# SCRIPT – OCEAN GIRL

***BEACH***

***EXT (DAY)***

*Neri and Jason have been swimming together, exploring the reef. Neri has been able to stay underwater long and swim much faster than Jason. This is the first time they’ve been alone together. Neri settles on the beach and throws her head back, shaking her hair to dry it in the hot sun. Jason, out of breath, arrives from the water and squats down beside her. He’s a bit put down that she beat him, but in admiration.*

**Jason** You must’ve stayed under for about 5 minutes. At least.

*Neri doesn’t know what minutes are.*

**Neri** That’s a long time?

**Jason** It’s amazing! Then you beat me back to shore and you’re not

even winded.

*Jason sticks his tongue out and pants like a dog. Neri laughs.*

**Neri** You’re funny! And not very pleased, are you?

**Jason** Me? Why not?

*She looks down at the sand with a little smile.*

**Jason** Oh! Brett’s been telling you all about my big head, right?

**Neri** Why should he say your head is big? It looks the right size to me. *A little shyly…* It’s a nice head.

**Jason** No, big head means… Oh nah, forget it.

*Jason takes a stick and draws in the sand for a moment.*

**Jason** So who taught you to swim like that anyone? Somebody must have…

**Neri** *Hesitates…* A friend.

**Jason** You said there was nobody else on the island though?

**Neri** I said no people for a very long time.

**Jason** And before that?

**Neri** It’s hard to think about… *Becoming anxious…* I don’t know if I should tell you.

**Jason** Neri, we’re your friends, me and Brett. That means its safe to tell us anything. Hey! We’re not even telling anyone you exist, we promised, remember?

**Neri** Yes, right!

**Jason** So who was here… Before?

*Neri hesitates again. But she likes Jason, and really wants to share what she has*

*never talked about.*

**Neri** My Father, and some other people too… When I was very little, but I can’t remember them. I remember my Father though. He was a strong, tall man with kind eyes, blue like yours, only very old and wise. We lived together in the tree house while I grew up. He taught me how to stay alive. What fish and plants to eat, how to keep healthy. How to speak like I’m speaking to you.

**Jason** And to swim?

**Neri** No, he was too old to swim much.

**Jason** *Trying to make sense of the story…* So, what happened to him?

**Neri** *Staring ahead of her, out to the sea, she speaks gently but with no tears or grief…* He… Stopped living. We took him out to sea on a raft at sunset, the way he always told me to, and we buried him.

*She continues to gaze ahead of her, lost in memory. Jason looks at her, moved.*

**Jason** I’m sorry, Neri.

**Neri** *Breaking her thought and looking back at Jason…* Why be sorry? It was his time

**Jason** You must have been lonely though.

*Neri rolls over and looks at the sand for a moment.*

**Neri** Yes, sometimes. *She turns to Jason with a friendly smile…* But

not now!

**Jason** Hey, just a minute, you said ‘we’ took him out to sea and buried him. Who’s ‘we’?

**Neri** Me and Charlie.

**Jason** Charlie…?

**Neri** The big fish. *She gestures size…*

*Jason can hardly believe what he’s hearing.*

**Jason** The whale?

**Neri** Yes, my friend.

**Jason** You mean, the whale taught you to swim?

*Neri laughs.*

**Neri** Of course. Jason you are so funny when you’re surprised. Your eyes pop, just like a fish yourself!