

FLOOD, PROLOGUE: "FROM THE SEA"

James Phillips

1 EXT. DAWN. NORTH SEA. 1

The dark empty sea, sun rising.

In the distance a storm, lightning coming down: a patch of darkness in an untroubled sky.

2 INT. DAWN. FISHING TRAWLER BASTION 2

The cluttered cabin of a North Sea Trawler. The Captain sits at the table, oblivious to the motion of the sea. He is surrounded by papers.

He is in his late 40's, tanned, dressed practically for the rigours of the cold sea. He is writing by hand, pen and ink.

POV Captain: the page in front of him, a letter barely begun, written in his precise handwriting. "Natasha-" and then a blank page.

The Captain hears a noise at the door to the cabin, looks up.

POV Captain: Sam, the First Mate, stands at the door.

The Captain conceals his letter under pages of hand scrawled figures and business calculations.

SAM

It's time.

3 EXT. DAWN. DECK OF FISHING TRAWLER BASTION 3

Wide: The fishing trawler alone and isolated in the North Sea.

Now the Captain and Sam on the deck, surrounded by the machinery of the trawler. The Captain looks out to sea, sees the distant storm.

CAPTAIN

Coming for us?

SAM

Leaving.

A scarce shrug from the Captain. He leans over the side, looks down into the dark, shrouded waters.

CAPTAIN

Let's get on with it.

Now we see the machinery moving, hauling in huge nets from the deep.
Mechanical sounds.

The first nets arriving. Gannets and gulls circling, landing on the water: a dark swarm, looking for fish.

4 EXT. DAWN. DECK OF FISHING TRAWLER BASTION 4

The net rising from the sea. Empty.

The Captain and Sam watching, on deck, unimpressed.

CAPTAIN

No harvest.

SAM

What do we do?

CAPTAIN

Try again.

Captain turns away.

SAM

Lower the nets!

5 EXT. DAWN. FISHING TRAWLER BASTION 5

C/U: The trawler winch heaving and spluttering heavily as it tries to pull up the next net.

SAM

Jammed!

The Captain approaching the mechanism, a tool in his hand.

Suddenly the winch starts to move quickly, pulling up the net with speed. The Captain steps back, surprised.

SAM (CONT'D)

Net coming!-

And the net comes fast out of the water.

The net is empty of fish. Instead a hundred migrant's orange lifejackets fill it. The Captain moves towards it, shocked. He pulls at the net to release the bottom. The lifejackets tumble out. Arranged within them, nestled in perfect symmetry lies a naked girl, head shaved, covered in tattoos. Her hands covered in dirty bandages. Dead but curled perfect like a statue. The Captain moves towards the heaped lifejackets.

CAPTAIN

Find something to cover her.

He reaches down to the dead girl. The cold skin at her throat. Sam approaching behind him with a blanket, respectful, eyes turned away.

And the girl sits up, blind eyes, vomiting out water, reaching for the Captain. A howl coming out of her. Alive.

6

INT. DAWN. FISHING TRAWLER BASTION

6

The girl sits wrapped in a blanket in the cabin. Unresponsive. Eyes unfocused. Across the cabin the Captain and Sam watch her.

C/U: the tattoos on her legs, where they escape the blanket. Scales tattooed like a fish.

The Captain moves towards her. She hears him, twists in her chair.

CAPTAIN

She's blind. Can hear us, can't see us.

(to the girl, in English)

Where are you from?

Nothing from the girl.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

(In Arabic)

Where are you from?

Nothing. He takes her hands, makes soothing noises. With great delicacy he starts to unwind the bandages around her hands.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

(to the girl)

Let me change these dressings.

He unpeels the bandages.

POV The Captain: A letter fresh tattooed and still bleeding is visible on each revealed finger. No seeming pattern to the arrangement of the letters from his viewpoint.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

(to the Sam)

They're fresh, these ones.

Frightened, the girl pulls her hands away from him, raises them to her face, covers her eyes. Now this new placement of her hands allow the letters to be read correctly.

C/U her hands over her face: "G.L.O.R.I.A.N.A."

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Gloriana.

And now Gloriana moves her hands left and right, exposing her previously covered eyes. Her eyes that have suddenly found perfect focus, found sight, now finding his eyes.

He draws back, shocked. Standoff. And then Gloriana reaches for him, afraid, grasping for warmth like a child.

7

INT. DAWN. FISHING TRAWLER BASTION/ GLORIANA'S DREAM

7

Gloriana lies huddled in the corner of the cabin. The Captain sits apart from her. He has been doodling on his pad. Next to the word 'Natasha-' now we see a childlike drawing of a mermaid.

Sam enters the cabin. They both watch her.

SAM

The net was 70 meters down.

CAPTAIN

Tell no-one.

SAM

She's sleeping.

We see Gloriana, huddled under blankets, eyes closed.

Now we slip into her dreams-

-Gloriana floating in the deep sea, light distant, from above. Her eyes closed, like a baby before it is born, sound of distant noise distorted by water. And now her eyes opening, panic, swimming desperately, a net closing in-

-Now we return to the cabin. Sam and Captain still watching her.

SAM (CONT'D)

What do we do with her?

CAPTAIN

Hand her in.

SAM

Where do we say she came from?

CAPTAIN

The sea.