

Circe

Produced by CRChange
Co- Produced by Roderick Coover and Scott Rettberg
Script by Scott Rettberg, draft date 3 March 2017.

CHARACTERS

Odysseus -- a lost adventurer, businessman.

Circe -- a witch and mistress of beasts.

Kelly -- an American drone pilot, on holiday.

Richard -- an ornithologist.

SCENES

Scene 0 Monologues mixing closeups of actors with establishing shots of Inishbofin.

Scene 1 O in the water. Walks On Seashore. Arrives At A Field Of Sheep. Meets C.

Scene 2.1 O & C Outside Of A Cottage On Inishbofin.

Scene 2.2 Combinatory Mix Of Island And Ocean Imagery With Dark Stormy Quality. 38 lines

Scene 2.3 Continuation of scene 2.1

Scene 3.1 R & K Meet On A Pier In Galway (Black Rock Beach In Salthill).

Scene 3.2 R & K Combinatory Monologues, 10 distinct shots.

Lighthouses and beacons. Marshes/Bird Habitats, Birds Feeding On Sand Flats/Mud Flats At Low Tide, Industrial Settings, Communications Technologies (Dishes, Antennae), Hunting Lodge Or Museum With Hunting Trophies, Fur Rugs, Stuffed Animals, Etc.?

Pulling Up The Nets On Fishing Trawlers, Drip Coffee Machine Dripping

- Scene 3.3** Continuation of scene 3.1
- Scene 4.1** O & C. In Cottage On Inishbofin. Firelit Room. O's Arms And Legs Are Chained To A Chair.
- Scene 4.2** O & C Combinatory Mix In Scene with 38 combinatory lines.
- Scene 4.3** Continuation of Scene 4.1
- Scene 5.1** R & K Richard And Kelly, Looking Out Over Galway Bay.
- Scene 5.2** Combinatory, 18 distinct shots
- Scene 5.3** Continuation of 5.1
- Scene 6.1** O & C. O And C Are In Bed Or Furs Or Whatever. Combinatory
- Scene 6.2** O & C. O And C Are In Bed Or Furs Or Whatever. Non-Combinatory
- Scene 7.1** R & K Sitting By A Seawall Or Similar, Drinking.
- Scene 7.2** R & K Combinatory Monologues X3 With Imagery
- Scene 8.1** Going to the place with bones
- Scene 8.2** Combinatory sequence at least distinct 12 shots
- Scene 8.3** Going in and looking at place with bones
- Scene 8.4** Combinatory sequence at least 14 shots
- Scene 8.5** Continuation of 8.3 or leaving.
- Scene 9.1** R & K Are Going Birdwatching On Inishbofin, O & C are in the field.
- Scene 9.2** combinatory sequence, between their two conversations, TBA?

Scene 9.3 Continuation of location of 9.1 The characters see each other or meet

Scene 10.1 / Ending 1

Scene 10.2 / Ending 2

Scene 10.3 / Ending 3

Scene 10.4 / Ending 4

SCRIPT

Scene 0 — Monologues

Note: These monologues are intended for a short version of the film.

Scene 0.1 — Monologue Circe

I am the last of my kind. Ages ago there was an island that floated in the waters, moving to and fro in the mist. A boatman lost in the fog came across it. He stepped onto the shore, gathered some driftwood and lit a fire to warm himself. As soon as the island was touched by fire it became fixed in place. As the fog lifted, the boatman discovered he was on a bank between between the sea and a lake. He saw an old woman leading a great white cow, the Auroch, to the water. When she struck the cow with her stick it became a rock. When the boatman ran to the old woman and confronted her, striking her boldly, both he and she were transformed into stone. Sometimes the cow returns, to foretell times of darkness and death. This island is where I have made my home. I live here alone, the last of my kind. Here I greet creatures who appear in the mists, the last of their kind, come here to live out their final days, on this isle. I live alone, gathering my orphans, and waiting for the boatman's return.

Scene 0.2 — Monologue Odysseus

Once the world was wide open, an idea vast as the seas. And a man of the islands had choices. He could stay and furrow his fields. He could fish off the shores and gather his nets. He could join an army and fight for his nation. And some men, some rare men, could stare off into the distant sea and pledge to go beyond, to venture out to find new

territories, to discover what lay beyond the edges of the known world. If fearless, and willing, and guileful as the fox, a man could reap great profit from the unknown. Speak well and answer great riddles, fight well when battle must be met, charm when seduction was called for, resist when bewitched against wits. Gather great treasures, slaughter great beasts, ride out stormy seas. Once the world was such. And the great beyond was not divided with highways and linked by networks and machines. Every island held its own mysteries and its own creatures, and no place was the same as the last. Once the world was a place to discover, and a man could make of himself whatever he might dream to become.

Scene 1 — O & C

Seashore of Inishbofin. Empty, shot of waves lapping ashore. A man clutching a timber comes into view in the distance. Closeup. He is nearly asleep. He starts and wakes. Swims into shore. He is unshaven and disoriented. Wearing business attire, clutching a laptop case. Coughing up water, he stumbles onto shore soaking wet. He looks at his watch. It is malfunctioning, ruined. He casts it aside. He opens his case and pulls out his laptop computer. He opens it and water splashes out. He casts it aside. He pulls out a sheaf of papers. They are soaked, ruined. He walks along the deserted shore. Eventually he spots some sheep.

O: My men?

He runs towards the sheep, slowing as he nears them.

O: Is that you? I thought the storm had taken you.

He gets down on his knees and touches the sheep.

O: Dear friends! I thought you were lost.

(Improvisation of further lines with sheep. He might recognize Eurylochus, or Elpenor among others)

C walks into the scene (from a cottage or ruins).

C: Are you alright?

O looks up, teary, wild-eyed.

C: It's ok. They have that effect on me sometimes too.

O: My men!

C: Are you lost?

O: What have you done to my crew?

C: Do you need help?

O rises and staggers towards her, and then falls into the mud.

Scene 2.1 — O & C

Establishing shot outside a cottage or ruins on Inishbofin.

Setting: Inside a cottage or ruins on Inishbofin (or outside on a bench outside cottage).

O has a blanket wrapped around him. C brings him a mug of hot tea.

C: How are you feeling?

O: Fine. I— Where am I?

C: You passed out.

O: How did I get here?

C: You wandered into my farm.

O: Before that?

C: I don't know. What do you remember?

O: Who are you?

C: Who is anyone?

Scene 2.2 – O & C Combinatory (2 x 6)

Odysseus	Circe
I remember losing something.	I live alone on this farm. With the animals.
I remember I was at sea.	I am more comfortable with animals than most men.
I remember hearing a song, and it pulled me so strongly. So beautiful.	I live in peace here on the island. I have learned to keep the invaders at bay.
I remember I was lost.	I am always alone here. I'm never alone.
I remember I was leading them somewhere. I was in charge.	I care for the animals. I tend to my flock.
I remember that we had a mission.	I care for this land, for the sheep, for the dogs, for the birds.
I was on my way home. I have been on my way home for a long time.	I have already lost so much.
I was once a soldier. But that time is gone.	I just want to be left alone though I don't mind company now and again.
I can't remember. There is a fog on the	I grew tired of civilization. So I moved to

sea.	the island.
I remember I had someone. I need to return to her.	I guess you would say I seek simplicity.
I remember strange lands, offers, profits.	We have all had losses. There's nothing unique about loss.
I remember a craving for adventure.	I am an animal. You are an animal. We are all animals here.
I was blown off course, at some point.	I listen the animals. Every beast has its own song.
I remember a crew of us together. We were going to be rich.	We all have our role to play.
I remember how clever I was, how we turned every disadvantage to a strength.	When men come here, they trammel the fields, disturb the peace.
So much sea all around.	We all have secrets in our hearts.
I remember threats all around me. Howling winds.	It is not that I seek solitude. It's something else.
I remember we could not stay on course.	I grew tired of men, their selfishness, their tricks, their narcissism.
I remember drowning but— but I did not drown.	Of all the monsters the worst is man.

Scene 2.3 — O & C

C: How are you feeling? You look tired

O: I am feeling a— little drowsy.

C: You're shivering.

She puts her hand to his forehead. He shivers.

C: Poor man. Lie down. Do you feel a change?

He shakes his head.

C: Eat.

She offers him some fruit. He gobbles it up. He rests his head, tired.

C: Poor man, there, there. You can rest. You will come back to yourself. You will feel better soon. You will change.

O: I'll get better. I rarely get sick.

C: Strong like a bull. Are you strong like a bull?

He looks up at her, puzzled. She strokes his the beard on his cheek.

C: You have such lovely fur. My pet.

Fade.

Scene 3.1 — R & K

Kelly and Richard meet on a pier in Galway (Black Rock beach in Salthill). They embrace.

R: Look at you, the prodigal daughter returned, after all these years.

K: It's been too long.

R: So what brings you to Ireland?

K: Just a break. Work has been crazy. I needed to get away.

R: Are you still a pilot?

K: Sort of. I'm more of a technician now. Government contractor sort of thing.

R: Government?

K: Basically drones. So I fly, but I don't fly. I'm not supposed to talk about it.

R: Sounds very double oh seven.

K: Richard, I wanted to say, about Mary, I was so sorry when I heard—

R: Yes, well...

K: I wanted to come for the funeral but it was impossible with work.

R: Don't worry. I was in such a daze at the time. I barely remember the ceremony myself. It all happened— it happened quickly when it happened.

K: That's a kind of small mercy, I guess.

R: In a way. And you know we didn't have children. It was just me, so— I think that would have been worse if we had. So.

K: So you're doing ok?

R: Oh yeah. It's been almost three years now. You get on. I have my work, my students, my classes, the birds.

K: You still go bird watching?

R: Professionally.

K: You're lucky to love what you do for a living. It sounds so peaceful.

R: Peaceful? Oh mostly, yeah. Of course, I've been researching bird populations in decline. So that brings out the fatalist in me.

K: Is it that bad?

R: It's awful. The numbers are grim. It's what bothers me most— I mean there is plenty of shit in the world: religious war, intolerance, the resurgence of the nationalist right— all reprehensible but still all that seems cyclical— meanness rises and falls. But what we are doing to the planet, the other animals that live here? That's the worst of it.

K: What we do to the animals is worse than what we do to each other?

R: *Yes.* Sure, we might elect the occasional sociopath hell-bent on genocide, but we have *already* successfully wiped out many other species. Just eliminated them. We've not yet driven homo sapiens to extinction.

K: Sometimes it feels like we're working on it.

Scene 3.2 — R & K Combinatory Monologues (2 x 2)

Richard is addressing Kelly, but Kelly's address should be understood to be to the audience.

Richard	Kelly
<p>Take the passenger pigeon. Two hundred years ago they still filled the skies, flocks of thousands, global population in the millions. When Native Americans hunted them, they would never kill an adult bird, because they knew that if they did, the rest would abandon the nest. But leave it to the white man. They applied industrial methods. Giant nets to take down a whole flock. They'd hunt them for pig fodder. They'd blast buckshot in the roost and drop sixty at a time. They'd blast shotguns from a train for target practice. Not even bother to pick up the carcasses. Just left them to rot. It took about twenty years to take one of the most abundant species of birds on the planet and wipe it from the face of the earth.</p>	<p>I fly every day on the job. Sort of. My body never leaves the ground. I sit at my ground control station in a trailer in the desert outside Las Vegas, piloting or watching sensors. I have my hands on the joystick, but I rarely have to take control. The flight pattern is basically pre-programmed. I make adjustments, but the drone could fly just fine without me. I'm there in case of emergency, and in case we locate a target. I watch my screens, I zoom in from above, I pull a trigger if the orders come through. It's mostly about watching from above. It's a disembodied experience. I'm always in the air. I never leave the ground.</p>
<p>It's this human obsession with rarity. The more endangered the creature the more we crave it. Ivory. Majestic elephants slaughtered for trinkets. And red ivory, have you heard of that? It comes from the helmeted hornbill, big bird, marvelous creature, remarkable call, a wild cackling laugh. They mate for life. When they lay their one or two eggs each year, the male seals the female in a tree with mud. He feeds her and the newborn through a slit until the chick is ready to fly on its own. Because of this, every time a poacher kills a male, the whole family starves to death.</p>	<p>We keep up a chatter, the pilot and the sensor operator, and sometimes a commander pipes in. We keep caffeinated. We stay frosty. We don't always know what we're looking for, the purpose of a given mission. It's all on a need to know basis. We operate the machinery. We are more like technicians than anything else. Someone else is telling us where to fly, where to look, what to look for: men, or buildings, or machines. I spend a lot of time scanning an empty desert. I don't know if I'm just on a zone patrol, or on a mission to kill.</p>

<p>Critically endangered now. For trinkets.</p>	<p>We're watching. Someone else is watching. I'm only the live connection, the interface for a robot an ocean away. I'm like a robot myself, a transmitter and receiver. Commands are sent to me. I operate in accordance. Signals are sent from my station to satellites, down to the bird and back to control.</p>
<p>Even the vultures of the Sahara are dying off. There's so single reason: they fly into power-lines or wind turbines. Urbanization degrades their habitat. They are killed for bushmeat or traditional medicine. But the irony is that the biggest threat to the vulture is poison. Vultures spot recent kills and circle in the sky. This is a problem for the poachers who have for example just illegally killed a lion. The rangers follow the vultures to see what's been killed. So the poacher will pump a zebra carcass with poison to get rid of the vultures. Kill them all off. There aren't many left now. The hooded vulture is nearly gone from Africa. 97% decline in under thirty years.</p>	<p>I envy hawks, eagles, falcons. I envy them their bodies attached to their wings. I envy the way they circle the sky. They soar and they dive. They spot their own prey and decide when to move in for the kill. They know why they hunt. They are guided by their own hungers and their own desires. They are one with the landscape and the sky. They are not alien things, they are majestic. They are part of an ecosystem. They hunt, and their prey flees from them. When they score a kill, they feel their talons piercing skin, their beaks meeting warm flesh.</p>
<p>The flightless birds make easy targets. The Great Auk had soft downy fur, good for lining coats, and so it was hunted out from Europe by the middle of the 16th century. And when the early European explorers found them thriving on American shores, they killed them for fishing bait. And when 19th century scientists determined that they were growing rare, museums sent out expeditions to capture the last of them. So they could kill and stuff one for their taxidermy collections. No natural museum worth its salt would go without one of the last Great Auks.</p>	<p>I try to keep up on the calamities. It's important to me to know about ISIL's atrocities, about the sins of the Taliban. The mass crucifixions, the beheadings, the destruction of giant Buddhas and ancient temples, the stoning of women and children. It is important to me that I know of these crimes against humanity. Sometimes I will watch them from above. I seek out the charred bodies and the burnt-out buildings, the homes with their roofs blown off. It is important to me to remember that there is some purpose here, that there is a reason for everything we do, to remember why I am floating over the desert day and night, watching desolate landscapes for any signs of life, for enemy movement.</p>

The Imperial Woodpecker was the largest bird of its kind in the forest, an enormous bird over two feet long. It reigned in the pines over the Sierra Madre in the Durango and Montezuma pines. When the logging companies came into the region in the 1950s they told everyone that the birds were destroying valuable timber. They distributed poison to smear on the bark of the pines. Whole groups of birds fell dead from the trees. As it turns out, the birds didn't actually harm the lumber. They only roosted in dead trees. But the lumber companies didn't want woodpeckers getting in the way of their operations. By 2010 the area had been logged and cleared several times. No Imperial Woodpecker has been seen since the 1990s.

There is real sense of loneliness coming out of the trailer. Not being able to say a word to anyone, nothing specific. I think it's part of what keeps me out of real relationships. I can't tell a lover, I can't tell a friend. The rules are strict and a leak is a crime. And for all of the 12-hour shifts when nothing happens, when a bird flies up and comes down with nothing but pictures of mountains and sand, every once and while an order comes through and something happens. I'm ordered to pull the trigger, to launch the Hellfire and kill the target. The missile knows its target. It has its cameras and its own cycloptic eye. We launch and hold our breath. We watch from its eye as it approaches. The figures we have been watching become men, we see them, maybe for a moment we see their faces. The feed from the missile goes to static and from our bird we see the cloud. Sometimes we see parts. Sometimes there is collateral damage.

Scene 3.3 — R & K, continuation of 3.1.

R: What would you like to do while you're in town?

K: Whatever you like. I'm up for anything. Just here for a little R&R, a change of scene, some peace.

R: I was thinking of heading out to Inishbofin tomorrow. A little island off the coast. Might be the sort of thing you're looking for, tranquil. And there are some rare species, things I'd like to show you.

K: I'd like that.

R: And tonight?

K: Tonight we should drink.

Scene 4.1 — O & C

O wakes in a firelit room. His arm and legs are tied with chains or boating ropes. C is tending to a fire with a hot poker.

O: What have you done to me?

C: What have *I* done to *you*?

O: You drugged me.

C: I never.

O: And what have you done to my men?

C: Not that again.

O: Why did you tie me up?

C: You came at me like a savage beast.

O: I don't— I wouldn't have.

C: One minute you were drinking tea, calm as a bunny rabbit, and the next you were at my throat. I had to subdue you.

O: You're making this up. Where are my things?

C: They are safe.

O: Just give me my things and I'll be on my—

C: I don't think so.

O: I mean you no harm.

C: I think it's time we are honest with each other.

O: Let me go!

C returns to the fire, stirring it with a poker.

C: It's time you tell me why you are really here.

Scene 4.2 — O & C Combinatory (2 x 5-6 of each)

Odysseus	Circe
I tell you I can't remember why I'm here.	What's in your papers?
I am a traveler. I am on my way home.	Are you here to steal my land?
I want nothing to do with you.	Have you come here to poison my well?
I'm not here because of you, I tell you.	Did you come here to torture me?
I have no designs on you.	This is not the first time men like you have come for me.

You have me mistaken for someone else.	Are you from the government?
I tell you I just want to go home!	Did you come here to kill me?
No one commands me but fate.	Is loneliness a crime?
Only chance brings me here.	You've taken my family, my children. Now you want my sheep too?
Can't you see that you've calmed me? You do not seem like a cruel woman. Undo my chains.	I know you, don't I? But the last time you were wearing a mask.
Please, lady, I need to get home to my wife and child.	Who hired you?
Your hearth is warm, but this is not my land.	I gave up. Do you hear me? I stopped. I fled. Why can't you people leave me alone?
I have been hurt, can't you see that?	Who are these "men" you speak of? Who were your mercenaries?
My men, they worked for me, my friends. What you have you done?	If you are honest with me, I will forgive your sins against me.
I am sure we both have sins.	Are you running from them? Are you running from them too?
I wish you no ill will. I thank you for your kindness.	When are the rest of them coming for me?
There is no violence in my heart.	I have no desire to kill you, man.
I don't know what I am. But I am not whatever you think I am.	You are a soldier, are you not? A killing machine. I nurture life here.
I am not against you. I am on your side!	You cannot so easily escape from memory.

Scene 4.3 — O & C continuation of 4.1

O: I promise you, let me go, I will go my own way. I will walk out that door. I am merely a man who has lost his way. I swear it. I have a family, a wife, a farm of my own. I can remember that. I can remember these things. I must return to them.

C: You have a wife? Are you sure?

O: Yes, yes. I am sure. I can see her. In my mind's eye I can see her. I can remember her touch. And I miss her, I miss her so much.

C: But you can't remember her name?

O: Her name is— her name is— I can't. Damn! I can't remember it.

C: My name is Circe. Circe. Can you say that?

O: Free me, Circe.

C: And what is your name, man? John?

O: It is not John.

C: Maybe Ishmael?

O: No. It is odd— but— I can't. Argh!

C: All right, I'll call you Eddie.

O: Free me, Circe.

C: You really don't know why you are here?

O: I do not. I can remember a boat. Filled with my friends. And we met with great success.

C: I suppose you came to plunder.

O: Circe, I arrived here only by bad luck.

C: It is not bad luck. You will change.

C kisses him very lightly on the lips

C: You will not attack me again?

He shakes his head. She cuts him free. He feels his hands free and raises his hands to cup her jowls as if to strangle her or kiss her.

O: I need to get out of here. Where can I go?

C: Go where?

O: I don't know the— port? Is there a port?

She shakes her head.

C: It's just us two.

O: How can I get home?

C: You'll need to build a boat.

O: A boat? Well then—

C: I suppose you could stay here with me, if you'd like. For a little while. Until you build your craft. Until you can remember your way home.

Scene 5.1 — R & K

Richard and Kelly, walking along the shore of Galway Bay and stop, looking out over the water.

R: It actually wasn't perfect.

K: What's that?

R: With Mary. Things were not always so great. While we were married. Before the cancer.

K: From what I hear, no marriage is ever perfect.

R: It got pretty bad, actually. One of my colleagues, a herpetologist—

K: He studies herpes?

R: Snakes. Well, amphibians in general. But mostly snakes. Anyway, I was pushing hard to finish a raptor study, trying to get it submitted to a journal before my annual review. Mary knew I was working late. She told me she was going out with girlfriends. As I was

dusting up my citations, I noticed a light on in the zoology lab. I thought someone must have just forgotten. So I walked in to turn it off—

K: Oh no.

R: He had her up on one of the dissection tables, in the midst of the snake cages, going at it. They were both moaning when I walked in. So.

K: So.

R: Dr. Johnson. Same department. Senior faculty. He actually chaired my review committee. I still work with him.

K: How awful of Mary.

R: I lost it for a moment, opened a couple of cages, knocked them to the floor.

K: Snake cages?

R: Oh yes. Big snakes. Vipers and boas. It frightened Mary. Didn't bother him in the least. He's used to handling snakes. Just walked over and gently put them back in their cages. He didn't even bother to button up his trousers.

K: You must have wanted to kill her. Oh, I didn't—

R: That's ok. Yes. I wanted to feed them to the vultures. It was humiliating, really. But in the end Mary and I decided to try and work it out. We went into marriage counseling. I got my promotion. For a month or two it was going ok. Then she got the diagnosis and everything else sort of fell away.

Scene 5.2 — R & K Combinatory (2 x 5 of each)

Richard	Kelly
I don't know why I just told you that. Some things are better left buried.	You can't blame yourself. She was always a flirt. She just took it too far.
I actually did want to kill her, at one point. But then all of the sudden she was dying. And I remembered how much I loved her.	Maybe in the end no one can be trusted.
I was hardly perfect. We had different interests. In retrospect, I was somewhat self-absorbed. Selfish.	I guess every relationship has it ups and downs. At least you were in love for a while.
I'm trying to say that in some respects our relationship was like—a phoenix—in this period. Just as we were on the verge of losing it we realized what we had had.	At a certain point, you can't abandon a mission, can you, once you are committed to it?
In the end there is little point in blame. Particularly as you face the end. There is only what there was between you, love and everything else, a shared history.	It's ultimately so arbitrary, isn't it? You go about your life as if it will last forever, and then something comes out of the sky.
We explored every option but it became clear that it would be terminal.	It must have been horrible to live through that, to watch her waste away.
Maybe she knew, subconsciously, even before the diagnosis. And she just wanted to live outside of normal expectations for a while.	I think I would rather not know when the end is coming. I would rather it happened suddenly, sharply. Instantaneous.
She was brave about it, really. Not a lot of tears at the end. Very matter of fact. She was worried about how I would get on without her. Very kind to me, really.	I guess that whenever someone dies, the survivors feel some guilt, even when they had nothing to do with it.
We had our time of last things. Last weekend trip to the islands. Last argument. Last time making love. Last walk on the shore. Last ice cream cone. Last words.	I guess there are two sides to any story.

Scene 5.3 — R & K continuation of 5.1

K: Do you think anything can be forgiven?

R: In a relationship?

K: In a broader sense.

R: I was raised Catholic, if that's what you mean. I was taught that mortal sins damn you to hell, but that they can be absolved if you repent. Thankfully. But I'm a scientist.

K: So—

R: So I believe that in the end our collective sins will be marked by a geological layer. Nothing more. But they are truly grave sins.

K: Maybe some things can't be forgiven.

R: Maybe it doesn't matter in the end.

They are quiet. They listen to the waves for a moment, and to the birds.

R: Did you know that 90% of seabirds now have plastic in their stomach?

K: That's sad to think of.

R: There has been a 67% decline in the global population of seabirds in the past 60 years.

K: Seems like there are a lot of them here now.

R: Come back in 50 years.

K: They'll all be made of plastic.

R: Flying plastic robots. Everything else will be dead.

K: Grim.

R: Hug?

She nods. They embrace.

K: Let's get that drink.

Scene 6.1 — O & C Combinatory (2 x 5)

O and C are in bed (or furs).

Odysseus	Circe
That was like dancing with a goddess. You are intoxicating.	I think I have found the animal in you.
You have such— control of your body— your muscles, I— I felt things inside you that I never— you devour me.	You really are a magnificent creature.
I have tasted temptation before but that was— that was really something. I want more.	Stay with me, and I'll make you feel things you've never imagined before.

Such ecstasy, Circe. I felt as if— as if I were outside of my body.	I come and come, you make me lose count.
Did you— did you slip me something? Some kind of elixir?	You have missed the touch of a woman. Just as I have longed for that of a real man.
I so want to remember, but now you make me feel content to forget.	I wouldn't fake it for a sailor.
I feel— reborn. As if I'm growing new skin. I feel as if I could stay trapped in this moment forever.	It is nice to curl up with you, tiger. You're so much better than the pigs who usually come around.
You feed a hunger in me. I could eat at your table forever.	Have I tamed you, beast?
You quiver like a live wire.	Have you have tamed me?

Scene 6.2 — O & C continuation of 6.1

O: I feel so good, and yet at this moment, I still feel so— lost.

C: I can feel that in you. That sense of loss.

O: Everything is all so foggy. How I came here.

C: Why you came. Your papers?

O: I had my company. I can remember them. We were in a field. But—

C: But what?

O: There was some kind of violence. I'm afraid of what it might have been. Lowing and howling. The sound of it. Blood wet and sticky on my arms, on my chest, on my neck. Such enormous eyes. Death was staring me in the face.

C: Poor man.

O: Cows. There were cows in a field. A slaughter.

C: You killed the cows?

O: Maybe. Maybe we slaughtered them all.

C: Maybe you are a butcher. Maybe it's a dream. Maybe you're delusional.

O: And my wife. I can see her. More clearly now. My wife, so true.

C: Her again?

O: I'm sorry, Circe. I'm sorry. I just know that I have a family—

C: There is no need to be so— fucking— uxorious about it.

O: I just need your help to remember, to get back—

C: I know that you will leave in the end. But first I need to show you a few things.

O: I am glad that you understand.

C: This, for example, is a blindfold. And this, this here is a rope. And this—

She reaches under the sheets and pulls out a pair of panties.

—is for your mouth.

She stuffs the panties in his mouth and begins to bind him to the bed.

Scene 7.1 — R & K

Richard and Kelly are walking down a Galway street and on a bench near the water. They have been drinking. Maybe they are singing an Irish song “Whiskey in the Jar” or similar, laughing.

R: I hardly ever do that anymore.

K: Drink?

R: Pints, singing, dancing. I haven’t danced in years.

K: Me neither. I haven’t seen a live band in ages.

R: It feels good. Kelly, it’s so good to see you.

K: The people I work with. We’ll go out for drinks, whatever, sure. After a long shift. But it’s just, you know, drinking. It’s just, like, sitting together and drinking. Getting the daily fix. Getting your head right.

R: Sounds like a laugh.

K: Yeah. Hardly ever. There's work. Drinks. Maybe a workout at the gym. Netflix. Shopping on the weekend, or see my sister and her kids, a museum, whatever. Years go by.

R: Centuries.

K: Whoosh. *(pause)* Can I tell you something?

R: Anything.

K: My work isn't normal. Sometimes I have to do things that I— that I don't feel right about afterwards. And I— have you ever seen a psychologist?

R: Well there was the couple's counseling, yeah, and a bit after, you know. When I was trying to pull stuff together.

K: I see one every other week. I have to go, actually. We all do, it's part of the job. And you know, it sort of helps, to talk. Sometimes it helps. But it's more like— it's more like doing a few shots or whatever with the people I work with. It's a fix.

R: I don't do it any more. After a while it just seemed like repetition— I mean my story isn't going to change, is it? Talking doesn't undo anything. Shit happens, and it gets stuck there, in history. All you can do is get on with it.

Scene 7.2 — R & K Combinatory monologues (2 x 3)

Kelly	Richard
My life is filled with out-of-body experiences. I become an instrument, one with a machine. It is not so much that it's an extension of me as I'm an extension of	There is time, time as we experience it, teaspoons, whatever, hours, classes, semesters, seasons, years, decades. The time it takes to light and smoke a

<p>it. And I float above, a kind of executive function. I see as if through the eyes of a lesser god.</p>	<p>cigarette. The time it takes to bury the dead. But there are other scales, scales we can't process. The lifetime of starling. The movement of a continental shelf. The dying of a star.</p>
<p>A mandatory vacation is part of the standard routine when you're involved in an incident with collateral. It both serves to give the higher-ups time to do the reports and evaluations, and gives the operators time to clear their heads. And I'm good with that. Most people just drive over to Vegas and check into a hotel, sit by the pool and drink daiquiris or whatever. I'm glad to be away, away from all deserts. I like feeling the chill, and the rain.</p>	<p>Recently of course it's been proven that most of the dinosaurs were related to birds. Many had feathers, similar skeletal structures. We imagined a kind of apocalyptic shock, an end point where virtually all of them died off. And there's evidence that most of them did perish nearly simultaneously, a massive swath of species. But many of the smaller theropod dinosaurs survived. And they became birds, and that surviving line diversified immensely and took flight. The dinosaurs never died. They are in the skies all around us.</p>
<p>They reiterate, they remind us. How all of it not only serves strategic objectives but also saves lives. And you can't always know, what you don't need to know. You can only see a part of the big picture, a postage-stamp-size square of it. Whether you're mapping a sector, tracking movement, looking for IED activity, or moving in on a high-value target. It's all part of a larger mission. You're in the right, you need to know. You're saving lives, even when you're killing people. You're on the right side of history.</p>	<p>At a certain point it began to seem like everything was pointing back to the grave. There was no way to avoid it. Even the language. I got "buried in" work. I had to "dig my way out" of grief. It was "killing me." When it's on your mind, it becomes inescapable, womb to tomb. I go to the lab and dissect carcasses. I think of death. I turn on the news, the latest atrocities. I think of death. The light entertainment on television. Always about murder, always about death. You slowly realize that it's not only inevitable, it's also omnipresent. Every time it rains, I look at the mud, I see graves. I go to the grocery store. Shrink wrapped death. It's like a signal, you know. Background noise. But once you identify it, it becomes very difficult to tune out. Because it's always around us, the hum of dying, all the time.</p>
<p>And so in this case, there were several children in the house at the time the missile struck. At the time I fired the</p>	<p>For me watching birds isn't just work, it's like a kind of therapy. Some people want to stay grounded. For me that less of a</p>

<p>missile. At the time I was ordered to launch the missile. And that was not the intelligence. It was contrary to the intelligence. It's something we try to avoid. Children in particular. That rattles the local population, turns people against us, creates problems for the generals and diplomats. This is not the only time this has happened but the only time it has happened for me. I guess there were three of them. Between three and five. And the target. And his wife. There was an infant, and a toddler, and a seven year-old, at least. Maybe more. At least three of them. I guess it is normal that they try to use children as shields. It is not unusual. We saw him go in, but we didn't know who else was there. I would have requested a change. In the order. If I had known.</p>	<p>concern than keeping that connection to birds in the air. To stay like— ungrounded— untethered. In communion with the sky. I don't know if it makes sense, but I find the great migrations to be extremely moving. Bewit's Swan, or the Redwing, or the Arctic Tern. They travel such immense distances. They face so many challenges. They return. Fewer, each year, but they return. In the fall, I watch these great migrations, passing overhead. You know, most of the time I don't really sort of— feel— very much. But when I watch the great migrations, I actually almost— soar.</p>
<p>You see the scene from miles above, and you zoom in, you see the people moving, like ants on the screen. Sometimes you can get close enough to make a positive ID. You trust the intelligence. You don't actually make the decision. We experience the people as insects. We experience the blasts as a explosions, small clouds. And you hear later, maybe, how many dead, how many injured. You read a report. Sometimes they don't even tell you. And most of the time when mistakes are made, you know they were not your own. You didn't make the choice. You didn't do the targeting. You only aimed and pulled the trigger. You only answer for operator errors, never tactical ones.</p>	<p>Many species are promiscuous, but some birds mate for life. The mute swan generally pairs off in this way. Almost all of breeding pairs stay together for life. Those that don't successfully breed are more likely to go their separate ways, but still only ten percent or so. If one of the pair dies, the swans will remate. The females tend to find a new partner more quickly than the male--they'll find a new partner within a few weeks. Males will usually remain solitary until at least one winter has passed, protecting their nest and raising their cygnets, if they have any. You get so used to seeing them in pairs that it's a strikingly sad sight, to see a solitary swan.</p>
<p>There's a disconnect. It's kind of— it's impossible to explain. I drive my Prius in from the condo. Maybe I stop at Starbucks for a cappuccino. I get to the facility I put on my flight suit. I put my phone in the lockbox. I get my orders and</p>	<p>Once two bald eagles mate, they will never part until the other dies. Their courtship ritual is a fantastic thing to see, if you are ever lucky enough to witness it. They will fly off a high cliff and lock talons, then flip, spin, spiral down</p>

I find out where I'm flying today. Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, wherever. I get the briefing, and then we fly. Sometimes there's a kind of intimacy. If we are tracking a target for a long time. And we want it, of course, we want to be crew to get the order. And when it comes and when it happens, you see the results. The body parts on the infrared. Maybe a guy with his legs blown off, trying to pull himself away, scratching in the sand. But it's different, it's abstracted. Maybe someone comes along to try to save them, or to collect the body, the body parts. Most often they wait, because they know there's never only one drone. There's always at least two in the sky looking down on them. And I'm watching, and I'm there, but I'm also a five-minute drive from the Applebee's where I'll go eat my Grilled Chicken Caesar or whatever after my shift.

through the air, breaking apart only at the last moment just before they hit the ground. It is a fierce and brave dance against gravity, this cartwheeling display of their commitment. Daring each other, falling together, tempting death, claiming life only in the last split second. So much at stake in that single tumble towards the abyss.

Scene 8.1 — O & C

O, carrying a small axe, enters a room or part of ruins with shelves filled with fossils and bones that C is arranging.

C: *(looking at axe)* Is that for me?

O: My boat is nearly finished. Soon she'll be ready to set sail.

C: Impressive work.

O: It's funny. I can't remember learning how to do it. It's a knowledge that's more in my hands than in my mind.

C: Like many other things that are in your hands and not in your mind.

O: Like what?

C: Like me, for example. And soon you'll sail off.

O: I don't want to. I wish that I could stay, but my home—

C: You could, you know. Stay. There's nothing stopping you.

O: Fate is stopping me.

C: (*indicating skulls*) Maybe I could make a place for you on this shelf.

O: It's not my destiny.

C: Your destiny! God! What about my destiny?

O: It is your own. I have commitments. My wife, my son, my land.

C: Your wife who you can picture but not name. Your mysterious son you've probably never met. Your land that you can't even remember.

Scene 8.2 — O & C Combinatory (2 x 3)

Odysseus	Circe
I love you. I won't forget.	You're not the only one who's lost people important to them. I've lost my share too.

You have helped me to heal and to begin to remember who I am. You gave me my life back, Circe.	You're not the first man to warm my bed. There have been others before.
You're the best lover I can remember. But another has claims on my heart.	You remember so little yet you remain so self-obsessed.
Life is a journey, not a destination.	What if you return home to discover that you never had a home, never had a wife. What if all you will ever have is right here right now?
I was in charge of something. Something important. People depend on me.	You go ahead and go on then. I'll add you to my collection of memories, my collection of lost things.
Can we talk about something else?	I offer you everything I have, I take you in my heart. All you offer in return is a cold bed.
What if there is nothing in front of me? What if all my memories are nothing but foggy seas?	What if my island is only a place where things come to die?

Scene 8.3 — O & C continuation of 8.2

O: Is this what you wanted to show me? What are all these fossils and bones?

C: They are last things. Reminders.

O: You collect them?

C: I was the last to see many of them.

O: These were your pets?

C: Most of them were animals. Some I never tamed.

O: What are they?

Scene 8.4 – O & C Combinatory (2 x 4)

Circe	Odysseus
The beak of a Dodo. They get a bad rap, but they were magnificent, colorful birds.	We live among strange beasts.
Femur of a Caspian Tiger. They were magnificent cats, bright golden coats. When the Russians occupied Turkey in the 19th century, they hunted them for sport.	Many people bury their dead.
That comes from a man. He was my lover for a long time. We had some great years together, before he succumbed to a horrible cough.	We don't always know when our prey is rare.
That belonged to a West African Black Rhinoceros. Poached for their horns. The Chinese paid top dollar to grind it up in their medicine tea. No medicine left now. Never really worked anyway.	This is a menagerie of the dead.
Tooth of a Tasmanian Tiger. Hunted to extinction by Australian shepherds. The last one died of exposure in the Hobart Zoo. They forgot to let him back inside his cage one freezing night.	Remind me to leave you something to remember me by.
I have the foot of a tax collector who found himself stuck in a nearby bog. This was all I could recover.	Many young girls collect seashells.
It's amazing how many animal parts men will chew up in the belief that it will bear them a better erection. Bile of bear, rhinoceros horn, yak testicles, tiger penis.	I think I prefer your bedchamber to your tombs.

Scene 8.5 — O & C continuation of 8.4

O: You must have been collecting that stuff for a long time.

C: A very, very long time. I'm older than you know.

O: I'd guess 30, maybe 35?

C: I've feel as if I lived several thousand years.

O: You're holding up very well if that's true.

C: Generation after generation of men, thousands upon thousands of beasts. You can imagine. The last of their kinds.

O: Circe, I may have been hit on the head, but I wasn't born yesterday. You haven't lived a thousand—

C: Years. Millenia. We all have.

O: And nothing really dies?

C: Oh things die. Nothing lasts forever. Even the planet will burn.

O: You think in longer terms than I.

C: And this may be all that's left. But do you know why you're special?

O: Because we have loved—

C: You and I are cut from the same cloth. I am the mistress of beasts and you are the epic adventurer. And we are the last of our kind. We can see ourselves in historic terms.

O: We're the last?

C: You don't understand, do you? You'll always be leaving, but you will never leave.

O: That's where you're wrong.

C: No lands left to conquer. No beasts left to tame.

O: My boat is nearly finished. I can be gone at daybreak if I choose.

C: You will never leave this island.

O: What is this place?

C: This is no ordinary archipelago. It's an island of last things. A place for men and creatures who are already gone to come to a rest and cease. The only way out is through the kingdom of the dead.

Scene 9.1 — R & K / O & C

R & K are bird watching on Inishbofin in a field of tall grass.

R: The corncrake is like the Golden Fleece of Inishbofin. I've seen them before, years ago, but they've gotten rarer and rarer. Like many things. Hard to see. We're more likely to hear one, if anything.

K: And how do they sound?

R: Bloody awful. Their song is like two cheese graters rubbing against each other. A distinctive cry.

K: And there's not many of them?

R: They're on the verge of extinction. They breed in the high grass. They used to thrive in the fields around here, but when tractors and hay threshers came in, the species began a massive decline. They're meadow birds, weak fliers. Their eggs get crushed, their broods simply get chewed up in the blades.

K: Yet another victim of mechanization.

R: Beautiful, though, if you get a chance to see them fly. There's a pair of peregrine falcons here too, somewhere.

K: One pair?

R: Just the two of them. Still, for an island with a population of 300 people, it's not a bad human-to-falcon ratio.

K: I would love to watch them hunt.

R: You favor raptors?

K: The most majestic birds are all hunters.

Scene 9.2 — R & K combinatory (2 x 3)

Richard	Kelly
They're at the top of the avian food chain. Apex predator.	They hunt alone. They circle the sky over the land, keen eyes scouring the earth below for the slightest sign of movement.
Their eyes take up between 25 and 67% of the skulls. Evolution's greatest optical achievement. Falcons and hawks see with ten times the visual acuity of humans.	Of course, humans are the greatest of alpha predators. There is no beast on land, sea, or in the sky that we cannot kill or have not killed. It's tied up in our nature, isn't it? The challenge of the hunt. And we kill each other so willingly. We hunt our species. Kill our own tribe.
They eat mammals, and reptiles, and other birds. Chicken hawks kill chickens. Raptors will devour almost anything with meat. Anything that they can manage to freshly kill.	Maybe it was a training camp, or a bomb factory. Maybe it was a field hospital, or a school.
Raptor. It comes from the Latin "robber, plunderer, abductor, ravisher." The original root means "to seize, to grip." And this, for the most part, is how it kills. Talons, daggers striking from the sky, at high velocity, then gripping, seizing, severing muscles and breaking spinal cords as it soars back into the sky.	What kind of monster would kill two children, would knowingly kill two children, would eliminate a whole family, write a brief report, and then sign out, and then get in a Prius and drive to TGI Fridays and order a plate of nachos and a pitcher of margaritas, drink it, then order an Uber and go home, to wake up naked in the bathtub the next morning? What kind of an animal would do that?
Raptors carry their prey back to the nest, beaten, broken, but still breathing. There they eat their victims alive, squirming and trying to escape, hearts still beating. The prey eventually succumbs to massive blood loss and organ failure, brought on by dismemberment.	We kill to survive. We keep telling ourselves that our survival is at stake. The survival of something larger than ourselves. And we kill in a civilized way. We kill with singularity. We have names. The names are on a list. The list is a list of our enemies. Those who will kill us if we do not kill them first. And so we kill them.

	We kill them and we kill their children, so they will not kill our children.
Golden eagles will hunt prey several times their own size. They circle the pastures, scanning the land, and when they spot the smallest and the weakest, they will swoop down on the lamb, talons gripping flesh enough to carry it back into the sky. They will carry the struggling animal to the cliffs and then drop it from a great height onto the rocks below, letting gravity do the work of killing.	It is not the bodies, really. The bodies you become accustomed to, the spread of human parts seen from a distance. These people very quickly become parts to us, parts separate from whatever wholes they were once part of. These things will go into a bag, or they will be wrapped in a shroud. They will be buried by nightfall. There is not much difference between the corpse of a human and any other kind of roadkill. It's actually the inanimate objects that get to me. The tricycle tipped over by the roadside, the kite still fluttering in the breeze.

R: Nature is not, by nature, kind.

K: Wait. Shhh. I think I hear it!

R: The corncrake? (*He listens.*) It just may be— I think you're right!

K: Where is it? Where is it?

R: Always hard to spot.

K: I hear voices.

They spot a couple in the distance.

Scene 9.3 — O & C

O and C are out walking in the field.

C: ... and there is a rhythm to life here. It brings you peace. One struggles through the winter but the flowers come in spring. During the summer the whole island is teeming with life and the sun is so warm on bare skin. And in the autumn, oh Eddie, you will love it so much when the harvest comes. There is so much to do, so much to gather, so many rewards.

O: What's that?

C: I don't see anything.

O: Across the field, over there. Something moving.

C: Oh just some sheep. They wander off sometimes. Come, let me show you the gardens.

O: Those aren't sheep. That's a man. And a woman.

C: How unusual. Well, the gardens are this way—

O: You said we were alone.

C: We are. We are alone.

O: We're not. I'm going to talk to them.

C: It could be dangerous. We shouldn't.

She grips her hand on his arm.

O: Let go of me, Circe.

He shakes her off and takes off towards the others. Circe reluctantly follows behind.

C: You're seeing things, Eddie. They aren't real.

O: You have deceived me, woman.

He continues to outpace her. She yells with cupped hands.

C: We're the last, Eddie. The last of our kind.

Scene 10 — Endings

One ending of four possibilities will be selected by the system on each run of the film.

Ending 10.1 — O

Eddie is sitting on a police station bench or in similar institutional setting.

Odysseus: All of it was fabricated. She set the whole thing up. I was never who she made me out to be. The whole time I was on that island, she was feeding me massive doses of her antipsychotics. I was never even fully conscious. I didn't know up from down or present from past. Who I was or what I'd done. The birdwatcher recognized me from the news. He didn't want to tell me but I got it out of him. I had gone missing from Dublin, under mysterious circumstances. I had missed my day in court, to stand trial

for fraud. I stand accused of talking certain farmers into certain types of investments in certain type of funds. Now in my opinion, there's no harm into talking a farmer into making an investment with his eyes wide open. A clever man will make his way. Those were heady days. The Celtic tiger roared and money was multiplying in place. Who would have thought it would all come crashing so down so fast, that the tiger would just die off? No one can be blamed, really. We all lost money. Circe's husband, a weak man if there ever was one, he couldn't take losing his farm. He died by his own hand. Circe needed someone to blame. She became obsessed with me. She drugged me and pulled me off my yacht and she brought me to the island. She was so far gone, that a certain point she believed her own story. She decided to replace what she'd lost with me. She took me in her bed and played house. Now we'll both stand trial, she for her kidnapping, and me for these simple accounting mistakes and misunderstandings. I'll almost certainly get off, the way my barrister tells it. The evidence is all circumstantial. I have no idea what they'll do with her. Maybe she'll get the help she needs. At a certain point we've all got to move on. What's done is done, what's dead is dead and gone.

Ending 10.2 — K

Kelly is seen walking up towards the cliffs.

Kelly: I slipped away while he was talking with the islanders. I wanted to explain it to him, that I didn't really come here for vacation. But I didn't really get the chance, and I didn't want him to see me do it. I didn't come here for R&R. I didn't come here to relax or reboot. I didn't come here to rekindle an old flame or to fall in love. This had nothing to do with Richard. He's a good guy, and I didn't want to spend my last night drinking alone, but he can't save me. I didn't come here for him or for anyone else. I came back here because this place is my home, as much as anywhere. And I think we all want to come home, in the end. Because home is a beautiful place to die. I don't know if there

were two children or three. I don't know if it was five or ten before that. I don't know if there is any real distinction between choosing to do something and being an instrument. It's not really a matter of guilt, or accepting responsibility or escaping blame. It's about emptiness. It's about things that you only see with night vision. Things in the dark that you can never unsee. Things that you have done from above. Time's arrow only goes one direction. Some things that cannot be undone. People you have removed from the world. Does it matter if it's ten, or two dozen, or a hundred? Will one more removal make a difference? I don't think so. I don't think nature cares one bit. Just another corpse, crushed upon the rocks, and then washed out to sea.

Kelly throws herself from the sea cliffs. Sounds of seabirds.

Ending 10.3 — C

Continuing from previous shot in 9.3. Circe stands and watches as he approaches the couple. She raises her staff and closes her eyes.

Circe: They come from time to time, lost things in search of a home. Men and beasts and things that wash ashore. I told him not to run to the lost visitors, that it might be dangerous. It could have been. When people come to my island, they do not stay the same. We all have beasts inside us. When cast the spell, I guide you towards your transformation, but I cannot say what you will become, pig or boar, housecat or leopard, inchworm or bear. But once I set eyes upon those orphans, they do not stay the same. When you are lost your pain must find a way to its true flesh and you to your true incarnation. He ran towards them and I raised my staff. There was a flash and a crack in the sky. A corncrake and a falcon appeared in the mist, and settled to the ground. They stood for a moment, one contemplating the other. The falcon craned her neck and eyed the lesser bird as he let loose a mournful cry. For a moment I thought she might devour

him, but they merely looked at each other in silence, as if reaching some shared understanding. Then she flew into the field and he to the cliffs. Eddie stood and stared for a moment, then he turned back towards me and he knew. He understood that it was all as I had told him. He will stay with me here on this island, where last things come to gather and rest, to wait out their days until their time comes, until they must make their final journey to the kingdom of the dead.

Ending 10.4 — R

This could be a drone shot, pulling away from the scene of R & K birdwatching and O running towards them.

Richard: The earth is marked by its times of great dying. New life does not rise unless old life falls. During the Ordovician period most life on the planet lived in the seas. Trilobites, brachiopods and graptolites, simple creatures but diverse in their simplicity. Then the climate changed, the ice shelves expanded, the sea levels fell, and 85% of these creatures died, over a period of 30 million years. But then the species that remained diversified. The Silurian period saw the rise of coral reefs and bony fish. Plants flourished on the land, and new life rose around wetlands. 248 million years ago, the Permian mass extinction took place over a much shorter time, and was even more cataclysmic. We don't know if it was caused by an asteroid impact, flood basalt eruptions, catastrophic methane release, a drop in oxygen levels, sea level fluctuations or some combination. 96% of life on an unforgiving planet disappeared. All known life on this planet today descended from the 4% that remained. On the timescale of the planet, our time here is nothing. All of Western civilization from the Ancient Greeks to our age of jets, digital networks, and drones, has passed in the blink of an eye. We have made so much, but we have eliminated much more so quickly in our rush to remake the world. We live in a time of great wonders yet we live in a time of great grief. We no

longer have need of magic because we make our own through technology. Yet the cleverer we are and the more we make, the more we break down. We declare our dominion and our power to destroy and we oversee a mass extinction occurring faster than any before. Kelly has killed children seen through robot eyes. I spend my days counting dying birds and dissecting them, pulling plastic from their gullets, mapping our inevitable decline. We imagine a world apart for ourselves, another planet that we might escape to and survive, but we will never get free. We will remain here forever, on this island between the living and the dead. We are alien invaders in a world we have ourselves unmade.