

Rescripted text - opening dialogue sequence

1. INT. STUDIO APARTMENT — EVENING

1

WITNESS (O/S)

For us it was a moment
We didn't know it had begun until we
were already in the middle
Then we looked forward and knew how it
should end
but we didn't know how to get there
You could as well say that knowing the ending
we worked backward to what we must have been
to begin it
as forward to what we must become to end it

What would happen if I told the story just as
it occurred?

LAGOON MAKER

How could you
Every time we recreate the past it is
different

Witness (O/S)

Then let us reinvent ourselves

Lagoon Maker

We are always doing that anyway

Witness (O/S)

Lets do it publicly

Lagoon Maker

From one point of view or another
everything is visible and public

Witness (O/S)

Let us experiment with a moment

Lagoon Maker

A moment may have no existence whatever

Witness (O/S)

A moment may have no boundaries
and may be expanded indefinitely

Lagoon Maker

A moment is like an atom and can be exploded

Witness (O/S)

Then let us choose a radioactive moment with

a ten-year half-life

Where are you

In a space of my own devising

Who are you

A being of my own invention

Why are you my company

You came to live in the space
of my own devising

Why are you my companion

You have entered the space

of my dreaming

Who are you

A being of my own creating

Where were you before

In the space of my own dreaming

If I am in your space it is
no longer a space of your own
dreaming

*If I am in your space it can
no longer be a space of your own
devising*

An experiment (beat) a bargain

A transaction of sorts

To discover if we are
each other's invention

*But how would you know or I know
By listening to a conversation
of another's devising*

*And comparing our own understandings
and enacting our own believing
While recording each other's
Behaving*

Choose any conversation

Lagoon Maker

I know a hardy creature (beat)
a crab

The First Lagoon

The Lagoon at Upouveli

**(Text and stills and sweeps of panels held in the
Pompidou Centre)**

SRI LANKAN LOCAL 1 stands at stall with the crabs tied,
limp, lifeless. The Lagoon Maker eagerly elicits
responses.

SRI LANKAN LOCAL 1

I know a hardy creature (beat) a crab
and I suppose it could live under
museum conditions

To do so it would need warm waters to
grow in (best) and equatorial light cycles
and some hiding places (beat) further
it could live out of water for up
to five days

It tastes good (beat) as good as most
lobster (beat) and it is a favourite
food among my people

It mates in small places (beat) and hides
in the mud among the mangrove roots
in the lagoons at Trincomalee and
Negombo (beat) it was the last to die
when the tidal ponds dried up
often crawling over land to find
better water (beat) or burrowing in the mud

I have seen this crab in dirty water
and clean water (beat) in the shallows and
much deeper (beat) in 65 degree water
and in 95 degree water
in oversalty water (beat) and almost
fresh water (beat) and it has a strange
relationship to the mangrove roots
which I do not understand

It is a scavenger
and can eat almost anything
even its own kind
and gives up and grows limbs rapidly
it is easy enough
to catch if you know how
but can bite off a finger if you don't

Lagoon Maker (O/S)

Fetch us some crabs and some bottom mud
and some mangrove seeds and whatever

I can grow a crab
I can make a lagoon to grow it in
I can be a lagoonmaker

SRI LANKAN LOCAL 2

I am from Sri Lanka
where the estuaries (beat) the lagoons

(beat) and the ocean are among the richest
in the world
and if you want to know about lagoons
you should go there and see them

The lagoons and the ocean are
being fished out by foreign fishing fleets
who send some fish to the world market
and sell the rest back to the people in cans

The fishermen can no longer afford to eat
the fish that they catch
because the tourist hotels pay
so much for them

The coconut provides most of the necessities
of life
Yet to get Western money they are exporting
coconuts

The two-thousand-year-old water system of
Tanks and irrigation ditches is degenerating
from lack of care (beat) and being abandoned
and replaced by modern dams and reservoirs

For almost 2,500 years Sri Lanka has
practiced one of the purest forms of Buddhism
and this is symbolised by the old flag

Sri Lanka has always been the richest nation
in Southeast Asia (beat) but modernisation is
impoverishing people (beat) while ruining
land and water

I am angry (beat) I am going back to Sri
Lanka to save the rain forests

Why don't you go to Sri Lanka and see what is
happening
spend time with people who are working for
change (beat) visit the lagoons (beat) the
tanks (beat) the paddies (beat) and the
temples (beat) and listen to what people say

Lagoon Maker (O/S)
I will go to Sri Lanka
and behave as a witness

ORIGINAL TEXT sample

He said

If you want to know about the crab
go north to the lagoon at Negombo
and speak to the crab fishermen there

Some use boats

and some just wade the shallows
After that go to the east coast
To the lagoons at Trincomalee
and speak to the fishermen there

Above all he said

go to the lagoon at Upouveli
Go to the first bridge north of Trincomalee
and look for the fishermen's nets hanging there
Look down from the bridge
over the flat plain
You will see shallows with pockets of mangroves
and even some pools drying up
See if you can find the old fishermen there
He knows more than anyone

From the lagoon at Upouveli

The fisherman although puzzled answered
Questions as best he could after finding out we didn't
want to buy crabs

Yes he said

he had caught crabs and prawns here all his life and the
nets hanging from the bridge were his He didn't need a
boat since the deepest water was only waist high There
were fewer crabs here than there used to be but he got
more money for them and what else could he do

He said

he caught the bigger ones in the middle of the lagoon
Those in the shallows were smaller and they liked to
gather amongst the mangrove roots

He said

He had occasionally seen them mating after the monsoon
most often near the rocks under the bridge or half
buried in the mud But why would you ask such a
question

He said

the biggest crab he had ever caught was about six pounds
and that somewhat rotten fish was the best bait

And yes
The lagoon dried up each year before the monsoons came
again but he continued to catch some in the small
ponds remaining

And yes
the best time to catch them was early morning or late in
the afternoon since they hid most of the day and he
had found them in ponds as small as four paces by five
paces or even smaller

So I thought
I can make a tank four paces by five paces
and waist high
I can make a light cycle with timers
and time it to equatorial light
and keep it at equatorial temperature
and make a bottom filter that changes
the water as the tides

And
I thought
how will a crab know it's not a lagoon