

1st Finalist XI Madrid Sur Playwriting Award 2011, Spain

Three Five-dog Nights

Play for five actors

by Gustavo Ott ©May, 2010
Translated by Heather L. McKay

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Three Five-Dog Nights (“*Tres noches para cinco Perros*”) premiered February 10th, 2012, on the Main Stage of Teatro San Martín de Caracas, Venezuela, with direction by Luis Domingo González and the following cast:

LUDWIG PINEDA.....Barry Cox
DAVID VILLEGAS.....Ismael Martínez
LUIS DOMINGO GONZÁLEZ.....Wyatt Nelson
JOSÉ GREGORIO MARTÍNEZ.....Joe Brown
WILLIAM ESCALANTE.....Doug Waxman

Set Design: Rubén León.
Lighting: Gerónimo Reyes.
Asistant Lighting: Rene del Farra.
Music: Alfonso Ramírez.
Wardrobe: Manuel González.
Video: Francisco González.
Asistant Director: Valentina Garrido.
General Producer: David Villegas

*“Fix the problem,
fix the blame.”*
Popular –
From “Fix the problem,
not the blame.”

*“I’ve said amazement
where others simply say custom”*
Borges

Characters

BARRY COX
ISMAEL MARTÍNEZ
WYATT NELSON
JOE BROWN
DOUG WAXMAN

Set:

Everything takes place April 18-20, 2010, on an 18,000-ton oilrig forty-seven miles off the Louisiana coast, in the Gulf of Mexico.

On stage chains, pipes and iron collars on the floor. On both sides of the set and toward the audience, two bars or railings, like a balcony, mark the edge of the Platform.

1st Night

Offshore oilrig. Deck.

Sound of the drill, continuous.

On stage, Barney, beside him, Ismael and Joe. Center stage, a body covered by a white sheet.

JOE: How about we throw him overboard, like on a boat?

BARNEY: This ain't a fuckin' boat.

ISMAEL: A few words and in he go. That's it.

JOE: And let the fish eat him.

ISMAEL: At least is more dignified than worms

BARNEY: (TO ISMAEL) You rather get eaten by a fish?

ISMAEL: Maybe a shark.

JOE: Do sharks eat dead meat?

BARNEY: A shark'll eat anything. I've seen phones in sharks' bellies.

JOE: I saw scrap off a motorcycle inside a hammerhead once.

BARNEY: Yeah? One time I seen one them mirrored disco balls come outta the belly of a White Shark we hooked right here in the Gulf.

JOE: A disco ball in a shark's belly!

BARNEY: Biggest White Shark you ever saw. And not a single one of those little mirrors was broke.

JOE: No fucking way!

BARNEY: Am I telling the truth, Ismael?

ISMAEL: Absolutely, Barney.

BARNEY: I pulled it outta him with my own hands. It was all slimy, sure, but not a scratch on it.

JOE: And did it work?

BARNEY: Like brand new. We hung it up right over there. But then the shark woke up and started dancing Disco...

(ISMAEL MAKES THE MUSIC AND BARNEY DANCES LIKE A RESUSITATED WHITE SHARK WITH HIS BELLY HANGING OUT)

JOE: You're yankin' my chain!

ISMAEL: Joe, you been here a year and you still believe a word Barney say?

BARNEY: You don't believe me? Really. You wanna see the ball?

JOE: You're fucking with me!

BARNEY: No, seriously. It's in my cabin.

JOE: Don't fuck with me!

BARNEY: (SERIOUS) Ismael: Do I or do I not have the ball in my cabin?

ISMAEL: (SERIOUS) Really. He do.

BARNEY: And not just one ball, but two. Two balls hanging from a, Shark!

(HE GRABS HIMSELF AND CHASES JOE. THEY LAUGH. JOE BUMPS INTO THE BODY)

JOE: So? Do we throw him overboard or not?

BARNEY: Listen, kid, if this rig was a fuckin' boat, I could give the order myself. But I'm no captain; I'm in charge, but I'm not the boss.

JOE: (LOOKING AT THE BODY) Well, just so it's clear, if I ended up dying here, I'd want you to toss me overboard. Like a sailor!

BARNEY: No can do. To be a sailor you gotta know about the sea, man.

JOE: I know about the sea.

BARNEY: Don't shit me, Joe. The only thing you California boys know about water is it's wet. And y'all don't even know why. The truth is none of us here know about the sea. And there's no way we can be sailors if we don't understand that fuckin' ocean out there. (GOES OVER TO JOE AND THE BODY) A ship sails and the men who sail the ship are

sailors and it's their sacred right to return to the sea when they leave this life. But not our friend Wyatt here. Dying on a rig's different. A rig's like an iceberg run aground in warm waters. We're a stationary iceberg, an iceberg shaped like a temple, here to separate two constellations; one above and one below.

(JOES LOOKS AT ISMAEL AS IF ASKING: WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?)

ISMAEL: He mean that here a helicopter come to pick up the dead, they take them to New Orleans and that's it. And us: we go on drilling for oil.

BARNEY: That's it.

JOE: But they haven't come anyway.

BARNEY: Where are those leeches?

JOE: Should we put him inside so the humidity doesn't fuck him up?

ISMAEL: Orders is not to move him, Joe.

JOE: Because of the investigation?

BARNEY: What the hell they gonna investigate?! Wyatt just keeled over, anyone who saw it can tell 'em that. All 120 of us working on this rig saw him spin around, put his hand to his chest and fall from the derrick. That's it. He was there and then he fell. He didn't even make a sound. Just Boom! when he hit the floor. He went fast. His heart.

JOE: But he was so young.

BARNEY: So what, now heart attacks ask for your ID first before they kick your ass? There's nothing to investigate, man. That's it. An accident's an accident.

ISMAEL: (SHOWS HIS FINGERS) Like when I cut off my fingers, they don[t] investigate that neither.

BARNEY: That's 'cause they found your fingers, alive and kicking, holed up in your then boyfriend's ass. And they stapled 'em back on. Crooked, I'll grant you, but still good enough to drill up your ass, the way you like.

ISMAEL: Yeah, and I tell them it was Matahari that do it. Man you think I was talking Chinese.

JOE: Matahari?

ISMAEL: (POINTS TO A HANGING CHAIN) That is what we call that chain, ‘cause she is always killing guys on this rig.

BARNEY: Dry your tears, Jalapeño, they took you to the hospital and paid some big black mother to dress up like a nurse and give it to you up the butt. And you said it was sticky but gooood. I heard you.

ISMAEL: I tell them: the chains need maintenance...

BARNEY: And you were calling him for a month: “Baby? Don’t you love me anymore? Why don’t you answer when I call?”

ISMAEL: We don[’t] got enough steel mesh gloves, Barney.

BARNEY: “Baby, here’s a picture of me in a steel mesh g-string.”

ISMAEL: ...The oil we using is gone bad, it get thick, the chains catch and then, if the drill hit something, they come flying off, whoosh! (GESTURES SOMEONE BEING DECAPITATED) They cut off your fingers.

JOE: (SHOWS HIS EAR) Or an ear.

BARNEY: Give me a fuckin’ break with your ear, it’s still there.

JOE: But I almost lost it.

BARNEY: Well, if you do lose it, put it under your pillow and the Company Fairy will leave you a box of Q-tips.

JOE: (SHOWS A SCAR ON HIS BACK) And a scar.

BARNEY: Are you gonna keep on sniveling over a little drill lashing? Give it a fucking rest, Joe! Lashes are our trademark. We’ve all got ‘em. If you’re gonna work an offshore rig, pumping 40,000 barrels of oil and 136,000 cubic feet of gas every 24 hours, then, Miss San Diego, you may as well get used to getting spanked by the main drill. As long as Matahari don’t smack you across the face, those scars come with the paycheck and carry the seal of approval of BP: which stands for...

ISMAEL and

BARNEY: Bullshit Petroleum!

ISMAEL: (SHOWING HIS BACK) Besides, we all got a scar, Joe.

BARNEY: War wounds!

(BARNEY AND THE OTHERS PREPARE TO SHOW OFF THEIR SCAR, LIKE A GAME THEY ALWAYS PLAY. AT THE SAME TIME WE SEE DIZZYING FLOW OF PROJECTED IMAGES OF INJURIES FROM INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS: EYES, HANDS, LEGS, ETC., MISSING TEETH. BARNEY TAKES THE LEAD AND OPENS HIS SHIRT. PART OF HIS TORSO IS BURNED)

BARNEY: Boiling oil (SHOWS AN EYE) Black rain. Oil in one eye, damn near blinded me. (SHOWS A LEG) Scar number 1: a chain gone crazy. Scar 2: unsecured chain. Scar 3: Wyatt, lying stiff over there, gets in my way and I damn near fall overboard. (SHOWS HIS FEET) Scar number four: a pipe Izzy here dropped...

ISMAEL: It slip!

BARNEY: Teeth...

ISMAEL: Oh shit!

JOE: No, please, not the teeth!

ISMAEL: Barney, Jesus Christ crucified, don[’t] start with the teeth!

JOE: Skip the teeth. Your teeth are just fine.

ISMAEL: No teeth. Talking about teeth at sea bring bad luck. Teeth, no.

BARNEY: Tooth one: (THE OTHERS GROAN) Engine belt. Thanks to Ismael Tortilla Martinez.

ISMAEL: Present.

BARNEY: Tooth two: loose chain. Thank you Wyatt.

ISMAEL: (POINTS TO THE BODY) Present.

JOE: Absent.

ISMAEL: Here in body, I mean.

JOE: Oh, yeah.

BARNEY: Tooth three and tooth four:

ISMAEL and

JOE: (TRAINED) The Fray with McKay!

BARNEY: Anyone else got scars they wanna share?

(THE OTHER TWO SHAKE THEIR HEADS, GIVING UP. JOE UNCOVERS THE BODY)

ISMAEL: When it come to counting injuries, boss, no one can beat you.

BARNEY: That’s how I like it, suck up.

ISMAEL: One day you gonna call me by my name? I’m Ismael.

BARNEY: Or fag.

ISMAEL: (DEFEATED) What can I do? You got to follow your ass.
(NOTICES JOE) Leave the dead guy alone!

BARNEY: (TO JOE, ANGRY) And cover him up! A little respect! That man worked here for five years. He was a specialist. He wasn’t my friend, but we got along. Wyatt was a guy who knew how to bust his hump and earn his keep. He worked hard as anyone. He deserves to be treated with decency. Besides, the inspectors should be here any minute.

(JOE COVERS WYATT’S BODY)

ISMAEL: (TO BARNEY) Don[’t] forget to tell them we need more gloves.

BARNEY: Drop it, Ismael. The company’s on a savings kick. The crisis...

ISMAEL: They even save on toilet paper in this dump!

JOE: By the way, we’re out.

BARNEY: That’s what your hand’s for, wiping.

ISMAEL: Is not like we make books or lettuce! This is oil!

JOE: Barney; just to be safe. If they ask, what do we say?

BARNEY: That Wyatt’s dead.

JOE: That’s all?

BARNEY: Is he coming back?

JOE: I was talking about the smell.

BARNEY: What smell?

JOE: The smell. You know...

BARNEY: I didn't smell any smell.

JOE: Well we did.

BARNEY: You smelled a smell?

ISMAEL: Yes, Barney Cox. Of course I smell it and so do you.

BARNEY: Fine, say whatever you want. I didn't smell a thing.

JOE: They better check that gas leak, boss.

BARNEY: From a smell you jump straight to a gas leak?

ISMAEL: It happen, Barney, it happen and we not playing dumb. Everyone here know there is a gas leak. And that gas maybe cause Wyatt's death.

BARNEY: And gas gives you a heart attack?

JOE: But this gas is special.

BARNEY: Special how?

JOE: It might be poisonous. And I think it's coming from the drill.

BARNEY: I've been working these rigs for 9 years now and I've never heard of any gas killing people.

ISMAEL: So you admit there is gas!

BARNEY: I'm not admitting a damn thing! Nothing's going on. We drill a well in the sea floor, ten, twelve, thirteen thousand feet deep. A little oil leaks out, and a little bit of fuel gas and we burn off the excess. End of story. If there's a problem, I report it. If not, then no. And as of this moment, today Sunday, April 18th, 2010, on the BP Deepwater Horizon oilrig, there's nothing to report.

ISMAEL: Ok. If words is all you need to stop a leak, then sure, is fine, don[‘t] report it. But words, and the paper they are wrote on, you put them up against methane gas and they don[‘t] hold up so good, boss.

BARNEY: Methane gas? Come off it. The divers and the contractor, who know a damn sight more about it than we do, said everything’s A-OK.

ISMAEL: And the gas?

BARNEY: Again with the gas! If everything’s fine, there is no gas leak.

ISMAEL: Barney: how many times you see gas come out of these wells?

BARNEY: Always!

ISMAEL: And how many times you see this red gas?

BARNEY: Not often...

ISMAEL: Not often? A deep red gas?

BARNEY: Almost never.

ISMAEL: Killer gas.

BARNEY: It’s not killer gas!

ISMAEL: So that body is not dead then?

BARNEY: We don’t know the gas killed Wyatt!

JOE: Yesterday, when we smelled the gas, it made me sick to my stomach.

BARNEY: That’s your morning sickness, I told you to use condoms. (TO ISMAEL) You gonna give the little bastard your name?

ISMAEL: Barney, the gas...

BARNEY: (YELLS ANGRILY) Enough! Take my advice and stay away from the company guys when they get here tonight. They’re here for the body and to write their reports. The autopsy will tell us everything. But keep your trap shut about things you’re not sure of. Especially, about any killer gas. If we start talking about some killer gas, they could take us all off here. Send us onshore. How much do onshore crews make? Huh?

JOE: No even half what we make.

BARNEY: You see? And I don't know how you can live on half what I make.

ISMAEL: Barney...

BARNEY: (CUTS HIM OFF) ...And they're not gonna shut down the rig over a some evil gas. No sir. They'll shut us down, but the rig'll go right on working. They'll find themselves another 120 operators who want to make a shitload of money offshore and that'll be the end of it. And I don't want that. It's happened to me plenty of times: I open my mouth and I lose my job. I bitch and I lose my paycheck. I whine and I lose my livelihood and my promotion. Well no more. Since I learned my lesson, life's been good, they've even made me supervisor on this floating hunk of junk.
Listen up, mermaids: this fucking oil's getting harder and harder to find. And we're standing right on top of two huge pools. They're not gonna shut down this rig because three scumbag operators, who wanna play sailors, are frightened of a little gas. (YELLS) There's your masks, now shut your traps!

ISMAEL: You talk like you own the company.

BARNEY: I do! It's mine! Just like the Houston Astros are mine and the United States of America is mine too!

ISMAEL: But them guys are English pirates!

BARNEY: But they're mine! They're my pirates! I own my pirates, my ambition and my job! Got it? (TO JOE) Got it?

JOE: I'm just pointing out the gas thing. And the dead guy. But, generally speaking, I'm with Barney.

(ISMAEL LOOKS AT HIM IN SHOCK)

ISMAEL: You are with Barney? That don[t] take long!

JOE: I just hadn't looked at it from the point of view of...

ISMAEL: Your wallet. (BETRAYED) Then who was it say to me this afternoon: let's go bug Barney so he say something about this gas that is killing us before there is another leak and the dead guy with the broken heart is me?

JOE: I said it.

ISMAEL: So?

JOE: Well, I don't want to lose my job. (TO BARNEY) I withdraw my statement.

BARNEY: The kid's a genius. "I withdraw my statement." Good. Because you better not forget the reason, the only reason, we're out here working on this rig from hell, past its expiration date, surrounded by wild animals, breathing danger like air and dropping body parts one by one, like lepers. All this is for one reason. Huh?

JOE: Money.

BARNEY: No. Not money. It's for the "Fantasy."

JOE: Not fantasy. Money.

BARNEY: It's the fantasy, man. It's all a fantasy. For the guys back on land, with their civilian jobs, there's a fantasy. But they'll never make it come true. They imagine it when they're looking at a porn site. Or looking at the house they want, or the car they want, or the college where they want to send their kids. Those are the Fantasy Jerkoffs for Normal People. I'm not saying they're bad. Like the Bible says: "Onan knows pleasures that Don Juan don't..."

JOE: The Bible says that?

BARNEY: Yeah, in Song of Solomon, you numskull. But in our case, the fantasy is the truth. It's reality. Because we're not normal; WE ARE (LOUD): the ones who serve the first drink to a thirsty world. And for that privilege, this is how we get paid. Not with Money. But with the chance to turn the fantasy not into a hand job, but the best screw ever, present in body. For us the fantasy is reality. (TO JOE) Like for example: What is it you plan to call the little place you're gonna set up once you make the big bucks working out here?

JOE: I'm gonna call it "Three Nights"

BARNEY: Three nights.

JOE: Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

BARNEY: What about the other four?

- JOE: Renting out rooms and stuff.
- BARNEY: Buying and selling. Bodies to the highest bidder. Cheap meat for the hungry. A civic service.
- JOE: With the works; a little talk, a little dance, a little touchy, feely and...
- BARNEY: Little back rooms.
- JOE: Little back rooms. For a cut
- BARNEY: You see? Mr. Trump here is already planning his “present-in-body” fantasy. So he’s come to do his time in this hellhole in the Gulf of Mexico so he can open his Bunny Ranch in the suburbs of Houston. How old are you, junior?
- JOE: Twenty-three.
- BARNEY: By 27 you’ll be a millionaire.
- JOE: Sooner.
- BARNEY: Sooner. Yeah. Now; you know why you want to be a millionaire? ‘Cause like me, a true Texan, and like Miss Cancun over there, you wanna leave your mark. That’s all: the fantasy of leaving your mark. Like what we write in the bathrooms on this dump or on the tables and walls of the Bar; because we wanna leave our mark, make an impact, leave our trace. Like the cavemen. Scratching on walls. Fantasy’s an instinct. That’s why we’re here.
- ISMAEL: Then what about the dead guy?
- BARNEY: He’s dead. An accident. No one killed him; no one hurt him. He was our friend. We loved him. But he died. Are we gonna die with him? (HE GOES TO A RAILING. HE PULLS ON A ROPE TO BRING UP A BUCKET) And if you want to honor him... Here you go. We’ll drink to his health with seawater.
- ISMAEL: Isn’t that a sailor tradition?
- BARNEY: Well, for one minute, let’s pretend we’re not employees of British Petroleum, but sailors of the seven seas, descended from Jesus himself, battling at high sea against all the bloodthirsty white whales in the world.
- JOE: Jesus was a carpenter, Mr. Cox.

BARNEY: He walked on water. That makes him a sailor.

ISMAEL: That is true. And is the only thing you say all day that make any sense.

(THEY ALL DRINK SEAWATER, IN THREE GLASSES, LIKE WINE. THEY TOAST TO THE DEAD MAN’S HEALTH. JOE CAN’T DO IT AND SPITS. ISMAEL MOVES AWAY AND TOSSES HIS OUT. HE LIGHTS A CIGARETTE, HALF-HIDDEN)

BARNEY: (TO JOE) Drink up!

JOE: Salt water damages your kidneys.

BARNEY: Give me a fucking break. A little ain’t gonna hurt ya. (ORDERS IN A LOUD VOICE) Drink up damnit!!!!

(JOE DRINKS IT, TERRIFIED. BARNEY LAUGHS AND DUMPS OUT THE WATER HE HAD SUPPOSEDLY DRUNK)

BARNEY: You’re gonna go far, kid. Keep it up. (BARNEY SEES ISMAEL SMOKING. GESTURES “ARE YOU NUTS?”) What the fuck are you doing, asshole?

ISMAEL: I know. I am not suppose to smoke on an oilrig.

BARNEY: Hell, no. You’re not. You’re really not.

ISMAEL: I throw it overboard, the wind blow it away. What gonna happen?

BARNEY: Nothing... (TRIES TO TAKE THE CIGARETTE AWAY, BUT ISMAEL DODGES HIM) I’m gonna throw your ass into the Gulf the next time I see you doing that. And then you’ll be what you are: a Mexican with a wet back.

ISMAEL: You know I am not Mexican, right?

BARNEY: No? Then what the fuck are you? Chinese?

ISMAEL: I am from Venezuela.

BARNEY: Cut the crap. You’re all Mexican. Y’all just made up those other names to fool us. But all there is down there, outside of the US of A and Texas, is a buncha shit-eating Mexicans.

ISMAEL: That right? What about Brazil?

BARNEY: Mexicans who talk Portuguese.

ISMAEL: And Puerto Rico?

BARNEY: Mexicans who can dance.

ISMAEL: And Cuba?

BARNEY: Mexican communists.

ISMAEL: Argentina?

BARNEY: Mariachis who play Tango.

(ISMAEL GIVES UP. HE LOOKS OUT TO SEA, WHICH GROWS LOUDER)

ISMAEL: Here they are!

JOE: Are they on a boat? How many are there?

ISMAEL: Like fifteen.

JOE: Fifteen investigators?

ISMAEL: Sharks.

BARNEY: Ain't it a bit late for those monsters?

ISMAEL: Maybe they smell the body

JOE: Should we throw it to 'em?

BARNEY: Again with that?

ISMAEL: Then there will be no body of evidence.

BARNEY: There's no crime.

ISMAEL: Those things look restless down there...

BARNEY: You wanna go down and ask 'em? You're nice and plump.

ISMAEL: (TO JOE) They come every night even though we never give them nothing. But they come anyway.

BARNEY: Habit

ISMAEL: Fantasy. We are here for the fantasy. Like Joe and his little place; fantasy.

JOE: How long you been here?

ISMAEL: Call me Ismael.

JOE: How long you been here, Ismael?

ISMAEL: Three years ago, I was just about out of money, so I decided to set sail and see the world. Three years. In December...

BARNEY: A shitty month to come to this floating piece of crap.

ISMAEL: Is what I find.

BARNEY: I started in December too. Running away from Christmas and that goddamn hollow feeling you get at the holidays.

ISAMEL: “Don’t worry, the sea’s calm this time of year,” they said. But it rained all month.

BARNEY: The Gulf is calm, sure it is. But on the rigs: storms and rain

ISMAEL: And still, a lot nicer and quieter than being home with my family.

BARNEY: And still, a lot nicer and quieter than being home with my family.

JOE: And you’re leaving in two months?

ISMAEL: Forty-five days.

JOE: Then what’re you gonna do?

ISMAEL: Maybe I invest in this Three Nights business of yours. Living in a bar is not a bad idea for a guy like me.

JOE: That’s what Wyatt said too.

(SOUND OF THE DRILL, IN DECRESCENDO. LIGHTS CHANGE. THE SKY IS BLUER AND THE STAGE SEEMS SURROUNDED BY DARKNESS. A BLACK SMOKE RINGS THIS PART OF THE STAGE.

WYATT APPEARS THERE. HE TALKS TO SOMEONE WHO, LITTLE BY LITTLE, WE SEE IS JOE)

WYATT: ...Maybe I'll go with you. Maybe I'll leave this fucking ocean and learn to live on dry land again. And then, I'll take the money I've saved, and instead of giving it to the women I got myself tangled up with, I'll go to your bar and be a part of your business. I trust you, Joe. I'll give you all my money and you let me stay there, living in the Three Night Bar and Girlie Club, with the babes and booze.

And when I get old one day and without anyone having to find out, you get me good and liquored up, surround me with hotties, sit me down to a game of poker and when I'm least expecting it, you put a bullet through my brain.

From behind, so I don't see you.

And that's how I'll go. With dignity.

JOE: That's what you want?

WYATT: Yep. To spend the rest of my nights in the Girlie Club with you telling the customers: "This here is my friend Wyatt. Us two produced this many millions of barrels of oil and this much gas in the Gulf." You'll say it so the blondes and the businessmen and the fat cats can hear you and then they'll turn to me with admiration in their eyes and say: now there's a real American, a man who produced for his country.

JOE: That's when I shoot you?

WYATT: (HITS JOE) FUCK, NO! That's when I'll be in my glory. Instead of a bullet, you'll get me a whisky. The bullet comes later. Hah? So in two years I'll coming looking for your Three Nights girlie bar?

(THE SPECIAL AREA DISAPPEARS. THE LOUD SOUND OF THE DRILL RETURNS AND GENERAL LIGHTING ON THE RIG. WYATT REMAINS TO ONE SIDE)

ISMAEL: He said that?

BARNEY: Well, he won't be needing that bullet any more. But there's something that just don't make sense about that story. (BOTH LOOK AT HIM) Joe here's got such bad aim he couldn't hit the ocean from ten paces.

(SUDDENLY, THEY FEEL SOMETHING. A MECHANICAL NOISE. A VERY UNPLEASANT SCREECH. AND THE DRILL STOPS.

THEN, THE SILENCE IS EERIE. FOR THE FIRST TIME WE HEAR THE SOUND OF THE SEA LAPPING AGAINST THE RIG. IMMEDIATELY VOICES ARE HEARD IN THE DISTANCE AND THE REPETITIVE BLARE OF AN ALARM)

ISMAEL: What was that?

JOE: A wave maybe?

BARNEY: Yeah, felt like the sea moved us.

ISMAEL: The drill stop.

BARNEY: Let's go talk to the engineer.

JOE: It smells like gas.

BARNEY: Again?

ISMAEL: Good gas or the other kind?

JOE: The other kind.

BARNEY: Fuck!

(ISMAEL LEANS OVER THE RAILING TOWARD THE SEA)

JOE: What're we gonna do?

BARNEY: Flip the shutoff switch! Go on, move it

(JOE LEAVES)

ISMAEL: Barney. Come take a look at this.

(BARNEY LEANS OVER. DOESN'T LIKE WHAT HE SEES)

ISMAEL: It don[’t] look good.

BARNEY: No. Not good at all.

ISMAEL: But...What you think it is?

BARNEY: I have no fucking idea.

BLACKOUT. MUSIC

2nd Night

Wyatt appears at the railing. We hear a piano, the sea and birds.

WYATT: (TO AUDIENCE) When you're heading out to the Gulf rigs, the first thing you notice are the barrier islands. In the morning, the nesting birds make a marvelous racket. These coastal areas are home to an incredible diversity of birds and fish, which at this time of year, April and May, are at the height of breeding season.

(IMAGES OF EACH ANIMAL APPEAR AS WYATT NAMES IT)

The Brown Pelican, the Great Egret, the Sandwich Tern, the Black Skimmer, the Least Tern, and my personal favorite, because it's so social and it likes coming out to the rigs, the Laughing Gull.

On summer afternoons, if you lean out and look toward the coast, you might even catch a glimpse of Sea turtles trooping by and if you're lucky, the greatest beauty of them all, the Diamondback Turtle.

All marvelous species.

All multiplying in their home, the sea.

And all, about to disappear.

(SNAPS HIS FINGERS)

Like that.

(A PHONE RINGS.

WYATT FADES AWAY, THOUGH HE REMAINS ONSTAGE.

GENERAL LIGHTING ON THE OIL RIG.

BESIDE THE OTHER RAILING, BARNEY AND DOUG, WHO WEARS A BLUE SUIT, WHITE SHIRT, AND RED TIE. DOUG ANSWERS HIS PHONE.

DOUG: Doug speaking. (LISTENS) Yes. (LISTENS) Give his family the company report and tell them we're waiting for the results of the autopsy. We'll work out the other thing later. Fine. (LISTENS) Leave that to me. (LISTENS) I'm with him right now. (LISTENS) Yes, I'll let you know.

(DOUG CLOSSES HIS PHONE. LOOKS AT BARNEY AND CHECKS A PAPER)

DOUG: Barney Cox. You've been here three years?

BARNEY: Nine.

DOUG: Nine years out here?

BARNEY: With the company.

DOUG: Of course, but, on this rig you've been here, three years?

BARNEY: Five.

DOUG: Right. Five years: three as a driller and two as Chief Mechanic.

BARNEY: In charge of Deepwater Horizon. BP's oldest rig

DOUG: The oldest? How old is it? Ten?

BARNEY: This heap? Nearly twenty.

DOUG: Don't call it a heap. It may be old, but it's our best producer. You're our oldest employee on the rig right now, is that right?

BARNEY: Don't call me old either, it makes me sound like some geezer. Let's just say I've got the most experience.

DOUG: Tell me something, Barney: What do you think happened?

BARNEY: I think Wyatt had heart trouble. It's not unusual. We live and eat here year round practically. With the bonuses we get if we don't take vacation time, no one ever leaves. We work a lot, but it's because we want to. Greed, pure and simple. This is a man's job, you know, and no one out here's paying much attention to his food or his figure; around here no one's thinking gourmet. So we eat junk and we get sick. And if you don't take care of yourself, well then your kidneys, arteries, stomach, lungs, and most of all, your heart, are there to tell you: "This is as far as we go my friend, good night. The drill's stopped." And that's all.

DOUG: The autopsy will take a few days, but we think it was his heart.

BARNEY: Fine. That all?

DOUG: What's this about a gas?

BARNEY: Who said gas?

DOUG: Ismael Martinez, a mechanic. He mentioned it to one of my assistants when we arrived last night.

BARNEY: He said something about a gas?

DOUG: It seems there was a gas that some of the men smelled before Wyatt died.

BARNEY: Nah. That’s nonsense.

DOUG: So there is no gas then?

BARNEY: Mister...

DOUG: Waxman. Doug Waxman.

BARNEY: Waxman? Really?

DOUG: Call me Doug. Talk to me about the gas.

BARNEY: Look, this here’s an oilrig, there’s always gas.

DOUG: Martinez mentioned this might be a special gas. (CHECKS A PAPER) “Hazardous” he said.

BARNEY: All the gases we’ve got out here are hazardous. They come from the Earth.
The Earth’s bowels, Doug, and we find gases that have been fermenting down there for millions of years. I call ‘em dinosaur farts; something disagreed with them, maybe a burp, an upset stomach, moldy tree they ate. That’s gas.

DOUG: Mr. Martinez says there was a leak...

BARNEY: It don’t leak, we release it and we burn it. There’s the flare. Not now, of course, ‘cause the drill’s stopped, but...

DOUG: What do you think of Ismael Martinez?

BARNEY: Look, I’d say he’s the only Mexican worth anything in a market of junk and shit eaters. He’s a good worker, we know each other. Loyal to the company.

DOUG: Are you friends?

- BARNEY: I'll be frank. I don't fraternize with foreigners. Or blacks or stinkin' Latinos, even if they were born here. 'Cause it's in the blood and the truth is this business ain't for them. That's why there's so few. We invented it in Texas and Texas is where it's gotta stay. This is where they'll drill the last well, neither you nor I will be around to see it, but it'll be the last one standing. With its lone star flag flying and fire atop the tree. It'll be Texas where they pump the last bit o' dinosaur dung and this whole oil thing will come to an end for good.
- DOUG: We were discussing Martinez. He's on his way out, isn't he?
- BARNEY: Yeah, he's leaving the company in a couple of months, a little less. He's made his money and he's off. He go buy his fantasy.
- DOUG: Does he have a family, is he going back to his country?
- BARNEY: He's got no one. Not here not there. I think he got divorced there once; not enough money, not enough love.
- DOUG: What about the company? Do you think Martinez would make anonymous calls to someone to hurt the company?
- BARNEY: Ismael? I don't think so. Besides, he's one of those guys who always comes back. We're like soldiers, like the guys over in Iraq and Afghanistan. Here we know our job's as dangerous as they come, but we also know our country's counting on us. And that's what gives us the strength to go on. Martinez won't get used to civilian life any more than a good soldier gets used to living without his gun, his buddies or the smell of death and gunpowder, without taking orders and carrying them out. He'll be back, you'll see. Martinez is no civilian, Martinez is a Gulf man.
- DOUG: Fine. So we won't worry about Martinez.
- BARNEY: Leave him to me.
- DOUG: Because, if there is a gas.... Does that mean the cap's no good? Explain it to me.
- BARNEY: When the casing's in place, we've gotta cap it off for good. That's when the contractor who caps the well...
- DOUG: On the sea floor.
- BARNEY: Yeah, down there. The contractor comes, makes the mold. Then they fit it on the wellhead. Then they send the cement. The cement's

supposed to form an impenetrable wall to hold in the gas and oil and withstand the pressure.

DOUG: And then?

BARNEY: Then it's capped.

DOUG: And was that done?

BARNEY: Just three days ago.

DOUG: You were there.

BARNEY: I was there.

DOUG: You liaised with the contractor.

BARNEY: All day.

DOUG: And at night...

BARNEY: There's a 24-hour watch, to make sure nothing goes wrong.

DOUG: And everything went well.

BARNEY: Exactly.

DOUG: Who would be responsible for an uncontrolled gas leak?

BARNEY: Me?

DOUG: You just confirm the inspection. You don't do the capping, or the inspecting.

BARNEY: No, of course not.

DOUG: Then? Who does?

BARNEY: Well the contractor. Right?

DOUG: And the contractor is...?

(WYATT PAYS ATTENTION FROM THE SHADOWS)

BARNEY: You know: Halliburton.

DOUG: Halliburton, exactly.

BARNEY: The Iraq guys.

DOUG: The Iraq guys? What do you mean?

BARNEY: Well, they're the ones that worked over there. Right?

DOUG: Yes, but Halliburton isn't "the Iraq guys," Barney.

BARNEY: So where're they from?

DOUG: They're from Washington, they're our guys.

BARNEY: Oh! Of course, yeah.

DOUG: Exactly. "Oh! Of course, yeah." Don't forget it. They're our guys.

BARNEY: Of course not. They're good guys, very professional.

DOUG: Even though their headquarters are in Abu Dhabi.

BARNEY: With the Arabs!

DOUG: Yeah, but these are the good Arabs.

BARNEY: It's a good thing. (DOUG GESTURES FOR HIM TO CONTINUE) Well Halliburton did the inspection, wrote the report. The cap was finished. (HANDS HIM PAPERWORK) Here's the reports. The cap turned out fine, Halliburton says so and we certify it.

DOUG: Through you.

BARNEY: (NODS) For us. For BP.

DOUG: You certify it and here it's clear, that when Halliburton came to do maintenance, there was no leak and the pressure was under control.

BARNEY: That's right; no pressure, no leak.

(DOUG STARES AT HIM, WHILE TAPPING HIS PEN ON THE RAILING. HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOING TO SAY SOMETHING, BUT DOESN'T)

DOUG: (HANDING BARNEY THE PEN AND A PAPER) Fine. Sign here.

BARNEY: What’s this?

DOUG: Everything you just said

BARNEY: But when’d you write it?

DOUG: I had it ready

BARNEY: And how’d you know what happened?

DOUG: Because you told me.

BARNEY: Yeah, but then, how’d you have this ready?

DOUG: Because that’s what happened. It was or wasn’t it? (BARNEY NODS. READS THE PAPER) So? It’s all right?

BARNEY: Yeah, it’s exactly what I said.

DOUG: Fine, then sign.

BARNEY: (GOING TO SIGN) Just a sec: Did I tell you or did y’all tell me?

DOUG: What’s it matter who said what? These are facts. It’s true.

BARNEY: (SIGNING) What’s true is true.

DOUG: It’s clear then that Wyatt died of natural causes, to be confirmed by the autopsy. And we’ve established that, as of today, Monday, April 19th, there is no gas leak and pressure is normal. Fine. (TAPS ON THE RAILING AGAIN WITH THE PEN)
Now, let’s discuss the real reason I’m out here.

BARNEY: The real reason?

DOUG: Yes, the reason the company has assigned me to spend three nights on this oilrig in the Gulf.

BARNEY: You didn’t come about Wyatt’s death?

DOUG: Me? We have a special unit for these accidents. You saw them last night when we got here. They took the body, did a preliminary study, took photos, they’re writing the reports and conducting interviews even as we speak. Dr. Chang, from the company, takes care of that.

BARNEY: Of course. A doctor?

DOUG: People die on these rigs all the time, we have a procedure. You know that. We may be out at sea, but this isn't the Wild West.

BARNEY: Of course not.

DOUG: But the natural conditions out here aren't the same as those of, say, a crime or a workplace accident in your run-of-the-mill company.

BARNEY: And this is no run-of-the-mill company.

DOUG: No, it's not. This is a difficult job, a dangerous one. Accidents happen. You don't need me to tell you. Chains, boiling oil, gas, wind...

BARNEY: Even sharks.

DOUG: Right. It's a dangerous job and the pay reflects that. Or doesn't it?

BARNEY: Two years out here's like 15 at a regular company.

DOUG: That's right. And that's not bad.

BARNEY: But you've gotta earn it.

DOUG: Right. Of course. BP doesn't give money away. But BP is concerned about the current drilling status. (LOOKS AT HIM MENACINGLY) Last night you shut off the drill.

BARNEY: We shut off the drill because... This morning we confirmed we had hit mud. And there's a small leak, somewhat irregular, but small, crude and mud that...

DOUG: And that means...

BARNEY: That our job here might be over and the rig's gotta move.

DOUG: Is that what it means? Are you sure?

BARNEY: (NOT UNDERSTANDING WHERE DOUG IS HEADING) I don't know, Mr. Waxman. That's going by the book.

DOUG: Procedures say that when there's a strange reddish gas or lots of mud or an oil release, you shut down the drill

BARNEY: It's the first thing you do. A reddish gas? Did you say reddish?

DOUG: Yes. A reddish gas. (BARNEY IS SURPRISED) And did you?

BARNEY: Yes, the drill’s stopped. Right?

DOUG: But...(MENACINGLY) Did you shut it down or did it just stop?
(BARNEY DOESN’TKNOW WHAT TO SAY) Think Barney, we’re on the same team.

BARNEY: (GIVES UP) It just stopped.

DOUG: And then...

BARNEY: We saw it...

DOUG: The Gas. The reddish gas. Did you control it?

BARNEY: The gas disappeared when the drill stopped.

(DOUG TAKES OUT A SMALL BOTTLE OF ALCOHOL, POURS SOME IN A CUP AND HANDS IT TO BARNEY)

DOUG: (FRIENDLY) Barney; we’re not going to go against our own company. We’re together in this. BP appreciates the loyalty of its employees, but we have to know the truth, because the day after tomorrow, on April 21st, at 9 a.m. to be precise, supervisors are coming...

BARNEY: More supervisors!

DOUG: Government supervisors.

BARNEY: (DRAINS HIS CUP. DOUG POURS HIM ANOTHER) Shit!

DOUG: Right. The government. The truth is, if you ask me, well I’d say I’ve always liked the government. Correction: I liked it. Before. But our relations with federal agencies are changing. Before, we were fine, we were all on the same team: from your friend Martinez and you, Barney Cox, to me, Doug Waxman, and on to the CEO of BP, and our allies at Chevron, Shell, Texaco, Exxon, and our contractor friends at Halliburton. And finally, to Washington, from the most rookie supervisor right on up to Vice President Cheney.

BARNEY: A great guy.

DOUG: All together, on one team. Like in baseball. You a Ranger fan?

BARNEY: Astros.

DOUG: (THEY DRINK AGAIN) Hey! You beat us last night. I’m a Cub man myself. And we’re playing again today? Right? That’s right. You see? And even though we’re for two different teams, you and me, here on the Gulf, we’re teammates. Hah?

BARNEY: Pitcher, catcher, outfield, short: All for one.

DOUG: Even the fans in the stands. Have you ever been to Minute Park to see the Astros?

(BARNEY NODS) It used to be called Enron Stadium; we were very involved in building that stadium with our colleagues from the now defunct Enron in Houston. A bad business what they did later. But they did a lot for the city. Right? Because that’s how we are: the Astros, the Cubs, Halliburton, Enron, you and me, pulling together for a single purpose.

BARNEY: Pumping oil.

DOUG: Making History spin and dance to our tune. And in our case; giving the world energy. Spinning it. That’s what we do!

BARNEY: Exactly!

DOUG: And the government, too. Though that was before, now not so much.

BARNEY: The black guy came.

DOUG: Let’s just call it the “new political reality.”

BARNEY: Those communists are busting our balls.

DOUG: Let’s just say there’s not the same understanding of this business, which, by the way, does this country a lot of good. Now, for example, they got the idea that instead of a friendly contractor like Halliburton doing our maintenance and inspections and us supervising them, that the government should do it for us.

BARNEY: America’s turning into a Soviet dictatorship, Doug my man.

DOUG: The thing is they don’t trust the private sector. Taking away our right to supervise ourselves is unconstitutional. (THEY DRINK) And, besides, the government has a lot of nerve to come tell us that THEY have better quality control than we do.

BARNEY: Never!

DOUG: Because we do everything better than the government! Always! The only thing the government's good for, Barney my man, is invading countries. And that's with our help, of course. The only reason we don't do the invading ourselves is because it's too expensive. Like Iraq. We asked Hussein for access to his wells; he wanted 40% of the concession in return. As you can understand, we're not putting our oil industry in the hands of some nutjob dictator. So, that's where the government comes in handy; it invades and gives us the wells. It sends the soldiers in to fight for us, now that they're good for, there's no denying. But that's all. For anything else, we're the ones who know what's got to be done in this job and no Washington bureaucrat is going to come...!

BARNEY: No pansy-ass Washington Democrat...!

DOUG: And tell us how to run the oil business!

BARNEY: Homosexuals, communists, foreigners and blacks!

DOUG: Just because they know how to pump gas in their Toyotas! Hah?

BARNEY: We'll fight the oppression of this black man Obama and his outlaw government, don't you worry, Mr. Waxman! Count me in!

(THEY TOAST)

DOUG: I'm not worried. We don't have any real problems, of course. But the day after tomorrow the government will be here. And it's not going to be so easy explaining to them that, even though our latest inspection says we're fine as far as leaks and pressure go, still the drill's shut down because we ran into a bit of mud and there's a kind of leak of reddish gas.

BARNEY: I guess not.

DOUG: Or because a few gallons of oil were released and we're letting them settle to the seafloor.

BARNEY: Those limp-wrists will never understand that!

DOUG: Never!

BARNEY: They'll whine. They'll say: (IN AN AFFECTED VOICE) "You're killing the gulf."

- DOUG: (IN AN AFFECTED VOICE) "You're killing off marine life..."
- BARNEY: (IN AN AFFECTED VOICE) "The dolphins, the turtles, the yellow-neck duck."
- DOUG: (LAUGHING AND DRINKING) They don't understand!
- BARNEY: You wanna hear, just between you and me, in all honesty, what I think? I think this *little president of ours* is being paid by the Arab oil companies. And they're the ones who wanna take over the whole Gulf. That's why they're fucking with white Western companies. If you ask me, this Hussein Obama, he works for the sheiks. I don't know. It's my opinion. Write it down, talk it over with your bosses, dig around. Think about it.
- DOUG: I'll think about it. But for now we have to let them do the inspections, unless we can convince them first what a terrible role all this government interference plays in oil production. Because in the end, it's the consumer who pays for their mistakes. And no government likes for their citizens to be up in arms because they have to pay more at the pump for the gas which is their God-given right.
- BARNEY: Even less during an election year. Hah?
- DOUG: So in order to get them to come around to our perspective on the truth, we have to mold it. The truth has to be in our hands. See? That's why I'm asking you, and you can answer freely. (SUDDENLY MENACING) Why aren't we drilling?
- BARNEY: Because we want to do another inspection, since we hit mud and...
- DOUG: Yes, but... Why aren't we drilling?
- BARNEY: Well we want to check the Shutoff Switch that wasn't working yesterday and check that oil release and if there's gas in...
- DOUG: What happened to the switch?
- BARNEY: To the...
- DOUG: (MENACINGLY) What happened to the switch?
- BARNEY: I...the...ah...well...(PAUSE) I think it's broken.

(DOUG EXPLODES, LETTING BARNEY SEE THAT THE FRIENDLINESS BETWEEN THEM WAS A SHAM. HE LEAPS ON HIM LIKE AN ENRAGED TIGER)

DOUG: Of course it's broken, Barney Cox you asshole! That's obvious! I'm not an idiot! Tell me: What can happen if we start this piece of shit back up anyway?

BARNEY: (FOR THE FIRST TIME, APPREHENSIVE WITH DOUG) Well... I... I... The thing is... Any minute there could be another gas leak and the pressure...

DOUG: The pressure's fine!! Halliburton says so!

BARNEY: Yeah, but oil and gas are being released...

DOUG: But it's not our usual gas, it's some red gas, it's worthless. Right?

BARNEY: It's just that it's not a constant gas, it comes and goes...

DOUG: And can't we burn it off?

BARNEY: We might set the sea on fire...

DOUG: (DOUG EXPLODES. BARNEY IS TERRIFIED) Does this seem like the moment for poetry to you? (FURIOUS) Set the sea on fire! Is that what you think? Do you have any idea what you're saying? Do you have any idea how much oil is down there? Do you know how much we've invested in these wells? (DANGEROUS) It's not about money, we can't talk about money when we're talking about oil wells like the ones in the Gulf of Mexico; no sir. We're talking about the future here; the fantasy of the future. Do you know what the nature of our fantasy is, Barney you moron? (TERRIFIED, BARNEY DOESN'T ANSWER) Ambition. Vast ambition; the size of a white whale in these waters! That's what ambition is and that's who we are, Barney you imbecile! (LOUD) The fantasy, ambition and the whale; yours, mine, BP's and the whole country's! (SUDDENLY, DOUG DIALS DOWN ALL THE TENSION. NORMAL, PACIFIED, HE SHOWS BARNEY ANOTHER PIECE OF PAPER)
Do you know who David Woodward and Tony Hayward are?

BARNEY: (SCARED) No, I don't...

DOUG: (IRATE AGAIN) Look close, you bonehead Texan! They're the ones whose signatures are on this paper. David Woodward, President of BP America and Tony "The Bull" Hayward, CEO of BP International. And if

you tell David Woodward and Tony Hayward, (TAKES OUT HIS PHONE AND DIALS) ...if you were to say: (IMITATING BARNEY) “Mr. Woodward and Mr. Hayward, for us to go on drilling these wells with your Deepwater Horizon rig, first you have to kill your five children. And you have to do it with a single bullet to the head while your wives, the kind and lovely Mrs. Woodward and Mrs. Hayward, look on...”

BARNEY: Jesus, Jesus Christ, don't say that...

DOUG: If you were to say that, right now, to Mr. Woodward and Mr. Hayward! (SUDDENLY NORMAL, WITHOUT TENSION) Do you know what they would do?

BARNEY: Please... Please...

DOUG: They'd say: (LOUD, IRATE) Of course! With pleasure! And then they'd grab their gun and take each one of their children and with a steady hand, they'd put a bullet in each one just like you requested! (GRABS BARNEY BY THE HEAD AND HOLDS THE TELEPHONE TO HIS MOUTH) What's more, if you dial them up and in a sexy whisper say these words: diesel, distilled gas, jet fuel, liquefied gas, asphalt, rubber, lubricants!, you'll make them come then and there! Both Mr. Woodward and Mr. Tony Hayward; the Bull who won the Gulf of Mexico pissing contest! That's how important this business is, fucking Barney Cox. That's how important!

(DOUG THEN THROWS HIS CELL PHONE AT BARNEY, HITTING HIM IN THE HEAD. THE PHONE CUTS HIM AND HE BLEEDS. BARNEY IS TERRIFIED OF THIS EMPLOYEE IN A SUIT WHO HAS BARED HIS TEETH UNEXPECTEDLY)

DOUG: (SUDDENLY IN A NORMAL TONE, FRIENDLY) Tell me something, Barney Cox: How many times have we had gas issues and we've taken care of them?

BARNEY: Always. Every time we've had gas issues, we've taken care of them.

DOUG: Of course we have. And nobody's ever found out about our issues. This industry of ours is nearly 150 years old. And they're not going to come fuck us over now because of some red gas, a dead workman and some pansy ass government inspectors. Are they?

BARNEY: No, of course not.

DOUG: Because this is more difficult than going to the Moon, right? Explosions, sinkings, spills. We've wiped out hundreds of species and

nothing’s ever come of it. People don’t know, and people don’t really want to know. People are interested in TV, their problems, their kids. Do you know what Americans want most, according to the latest polls? Do you know what’s the object of their desires? Their biggest fantasy?

BARNEY: I don’t. I don’t know.

DOUG: To be famous.

BARNEY: That’s what they want?

DOUG: That’s what the people want. Their sole desire is to be famous. Well fine, in BP we want that for them. To us, what fucking difference does it make? What’s important to us is that they mind their own business while we mind ours. Right?

BARNEY: Yes, of course, right.

DOUG: Fine. Now: if what people want is to be famous, let me ask you this: (CHUMMY) Why the fuck don’t we, meanwhile, get this goddamn drill running, even if there is no shutoff switch? (NEARLY A WHISPER) Can we do that?

BARNEY: Technically yes.

DOUG: Excellent, Barney. I appreciate your honesty. Clearly we need to take some urgent measures, immediate decisions. (SHOWING HIM THE PAPER AGAIN) Do you know what this is?

BARNEY: Mr. David Woodward and Tony “the Bull” Hayward. I didn’t forget ‘em.

DOUG: Presidents of BP International and BP America.

BARNEY: Our bosses.

DOUG: They’ve authorized me to make decisions. Anything we decide here in the next few minutes will be their responsibility and there’s no need to take it further. Is that clear? (BARNEY NODS. DOUG SPEAKS WITH SUDDEN CONFIDENCE) Because, after all, you and I are all alone steering this ship as we sail toward our greatest destiny.

BARNEY: What’s that...?

DOUG: What’s really going to happen.

BARNEY: Stopping the gas leak?

DOUG: That we’re going to get this drill running again.

BARNEY: Of course we are, Mr. Waxman. As soon as we finish the inspection, I think we can get drilling in ten days, maybe less...

DOUG: Tomorrow

BARNEY: Tomorrow... What?

DOUG: Tomorrow we drill.

BARNEY: On what rig?

DOUG: On this rig.

BARNEY: Deepwater Horizon?

(DOUG LOOKS FOR HIS PHONE, WHICH HAS FALLEN ON THE FLOOR)

DOUG: The very same, Barney: fix the problem, fix the blame...

BARNEY: But I don’t think... Tomorrow?

DOUG: We have to continue drilling. (SHOWS HIM A PICTURE ON HIS PHONE) The satellite had already shown we’d hit mud.

BARNEY: Then why wasn’t I informed?

DOUG: Because it never occurred to them that you’d stop the drill without waiting for orders.

BARNEY: I didn’t stop it, it shut off. And what with Wyatt’s death we thought...

DOUG: (HITS HIS HARDHAT SOUNDLY) Don’t think, Cox. Don’t think. (SHOWS HIM THE PHONE AGAIN) The satellite says that between twenty and twenty-five thousand feet, there’s a pool of oil of scandalous proportions.

BARNEY: Yeah?

DOUG: Just waiting down there. So tomorrow, spare me your little-old-Texas-lady-in-a-wheelchair excuses, and do me a favor and get this drill up and running.

So when those government inspectors get here, they see this rig’s fully operational. And that everything’s in perfect working order; the Emergency Shutoff Switch, the drilling equipment, the casing, there’s no oil release, we’re not dumping anything into the sea, that everything here is so wonderfully ecological that even that pansy Al Gore would give it his oily kiss of approval to do his part to contribute to the reserves of the one thing that gives meaning to our two beautiful nations: OIL!

BARNEY: Oil...

DOUG: (LOUD, ENRAGED, POSSESSED) Drilling! Discovering reservoirs! And capping them! Storing them in the sea floor; like buried pyramids. Like sunken ships from the conquistadors. Down there is where our treasures lie, Barney; Dinosaurs, gems, slaves, White Whale! All turned to oil. (LOW, MENACINGLY) So. What the fuck are you going to do, Barney Cox?

BARNEY: What?

DOUG: (LOUD) To get this drill running tomorrow!

(WYATT APPEARS VERY CLOSE TO THEM. WE HEAR THE SEA, MORE INTENSE)

BARNEY: Tomorrow, at six a.m., my crew will remove the drilling mud.

WYATT: Mud that kept methane gas from bubbling to the surface.

BARNEY: And we’ll turn on the drill.

WYATT: Which in turn will push the gas up the casing.

BARNEY: And we’ll switch seawater for the drilling mud.

WYATT: Which will increase the pressure and then...

(WYATT GOES DARK AND THE SOUND OF THE SEA FALLS OFF)

BARNEY: But, God forbid, if the pressure don’t hold, there could be a blowout...

DOUG: That’s precisely the point, Mr. Cox; God does forbid it. The only thing God’s thinking about is us getting back to pumping this oil that we worked so hard to find.

BARNEY: You sure? That’s God’s will?

DOUG: Positive. God knows our oil’s down there. Sealed up tight. And the area’s ours, it was assigned to us, it’s our private property. God given and legal property. All this is private property. Do you believe in private property or communism? Huh? So those are the two words everybody here needs to understand: PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Look, stop your worrying, no matter what happens, we’ll take responsibility and no one else. It’s our problem, period. No one has any reason to come nosing around our property.

(FACING BARNEY, MENACINGLY) So. What do we do? Are you going to cowboy up or do you quit and we bring in someone else?

(BARNEY NODS. HE YELLS INTO HIS TWO-WAY RADIO)

BARNEY: Ismael Martinez and Joe Brown. Get over here now.

DOUG: (LEAVING) I’ll be at the command post. Between tonight and tomorrow morning two support ships will arrive. No matter what, no one’s going to die. If it works, we’re back on track. If not, we sink this piece of shit, which is before the government gets here. And then we go back to pumping what’s rightfully ours. Private Property; don’t you forget it. (CORDIALLY)

Sweet dreams, my friend. Nice meeting you. (SENDS WHAT APPEARS TO BE A TEXT OR EMAIL ON HIS PHONE. THEN HE LOOKS AT BARNEY. SHOWS HIM THE PHONE) I love these Blackberries: not a scratch.

(DOUG MEETS ISMAEL AND JOE. SHAKES THEIR HANDS AND THEY INTRODUCE THEMSELVES. DOUG GIVES THEM A SLAP ON THE BACK)

DOUG: I want you to know that BP’s proud of all of you. And that Mr. David Woodward, President of BP America and Tony Hayward, President of BP International, themselves have sent their most personal thanks.

(DOUG LEAVES)

BARNEY: Ok girls. We’ve got our work cut out for us.

ISMAEL: Barney: did you tell him everything?

BARNEY: Everything.

ISMAEL: And you put him in his place?

BARNEY: You know me!

ISMAEL: Good. Show them up there they not dealing with little boys. We're responsible. We know more than nobody about this job and some wimp in a blue suit and red tie can't come here and fucking order us around.

BARNEY: Oh I told him. All I had to do was yell and that pencil pusher was shaking in his shoes. He even gave me his phone to talk to the higher-ups.

JOE: Way to go boss!

BARNEY: Who do those Yuppies think they are?

JOE: (POINTING TO HIS FACE) Boss, you've got some blood there.

BARNEY: I cut myself with a pencil when I was yelling at him. You know how I wave my arms, I didn't even realize. It's nothing.

ISMAEL: Besides, they got to understand that this company might belong to them, but we run it. Is us workers who got to bust our ass out at sea, not those office boys who only know how to dress up and spray on perfume.

BARNEY: You know that little English chicken talked about a white whale. I think he quoted Moby Dick.

ISMAEL: Moby Dick? Coming from one of them fags, I bet it was Flipper.

BARNEY: Gay. That's what they are. (LOOKS AT THEM) Now, get this rig ready, 'cause tomorrow morning, first thing, we're gonna drill.

ISMAEL: What?

BARNEY: We're getting back to work tomorrow.

ISMAEL: Are you crazy?

BARNEY: No! Not crazy! We're gonna drill! It's an order!
Let's make the world dance!

(BLACK OUT.
THE SOUND OF THE SEA.
INDUSTRIAL TRANSITION MUSIC)

3rd Night

Wyatt, onstage. We hear a piano, the sea and birds.

WYATT: I like to see the rigs. And when I do, I think we made rigs like them. I mean they look like dinosaurs. From a distance they've got the same majesty those monumental creatures must've had.

And I imagine them; all of them, my derricks, my precipices, my oilrigs, like impetuous men working around the clock non-stop. And when their useful life is over, then I see them both, rigs and workers, flying together like pelicans, like seagulls, swimming like turtles, Rising like the waves!

(THE SOUND OF THE SEA AND BIRDS STOPS. AGAIN WE HEAR THE SOUND OF THE DRILL, LIKE A DISTANT DINOSAUR'S CRY)

But I know it's a dream, or maybe I should say a fantasy. Because reality isn't like that and out here, on these Gulf rigs, we define it only by greed, arrogance and ego.

Reality and Fantasy, or what around this ocean and its nights we know as "sad hope;" our white whale present in body.

(LIGHTS UP.
ONSTAGE, BARNEY AND JOE, WEARING HARDHATS AND HOLDING TWO-WAY RADIOS)

BARNEY: Cold. Damn cold. What's today?

JOE: April 20th.

BARNEY: April 20th feels more like January 20th. Cold. This gulf's turning to ice. Must be all that shit about the ice caps melting.

JOE: So how come they're melting if it's so cold?

BARNEY: 'Cause they're melting there, where it's hot and they're coming down here, to freeze us to death. Can't you feel the polar ice?

JOE: Fuck yeah.

- BARNEY: Well, that's it. *Fuck yeah*. That's it. What else can you say? *Fuck yeah*. In Salado we'd call this dog cold.
- JOE: Salado?
- BARNEY: My hometown in Texas. Down 35 South.
- JOE: What's with the name Salado?
- BARNEY: Don't ask me. Must be all those lettuce-pickin' Mexicans. We've got our own way of telling how cold it is.
- JOE: How? In Farenheit or centigrade?
- BARNEY: In Dogs.
- JOE: In Dogs? What's that?
- BARNEY: For example, this cold today April 20th is a five-dog cold.
- JOE: I don't get it.
- BARNEY: Way back when in Salado, when it would get cold, homeless guys'd use dog skins to cover up. There were so many, they'd kill 'em, skin 'em and use 'em for blankets. And that's how the Dog Degrees got their start. One dog, it's cold; two dogs, it's colder; three dog's, it's really cold. Well today's a five-dog night.
- JOE: So what'd they use cats for? Measuring miles or gallons of milk?
- BARNEY: You can't do anything with cats; they're too small and there's not enough. They're hard to catch and they don't trust us, the fucks. Besides, you'd have to use more, something like 5 cats for every dog. And it don't sound nice to say: *tonight's a 25-cat night*. Sounds more like a party.
- JOE: I don't wanna hear about it anymore, I don't like that Salad town of yours.
- BARNEY: It was an Apache or Comanche or Tonkawan custom, some redskin thing.
- JOE: I don't like indians. They've got these weird *native* traditions, demonic is more like it.

- BARNEY: They're not bad. Not the squaws anyway. One time I fell in love with one.
- JOE: You? With an indian?
- BARNEY: It was in McDonald's. She was sitting in front of me, but facing the other way. She was all by herself and she was eating real slow. I never saw her face, just her hands; she kept playing with her hair, putting it up in a ponytail and taking it down. She had a mole on her neck.
- JOE: And that's what you call love?
- BARNEY: (NODS) It's a fantasy. Right?
- JOE: But that doesn't mean anything, boss.
- BARNEY: It don't meaning anything to you.
- JOE: I thought you were gonna tell me a story of true love.
- BARNEY: Well that's my story of true love. The only one I've got. (FEELS THE COLD AGAIN) Bad weather's brewing. That won't help anything, hah?
- JOE: Maybe we should wait till tomorrow, boss?
- BARNEY: Give me a fuckin' break tomorrow. By tomorrow the government inspectors'll be here. And we're not gonna let ourselves get screwed by a buncha Washington fairies coming out here to fall in love with us. And just so you know, the first one to bat his eyelashes at me is going in the drink, there's plentya machoman sharks down there can bite their government cherry asses. (GIVES JOE A SLAP ON THE BACK) So by the time they get here, we've gotta have this piece of shit rig going full speed; oiled like a war machine, like a bomber in Iraq, like a "Predator Drone" homing in on Obama Bin Laden's hindy hole. Are we doing this?
- JOE: We're doing this.
- BARNEY: And for the cold, since there's no dogs, Oil!
- JOE: What about the red gas? You really believe it's ok boss?
- BARNEY: Look, Sushi. I can believe in the Holy Ape or the Crucifixion of the Bleeding Ass or I can believe in Aliens with three-headed dicks. But what I believe, Joe my friend, don't mean squat. If the satellite says there's an enormous lake down there surrounded by some red gas...

you think I'm gonna argue with a satellite? I don't speak satellite. They're saying if this piece of shit don't run, they're gonna sink it. Well, they know, they give the orders, and I carry them out. So today's the day we head, live and via satellite, straight for the jugular on this Pterodactyl.

JOE: Just like that.

BARNEY: *Fix the problem, fix the blame.* (WITH HIS FOLDER) Fine. Let's go back over it: Did we get all the drilling mud out?

JOE: All out.

BARNEY: We've injected salt water?

JOE: Enough.

BARNEY: So if the pump's working...

JOE: (TO THE RADIO) Ismael, how's the pump?

ISMAEL: (VOICEOVER) Looks good.

(JOE SHOWS BARNEY THE RADIO)

BARNEY: So, no problem.

(DOUG APPEARS FROM ABOVE, A TWO-WAY RADIO IN ONE HAND AND HIS PHONE IN THE OTHER. HE SHOUTS AT BARNEY)

DOUG: Is this for today? Barney! Get this piece of shit running now!

BARNEY: (TO THE RADIO) Right away! (TO JOE) Where's Ismael?

JOE: He went to check the Shutoff Switch.

BARNEY: I told him to forget that!

JOE: A little Mexican improvisation.

BARNEY: And how long's it gonna take Miss Tijuana to do that? Hah? All month?

JOE: Fifteen minutes.

DOUG: (ON THE RADIO) Barney Cox!

BARNEY: (SCARED) Yes?

DOUG: Are we doing this?

BARNEY: We’re doing this!

DOUG: But the drill’s not moving!

BARNEY: We’re checking the safety switch, Doug.

DOUG: (LOUD) We’re going without the fucking switch! We decided that!

BARNEY: Yeah, a few minutes. The operator didn’t know. We’re starting any second.

(DOUG PUTS DOWN THE RADIO AND TALKS INTENSELY ON THE PHONE)

BARNEY: (ON THE RADIO) Ismael, honey, sweetie: Are you coming or not, Shakira?

ISMAEL: (VOICEOVER) I’m checking the shutoff switch.

BARNEY: Are you checking it or are you petting it to see if it gets hard? You got it naked yet? Whatta ya want? Champagne? Mood music? (ANGRY) No one told you to go down there! GET YOUR ASS UP HERE NOW! THAT’S AN ORDER!!

ISMAEL: (VOICEOVER) It don’t look like is working, Barney.

BARNEY: Fine, but it’s not broken either. Hah?

ISMAEL: (VOICEOVER) I don[’t] understand.

BARNEY: It’s no big deal, fried tamale. It won’t be the first time we ran this damn drill without a shutoff switch. We’ll fix it after we get this piece of shit running. For now, we wear our masks. And if there’s gas, we stop it manually. I’ve explained it to you a hundred times, you glass of Aztec piss!

(ISMAEL COMES AND TAKES BARNEY BY THE ARM)

BARNEY: Finally la Malinche herself makes her way through the Aztec masses. Thank you your highness for gracing us with your presence. (REMOVING ISMAEL’S HAND) No touching the soldiers, Mexican Queen!

ISMAEL: I just want to tell you I check the underwater chambers and there's a spill. Nothing big, but it could get worse.

BARNEY: There's always spills!

ISMAEL: (JOE LISTENS) What I mean is there could be problems with the cement and then the pressure...

BARNEY: Buncha Latino wusses. That's why we had to take Texas away from y'all. 'Cause that's no place for chickens. Buffaloes, dinosaurs, lions, wolves, but chickens, we shoosed them all south.

DOUG: (OVER THE RADIO) GET THIS PIECE OF SHIT RUNNING NOW!!
(BARNEY SHOWS ISMAEL AND JOE THE RADIO)

BARNEY: It's all gonna be ok, Ismael. I've got things under control. Don't worry. If anything goes wrong, I'll shut 'er down.
(ISMAEL AGREES AND THEY GET READY TO TURN ON THE DRILL. BUT JOE DOESN'T MOVE. THE OTHER TWO LOOK AT HIM)

JOE: I...I... (PAUSE) I think it's time I told you.

BARNEY: Told us what, California roll?

JOE: What Wyatt said about the cement. He said Halliburton's cement was cheap and they discovered the pressure's negative.

BARNEY: (SURPRISED) When?

JOE: Three days ago.

BARNEY: That's not what they said in the report!

JOE: It was negative. I was there when they said it. Wyatt argued with them, raised his voice. They sent him out. I kept my mouth shut. And I listened. Even though the test showed negative pressure, they put down it was normal in the report.

BARNEY: That's no good.

ISMAEL: Are you sure, kid?

JOE: That's what I heard.

BARNEY: Well, now we know that, this test's over before it started. Let me tell him. (TAKES THE RADIO) Doug?

DOUG: Another delay? We've all got your picture here and we're either going to hang it on BP's wall of heroes or toss it in the toilet and take a dump on your head. What's it going to be? Do you need another introduction to the finer qualities of the Blackberry, Barney Cox?

BARNEY: Sir, I've been informed that during their inspection three days ago, Halliburton found negative pressure down there. That could explain everything, Doug. We'd better call it off.

DOUG: (LOUD, FURIOUS) That's not what it says in the fucking report!

BARNEY: But I have witnesses who confirm what I'm telling you.

DOUG: (CALM) Barney, Barney, Barney: you remember I told you we're a team?

BARNEY: Yeah, sure, but if the pressure...

DOUG: We *already knew* about the pressure.

BARNEY: That it was negative?

DOUG: Of course.

BARNEY: How did y'all know?

DOUG: (LOUD) Halliburton told us, you Texas shithead!

BARNEY: But it's not in the report.

DOUG: (LOUD) They told us that too!

BARNEY: They why didn't you say anything to me?

DOUG: Because I hadn't realized that Mr. Tony Hayward had made you my boss.

BARNEY: Doug, I'm not your boss...

DOUG: Oh! No? Then, I didn't need to tell you, asshole.

BARNEY: But...Why?

DOUG: To see if you wanted to drill for oil or flip burgers at McDonalds!

BARNEY: Of course I want to drill for oil...

DOUG: No, you don't! Right now you don't because the damn drill is still not running you piece of Texas cowshit!

BARNEY: If the pressure's too high, this platform could sink.

DOUG: We know that too. That's why we have boats in the area. We know we could sink the platform, but we're not going to let that happen. Right, we're not going to sink it?

BARNEY: But if this blows, the well cap could break.

ISMAEL: (INTERRUPTING, TO THE RADIO) And the oil burst out.

BARNEY: All the oil!

DOUG: And?

BARNEY: There'd be a spill.

DOUG: Fine, but it will spill into the sea, won't it?

BARNEY: Of course it'll spill into the sea!

ISMAEL: Is this guy an idiot or he's pretending?

BARNEY: And then what?

DOUG: What? Nothing. It spills in the sea. The way it always does. It'll be a black spot, but completely manageable. It's one of the risks. What can happen? Hah? We're not going swimming out here. We've got the boats, jackass! Our asses won't turn black!

BARNEY: But, what about the sea?

DOUG: We pay you to get that drill up and running, not to eat fish. Besides, I don't like seafood. Give me a juicy steak. Texas Style. I'm not waiting any longer, Barney Cox. We're all set. Are you going to quit the Oil Business and get a job cleaning hotel toilets or what? Anyway; either you do it or someone else will.

(THERE'S A PAUSE. BARNEY LOOKS AT ISMAEL, WHO SHAKES HIS HEAD)

BARNEY: Better us than a buncha ignoramuses, Ismael. We'll control it. You'll see. Ok? (ISMAEL NODS, RELUCTANTLY. BARNEY SPEAKS INTO THE RADIO) It's a Go. It's a Go. (TO JOE) All set, Joe?

JOE: (JOE NODS, SPEAKS INTO HIS RADIO) It's a Go. It's a Go.

BARNEY: Good. (TO HIS RADIO) Everyone stand by. It's a GO. (TO ISMAEL) Well then, let's blow up the world.

ISMAEL: Blow up the world?

BARNEY: It's a fuckin' joke, pinto bean! You ready?

ISMAEL: Ready.

BARNEY: (TO DOUG ON THE RADIO) Boss. We're ready.

DOUG: (HAPPY) Good, today's the day. We've got to get this piece of shit running.
Drill baby drill!

(DOUG GIVES A COWBOY WHOOP. EVERYONE PUTS ON HIS MASK. OVER THE RADIO, BARNEY GIVES THE ORDER)

BARNEY: All right, boys. GOOOOO!!!

(A LOUD NOISE. A CHANGE OF LIGHT. SHOUTS. ALL LOOK APPREHENSIVE. BUT SUDDENLY, WE HEAR THE SOUND OF THE DRILL, BACK UP AND RUNNING)

BARNEY: (TO THE RADIO) Normal? Are we normal?

ISMAEL: (TO THE RADIO) How are we Stevens?

JOE: (TO THE RADIO) Report? Ok?

(THEY WAIT FOR AN ANSWER)

VOICEOVER: Running smooth.

VOICEOVER: Fine here boss.

VOICEOVER: We're ok over here.

(BARNEY RAISES HIS ARMS IN A V FOR VICTORY. DOUG TALKS ON THE PHONE IMMEDIATELY)

BARNEY: (TO THE RADIO) It's all good boss. Report to HQ. We're back up and drilling!

(STARTS TO TAKE OFF HIS MASK, SLOWLY. SMELLS SOMETHING AND PUTS IT BACK ON QUICKLY. TRIES TO GET ANOTHER WHIFF)

The sea breeze, oil and that's it!

(THEY ALL TAKE THEIR MASKS OFF CAUTIOUSLY)

DOUG: (TO THE PHONE) Just as we thought, sir. Now we're going to... (HIS VOICE IS LOST)

ISMAEL: Did it work?

JOE: I don't smell anything.

ISMAEL: And the drill sound ok.

JOE: Like usual.

BARNEY: Maybe it was just a glitch.

(EVERYONE CHEERS. THEY CONGRATULATE EACH OTHER. WYATT FROM THE PLACE WHERE HE FELL DEAD, SPOTLIGHTED. A MELANCHOLY PIANO PLAYS)

WYATT: Ah! That sound. To me the sound of the drill's a necessity. Without it, I can't sleep. It's like the sound made by a mad pianist, one of those desperate artists. Like a musician who starts his career knowing where he's headed, but then his mind is invaded by madness. And then his fingers become the fingers of a murderer. And that's how he plays the piano; like a beloved instrument of torture. And the piano, like the drill, no longer makes music but a storm of notes, a terrible tempest of sound rising and falling. And then it's not his fingers playing that piano anymore, or the workers' hands putting chains on the drill, but Madness. Madness itself is the pianist who's decided that the finale of that unbalanced sonata, of that Concerto No. 1 for the Unhinged and Piano Opus Gulf of Mexico, the finale of that psychopathic sonata is not only the end of the piece or of the music, but also the end of all of us...

Because that is the finale: an allegory of death.

And when the music has ended and the pianist is dead, the mad notes will go on. How? Because then the madman will be you.
IT'S YOU!

Because you heard, and so the delirium is sown in you. It's your thirst. Now you carry that senselessness. And all because you committed a single sin: that of listening, dearest sound of my drill; song of my whale, of my ambition, of my fantasy!

(SUDDENLY, WE HEAR AN EXPLOSION. NOT VERY LOUD, BUT IT ROCKS THE PLATFORM. THE DRILL SHUTS OFF. JOE FALLS DOWN. THE THREE QUICKLY PUT ON THEIR MASKS. DOUG FOLLOWS SUIT)

BARNEY: (TO THE RADIO) What the hell's going on? Engines. What happened?

ISMAEL: (TO HIS RADIO) What you see down there?

JOE: (TO HIS RADIO) What was that?

ISMAEL: We think there was an explosion...

BARNEY: An explosion where goddamnit?

ISMAEL: (TALKS TO HIS TEAM BY RADIO) I let you know...

BARNEY: Find out now!! Everyone put on your masks!

ISMAEL: It look like more water come out of the well than we inject.

BARNEY: Was there gas trapped in the pipeline?

ISMAEL: That cause the explosion

BARNEY: That stopped the drill. Let me tell 'em. This shit's gonna hafta wait till next week. Halliburton's gotta get back here and seal that thing right!

(TALKS TO DOUG, TELLS HIM WHAT'S HAPPENED. WE CAN'T HEAR, BUT SEE THAT DOUG IS ARGUING FURIOUSLY)

ISMAEL: (TO JOE) Go tell Brandon we stop the pump till they come out and inspect. They gotta get a good look at this, down there.

JOE: With divers?

ISMAEL: Divers? They gotta bring in subs! And forget about saving, cheap bastards.

JOE: A month?

ISMAEL: Easy. Down a month.

(BARNEY AND DOUG ENTER CLOSEUP)

DOUG: Down a month, son of a bitch? You think the world's going to stop for a month?

BARNEY: There could be a real problem if we don't check that seal, Mr. Waxman. Look, I recommend you let me explain to the inspectors, when they get here. Leave them to me. I know how to handle these people. I'll take care of it all.

DOUG: (IN CRESCENDO) Oh! How nice! Thanks! By the way, before I tell Mr. Woodward and Mr. Hayward about your generous offer, can I also leave you the Nascar races, Paris-Dakar, Formula 1, the jet fuel, tire manufacturing, (LOUD, FURIOUS) The US Air Force, the interballistic missiles, the bombers and all our military might that even as we speak is fighting two wars and preparing for a third?!! Thank you so much for taking care of it, you asshole Barney Cox. Don't forget to pass along the message to the entire fleet of ships sailing the seven seas, not carrying passengers or food, but carrying on their backs and in their bellies our real power: (LOUD) OIL!

BARNEY: We've got a good-sized spill...

DOUG: Don't go soft on me Barney Cox, you don't move that ass without a gallon of 95 octane gasoline! So quit fucking around and try to get that drill running again! And if you can't then quit and I'll replace all you assholes in ten minutes!

(BARNEY GOES BACK TO ISMAEL. DOUG MAKES A PHONE CALL)

BARNEY: We either do it or we quit.

ISMAEL: That[']s the way it is?

BARNEY: Don't get much clearer than that.

DOUG: (TO THE RADIO, LOUD) I want that drill making its music now!

BARNEY: Let's give it another go. (ISMAEL APPROVES, GRUDGINGLY. JOE DOESN'T LIKE IT EITHER, BUT ACCEPTS)
(TO THE RADIO) Take two, ladies.
Let's go! Places everyone! Take Two! Land of the Brave! GOOOOOO!

(DOUG PUTS ON A HARDHAT AND MASK, LIKE THE OTHERS.
WE HEAR THE SAME SOUNDS AS IN THE FIRST TRY.
THE SOUND OF THE DRILL STARTS UP AGAIN AND HOLDS)

BARNEY: It's working.

JOE: Sounds good.

ISMAEL: Is rougher,

BARNEY: But it's working. (TO THE RADIO) Is it working?

ISMAEL: Give it a minute to see...

BARNEY: Gas?

JOE: Negative.

BARNEY: That shit sounds fine to me!

(THERE IS A SECOND NOISE, LIKE AN EXPLOSION, BUT SOFTER
THAN THE LAST. THE DRILL STOPS AGAIN)

DOUG: Goddamnit!!

BARNEY: What the fuck!

DOUG: What the hell happened now?

BARNEY: (TO DOUG) The drill stopped.

DOUG: You don't say! How'd you figure that out you Texas fairy? Of course the drill stopped! I'm right here you cow patty! I'm looking at it!
(SHOWS HIM THE PHONE, AS IF READY TO THROW IT AT HIM) If I didn't have our boss on the line I'd toss this at your ass, you prick! Do me a favor and try again! That's an order!

BARNEY: (TO ISMAEL) I've had it with this guy.

ISMAEL: Had it? I think you are scared of him.

BARNEY: Me scared? I guess you don't know me after all?

DOUG: (TO THE RADIO) No more screwups, Barney Cox, or I'll throw you to the sharks! And I'll do it myself!

(BARNEY TALKS TO ISMAEL AND JOE, AS THOUGH IN SECRET)

BARNEY: Well, the explosion didn't seem so big this time, hah?

JOE: Actually it was smaller.

BARNEY: Like everything snapping into place, right?

ISMAEL: I think the problem is down below.

BARNEY: (TO JOE) But, what do the cameras say?

JOE: Nothing. They don't say a thing.

ISMAEL: The oil is in the way.

JOE: There's a spill.

ISMAEL: A big one.

BARNEY: There's the Blowout Preventer. If we've gotta use it, as a last resort, we do. That closes off everything, right?

ISMAEL: Yeah. If it works.

BARNEY: Why shouldn't it work?

ISMAEL: Because is in the wellhead and the only ones who been there lately is the Halliburton guys.

BARNEY: But it should work.

ISMAEL: Yeah, it should.

BARNEY: This is what I think: I think the drill, with its vibrating, is shaking everything into place. It happens. It happened to me once. Two or three tries and the drill ran for two years without stopping. That's how these things are.

ISMAEL: You can say no, Barney. Say no. If they gonna bring someone else, let them, but not us...

BARNEY: Let's give it a third shot. And if it don't work this time, we drop it and make 'em do the inspection. And if there's a spill we use the Blowout Preventer and then let the divers come fix it. Is that clear? So? We agree. Three strikes and they're out. Hah?

ISMAEL: Fine. If it don[t] work, is over.

BARNEY: It's over. (TO THE RADIO) The third time's the charm, boys.

VOICEOVER: We don't recommend it boss.

VOICEOVER: No one here wants to go again.

VOICEOVER: Better get it checked first

BARNEY: All right boys. She's all ready to go, she just needs a little push...

JOE: At least there's no gas leak.

BARNEY: (TO THE RADIO) Besides, there's no gas. It's going better. Come on now. Let's do it. One more time. Everybody stand by...
(SHOUTS LOUD. TO ALL AND THE RADIO) All right everybody! Take three! Ready! One two. Three. Goooooo!

(AGAIN THE SOUND OF THE DRILL STARTING UP, BUT THIS TIME ACCOMPANIED BY A ROAR OF CHAINS. ONE SPINS FREE AND STRIKES BARNEY IN THE BACK. THE DRILL SOUND CONTINUES, IN CRESCENDO)

BARNEY: Son of a Bitch!

ISMAEL: Barney!

(BARNEY FALLS DOWN. JOE GOES TO THE RAILING)

DOUG: It's working fine! We're drilling! Drill baby drill!

ISMAEL: (TO THE RADIO) We got a man down! Attention! Man down!

(JOE SEES SOMETHING HE DOESN'T LIKE)

BARNEY: The devil's whip. Jesus, that hurts. Ismael, I think I'm bleeding. Ain't that the same one that fucked up your fingers?

ISMAEL: The one and only Matahari. She hit you in the head?

BARNEY: No, my head's fine. But my back...

ISMAEL: Don[t] worry then, nobody die from a chain to the back, especially not you, man, you collect them.

BARNEY: Very funny goddamn chile con carne.

ISMAEL: That's right. Think about food till the medics get here...

BARNEY: It's working, hah?

ISMAEL: Sure is. That's what it need[ed]: the blood of a son of a bitch.

BARNEY: Hey now, Mom can't help she's a dog...

(BOTH LAUGH. BUT NOW THERE IS A LARGE EXPLOSION. THE DRILL STOPS, BUT THE SOUND IS TERRIBLE. SHOUTS IN THE DISTANCE: FIRE! FIRE! ALARMS GO OFF. AN EMERGENCY SIREN WAILS. FLICKERING LIGHTING. THE SCENE QUICKLY TURNS RED. FIRE AND SMOKE. THE RED GAS TAKES OVER THE SET)

BARNEY: What's that?

ISMAEL: I think, amigo, this shit gonna catch fire.

JOE: Gas! The red gas! It's there!

DOUG: Goddamnit! Goddamnit! (TO THE RADIO, GIVING ORDERS, IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION) Let's go, men. We'll just let it sink. This hunk of junk was already old anyhow. We'll come back for our wells, don't worry. For now, we have to let it go. There's no problem. Let the sea swallow it up. (TO THE TELEPHONE) There won't be a spill, sir, I guarantee it. See you in an hour.

(EXITS.
NOW, WE HEAR THE SOUND OF FIRE. THE ALARM GROWS LOUDER. A VOICE INSTRUCTS THEM TO ABANDON THE RIG IMMEDIATELY)

ISMAEL: We gotta abandon the rig!

BARNEY: (NERVOUS TO THE RADIO) We've gotta abandon the rig...

JOE: Let's get to the boats! It's burning up...!

ISMAEL: (TO BARNEY) Can you walk?

JOE: Red alert, boss! Fire!

BARNEY: Fucking rig: 18,000 tons of goddamn steel is gonna kill me today; today this miserable beast is gonna kill me...
(FEELS PAIN) Fuck! Fuck!

ISMAEL: Is not gonna kill you, Barney. We getting outta here.

JOE: Come on, let's go! Let's go!

ISMAEL: You are bleeding. (TO THE RADIO) I need a first aid team. (TO JOE) You tell 'em we got a man down here?

JOE: (WANTING TO RUN OFF) Yes, of course I did, yes! (HYSTERICAL) Everyone's heading for the boats...!

ISMAEL: But if everyone's abandoning the rig, who the fuck gonna help me get Barney outta here? (JOE DOESN'T ANSWER. TREMBLES)
Come on, we do it...

JOE: (LEAVING) We have to go! There's a fire. No one's paying attention! The whole crew's evacuating!

ISMAEL: Don[’t] go, Joe! Help me!!

JOE: Orders are to leave now!

ISMAEL: Help me!

JOE: The smoke's closing in on us! I'm going for help!

ISMAEL: Don[’t] leave us here!

(JOE RUNS OFF)

ISMAEL: He go to... get help...

BARNEY: Help? Give me a fucking break, Piña Colada. He ain't coming back.

ISMAEL: I get you out, Barney. I do it myself.

BARNEY: Don't worry, buddy. This is like Iraq. Soldiers never leave one of their own behind. Our command will take action. They'll come to the rescue.

ISMAEL: The fire's not here yet so while they coming to save you, maybe we better try ourselves first. Hah?

BARNEY: (ACCEPTING HIS HELP) Goddamn rig! Damn them all!

(ISMAEL LIFTS BARNEY ONTO HIS BACK. WE SEE ISMAEL SLIP BUT STRUGGLE AGAINST THE INCLINATION IN THE RIG. THE BLACK SMOKE BECOMES DENSER. SUDDENLY, THE TWO MEN FALL. BARNEY'S INJURY IS WORSE THAN WE THOUGHT AND THERE IS MORE BLOOD)

ISMAEL: What is going on?

BARNEY: I think we're sinking, my fine fellow American.

ISMAEL: The chambers fail?

BARNEY: What if we sail Ismael? Hah? This is a boat, right? You said so. Surrounded and floating in the water. A boat. (FEELS PAIN) Give me a fucking break! (SEEING THAT THINGS COULD BE DIFFICULT) A boat. The water's rising but our necks don't stretch. And I'm like the captain of this ship. Ain't that right? And don't the captain always go down with his ship? Dying like a sailor, dinner for the fish?

ISMAEL: Boss; we're closer to the water. Is easier to jump into the Gulf than get past the fire to the boats, besides fighting up a hill. Come on, let's jump in and they can pull us out from there.

BARNEY: What about the hungry sharks?

ISMAEL: They[re] dead already with all the crude that spills. The sea gonna be black, Barney. I know you don[t] like no blacks, but you gonna have to learn to live with a black ass. Ready?

BARNEY: Wait... You go.

ISMAEL: We both go! We swim fast when we hit the water. We just gotta keep away from any metal. The sea gonna put out the fire on the rig. And if we're lucky, the sea don[t] set on fire...

BARNEY: Set the sea on fire? Is that what you said?

ISAMEL: Come on, time to swim.

BARNEY: Swim? But... Where?

ISMAEL: In the sea!

BARNEY: The sea. What sea?

(ISMAEL LIFTS BARNEY AGAIN. THE TWO FACE THE AUDIENCE. BEHIND THEM, THE ALARMS AND DESTRUCTION IN DECRESCENDO BEGIN TO MIX WITH A MELANCHOLY PIANO. TERROR IS CLEAR ON BOTH THEIR FACES. BEHIND BARNEY AND ISMAEL, WYATT APPEARS)

BARNEY: (ALMOST CRYING) And here I wanted to die thinking about my family. And neither one of us has any.

ISMAEL: (ALMOST CRYING) We're our family.

BARNEY: A soldier don't cry, damnit!

ISMAEL: No sir!

BARNEY: Soldiers don't touch each other!

ISMAEL: No sir!

(BUT INSTEAD OF LETTING GO, THEY GIVE A HEARTFELT EMBRACE. BARNEY THEN TAKES ISMAEL BY THE SHOULDERS)

BARNEY: Ismael.

ISMAEL: Yeah?

BARNEY: Pansy.

ISMAEL: What can I do? You got to follow your ass.

(THEY LAUGH. THEY PREPARE TO JUMP. BUT FIRST, THEY SURVEY THE DISASTER)

BARNEY: I guess we fucked up, huh?

(THEY STAND THERE, FACING THE AUDIENCE, TERRIFIED. WYATT JOINS THEM)

WYATT: We thought we were infallible chasing the fantasy.

ISMAEL: Hunting the whale.

BARNEY: Being famous and leaving our mark.

WYATT: Thirteen crewmen dead
Five million barrels of oil spilled in the sea.

And that, my good friend, is the Whale.

(LIGHT ON WYATT ONLY)

And none of this is even fiction.

(A FINAL EXPLOSION TAKES US TO BLACKOUT.
THE SOUND AND IMAGE OF THE DRILL REMAIN AND LATER MIX
WITH THE SOUND OF A WHITE WHALE)

END.