

MERMAID GAME

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EXT. MID-LEVEL OCEAN - DUSK

Two mermaids swim side by side through a turbulent sea. They cling close to the rock piers that pierce to the surface.

THE PLAYER controls SAOIRSE, a Summer Maid with ruby scales. THE PLAYER swims next to ALORA, a Siren with a sleek navy shark-like tail and a large, hooked, dorsal fin.

Alora powers towards the surface, pokes her head above the water. She submerges her head back under. She smiles, gesturing Saoirse upwards.

SAOIRSE
(jokingly)

I'm not built for this, you've gotta relax.

ALORA
Not now! This is where the action
is!

Saoirse sighs, THE PLAYER is prompted to **accelerate**. Saoirse catches up with Alora. Both pop their heads out of the water.

EXT. STORM'S RESPITE SURFACE - DUSK

Waves bob along the choppy surface, the swirling clouds rush along the eerie gray sky.

Alora nods excitedly. She gestures to a ship on the horizon.

ALORA
They call that one *The Whimpering
Whale*.

SAOIRSE
Ew, that's a terrible name.

ALORA
(laughing) I know! Here, just a
little further and we can see some
action.

Alora leaps out of the water like a dolphin towards the ship.

PLAYER leaps as well.

Camera stays watching the surface.

SAOIRSE
(mid jump)

I thought...

SPLASH!

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
(mid jump)

This ship..

SPLASH!

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
(mid jump)

I've seen it..

SPLASH!

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
(mid jump)

Before?

SPLASH!

The mermaids stop just shy of the boat. They sink down so just their heads bob above the water. The ship is in a panic. Sailors run up to the top deck. They fling bucket-loads of water over the side. They run back down to the lower deck. Alora speaks in a near whisper.

ALORA
Oh I'm sure you have, its been
sailing through Storms for months
now, of its own volition, mind you!
We got sick and tired of it.

A siren torpedos towards the deck. She snaps at a sailor, catches his foot and plunges back into the sea with the sailor.

SAOIRSE
Oh wow, that's kinda gutsy of them.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WHIMPERING WHALE

The entire deck is in chaos. The camera glides from bow to stern. At the bow a siren grapples up to the deck, her tail flicking side to side.

In mid deck- a sailor has a siren in a headlock. The trapped siren lurches to the side, taking the sailor down with her. She death-rolls like a crocodile.

At the helm, a siren yanks the wheel off of its axel. He drives it through the helmsman and shoves the helmsman off the deck. The siren dives in after him.

The camera pans downward towards the Captain's Quarters.

INT. THE WHIMPERING WHALE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

CAPTAIN HARDTACK, a large grizzly man in a coat with ten too many medals on it, sits cowering on the floor.

CAPTAIN HARDTACK
My ship.. My ship.. First of its
class to... weather the storm

He laughs, his eyes wide. The FIRST MATE barrels through the door, dragging LARKINEON, a young sailor with dark hair slicked back with wax, behind him by her jacket collar.

FIRST MATE
Captain! I found the little rat
before she skittered off the ship.

LARK
Half the crew is overboard sir! We
need you out on the helm! Both of
you!

The Captain stands - he leers down at Lark

CAPTAIN HARDTACK
Tell me Larkineon, was it you who
gave the order to redirect course?
Do you believe you are better
suited to chart MY voyages?

A sailor yells from outside. Then, a meaty SPLASH. A loud chorus of person-being-eaten-alive noises ensue.

The PLAYER is given a choice-

Knee Hardtack in the groin OR Escape from the First Mate

Player must **complete a short puzzle** for either option- Player is presented with three empty slots and a collection of six picture cards. Correct cards must be chosen and placed in appropriate slot.

Knee Hardtack: Player correctly submits:

Card 1: Plant feet on ground.

Card 2: Wind up kick.

Card 3: Follow through with kick

Escape: Player correctly submits:

Card 1: Pull arms out of jacket sleeves

Card 2: Duck

Card 3: Run

FAILURE:

CAPTAIN HARDTACK (CONT'D)
(laughing)

You want to go so badly? Fine. Throw her to the 'maids.

The first mate grabs Lark by the arms. He drags her port side. At the edge, a tiny siren is gnawing at the wood railing. She looks up, smiles sinisterly.

FIRST MATE
Little RAT!

Lark is launched into the sea below.

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. STORM'S RESPITE SURFACE

Through Saoirse's perspective we focus on the First Mate tossing Lark from the ship. Saoirse tips her head and focuses her eyes.

SAOIRSE
Now why would they...?

Lark splashes to the surface, flailing. Saoirse's ears flick backwards like a frightened cat.

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
No way.. She's not gonna.. 'Lor I think that's..

Saoirse bolts towards the boat before she finishes the thought.

ALORA
Hey! Wait!

Alora dives in pursuit.

THE PLAYER is given control.

THE PLAYER must **swim to Lark**.

THE PLAYER swims forward with accelerate, direction, and punch controls.

Dodging away from sirens in swim path is a success.

Bumping into sirens results in a "stuck" segment- the Player must button mash to return to the path.

THE PLAYER is able to "punch" sirens in a quick-time event style which pushes a Siren out of the way.

A failed punch results in the "stuck" segment.

THE PLAYER reaches a tired Lark.

Lark kicks the tiny siren off of her boot. The tiny siren yelps like a shih tzu.

SAOIRSE
HELLO.

LARK
Hiiii...

Lark sinks below the surface, unconscious. Saoirse gasps. She dives under. She throws a limp Lark over her shoulders. She pops back up to the surface.

Saoirse turns, she powers back the way she came.

The PLAYER is given control.

The player must **navigate to a small rock island**.

Alora pops up next to Saoirse. Saoirse screams in surprise.

ALORA
You got one! It took me weeks to
catch my first Twin...

THE PLAYER powers forward. A siren approaches, when pressed, the punch button causes Alora to shove the encroaching siren out of the way.

SAOIRSE
'Lor! This is Lark!

THE PLAYER powers forward. A siren approaches, the player can either dive under the siren or once again shove with Alora.

ALORA
That sailor kid?

SAOIRSE
Yes! Can you believe it!

THE PLAYER powers forward. Same choice of maneuver around a new siren.

ALORA
You're gonna eat her??

THE PLAYER powers forward. Same choice of maneuver around a new siren.

SAOIRSE
NO! I'm not going to eat her!

The two escape the crowd and close in on the island. THE PLAYER can meander towards the island.

ALORA
Oh, well that's good. I figured that would make you upset. But, you know, who am I to order you around.

SAOIRSE
Yes, thank you I'm so grateful.

Saoirse lays Lark out on the island's shore.

(End of failure branch)

SUCCESS:

INT. WHIMPERING WHALE

CAPTAIN HARDTACK (IF KICKED)
SON OF A BITCH!

Lark scrambles out of the captain's quarters. She looks frantically, left, right, left.

She locks eyes with her, Saoirse. Saoirse returns her gaze-terrified.

Lark relaxes. WHAM! Alora leaps up onto the ship. Her shark tail thrashes and thumps on the wooden deck. Lark trips backwards. She winces, Alora crawls forward.

SAOIRSE
Alora.. 'LOR!

Alora's head snaps back to the water.

ALORA
HUH?

SAOIRSE
That's Lark! You remember??

Alora accelerates towards Lark. She picks up Lark by her shirt collar like a trophy fish.

ALORA
Oh! You're like an adult now!

LARK
(Choking)
Hi... Alora...

SAOIRSE
Just get her out of there!

Alora flips Lark over her shoulder firefighter style. She clambers back to the railing.

LARK
Wait.. I can't..

SPLASH! Alora dives off the railing with Lark in tow.

(End of Success Branch)

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. ROCKY ISLAND - NIGHT

Lark's eyes flutter open. The sea is peaceful. The rocky island is powdered in white sand. With each incoming wave, a new slew of debris from the *Whale* is carried with it. Saoirse hoists Lark upright, tightening her arms around her stomach.

ALORA
(If Success: Now that's my bad,
but) how are you gonna be living on
the water if you can't breath the
water. Explain that to me

SAOIRSE

I mean the boats are pretty fast,
and I think you have to be dry to
be on the boat...

LARK

Saoirs..

THUNK! Saoirse quickly squeezes Lark's stomach in a Heimlich maneuver.

THE PLAYER is given control

Player must **orient Saoirse's arms in the correct position for Heimlich.**

ANY FAILURE:

Lark cartoonishly yelps in pain.

SUCCESS 1:

Water launches out of Lark's mouth.

LARK (CONT'D)

I didn't think!

SUCCESS 2:

Less water launches out of Lark's mouth.

LARK (CONT'D)

I'd see you...

SUCCESS 3:

A spew of droplets launch out of Lark's mouth. She coughs

LARK (CONT'D)

Again!

Lark pulls away from Saoirse. She takes a deep breath and holds her hand to her chest.

She turns, and pulls Saoirse into a hug.

SAOIRSE

Haha, I'm happy to see you!

LARK

They would've killed me, thank you!

Lark matches gaze with a deeply invested Alora.

LARK (CONT'D)
Both of you! I can't believe it!

The two break the hug. Lark settles, sitting on the rock. She rubs her hands along her face.

Saoirse does the same. She settles with her tail just brushing the tide.

Alora flops over onto her back, her tail submerged.

ALORA
Some ship you had there.

LARK
Yeah, it may be for the best.

THE PLAYER is given control.

A thought bubble appears over Lark's head in a more cartoonish style.

The player must **complete the actions as Lark speaks to continue the dialog.**

A lone broom appears in the bubble.

LARK (CONT'D)
I thought I could work my way up.

THE PLAYER pushes the broom, back and forth, kicking up dust.

LARK (CONT'D)
But nothing ever changed.

The broom falls over with a DONK! A present day Lark appears in the bubble with a bucket and sponge.

THE PLAYER scrubs the imaginary deck with the sponge- creating tiny soap bubbles.

SAOIRSE
You're still a dock's hand? But
that was years ago!

LARK
A deck hand, yeah. I don't know,
things seemed good on the whale.

Captain Hardtack appears in the thought, well-dressed and well-groomed. He smiles and poses.

LARK (CONT'D)
When I was younger.

THE PLAYER clicks, the Captain POOFS! And reveals his true, gross appearance.

THE PLAYER shoves Hardtack out of the thought bubble.

LARK (CONT'D)
I don't know what I thought

The Whimpering Whale fades into the thought.

LARK (CONT'D)
I did everything right,

THE PLAYER unravels a pile of rope. Each unraveled piece sparkles with happy particles.

LARK (CONT'D)
everything the best,

THE PLAYER is in control of the imagined *Whale* moving the direction control up aims its cannons upwards. THE PLAYER clicks, fireworks erupt out of the canons.

LARK (CONT'D)
But it was all for nothing.

The thought bubble contains a Captain Hardtack again. He stomps his feet and yells at an imaginary Lark.

Lark blinks, the thought bubble dissipates like a cloud.

Lark fishes a necklace out of her shirt. The necklace, a shard of scuffed obsidian hooked to a weathered chain, shimmers in the moonlight. She fidgets with the obsidian pendant.

LARK (CONT'D)
I have to go home now.

ALORA
Oh Lark, I'm sorry.

Saoirse pouts, tracing her fingers through the sand of the stony shore. She stops. Her whole body perks up.

SAOIRSE
Just build your own ship!

LARK
Well sure, thats the goal.

The thought bubble appears again. Inside are hand-drawn cartoony waves. THE PLAYER is given a pen tool.

LARK (CONT'D)
Of course I wanted my own
ship.

THE PLAYER is allowed to free draw on the waves. (Ideally the player begins to draw a ship)

As THE PLAYER draws- Lark continues.

LARK (CONT'D)
And I know how to run it now,

Player keeps drawing.

LARK (CONT'D)
But who am I. If all of those
sailors thought I was dirt then how
am I supposed to get a crew,

The sensitivity of the pen tool is increased- causing the Player to make more erratic movements. With each word out of Lark, the sensitivity increases

LARK (CONT'D)
Or a title? Or a legacy? Not to
mention I need to make trade routes
and negotiations and friends!

The pen tool is out of control- drawing frantically on its own.

The pen stops.

SAOIRSE
Lark?

LARK
I know I could do it all. But I
need help.

Lark snaps out of a far-away stare. Inside the thought bubble, the image of a shape emerges. *The Gore*: an elegant ship adorned with crimson sails and a hull carved to look like a baroque sculpture of bones, blood, and guts.

The image of *The Gore* flickers like TV static.

The bubble disappears.

LARK (CONT'D)
What do you know about the
"Bleeding Goddess?"

SAOIRSE

"Bleeding Goddess?" What the hell are you Twins on with these dumb names...

ALORA

Do you mean Daphne? Lark I'm gonna be honest I think she's gotta be *long* dead by now.

SAOIRSE

Oh yeah, Lark that's old history stuff.

Lark stands, clutching her pendant.

LARK

But still! The sea, it's still pink isn't it?

SAOIRSE

I mean sure but, that might just be how it stayed...

LARK

Fine, IF the goddess is alive can you imagine what she could teach me? Alive! For a millenium! Alora, imagine how much *time* she's had to perfect her powers!

ALORA

(Speaking quickly)
Now that's a good point, my cousin Lunera did a "Fiber-Anchoring" with her hunting coven last month and I swear I saw them call a ship in from across the Pire...!

SAOIRSE

I don't see what this has to do with getting you a ship.

Lark sits again, she takes Saoirse's hand.

LARK

It'll be more than the ship. It would mean my legacy, my life! In my own control. I could live forever, WE could live forever!

Saoirse blushes and laughs.

SAOIRSE
You're out of your mind with all
this.

LARK
(laughing)
I really don't have much else going
for me.

They unclasp hands.

SAOIRSE
Alright here's what we do. We build
your ship and then MAYBE we see
about Daphne.

LARK AND ALORA
Hell yeah.

SAOIRSE
If you're gonna be disappointed I
would like you to at least be
afloat and disappointed.

LARK
Ok! That's very true!

Lark smiles and clips the necklace back around her neck.

ALORA
She should hang out in Summer for
now...

*In the distance, The Whale's cannon sounds once. It sounds
again, this time underwater. Sirens back at the boat hoot and
holler.*

ALORA (CONT'D)
Probably safer for you...

LARK
Ok also true.

SAOIRSE
Yeah! Theres a little patch of land
out East, but its a little far.

ALORA
Yeah no way I'm carrying you out
all that way.

SAOIRSE
Hey no problem, theres plenty here.

Saoirse glides along the shallows.

THE PLAYER is in control.

As Saoirse the Player must **search for and assemble debris into a makeshift raft.**

LARK (O.S.)
You didn't keep our old campsite
did you?

THE PLAYER picks up a length of rope. Alora catches up and takes it from Saoirse. Alora pulls at the rope. She smiles, seeing that it's strong.

SAOIRSE
Of course! I knew we'd crash into
each other again sometime!

THE PLAYER picks up a sturdy trapdoor. Alora gasps excitedly. She takes the door as well of screen.

LARK (O.S.)
Oh yeah, that'll work great, thank
you.

SAOIRSE
You need a buoyancy thing huh?

LARK (O.S.)
Yeah exactly!

THE PLAYER clicks on a barrel.

SAOIRSE
Just gotta fix this a bit...

THE PLAYER is prompted to **split the barrel in half.**

Saoirse must align her karate-chop directly in the middle of the barrel's top.

FAILURE:

Saoirse bruises her hand.

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
OW!

She tries again.

SUCCESS:

The barrel splits into two perfect halves.

LARK (O.S.)
 Perfect! Just gotta put it all
 together.

A blueprint-like sheet of paper covers the screen. THE PLAYER **must assemble the raft by dragging each component's icon into place.**

1: THE PLAYER puts the barrels at the bottom

ALORA
 Oh yeah, that air's goin nowhere.

2: THE PLAYER puts the door on top

SAOIRSE
 Seems sturdy enough.

3: THE PLAYER loops and ties the rope through a hole in the door

LARK
 Yup! Should be good to go!

The blueprint closes, the gang stands behind a newly constructed raft.

The three push the raft out to the shallows.

Lark steps onto the door carefully, slowly. The raft shakes. It stabilizes.

ALORA
 ALRIGHT!

SAOIRSE
 'Lor if you keep the back level I
 can tow from up here.

ALORA
 Sure thing, boss!

SAOIRSE
 Strap in, this might take a while.

LARK
 I'll do my best over here.

Lark jerks nervously, the raft shutters as Alora positions herself at its stern.