

# ABIGAIL

## AUDITION EXCERPT

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The character of Abigail, as she is the omnipresent narrator of the story, has a lot of monologues. She moves between talking directly to the audience and reading verbatim from letters or documents.

You will be expected to learn these lines by heart.

There are two sections to this excerpt. Please prepare both.

### PART 1

This section comes directly after the stowaways have been punished for stealing food. Abigail watches.

*Focus is drawn to ABIGAIL, who motions towards the STOWAWAYS.*

#### ABIGAIL

A moment. That deep, pit-of-your-stomach aching like it simultaneously holds rocks and snakes, heavy and slithering about inside of you. That kind of moment.

*(Pause)*

As I read this story - tell this story - over and over again, I can't help but wonder: if any moments had been different, would the ending have been different too? What if the boys hadn't stowed away on the Arran? What if there'd only been one of them, or two or three? The moment John Paul stole biscuits; if that moment had been different, would the ending have been different too? Would they all have survived? Or would more have died? You could look at this moment here, seven boys sitting huddled in the hold of a ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, and say that it started here. "This is the moment," you say, "that it all went downhill." Because this is the moment an idea is born.

*Lights down on the STOWAWAYS. ABIGAIL holds up a letter and reads from it. The movement mirrors her words.*

#### ABIGAIL (cont'd)

"One month after leaving Greenock, we came across fields of ice about the fifth or sixth of May." It was the ninth. "We went into the ice, and were drifted in St. George's bay, on the coast of Newfoundland." The Arran was trapped. No going forward, no going back. Captain Watt and Kerr left the ship to see what could be done, and while they were gone...

## **PART 2**

This sections comes directly after the stowaways have been thrown overboard onto the ice. Abigail storms into Captain Watt's cabin to confront him.

*ABIGAIL storms into his cabin.*

### **ABIGAIL**

Do you even know what you've done? The lives you have condemned? They are boys! Children! The youngest is eleven years old and you have put them over to die! You are the Captain of this ship. You are responsible for every person onboard. They were on board your ship, even if you didn't want them here. They chose your ship and they chose you as their Captain, and you have abandoned them to their deaths. Can you feel that growing heaviness in your stomach? The guilt that eats away at you from the inside, demanding to be let out? You knew! You knew when you first heard the idea to escape over the ice. You knew when you offered Reilly your telescope. And you knew when you pushed them over. You knew that you were sending them to their deaths. Murderer! Selfish, self-preserving, awful—

You do not yet know it, but by killing them you are killing their descendants. Thousands of people who may have learned, loved, and led lives. You aren't killing a few boys. With a single choice, you are killing generations.