

Fire Island



A Play for a Young Audience

by

Andrew Hilton

Lyrics by Andrew Hilton & John Telfer

Music by John Telfer

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Music © AoReA Music 2021

Cover:

John Voce, Eddie Nestor, Tod O'Boyle and Sara Tracy in the 1985 revival

Like *Backfire!* this 1984 play, which deals with ideas of energy use and misuse, could well have shown its age. Given that we know now that the continued use of fossil fuels threatens catastrophe, it seems extraordinary to me that only 30-odd years ago I was to portray the solution to the abandoned island's problems as the exploitation of its newly discovered coal reserves.

Changing the play to reflect our current emphasis on clean energy seemed a real possibility, and as much of the rest of the play has stood the test of time I decided to go ahead with an update ...

A.H.

March 2021

Fire Island was commissioned by the Molecule Theatre of Science and first performed at the Mermaid Theatre on 17th September 1984. A ten week National Tour followed. The company was as follows:

Sunny	-	Eddie Nestor
Michael	-	David Jessiman
Joyce	-	Eva Louise
Spud	-	John Voce
Norda	-	Tania Jones
<i>Director</i>	-	<i>Andrew Hilton</i>
<i>Designer</i>	-	<i>Rod Langsford</i>
<i>Composer</i>	-	<i>John Telfer</i>
<i>Musical Director</i>	-	<i>Roger Cutts</i>
<i>Lighting</i>	-	<i>T.M.White</i>
<i>Production Manager</i>	-	<i>Forbes Nelson</i>
<i>Company Manager</i>	-	<i>Linda Edwards</i>
<i>Deputy SM</i>	-	<i>Audrey Cooke</i>
<i>ASM/Understudy</i>	-	<i>Emma Bridgeman-Williams</i>
<i>ASM/Understudy</i>	-	<i>Tod O'Boyle</i>
<i>Technical ASM</i>	-	<i>Rhett Stevens</i>

The production was revived at the Mermaid on January 15th 1985 and a 15-week national tour followed. The cast was as follows:

Sunny	-	Eddie Nestor
Michael	-	Tod O'Boyle
Joyce	-	Sara Tracy
Spud	-	John Voce
Norda	-	Julia Brooks

and Production team changes:

<i>Deputy SM</i>	-	<i>Emma Bridgeman-Williams</i>
<i>ASM/Understudy</i>	-	<i>Theresa M. Murphy</i>

Characters

SUNNY

MICHAEL

JOYCE

SPUD

NORDA

*with the voices of a Ship's Captain, Engineer & Surveyor,
and later of radio operators from the 'Hesperus' and
'Kestrel'*

An island in a warm ocean, in the present day

Act One

Prologue

Sound only. Night. Aboard a small ship at sea in a violent storm. The crew communicate by intercom:

Captain Mr Lewis! More power, more power! I'm losing steerage way!

Engineer We're taking in water, sir. Port engine's flooded!

Captain Then full ahead on starboard! This sea could have us over.

A great screech of wind.

Mr Patel, Mr Patel!

Surveyor Captain?

Captain Those three kids. Get them in a lifeboat. We may not make it.

Surveyor No lifeboat, Captain!

Captain What?

Surveyor Port boat smashed, starboard lost overboard. This is some storm!

Captain The survey launch? Could you get them into that?

Surveyor That's no lifeboat, Captain!

Captain I know, but it's tough. It may be their only chance. Get 'em into it and batten down as tight as you can. We won't launch it unless we have to.

Another great screech of wind.

Engineer Starboard engine's flooding, sir, fast. It's going to cut out any second!

The engine cuts out.

That's it, sir. It's gone!

Captain Abandon engine-room, Mr Lewis! Join me on the bridge.

Engineer Aye, aye, sir!

Captain Mr. Patel?

Surveyor Yes, Captain.

Captain Launch that boat as soon as it's ready. *[Fading]* Let's hope this sea is kinder to those kids that I fear it'll be to the rest of us ...

The sounds of ship and sea fade away.

A large, yellow sun rises.

*Spotlight on **Sunny**.*

Song of the Island - 1

Sunny *Once upon a time there was an island,
island in the sun
with animals and plants and trees
and birds that sung.
Once upon a time there was a city,
a city on the island in the sea,
twenty thousand people living happily!
And they worked to make their island thrive
so their life there could survive
in prosperity!*

*Fire Island,
Fire Island,
Fire Island,
Why did it die?*

The light on Sunny fades.

Scene 1

A small, sandy beach. Behind, a moonscape background of rocks and the remains of human settlement of three centuries ago. There are no trees, no grass - no green of any kind, even in costume and props.

A small, fibreglass launch lies on the beach. It has an inboard motor and a small cabin, a large headlamp and an aerial; and inside is equipped for sleeping, cooking and radio communication.

The sound of gulls, and the sea gently lapping on the shore.

*After a few moments **Michael** pushes his head out from under the awning. He has just woken up. He looks round, blinks, rubs his eyes, looks over the side at the dry sand underneath, then jumps out of the boat and looks about.*

Michael *Joyce! Spud! Wake up!*

He thumps on the side of the boat.

We've landed!

***Joyce's** head appears, then **Spud's**.*

Joyce *Where are we?*

Michael *No idea. After the storm we must have fallen asleep and just drifted ashore. At high tide by the looks of it.*

Spud *[Blearily] Where's the sea? ... Oh.*

Joyce *[Getting out of the boat] Any sign of The Seeker?*

Michael *No.*

Joyce D'you think it really did sink?

Spud I think it sank almost as soon as they put us in this boat.

Michael We can't be certain. Those waves were big enough to hide a battleship.

Spud I know. I just think it sank. And the lifeboats had been smashed.

Joyce Poor Mr Lewis.

Michael And Captain Burroughs. And Sam Patel. We've been very lucky.

Joyce We have. But where on earth are we?

Spud Are those ruins?

Michael I'm going to see what I can see from up there. Haven't we got some binoculars?

Spud Here!

Michael Thanks.

He climbs the highest rock.

Joyce I'm going up there!

Joyce takes another vantage point, and Spud climbs out of the boat to take another.

Michael Hey! Just look at this!

Joyce Wow!

Michael It's a desert! No trees, no grass. Just sand and rock ... and ruins of old buildings everywhere.

Joyce Can't you see any people?

Michael No. And no cars either.

Joyce There must be a town - further along the coast.

Michael No ... no, there's nothing. Just rock and ruins, and sand and sea. I think ...

He scans the horizon right round.

 Yes ... yes, we are.

Spud What?

Michael We're on an island. A big desert island!

Joyce You mean we're marooned?

Michael I can't understand it. We saw lots of islands from The Seeker, didn't we? None of them looked like this. They were covered in green.

Joyce Yes. Trees and bushes like jungles!

Spud Maybe there's no water. Like a desert in Africa.

Michael looks again through the binoculars.

Michael I don't think so. I think that's a stream ... and another one! Plenty of water. It doesn't make sense.

Spud Perhaps there was a war. Perhaps it was bombed!

Joyce Yes! Or a volcano! Or an earthquake!

Michael Maybe. People certainly used to live here.

Joyce It's spooky, if you ask me. Where's the mainland?

Michael Well, it must be east of us, so with the sun there, in the south ... [*looking over the audience*] it ought to be that way. I can't see it. 'Course, it was already out of sight when the storm broke. And the wind was blowing offshore ... we could have drifted a long way. We could be fifty miles off the coast. More, even ...

Joyce Then what do we do?

Michael Let's go back to the boat and decide.

Spud I'm starving! Is there anything for breakfast?

Joyce Oo, typical! We're marooned on a desert island and all you're bothered about is your stomach.

Spud I don't think straight when I'm hungry.

Joyce When you're full you don't think at all.

Spud Hey!

Michael has been examining his mobile.

Michael No signal. Not a thing.

Joyce I tried in the storm. Same.

Spud My battery's flat. And I've lost my charger.

Joyce Well, what shall we do? Set off in the boat. We've still got petrol, haven't we?

Michael Yes, but ... have we got a chart?

Spud I'll look.

He climbs into the boat. Joyce looks at the hull.

Joyce No damage, Michael. It's a tough little boat.

Michael Yes.

Spud Yippee! Here's breakfast! Chocolate!

He throws chocolate bars to Michael and Joyce.

M & J Thanks!

Joyce Oo, bit soft.

Michael Yes, the sun's getting hot already. Is there any more, Spud?

Spud Mm. Three more bars.

Michael Better put them in the fridge then. Stop them melting altogether.

Spud Does it work?

Michael 'Course it does. It's electric. Runs off the boat's battery.

Spud Oh, right ...

Michael But what about a chart? Have you found one?

Spud There's this, that's all.

Michael *[Taking a folded map from Spud]* Let's see ... No, this isn't a sea chart. Just a very detailed map of a bit of the mainland coast. That bit Sam was doing his research on last week, I think. We can't put to sea with this.

Joyce Can't we?

Michael We don't know where we are. We don't know how far we've got to go. We could run out of petrol and still be miles from anywhere. 'Least, I think it ought to be a last resort.

Joyce What's the alternative?

Spud We could stay here - play Robinson Crusoe!

Joyce No thanks, Spud!

Spud Don't we just call for help, then?

M & J We said, there's no signal -

Spud On the radio.

Michael What?

Spud The radio. It's a transmitter. Didn't you know?

Michael No!

They all lean into the boat.

Spud It's how old Sam kept in touch with the ship. It's a bit old-fashioned, I think, but I've heard him use it ...

Michael has climbed into the boat and is fiddling with the radio's buttons.

Michael That's switched it on. Red light there, look. Now ... this says 'transmit'. That must be it ... Hello! Hello! ... What am I supposed to say?

Joyce You give the name of your boat, don't you?

Michael What is it?

Spud Same as the ship - The Seeker.

Michael Hello, Seeker, this is Seeker ... Is that it?

Joyce and Spud nod.

Spud Then you say 'Mayday, Mayday'.

Michael Why?

Spud It's code for 'help'.

Michael Are you sure?

J & Spud 'Course!

Michael This is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday!

Pause

This is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday!

Pause

No reply. Of course, we don't know what range it's got. Only a few miles, maybe. We might have to wait for a ship to pass quite close. Shall I just keep trying?

Joyce You'd better, yes. Is there anything we can do?

Spud I'm thirsty. Have we got any water?

Michael Try the pump.

Spud reaches into the boat and tries the electric water pump.

Spud No. Empty.

Joyce That's what we'll do then, Spud. Find one of those streams and fill up these ... here.

Michael We'd better boil it before we drink it.

Joyce Yes, but we can do that. The boat's got a gas stove and a kettle. Come on, Spud. Which way shall we go?

Spud Let's try this.

Joyce O.K. Good luck, Michael. Find someone, won't you!

Michael I'll do my best. Bye!

Joyce and Spud leave.

Don't get lost!

Joyce [Off] We won't!

Michael Now where's the best place for this? Out of the boat ... and pointing out to sea.

He sits on the sand, leaning back on the hull.

Right. Seeker, this is Seeker, calling all ships. This is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday! ... Seeker, this is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday! ... [etc]

Music. *The sun climbs higher in the sky. Enter Norda, a pale, thin woman dressed all in black.*

Norda What's this? People? Here? No! Never! Never here! He's brought them! He's brought them!

Michael shifts a bit. Norda draws back.

Be off with you! Be off!

Michael is oblivious. Norda leaves the way she had come.

Michael Seeker, this is Seeker calling all ships. Can you hear me? Mayday, mayday, mayday! ... Seeker, this is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday! ... Phew!

Joyce *[Off] Michael!*

Enter Joyce and Spud with full bottles of water.

See, plenty of water. Much further away than we thought though.

Spud And look! We think we've found what happened to the island.

He hands Michael a lump of rock.

Michael It's just a lump of rock.

Spud No, look. At these brownny bits.

Michael Oh!

Joyce It's iron. We're sure it is - iron ore!

Michael It looks like it, yes.

Spud We found it in an enormous pit. Must have been an old quarry. The people here must have been iron miners. And the iron must have run out.

Michael That could explain the ruins, couldn't it?

J & S Yes!

Michael We'll keep this as a souvenir.

Joyce Have you had any luck on the radio?

Michael Oh - no, I haven't.

Joyce *[Looking at her watch]* But we've been away for nearly an hour!

Michael We'd better face it. It could be a while before we contact anyone. Days, even.

Joyce Days? On this island? D'you know, there aren't even any animals here, or birds. Apart from the streams, it's just still and silent. It's dead!

Spud There's no food for anything, is there? Even birds can't eat sand, or old bricks.

Michael *[Shrugging]* Well ...

Joyce O.K. 'Spose there's no point in getting gloomy. If we are stuck here, we'd better make the best of it. We could make a camp, couldn't we? Use what there is in the boat, build a shelter. We shall need some shade.

Spud Yes, just think, we could've been washed up on a log, without anything! The boat's got lots. Gas stove, pots and pans, even that fridge!

Michael We're going to need that in this heat. Right - oh, let's pull the boat up, first. Out of the reach of the tide ... Ready? One, two, three ...

They heave the boat further up the beach.

Now. Who does what?

Joyce You leave this to us and get back to the radio. We'll boil some water -

Spud Oo, yes, I'm parched!

Joyce - then do our best with the camp. What about food?

A blank moment.

Spud Hey, I can fish! Sam's rods are in the boat.

Joyce Have you ever fished before?

Spud No. Have you?

Joyce No! O.K. You fish, I'll build the camp. If this island can be made fit to live on, we'll do it!

Music. *Joyce finds the gas stove and kettle and puts water on to boil. Spud sorts out the fishing rod, then climbs one of the rocks with it and casts.*

Michael Seeker, this is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday! ... Seeker, this is Seeker calling all ships ...

Fade.

Music. *Build lights on **Sunny**, for:*

Song of the Island - 2

Sunny *The island in the sun was full of colours,
colours that now have gone,
fields of gold and rooves of red
and clothes that shone!
Colours of the forest and the city,
the city on the island in the sea,
greens and blues and yellow flame
in harmony.
But now
in this empty desert land
the colour of the sand
is all there is to see!

Fire Island,
Fire Island,
Fire Island!
Why did it die?*

Scene 2

*The beach. **Joyce**, **Michael** and **Spud** stand admiring Joyce's work. Spud holds something behind his back.*

Joyce How about that?

Michael Brilliant! Looks like we live here!

Joyce Shelter, see - the awning from the boat held up with the paddles. Kitchen - gas cooker and electric fridge. Electricity supply - the boat's battery. And there's water in the tap!

Taking a cup, she reaches into the boat and works the electric pump. She offers the cup to Michael.

Here, all that talking, you must be thirsty.

Michael Thanks ... It's hot!

Joyce I've boiled it. But it's pure. And look, there's electric light ...

She switches the boat's headlamp, which now hangs by the shelter, on and off. There are wires everywhere now, of course.

And there's music!

She plays something on her phone.

All that silence was driving me mad!

Michael This island doesn't look so bad after all, does it, Spud?

Spud No. And it's going to feel better soon. Look!

He holds up a large fish.

Joyce Wonderful! What is it?

Spud It's a fish!

Joyce I know that! What kind?

Spud Who cares? I could eat anything.

Joyce Me too!

Spud Yeah!

Michael Shall we cook it straightaway?

Spud Yes!

Joyce Let's! Let's have a party. We deserve it. We've turned a spooky old desert into a little bit of civilisation!

Spud Pity we haven't got our Xbox with us.

Joyce We've got music!

She turns the music up to maximum.

Michael I'll cook. You find some plates, Spud.

Spud Right.

Michael lights the gas stove with a match, plonks the fish into a frying pan and puts the pan on the stove. No gutting, of course, and no oil. The gas goes out. Michael strikes another match. Then another.

Michael Oh no!

Spud What's the matter? Joyce ...

Joyce Yes?

Spud Turn the music down!

Joyce Why, what's the matter?

Michael The gas has run out.

Joyce No!

Michael You shouldn't have boiled all that water. How many kettlefuls was it?

Joyce Lots. Five or six.

Michael Probably wasn't full to start with. There isn't a spare cylinder, is there?

Joyce No.

Michael That's it, then.

Spud No food?

Michael No. 'Less you want to eat it raw.

Spud Urgh!

Joyce We've still got matches. Couldn't we light a fire?

Michael What with? Have *you* seen any wood on this island?

Joyce Not a stick.

Spud [*Holding pan up*] Can't the sun cook it?

Joyce Don't be daft!

Spud I'm starving!

Michael We all are, Spud!

Pause.

How much chocolate have we got left?

Spud [*Leaping to the fridge*] Chocolate! I'd forgotten that! ... Three bars. One each!

Michael Hang on! We ought to think this out first.

Spud Eh?

Michael If we can't cook fish, and there's no other food on the island, three bars of chocolate is all we've got.

Spud It'll do to keep us going.

Michael Yes, but how long for? What if we really are stuck here? If we eat it all now, what will we do tomorrow? And the day after that?

Spud Well ...

Joyce Michael's right. We'll have to ration it. It's the basic necessity of life, food. We can't afford to run out.

Michael No

Spud Can't we eat any of it now, then? Not even half a bar?

Michael Well, O.K., half a bar. Between us.

Spud Between us?

Michael and Joyce nod solemnly.

I won't be able to do anything, you know. I shall just have to lie down, dead still, and conserve all my energy. Here, you divide it ... Bet Robinson Crusoe didn't have to lie dead still and listen to his tummy rumble!

Joyce *[Giving him is piece]* Got the energy to eat that?

Spud Just!

Michael At least it's nice and hard again. Hate chocolate all soft.

Joyce So do I.

They all eat.

Well? What do we do now?

Michael I get back to the radio, I suppose. If we don't get help soon, we're going to be in a real mess.

Joyce What do we do?

Michael Just wait. Conserve your energy like Spud says.

Joyce O.K.

Michael At least saying 'Mayday, mayday, mayday' doesn't use much.

*He returns to the radio. Joyce sits and watches. **Music** under Michael's repeated call. The sun begins to fall in the sky, and the light to fade.*

Michael puts the microphone down, very dispirited.

Joyce Nothing?

Michael Not a whisper.

Joyce Never mind. You've done your best. It's getting quite late, you know. We might as well get some sleep. Don't you think, Spud?

Spud nods.

You can try again in the morning.

Michael What if a ship should go by in the night? We don't want to miss it.

Joyce No ... What if we leave the light on? Shining straight out to sea? There might be a search going on by now. People must know the Seeker's missing. A light shining from an uninhabited island ought to attract attention.

Michael Yes ...

Spud Wouldn't it run the battery down?

Michael Yes, it would. It's a good idea though, isn't it? I know! We can run the motor. That'll keep the battery charged up. If it works like a car, anyway ...

He looks in the engine.

Yes, it does. The engine turns the dynamo, and the dynamo charges up the battery. So ... check it's in neutral ...

He starts the motor, then leaves it ticking over.

That's it. Leave it ticking over like that and we've got our own petrol power station. It'll make all the electricity we need - for the lamp, the radio, the fridge, everything!

Joyce Good. Hand the lamp up to me. I'll put it up there ...

She climbs the rocks and points the lamp out to sea.

Is that it?

Spud Bit further that way ... that's it. It'd be great to wake up in the morning and find a ship waiting to pick us up, wouldn't it?

Michael Yes!

Joyce At least this way we shouldn't miss one. I'm off to bed. Goodnight!

M & S Goodnight, Joyce.

Joyce curls up under the shelter and goes to sleep.

Spud Shall I put the fish in the fridge?

Michael Might as well. Stop it going bad.

Spud I wish we knew for sure what has happened on this island, Michael.

Michael So do I. The quarries running out of iron - that doesn't explain everything, does it? Why are there no trees here, no grass, nothing.

Spud Perhaps it was an earthquake or something.

Michael Mm. Certainly no-one could survive here now.

Spud Let's hope we don't have to!

Michael We won't! We'll contact someone in the morning. Here, have a pillow. Goodnight, Spud.

Spud Goodnight.

Music. *They stretch out on the beach and go to sleep. The sun sinks out of sight. The lamp shines, the motor sounds.*

Enter Norda.

Norda Not gone yet? Settling in nicely! He'll pay for this. He won't bring people here, I won't have it. Nothing shall live on this island. Nothing shall live, nothing shall grow!

She writes something in large letters in the sand.

Now be off with you, be off! Get in your boat and go!

She leaves. Spud stirs.

Spud Who's that? Who's that? Hello?

He looks around, sees nothing.

Michael. Michael!

Michael What?

Spud Did you hear someone? I thought I heard someone.

Michael No. There's no-one to hear, is there?

Spud No, but ...

Michael Go back to sleep, Spud. It's just the motor. Or the sound of the sea. There's no-one on this island except us.

Spud O.K. Goodnight.

Michael Goodnight.

The lamp shines, the motor sounds. Fade.

Build light on Sunny, for:

Song of the Island - 3

Sunny The island in the sun was full of noises,
noises filled the air,
shouts and cries and children's laughter
everywhere!
Noises of the forest and the city,
the city on the island in the sea,
anvils rang and songbirds sang
in every tree!
But now
there's no sound to be heard,
no man, no beast, no bird,
no voice, no melody!

Fire Island,
Fire Island,
Fire Island!
Why did it die?

Scene 3

The sun rises on the beach camp. There is no sound from the motor.

Spud wakes, gets up, stretches, looks out to sea, then pats his stomach ruefully.

Spud I am starving!

He opens the fridge, takes out the fish, makes as if to bite it, draws back with a grimace, then looks up at the sun.

Why can't the sun cook it? It's hot. Come on, Sun - cook my breakfast for me!

Song - Sun

*Sun, sun, why can't we use your heat?
I only want to eat,*

*I only want my breakfast!
You warm the sea and you warm the land,
our feet get hot walking on the sand.
Sun, sun, why can't we use your heat?*

He catches sight of the words in the sand.

Michael! Michael, wake up!

Michael Hello, Spud.

Spud Who did this?

Michael What?

Spud. This. Look!

Michael scrambles up and looks.

Michael 'Go away'. Is this a joke, Spud?

Spud 'Course not!

Michael Then there is someone else on this island?

Spud Looks like it.

Michael Joyce! Joyce!

Joyce Hello.

Michael Look at this.

Joyce What?

Michael *[Pointing]* Look!

Joyce 'Go away'. Who did that?

Michael and Spud shake their heads.

This island isn't deserted?

Michael Can't be.

Joyce Not very friendly, is it?

Spud No.

Joyce Mind you, you wouldn't expect to find friendly people in a place like this.

Michael Who can it be?

Joyce I don't know and I don't care! I think this island stinks!

Spud So do I! The sooner we get off it the better. We'll die of hunger if we're here much longer.

Joyce Where's that radio? I'm going to have a try. Cross your fingers - hard!

M & S Right!

Joyce Hello, this is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday! This is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday! Come in, please!

Michael Wait, Joyce ... Look at the red light. It was much brighter than that yesterday. The battery can't be running down, can it? Hey! Who switched off the power station?

Joyce What?

Michael The motor!

Spud Not me.

Joyce Not me.

Michael Well, I didn't. Then who ... ? Oh no! Look at the petrol gauge - it's empty!

Joyce What?

Michael We've run out of petrol. Switch everything off! The fridge. And the lamp - that's still on, look, just. We must have all the power for the radio. Oh, why didn't I think it would run out?

Spud Fridge off.

Joyce Lamp out.

Michael Right. And don't use the water pump! I'll have another go ... Seeker, this is Seeker calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday! ... That's it. It's gone dead. The battery's flat. We can't call for help.

Spud What do we do?

Joyce I think we should just leave. Like you said yesterday - the last resort. Chuck everything back into the boat and just go!

Michael We've run out of petrol, Joyce! It's my fault. I didn't think it would use much, just ticking over like that.

Joyce No, we're all to blame. Isn't it stupid? Here we are, stuck on a desert island. We've a perfectly good boat with a perfectly good engine, and a perfectly good radio -

Spud And a perfectly good gas stove -

Joyce Yes, and a perfectly good gas stove, and we can't use any of them -

Michael Because we've run out of energy!

Joyce Exactly.

Michael After all we said about running out of food.

Joyce We must be soft in the head.

Spud Couldn't we just row the boat?

Joyce Miles across the sea - with a couple of paddles?

Spud No.

Joyce Well, let's at least have some music on. Cheer the place up a bit ... Oh no, my phone's dead as well! Oh, I hate this island, I hate it! We can't eat, we can't call for help, our phones are useless. We can't even take a risk and put to sea in

our boat. We've got to get help somehow!

Spud But to get help we need the radio.

Michael Yes. And the radio needs electricity ... What if ... ?

Spud What?

Michael What if we could replace the energy somehow?

Spud In the battery?

Michael Yes ... What if there was another way of turning the dynamo to make it charge up the battery?

Spud Turning it by hand, you mean?

Michael Maybe.

Spud That wouldn't work, would it?

Joyce It might. If we all had a go - turning it in relays.

Michael We could try. Let's see if we can get it out of the engine ...

They all lean into the boat

I think we can ... But it'll take two of us. And then we'll have to improvise some kind of handle. Come on, Joyce. You stand by with the tool box, Spud!

Music. *They remove the dynamo and fit a crude handle onto it. Then ...*

Michael Shall I start?

He turns the handle vigorously for a moment, then stops.

Wait. Switch the radio on and see if I make the red light come on.

Spud Right. Go on!

Michael turns again as fast as he can. Spud peers at the red light, shielding it from the sun.

Joyce Is it on?

Spud Just.

Michael *[Stopping]* That's something. If we switch the radio off, then all have a go at this - in relays like you said, Joyce - we should be able to store up some real power in the battery.

Spud *[Switching the radio off]* O.K. ... Off.

Michael It's going to be hard work, though. My arm's feeling it already.

Spud No wonder, we haven't eaten anything! We'll have to, you know - if we're going to do any good. Energy doesn't come out of thin air.

Joyce Spud's right, Michael.

Michael You mean we should eat some more of our chocolate?

Joyce All of it! Risk the lot, that's what I say!

Spud Me too!

Joyce We've got to get off this island, Michael!

Michael O.K. Fetch it out, Spud. Let's turn chocolate into electricity!

Spud opens the fridge and reaches for the chocolate.

Spud Ugh, gone all soft again.

Joyce That's the fridge not working either.

Michael Never mind. Put it all on a plate.

Spud There.

Michael That's it. Ready?

S & J Ready!

Song - Energy

*Take a bar of chocolate -
a bar of lovely chocolate -
eat it off the plate,
feel your body strengthen
to an energetic state!
Turn the iron handle
quick as you can go,
From the food in your mouth
to the muscles in your arm
let the energy flow!*

*Wouldn't it be lovely, wouldn't it be great
wouldn't it be nice - if the battery ate!*

*Take a bar of chocolate -
melted, urgh! -
lick it like a cat.
If you didn't have to work
it would make you fat - fat cat!
Turn the handle quickly
- Quick as I can go!
You're turning it too slow!
- Quick as I can go!
Give your energy
to the battery
through the dynamo!*

Wouldn't it be lovely etc ...

*Running out of chocolate -
what? Oh no! -
out of energy!
Give me the last piece
fast as you can please
and you'll see! - We'll see!*

Hope it's not been wasted
- Hope it's not! -
well, it wasn't very large!
With the energy burning
and the dynamo turning
is the battery charged?
Wouldn't it be lovely etc ...

Michael Oo, my arm's dropping off!

Joyce Mine too!

Spud Mine too!

Michael Still, at least all that energy's gone into the battery.

Joyce Yes, it should be able to work anything now. I feel like I've moved a mountain.

Michael Let's see ...

He switches the radio on.

[Cautiously] It is working.

Joyce Great!

Michael The light isn't all that bright. Still, here goes ... cross fingers! Seeker, this is Seeker, calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday.

Pause.

Seeker, this is Seeker, calling all ships. Mayday, mayday, mayday.

Pause. Michael is just about to call again, when ...

Radio Voice Hello, Seeker. Hello Seeker, this is Hesperus. I am reading you.

All Yippee!

Michael Sshhh!

Radio Voice What is your position, please, what is your position?

Michael Hello! We're stuck. We're marooned without petrol -

Spud And without food -

Michael Yes, and without food on a deserted island, somewhere off the mainland coast.
 We -

Radio Voice Which island, please, which island?

The voice is getting fainter.

Michael We don't know what it's called. We were shipwrecked in the storm, you see.
 We were sailing from -

Radio Voice I am losing you, Seeker, I am losing you ...

Michael What? ... Hello, hello, can you hear me, can you hear me? Come in, Please!

Silence.

Hello! ... It's gone again.

Joyce You've lost contact?

Michael The battery's gone. Dead as a dodo.

Joyce As soon as that?

Spud After all that effort?

Michael Yes.

Joyce A radio doesn't use that much power, does it?

Michael No.

Joyce So all that chocolate and all that work produced only a few seconds worth of electricity?

Michael Yes. If only we'd known where we are! We're in a worse mess than ever now. That chocolate was the last bit of energy we had.

Spud Yes, and I'm still starving!

Joyce Spud! ... Is there no other way we could get energy? No other way to make the dynamo work?

Michael Nothing I can think of. Short of building a wind turbine. And we can't do that!

Joyce We'll have to think of something. We can't live without energy.

Michael But what is there? Here?

Spud Aren't we forgetting something?

Joyce What?

Spud The words in the sand. There *is* someone else on the island, *somewhere*. Whoever it is, they must have some energy, mustn't they? And some food. They'd be dead if they didn't.

Michael That's true. They must have something, even if it's only enough to cook fish with. But they won't give us any, will they?

Spud Why not?

Michael They hate us. They want us to go away.

Spud Yes ...

Joyce We could ask.

Michael We don't know where they are!

Joyce We'll have to look! What else can we do? We can't get off the island without energy, we can't live on it without energy. We've got to try something!

Michael Yes, I ...

Spud These could be their footprints in the sand ... Look, leading off that way!

Joyce Our only hope, Michael.

Michael O.K., let's go and look. But ... I don't understand. Who can it be, living here in this desert?

Joyce *[Shaking her head]* Let's just hope he or she or they are a lot nicer than they seem!

Michael Yes ... Go on, Spud, lead the way!

Music. *Spud, Michael and Joyce leave.*

After a few moments, enter Sunny. He stops, surprised at what he sees. He calls out:

Sunny Hello? Hello?

He sees the fish, picks it up. It stinks. He looks in the pan, puzzled. He examines the gas stove.

Ah, no gas!

He thinks for a moment, looks at his watch, and then up at the sun.

Yes!

He turns decisively and exits the way he had come.

Fade lights on beach scene.

Build lights on Michael, Joyce and Spud for:

Song - Who?

*Who could be living here
in this desert place?
What sort of animal,
beast with a human face?
What will we find, we don't know,
will it be friend, or our foe?
Who could be living here?*

Fade.

Scene 4

A cave. A great heap of coal.

Norda *is hacking at the ground with a lump of rock.*

Norda Out with it, out with it, you devil. I'll heap you up! Heap all of you up and burn you! Send you away - out there, into space. You'll bring no life back here. There'll be no people on this island. No trees, no factories, no people!

Throwing more lumps on the heap, she falters and nearly falls.

So weak. So weak. But keep going 'til it's burnt - every last piece of it! Then you can rest.

She hammers again at the coal. Enter Spud, Joyce and Michael, who stop and stare.

Joyce It's an old woman!

Spud What's she doing?

Michael That's coal. She's digging up coal!

Joyce So that's her energy supply!

Spud We could cook all right with some of that, couldn't we?

Michael Why's she making such a big fire? That can't be just to cook with ... Hello!

Norda What? Who are you?

Michael We -

Norda Is it you with the camp on the beach?

Michael Yes, we -

Norda Why haven't you gone? I told you to go! Can't you read?

Michael We're stuck. We're marooned!

Joyce We were on a ship, you see. It sank in the storm and we got washed up here in a boat.

Spud Then we ran out of petrol and gas - and electricity - so we can't leave -

Joyce And we can't radio for help -

Michael And we can't even cook. We hoped -

Norda You're lying. You won't fool me. He brought you, didn't he? He told you about the coal and brought you here, didn't he?

Joyce What? Who are you talking about?

Norda *[Pointing off]* Him! Him with his soil and his trees and all his stupid dreams!

Joyce We don't -

Norda Tell him from me - he won't bring life back here. This island is dead. Dead! There'll be no new forests here. No farms, no factories, no schools - no people!

Joyce She's crazy.

Michael Look, we don't know what you're talking about. We don't want to be here. We want help to get away.

Spud Yes, and some coal just to cook with, if we can. We haven't eaten properly since the day before yesterday -

Norda Never! Never! I'm burning it - all of it! I'm burning it off!

Joyce What?

Norda I won't leave a scrap of it. Tell your friend I'm going to burn his dreams. Tell him from me. Then go away and leave this island in peace!

She picks up a rock.

Michael She's mad!

Norda *[Taking aim]* GO!

They flee.

Norda

Song - I Hate Life!

*People, I hate people!
I hate living in this world,
I hate life!
Cities! Or green hills!
If it moves, if it grows, if it sounds, if it smells
I can't stand it, I just hate it,
I hate life!*

*Give me stillness! Give me silence!
Give me desert, nothing growing!
But no sunshine, please no sunshine,
Give me darkness, like a graveyard!*

*I hate aeroplanes and motorcars
and stereos and videos and offices and factories
and engines!
I hate farming-land and forest-land
and leisure parks and pleasure-grounds
and animals and birdlife make me mad!
And I hate everything that reminds me of life
in that world full of noise, full of heat,
full of light!*

*Give me stillness! Give me silence!
Give me desert, nothing growing!
I hate people, I hate children!
I want nothing, nothing breathing,
no warm life, I hate life,
I hate YOU!*

Blackout.

Act Two

Scene 5

The beach scene as it was left at the end of Scene 3.

*Enter **Sunny**, with a bag, a large concave mirror (and stand) and a large fish. He calls out:*

Sunny Hello!

He puts the fish in the frying-pan and adds some oil.

Now, where are we going to catch the sun ... ?

He places mirror and frying pan and focuses the sun on the fish.

That's it. Now, sun, let's cook these people some dinner. Let's have a nice hot sizzle ...

After a few moments the fish begins to fry. Sunny sits by the pan and prods the fish with a fork, salts it perhaps, sniffs it.

Mm, good.

Gently, he sings:

Song - Sun 2

*Sun, sun, shining in the sky
let no clouds go by,
here's a fish for frying!
You warm the sea and you warm the land,
our feet get hot walking on the sand,
sun, sun, shining in the sky ...*

*Off, the approach of **Michael, Joyce** and **Spud**.*

Joyce *[Off]* What a horrible old woman. How can we go away, if she won't help us?

Spud *[Off]* Why wouldn't she give us any coal? Enough to cook with wouldn't have hurt her.

Michael *[Off]* We're going to have to eat that fish raw.

Spud *[Off]* What? I bet Robinson Crusoe didn't have to eat -

Joyce *[Off]* Spud, shut up about Robinson -

Entering and seeing Sunny, they stop dead in their tracks.

Sunny Hi!

M & J Who are you?

Sunny My name's Sunny. I live here. I saw you'd run out of gas. Thought you might need something to eat. I brought you a fresh fish.

Spud Yes, we do, but -

Michael Is that cooking?

Sunny Certainly is.

They approach hesitatingly. Spud makes to touch the fish with his finger.

Spud Ow!

Sunny Careful!

Spud What -

Michael It's the sun. You're cooking with the sun!

Sunny Always do.

Michael It's a mirror. It's catching the sun's rays and concentrating them - on the fish!

Sunny That's right.

Michael Like a magnifying glass!

Joyce Does it really work?

Sunny Can't you hear? Can't you smell?

Michael Yes!

Spud Yes, it's the best smell ever! We haven't eaten properly for two days.

Sunny It won't be long. It's cooking nicely.

They all sit and watch.

Tell me - what brought you here?

Spud We're marooned. Our ship sank in the storm. But we were lucky, we got ashore in this boat.

Michael We've been trying to get a ship to pick us up. We've got a radio, you see. A transmitter. But our battery's gone flat, and our petrol's run out, too.

Sunny Tricky. I think you'd better use the wind.

Joyce The boat's not a yacht!

Sunny No - to work your dynamo. Build a small wind turbine. Like an old Cretan windmill.

Michael A windmill! We can build a windmill?

Sunny Yes. I use an old water-wheel myself. But a windmill's quite easy. I'll show you. But we'll eat first.

Spud Yes, please!

Sunny Just a few more minutes ...

Joyce Are you ... Are you the man the old lady was talking about? The old lady in the cave?

Sunny Oh ho, you've met Norda, have you? Yes, that'd be me. There's only the two of us here. You mustn't mind Norda. She's quite harmless.

- Joyce* She didn't look harmless. She threatened to throw a rock at us. We don't understand. What's going on on this island?
- Sunny* You think it's a bit strange - all these ruins and just a mad old lady and a man who cooks with the sun?
- Joyce* Yes, it's spooky.
- Michael* Joyce!
- Sunny* *[Laughing]* Well, now. For a start, do you know where you are?
- They all shake their heads.*
- You're sixty nautical miles off the mainland coast, south south west of Port Cyrus. You're on Fire Island. Three centuries ago this was home for maybe twenty thousand people.
- Joyce* Twenty thousand!
- Sunny* Yes, Fire Island was a small city. A noisy, very dirty, living city! This is what's left.
- Michael* Did they live on iron? By mining iron?
- Spud* We found some - some iron ore, look!
- Sunny* That's right. They mined iron, and they forged it into tools. Ploughs and hand tools for the farm, knives and forks for the kitchen, weapons too. If you'd been here all those years ago out there in the bay you'd have seen maybe twenty or thirty ships, all loading up tools made here. You'd've had to shout to be heard over the din. Sailors coming ashore, fishermen landing their catches, barrows and carts on the quayside, horses, merchants, children, traders shouting - "Knives, buy my knives! Fish, fresh fish!" But above all that, beyond the quay, in the heart of the island, the sounds of the iron-founders hammering out the island's wealth. If you were on the mainland and you looked this way at night, they said you could see the glow from the foundry furnaces. On the darkest nights and with the furnaces at their hottest, they said it seemed the sea itself was on fire!
- Spud* Is that how it got its name?
- Sunny* I guess so.
- Joyce* It sounds wonderful
- S & M* Yes!
- Joyce* But then the iron ran out, did it?
- Sunny* What? Oh no. Not the iron. There's plenty of iron here still.
- Michael* Then why's it like this? Asll these ruins. And no life. No people.
- Sunny* They ran out of energy.
- Spud* What?
- Sunny* Around the city was a forest. To heat those furnaces they cut down the trees and burned them. One day the last tree was gone.

Michael You mean that was the end of the iron industry?

Sunny No fuel, no furnaces.

Michael How could they be so stupid, letting themselves run out of fuel?

Spud Sounds a familiar story to me.

Michael What? Oh yes. We ran out of electricity a bit like that.

Spud And petrol. And gas.

Joyce We thought they'd go on forever.

Sunny They don't!

Joyce No. So what happened then?

Sunny The foundries made their last tools. The ships that came to buy made their last visits.

Joyce What did the people do?

Sunny They left. Most of them. A few stayed behind - and starved.

Spud Starved?

Sunny So they say. You see, it'd been a long time since they'd grown their own food. They'd given over every bit of the island to iron-making. They had to buy food from the mainland - trade it for the tools they made. But with no more tools to trade the food stopped coming. They tried to get food out of their own soil - too much. What with the goats they kept to provide milk they wore the soil out. The goats pulled up the roots, and then streams washed what was left of the soil into the sea. Left it just rock and sand like you see it now.

Michael But there's coal on the island. We saw it. That old woman - Norda - she's digging it up.

Sunny Digging it up?

Joyce Yes, making a great pile of it. She said she's going to burn it off. So you can't have it!

Spud We asked if we could have some, to cook with. But she wouldn't give us any. Just shouted at us.

Sunny shakes his head, wryly.

Michael Didn't they know about the coal? Three hundred years ago?

Sunny No. It just lay in the ground. A great, undiscovered treasure.

Michael And so the island died?

Sunny Yes.

Joyce What a sad story. But ... but what are you doing here - now?

Sunny I want to make it live again.

Michael What?

- Sunny* I've brought soil here, and seeds. I've planted trees. Already there's a small corner of the island that's green again.
- Joyce* Why? Why not just leave it?
- Sunny* Three hundred years ago my family lived on this island. They worked here in the foundries. When the last tree was burnt they escaped, made a new life for themselves on the mainland. But they dreamed that one day they'd come back and Fire Island would live like it had before. They never did come back, but they passed that dream on.
- Michael* And you've come!
- Sunny* Yes.
- Joyce* On your own?
- Sunny* I'm just a start. Others will follow. Farmers, builders, engineers. We must build again. Houses, schools, a hospital ... I'm going to show it can be done. The island can be brought back to life.
- Michael* So you'll dig the coal and start the foundries up again?
- Sunny* *[Laughing]* No, no foundries - and no coal mines either. Only clean energy from now on. We'll leave the coal in the ground, make energy from wind turbines and solar panels. We've no shortage of wind here, and no shortage of sun. It will be a green revolution for a new, green island. New farms, new forests, a self-sustaining economy.
- Joyce* Sounds like a paradise.
- Sunny* As near as we can make it, yes.
- Spud* I don't understand. Why does Norda think you want the coal, why's she trying to burn it all off?
- Sunny* Norda has been hurt very badly. I don't know quite how, but I'm told she used to be very wealthy, and exceedingly generous. But something went wrong and she lost her home and all her money. She asked her friends for help and they all refused her - you know, made one excuse or another. I'm afraid it turned her head. From that moment she trusted no-one, hated everyone. And came here to be completely alone. She sees me as a threat. And so I am. I want the island to live again. She wants it just as it is, a denial of life in every form. I've told her over and over I'm not going to dig for coal, but she believes nothing I say.
- Joyce* How does she live?
- Sunny* Very poorly. I think on raw seafood. She can't last much longer. She'll run out of energy herself.
- Joyce* You mean she'll die?
- Sunny* Yes ... But let's not think about Norda. Dinner's ready!
- Spud* Yippee!
- Sunny* Hold out your plates.

Joyce Spud!

Spud Sorry.

Sunny This is sea trout. Like salmon. Very nice.

Michael It'll be wonderful. Thanks!

Joyce Mm.

Spud I feel better already. I was about to stop working altogether, you know. This is just in time.

Joyce Spud has an appetite like an iron furnace.

Spud I don't eat trees!

They all laugh.

Sunny Eat fish!

Music. *They eat ...*

Michael That was great. I'd forgotten just how hungry I was.

Joyce Me too.

Spud I hadn't!

Sunny Good. So you're feeling better? Full of energy again?

Trio Yes!

Sunny Come on then - let's build you a wind turbine.

Trio Right/Yes! etc

Sunny What are we going to need? A spindle. The steering-wheel from your boat might do. And spokes ... yes, your two paddles - you'll have to lose your shelter - and these rails [*deck rails*] if we can get them off. Sails, of course - have you any pieces of cloth?

Spud We've the ship's signal flags in a bag - I was using it as a pillow.

Sunny They might do very well. Dig them out, Spud. And let's see what we can make with oars, rails and the steering-wheel ...

Music. *They build a small wind turbine - Cretan windmill-style - and mount it in the highest section of old wall. They then connect it to the dynamo.*

Michael Switch the radio on, Spud. See if the red light works.

Spud I think so - yes! It's only dim, but it's on!

Trio Yippee!

Michael Switch it off. We'll have to leave it now, to store up power in the battery. But it'll do it, won't it?

S & J Yes!

Michael Thanks, Sunny. That's brilliant.

S & J Yes, thanks!

Sunny That's O.K. Hope you get help soon.

He picks up his mirror etc.

Spud Are you going?

Sunny Yes. I must fish again now. Or I'll have nothing to cook tomorrow.

Joyce If we do get some help, are you sure you don't want to come back with us?
Back to the mainland?

Sunny That's kind of you. But no thanks. My life is here. If you want to see my home
and the trees I'm growing, I'm that way - two miles. I'll be back there by dusk.
Good luck!

Joyce Thank you.

Michael Yes, thanks for everything.

Sunny waves and exits. Spud follows him to watch him go.

What a strange man.

Joyce I like his dream. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see the island really alive again?

Michael I think it feels different already. The turbine giving us power, food in our
stomachs. We should just leave the battery charging and try the radio
again tomorrow.

Joyce O.K.

Michael So I'm just going to lie down and soak up the sun ... Is something the matter?

Joyce Just thinking about Norda. Sunny says she might die, she might starve. She may
be mad, but we've made it worse, haven't we? Just being here, I mean.

Michael Maybe. Hardly our fault though, is it?

Joyce No.

Spud *[On the high rocks]* Hey, where are the binoculars?

Michael Why?

Spud Fire. I think I can see a fire. Where Norda's cave is.

Michael climbs up beside him and takes the binoculars.

It's definitely a fire. She must be burning that coal.

Joyce joins them and takes a look, too.

Joyce Is there nothing we can do?

Spud How d'you mean?

Joyce She's a mad, unhappy old lady. She's digging coal out of the ground and
burning it - wasting it - all to no purpose. And if Sunny's right, she hasn't eaten
properly since she came here. We're making it worse, Spud!

Spud So?

Joyce I think we should go and speak to her again. See if we can make her see sense.

Spud Not much hope of that.

Joyce Maybe. But can't we try? Michael?

Michael thinks for a moment.

Michael I think Joyce is right. We've nothing to lose. And we *might* be able to persuade her Sunny means no harm. And nor do we.

Spud Does it ... does it need all three of us?

Joyce Why, what's the matter? You're not scared of her, are you?

Spud No! I've got a stomach ache.

Joyce You're a pig, Spud - you ate too fast!

Spud I was starving!

Joyce Well, it serves you right. Anyway, stay here if you want and make sure our windmill doesn't fall to bits. You can wash up, too! Come on, Michael!

Joyce and Michael exit.

Spud How can I wash up? No hot water, is there?

He sits on the sand.

What I need is a rest. *[Stretching out]* Fire Island, you're not such a bad place, after all.

Music. *He sleeps. After a while Norda enters.*

Norda What, not here to stay? Liars! All liars! I'll show them. We'll have no windmills here!

Spud *[Waking]* Hello?

Norda Oh, left the young one on guard, have they?

Spud What do you mean?

Norda You won't stop me, boy! You're making no energy on this island!

She makes a dash for the turbine. Spud gets there first.

Spud Stop!

Norda Out of my way!

Spud I won't. I won't let you touch it! I may be young, but I'm strong, I'm warning you!

Norda You ... ! Oh very well. Then I'll go to the heart of it. Him and his trees - I'll finish them. Put paid to his stupid dream once and for all!

She runs off.

Spud What shall I do? Sunny's gone fishing. She'll tear his place apart ... Joyce! Michael!

Urgent Music. Spud runs off.

Fade.

Scene 6

Norda's Cave. The heap of coal has been reduced to smouldering ash.

*Enter **Joyce** and **Michael**, warily.*

Joyce Can you see her?

Michael No.

Joyce Look at it - just a pile of ash!

Michael *[Calling]* Norda! ... Norda!

Joyce Norda!

Michael Norda! ... Where can she be? 'Spose she may have gone fishing. Shall we look for her along the shore? We'd better stick together.

Joyce OK.

Michael This way then?

Spud *[Off]* Joyce! Michael!

Joyce! Spud? ... Here! This way, Spud!

*Enter **Spud**, panting.*

Spud We've got to help Sunny. Norda - she's gone crazy! She tried to pull our windmill down -

Michael What?

Spud I stopped her! But she said something about going right to the heart of it and she went off to Sunny's place. Said she'd put paid to his dream once and for all!

Joyce You're sure - that's where she was going?

Spud That's what she said. And she wasn't heading back here.

Michael *[To Joyce]* He won't let her do anything, will he?

Spud He won't be there. He went off to fish! Said he wouldn't be home until dusk. She was really angry. She'll tear the place apart.

Joyce We must stop her.

Michael Yes, we must! Well done, Spud! Come on!

They run off.

Scene 7

Sunny's Plantation. The brilliant green of a few slender young trees dominates the scene. There is a small water-wheel, part of an old mineworking, turning. Against a wall, great bags of soil and a smaller one of seeds.

The sun is low.

Music. Enter **Norda**.

Norda Fool! Fool! Trying to make this island grow again. Never! What's this ... seeds? Him and his trees! Out with you ... there, into the sand, the barren sand. You'll never grow there! And this? ... Soil? Ugh! What to do with you? ... Into the sea with you ...

Painfully she drags a soil sack towards the sea. She has to pause.

So weak, so weak ... But not much further ...

*With a huge effort she has moved the sack another metre or so when **Michael, Joyce and Spud** enter.*

Michael Hey!

Norda *[Backing off]* What are you doing here? Go away!

Joyce What are we doing - what are you doing?

Michael What's this? ... It's soil! Soil for Sunny's trees. Where are you taking it?

Norda I'm throwing it in the sea where it belongs.

She goes for another sack, but Joyce beats her to it.

Joyce Oh no, you're not!

A momentary stand-off.

You interfering brats! I'll finish this place. I'll finish it now!

Music. *Norda goes on the rampage, pulling up the trees. The trio try to stop her and she turns to the water-wheel. Trying to stop it turning, she screams, topples backwards onto the ground and lies still. Silence. The trio are momentarily transfixed, then bend over her.*

Spud Is she all right?

Joyce Norda! Norda! ... Look, her hand is bleeding ...

*Enter **Sunny**, carrying some fish.*

Sunny What's happened?

Joyce Norda. She was going mad - pulling up your trees, trying to wreck your water-wheel. Then she just fell down. And she's hurt her hand.

Sunny Norda ... Norda ...

He checks her breathing, feels her pulse.

She's breathing, but her pulse is weak. Goodness knows when she last had any food. The temperature's dropping now, we must keep her warm, and bandage this hand. Spud, fetch some of those sacks, will you? Somehow, when she wakes, we'll have to make her eat, or she won't have a chance.

He cleans and bandages the hand.

Joyce Could we cook her a fish broth?

Sunny In the morning, when the sun is up. Then we must get her to the mainland. To hospital. Does your radio work yet?

Michael Haven't tried it. Thought we'd wait 'til the morning.

Sunny Could you bring it here then? We could connect it up to my own battery. The water-wheel keeps it fully charged.

Michael Yes, of course. Come on, Spud. Let's both go.

Spud O.K.!

Michael and Spud run off. Sunny and Joyce look at Norda.

Joyce Will we save her?

Sunny That's up to her. If we can persuade her to eat ... At least she's resting now. You must be pretty tired yourself. I'll watch her. You get some sleep.

Music. *Joyce lies down and sleeps. Sunny pours himself a mug of water and sits by Norda. The lights slowly fade into night.*

Scene 8

The same. The sun is well up. Michael is sitting at the radio, quietly calling for help. Sunny is stirring a pan of broth under the mirror. Joyce watches. Spud is asleep. Sunny spoons some broth into a bowl.

Sunny Norda ... Norda, can you hear me?

Michael stops radioing and watches.

Food for you, Norda. A broth to make you strong again.

Norda No, no ... no food. I can't ...

Sunny You must eat. You've starved yourself. Here, just a mouthful

He puts the spoon to her mouth. A pause, then she takes it. The rest smile.

Music *as Sunny continues feeding Norda. After a few moments Michael returns to his radio call, and Joyce begins to sing softly ...*

Joyce Once upon a time there was an island,
island in the sun
with animals and plants and trees
and birds that sung.
Once upon a time there was a city,
a city on the island in the sea,
twenty thousand people living happily!
And they worked to make their island thrive
so their life there could survive
in prosperity ...

Norda has eaten and fallen asleep again. Sunny gives bowls of broth to Michael and Joyce and sits next to Joyce.

Sunny She's sleeping again now. I think she's going to be O.K.

- Joyce Will she still want to tear up all your trees?
- Sunny We'll have to wait and see.
- Pause.*
- Joyce Sunny ... cooking with the sun ... the sun must be very hot, mustn't it?
- Sunny Very, very hot.
- Joyce Is it on fire?
- Sunny Not really. The sun is a great nuclear reactor.
- Joyce Like the ones we build on the mainland?
- Sunny No. The man-made ones make their energy by splitting apart the tiniest atoms of things. 'Nuclear fission', we call it. The sun does it by putting atoms together. That's called 'nuclear fusion'. We're trying to do it ourselves, here on earth.
- Joyce To make little suns?
- Sunny I suppose so. It would be another great source of energy.
- Joyce Will we do it?
- Sunny I don't know. I believe it's really very difficult. Maybe.
- Joyce takes a mouthful of broth.*
- Joyce What would happen if the sun stopped? Stopped doing that fusion - went cold? I mean, what would happen to us?
- Sunny The earth would die. Like Fire Island did all those years ago. The sun shines on the earth, giving us warmth and light, and the plants energy to grow. The animals and the people eat the plants. It's a great chain of energy. The sun is the source. We'd be nowhere without it.
- Joyce We'd have coal and oil and gas, though.
- Sunny Not enough for a dark, never-ending winter. Yes, they're sunlight in a way - stored sunlight. Stored in the earth and under the sea. Living things, fed by the sun millions of years ago, then locked into the dark of the earth - when the surface of the earth moved and changed its shape. But they couldn't replace the living sun ... I think she's awake ... yes ... Hello, Norda.
- Norda Where am I? *[Looking around]* Oh ...
- Sunny How are you feeling?
- At first she says nothing. Then:*
- Norda I pulled up your trees, Sunny. I threw your seeds into the sand.
- Sunny It doesn't matter. The trees can be planted again. And a bit of sand with the seeds won't do any harm.
- Norda Who are these young people? Did you bring them here?
- Sunny No. Their ship was wrecked in the storm. They were very lucky to survive in

their little boat. But see, Michael is radioing for help. To get back to the mainland.

Norda So they told me the truth?

Joyce Yes, we did. Why didn't you believe us?

Sunny Joyce ... When Michael finds help, Norda, you must go back with them. This island is killing you. Last night you had a very narrow escape.

Norda No. No, Sunny. You mustn't send me away!

Sunny No-one can live on hatred alone, Norda. You need care, proper food, somewhere to be warm at night. Not everyone is against you, you know.

Norda I know. You've been very kind - all of you. But I stay on the island. Perhaps ... perhaps I could help you, Sunny? *[Her first smile]* I'm quite good at digging coal.

Sunny *[Laughing]* So I'm told! But the coal stays in the ground. Here we use only clean energy. The sun and the wind and the water.

Norda Is that all?

Sunny That is all.

Norda I've got everything wrong, haven't I?

Sunny Well ...

Michael Hello, hello ... Quiet, everyone. I've found someone!

*This wakes Spud. We hear a **Radio Voice**, possibly Australian.*

Radio V Reading, you, Seeker. This is Kestrel. Give me your position.

Michael Er ... *[looking to Sunny for confirmation]* about 60 miles south west of -

Sunny South south west ...

Michael No, sorry - about 60 miles south south west of Port Cyrus. We're on Fire Island. Our ship went down in the storm. We're marooned. And we have a sick lady who needs to go to hospital.

Norda No, no, no ...

Radio V I understand, Seeker. I will check your position. Keep tuned, please. Over.

Michael Thank you ... We've got help!

A cheer from Spud.

Sunny That's great. You can go home. And Norda can go to hospital and get better.

Norda Sunny, no. I know how wrong I've been. It's like I've woken from a nightmare. I like what you are trying to do, and I want to help you with it. Some more of your broth and some rest and I'll be fine. Please let me stay. I can catch crabs and find mussels - sometimes even a oyster! And I would love to plant trees for you.

Sunny It's more than planting a few trees, Norda. For the island to really live again

people must come back and build. Homes and schools, farms, factories even. And we'll need more than a centuries-old water-wheel to power us. There'll be huge wind turbines and great fields of solar panels. Not a quiet place, not just a green place, but Fire Island more as it used to be, burning with industry and life. You do understand?

Norda Yes, I do. That's what I want.

Sunny Well ...

Norda I'm staying, Sunny.

Sunny O.K. Then we'll get you well, and work together.

Norda Yes!

Sunny *[To the trio]* Looks like you've lost your patient.

Joyce *[Quietly]* Yes ...

Sunny You'd better all go back to your camp and get your things together - pack them all back in the boat. If it can stop for you that ship will want you to be ready.

The trio whisper to each other.

Hey, what are you waiting for? You've got things to do!

Joyce We're not going, Sunny.

Sunny What?

Spud No, we're not.

Michael We're staying here, too.

Joyce If we can help, we mean.

Sunny But -

Radio V Hello Seeker, hello Seeker, come in, please. This is Kestrel.

Pause.

Seeker, can you read me? Over.

Michael Hello, Kestrel. Yes, we read you. Over.

Radio V The coastguard has been searching for you. Your ship survived the storm and reported you lost. The Captain will be very relieved to hear he didn't make a terrible mistake putting you in that boat.

Michael That's wonderful!

Radio V We are fifteen miles south west of you. We can reach you in an hour and a half and pick you up. Please state your exact position on the island. Over.

Michael Er ...

Joyce Go on, Michael - tell him. Tell him we're staying.

Radio V Come in, Please, Seeker. I must have your precise position on the island. Over.

Michael Hello, Kestrel. This is Seeker. We are very grateful, but we no longer need help.

We are staying on the island. Repeat, we are staying on the island. Over.

Radio V Do I read you correctly, Seeker? On my chart Fire Island is uninhabited. Looks about as homely as the Sahara Desert.

Spud grabs the microphone.

Spud Not any longer, Kestrel. Your chart is out of date. We've made friends here and we're staying. We're going to make Fire Island live again! Over.

Radio V O.K. Seeker, I read you. Good luck! Over and out.

The radio goes dead.

Joyce So, it's five of us now. Is that all right, Sunny?

Teasingly, he makes them wait for an answer.

Sunny Yes. A new beginning. Hey, Norda?

Norda It is. We'll work together, all of us. Farm together, build together. We'll make this island live like it used to live. Won't we?

All Yes!/We will!

Sunny Then let's get going. Not you, Norda, not yet. Enforced rest - that's an order! Michael and Spud, can you rescue the seeds from the sand? Just scoop them up, we'll sift the sand out later. Joyce, give me a hand replanting these trees. Then we'll give them a good water, before we all go fishing again. OK?

M,J & S OK!

Music. *They set to work, and as they do Norda sings:*

Song of the Island - 4

Norda Once upon a time there was an island,
island in the sun
with animals and plants and trees
and birds that sung.
Once upon a time there was a city,
a city on the island in the sea,
twenty thousand people living happily!
And they worked to make their island thrive
so their life there could survive
in prosperity!

Fire Island,
Fire Island,
Fire Island,
You'll never die!

Slow fade.

The End.

The Score

Song of the Island 1&4

Song of the Island 2

Song of the Island 3

Sun

Energy

Who?

I Hate Life!

(and a 'Windmill Song' - unused in production)

Song Of The Island

Sunny

Once up-on a time there was an is - land,

is - land in the sun with a - ni - mals and plants and trees and birds

that sung — Once up-on a time there was a ci - ty, a

ci - ty on the is - land in the sea — twen - ty thou - sand peo - ple li - ving hap

pi - ly! — And they worked to make their is - land thrive

21

so their life there could sur- vive— in pros- per - i - ty—

sub p

26

Fire Is - land— Fire Is - land—

f *molto* *sfz* *8vb*

31

Fire Is - land, Why did it die?...

sfz *subito p* *calando.....* *ppp*

8vb

Last rendition of the song sung at the end by Norda from bar 32

36

You'll ne - ver die

rit *calando.....* *ppp*

Song Of The Island (2)

Sunny

The is-land in the sun was full of co-

4

- lours co-lours that now have gone with fields of gold and roofs

8

of red and clothes that shone! co-lours of the for-est and the

12

9

ci-ty the ci-ty on the is-land in the sea, greens and blues and yel

16

low flame_ in har - mo ny_ But now_ in this emp

20

ty des - ert_ land_ the col-our of_ the sand_ is

24

all there is to see! Fire Is - land_

29

Fire_ Is - land_ Fire_ Is - land,

32

Why did it die?...

(8)-----

Song Of The Island (3)

Sunny

The is-land in the sun was full of noi - ses

noi - ses filled the air shouts and cries and chil - dren's laugh - ter ev'-

- r'y - where! Nois - es of the for - est and the ci - ty, a

ci - ty on the is - land in the sea an - vils rang and song - birds sang in e -

v'ry tree! But now there's no sound to be heard,

21

no man, no beast, no bird, no voice no me-lo-dy

sub p

26

Fire Is - land

f *molto* *sfz*

31

Fire Is - land, Why did it die?

sfz *subito p* *calando...* *ppp*

8vb

Sun

♩ = 100

Spud

♩ = 100 *8^{va}*

p gently pulsing wash.....

Ped.

5

Sun, sun, why can't we use your heat_____

mf

Ped.

9

I on-ly want to eat_____ I on-ly want my break - fast

gentle calypso

14

You warm the sea and you warm the land, our feet get hot walk-ing on the sand_

f

18

Musical score for measures 18-20. The vocal line (treble clef) contains the lyrics: "Sun, sun, why can't we use your heat". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a complex texture with eighth-note runs in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *pp* (pianissimo). A *Red.* (Reduction) line is shown below the piano part.

21

Musical score for measures 21-24. The vocal line (treble clef) is silent. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) continues with a complex texture, featuring a *calando* (diminuendo) marking. Dynamic markings include *pp* (pianissimo). A *Red.* (Reduction) line is shown below the piano part.

Energy

♩ = 140

sprightly reggae (till slowing at each verse end)

♩ = 140

5

Joyce

Spud

Michael

(dreamily) a bar of love-ly choc' late

take a bar of choc' late eat it off the plate feel your bo - dy

OOH (munch munch)

10

J

S

M

MMM (munch munch) YUM YUM (turning) Al - right!

streng-then to an en-er-ge-tic state (as in "hurry up!") turn the woo-den han-dle

turn the woo-den han-dle

15

J

S

M

From the food in your mouth to the musc-les in your arm, let the

quick as you can go From the food in your mouth to the musc-les in your arm, let the

quick as you can go From the food in your mouth to the musc-les in your arm, let the

19

♩ = 123 *Hymn like*

J

S

M

en-er-gy flow!— Would-n't it be love - ly,

en-er-gy flow!—

en-er-gy flow!— *decelerando* ♩ = 123

25

primo tempo

J

S

M

would-n't it be great? would -n't it be nice if the bat-ter - y ate! (to Michael)

primo tempo

31

J

S

M

now YOUR turn Take a bar of choc' late

mel - ted! URGH!

36

J

S

M

lick it like a cat! If you did-n't have to work it would make you fat! fat cat!

(tittering)
lick it like a cat! he he he he! fat cat!

42

J

S

M

turn the han-dle quick - ly You're turn-ing it too slow! give your

turn the han-dle quick - ly You're turn-ing it too slow give your

Quick as i can go! as quick as i can go!

46

J e - ner - gy to the bat - ter - y through the dy - na - mo!

S e - ner - gy to the bat - ter - y through the dy - na - mo! _____

M

decelerando

51 $\text{♩} = 123$ *Hymn like*

J Would-n't it be love - ly, would-n't it be great? would-n't it be nice if the

S

M would-n't it be love - ly, would-n't it be great? would-n't it be nice if the

$\text{♩} = 123$

58 *primo tempo*

J bat - ter - y ate!

S (excitedly) Choc - 'late? (less hopefully) choc - 'late?

M bat - ter - y ate! *primo tempo*

63

J run-ning out of choc-'late out of en-er - gy

S WHAT? OH NO! give me the last piece

M run-ning out of choc-'late out of en-er - gy

68

J we'll see! hope it's not been was- ted!

S fast as you can please and you'll see! hope it's not....!.. Well it

M we'll see! hope it's not been was- ted!

73

J with the en-er-gy bum-ing and the dy-na-mo turn-ing is the batt -'ry charged?

S was- n't ve-ry large!— with the en-er-gy bur-ning and the dy-na mo turn-ing is the batt -'ry charged?

M with the en-er-gy bur-ning and the dy-na mo turn ing is the batt -'ry charged?

78 $\text{♩} = 123$ *Maestoso*

J

S

M

decelerando $\text{♩} = 123$ would - n't it be love - ly,

Piano TACET

83

J

would - n't it be great? would - n't it be nice *rall* if the bat - ter - y ate!

S

would - n't it be great? would - n't it be nice *rall* if the bat - ter - y ate

M

would - n't it be great? would - n't it be nice *rall* if the bat - ter - ry ate!

Who?

Michael
Joyce,
Spud

$\text{♩} = 98$

mysterioso

Who could be li-ving here...

5

in this des-ert place? What sort of an-i - mal...

10

beast with a hu-man face? Joyce
Spud/Michael What will we find? we don't
Spud/Michael

15

knöw will it be friend or our foe?

20

Who could be li-ving here?

8^{va}

pp

Ped.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system (measures 15-19) includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a whole note 'knöw' in measure 15, followed by a series of eighth notes in measures 16-19. The piano accompaniment features a repeating eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a sustained bass line in the left hand. The second system (measures 20-24) continues the vocal line with the lyrics 'Who could be li-ving here?'. The piano accompaniment continues with the same pattern. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 20. Pedal points are indicated at the beginning and end of the piece.

I Hate Life!

$\text{♩} = 160$

Norda

quite violent, rocky.

Piano

Peo - ple!

5

I hate peo - ple! I hate liv-ing in this world

Pno.

9

I hate life! Cit - ies!

Pno.

13

and green hills! if it moves or if it grows

Pno.

17

— if it sounds or if it smells... I can't stand it, I just

Pno.

21

hate it I hate life! Give me still - ness! give me

Pno.

8^{vb}.....

26

Si - lence! give me de - sert no-thing grow - ing! but no

Pno.

8^{vb}.....

32

sun - shine... please, no sun - shine... give me dark - ness... like a grave...

cresc.....

p

Pno.

p sustained but insistent.....

39 *cresc.....* *f*

yard! I hate ae-ro-planes and mo- tor cars and

Pno.

43

ste - re - os and vi - de - os and off - i - ces and fac - tor - ies and en - gines! I hate

Pno.

46

far-ming land and fo-rest land and lei-sure parks and plea-sure grounds and a - ni - mals and bird life make me

Pno.

49

mad! And_ I hate e - v'ry - thing that_ re - minds me_ of

Pno.

53

life in a world full of heat full of noise full of

Pno.

57

light! Give me still - ness! give me si - lence! give me de - sert,

Pno.

63

no-thing grow - ing! I hate peo - ple 'spec - ially chil - dren!

Pno.

69

I want no - thing, no-thing brea - thing no warm

Pno.

75 *p* *mp* *fff*

life i hate life I hate YOU!

Pno. *fff*

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the voice, written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains the lyrics "life i hate life I hate YOU!". The dynamics are marked as *p* (piano) for the first two measures, *mp* (mezzo-piano) for the next two measures, and *fff* (fortissimo) for the final measure. The bottom staff is for the piano (Pno.), written in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature. It features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The piano part also has a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*fff*) climax at the end of the phrase.

Windmill Song

 $\text{♩} = 120$

Joyce

Boys



5

Buil - ding a wind - mill_____ make it spin!
Catch - ing the pow - er_____ of the wind!

Buil - ding a wind - mill_____ make it spin!
Catch - ing the pow - er_____ of the wind!



10

Wind from the South West____

Wind from the South West____



15

Let it blow!

20

Mak - ing the sails turn the dy - na - mo

25

28