

Vanished

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Created in collaboration with the Kensington Blue Company 2024-25

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FOREWORD

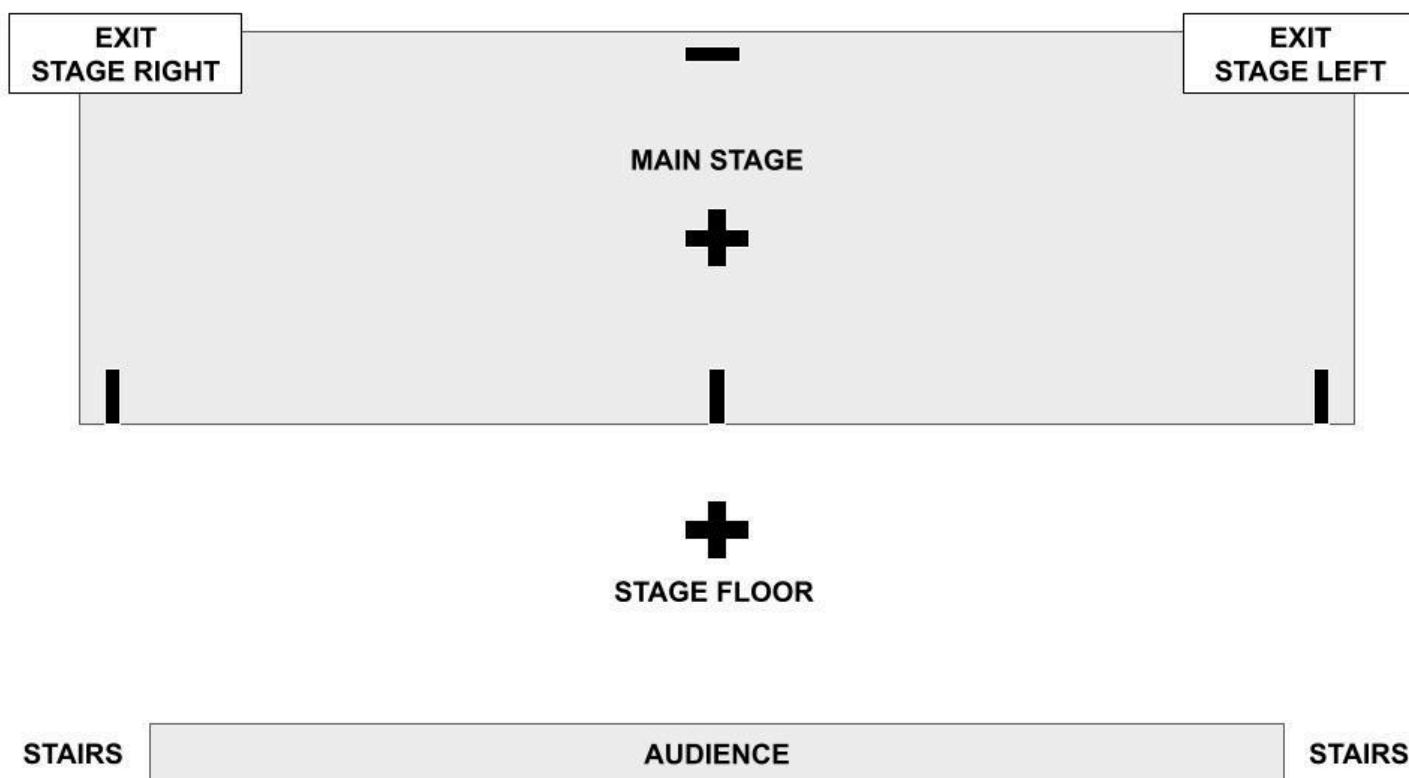
A thrilling, swashbuckling mystery brimming with danger, betrayal, and the restless pull of the sea. In this tale of ambition and survival, the notorious crew of the Blackwind embark on a perilous quest for a legendary treasure said to grant dominion over the seas.

However, their journey takes a sinister turn when their ship is wrecked upon the shores of a desolate town called 'Graypourt', a place shrouded in an unending mist. Without their captain to lead them, the crew part ways and soon they discover something far darker lurks here. As they search for answers they hear whispers of a cursed Nightship and uncover ghosts from their pasts.

In a world where the dead do not rest, where the past refuses to stay buried, and where the Nightship waits for them on the horizon, the greatest question remains: Where do pirates go when they die?

This play was inspired by the role-play sessions with the Kensington Blue Company of 2024-25. Using the 'Role That Dice' system, the pupils explored an immersive world in an improvised drama setting. Through this process the pupils created the characters, lines and narrative for this play.

STAGING DIAGRAM - THE TABERNACLE THEATRE



SCENE 1: RYGAR'S KEEP. NIGHT.

The STAGE FLOOR is dimly lit, bathed in the cold glow of the moon.

A worn wooden sign hangs downstage right, its faded letters reading: 'RYGAR'S KEEP'.

The CREW OF THE ONEIROI RAVENS stands solemnly around a freshly dug grave, marked only by Rygar's belongings. TARIEL kneels by the grave, her head bowed.

TARIEL and ONYX begin to sing a mournful, haunting rendition of 'The Parting Glass'.

TARIEL and ONYX

Of all the money we ever had,
We spent it in good company.
And all the harm we ever done,
Alas, it was not meant for thee.
And all you've done for want or wit,
Your time has come for the Night Ship.
So we bid farewell, let sorrow be,
A wandering soul, lost to the sea.
A wandering soul, lost to the sea.

As the final notes fade, a heavy silence settles, unspoken grief hanging in the air.

The crew glances at one another, their expressions tense.

TARIEL kneels silent, her gaze fixed on the grave.

BARREL

Cap'n you was a fine man o' the sea.
May your soul *forever* find solace in the depths.

TARIEL

And, may the waves *forever* sing your name, father.

ONYX

Tariel, what now?
The Blackwind *will* find Rygars Keep soon enough.

BARREL

Let 'em come - we're not cowards.
The Ravens 'ave long guarded these shores!
We'll take one final stand.

FLINT

Fight 'em?

The Blackwinds got the numbers, the ships - the advantage!

ONYX

But, they don't know these isles like we do.

If we strike swift, we might take em 'fore they even catch wind o' us!

SERPINE

We lost. The war be over.

Might be time we try talkin' - a parley?

We meet an' strike a truce, if it can be done.

BARREL

(scoffs)

A truce?

With the Blackwind?

SERPINE

If not a fight or a truce, Barrel?

What then?

TARIEL stands and moves to look outward to the sea.

The crew looks at her expectantly.

TARIEL

We're *not* fighting - not now.

We are all that's left of our people.

And, Blackwind *wants* us to come.

To stumble into a trap, where they can finish us off.

As for a *parlay*?

The Blackwind *won't* parlay - such an act requires *honour*.

There is no *honour* amongst pirates of *their* kind.

ONYX

What about the boy?

TARIEL

Leave him.

(pause)

He'll find his way back to us.

FLINT

So what, in the meantime, we *wait* for 'em to come after us?

TARIEL

No. We leave.

The crew reacts with disbelief and confusion.

TARIEL

We leave Rygar's Keep and spread out amongst the west coast.

SERPINE

Splitting up *now*?

That ain't wise.

TARIEL

It's survival.

Together, we're an easy target - but apart, we'll be harder to find.

In the meantime, we can gather strength.

The island clans still owe us some favour,

An' there's bonds to forge in the port towns.

We seek 'em out. We survive.

A heavy silence.

ONYX

If that's your command, I'll follow it.

Cap'n.

The crew exchange nods in agreement.

TARIEL

When the time comes, we bring justice to Rygar's Keep.

The crew freeze, their expressions a mix of determination and sorrow.

They take turns narrating their fates before slowly stepping into the shadows and exiting.

BARREL

I disobeyed Tariel's orders.

I went after The Blackwind, reckless and desperate.

I thought I could end it myself.

I was to the sea.

ONYX

I went north, to Whitby, where the cliffs meet the waters.

A small town, where I became a blacksmith.

For a few months I led a quiet life - until Blackwind's crew tracked me down.

I was to the sea.

FLINT

I thought I could disappear into Brighton, lose myself in its bustling streets.

But Blackwind's influence had become more wide-reaching than I could've imagined.

They tortured me. I gave them nothing.

I was to the sea.

TARIEL

I sailed alone, island to island, rallying the clans.

I worked in whispers and shadows.

But I was betrayed once more.

I was to the sea.

Only SERPINE remains on stage, lit under the dim light.

SERPINE

I never stopped moving.

New costume, new name, new person - always keeping the Blackwind in sight.

I *knew* the Blackwind would come looking for Rygar's treasure.

In fact, I planned for it.

Nearly a year later, it led me back to this very same spot, here on Rygar's Keep.

SERPINE hears a noise, tenses, then swiftly ascends the stage-right staircase, disappearing into the shadows.

SCENE 2: RYGAR'S KEEP. NIGHT.

THE CREW OF THE BLACKWIND enters, their movements slow and heavy with exhaustion. Their faces show the strain of hunger and fatigue, yet they trudge forward, following **BUCKLEBREE**, the ship's navigator, who clutches a worn map, leading them to centre-stage.

BUCKLEBREE

'Ere!

This right 'ere be the spot Cap'n.

BLACKWIND

Alright ya wrong'uns, let's get diggin'!

SCARR

Ye heard the Cap'n!

You four, grab yer shovels an' start diggin'!

The rest of ya, stay alert!

The sooner we're off this cursed patch o' dirt, the better!

CRIMSON, BLONDIE, MARINA, and MARY begin to dig.

BLACKWIND, BUCKLEBREE and SCARR confer quietly downstage right.

BRIMSTONE, ALGORA, BLOODB Beard, AIDEN, and WRAITH sit scattered across the stage, their expressions ranging from boredom to unease as they observe the scene.

CRYSTAL knelt downstage left, scans the horizon for any signs of trouble through a spyglass.

BLONDIE

(nervously)

Ya think the stories about this place are true?

CRIMSON

You heard her!

Cursed?!

This whole island feels like it's waiting to swallow us whole.

I've been sayin' it since we stepped foot on this island!

MARINA glancing over at **BLACKWIND**.

MARINA

Just look at the Cap'n - look at her!
Not a speck of dirt on her hands!

MARY

As usual, we're breaking our backs while she stands there la-di-dah!
She *said*, we already won the war.
So what's *this* all for now, eh?

SCARR

Enough chatter you lot!
Dig!

CRIMSON, BLONDIE, MARINA, and MARY get back to digging.

BRIMSTONE

Oh, aye!
Let's dig into cursed soil, on a haunted island.
Great idea!
What could possibly go wrong?

AIDEN

It'll bring nothin' but ill fortune.
This artefact the Cap'n keeps nattering on about?
What good is it to us anyway?
We've got enough treasure to keep us for ten lifetimes!

BLOODB Beard

That's what I been tellin' ya!
Digging graves?
That's the errand of a person gone mad.

ALGORA

I think we've all had enough.
Months of battle with not even a day's rest.
Weeks spent searching for this island.
Days spent on foot searching for some old treasure?!
I need a night of drinking and a warm bed!

CRYSTAL

This place - it reeks of death and decay.
The air's too quiet and the seas too still.
We should get back on our ship and *leave!*

They all nod silently in agreement.

BLACKWIND

What *is* taking so long!
(grabs a shovel)
Move!

**BLACKWIND begins digging furiously, shoveling dirt.
The crew pause their digging, watching her with unease.**

ALGORA

Now, I am certain, that the Cap'n has lost her mind.

BRIMSTONE

And I am certain, that we're gonna die on this island!

WRAITH begins approaching BLACKWIND.

WRAITH

Cap'n. A word if I may?
(lowers her voice, serious)
This all feels - *wrong*.
Grave robbing.
That's not us and it isn't what any of us signed up for.

BLACKWIND

No!
It *ain't* grave robbing?!
We're uncovering history here.
And history *is* worth the cost.

WRAITH

(glancing uneasily at the others)
The crew doesn't see it that way, Cap'n.
They're starting to question you.

BLACKWIND

Don't you worry.

(shouting)

You'll have your answers soon enough.

Suddenly, a metallic clink breaks the tension.

BUCKLEBREE

What was that?

THE CREW gathers round as **BLACKWIND** kneels, brushing away dirt from a small buried chest, revealing its strange, rune-covered surface.

BLACKWIND

There you are.

BLACKWIND opens the chest, revealing a gleaming necklace.

ALGORA

That's it?

A necklace?

BLACKWIND

(holding the necklace aloft)

Not just any necklace.

This ere trinket, has the power to command the waves,

The winds and the very bones of the ocean herself.

She is -

BUCKLEBREE

The "Eye of the Raven"

An ancient artifact, forged in the tempests of the deep.

I've listened to the sea shanties for years, and every tale did whisper of doom.

BLACKWIND

Not doom - conquest and victory!

BLOODBARD

The markings... they're not English, Cap'n.

Nor any tongue I've seen.

BLACKWIND

Brimstone!

You've got a knack for the old tongue.

BRIMSTONE

(stepping forward, his voice hesitant)

Cap'n, I'll not mince words -

I've a creeping feeling of dread that we're meddlin' with forces best left buried.

BLACKWIND

Enough with superstitions.

Speak plain - what does it say?

BRIMSTONE

(sighing)

Well, It's written in Old Norse.

Let me see...

(pauses, tracing the runes with his finger)

A drop of blood, a name bestowed,

And seas shall rise, and winds shall grow.

Through storm and shadow, the great wave shall soar,

To deliver you to the soul you named before.

CRIMSON

What does it mean, Cap'n?

BRIMSTONE

It means that no one can hide from us now.

It means - we're unstoppable.

CRYSTAL

(kneeling and pointing outward)

Cap'n, the sun will soon be up,

And, there be naval ships out there!

We need to get moving.

BLACKWIND stands clutching the necklace tightly, a sinister grin spreading across her face.

BLACKWIND

We have what we came for.

Ready the ship - we make for Brighton!

BLACKWIND exits, as the crew rise slowly and silently, confused and tense.

SCARR

Ye heard the Cap'n.

Let's move!

THE CREW OF THE BLACKWIND exit.

SERPINE returns to the stage floor, sneaking back in from the audience.

He grips his necklace tightly, his eyes gleaming with determination.

SERPINE

Justice will be ours, Cap'n.

SERPINE pauses, glancing around to ensure no one is watching, before removing his necklace. With a sharp breath, he pricks his finger on the spike, drawing a bead of blood.

SERPINE

Tariel -

A sudden, deafening gust of wind sweeps across the stage, growing louder and more otherworldly. The sound is punctuated by the sharp, echoing caw of a raven.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 3: TOP DECK OF THE BLACKWIND. NIGHT

On the mainstage, a sail and ship wheel are set, showing the deck of The Blackwind.
Stage right, rigging connects to the crow's nest above.
The ship rocks gently, illuminated by faint moonlight.

A joyful SEA SHANTY plays as THE CREW OF THE BLACKWIND enjoy their well earned drinks.

BUCKLEBREE

(shouting from the crow's nest)

Oi - which one of ye stinkin' rats has nicked me spyglass?

The crew below looks up, smirking and exchanging glances.

MARY

(serious, shouting up)

If it's gone, ye've no one to blame but yer own self.

Ye know the code out here on the waters - finders, keepers.

Keep a sharper eye on yer things, or lose 'em to the tide!

AIDEN

(shouting back)

Maybe the gulls made off with it?

MARINA

(laughing)

Or maybe it got so fed up with your smell,

It threw *itself* overboard!

BUCKLEBREE

(scowls)

Mock me all ye like, but I swear it was right here!

I leave it *always* right here!

Someone's taken it!

BLACKWIND

(stepping forward, cutting through the chatter)

Enough, if yer spyglass is gone Bucklebree, then it's gone.

We'll get you a new one in Brighton.

Focus on the horizon, stay our course.

BUCKLEBREE

(grumbling)

Aye, aye, Cap'n.

BUCKLEBREE mutters to himself before scanning the horizon without his spyglass.

BUCKLEBREE

(to himself)

But it ain't right... it was here.

BLACKWIND

(to the crew)

Nothin' can stand in our way now.

I say we've earned ourselves a bit o' rest, an' we'll be takin' it.

Our finest days be waitin' just beyond the horizon!

The crew react in approval.

MARINA

(grinning wickedly to Mary)

The moment our boots touch Brighton's cobblestones,

We're marchin' straight to the market!

There's a jewelsmith there what owes us,

An' it's high time we square the ledger.

Wouldn't ye say so, Mary?

MARY

(smirking)

Ay Marina.

(to the group)

The ol' boy swindled me and me sister of a small fortune.

He'll be payin' us back - with interest, mark me words!!

The crew react.

AIDEN

(calmly, with a slight smile)

Well I'll be findin' a music hall to hear songs that tell of storms and battles.

A good sea shanty can soothe the soul - if you've still got one left.

The crew react.

AIDEN

(calling out)

How bout you Wraith?

WRAITH

(grinning confidently)

I'm headin' for the fighting pits.

A few rounds of bare-knuckle brawling should line my pockets nicely.

And if the odds are good, I'll wager on myself and walk out richer than the Cap'n!

The crew react in immense approval and even BLACKWIND smiles.

BRIMSTONE

(thoughtfully)

Myself, I'm looking forward to visitin' the apothecaries and libraries.

Brighton's bound to have a few dusty tomes and rare mixtures for me.

Knowledge is as sharp a weapon as any blade.

The crew react in huge disapproval.

BLACKWIND

And what about ye, Scarr?

The *now infamous* first mate o' The Blackwind.

SCARR

Ya know - war never rests, Cap'n.

I'll be finding meself a quiet corner in some tavern,

Sip a fine mead, an' keep me ears open fer whispers.

BLACKWIND

Listen up, ye scurvy lot!

I'd say you've earned a rest!

Crimson, Algora, Bloodbeard, an' Crystal - man the deck.

The rest o' ye, get to yer quarters an' get some kip.

This time tomorrow, we'll have our boots back on solid ground!

The remaining crew disperses, leaving CRYSTAL, CRIMSON, ALGORA and BLOODBARD on deck. A moment of quiet settles over the stage as the remaining crew exchange uneasy glances.

ALGORA

(mimicking, annoyed)

They've earned a rest.
What about us?
We don't deserve a rest?

CRYSTAL

There's no rest fer the likes o' us.
Ye heard Scarr - this war ain't won, not yet.

BLOODB Beard

I've gotten so used to war.
After all we've done, how do we go back to a *normal* life?

CRIMSON

We don't go back to a *normal* life.
Because we are *rich*!

ALGORA

Not just rich - we're legends.
Tales will be spun and songs sung, 'bout the crew o' the Blackwind.
Ours be a saga o' war - two mighty fleets.
The Iron Tide and The Ravens o' Oneiroi.
Empires, who tore the seas asunder for a thousand years.

CRYSTAL

But madness took root in the Iron Tide,
Greed and paranoia spreadin' like a plague.
They turned on their own.

ALGORA

A mutiny shattered 'em into three warring factions,
Each led by a Cap'n.
And among 'em - Blackwind.
Cunning and ruthless, she rose, crushin' all who stood in her path.

CRIMSON

Aye, but one crew still ruled above all - The Ravens o' Oneiroi.
They held more than cannons an' cutlasses.
They wielded a power beyond the mortal world.

BLOODB Beard

The Ravens whispered to the winds,
Rygar, their Cap'n, like those before him,
Commanded the very tides.
And no fleet could stand against 'em.

ALGORA

But even the mighty fall.
With the Iron Tide broken,
Blackwind seized the ports, took the trade routes.
And then, opportunity presented itself.
A rare moment to strike a bargain with the Ravens.

CRYSTAL

A sacred parlay.
Rygar swore loyalty, offering his firstborn son to Blackwind.
Blood-bound, their fates entwined forever.

CRIMSON

But when the tides turned and the seas grew lean,
Blackwind reneged.
She shattered the ancient pact.
Rygar fell to poison, slain at his own table.
A betrayal that drowned the southern isles in blood.

ALGORA

With their Cap'n dead,
The Ravens scattered and vanished into the dark.
And from that day forward, the seas belonged to the Blackwind.

CRIMSON

All true things.
But we know there's more to this tale.

ALGORA

These are some things we must never talk of.

A tense silence falls over the group.

CRYSTAL

But, the people will talk.
The islanders, what's left of them, will tell a different story - their story.

BLOODB Beard

History belongs to the victors.

And, our blades will silence all dissenters.

The distant creak of the ship and the crash of waves fill the air as they ponder the story. After some time, CRIMSON stands and looks towards the crows nest, her eyes narrowing.

CRIMSON

(standing, urgent)

Who's there?!

(pointing)

I saw someone up there!

BLOODB Beard

(shouting)

Intruder, ring the bell!

CRIMSON rings the bell and the ENSEMBLE begins to rush the stage, confused and half asleep.

ALGORA

There is someone aboard ze ship!

The crew begins to examine the ship for the intruder and ad-lib their response. BRIMSTONE enters from below deck, dragging SERPINE by the collar.

BRIMSTONE

Captain, looksy, I caught a rat, sneaking below deck.

(searching Serpines pocket)

I found your spyglass and this...

BRIMSTONE hands the treasure box to BLACKWIND.

BUCKLEBREE

I told ya some one had nicked it!

The crew quickly gathers, their expressions ranging from anger to curiosity. SERPINE struggles but is held firmly by BRIMSTONE and WRAITH.

BLACKWIND

(stepping forward, menacing)

Who are you?

And what are you doing aboard The Blackwind?

SERPINE

(smiling faintly)

Just a wanderer.

The sea's a lonely place - you know how it is.

I needed a ride.

SCARR

(skeptical)

Look at him, he's too smug for his own good.

He's a spy.

Working for someone.

MARY

We should throw him overboard and be done with it.

MARINA

No Mary, we should gut him, from chin down to his navel.

SERPINE stands calmly amidst the chaos, his faint smirk unwavering.

BLACKWIND

Enough, you two.

So you thought you would come aboard my ship and steal my necklace?

SERPINE

That necklace belongs to Rygar and the ravens!

BLACKWIND

(drawing her sword to SERPINE's throat)

You have exactly 5 seconds to tell me who sent you!

As BLACKWIND starts counting, a low, rhythmic drumming begins to echo faintly in the distance. The drumming is eerie, growing louder.

BLACKWIND

Five!

A drum beats.

BLACKWIND

Four!

A drum beats.

CRYSTAL

(pointing towards the horizon)

Cap'n...

A drum beats.

SCARR

Wave!

A drum beats.

BLACKWIND

Brace yourselves!

The crew look out in awe as a massive wave, towering and dark, looms on the horizon as the lights snap to a BLACKOUT.

SCENE 4: GRAYPOURT. CLIFFS. NIGHT

The mainstage, downstage right, is dimly lit by a spotlight.

The sound of distant waves rolls softly.

A worn wooden sign hangs downstage right, it reads "GRAYPOURT."

The ONEIROI RAVENS - TARIEL, ONYX, FLINT, and BARREL - are seated on the main-stage. FLINT sits cross-legged, rolling dice on the floor, the repeated thunk of the dice breaking the stillness. ONYX glares at him, her expression frustrated. TARIEL sits, staring out into the mist, unmoving. BARREL is sharpening a rusted blade, focused.

ONYX

Will ya blummin' *stop* that?

FLINT

Stop *what*?

ONYX

That.

The noise.

The dice.

The relentless - thunk thunk thunk!

FLINT

Gets to ye, doesn't it?

The quiet - it makes the silence louder in yer head.

ONYX

(snapping)

But it's not silent, because of you and your dice!

FLINT

(mocking)

Alright.

No dice.

Just silence.

Enjoy the peace, Onyx.

A heavy pause follows. The soft crash of distant waves fills the void, accompanied by the faint sound of wind. TARIEL finally speaks, her voice steady, hollow.

TARIEL

Peace?

There ain't no peace here.

BARREL

(stroking her blade)

Aye, no peace - just waitin' for the great wave.

FLINT

She crashes in, spills her lot, leavin' now't but chaos in her wake.

Then she vanishes like she was never here at all.

BARREL

(solemnly)

Those souls she brings in,

Most are lost an' dazed -

ONYX

But it ain't long 'fore the Night Ship comes in,

Silent an' grim, to take 'em away.

None ever stay.

BARREL

Yet *we're* still here.

TARIEL

Because we ain't finished what we started.

FLINT

Finished?

There's no finish line here, Tariel.

No *other* ship to catch, no *new* port to dock.

Just an endless waiting.

ONYX

Do ye always need somethin' to chase?

Somethin' to swing yer blade at?

(standing)

Face it, Flint - you're bored.

That's all it is.

BARREL

We'll be ain't alone.

A faint rumbling begins to grow in the distance, like the deep resonance of thunder or an oncoming tide. The crew falls silent, listening. The sound of waves crashing grows louder.

ONYX

(looking out, pointing)

It's starting again.

The wave.

The rumble intensifies as TARIEL steps forward, resolute.

TARIEL

Seein' as yer bored, Flint, go with Barrel.

Head down to the beachfront an' see who the wave's tossed our way.

BARREL

(gesturing to FLINT)

Come on.

FLINT and BARREL exit, their figures fading into the mist.

TARIEL and ONYX remain behind, the weight of the moment settling over them.

SCENE 5: GRAYPOURT BEACH. SUNSET.

The stage is dimly lit with the pale glow of dawn, the sun disappearing beneath the horizon. Wreckage from The Blackwind is scattered across the beach - broken planks, tangled ropes, and torn sails.

The crew of THE BLACKWIND lay unconscious, sprawled in positions across the stagefloor.

MARINA stirs first, coughing and waking suddenly. She is shocked by what she sees and quickly crawls over to MARY, shaking her shoulder.

MARINA

Wake up, ye lazy sea dog!

(slapping her face)

Come on!

MARY

(coughing and sitting up)

By the seas... where are we?

MARINA

I don't know.

(looking around)

The others... we got to wake them.

They move to rouse the rest of the crew. One by one, they groggily wake, coughing and groaning as they struggle to their feet. SCARR stands, scanning the wreckage.

SCARR

The ship...

(picks up a broken piece of wood)

The Blackwind... she's gone.

BLOODB Beard

And the Cap'n?

A heavy silence as their eyes meet, the grim realisation of the captain's fate sinking in.

BLONDIE

(wide-eyed, nervous)

Where's Cap'n Blackwind?

CRYSTAL

She's gone too.

The group freezes, turning to CRYSTAL, who wipes blood from a cut on her forehead.

AIDEN

What d'ye mean, "gone"?

Ye don't know that!

She could still be out there - floatin' somewhere!

CRYSTAL

No. I saw her meself.

Before the wave struck, she was tossed against the side o' the ship.

The impact... it took her life.

MARY

She's speakin' the truth.

I saw it too.

The last thing I remember is the Cap'n head crackin' against the side o' the ship,

Right before the wave swallowed her.

MARINA

We don't know that for sure!

I won't believe it -

Not 'til I see her with my own eyes.

She could still be out there... somewhere.

MARY

(flatly)

No one survives a blow like that.

She's gone.

AIDEN suddenly notices something washed up on the shore.

The crew turns as AIDEN holds up Captain Blackwind's hat, torn and soaked.

AIDEN

(voice trembling)

It's... it's the Cap'ns.

BUCKLEBREE

Then it's settled.

The Cap'n's gone.

A heavy silence falls over the group as the weight of the revelation sinks in.

ALGORA

The Cap'n's gone.

We're stranded in who-knows-where, with no ship an' no one to lead us.

An' worse yet - I still ain't had meself a drop o' beer in weeks!

BUCKLEBREE takes the captain's hat from AIDEN.

BUCKLEBREE

By the pirate code, when the Cap'n's gone.

The First Mate takes charge.

BUCKLEBREE offers the Captain's Hat to SCARR.

MARY

That's the way it's always been.

CRIMSON

That makes you the new Cap'n - Scarr.

BRIMSTONE

(laughing bitterly)

Not my Captain,

We need a leader who does more than bark orders at you!

SCARR

(snapping)

Watch your tongue, Brimstone, or you'll regret it.

BRIMSTONE

(warning tone)

Look at where we are.

What we need right now is a sharp tactician, someone who'll keep us breathin'.

An' I reckon that's somethin' Wraith will do best.

ALGORA

I agree.

Wraith should be Cap'n.

She's calm, steady, an' someone the crew already respects.

SCARR

(snarling)

Respect?

Respect won't keep you alive when you're face-to-face with the enemy!

BLOODB Beard

(mockingly)

Careful, Scarr.

Wraith's shown time an' again she's a far better fighter than ye'll ever be!

The crew jeers and taunts, eager to provoke a confrontation.

WRAITH

(stepping forward, raising a hand to silence them)

Enough.

I don't want it, and I *won't* fight you for it.

I'll say this - if we are gonna survive *whatever* is out there,

We'll need our wits about us.

An' there'll be no bloody fightin' amongst ourselves, ye hear?

BUCKLEBREE

(looking out to sea)

I've sailed these seas longer than most o' ye've been drawin' breath.

An' if there's one thing I've learned, it's this -

What hides in the shadows is far worse than anythin' yer eyes can see.

A long silence after BUCKLEBREE speaks, the crew exchanging uneasy glances.

BLONDIE

What's that supposed to mean?

SCARR

It doesn't mean anything - the old codger's gone senile.

I say we stay right here.

This beach is defensible.

Whose with me?

MARY

Agreed, Scarr.

There's no need to go wandering into the unknown.

CRIMSON

Aye, best we keep to ourselves.
We can scavenge enough to get by.
We've got nets fer fishin' an' plenty o' wood to stoke a fire -

WRAITH

(cutting in, calm but firm)

We don't know where we are or who might come looking for us.
This wreckage makes us a target.

BLONDIE

Looking for us?
(nervously)
Are we in danger?

BUCKLEBREE

(scoffing)
We'll be fine, lad.

WRAITH

(cutting in, calm but firm)

I'm telling you - staying here's a fool's errand.

CRYSTAL

Wandering into some unknown town?
You think they'll welcome you with open arms?
I'm with Scarr on this - better to stay put than go wanderin' blind into who-knows-what.

BLOODBEARD

Out there, at least we've got a chance to get a measure o' what we're up against.

AIDEN

Sea towns don't take kindly to strangers - especially pirates.
Do you really think they'll let us walk into town without trouble?

WRAITH

We'll keep our heads low, act like we belong.
Figure out where we are, barter for supplies and find a ship.

ALGORA

I'll take my chances in town.
This beach stinks o' death, an' I'm in sore need of a stiff drink!

WRAITH pauses, glancing at **BUCKLEBREE**, waiting for him to make his decision.
After a moment of hesitation, he sighs and steps forward, joining her group as they exit.

SCARR

You're making a mistake.

WRAITH

Maybe.

(offering a handshake)

Good luck, Scarr.

SCARR

(accepting the handshake)

You'll need it more than we will.

The crew part ways.

SCARR, MARY, MARINA, CRIMSON, BLONDIE, and CRYSTAL stay on the beachfront.

WRAITH, BUCKLEBREE, AIDEN, ALGORA, and BLOODBARD prepare to head inland.

BLONDIE sits on the sand, clutching Blackwind's hat, his head bowed. His expression is a mixture of grief and disbelief. **SCARR**, noticing his distress, strides over and kneels beside him.

BLONDIE

She was the only family I had.

SCARR

The Cap'n's in a better place now, kid.

BLONDIE

Where do pirates go when they die?

SCARR

(placing a hand on his shoulder)

Don't you fret - we'll look after ya.

BLONDIE stands slowly, brushing off the sand from the hat.

BLONDIE

I know... I just need a walk.

Lots to think about.

CRIMSON

Don't wander too far, kid.
It'll be night soon.

BLONDIE exits and they watch him go.

MARINA

Think the others will make it through the night?

MARY

We've got our own problems to deal with.

CRIMSON

They'll be back.

A heavy silence lingers as they watch the waves roll in and the sun lower on the horizon.

CRYSTAL

(breaking the silence)

We'll need to get a fire going before the sun's down.

The crew begins gathering scattered bits of wood from the wreckage, working together in tense silence. Broken planks and splintered beams are piled up, and MARINA crouches to strike a spark, using two rocks.

MARINA

This place, none of it feels right.

CRIMSON

(looking out at the waves)

Some things out there, watchin' us.

MARINA

Aye... and maybe it ain't just watchin'.
Might be the Night Ship, coming to collect what's owed.

Suddenly, BLONDIE bursts onto the stage, his face pale and his breathing laboured.

BLONDIE

(panicking)

I found something!
Someone!

MARY

What is it, kid?

BLONDIE

The spy - that was on our ship!

He's washed up on the shore!

The crew exchange alarmed glances as they draw their weapons.

CRIMSON

Is he alive?

BLONDIE

(breathless)

I - I don't know.

He wasn't moving, but... but he's just up there!

SCARR

Lead the way, kid.

The sound of the waves intensifies and tension builds as the crew exits stage via the staircase stage-right.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 6: GRAYPOURT. TOWN. NIGHT.

WRAITH, BRIMSTONE, BUCKLEBREE, AIDEN, ALGORA, and BLOODBEARD enter from stage right onto the mainstage. They keep their voices low, glancing around warily.

WRAITH

Remember - we keep a low profile.

BUCKLEBREE

They don't take kindly to strangers in port towns like this,
And even less to pirates.

ALOGORA

So what's our backstory, then?

WRAITH

We're Scandinavian fishermen.
We washed up in the storm.
Looking for a place to stay the night.
Simple.

BLOODBEARD

I ain't too sure 'bout this.
I ain't very good at performing.

ALGORA

One wrong step, and we'll be hanging from the gallows by sunrise.

AIDEN

If anyone asks, we say we come from the isles of... Jørgenfjord.

BRIMSTONE

Jørgenfjord - okay, sounds real enough.
Y'know, if this whole piratin' life hadn't worked out,
I reckon I'd have made a fine thespian.

AIDEN

(with a flourish)

I'll have you know, I've dabbled in the performing arts myself!
I've walked the boards more times than I can count, in fact.
Darlings, the first and only rule for an actor?
Commit to the role, heart and soul.

The group falls silent, stunned by AIDEN's sudden transformation and dramatic flair, exchanging bewildered glances.

WRAITH

Right - let's stow our weapons shall we?
And try n' make yourselves look less like bloody pirates!

They begin adjusting their costumes. On the staircase stage-left BARREL and FLINT enter talking, as they make their way down from the cliffs.

FLINT

If we stay here too long?
What do you think happens to us?

BARREL

Doesn't really matter.

FLINT

Where do you think the Night Ship takes em all?

BARREL

Doesn't really matter.

FLINT

Who's to say the boy will even end up here?

BARREL

He'll come -
We all *have* to come through here *eventually*.

FLINT

But what if Taniel is wrong?
I'm mean she *is* grieving after all -

BARREL

(firm)

Flint - we're all grieving.

They continue descending down the staircase, spotting the group centre stage. BARREL and FLINT draw their pistols and approach, tense and suspicious.

BARREL

(studying them)

You lot ain't from around here, are ya?

AIDEN

(thick Scandinavian accent)

Ahh, ja, ve be a simple fisherman, yah?

Ve ver in de storm and ze boat go kaput.

Very bad, uff da, very bad.

BRIMSTONE

Yah, yah - vas a vig storm!

Vas a vig wave!

AIDEN

Ve wash up like herrings in net!

Now ve go to town, for varm bed, hot food,

And beer as cold as a viking's backside in a snowstorm!

ALGORA

(overdoing it)

Yah, ve vant just von beer.

No more!

Yust vone!

Ve are good, humble fishermens!

BARREL narrows her eyes, glancing at FLINT, unconvinced.

FLINT

Fishermen, huh?

From where?

ALL

(loudly)

Jørgenfjord!

A tense silence.

BARREL

(skeptical)

Jørgenfjord?

Never heard of it.

AIDEN

Yah, yust a very small town!

FLINT

(eyeing them)

You lot see any pirates on the beachfront?

ALL

Pirates?

No!

BARREL

How about a boy?

With bright blonde hair.

Maybe he washed up with you?

The group freezes for the briefest moment before shaking their heads quickly.

BARREL studies them a moment longer, then finally exhales, stepping back.

BARREL

Fine.

Be on your way.

BARREL and FLINT keep a close eye on them as they exit the stage, before they exit in another direction.

SCENE 7: GRAYPOURT BEACH. NIGHT.

From the staircase upstage left **SCARR, MARY, MARINA, CRIMSON, CRYSTAL, and BLONDIE** re-enter, dragging an unconscious **SERPINE** onto the stagefloor.

MARY

It's that very same rat that snuck onto our ship and set it ablaze.

SCARR kneels to inspect closer.

MARINA

Would've been better to leave him to the sea.

SCARR slaps **SERPINE's** face roughly, waking him with a jolt.
SERPINE gasps, eyes wild and darting around in confusion.

SERPINE

(breathless)

No... no, no, no...

I'm not supposed to be here yet!

CRIMSON

(coldly)

Oh, but you're here alright.

Now tell us why you were on our ship.

SERPINE lets out a dry, humorless chuckle.

SCARR

(leaning in)

Speak some sense,

Or I'll have these two *carve* it out of you.

MARY and **MARINA** draw their blades.

SERPINE

You can't hurt me - not here.

MARY

(tightening her grip on the weapon)

Oh?

And why's that?

SERPINE

Steel, fire, even the sea itself -
All have tried to kill me.
And still, I remain.

(beat)

How can you kill me, when I'm already dead?!

CRYSTAL

What does that mean?

SERPINE lets out a manic laughter, whilst the crew stiffens, exchanging wary glances,

CRIMSON

Enough!
One of you - shut him up!

MARINA

(moving in with her blade)

With pleasure.

Before MARINA and MARY can get to SERPINE, BARREL and FLINT enter, their pistols aimed.

BARREL

(from the staircase)

Hurt him and I promise, I'll leave you on this beach full of lead.

FLINT

Good to see ya Serpine.

SERPINE

(standing confidently)

Ay, you too Flint.

(to Barrel)

Are the others with you?

FLINT

Not too far from 'ere -

BARREL

(eyeing SCARR)

Well, well, finally our most desired guests have arrived.
Tariel will be pleased.

Before they can react, BLONDIE makes a break for it.

FLINT raises his pistol and fires a shot, missing, BARREL stops him from firing another.

BARREL

(snapping)

You idiot!

We need the boy alive!

FLINT hesitates and BLONDIE is already gone.

The crew looks between one another, the tension thick.

FLINT

Shall I go after him?

BARREL

Don't bother.

He'll find his way to us.

Ere' all roads lead to the same place.

They all exit stage.

SCENE 8: GRAYPOURT. TOWN CENTRE. NIGHT.

The stage is dimly lit, casting long shadows across the cobbled streets of Grayport. The town is eerily silent. Doors hang open, signs sway in the faint breeze, and the remnants of an unfinished life; half-eaten meals, scattered belongings, lie untouched.

WRAITH, BRIMSTONE, BUCKLEBREE, AIDEN, ALGORA, and BLOODBEBARD cautiously step onto the deserted streets, their footsteps echoing unnaturally in the silence.

BRIMSTONE

No one's here?

No people.

No animals.

Nothing.

ALGORA

(kneeling to pick up a bowl from the floor)

This place is not just empty.

It's like everyone just vanished in the middle of whatever they were doing.

BLOODBEBARD

What if something worse got to them first?

ALGORA, looking increasingly uneasy, suddenly spots a bottle of rum.

ALGORA

(excited)

Ah! Finally!

A drink!

ALGORA rushes over to the unopened bottle and sits gleaming, opening the bottle.

ALGORA raises the bottle in the air and then tips the bottle back, only for nothing to pour out.

ALGORA

(confused)

It's empty...

BLOODBEBARD

A whole town doesn't just vanish.

Something's happened here.

BRIMSTONE

Something we don't understand.

BUCKLEBREE, who has been studying the weathered sign downstage, runs a hand over the sign as he grips the edge and turns it slightly.

BUCKLEBREE

This ain't right!

Look at this!

When you rearrange the letters -

BUCKLEBREE holds up the reverse side of the sign, the faded letters reveal a chilling truth - 'PURGATORY.' He stiffens, the weight of realisation settling over him.

WRAITH

We need to get back to the others!

Before anyone can react, a slow, deliberate clap echoes from above. The group freezes, their eyes snapping upward to the shadowed figure of **BLACKWIND**, silhouetted above.

ALGORA

(staggering back)

Look!

It's - it's the Captain!

WRAITH

That's impossible.

The shadowed figure of **BLACKWIND** disappears, exiting stage.

BUCKLEBREE

Cap'n, ye come back here!

The group quickly moves up the stairs stage-right, in pursuit of the phantom before exiting.

The stage is silent, heavy with unease.

BLONDIE bursts in, breathless and panicked.

BLONDIE

(breathless)

Hello?!

Hello?!

Where did they go?

(confused)

I just saw them come in here?

He moves toward a wooden stool and slumps down onto it, rubbing his face with his hands.

BLONDIE

What do I do now?

A long pause as he tries to collect his thoughts, he puts his head in his hands.

BLACKWIND appears upstage, standing behind **BLONDIE**, who hasn't noticed him.

BLACKWIND

It'll be okay, kid.

BLONDIE freezes, his eyes widening in disbelief as he slowly turns to look up at the figure.

BLONDIE

C-Captain...?

(He scrambles to his feet, his voice shaking)

You're - You're alive?

But... I thought -

Crystal said, she saw you die?

I - I don't understand.

BLACKWIND

Not all stories end the way they're meant to, kid.

BLONDIE takes a hesitant step forward, his mind racing with questions.

BLONDIE

The others, they were taken!

BLACKWIND places a hand on **BLONDIE**'s shoulder, her grip firm yet oddly cold.

BLACKWIND

What do you mean, *taken*?

BLONDIE

These pirates, with pistols.

They took 'em, from the beachfront and up the cliffs.

BLACKWIND

Show me.

Without another word, BLACKWIND strides off into the darkness and BLONDIE follows.

SCENE 9: GRAYPOURT. CLIFFS. NIGHT

**A faint, eerie glow from the moon outlines the jagged rocks below.
The sound of distant waves crashing against the shore filling the silence.**

**TARIEL and ONYX sit on a rock, gazing out into the dark horizon.
A storm brews in the distance.**

ONYX

Ye never did tell me?
What were your last words with ye father?

TARIEL doesn't answer at first. She watches the waves ahead, lost in thought.

TARIEL

He told me he knew.
He knew from the moment he struck a parlay with the Blackwind,
That an omen had fallen upon us.

ONYX

He was a great captain, Tariel and an even better man.
He did what he thought was best -

TARIEL

And, they poisoned him, like a dog.
(pauses, voice trembling with restrained fury)
They'll learn what it means to cross a child of the storm.

ONYX

(softly, with caution)
Revenge is a tempest, Tariel.
It cannot distinguish between the guilty and the innocent.

A heavy silence.

TARIEL and ONYX stand as BARREL and FLINT enter, with SERPINE.

**SCARR, MARY, MARINA, CRIMSON and CRYSTAL are forced to their knees at gunpoint.
FLINT and BARREL keep their pistols aimed at them.**

SERPINE

Good to see ya, Tariel -

TARIEL

Serpine.

(placing a hand on his shoulder)

Look at this, the mighty crew of The Blackwind,
Brought to their knees like common thieves.

SCARR

You'd best watch your tongue, girl.

WRAITH, BRIMSTONE, BUCKLEBREE, AIDEN, ALGORA, and BLOODBEARD enter from above and whisper among themselves.

ALGORA

This is bad.

AIDEN

Very bad.

BLOODBEARD

What do we do?

WRAITH signals that they hush and hide.

They huddle together, tense, watching from the shadows above.

ONYX

We've waited a long time for you to arrive.

TARIEL

I know it was Blackwind's tongue that spoke the order -
But whose hand poured the poison into my father's cup?

MARINA

It wasn't any of us.

TARIEL

(fiercely)

Don't lie to me!

CRIMSON

She's not lying!

MARY

It's the truth.

It wasn't any of us.

**BLACKWIND enters with BLONDIE, her grip tight on his arm.
The ENSEMBLE reacts to their sudden appearance.**

BLACKWIND

Oh, Tariel...

Always asking the wrong questions.

TARIEL freezes, her eyes locking on BLONDIE.

BLACKWIND

You've been chasing shadows, my dear.

She shoves BLONDIE forward.

BLACKWIND

You want your father's killer.

Here he is...

TARIEL

No - no, that's not possible!

BLACKWIND

He didn't know what he was doing.

But he brought Rygar the cup

(to BLONDIE)

Didn't you?

BLONDIE

(pleading)

I didn't know it was poison...

I swear, I didn't know...

BLACKWIND

Tariel, he did it because I told him to -

Because he's mine.

TARIEL approaches BLONDIE.

TARIEL

Listen to me, Trayu.

BLONDIE

Trayu?

TARIEL

That's your name... your real name.

Trayu.

You're one of us.

You're my brother.

BLONDIE

I don't understand?

ONYX

You were just a child when the Blackwind took you from us.

BLONDIE

I don't remember.

TARIEL

Listen to me, Trayu.

BLACKWIND

His name is Blondie.

BARREL

(pistol aimed at Blackwind)

His name is Trayu.

ONYX

Blackwind's been lying to you, Trayu.

There's a reason she has kept you close.

There's *power* in you - in *all* of us Ravens - *bound* to our necklaces.

Yours holds the force to deliver justice... to send her to hell.

Prick your finger, speak *her* name, and let the spell take hold.

TARIEL

Right the wrongs of our past, brother.

BLONDIE looks down at the necklace in his hand, the ancient spell pulsing faintly.

BLACKWIND

Don't do it, kid. We can leave this place together.
With my necklace and yours, we will carve our names into history.
Gold, power, the very seas themselves.

BLONDIE, pricks his finger on the spike, drawing blood and whispers into the necklace.

BLONDIE

Trayu.

BLACKWIND

No... no, you fool...

A wind envelops TRAYU pulling him to the tips of his toes, before he collapses to the ground.

TARIEL

(crumbling to her knees)

Trayu...

A storm breaks, thunder bellows as rain pours down. The two crews stand in stunned silence. BLACKWIND stumbles back, her face pale, TARIEL looks up at the sky, the rain mixing with her tears, clutching him tightly as she whispers.

TARIEL

I forgive you, brother.

The ENSEMBLE freeze. ONYX steps forward and begins to sing, closing the play.

ONYX

Of all the money we ever had,
We spent it in good company.
And all the harm we ever done,
Alas, it was not meant for thee.
And all you've done for want or wit,
Your time has come for the Night Ship.
So we bid farewell, let sorrow be,
A wandering soul, lost to the sea.
A wandering soul, lost to the sea.

FADE TO BLACK as a ship's horn bellows deep and distant, followed by a raven's caw.

END