

## SCENE 1

*The original story of Atlantis was written by Plato, in his play Timaeus. That play tells a story of how the world was created. This includes the story of Atlantis. This play is set in Atlantis as it was described by Plato.*

*The actors stand on stage in a formation resembling a Greek chorus. The following can be said in unison or with parts separated evenly among the actors.*

### FIRST ACTOR

Histories tells of a mighty power which, unprovoked, made an expedition against the whole of Europe and Asia.

### SECOND ACTOR

This power came forth out of the Atlantic Ocean, for in those days there was an island situated in front of the Pillars of Heracles.

### THIRD ACTOR

The island was larger than Libya and Asia put together, and may most truly be called a boundless continent.

### FOURTH ACTOR

Now in this island of Atlantis there was a confederation of kings which had rule over the whole island and several others, and over parts of the continent.

### FIFTH ACTOR

This vast power endeavored to subdue the whole of the region within the Pillars. This endeavor inevitably failed.

### SIXTH ACTOR

Afterward there occurred violent earthquakes and floods; and in a single day and night of misfortune, the island of Atlantis disappeared into the depths of the sea.

### ALL

This is the story of the fall of Atlantis.

*The actors disperse, and the scene shifts to a man, JUBA, and his wife, TANIRA. They are fishing on a BOAT in the open ocean. As Juba is hauling in a NET, the boat shifts. Tanira opens a BASKET, and pulls out a piece of BREAD. She starts eating it as Juba finishes the haul. Juba notices.*

### JUBA

(Teasing)

Hey! That's got to last all day!

TANIRA

What can I say? I get hungry.

JUBA

Ah, go ahead, darling. You deserve it.

TANIRA

You deserve the world!

JUBA

Only if you're in it, my love.

TANIRA

Aren't you sweet?

JUBA

Am I? I hadn't noticed.

*Tugging on a ROPE to shift the sail*  
Duck your head.

*The boom of the sail swings around. Tanira ducks.*  
Ah, now we're catching wind.

TANIRA

Isn't that a great feeling? The wind, the open sea?

JUBA

Best feeling in world!

TANIRA

Best feeling in the world... Have you ever thought about the world?

JUBA

What?

TANIRA

The world. Rome, Greece. I want to see the mountains.

JUBA

The world is right under your feet. You see it every day, love.

TANIRA

But have you thought about it? What we could see if we left home and went somewhere magical and new?

JUBA

You know I'd love that, Tanira. I really would. But, we don't have that kind of money. We barely have enough to buy bread. Let's take it in steps. We take these fish home, we cook them, and we sell them. Then, we can raise our daughter in a palace instead of a hut.

*She takes another bite of bread and continues*

TANIRA

But the world, Juba! I've heard stories of men traveling hundreds of leagues exploring far off places and learning new languages. Imagine sailing past the horizon until you're in a world so distant you forget where you came from. Why do we go through life so freely when we know there are places on this earth that we've never been? We haven't even traveled to the other side of the island! And what about our daughter? Will she see the world or be stuck here like us? How will she hear these stories? We're selling fish to men who come from Greece and Rome! I want to go to Rome and buy Roman fish! Have you heard the stories of the mainland? I've heard that there are statues as tall as the sky! I've heard of warriors and pirates! I've heard that there is an altar where you can speak to the gods!

JUBA

You said it yourself: stories. No man can talk to the gods directly! Especially not me. You keep saying these ridiculous things, but where have you heard them? The market? Some fortune teller?

TANIRA

My family. Juba, look at this necklace.

*She hands it to him*

It's been in my family for generations. Ever since my mother gave it to me, I have dreamed of going to the mainland. I'm tired of being stuck in Atlantis. The stone in the center is said to be made from the same stone that built the altar, and my family was chosen to keep it safe.

JUBA

*Putting the NECKLACE in his pocket*

Your family also let you marry a poor fisherman.

TANIRA

The best fisherman around.

(Beat.)

Hey, thank you for taking me on the boat. I love sailing.

JUBA

Really? I never knew.

TANIRA

I love the adventure of it! I wish we could travel farther than we've ever gone before, see new sights!

JUBA

Is that what you really want?

TANIRA

More than anything. You. Me. Elissa. All over the world.

JUBA

Elissa. Where does she fit into all of this?

TANIRA

Well, I'd hate to go to the mainland without her. We could raise her on the sea, show her an adventure instead of reading about it in books.

JUBA

You know what, once we get enough money, I'll get you to the mainland. Where would you want to go?

TANIRA

The Pillars of Herakles.

*Juba laughs.*

I mean it! That's where the altar is.

JUBA

Do you really think this altar can help us make a better life for Elissa?

TANIRA

She'll grow up in the palace you dreamed of.

JUBA

Well, in that case, I'll take you. Pillars of-

TANIRA

Herakles. Really? You promise?

JUBA

I promise. We will go to that Altar.

*It starts to rain*

For now, we should head to shore.

TANIRA

Aw, but I think the rain is rather romantic don't you?

JUBA

Ah, yes. The smell of fish and sweat on a rainy day makes the heart soar.

TANIRA

*(Laughing)*

You know what I mean. Just lie down and let it soak in.

JUBA

The rain will ruin our food.

TANIRA

Just relax!

JUBA

We barely have enough to last the week. If the food is ruined, what will we do? I'm heading to shore.

TANIRA

*She stands, looking out to sea*  
But there's so much to explore out there!

*Juba is pulling ropes and setting course. The sail swings around with the changing wind. Loud thunder is heard.*

JUBA

Duck!

TANIRA

What?

JUBA

Duck your head!

- END OF EXCERPT -

To finish reading the play contact the playwright:

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