired and I wanna go to bed,
I had a little drink about an hour ago, and it’s gone right to my head!
Wherever I may roam, o’er land or sea, or foam,
You can always hear me singing this song: show me the way to go home.”

And they start singing it over, and over, and they get louder and louder...and they get so loud, pounding their fists on the table and singing at the top of their lungs, that they don’t even notice that the shark is attacking the ship with its horrible snout, and weight, breaking the boat apart; they lose power, and they notice the one thing you don’t want in a boat, in the middle of the ocean... the boat is taking on water.

JUAN: And is that how they die? They drown?

BEN: No, they make it through the night, working to get the engine working again. By morning, though, tensions are high. The Sherriff tries to call the Coast Guard for help, but Quint smashes the radio in a rage. Then, they spot the shark, and they chase it down, and put a harpoon into it. And one thing leads to another, and the shark is just too strong for the little Orca. The ship is damaged again, lame, and really sinking this time. But Quint never gives up, never gives in; they send Hooper down in Scuba gear inside a shark cage, to try to give it some kind of poison or drug, but the great white attacks the cage, destroying it, but Hooper’s vulnerable in the water. Then, as though furious at these constant attempts on his life, the shark attacks the lame ship once more, and Quint slides down, and is eaten by the shark!

JUAN / OLIVIA / SARAI: Woah!

KEVIN: Crazy.

BEN: So there’s the Sherriff, alone on the sinking boat; he’s alone, and he’s next, if he doesn’t do something. Quickly, he picks up a canister of pressurized air, you know, for Scuba diving, and throws it into the shark’s mouth. Then, like a Sherriff out of an old Western, he picks up Quint’s shotgun, aims at the canister, and fires. And the shark is blown to bits.

JUAN / OLIVIA: Gross!

KEVIN/ SARAI: Woah!

BEN: Hooper resurfaces; he and the Sherriff survive, paddling together back to the shore.
(*beat*) The End.

JUAN: That is a crazy story!

SARAI: Truly insane.

KEVIN: I can’t believe they blew up the shark!

OLIVIA: Yeah. Seems like nowadays this film would be widely criticized.

BEN: Yeah, well...

SARAI: Still, it was good. Good job.

BEN: Thanks.

The children applaud Ben's efforts.

BEN: It's... *(beat)* It's so much better in person. I wish ... it seems silly, but I wish you could all see it.

JUAN: Maybe we will... wherever we're going.

SCENE FIVE

NARRATOR: Amnesia like this... interesting stuff, huh? The soldier forgets he is a soldier. The children forget they are illegal... pretty cool. Don't worry, it'll all be reversed, though, in due course.

But, for now, they forget...

But that sand storm, man. The one that's stopping this truck from moving? Blowing for hours... it's crazy, right?! *(beat)* Oh, maybe, just maybe, it's like a metaphor! You think? I mean, if this were the sort of play meant to manipulate, or deal in emotional currency, the sandstorm could be a metaphor for the fog that sometimes surrounds our collective consciousness, our collective idea of who-we-are. Especially when it comes to the idea that these are human children. A great, unethical, amoral sandstorm that obscures the empathy of half a generation...

Nah, I'm sure the playwright didn't mean it like that, though. It's just a sandstorm.

In a way, I'm glad the sandstorm persists. Though it does merely delay the inevitable.

And, hey, the question isn't about us, and what we must do to protect ourselves from would-be criminal elements who are right now just 5, 8, 9 and 11 years old. No, that's not the question. The question is, who would subject their children to this type of thing? Passage to a foreign land, with a stranger who may or may not rape them? Or, making them board a freight train, alone, in the middle of the night; one bound for Hell? Why would a person do this to their child? What possible thing, what kind of wormwood, warp-ation of the brain (I know that's not a word, just go with me), what possible psychosis would have to occur in order for a person to do this, give up their child to the fates, to the border patrol soldiers, to the United States' Department of Immigration and Illegals-busting?

What possible thing, indeed...?

Lights cross-fade to focus again on the soldiers.

John is thumbing through a magazine, as David is wrapping up a phone call with his boss.

DAVID: Yes, sir. I will, sir. Alright.

David hangs up his cell phone.

John finishes his magazine, then looks out the window.

They both hear the muffled sounds of the children applauding playfully, in the back of the van.

JOHN: Where do you suppose their parents are?

DAVID: What? Who's parents?

JOHN: Them, in the back?

DAVID: Oh, man, you're not going soft on me, too, are you?

JOHN: No. *(beat)* But, doesn't it make you wonder?

DAVID: No. And neither should you.

JOHN: Still.

DAVID: What the fuck does it matter? They're here, and they're not supposed to be here. We're just doing what we're told; why is somebody else's concern.

JOHN: Yeah. I know. *(beat)* Still, it just makes you wonder. I mean, do their parents know they've been living out in the desert all alone? Why aren't they kept together, the kids and the parents? Shouldn't they be together? It doesn't seem right.

DAVID: You've got to be kidding me.

JOHN: What?

DAVID: You *have* gone soft!

JOHN: NO, no!

NARRATOR: Because God forbid a man goes soft.

JOHN: No, I'm just asking.

DAVID: It's not our problem. It's just not. *(beat)* Why do you care?

JOHN: I'm not saying I *care*.

NARRATOR: *(to the audience)* Because God forbid a man *cares*.

JOHN: I'm just saying... we're usually after... after the bad guys, right? Coming over here to run drugs, or rape people, or murder people! Or, just the ones crossing illegally because they don't have the ... the whatever ... to come in the Right Way. But... kids? I mean, is there such a thing as an illegal kid?

DAVID: It doesn't matter. It's all the same. *(beat)* I don't care how old they are. And neither should you; they're illegal. And that's all we need to know.

JOHN: Yeah. *(beat)* I guess you're right.

NARRATOR: Because God forbid ... you do or say something that makes you stand out. Not 'belong'. Be a lone wolf, on your own, in the wilderness, while everybody else is warm and safe at home. Gotta stay *within* the fold, right? Stick to the party line. Don't get caught being soft. And above all else... above all else... don't fucking *care*.

SCENE SIX

Lights cross-fade back to the back of the van.

The children are still pretending.

BEN, KEVIN and SARAI look on, as Juan and Olivia continue to act out their elder years.

JUAN: So, my wife... what would you like to do, now?

OLIVIA: Perhaps ...a stroll through town, and a nice chat.

JUAN: Of course.

They walk in an ellipse...

OLIVIA: All these years, we've been walking and talking together. Yet you've never spoken of your childhood.

JUAN: There is a reason, for this. I did not want to upset you, my dear.

OLIVIA: But I am your wife. You can tell me anything.

JUAN: Very well. I was born in a small town, a border town, in Mexico. My father died before I could know him; he was shot by drug runners... when he wouldn't do what they asked...

OLIVIA: I had no idea, I am so sorry.

JUAN: My mother, well, she did the best she could. But... with no husband, and three children to raise, we were very often hungry. I did not go to school; I scavenged for us, with my two brothers. We lived right near the dump — that was where the scraps could be found— so we'd go every morning and see what we could find.

OLIVIA: Did your mother work?

JUAN: The cartel would not allow it. They blacklisted her, because of my father. She could find no work. To them, we were scum. So they made us live like garbage... of garbage, by garbage...

OLIVIA: How did you come to be here?

JUAN: My mother took a chance; she wanted a better life for us, for my brothers and me. She sold herself to the coyote, as payment for bringing us to the border. Then guards shot my brothers, on sight, because they looked like grown men; they were 15 and 17. Then they took me, made me wait, made me answer stupid questions, the bastards.

OLIVIA: But all that is behind you, now. You have me. I have you. We have a nice life, going to dinner and the movies together, in peace. Just as your mother would have wanted; a better life. A better place...

Juan is again in the made-up future.

JUAN: Yes. *(beat)* Yes.

There is a long silence.

JUAN: I don't want to play this anymore.

SARAI: Let's play something else!

JUAN: No. NO!

BEN: Why not?

JUAN: I don't know, I just don't!

SARAI: But... I didn't get to see what I'll become!

BEN: Do you want me to tell you what you all become?

KEVIN/ SARAI / OLIVIA: Yes! Okay! / Yeah, let's hear it.

BEN: Juan, you don't have to play, if you don't want to.

JUAN: Thank you...

BEN: Okay, Kevin, I see you as a college professor.

KEVIN: A teacher, you mean?

BEN: Yes, but at the highest level. Teaching almost-grown-ups.

KEVIN: Yeah, I can see that...

BEN: And Olivia, you're going to become ...a social worker.

OLIVIA: Okay. What's that?

BEN: It's someone who ... helps people with their problems. Sometimes they work in schools, with kids; other times, they work with adults.

OLIVIA: How do they help them?

BEN: Well, by talking things through with them. Letting them know, they're not alone.

OLIVIA: What if they are alone? Like, like, us?

BEN: They help then, too! They help find them support, a community to belong to. Friends.

OLIVIA: Yeah, I like this. A social-workers...

SARAI: What about me?

BEN: Sarai... I imagine you grow up to be ... a member of the clergy.

SARAI: Like, a cleric, or a rabbi?

BEN: Or, a priest, yes, same thing.

Juan suddenly feels left out.

JUAN: And ...what about me?

BEN: Juan... I imagine, you'll grow up to be a zoologist! Or, ... would you rather be a cowboy?

Juan's eyes grow wide and he smiles broadly, then nods.

BEN: Okay, cowboy, it is...

The lights dim on the prisoners.

SCENE SEVEN

Lights up on the soldiers.

SFX: The sound of sand hitting the van dies down.

David starts up the engine.

Ben and the children lurch as the truck starts moving, again.

DAVID: Finally, Jesus.

JOHN: Yeah, that was... whew. *(beat)* How long, now?

DAVID: Not too far.

They drive, blithely not caring.

JOHN: So. *(beat)* You seen *Wonder Woman*?

David rolls his eyes.

Lights illuminate the children; the motion has released them from their alternate reality, and they are once again prisoners, riding in a van.

Ben, uncomfortable with the silence, sighs.

BEN: I wish I had a story to tell you.

JUAN: But you told us *Jaws*. That was a story.

BEN: A better story. A story about ... kids like you, overcoming...

More uncomfortable silence.

SARAI: We wish you did, too.

Ben and the children's bodies lazily move with the motion of the van. Outside, they can hear other vehicles passing by, now.

Ben puts his face in his hands, crying.

Sarai moves towards him, sitting down next to him. She takes his hand in hers.

SARAI: It's okay. It doesn't matter anyways.

BEN: It does matter. It's not okay.

OLIVIA: Now he's got a conscience.

KEVIN: Yeah, fat lotta good that's gonna do us, *now*.

JUAN: You're being mean! Don't be mean to him!

BEN: It's okay, Juan. I deserve it. *(beat)* I'm sorry.

SARAI: It's okay. If it wasn't you... it'd just be somebody else. Like the other ones, up front.

SFX: wind, again.

OLIVIA: What's that?

Juan has an idea.

JUAN: *(quoting JAWS)* "It's a whale!"
(singing, as in the movie) "Farewell and adieu unto you Spanish ladies,
farewell and adieu to you ladies of Spain..."

OLIVIA: *(joining in)*
"Show me the way to go home!
I'm tired and I want to go to bed!"

JUAN & OLIVIA:
"I had a little drink about an hour ago,
and it's gone right to my head!"

ALL: "Wherever I may roam
Over land or sea or foam
You can always hear me singing this song
Show me the way to go home."

KEVIN:
"Boom, boom, boom..."

ALL:
(faster) "Show me the way to go home
I'm tired and I want to go to bed
I had a little drink about an hour ago
And it's gone right to my head
Everywhere I roam
Over land or sea or foam
You can always hear me singing this song
Show me the way to go—"

The van lurches to a stop.

Everyone freezes, except the narrator, who addresses the audience.

NARRATOR: "Fugue State" : Reversible. Amnesia. The Amnesia of *Who You Are*... but *reversible*. Lucky you, ALL OF YOU... you're inside a *Fugue State*, right now. We're all in it, together.

THE END