

Jump in with me.

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a *roughfiction* play: roughfiction.com
written 2010, Phil King: philjcking.com

Main Characters:

Sabina: pretty enough for all normal purposes.

Boy/Man: her lover, a solid human being and signwriter's son.

Mother: the self-appointed town matriarch.

Daughter: conniving although not clever.

Others:

Bedouin

A Daughter

A Mother

Signwriter

Stall owner

Teacher

Voices

Whisper

Workers

In-text notation:

... an idea or thought unfinished in some way, either abandoned by the speaker themselves or cut off by another character. If ellipses start a speech it means that sentence represents a continuation of thought, maybe from the previous line that character has spoken.

/ the point overlapping speech begins.

(!) sarcasm or a note of confused surprise.

{ all grouped lines preceded by this symbol are spoken simultaneously.

Thoughts:

I'll find strength in pain and I'll change my ways...

Mumford and Sons

We need hints before we get tired...

We need a hint to know we're on the right track.

Jose Gonzalez

Betrayal means breaking ranks. Betrayal means

breaking ranks and going off into the unknown.

Sabina knew of nothing more magnificent than going off into the unknown. *Milan Kundera*

1. The first and last time.

Dark.

Whisper Sabina?

Sabina.

Sabina, where are you?

Come here.

Come down here.

You're safe down here.

Sabina

Sabina *walks forwards with purpose and strength. She strips to her faded and simple bra and knickers, piles up her clothes and plunges in, smiling, amidst a black and white splash of bubbles: deep, lost and gone forever.*

Act One 2. A life.

A flash of blues and whites leave these colours all around. Blissfully bleached out. Whitewashed with summertime joy.

A fishing village bursts into life, smiles.

Voice 1 Our lake / as you can...

Voice 2 Salt lake

Voice 1 ...yes, salt lake, as you can see is vast.

Voice 3 Not as vast as the sea, obviously, but vast and *ours*...

Voice 1 Always plenty of fish.

Voice 2 Always

Voice 3 So we're all...

{ **Voice 1** Happy.

{ **Voice 3** Happy to live on the shore

Voice 2 Happy to fish and earn money and play and receive excellent dental care and live in houses big enough for our families and *their* families and when they want to move out there's land to build on close to the shore and the opticians are magicians and there's no trouble in the sun-kissed clean streets
[breath]

This is paradise my friends and you're lucky just to be able to glance it
[breathes it in]

Voice 1 Our simple paradise.

Voice 3 Oh yes, simple

Voice 1 We don't hear the news,

But this is very much what we choose.

Voice 3 Cut off and left alone

Voice 2 Unless it's to trade fish

Voice 1 Simple.

Fish equals money equals happiness.

This happiness, our happiness, our, togetherness.

Voice 3 Not a frown in the place

Voice 2 We're a world heritage site, why would we frown?

Voice 1 *[smiles]*

Voice 3 Not a dissenter amongst us

Beat.

Voice 2 *[keeping an eye on Voice 1's reaction]* That is, apart from...

Calling out Sabina?

Sabina.

Sabina, where are you?

Voice 1 Christ, that little girl...

Signwriter *[interrupting to keep the peace]* I'm the signwriter.

We're obviously not *all* fisherman here, there are many other important jobs for skilled people

Erm, the best signwriter there is, so that's what I / do...

Calling out Sabina?

Sabina.

Sabina, where are you now?

Voice 1 I hope she's fallen down a hole...

Signwriter And, erm, I have a son

A little simple, but that's what we like here

He's lovely

He's never going to set the world on fire, but that's what we like here

He's going / to be...

Voice 1 She might have drowned?

Calling out Sabina?

Sabina.

Sabina, come on now.

Signwriter A fisherman

He's going to be a fisherman, which is what we *[indicates with his gestures that we know the end to this sentence]*

Later he'll get married to a beautiful and intelligent girl (they all are here – it's the money), but he'll be a fisherman first collecting all the fish he needs each and every...

*The young **Sabina** enters. Walks straight to centre stage splitting the group.*

Sabina Question.

If all this dried up what would we do?

*They all laugh (some more forced than others) and go about their business. **Sabina** stays stock still.*

Voice 1 Year by year the glorious same – just the right amount of sprinkling rain.

Reinvigorating everything it touches.

Voice 3 And just the right amount of perfect fishing

Voice 2 Very useful for our fishermen

Voice 1 Fewer crimes than the year before / even.

Sabina But what if all the fish swim to the very bottom and refuse to be caught?

Signwriter *[smiling at her and ruffling her scraggly hair]* I think it's time you started school young lady...

The tables and chairs of a formal, old-fashioned style simple school.

Teacher Any questions?

Sabina *is the only student with her hand stretched out. The **Teacher** searches for anyone else.*

Teacher Anyone?

Sabina *[stretches her hand higher]*

Teacher Sabina?

Sabina *[beat]* Why is the world a deaf machine?

*Silence as the **Teacher** fumbles for a workable answer, several spring to mind but they aren't going to work.*

Teacher *[takes a breath to speak]*

Sabina Why won't people hear what you're saying when you're trying your hardest?

If blue things were really yellow would we all be colour-blind?

Why can boys spit and play guns but girls just get to plait hair?

*A bell rings and everyone whizzes away and around leaving a young **Boy** transfixed. After a circuit of her own **Sabina** tweaks his nose to get him out of his daze.*

Sabina You look stupid like that – come on.

He follows. The spirals continue a while.

Signwriter Seven years old

Boy Sabina!

Sabina *runs towards him. The **Boy** kisses her. Pause.*

Sabina *[spluttering]* Urgh!!!

Get lost!!!

[tweaks his nose and runs off smiling]

*Everyone spins around them again. The **Signwriter** writes "the fun of the fair".*

Voice 2 And the fairs...

Signwriter All the usual games and rides and lights,
but better than you might be used to

Voice 2 Spinning and rushing and wobbling and
candyfloss you could get lost in
How old are they now?

Signwriter Last year of primary school
And he's already taking aim

*Winter. Sabina stands in a distinctive pink coat. The
Boy stands, rifle in hand, at a shooting gallery, clearly
doing very well. He has one shot left to complete.*

Boy Which one do you want?

Sabina That one.

Stall Owner Then you need to make this then young
man

*The Boy takes aim. Breathes slowly, holds it. Fires.
The tinny ping confirms he's done it.*

Stall Owner Nicely done [*handing over a fish in a
clear plastic bag*]

Sabina [*nearly drops it*]

Stall Owner Careful clumsy – don't want to burst
that bag.

Sabina Sorry, yes, thank you.

And thank you, what's he called?

Boy Henry?

Sabina He *is* called Henry.
Hello Henry.

Boy [*Henry voice*] Hello Sabina!

Sabina Fancy that.

I didn't know fish could talk(!)

Boy [*shrugs*]

Sabina And how comes you can talk Henry?

Boy [*Henry voice*] Because I'm special.

Sabina And how's that?

Boy [*Henry voice*] Because I'm going to look after
you forever, even when you're most unhappy and the
teacher's really angry with you for asking difficult
questions.

*Sabina pushes the fish away so she's face-to-face
with the Boy.*

Sabina Thank you.

Boy Don't thank me, thank Henry.

Sabina [*she takes the fish and nearly drops him
again*]

Stall Owner [*smiling, hands out a spare bag*] Just in
case(!)

{ **Sabina** [*rams it straight into her jacket pocket*]

{ **Boy** Clumsy

Sabina Smelly

*They stare straight at each other, the **Boy** moves to kiss **Sabina**.*

Sabina *[smiles, tweaks his nose]*
Get lost!!!

Off they run.

*In various attitudes time passes exceedingly quickly: he gets down on one knee, a wedding dress/cake whizz past, the **Signwriter** writes "to the happy couple", a house is decorated (paint is thrown and noses are spattered).*

Man *[hands her two vials]*

Sabina What's this?

Man It's for you.

Sabina No, I asked "what's this", not "who's this for".

Man For our anniversary.

Sabina No, again / that's...

Man *[a little embarrassed]* I went out fishing and took some of the water and, steamed it off.

Sabina Right.

Man So this one is now the salt.
See it?

Sabina *[nods]*

Man And this one's fresh water.
Together and separate.
[embarrassed short pause]
Like us.

Sabrina *[speechless]*

Man *[misreading her]* Sorry, it's not very special.
I'll get you a proper present tomorrow, / I'm...

Sabina *[staring at the vials shaking her head]* You're utterly fantastic.

What an unbelievably thoughtful gift.
It's the best present I've ever had.
[smiles]

I shall look after it always.
Always.
Always always always
Like us.

*A swirl of time. Other people have children. **Sabina** walks on with a little plastic stick shaking her head, and again, sadder, and again, sadder still. People play with their growing children. She sits. The **Man** places a hand on her shoulder, she throws it off. Tears. He exits, re-entering soon after.*

Man *[with a fish between his face and hers, Henry voice]* But why are you so sad?

Pause.

Man You still have your smelly husband.

Sabina

Man He still loves you very much, that's not going to change.

Sabina?

Sabina *[hugging him very hard indeed]*

Man Whoa, careful of Henry, clumsy.

Sabina Sorry Henry *[she kisses the fish, she then kisses the **Man** in, very deeply.]*

Man Thank you for loving me.

Sabina I can't help it.

Happy Pause.

Man You're utterly amazing.

Sabina *[tweaks his nose]* Get off!!!

*An explosion of fireworks. The **Signwriter** writes "remember remember". Another village swirl.*

Voice 2 *[over the delightful din]* And it was perfect again...

Voice 1 Unnatural.

Sabina Sorry?

Voice 1 I said "hello Sabina."

Sabina *[already somewhere else]* Hello!

*Another peel of firework bangs to "oohs" and "aahs". A whole new swirl. **Sabina** and the **Man** are found together as movement happens all around them. Colours light them up as they burn in the sky.*

Sabina We've got everything in front of us.

Man Don't leave me alone

Sabina *[laughing]* I wouldn't dream of it.

Man I always thought you wanted to leave

Sabina I'm not losing you.

Man No.

You're never losing me.

The biggest bangs yet, only the fireworks light us now, when they subside we are bathed in dark. Magnificence. We see an all-encompassing kiss between the couple in the fires.

A peel of thunder and crack of lightning disrupt proceedings.

A deep and dangerous splash. In black and white we see him surrounded by bubbles and thrashing, screaming under water. Dying. Lights fade as his struggle does. Darkness. Silence.

Act Two
3. Vengeance.

Sabina Sabina is alone.

Pause.

Sabina She never thought she would be. In front of a whitewashed and bleached house tears are marked out on her face, covered in dust from hours of trekking up and down and staring out, for him.

Throughout this a small light that grows in intensity, but never getting very bright, reveals her standing in front of a very small model as described above. She wears what appears to be a faded baby blue nightie, almost white. The small model the same. The model mirrors her movements throughout the rest of the scene. The vast salt lake spreads out in front of her. Small, simple wooden boats float in the foreground/distance.

Sabina He is gone but she needs to see it before she believes it. Separated from her body her mind is confused and lies in six hundred pieces. She would scream but her vocal chords are somewhere else. She watches the boats bob up and down.

[short pause]

How?

Sabina *watches a small boat turn upside-down. A head and hand can be seen waving for help. She waves helplessly in reply.*

In the distance Sabina!

Sabina!

Sa/bina!!!

Sabina No!!!

Dry up.

Dry up now.

*A **Mother and Daughter** appear on the small puppet stage allowing us then to realise that there are a **Mother and Daughter** in **Sabina's** larger life.*

Mother Now Sabina.

Enough's enough.

Sabina I wish the sun would come out and never stop.

The sun burns bright straight through the night dark.

Sabina I wish I could close my eyes and find nothing before me but the remains of all the fishermen that have ever drowned and I could go and find and bury each and every one of the them starting with my own and it would be all right and then it would be all right,

then it would just stupid be all right then, wouldn't it?
[breaks down in floods of tears]

*The **Daughter** moves towards her but is checked by her **Mother**. All this is mirrored in the small puppet stage.*

Mother Sabina, listen to me now, you have always been different but over the years you've been less and less so and we've come to accept you more and more.

[beat]

Don't fuck it up now.

{ **Daughter** Mother!

{ **Mother** *[without being distracted a beat, staring straight at her target]* You've had enough time now.

You've got two choices.

Behave like one of us or face the consequences.

4. An apology.

Night. Candle light.

Daughter It's all there.

[pause]

I don't want to do this / you know.

Sabina And me signing it would do, something?

Daughter Keep people happy.

Sabina *[barely audible]* Hmm *[places the letter down]*

Daughter I didn't want to come.

But they are right.

Don't you think?

We are a community.

Don't you think?

Sabina Doesn't matter.

Daughter Oh but it does.

If you don't sign this you won't be living here.

Sabina *[nods]*

Daughter No, you're not listening properly Sabina, if you don't sign this you won't be living here by the end of week.

Sabina *[nods]*

Daughter *[playing idly with some of **Sabina's** things]*

You have nice things.

Sabina It's just stuff.

Daughter *[continuing to play with things]*

I like things.

I've got lots of things.

Sabina

Daughter *[finds the vials, kept out in plain view]*

What's this?

Sabina *[quickly and efficiently removes the vials from the **Daughter's** hand and places them in front of her]*

Daughter I thought you said it was just stuff.

Sabina Well, some stuff you can't touch.

Daughter

Sabina

Daughter What is it?

Sabina My relationship.

Silence.

Daughter I don't think I'll ever be like you.

Sabina Probably a good thing.

Daughter Probably.

You scare people.

Sabina Do I scare you?

Daughter *[beat]* Yes.

I think you're a shipwreck.

Silence.

Daughter *[punches through the side of a cupboard]*

You're not going to win!

Sabina I wasn't aware I was trying to win.

I'm pretty sure I'd already lost.

Daughter No one's going to stop until you apologise.

Just sign the paper.

[grabs hold of the vials as if to break them]

You don't want what's coming next.

[smiles]

Sabina *calmly tips her water over the document washing the writing away, she hands it back. Smiles.*

*As soon as the **Daughter** exits **Sabina** instantly checks over the vials, polishes them with her outfit and places them in a bottom drawer of a cupboard.*

5. Searching/Wrecking.

Sabina *treks out over the dried-up lake looking for her husband. Nights and days and deep red sunsets pass and the lake dries up further. Outlined in dressing-room style lightbulbs he appears. She goes towards him. Sadly it's only the image of the town at night.*

Sabina's eyes dry up in the searching.

The **Signwriter** writes "pray for rain".

*At the same time her house is pulled apart. The **Mother** and **Daughter** tear the paper off the walls, they splinter the wood of the furniture and tear the cotton sheets in two, in three, more... The more **Sabina** searches on the lake the more her house is destroyed.*

The **Signwriter's** sign becomes bleached out and cracked. The sun has won.

Throughout the scene focus is taken onto the events in the house. One object difficult to break (a pot, a pan?) has taken the fascination of the **Daughter** who keeps trying to break it despite near impossible resistance. **Sabina** enters, stops still, taking in the scene, the **Mother** stops but still the **Daughter** persists. She realises she is being watched. She stops.

Daughter I don't want to do this.

Mother Oh do shut up.

Well?

Sabina Well what?

Mother Are we going to have a polite conversation or are you going to be an awkward little bitch / as normal?

Daughter Mother!

Sabina A polite conversation being one where I agree with everything you say?

Mother

Sabina

Daughter *[looks to her mother for advice]*

Short Pause.

Mother For years, questions, and now this.

Sabina

Pause.

Mother *[strikes a match]*

?

Sabina I'll leave

Mother We both know that's far easier to say than to do.

Have you ever been outside the village? It's not all fish and chips out there.

Besides, you won't be able to find him if you leave.

[throws the match into a pile of splintered wood and debris, beat]

Look, all we need is a scapegoat.

Take the blame, we'll yell at you, lock you up until it starts to rain again.

Apologise.

Accept your punishment.

How does that sound?

Pause.

Sabina I miss him.

Pause.

Mother We know you do.
We know how you feel.
We're all suffering.

Sabina *[shaking her head]*

Mother Don't you shake your head at me young lady!

You think you have it bad – have you any mouths to feed? *[motions to her daughter]* Hmm? The lake drying up day by day, fewer and fewer fish.

Are you even aware of what's happening to this village?

The sign splits in two and crumbles.

No, I don't suppose you care one jot.
No fish equals no money equals..?

Daughter No happiness.

Mother He's gone. It's a horrible hardship but it's done now.

Say sorry.

It rains.

We're done. Scum.

Sabina Sounds so simple.

Mother It is simple.

Everything is simple.

Daughter Fish equals money equals happiness.

The fire catches.

Daughter Erm...

Mother Yes?

Daughter ...Mum.

Mother ?

Daughter Mum!

Mother *[barks]* I know. *[stays still]*

Daughter Sabina??

Sabina is staring at a cupboard dangerously close to the fire.

Mother What are you / looking at?

Daughter That's where / you've hidden them!

Mother What's she looking at?

Daughter The only thing she cares about

Mother Get it then.

Daughter Mum, it's / on fire.

Mother Get it!

[pause]

I said: get, it.

*Sabina dives into the bottom drawer of a cupboard and pulls out the vials, using what she can find, the pink jacket from the fair, to protect herself from the heat. She struggles with the heat, burning herself. The **Mother** pulls them off her, **Sabina** scratches her*

face but gets pulled back by the **Daughter**. **Sabina** and **Mother** are left animalistic, raging.

Mother Now, it's going to work like this.

Your house *is* going to burn down.

You're going to be very sorry and we're going to lock you up and hiss at you and spit on you and throw things at you and take you out each and every day and beat you each and every day until it rains.

You are different and you are stupid and you deserve everything that's happened to you and everything that's going to happen to you. What you've done to us is selfish and unforgivable.

Do you understand what I'm saying you pathetic wretch, you pathetic childless, husband-less unwomanly widow?

Sabina punches the **Mother** square in the face; she drops like a stone. The fire hisses and crackles as it turns up a gear. **Sabina** scoops the vials up in the pink jacket. The **Daughter** rushes to help her **Mother**.

Daughter Sabina.

Help me!

I can't move her on my own.

Sabina? Sabina!

6. Let my heart go/Fish.

Dusk.

Sabina runs out onto the lake at full pelt clutching the vials. The entire expanse is now a honeycomb of dried salt. Sweat pours into her eyes and she keeps running.

She finds the last remaining pool and crumbles down beside it, panting and struggling for breath. Chest heaving and tongue burning she seriously considers drinking the vial with the fresh water.

Pause.

After considering her choices she takes a deep draught of the salty puddle. She retches. Laughs.

Sabina What a shipwreck.

Outlined in dressing-room lightbulbs he appears.

Sabina [to the lights] I can't find you.

I'm sorry.

I don't know where you've gone.

*His lights die. Silence. Hit by tiredness **Sabina** lays down, her face near the edge of the dregs of the lake.*

Stillness.

From nowhere she lets out an almighty scream and jumps through in the air.

Sabina Jesus!

Fish Hello.

Sabina Christ!

Where did you...?

Fish Well I haven't exactly got a lot of options right now so, the salty puddle I'm afraid.

Sabina *[stares around]*

Fish The one you were just sick in.

Sabina I...

Fish He's gone.

Sabina B...

Fish He's gone.

Sorry to be blunt but time's not on my side.

Sabrina I'm sorry?

Fish You can waste all the time you like out here but he's gone.

Sabina Now, I'm not...

Fish No, no, listen.

He was out here everyday – for you.

For your life together.

And he loved you.

Sabina Who... what?

Fish Sabina: he's dead.

Sabina I...

Fish Sabina: he's dead.

Long Pause.

Sabina He's dead?

Fish Yes.

Sabina He's dead.

Fish Yes.

And I'm dying.

This is it, the last of the lake and I'm dying.

You can't save him but you can save me.

Take me to the sea Sabina.

Pause.

Sabina The sea?

Have you any / idea of...

Fish Yes, or I die.

Sabina I...

Fish It's really rather important for me.

Sabina Look, you're a *[struggles to know what to call him]*...

Henry Henry.

Sabina Henry?

Henry Help me Sabina, please.

Sabina *[searching aimlessly around her]* Erm, but how, I...

[by accident she finds the spare plastic bag the stallholder gave her in her pink jacket, beat]

Henry Please.

Sabina *[nods]*

Sabina scoops **Henry** up in the clear plastic bag and strikes out for the sea.

The last light of day dies and in the puddle we see the outlined image of his lightbulbs. One bulb splutters and dies.

Whisper Sabina.

Sabina

His remaining lights extinguish.

Act Three

7. Out of the fire...

Sabina is found within a huge landscape dominated by sand and sandy, brown rocks: rugged, almost impassable, terrain and searing sunshine. Her lips are chapped and she has tied her outfit in a way to protect herself from the ravages of heat.

Again she is seen in model form along a thin strip of land upstage (mimicking the above), the scale now giving a clearer idea of her mammoth journey. The model is tiny and all that dominates the stage space in front of her is sandy and brown.

*Distant desert flutes. The sound of searing and faint pops of heat hide underneath. The wind whips up the sand. A heat haze wafts visions lazily. A tiny moon and tiny sun move in arcs along with the passage of the light in the space. The stars are nothing short of phenomenal. But it is cold at night and **Sabina** finds it difficult getting comfortable. Her passage during the daytime is laboured, deliberate. She looks after her charge studiously; this is a labour of love.*

8. Well

*A well. **Sabina** runs towards it and takes a deep draught. She rinses the sand out of her eyes and the dust from her face; she rinses her mouth. In the distance, and maybe only visible on the model set a man is long in arriving. Wrapped up from the ravages of the sand only his eyes are visible and then only dimly so. After his long walk in the heat haze he nears. Stops. Stands tall, takes an old-fashioned rifle*

out and shoots into the air. Startled, **Sabina** stands to attention to be confronted by the **Bedouin**.

Bedouin Mine.

Sabina Yes, I'm sorry, I was thirsty and needed to drink.

Bedouin

Sabina I'm Sabina.

Bedouin

Sabina I needed to drink.

[uses her hands to gesture] drink, gagaga...

Bedouin ?

Sabina

Bedouin Mine.

[prepares his rifle]

Sabina God, I'm sorry.

I'm sorry.

I didn't mean anything by it.

I'm sorry.

I'm not used to, I mean I've never had to, I'm sorry.

Please understand.

You have to understand.

Silence.

Sabina Please understand?

Bedouin *[noticing for the first time]*

Fish. *[extends his hand]*

Sabina *[staring at Henry, panic stricken]*

No, I can't I'm sorry, I can't.

Not...

Bedouin *[prepares his rifle]*

Sabina No, shit, sorry, I...

[panics]

This, erm, here, here! *[unwraps the pink jacket from her head]*

Take this, please, take this.

Bedouin *[places down the rifle and inspects the jacket slowly and methodically, nods and exits]*

Sabina Sorry, excuse me, the sea, erm, the sea *[gestures with her hands]*

Bedouin *[without looking points in the direction she was already heading]*

Sabina Thank you!

Bedouin *[almost off]* You're welcome.

Good luck.

Sabina Oh, thank you.

{ **Bedouin** You'll need it.

{ **Henry** Sabina, we need to go.

Sabina I'm really not sure I can do this.

Henry Sabina

Sabina Maybe I'm not cut out for leaving home.

Henry I need you.

Sabina I don't know what I'm doing.

Henry Nor does anyone else.

Sabina I don't know anything.

Henry Most people don't know most things.

Sabina What do I know about the world?

Henry You don't have to know about the world.

Right now you just have to know which direction the sea's in.

Sabina [*points in their onwards direction*]

Henry Exactly.

Sabina [*smiles*]

Henry So come on lovely woman.

9. Irritation ditch

***Sabina** walks onwards. The puppet journey has progressed across the stage space.*

***Sabina** comes across a trench in the process being repaired. Workers sit round a small table with three cups of black tea in small glasses. A pot is on the stove: lunch bubbling away. **Sabina** tries walking onwards over the trench.*

{ **Worker 1** Woa!!

{ **Worker 2** Hey

{ **Worker 3** Hang on there

Worker 1 You can't just wander over there.

That took all morning.

Sabina [*tries to move forwards again*]

Worker 1 Hey hey hey, hang on.

That took us all morning to repair.

You cannot trample on that, that is the finest irrigation ditch in the land.

That is going to bring joy and prosperity to this fine country.

Sabina But where's the water?

Workers [*laugh*]

Worker 2 You don't know anything do you?

Sabina No, I don't suppose I do.

[*tries moving forwards again*]

Worker 3 Hang on / hang on

Worker 1 A perfect 17 degree angle on either face – steep, so it's deep with short surface area to limit evaporation, but not steep enough to stop concrete easily being layered on top without the effort of getting it to stick to the sides at a sheer angle!

And you people come here with your size sixes.

And we take all morning to put it right again.

Sabina But there's no water, no concrete, so / I'm fine to...

Worker 1 These things don't happen over night madam.

Worker 2 We have to win the war first.

Sabina War?

Worker 3 She really doesn't know much.

Woman of her age, it's a disgrace.

Worker 1 The bore holes are drying up, we've gone as deep as we can.

So we've got a new plan.

Win a war, divert a river *[indicates]* along here.

Fish and chips for / supper.

Everyone'll be doing it soon but we thought of it first.

Worker 2 Oh shit *[runs over to the stove and checks on the lunch]*

Worker 3 How is it?

Worker 2 *[waggles his hands as to indicate "so-so"]*

Worker 3 An improvement on yesterday then.

Worker 2 *[nods]*

Worker 1 Listen lady, we'd love to help but you've got to go round.

Sabina *[looks a mile up the trench one way and a mile up the trench and a mile the other way]*

Round?

{ **Henry** Sabina

{ **Worker 3** *[tastes the lunch and is not impressed]*

{ **Worker 2** *[stirs his lunch pot]*

Two and a half days that way.

Or is it that way?

Anyway, two and a half one way and seven the other.

...

Seven and three-quarters.

...

At a brisk pace.

...

Sticking to the stonier sections and away from the sand.

...

Although allowing for the heat you're / probably looking at..

Henry Sa/bina

Sabina I'd really rather step across.

Worker 1 And have us waste another morning?

...

What's in it for us?

Sabina *[checks her belongings – only her vial, a massive hesitation]*

Two and a half days you say?

{ **Henry** Sabina

{ **Worker 2** That way *[points one way, notices*

Worker 3 *pointing and then changes direction]*

{ **Worker 3** That way *[points the other, notices*

Worker 2 *pointing and then changes direction]*

Worker 1 So?

Anything?

Pause.

Worker 1 No?

Oh well, right, I have a tasteless lunch to attend and you have a walk ahead you, so if you'll excuse me...

Sabina Wait.

I do have something.

[cracks open the vial containing the salt and pours it into the pot]

Pause.

Worker 1 ?

Sabina *[encourages him to try the pot]*

Worker 1 *[to Worker 2]* ?

Worker 2 *[shrugs]*

Worker 1 *[tastes, beat, nods]*

Very very nice, very nice indeed.

[beat]

Well, not great, but definitely better.

[beat]

Right lads!

Sabina *is lifted aloft and with a great degree of skill and precision is manoeuvred across the ditch so as not to spoil the digging work.*

Sabina Thank you!

Workers Welcome!

Henry I don't have much time.

Sabina How far to the sea?

Worker 2 Couple of hours /

That is unless you stop for regular breaks in which case...

Sabina Hours?

Henry Minutes.

I have minutes left.

10. Family

Sabina *plunges onward on the final part of the journey with great haste. The model has nearly made its journey from stage right to stage left. Winds whip the sand up in strange spirals and progress is not easy although now Sabina is swift.*

A Daughter Help!!!

Sabina *is pulled up short, she nearly lets Henry and the remaining vial go flying but somehow keeps a hold.*

A Daughter Help, it's my mother.

Help her, please, won't you?

She's dying.

Sabina *caught in indecision, her feet remain pointing the way she intends to go.*

A Daughter Thirst.

Have you anything, just a drop, even a drop,
her last drop.

Help me, anything!

Henry Please; we have to get to the sea...

Sabina [*stares at the vial she has carried all this way*]

A Daughter She's dying.

Help / us.

Henry ...Now

A Daughter Please.

Sabina [*stares at the vial, stuck*]

Henry Sabina, you know he's not in that bottle don't
you.

Short Pause.

Sabina [*hands over the vial*]

{ **Henry** Now let's go!

{ **A Daughter** Thank you so much, thank you, /
thank you, thank you [*tips the water*]

Sabina The sea?

A Daughter Right over there, can you see?

Sabina Yes

Henry Come on!

{ **Sabina** Thank you!

{ **A Daughter** Thank you!

You're an amazing woman.

Sabina [*pausing*]

You know what?

You're right.

I am an amazing woman.

I am an amazing woman [*nods, exits*]

Thunder and lightning. The drought has broken.

11. The last and first time

*Rain cascades. A range of blues flood across the vista
from dark blue to near black in a velvety explosion.*

Sabina is picked out in faded yellow.

Sabina stands in front of us, drenched, at the end of
a jetty jutting out into the sea, in her faded bra and
knickers. A pile of clothes beside her, a fish in a bag
in her hands – held out in front of her.

Pause.

*Thunder and lightning. The **Man** appears at her side,
smiling. The stare into each other's eyes. Perfection.*

Sabina starts to cry.

Man [*smiling*] Get lost!!! [*tweaks **Sabina**'s nose*]

Smiles: open and honest. Lightning. He is gone.

As she plunges in and down she lets go of a fish that disappears upwards into the thunderous night sky.

As she plunges in, into a splash of black and white bubbles she becomes herself and her husband.

As she plunges in, they plunge in. They plunge together, smiling: deep and lost and found and together forever.

A freshly painted sign in the background reads "jump in with me".

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