

# Drama Stage 5 (Year 10) – script booklet 2

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*BEFORE THE SUN COMES UP* by Callan  
Purcell and Jordan Shea

This document contains teaching and learning resources that accompany the Year 10 unit, 'Finding voice – crafting a play'.

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## Resource overview

This script booklet is not a standalone resource. It has been designed for use by department teachers in connection to Year 10 resources designed by the Creative arts curriculum team for the [Drama 7–10 Syllabus \(2023\)](#). These include the Stage 5 scope and sequence, Year 10 ‘Finding voice – crafting a play’ unit and sample assessment task. All documents associated with this resource can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing drama 7–10 \(2023\)](#) webpage.

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# *BEFORE THE SUN COMES UP*

A docudrama by Callan Purcell & Jordan Shea

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## A note from the script writers

Here are some scenes for you - put together for you to play around with, have fun, make memories, and importantly - reflect and empathise.

Between the hours of nine pm and five am, an ensemble of young people gather in spaces determined by them, created by them and sustained by them. Peers are pressured, romance is born, parents don't answer their phones, and voices are heard. Fighting to tell their stories, to run their own races and to do it all.... before the sun comes up.

As artists and teachers, we understand how each individual classroom differs. In contemporary NSW, the drama class invites all to explore and take up space - whether in duologue, ensemble or monologue. We envision this work to be entirely performed by students of Stage 5 Drama, as either a subject exercise or co-curricular activity. The form of this work allows for all voices and experiences to contribute to and perform the work but does not allocate extensive and detailed setting or location, or character description or name. This allows for the text to be center to any performance or workshop- which centers the experiences of young people and night-time activity.

It's a play told through real life experiences of young people who create and perform it.

Here are some key things to remember:

### **Punctuation:**

- '...'
  - 
  - /
  - >>>
- Ellipses – when at the end or beginning, it signifies a trailing off or onto an idea.
- Long dash – when placed at the end of a sentence, it indicates the thought below interrupts.
- Forward slash – indicates where the thought below overlaps.
- Chevron – indicates a break in the timeline of the scene.

Phrases in italics in the scenes indicate stage directions, for example *They take in the horizon*.

### **Dialogue:**

The locations, names, pronouns, language and dialogue allocation used is merely a documentation of the first time it was heard. We encourage you to personalise the context of the characters in the script so your actors can live inside fictitious circumstances that have been determined by their own lived experience. We also encourage the actors to be directors; dreaming into how they see

the scenes come to life– whether that’s realism, clowning, physical theatre, chorus work or a tour-de-force monologue.

**Character:**

Bring yourself to this piece. Try and be your real self, your true self, these ‘voices’. Try and not exaggerate these people, try and just be how they are on the page. Look for the clues. Look for what resonates with you. What speaks to you. What you connect with.

**Safe Practice:**

Being respectful and sensitive is crucial when practicing autobiographical devising. Everyone must be safe, trusted and supported in order to feel brave and take creative risks in the room.

It is important to remember that no one will be pressured to share or perform things they don’t feel comfortable to and that although these scenarios and devising exercises give voice to young people’s experience, there are guidelines and boundaries to adhere to.

You may decide to begin the piece with an Acknowledgement of Country or Welcome to Country. We encourage teachers and their ensemble to get in touch with the local Aboriginal Council to understand what is significant about the land they are rehearsing and performing this play on. Taking that idea further, the ensemble may write their own Acknowledgement to incorporate at the top of the play as they step into the world of the night.

The final thing to remind yourself and your actors is that everyone in the room is the right actor for this version of the piece and every experience and perspective is welcomed and encouraged. If you begin with that mindset, you’ve already won.

## 9pm: CAN THEY SEE US?

*Duologue, Monologue or Scene*

*Across New South Wales, Australia*

*(This scene came about when we asked young people: 'What keeps you up at night?')*

*The bedroom light turns off.*

- How do I slow down the F1 race in my head?

- Wow, you got an F1 race in your head?

- Yeah, I do.

- Mine's more like traffic.

- BEEEEEEEEEP! BEEEEEEEEEP!

- What, it stays still?

- Yeah. Bumper to bumper, /honk honk!

- And then sometimes, sometimes, an ambulance, or a big corkscrew of sirens screams through.

- WHEEEEE-OO WHEEEEE-OO WHEEEEE-OOOOO—

-You got a lot going on in your head—

- So do you —

- We all do.

- I only ponder the future.

- Isn't pondering bad?

- Nah, good /ponder.

- Ponder about what matters.

- Do I have the effort to put into English Advanced?

- Nah, don't worry about that, that's only for like, two years.

- Why is corruption so prevalent?

*Pause.*

- Wow, hectic.

- ...My feet are too cold.

- That's a call, not a question.

- What will life be like when I'm like Nonna?

- Did I wee?

- I dunno, did /you?

- Now they're too hot.

- I'm useless.

- Again, hectic.

- You're not useless.

- We all got a use. All of us.

- The stars got a use.

- Have. The stars have a use.

- Had. By the time their light gets to us, they're gone up there. Burnt up. Blown out.

- Where?

- There!

- /What?

- They're born, they sparkle, they die.

- Yeah, /sure.

- Like a great big map of the past rolled out in the sky.

- I wanna buy the sky one day!



- The whole sky?
- /Yeah
- I get having a lot of money, but why that much?
- I know I want to buy it, but how do I get there?
- You don't need the sky.
- Nah, just the stars, the moon, the planets...
- There's one of them, wait, like two satellites, /space telescopes...
- Yeah, I think it's the Hubble.
- Is that it?
- I don't know if it's the one with the golden disc on it, like, it's one of those—
- A golden disc?
- Nah, /no way.
- It's a weapon.
- Shhhhhh.
- What if war breaks out?
- An apocalypse?
- Really, what if a war happens here?
- Don't worry, the grown-ups will help us.
- The big people— the adults.
- Why must we rely on older people to get what we want?
- I'm smarter than a lot of the adults I know, so why am I under them?
- Yeah, you know about this golden disc thing.

- I'm just a big fan of NASA. A big fan of NASA. I know a bit about space, I guess. I think it's so fascinating.

- You're weird.

- Nah I just love NASA.

*The moon rises over the clouds, waking more stars.*

- There, that!

- Where?

- The big cheese. The big moon.

- It's a dot.

- Maybe that's where my Dad is. Why doesn't he visit anymore?

- My Dad is up in the sky, too.

- I didn't say he's up there.

- Mine is. I talk to my Grandma about him. She doesn't remember much now, and I tell her that he's up there, stuck in a black square with the faintest, faintest blue.

- Maybe he's seen the golden disc? Like a big ring /thing?

- OH! It's near Saturn, right?

- That's The Voyager. That's the one they're sending out of the solar system.

- Wow, you really do love NASA, and space, and space and NASA.

- Yes, yes, I do.

- The Voyager was supposed to see Saturn's rings.

- Oh, you like NASA too?

- And then it just kept on going...so, it's...maybe it's the V...no Voyager's the one with the gold disc on it, isn't it? It took the last photo before it left.

- Who are the photos for?

- So, and it's got— this is the weird part— it's got instructions so if any intelligent life find it, they know how to use it, and using their technology or however advanced they are, it shows them pictures.

- Pictures of what?

- Of us.

- What intelligent life???

- The ones watching us.

- WHO'S WATCHING!?

- I don't know if it's the one with the golden disc on it, like, it's one of those— It's Webb, isn't it? There's one, there's like two satellites, space telescopes, yeah, I think it's the Hubble.

- No, no, there's one last photo of Earth, and it's, if you look it up, it's called, it's called 'The Blue Dot.' And it's cool, there's like...photos from the moon, like, you can see the Earth, you can see that this one is like, it's a dot. It's a picture of...a black square with the faintest, faintest blue.

- Great, so we ARE being watched.

- I dunno.

- It's pretty low quality because it's really, bloody faraway, like, I don't even know how they get it from there to, to Earth...um...

- I can't even get reception at school...

- There could be at least 130 habitable planets within 34 light-years ahead of us.

- Hec. tic.

- That disc is scary, man—

- What do you mean, 'man'?

- Well, the guy in the video basically says, 'when this photo is taken, we've either moved to another planet or we're burnt to a crisp.' He says that. 'We've burnt to a crisp...and there'll be no Earth left'—

- WHO IS WATCHING US?!

- It's got Greetings, sounds...music...116 images to explain us.

- Where they can find us in the solar system, our maths, our physics, our own solar system: Mars, Jupiter, home, DNA, gasses, cell division, human anatomy, organs and everything, how babies are made, foetus...es?
- Foeti?
- Birth, how our families look, the continental drift, the structure of the earth, Heron Island, a seashore in Maine, Snake River and the Grand Tetons, Sand dunes, Monument Valley—
- Vegetation, Daffodils, a flying insect, evolution of animals, seashells, Sequoia, they're all in scale too, school of fish, dolphin, tree toad in a hand, a dead crocodile! Well, it looks dead— it's next to an eagle.
- There was a waterhole with zebras, then next is monkeys.
- Apes. Chimps with Jane Goodall.
- What year is she in?
- Pictures of people hunting.
- A man from Guatemala and a dancer from Bali.
- Andrea girls— 5 or 6 of them.
- A craftsman making tiny elephant figurines with a proper big elephant right next to it.
- Kids learning.
- There's machines collecting cotton.
- Some guy eating grapes.
- Someone younger eating grapes.
- Men fishing, men cooking fish and Chinese people having a dinner party. Oh! The great wall of China.
- The Taj Mahal, then it jumps over to Oxford in England to Boston to the UN building and then, finally, the Sydney Opera House.
- I have a feeling it's more lost than looking for more intelligent life...unless intelligent life finds it first.

- It's all these moments, it's showing, the final moments of humanity.
- It's showing how babies are born, how, or what a skyscraper is.
- What's its point?
- The point of what?
- A golden disc.
- Not a golden disc, the golden disc.
- It's how we're born. How we sparkle. How—
- To show *us*. To show us in all our glory.

>>>

## 10:30pm: YOU GAME OR NOT?

*Scene*

*A bedroom in the middle of the city.*

*(A lot of interviewees spoke about taking risks and sometimes making choices that they didn't feel ready to make.)*

*A sonic sci-fi fanfare blasts through the headphones.*

- High score, high score, high score, almost there! GO! GO! GO!

*Pause.*

- AWWWWWW COME ON.

*Beat.*

- Again. Okay. Go, go, go.
- High score. So much noise. Flashing.
- Boop. Boop. Boop. Alright.

*Pause.*

- Mum asleep.

*Silence.*

- Deep asleep. Long shift at the hospital, so she's out.
- Totally out.
- Don't worry. Hands glued to the controller.
- What game? GTA? YEAHHHHHHH.
- Live out your fantasy on screen, 'til your eyes are big black squares.
- Til they're bloodshot.
- Til you feel like you're there.
- People around the world, in your ear.
- Speaking to them, talking to them.
- Belonging to them.
- A little universe locked in, linked up— chained together.
- Online.
- Fun, fun, fun.

*The game shuts down.*

- MUMMMMMMM!
- MUM!
- MUMMMM!
- What kind of monster puts a lockout on the wifi?
- MUM!!!!
- *(Imitating Mum)* If you pay for it, you play with it.
- AW MUM!
- She's got a point.

- Yeah, I guess.
- What do we do now? READ? TALK TO EACH OTHER!? NOOOOOOOO.
- I'm SO bored. I get bored really quickly.
- SAME.
- I saw the roll the other day. The teacher left it up on the screen. They were a sub. They didn't know.
- So?
- So, I saw all those little dots. Those tiny dots that tell you what each kid has.
- Pink means...you know what pink means.
- Dunno what yellow means.
- Black means gifted and talented.
- I've got a pink one.
- I love it.
- Really?
- Yeah, I'm like a dalmatian with diverse learning needs. It's sick.
- HAHHAHAHAHA!
- Well, what are we gonna do?
- I dunno, no internet.
- Hot spot?
- Nah, I feel bad for Mum.
- Alright.
- Maybe we should get a job to pay for it.

*Pause*

- She's always tired. We can help her out. Somehow.

- Really?

- Yeah.

- Right now?

- Yeah.

- It's 2am.

- It's helping her.

*Beat.*

- Let's do it.

*Awkward silence.*

- What should we do?

- What can get us money?

- Quick.

- Steal a bike?

- Nah, they're cheap.

- Alright.

- Steal that family's dog down the road?

- Weirdo.

- It's won heaps of awards at the Easter Show.

- A car.

- What!?

- A car.

- What!?



- A CAR.

- We can't steal a car.

- I do it all the time online.

- Yeah same, but—

- I can do it good.

- You dunno how to drive.

- Easy online. And it will help Mum.

- For sure.

- So, if we do, we do it. We do it non-stop. We don't stop. We don't turn back.

- Yeah, hang on.

- Thought so. Thought you wouldn't.

- I don't want to.

- I want to help my Mum.

*Silence.*

- So, we just, what, steal the car, then go? Then what?

- Then what?

- Yeah, then what.

- We drive.

- We drive where?

- We just drive. We drive and see what it's like.

- It'll be like one of the games.

- Which car?

- The black BMW, with the leather seats, looks like it's never been used.

- Down the road, near the house with the statues?
- Thought about it before?
- EVERY DAY!
- HAHAAHAHAHA.
- I'm worried.
- Why!?
- I just am
- It will be fun. Mad fun.
- Sure.
- SURE!? SURE!? It will be sick.
- That's a nice car.
- I don't know if it's a good idea.
- It'll be fine.
- Well, we should do it now.
- What, right now!?
- Yeah. You know why?
- Tell me.
- Only a few more hours, before the sun comes up.

>>>

## Midnight: WHAT'RE THOSE?

*Duologue, Monologue or Scene.*

*Middle of a paddock in Winter.*

*(This scene came from a rant about being targeted as a young person– especially at night.)*

*The moon catches their reflection in the window.*

- There is a lady and a guy and brother and sister.
- The window is perfectly framed the whole family having dinner.
- In that window you can see living room, kitchen, dining room. It's all open.
- Open plan. The television is glowing out of frame and on the table, steam's coming off the veggies...knives and forks clinking against matching plates...

*Beat.*

- What am I doin' here?
- No, no. What am I *doing*.
- Like, it is just a normal family; mum, dad, kids and they're just sitting at the table, having dinner. Eating, talking...to each other.
- I see them there, and—

*Pause.*

- I don't think they...obviously I'm in someone's backyard...while there's people there, right? But no, yeah, there's this normal family and there's some kid in their backyard.
- What am I doin'?
- I should...I have to crawl, because um...it's one of those, you've got the side of the house and like, there's the window...and the fence to go under and then I'll be in the clear.
- The grass is all dry— crying for a drink.
- Don't get caught.
- ... And if I do?
- Run. Run like crazy.
- But tonight, tonight in particular - we could get caught.

- The moon is brighter than usual.

- We take it seriously. Full black; black long sleeves, black trackies, black shoes— not because— because we're too old to do this anymore. Because there's just too much on the line if you get caught, y'know?

*They make their way past the house, under the fence, across the lawn to a safe hiding spot.*

- I'm hiding under a car

- I'm in the bush

- But there's footsteps

- We hold our breath

- Torch comes over.

- I freak out, jump out of the bush—

- Flash.

- The house has a camera, motion sensed and we have triggered it.

- Here we go...

- Now, uh, look— I, can't explain myself heaps well...whenever my friends do something against the law, I accept them for who they are...what they do. I. I mean, it is huge for me to be out here when it's this late...when it's this dark, even with the moon.

- We've been mates since primary school and I wasn't going to disappear into the night when they needed me most.

- Cops pull up; two ladies.

- One is very...very mean and the other one is very calm.

- The only other time I'd seen— when cops caught me, was one time when dad got pulled over for speeding.

- 'What are you lot doin'?' the mean one says.

- And...I was really...I was really annoyed because she was so mean, and we're trying to explain, like—

- We were playing spotlight.
- Nah you been sneakin—
- Course we were sneaking around, it's spotlight.
- Like, in my head, at that point, I'm like: Right now, I could literally give you the names and locations of where I know ACTUAL suss stuff is happening, and yet here we are: placid, normal kids— well, not 'normal', but like kids that aren't running amok...
- And it just— I'm just really annoyed, yeah, like, we get caught not doing anything crazy when I could literally point them...tween— ten minutes down the road where I know that house is um, or this house has, an—and all these people...y'know, they've all got secrets if you looked in the window. I was arky.
- I was arky at the coppas 'n' it bounced back...This night, we would go out and play spotlight in like a paddock or bush or, whatever is scariest.
- And coz I live around more sketchy people...I'm like, I was, one time I just trotted into someone's backyard and...
- The cops, they finish the night...
- We go home and we're like split up and we just have to sit in our rooms for the rest of the night. Calm down before it's light again.
- No one else home.
- Nothing to do.
- But that won't stop us playing spotlight tomorrow. In the daytime.
- But you call it tips then, I guess.

>>>

### 3am: ARE WE ALONE?

*Duologue, Monologue or Scene.*

*Abandoned building.*

*(A group of teenagers have done something incredibly dangerous. Their parents won't answer their phones. Do they make a pact, oust the guilty or act like nothing happened?)*

**Special note:** *A group of teenagers. This scene could be performed with 4 to 5 actors. Lines should be allocated, please note there are no characters. Lines could also be said together, this is up to the actors. The idea is that the group of friends have done something really bad and can't get a hold of their parents or friends. It is recommended that the given circumstances are guided by the teacher prior to workshopping the scene, for example, what have these teenagers done!?)*

- Uh oh...

- Yeah.

- Worry sits, in my stomach.

- Funny, it sits in my throat.

- I go in between, my chest?

- Tight. Tight. Tight.

- Funny, mine sits sort of, in the lower part of my body.

- Weird.

- Nah, everyone's different.

- Where is it right now?

- What?

- Worry.

- I need to go to the toilet. Haha.

- Seriously. What do we do?

- I got no idea.

- What about calling—

- NO!

- Don't.

- One of our mates.
- You were gonna say your parents.
- No, no I wasn't.
- No one can know.
- Really? Why?
- They just can't.
- I feel sick.
- It's just the worry, don't worry. Wait. Maybe worry. I dunno. Maybe it's worry. STOP WORRYING!
- SHHHHHHHH
- No one is calling their parents.
- I want to.
- Why?
- I'll feel better.
- Serious? Lucky you. Lucky, lucky you.
- You don't like your parents?
- They have no idea what I do. A lot of the time. They don't care.
- Wow.
- THAT'S lucky!
- I wish mine cared. I wish they cared a lot more.
- Call them!
- No way. No, no, NO way.
- I dunno, I think we should.
- NO PARENTS!

- I feel the worry rain down, like a warm shower.
- For me it's cold, like I'm dodging it, like dodging each drop.
- The moon watches on. (*This could be a line or dialogue or a stage direction.*)
- We shouldn't have done that.
- We had to.
- Did we?
- You wanted to.
- I wouldn't have if you didn't.
- Woah, what? Are you serious, I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing.
- We all did it.
- All of us said: yeah, it's okay. I reckon it's okay, let's do it, let's do it, let's do stuff.
- Hectic.
- I don't remember agreeing and I just want to go home, now.
- No, no one goes home.
- No one calls their parents. We, we have to do something. Right now. We decide on something. Otherwise, we are done.
- You say that like you're dinner being prepared.
- What?
- 'Done', it's a bit much. Calm down.
- You're a bit much.
- You're a bit much.
- I AM a bit much.
- Alright, stop.



- All of you just, shhhhhh

- Okay, okay. I get it. I get it.

*The moon begins its descent.*

>>>

## 4amish: WHO'S FIRST?

*Monologue or Chorus.*

*Regional town and beach.*

*(Throughout the project we explored scenarios that live in stillness; that need to be completed by sunrise. Then came this category of events that begin in darkness to welcome the day.)*

*The alarm clock goes off.*

- It's about five 'o' clock...very, very early.

- It would've been, it would've been earlier, actually and I couldn't sleep all night, actually because I was so excited, and so I get about a whopping two hours of sleep.

- I pack a jumper

- A towel and, I think I have a coffee

- I wear my swimmers to bed

*They laugh.*

- Out the window, in the dark, I see Tilly.

- She's the only one with her Ps, I think she picks me up first.

- And it's super cold.

- And I'm not wearing any shoes

- And there's water in the gutter

- And I step into the gutter

- And the water

- And it was...horrible

- A-and, we drive just up the road to pick up another one of the girls, Sadiya.

*They swallow.*

- Um, Sadiya lives— like a block away.

- We pick up Sadiya and then went out to get Nicole. Umm and Nicole lived on,

- Like this road.

- Like that you had to take this back road?

- And, um, parents, I would cover your ears at this point and, um, we drive on this back road at about four, ten past four in the morning and um—

- We have the windows down

- The music blasting

- It feels like proper freedom!

*They shuffle in their seat.*

- Um, and then we pick Nicole up and we drive through some streets that were really foggy—  
Sadiya goes

- ‘Has anyone seen The Witches? The old one? With the fog and they come out of the shadows?’

- And I, I froze. Froze more than I was already freezing. I was thinking about the faceless people and that, and then, anyway, we’re driving down, listening to music, listening to the Sea of Thieves soundtrack (*they laugh*) and get down to the beach and we go down to Dudley and then Dudley was closed, so we drive to the Bar Beach car park? And go to Susan Gilmore.

- Now,

- To get to Susan Gilmore the way we did,

- You have to walk down this mud track—

- And getting out of the car to get to that mud truck in the freezing weather with no shoes on literally rips the skin off every single one of our toes.

- Like our feet are destroyed

- Walking down to this beach.

- It was like a burn, like it was so cold on the, like, tar for the fifty-metre walk.

*They pause.*

- Ok, it wasn't that long, but it was like a burn and then getting to the mud, that was like— it had rained the night before I think...getting to the mud was so soothing. Like someone had put chocolate mousse and coco pops around on the ground?

*They look at the jumper they packed.*

- The jumper I packed is my sister's jumper.

- I didn't have any choice.

- It was cold, and the jumper is...skin tight...four sizes too small. It was just to keep myself warm and...I should've brought a change of clothes.

*They navigate the beach.*

- Ahhh we walk down this track it is a very sketchy track— I dunno why we took that way...

- We have to walk down this set of really old stairs at the very bottom and then... .. I think, maybe, uhh...ahhh...and then... jump onto some rocks and then this like, jump off the rocks into the water.

- We make our way up the beach bit and we find this big, like, cut out in the rock, like, wall? And chuck all of our bags and um, our towels.

- We're at the rock face and Tilly and Nicole stand on the ground, Sadiya has scaled up into the hole and I attempt to come up behind her and then I get up behind her and then she jumps down and I can't get down. *(They laugh).*

- But from here, maybe the coffee is working, or the breeze on my belly while I wear this crop top jumper thing is waking me up...but from here you can see the outlines of everyone scaling across the rocks toward the waves.

- Little figures clambering through the crevices. And I'm running out of time. So, I just jump. I come down from that...little cut out, then I make my way to the shore and then...

- Who is gonna jump first?

*They take in the horizon.*

- There's the...and beside me...it's that freedom coming back again.

- The sun...it was like, you literally see, just see it, like, peeking over the horizon and...we were taking it in.

- And again.

- 'Who's gonna get in first?'

*After a moment.*

- We all went together, yeah that was right.

- We all, we all... it was this, like, magical moment.

- I dunno.

- We didn't hold hands.

- I think— yeah.

- Shoulder to shoulder... Shoulder to shoulder...

- Nah, ok...

- We held hands.

- Hitting the water together...It was this feeling of hitting the water— like nothing else.

- It's like, you can feel your whole body pretty much switch on at once.

-It's like, basically— you can feel all of your blood pumping through your body.

- It's like...

*This jolt of energy courses through their veins.*

- Each and every one of us was a different shade of blue. Blue lips, skin, eyebrows...

- Oh! And after all was said and done, Sadiya hauls this proper, I mean big proper rock back to the car at the passenger side door and insisted on taking it home with her.

- For the whole trip home, we just stare at the rock. Sadiya holding it in her lap.

- Scared it'll I dunno, go flying at a roundabout or through the window if Tilly braked too fast...or if there was some weird rule that P platers weren't allowed to transport rocks between 6-9am.

- Now Tilly has a rule of no rocks in her car.

*The water glows blue.*

*They jump in.*

*They are suspended.*

- I don't want this to sound like, y'know, the end of some perfect movie— that really weird 'everything is perfect' ending? How it's all slo-mo? But it was. All of us just sparkling under the water.

- And we're still holding hands.

*The sun beams.*

*END.*

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