



the tide

A chamberlarp for Fastaval 2022

By Sebastian Nemeth

“Often ‘tis in such gentle temper found, that scarcely will the very smallest shell. Be moved for days from where it sometime fell, when the winds of heaven were unbound. Oh ye! Who have your eye-balls vexed and tired, feast them upon the wideness of the sea...” – Keats, 1817

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Information

The Tide is a scenario focusing on a pensive narrative with a lingering slowness. It has family, farewell, and the ocean as themes.

Imprints form shapes and lines; the waterline rolling in and withdrawing, dragging memories with it. Footprints washed away, only to be shaped anew with another time, ever changing and simultaneously constant.

The narrative centers around a family, two parents and their twins. With this family as the focal point, the game will explore the fickle moods and expressions. Departure and allowing your loved ones to move on is central for the scenario.

It is a gradual intro to the family and playing the game we will explore their lives together. The tide is a scenario around small joys, warm laughter, and music. It is a game focusing on the uncomplicated. There is a focus on the interchangeable in the narrative as well as the game's overall mechanics.

This is a scenario delving into the small dramas, and it is constructed as an abstract, melancholic poem to the ocean.

Player type:

You want to delve into and explore a narrative fully as well as enjoy lingering. You enjoy creating scenes with your co-players and express moods and moments. You'll be playing both a character and some aspects of the scenography fall to your creativity and you're fine with that.

Gamemastering:

You want to facilitate a room for player creativity through both workshop and the general storyline. You're not afraid of the silence; the game is both about narrating beautiful scenography with the players, but also leaning back and giving them room to express the narrative themselves.

Basic requirements for play

4 players and one facilitator

1 hour approximately of workshop and reading and 4 hours playtime

Printouts of the playing cards for the descriptive scenes (Will be provided to you at Fastaval)

A total of 10 small items from the beach (Will be provided to you at Fastaval)

A device to play sounds and music on.

Works for inspiration

Victor Hugo's work: *Toilers of the Sea*, 1866

Mary Oliver's poem: *The waves* in the collection *A Thousand Mornings*, 2012

The videogame *Spiritfarer* by Thunderlotus, 2021

Nomadland, movie by Chloe Zaho 2021

The Boiler – Chamberlarp by Jackson Tegu

A place called Home – Chamberlarp by Andreas Markehed



Introduction

“The solitudes of the ocean are melancholy: tumult and silence combined.” - Victor Hugo, Toilers at the Sea (1866)

Welcome to the Fastaval Chamber LARP, The Tide and thank you for your interest in the game. It has been underway for some time now, as realizing these game themes in a slow and poetic expression took some careful consideration and time. It is not a game of action-packed dungeon crawling, and even if a key, expressive theme is sand, it is not a sandbox game.

I hope you'll enjoy co-creating a poetic tale of lonesome, solemn goodbyes and letting go of those we hold dearest, as much as I enjoyed writing this.

The story

The story you are about to explore centralizes around a family of four. Two parents, and twin teenagers. We follow their life every time they visit their cottage by the beach, as their everyday activities make for most of the scenery while they prepare for the inevitable. The waves are calling, and the children will soon leave with the tide. It is not a story that wants to explore filicide or overly abusive households. The parents will not actively force their children, the twins will be willing to go, they might even be excited for it. The story instead wants to express the solemn melancholy of letting go. The bittersweet feeling of releasing your children into the unknown. It is centralized around exploring the scenography together and the mood should be slow-paced, sentimental joy, family times and blissful moments with the overarching knowledge that the tide will come and the children will go out with it. The story has an open ending, there is no direct answer to where the children will go and what the end of the story is. There is only the loneliness left, the empty rooms and the solitude of their cottage by the sea. The game both invites to explore the question of: Where do we go now? But perhaps more importantly, what will happen when such a central part of our life moves on. What is left for the parents to do, whose main focus is creating a solid family together, when the children don't need them anymore?

Game mood and aesthetics

The pacing of this game is the most important tool to help the players find the mood. The game has a certain slowness to it, and this slowness challenges both players and the facilitator to keep their patience. In one playthrough the characters were kept vague and nameless and in another they were given more detail by the players and the facilitator in the workshop. The game runs better abstract and the poetic scenery was given more attention in the first playthrough; and so, the design builds around this rather than fleshing out the characters. They are aspects, representations of a normal family with normal conflicts and emotions, rather than a unique story. The scenography is also a representation of the ocean, beach, and the tide rather than a specific location.

The Facilitating role

This is a story built around the freedom of exploration within a very tightly set narrative. Your most important role is to balance these two things, as the facilitator. The players' imaginations should be given free rein in scenes like "Daydreams in summertime" and kept strict and to the point in scenes like "Saying Goodbye". Especially in the last act, the two players working as aspects should be given free rein while the other two players, the parent roles, are bound to the physical manifestations of their characters. Help your players maneuver around these roles and pace the scenes with courage. Remember, time is important, the slowness of time specifically.

And be patient with your players, if they cannot come up with the magic of their voices, let them find this by giving them space and patience, encourage slowly and allow them to dwell on their thoughts for a moment. Most importantly. Have fun.

The Sea and Time as inspiration

"...And the sea says in its lovely voice: Excuse me, I have work to do." Mary Oliver, The waves (2012)

The narrative has a certain freedom to it. Our aspects decide the moods and some of the scenes are controlled by their choices (More on that in the chapter, The Mechanics), but the narrative itself should always lead to the end of the game in Chapter 3. That means there are things you should not re-invent, nor should the players. No matter how they set up the little dramas, the conflicts within the characters and the relation between the family-members, the game will always lead to the point of saying goodbye.

In this regard, time is both a theme of the game as well as a factor within the structure of the game. You should keep a watch or something else to tell time, so that you're certain to keep the pacing relatively strict. Play in the moment but do not let the moment run off with your attention. Be inspired by your players and take the time to focus on especially the aesthetics of the moment. How does the sun feel on the face of the parent, watching their children play in the sand? How is the sound of laughter? What does the ocean smell like and how warm is the sand underneath their bare feet?

Everything will take place upon the same beach, but it should change over time, take your time to explore these changes together and use your collaborative creativity.

As the children are growing up throughout the narrative and the departure comes closer, time will also start to slow down. You'll give players more time to linger on the scenography and they'll be given more silence. It is a good idea to let them know this beforehand, so they are aware that they'll be paced in the beginning to explore the flow of time quick as they are enjoying themselves and slowed to give the simulated experience of loneliness and the inevitable goodbye closing in.

Character overview

The characters are as much archetypes as they are characters. They are written vague and open-ended, with the intention for the players to build on it as they see fit. The game tries to blur the line between solid characters and archetypes or aspects, and so as much as the players are in control of emotional scenography and aspects of the life around the characters, the characters themselves are also translucent in this way.

The Parents

The parents represent adult decisions and adult life. These are the two characters that invite into a more classic playstyle. They decide in the beginning of the game, how they want to be addressed, mother and mamma, pari and pappi, father and mother, dad and mom, daddy and father, mommy, and with-mom, or whatever else. There is no question of how the children were born, they belong to these parents.

The players playing the parents will not become the aspects of the scenography in most of the scenes in act three, and a lot of the character-development bound on the other two characters (The Twins) is tied to the choices made by the parents. These two characters do not have to be gendered depending on the players' gender-representation and can of course be anything. They are dualistic in their nature and created with a sense of distinctive duality and differentially in mind which can easily feel gendered - it is a good idea to help them not to force stereotypes, but the game does not focus on exploring gender norms and gender roles in society.

The Twins

The Twins or the siblings have less control over their own character development because in Act one and two, the parents make choices on their behalf and craft a lot of the story, and the Twins can decide how these choices affect their story. The Twins are not gendered and unlike the two parents, who represent duality, the Twins represent unity. They are usually alike, but also distinctive in some ways. The players may at times feel like playing the exact same character. Encourage this, they are mirrors of each other's innermost soul. The players playing the Twins should be made aware that they'll be playing the aspects that in many ways fit each other's characters and so their aspects are not a representative of their own character. That is intentional to make the characters feel more like mirrors than solid individuals.



The Mechanics

All of these mechanics' purpose are to make the game flow and the mood translate fluidly into the game. So, if you're facilitating and they do not work for your game, remember that it is your game to run and it has been left in your capable hands. Interchanging some of these or swapping out for another mechanics that work better around your table is welcome. The main mechanic for the narrative – the flow of the time – is central for the feel of the game though and through a few test-runs it was clear that it ran rather poorly without it.

Controlling the scenography

The game is run through scene-cards, and they have clear indication of what to do. As a facilitator you shouldn't stray too far from the scenography and the game itself is not supposed to change location from the cottage by the sea and maybe the surrounding town-area or whatever else your players and you might come up with. The scenes have several cards, belonging to each player. Each card has the act information on it, what scene it is, and a small quote from a poem about the beach. These poems are not supposed to be read aloud for each scene as much as creating flavor for the mood, the game, and the whole aesthetics of a symbolic and poetical narrative. It will be the same poem for the entire act.

One card of each scene has the facilitator icon, and the facilitator scene cards also have a small time-icon number. This number indicates how many of the beach items you'll need to add to the center of the table, you can read more about that in "pacing" further ahead. This card also describes the facilitating role. Lastly the facilitator card also has the character-play logo on it, if the players must play their characters, as well as a small info-text for that. Not all scenes have all characters at the same time, and some of them have no character-play. It will all be described on each scene but the overview further on in this material also gives an indication of when you'll need to create the scenography yourself, and when you'll be co-creating. If the scene has more than two cards, it means that some players will be playing their aspects. These other cards in the scene have the aspect icons. The aspects are the ones on each character's description.

Next page has the example of cards, note that this is not the full size of the cards but examples. The cards can all be found at Appendix B with full graphic backgrounds.

Act 1.



Scene 1 - The Beach. Facilitating card

"Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars." (Copeland, 2018)

This scene your main task is to keep track of the time. Make sure that all the aspects are given equal time to talk.

This scene does not have any character-play

Each card has the Act information on it, what scene it is, and a small quote from a poem about the beach. These poems are not supposed to be read aloud as much as creating flavor. It will be the same poem for the entire act.

This is the icon of the facilitator. This means that this card has the number for pacing on it and the specific task for the facilitator. The facilitator card also has the character-play logo on it if the players have to play their characters, as well as a small info-text for that.

The other cards have the aspect icons. The aspects are the ones on each character-description.

Act 1.



Scene 1 - The Beach. Aspect card

"Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars." (Copeland, 2018)

Describe the beach from the perspective of the sand and the ground, the plants and the nature around it. What does it look like? How does the sand feel?

Act 2.



Scene 2 – Building sandcastles.

Facilitating card

*"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt
Whitman, 1887)*

In this scene, the family have gone to the beach with blankets and towels, buckets and shovels.

Your job is to set the scene as an uncomplicated visit to the beach, building sandcastles.

Pacing

The game is paced through the use of beach-items. Rocks and seashells and whatever else you can find. You can also use coins, beads, pearls or similar if you do not have a beach available to collect these items. Some scenes are longer than others, and so the time is represented by visible items to help both the facilitator and the players time their game. At the beginning of each scene, the scene card is flipped and a small number at the top right corner indicates how many items should be put forward. The items are put at the center of the table or otherwise somewhere that everyone can see them. These items represent two minutes, you'll quickly get a feel for when to remove them as the facilitator, but it's advised to check the time closely throughout Act 1 so you get a feel for how to pace this. This means, every two minutes, remove an item, to indicate how much time there is left of each scene. Some scenes will feel long, and some will feel rushed, this is intentional and especially at the end of Act 2 and through Act 3 it is supposed to feel like there is no time left.

If you decide to pace without the items, let the numbers be an indication whether it is a long or a short scene you are playing.

Workshop

The workshop consists of two parts, one is framing your game together, so it becomes co-creation and the players feel close ownership of their characters. The game does not want to dictate the intersubjective narrative as much as build the framework for an expression of farewells. This means that the players have a lot of freedom to explore the family and this workshop aims to give space for that. It is timed for around an hour, however within that time, give your players time to say hello to each other, get drinks, get comfortable and read the material.

Step one, framing the game

This part of the workshop is all about constructing your narrative. So before giving the players their characters, play a little word-game with them. It is a simple exercise of association, you say a word, they have to say whatever comes to their mind. Do this for four rounds, then present the characters to them. Remember to explain that the aspects are not aspects of their characters but aspects of the narrative and might feel familiar to the parents and mirrored to the twins.

When you are done reading the characters, let the players flesh them out, give them some time to think on their character, what would they like to add? How can they expand on it?

When that is done, let the siblings talk to each other and find out how they are similar, when do they always agree? What are their first childhood memories? And finally, what their room(s) looks like at the summer cottage.

While the siblings are talking, the parents should figure out their dynamic as parents. How do they see themselves? What do they hope for their children and what do they talk about at night when they've put their children to bed? How did they meet and what is their best memory as a couple?

After this is done, take a brief moment to talk about safety. How do you plan to cut if someone needs a moment away from the table? The game does not involve themes that might seem obvious for causing distress, but it can still be an excellent idea to have a conversation about this. Especially sorrow and loneliness are themes of the narrative, and some players might want to take a breather when these become explicit.

Step two, getting into the narrative

The most important part to practice is how to run the scenes, the pacing, and the cards. In the playtests it was especially the aspects that were difficult to get into at first but were also mentioned as most enjoyable at the end of Act 3. To this end there are cards tagged Act 0, that has nothing to do with the narrative itself, but helps players try out playing aspects of the scenography and how to co-create moods. Play through the act 0 as the last bit of this workshop, then proceed to playing the game. Note, it is a good idea to let the players have a small break before running act 0, not before starting act 1, as the transition might feel slower then and more mechanical. Remember that your players might feel inclined to take turns around the table. That is not the point, they do not need to rush through their cards, they should expand upon what it says and have fun with building the scenography. Make it clear that there's no order of things, and it is okay to be silently contemplating a bit before moving on.



The game

This is not the description of the entire collection of scenes, but an overview for you as the facilitator. You should get all the cards printed and in case you get them mixed up, this is the order to present them in. This also gives you a narrative overview as well as the time pacing. Note that almost all of Act 2 the players only play their characters, and you are responsible for setting the scenes and creating the atmosphere. In Act 1 and Act 3 they will change between being aspects and playing, and your main job as the facilitator is to help pacing, keep track of the time and inspire them to move forward. Each scene should be paced according to the card, but here's also a time overview.

Note that the main game starts by act 0.5 requesting you to play a song for the players, the Tide by "The XX". The game can work fine without it, but it gives a sort of mood.

Certain scenes are in a way repeated. It should be obvious when they are the same scenes, but with the aspects of time woven into them. These are:

Daydreams in summertime – This scene is a repeated scene where you will explore and expose the inner-most dreams of the characters. It should start as a very open scene in Act 1 and be quite meta in Act 3

Building sandcastles – This scene clearly represents the growth of the children, how they move from childlike wonder to adult-like responsibilities. These scenes are also supposed to give room for feeling at one with the beach and the sense of summers that could last forever.

The passing of time – This is more of a meta-scene than anything else, and it is supposed to indicate that time moves on. There is one at the end of each Act and one by the break-time for the second act. They are small scenes more than large times to play and are more meant for wrapping up and punctuating the narrative than anything else.

All the longer scenes wrap up with "And then came the tide." It might feel awkward to say it repeatedly so many times, but it should feel more natural as the game moves on. The coming and going of the tide is heavily symbolic and represents the core essence of the game, time. This is also why the facilitator icon on the scene cards is the hourglass.

Act 1 – 50 min

The Beach – Aspects

The Summer Cottage - Aspects

Daydreams in summertime

Arrival - Character play

Building sandcastles - Character play

The passing of time – Transition to Act 2

Act 2 – 2 hours of play (With a break in between)

Daydreams in summertime

Building sandcastles

A birthday party

Boardgame night and fireflies

A sudden summer-storm – Parents play the aspects

The Passing of time – Opening up to the break

Break, around 15 minutes

Daydreams in summertime – children play the aspects

Building Sandcastles

The romantic encounter

The floating unicorn

The passing of time – Transition to Act 3

Act 3 – 50 min

Daydreams in summertime

The ocean at dawn – Aspects

Saying goodbye - Character play

Going Back - Aspects / Character play

The passing of time – Ending the game

Appendix A: Characters

The character's descriptions found here are simple and supposed to inspire into building your own familiar narrative with the players. They are descriptions of the manifestation of family that your specific game calls for. In that regard, each playgroup's experience is unique and full of their own tales. The Aspects are not described further here, they will make sense as you are playing the game. When the players are reading their characters, it can be a good idea to point out the iconography for them so they can identify their cards when they are to play the aspects. When they are all done reading these characters, you can begin step two of the workshop.



The Parent / Earth, sand, and soil



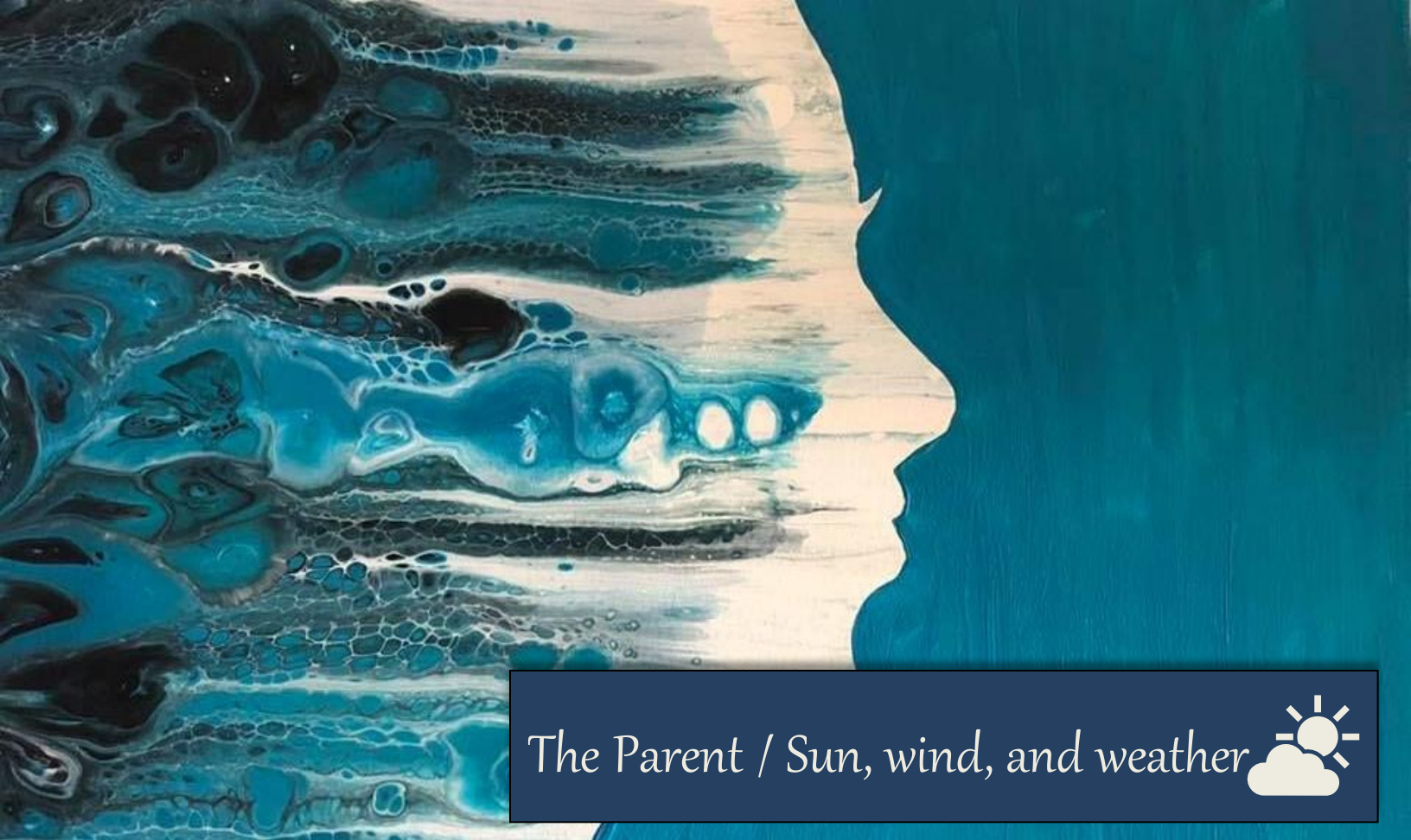
Title, pronouns and a name (Optional): _____

You are the parent the children can always depend on to be predictable. You are steadfast and solidly planted in your beliefs. In life you were faced with troubles, and a difficult upbringing has led you to believe that growing up facing adversity is healthy for your spirit - but in a loving and caring way. You are not hard on your children without reason and you are sensible and logical. You love your co-parent with all their merits and flaws, but you are not always good at expressing this, both with your co-parent and your children you sometimes come off as too levelheaded and need a little bit of a push to express how you actually feel. That is okay, you are aware of this and you're working on it.

You sometimes work too hard, and the summer trips have always been your stress release.

You love nature, the peace and tranquility of the beach and you prefer exploring and investigating secret hiding spots by the coastline rather than the loud city. You're enthusiastic about this, and you love to show all of nature's wonders to your partner and your children.

Aspect: Your aspect is represented by the seashell icon on all the cards. You can expand on both this character and the nature of your aspect as you see fit.



The Parent / Sun, wind, and weather

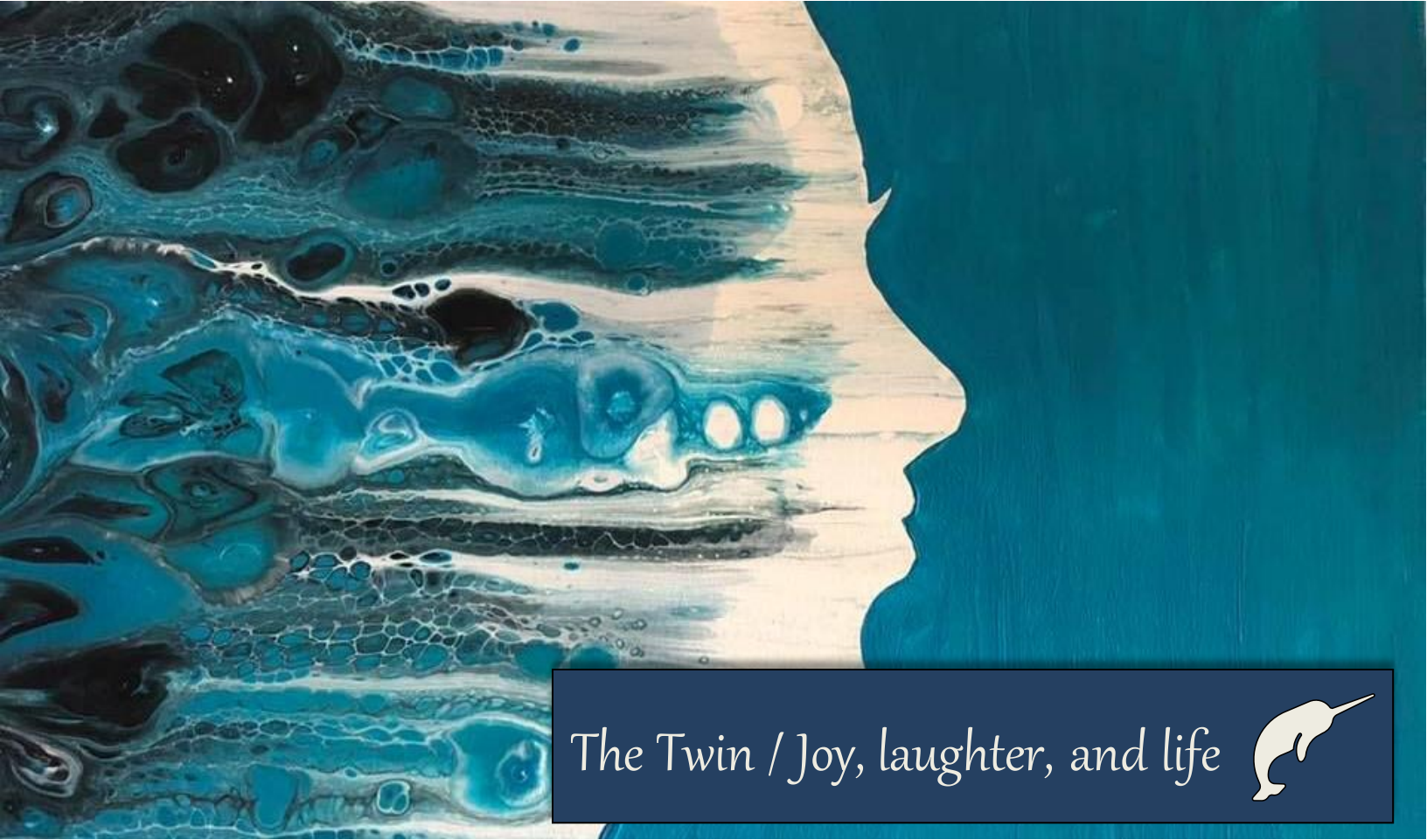


Title, pronouns and a name (Optional): _____

You are the parent who lights up any room you enter. Your own childhood memories are full of love and laughter and you'll like to shape your future like this as well. Especially for the children. You and your partner have your spats and conflicts but you're always willing to lovingly compromise if the compromise will still bring love and joy to your lives in some ways. You are in that way devoted to the family wholly and without reservations. You tend to be impulsive and disorganized at times, and you get carried along into dreams of magic and wonder. But it is alright, you balance each other well and you know that both you and your family require some structure as well. At home you are more accepting of this structure, but the summer trips have always been your release, your place of rest where you can let the artsy, impulsive, expressive and dreaming you free.

You love late nights, secret escapes and stargazing. You're never one to say no to going on adventure or playing wild games. You can always escalate a fantastic narrative and you've never let go of your childlike imagination.

Aspect: Your aspect is represented by the sun and cloud icon on all the cards. You can expand on both this character and the nature of your aspect as you see fit.



The Twin / Joy, laughter, and life

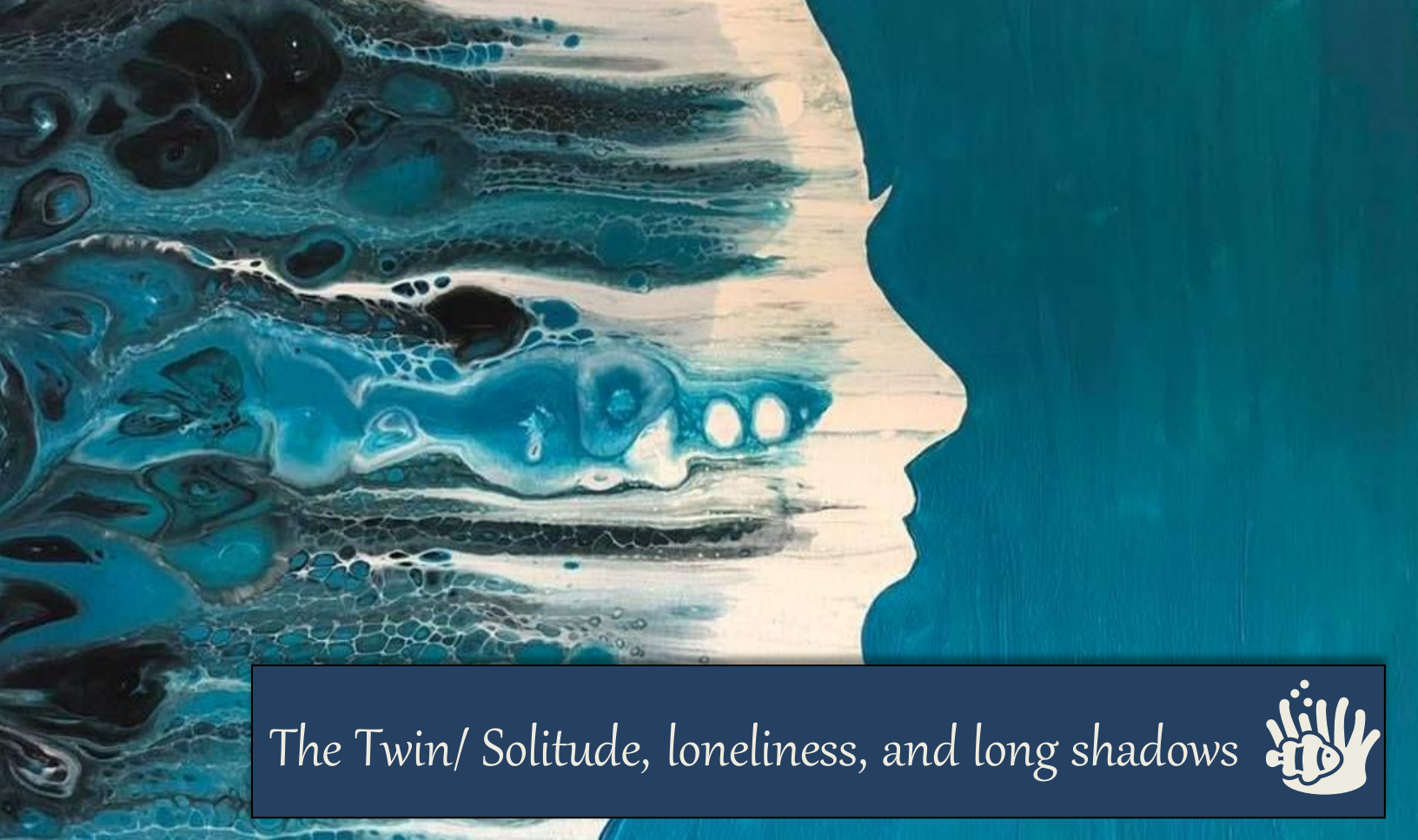


Title, pronouns and a name (Optional): _____

You are one of the two twins in this family, and together with your sibling you are quite a unity. You mirror each other in many of your emotions and you've always agreed on things. But growing up you've become more and more independent. You sometimes pick fights that you know are unreasonable, but you are just as quick to reconcile with your sibling again. You're quick to find flaws and are drawn to the darker corners of your mind, you had nightmares frequently as a child and you're afraid to lose what you have. It made you feel anxious at school a lot, because you didn't want the other children to think less of you and you had a feeling you were always doing something wrong. Despite these feelings you are well liked, sociable and doing well in school. You will probably grow up with success in whatever path you choose and you are loved and supported by those around you. You think you'll go into the world of arts or the like and it entuses you to go.

Throughout the years of childhood, you've always loved going to the summer cottage by the beach. It is a time of laughter, of family and love that you'll cherish forever. You especially enjoy the late nights stargazing and the small, quiet moments.

Aspect: Your aspect is represented by the narwhale icon on all the cards. You can expand on both this character and the nature of your aspect as you see fit.



The Twin/ Solitude, loneliness, and long shadows



Title, pronouns and a name (Optional): _____

You are one of the two twins in this family, and together with your sibling you are quite a unity. You mirror each other in many of your emotions and you've always agreed on things. But growing up you've become more and more independent.

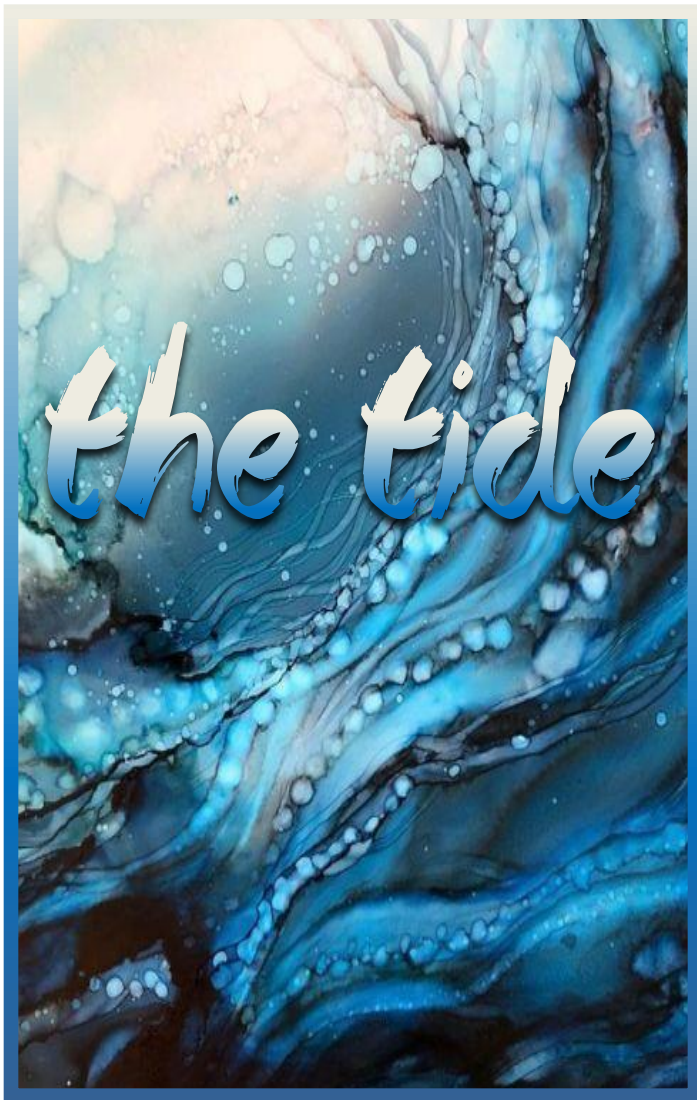
You're somewhat more forward than your sibling and have a strong sense of justice. You are protective, both of values and friendships but also of societal standards and morals. You have opinions and you are still experimenting with them. In many ways you can come off as entitled but you also know when you've overstepped, and you can find your way back to a compromise if you have offended or hurt someone. You are well liked, both in school and outside of school. Your parents raised you well and you have a lot of good qualities which will help you in your future life. But you do not know what that will be yet. You're nervous because the world is so widely open. Becoming an adult terrifies you, but you do not want to disappoint.

Throughout the years of childhood, you've always found joy and adventure by the summer cottage. The beach feels like home and you especially love all the crazy, funny and silly sudden bursts of events; you always love laughing.

Aspect: Your aspect is represented by the lonely clownfish icon on all the cards. You can expand on both this character and the nature of your aspect as you see fit.

Appendix B: Cards for scenes

All the cards for the game should be printed and cut out. Note that there's a back side for the cards. I have only added that in once, and it is mainly a graphical design choice and has little impact on how the game is run. If you are printing this yourself, there's no need to print all the cards with the backside artwork.



Act 0.



Scene 1 – A White Christmas. Facilitating card

“It’s going to be a cold, cold Christmas, without you, dreaming of those warm, warm lazy summerdays (Dana Rosemary Scallon, 1975)”

This scene is a winter-getaway for two lovers. They are celebrating Christmas together somewhere away from responsibilities of life.

This scene your main task is to keep track of the time. Make sure that all the aspects are given equal time to talk.

This scene does not have any character-play

Act 0.



Scene 1 – A White Christmas. Aspect card

“It’s going to be a cold, cold Christmas, without you, dreaming of those warm, warm lazy summerdays (Dana Rosemary Scallon, 1975)”

This scene takes place within a cabin, what does it look like inside this small getaway? Describe the old couch and what it feels like to sit in it. Describe the fireplace, what is burning and how does it smell? Describe what makes it cozy and why it is a “getaway”, help the others flesh out the scene.

Act 0.



Scene 1 – A White Christmas. Aspect card

“It’s going to be a cold, cold Christmas, without you, dreaming of those warm, warm lazy summerdays (Dana Rosemary Scallon, 1975)”

This scene takes place within a cabin, what is it like outside? How does it look out the window? How is the lighting inside? Describe the sense of coldness and warmth. Help the others flesh out the scene.

Act 0.



Scene 1 – A White Christmas. Aspect card

“It’s going to be a cold, cold Christmas, without you, dreaming of those warm, warm lazy summerdays (Dana Rosemary Scallon, 1975)”

This scene takes place within a cabin, where two people have wanted to get away. Who are these people? How do they smile at each other? What makes them happy and what do they think of, sitting here together? Help the others flesh out the scene.

Act 0.



Scene 1 – A White Christmas. Aspect card

“It’s going to be a cold, cold Christmas, without you, dreaming of those warm, warm lazy summerdays (Dana Rosemary Scallon, 1975)”

This scene takes place within a cabin, where two people have wanted to get away. Who are these people? Why did they want to get away? Describe the sense of emptiness in the cabin and that which was left behind. What do they fear, and will they tell each other?

Help the others flesh out the scene.

Act 1.



Scene 0.5 -The Tide. Facilitating card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

Tell your players to close their eyes and listen to the song “The Tide” by The XX. When the song is done, pull the next card of act 1.

Act 1.



Scene 1 - The Beach. Facilitating card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

We are introduced to the beach. It is up to the players to shape it out. Remember that the beach is ever changeable and so they are not completely bound by what they describe here in the first scene

This scene your main task is to keep track of the time. Make sure that all the aspects are given equal time to talk.

This scene does not have any character-play

Act 1.



Scene 1 - The Beach. Aspect card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

We are introduced to the beach. What does the vast dunes of sand look like? What grows here and what does not? Describe the feel of sand and the smell and taste of ocean. Describe the plant-life and the animals.

When there is only one time-item remaining, describe the path to the cottage – not the cottage itself, but the path that leads us there.

Act 1.



Scene 1 - The Beach. Aspect card

"Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars." (Copeland, 2018)

We are introduced to the beach. What is the weather like? How does it affect the beach and how does the ocean feel? What does it sound like, as the waves roll in?

Describe the wildlife and the sky ahead, is it clouded or clear blue?

When there is only one time-item remaining, describe a change in the ocean, either subtle or a sudden shift.

Act 1.



Scene 1 - The Beach. Aspect card

"Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars." (Copeland, 2018)

We are introduced to the beach. Who is there and what are they doing? Where is the laughter coming from? Describe an animal playing in the waves or a bird frolicking in the sky.

When there are two time-items remaining, describe the subtle signs of life on the beach and the timeless marks left on nature.

Act 1.



Scene 1 - The Beach. Aspect card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

We are introduced to the beach. Who is there and what are they doing? Who is that shape on their own on the dunes? Describe the vast emptiness of the ocean, the horizon ahead and the solitude. The sounds of the wind passing nothing, or perhaps trash left on the beach.

When there are two time-items remaining, describe signs of life that is then swallowed by the waves.

Act 1.



Scene 2 - The Summer Cottage. Facilitator card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

The summer cottage is where the family spend their summers. They always have, it is their sanctuary, the getaway from a busy life.

This scene your main task is to keep track of the time. Make sure that all the aspects are given equal time to talk.

This scene does not have any character-play

Wrap it up with: “And then came the tide.”

Act 1.



Scene 2 - The Summer Cottage. Aspect Card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

The summer cottage is where the family spend their summers. Decide what it looks like from the outside and inside. How many rooms does it have? How large or small is it? How is the nature around the cottage and what plants have been potted inside the house, if any?

When there is two time-pieces left, describe the parking area and the entrance to the cottage.

Act 1.



Scene 2 - The Summer Cottage. Aspect Card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

The summer cottage is where the family spend their summers. Where does the rising sun touch the floor in the morning? Where’s the best spot to stargaze in the night? What is the favorite room to play in and where do the family eat their lunch?

When there is two time-pieces left, describe what the ocean is like from here. What is the beach like and how far away is it? From where can the family see it?

Act 1.



Scene 2 - The Summer Cottage. Aspect Card

"Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars." (Copeland, 2018)

The summer cottage is where the family spend their summers. How does it look when it is empty? What is left behind when they always leave? Where's the dust thickest and where did the spider move in?

When there is one time-piece left, describe that one place in the cottage that was always kind of scary for the children. Where does the boogieman live in the house?

Act 1.



Scene 2 - The Summer Cottage. Aspect Card

"Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars." (Copeland, 2018)

The summer cottage is where the family spend their summers. How does it feel when it is full of life? What memories are on the walls and what items have significance? Are there memorabilia from an event or seashells from a special trip to the beach?

When there is one time-piece left, describe a moment of joy from the house. What do they all remember as a good memory and in what room did it happen?

Act 1.

Scene 3 – Daydreams in summertime.

Facilitator card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

This scene is one of the transition scenes that is repeated in all acts. For act 1 it is only character play, and the focus are the parents.

For this scene your main task is to keep track of the time and facilitate the daydreams. Help them by describing the trip driving up to the cottage.

Act 1.

Scene 3 – Daydreams in summertime.

Character-Play

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

You are in the car, driving towards the cottage. The twins are young children, and it is your first time there. Narrate your thoughts and dreams.

For the parents: What are your hopes for the future and what excites you?

For the children: what are you impatient about? What do you see out the window of the car?

Act 1.

Scene 4 – Arrival. Facilitator card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

Arrival at the cottage, this scene has the players play their characters. Your job is to facilitate the arrival and remind them of the moods they set before.

Let them settle in and describe playing around. It's quite a free framed scene and you are welcome to expand upon what they already described in the cottage.

Act 1.

Scene 4 – Arrival. Character-Play

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

The twins are young children, and it is your first time arriving to the cottage.

Settle in.

Act 1.

Scene 5 – Building Sandcastles. Facilitator card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

This is another of the repeated scenes. It is important to punctuate the childlike wonder of this scene, let the focus be the children.

The scene is set by the family going to the beach for the first time, with towels, blankets, buckets, and shovels in hand. Let them explore the beach and add little flavor like sea-shells or maybe other beach-goers to fill the scene.

Wrap it up with: “And then came the tide.”

Act 1.



Scene 5 – Building Sandcastles. Character-Play

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

The twins are young children, and you are going to the beach for the first time.

Play out the scene.

Act 1.



Scene 6 – The passing of time. Facilitator card

“Waves come crashing to grey sullen shores. Powerful and strong, it breathes and roars.” (Copeland, 2018)

This is the transition into Act 2. Punctuating act 1.

Go around the table, one at the time, describe one thing that has changed over the years from childhood to the near adult time that Act 2 will focus on. End with yourself adding something.

Then go around the table and one at the time, describe one thing that has stayed the same throughout the time. End with yourself again.

Act 2.



Scene 1 – Daydreams in summertime.

Facilitator card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

This scene is one of the transition scenes that is repeated in all acts. For act 2, part 1 it is only character play.

For this scene your main task is to keep track of the time and facilitate the daydreams. Help them by describing the trip driving up to the cottage.

Act 2.



Scene 1 – Daydreams in summertime.

Character-play

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

You are in the car, driving towards the cottage. The twins are soon nearing adulthood. Narrate your thoughts and dreams.

For the parents: What are your hopes for the future and what excites you? What scares you?

For the children: What are you impatient about? What do you see out the window of the car? What do you hope for your future?

Act 2.



Scene 2 – Building sandcastles. Facilitator card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

This is another of the repeated scenes. It is important to punctuate how the children have grown and what they do now.

The scene is set by the family going to the beach after they have arrived at the cottage for the summer. With towels, blankets, buckets, and shovels in hand the set up by their familiar beach.

Maybe they meet another local family? Perhaps there’s a peddler with sunglasses trying to sell them things?

Act 2.



Scene 2 – Building sandcastles. Character-play

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

The scene is set by the family going to the beach after they have arrived at the cottage for the summer. With towels, blankets, buckets, and shovels in hand the set up by their familiar beach. But perhaps the twins have

become too old to build sandcastles?

Playout the scene.

Act 2.



Scene 3 – A Birthday Party. Facilitator card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

The birthday party is a longer scene and will be followed up by the next scene, “Boardgame night and fireflies”. In this scene the parents are celebrating the twins’ last birthday before adulthood. Let them play through and do not be afraid to fill in mid-sections:

1. The parents waking up early to surprise the twins
2. Gift-giving and well wishes.
3. Making food together and eating dinner.

Act 2.



Scene 3 – A Birthday Party, Character-Play

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

It is the birthday for the twins, and the parents are up early to celebrate them.

Play out the day, happy birthday!

Act 2.



Scene 4 – Boardgame Night and Fireflies.

Facilitator card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

Following the birthday party, the night is full of boardgames and fun.

Halfway through the time-pieces, describe the illuminated landscape around them as fireflies appear like a sea of stars all around them. As much as you can, make this scene feel magical to the family.

Wrap it up with: “And then came the tide.”

Act 2.



Scene 4 – Boardgame Night and Fireflies

Character-Play

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

Following the birthday party, the night is full of boardgames, fun and magic.

What games are you playing? Who is winning? What snacks did someone fetch and who fetched them?

Act 2.



Scene 5 – A sudden summer-storm. Facilitator card

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

This scene is taking place a while after the birthday party, at the end of the summer retreat. The children are alone in the house, let them describe what they are doing. As you have moved three pieces of time, the storm will come suddenly and without warning.

The aspects will help you set the scene, help them fill out the mood while the players play the twins. Wrap it up with: "And then came the tide."

Act 2.



Scene 5 – A sudden summer-storm.

Character-Play

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

You are home alone, as your parents have left for the town to get supplies. What do you do? Let it turn more and more into a conflict.

Act 2.



Scene 5 – A sudden summer-storm.

Aspect card

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

It is a calm day by the cottage. Describe the interior.

Does it smell like home-baked bread? What kind of sounds can be heard in the house?

After the third time-piece has been removed, change the mood completely. The storm will rage, and you oversee all the cottage interiors. Where does it go dark? What kind of noises can they hear? What is scary?

Act 2.



Scene 5 – A sudden summer-storm.

Aspect card

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

It is a calm day by the cottage. Describe the ocean and exterior. It is sunny and warm. How does the light fall in the windows? What animals are lazy in the sun?

After the third time-piece has been removed, change the mood completely. The storm will rage, and you describe the ocean and the noises, the loud storm and the beating wind and rain. Can they hear the waves crash against the beach?

Act 2.



Scene 6 – The passing of time. Facilitator card

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

This is the transition into the break at Act 2.

Punctuating the first part.

Go around the table, ask the children what will change over the next year. Ask the parents what will stay the same over the next year.

After this card, take a short break.

Act 2. 4

Scene 7 – Daydreams in summertime.

Facilitator card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

This scene is one of the transition scenes that is repeated in all acts. For act 2 part 2, the children play their aspects.

For this scene your main task is to keep track of the time and facilitate the daydreams. Help them by describing the trip driving up to the cottage.



Act 2.

Scene 7 – Daydreams in summertime.

Character-Play

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

The parents are driving alone to the cottage. The twins have other obligations and will arrive later. In this scene the parents are alone in the car and having a conversation about the future.

Act 2.



Scene 7 – Daydreams in summertime.

Aspect card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

The parents are driving to the cottage on their own.

The twins will come later.

As they are driving, you should ask them if they’ll miss you when you are gone? Will they be lonely?

What is their biggest regret with raising you? Will they ever be able to change that?

Act 2.



Scene 7 – Daydreams in summertime.

Aspect card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

The parents are driving to the cottage on their own.

The children will come later.

As they are driving, you should ask them if they are hopeful for your future? What memory they cherish the most and really makes them smile.

What is their greatest moment in raising you and what are they proud of?

Act 2.

Scene 8 – Building Sandcastles. Facilitator card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

This is another of the repeated scenes. It is important to punctuate the loss of childlike wonder of this scene, if silence happens, let it linger.

The scene is set by the family going to the beach after the twins arrived. They bring towels, blankets, buckets, and shovels in hand. Let the beach be empty but for them, give them little to interact with but each other. Make the activity feel boring.

Act 2.

Scene 8 – Building Sandcastles. Character-Play

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

The twins arrived later to the cottage, and now their parents made them go to the beach as always. The twins have really started to step into adulthood and building sandcastles isn’t that interesting anymore.

Play out the scene.

Act 2.

Scene 9 – A romantic encounter. Facilitator card

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

As the sandcastles building scene ends, a handsome stranger approaches the two twins. Whatever the twins might find attractive, is what is approaching the two twins while they are still with their parents.

It is up to you why this individual is approaching them, but make it clear they are flirting and showing interest in whomever twin is most outspoken. This encounter can be followed up with a conversation at home if the flirting is shut down quickly.

Act 2.



Scene 9 – A romantic encounter. Character-play

“I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen’d long and long to the waves of tomorrow” (Walt Whitman, 1887)

As the sandcastles building scene ends, a handsome stranger approaches the two twins while the parents are still around.

Who will be charmed, and who might feel left out?
What do the parents think, and will they withdraw while this flirting is happening or intervene?

Act 2.



Scene 10 – The Floating unicorn. Facilitator card

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

If the twins were allowed to flirt with the stranger.

- A few days later, the twins swim out with the stranger, they are splashing water on each other and floating around on a blow-up unicorn.

If the twins were not allowed to flirt with the stranger.

- The twins have floated out far with a blow-up unicorn boat. They are hardly visible anymore.

Act 2.



Scene 10 – The Floating unicorn. Character-play

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

The twins have found this old, floating blow-up unicorn that can hold both. They were never allowed to swim out too far but now they are adults they have argued to bring it out in the open seas.

They are going further and further out in this scene, having fun.

The parents are at the shore, looking out, as they see their children slip away towards the horizon.

Playout the scene.

Act 2.



Scene 11 – The passing of time. Facilitator card

"I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair. Listen'd long and long to the waves of tomorrow" (Walt Whitman, 1887)

This is the transition into Act 3. Punctuating act 2.

Ask the characters, one at the time, to describe a small, fond memory from the last summer. Something that happened in between the scenes we've played, that are now cannon in their narrative.

Wrap it up with: "And then came the tide."

Act 3. 4

Scene 1 – Daydreams in summertime.

Facilitator card

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning*

(The XX, 2012)

This scene is one of the transition scenes that is repeated in all acts. For act 3, the scene is a meta-scene where all the characters get to express their fears for what is to come. They are all in the car, but it doesn't matter what is going on, because the scene is about describing their thoughts, not about character interactions, so you should not spend too long describing the trip itself.

Act 3.

Scene 1 – Daydreams in summertime.

Character-Play

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning*

(The XX, 2012)

The family are all in the car, driving to the cottage. Describe your greatest fears for what is to come, for the future ahead without the children or for the future ahead in the open world as an adult. These descriptions are thoughts, and no one hears them. You can expand upon your thoughts until there is nothing more to think about.

Act 3.



Scene 2 – The Ocean at Dawn.

Facilitator card

You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)

This is a scene where the aspects all describe the scenery in as much detail as they want. The main job as the facilitator is to keep track of the time.

Act 3.



Scene 2 – The Ocean at Dawn. Aspect

You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)

It is dawn by the beach. What do the dunes of sand look like? What does the plantation look like in the long shadows of dawn? Are there any animals out and about? How does the sand feel when it is cold?

Act 3.



Scene 2 – The Ocean at Dawn. Aspect

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)*

It is dawn by the beach. How does the sun look like, creeping in over the waves? How does the ocean sound in the morning and what is the wind like rushing in over the dunes?

Act 3.



Scene 2 – The Ocean at Dawn. Aspect

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)*

It is dawn by the beach. What life has started to show its face? What traces are left by the beach of joy and laughter from the day before? Are there footprints in the sand? A castle built by a child? Describe the lingering memories of the visitors of yesterday.

Act 3.



Scene 2 – The Ocean at Dawn. Aspect

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)*

It is dawn by the beach. How do the long shadows look cast from the houses nearby? Describe the solitude of the beach as it is lifeless and vast. The long treks that stretch as far as the eye can see. Describe the lost traces of life now drawn out into the ocean. Perhaps there's a forgotten beach ball? Or an empty soda-can left behind?

Describe the loneliness of the sea.

Act 3.



Scene 3 – Saying goodbye. Facilitator card

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)*

Everything has built up to this scene. This is where the parents will say goodbye to the children. It is more metaphor than actual actions, let this be obvious to the players. Describe the beach like they just described it themselves, try to use words they used in the last scene, as they go down to the beach at dawn and say goodbye before the children go out into the water and leave.

Act 3.



Scene 3 – Saying goodbye. Character-play

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)*

It is time. Take the time you need, before walking down to the beach at dawn. The parents know what must happen, so do the twins. There is no resistance, it must happen, there are only farewells to share.

When the parents and twins are ready, after at least five time-pieces have been removed...

When the family is ready, the twins will have to step into the ocean and disappear with the Tide.

Act 3.



Scene 4 – Going back, Facilitator card

*You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning
(The XX, 2012)*

The parents are alone now. They have let go of their children. Help them return to the cottage and describe the environment for them as lonely and silent. Let the aspects ask them questions and the parents say them aloud to themselves or maybe even to each other.

Act 3.



Scene 4 – Going back. Character-play

*“You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning“*
(The XX, 2012)

Only the parents are left now. As they return to the cottage, solemn and without their children, the aspects will ask them questions. Face the Aspect to reply to their question. Or look to the other parent, to ask them the question.

Act 3.



Scene 4 – Going back. Aspect

*“You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning“*
(The XX, 2012)

The parents are left, and you can ask them questions as the aspect of solitude, loneliness, and long shadows.

- What will you do now? What is the point?
 - Did you ever love each other?
- Did you let the twins go, or were you left behind?
- Will you ever return to the cottage again?

Act 3.



Scene 4 – Going back. Aspect

*“You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning“*

(The XX, 2012)

The parents are left, and you can ask them questions
as the aspect of joy, laughter, and life.

- What will you do now? What is the point?
 - Do you still love each other?
- What makes you smile, thinking about the twins?
- What would you like to tell the twins that you never said?

Act 3.



Scene 5 – The passing of time. Facilitator card

*“You leave with the Tide, and I can't stop you leaving
I can see it in your eyes, some things that lost their meaning“*

(The XX, 2012)

This is the punctuation of Act 3.

Tell the players to close their eyes and put on the song
“The Tide” by the XX.

Listen to the song, and then wrap it up with: “And
then came the tide.”