

PANOS SAKELIS

JUDAS IS PRESENT

THEATRICAL PLAY

Characters of the Play:

<i>Captain</i>	The captain of the ship.
<i>Quartermaster</i>	The one in charge of the materials, food, accommodation and everything that has to do with the supplies. Male.
<i>Boatswain</i>	The one in charge of the ship. Male.
<i>Cook</i>	The <i>Cook</i> of the vessel. Female.
<i>Doctor</i>	The doctor that accompanies the lunatics. Female.
<i>Nurse</i>	The one in charge of the ship's hygiene. Female.
<i>Magda</i>	One of the lunatics. Female.
<i>Manos</i>	One of the lunatics. Male.
<i>Michael</i>	One of the lunatics. Male.
<i>Antigone</i>	One of the lunatics. Female.
<i>Joanna</i>	One of the lunatics. Female.
<i>Jordan</i>	One of the lunatics. Male.

The setting of the Play:

We have three different scenic shots in a single stage. All three represent the living quarters of a ferryboat or landing ship. The first is on the right of the scene, the other on the left, while the third is like a second floor on top and left. In the lower-left part, there are bunks and a table with chairs. It reminds, respectively, the sleeping and eating area of a cargo ship. On the right is an empty space where chains are hanging from the walls, indicating the lower hangar of a ferry boat where cars, and other vehicles, are parked. On the upper level, there is the bunk and the captain's office. There is still a ladder from the middle part of the scene that is going up to this level.

Time of the Play:

The present.

ACT ONE

We hear the ship whistle, and a loudspeaker announces that the time is seven in the morning. From the right, the Cook enters carrying a tray with cake and a jug of tea. She puts them on the table. She's dressed in something like a uniform. She sits at the table and fills a glass with tea.

Cook: What a day today! You know where it is heading from early on!

The Quartermaster and the Boatswain enter the scene. They wear blue jeans and blue shirts, while over their right pocket hangs a badge with their names. They sit next to her and start to eat without saying a word.

Cook: Can you tell me where you went yesterday?

Quartermaster: How did you come up with that conclusion again?

Cook: Your beds were made early in the morning. Did you go out last night?

Boatswain: Don't shout! We went for a walk in the city just to get some air, we were freaking out in here so long.

Cook: In that city of hell?

Quartermaster: (Looking at her strangely) Why you call it hell?

Cook: Why did you discover hidden beauties. It is their madhouse!

Quartermaster: So what? They don't let lunatics walk on the streets! They keep them inside.

Cook: Nobody walks on the streets.

Boatswain: They do.

Cook: Indeed, the...

Quartermaster: come on, speak up?

Cook: You think I am ashamed? The whores! Fire will fall from the sky and burn you all.

Boatswain: Don't shout, you, bitch. I'm not deaf!

Cook: Captain ordered no one to leave the ship. We all heard him from the loudspeakers. The boat must be ready to sail at any time.

Quartermaster: That's why he collected them all to his table, and we couldn't find even one with straight legs!

Boatswain: Come on now!

Boatswain: I wish! Instead, we were left with a dick in our hands!

Cook: Aren't you ashamed to talk like that, you cretin?

Quartermaster: Ashamed? For what?

Cook: No one talks like that.

Boatswain: I don't know how they talk. What I know for sure is that we lost our time for nothing.

Quartermaster: Oh, yes, and not only, but we are also left with a shitty hangover, who wants to work? While if we...

Cook: I will tell you once again, speak nicer in front of me.

Quartermaster: Damn! I'm going for a nap, and we'll figure out afterward what to do. (He gets up, and after a few steps he turns back)

Cook, be careful! You know why? After so many days locked in here, you are becoming prettier by the day!

Cook: (She looks happy with what she heard.) There's no shame in you, boys? Why don't you take care of your job for a change? Don't you want to be updated with the program?

Quartermaster: What do I care about the program? I'm the *Quartermaster* of this brothel. I check my materials regularly, I keep my books in order, I take care of the provisions, for the rest, I don't give a shit!

Boatswain: Shut up, dumm ass! From the way she talks, I guess she's getting somewhere. Her chit chat feels more of a quip than just an observation. Well, sweetheart?

Cook: What? I just read the daily orders and figure out what is hidden behind the words, I don't have in mind how to go like you in filthy places and such.

Quartermaster: Come on now! Cut to the chase, and we'll get the details later.

Cook: We'll carry lunatics.

Boatswain: Say what?

Cook: We'll carry lunatics! Didn't you hear me in the first place?

Boatswain: I heard it, but I didn't understand it. Where exactly will we carry them to?

Cook: He is the *Boatswain* and asks where we are heading! Really you don't know?

Boatswain: Oh, who cares, here or there, what's the difference? What matters is to be in charge of something, to be a *Quartermaster*, a *Boatswain*, not to actually perform your duties!

Quartermaster: Shut up! Like its so damn hard to take a look now and again, just for the fun of it. Besides, who has ever asked you to take specific responsibilities?

Boatswain: Come on, don't take the bitch's side? You know I am good at my job, I am just making fun.

Quartermaster: Will you spit it out or continue with this bullshit?

Cook: They are bringing lunatics onboard. Just that. So you will get a chance to practice your charm on them... at least some of them.

Boatswain: Go fuck yourself! I am not doing crazy chicks?

Cook: Why, do you know anyone in her mind that would go out with you?

The Quartermaster laughs.

Boatswain: What are you laughing at, asshole? You're no better!

Quartermaster: Oh, you make me feel so bad!

Cook: You are both the same.

Quartermaster: Look who's talking.

Cook: Yes! (Imitating the *Quartermaster*) Look who's talking back! Like we are the spitting image of each other.

Boatswain: Why not, you think we don't know why you are playing the role of Santa Maria?

Cook: How about letting me know?

Quartermaster: *Boatswain*, let's go. It smells like trouble.

Cook: No need to, I am leaving. (She picks up the tray and walks towards the exit).

Boatswain: Ever since that guy left the old bitch, she is all about the chicks and the sorrow.

The Cook, who hasn't left the room yet, hears that, grabs a piece of cake, and throws it at his head. Both avoid it and leave in a hurry to the other side of the stage.

Cook: (as she walks away) Listen what these jerks say! Do you hear what they say?! I'll saw them one day.

The Captain walks to the stage, dressed casually. He is wearing a jockey with insignia indicating his rank. He paces for a while in the front part of the stage and finally goes up the ladder to his cabin. He sits at his office and lifts the handset.

Captain: Hello, sailor, please call the *Nurse*. (He hangs up the phone and writes something on a piece of paper). What a night! You can't find anything to do in this shit hole, but orders are orders. (Picks

back the phone) If a doctor asks for me, send him to my cabin. What happened to the *Nurse*? Did you notify her? (Pause). Well, call her again!

The Quartermaster enters the stage at the vehicle area, holding six blankets, leaving one after the other on the wall with the big chains.

Quartermaster: (Singing)

*"We all live in a yellow submarine
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine
We all live in a yellow submarine
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine
And our friends are all aboard
Many more of them live next door
And the band begins to play."*

Nurse: (Entering the stage running). Good morning.

Quartermaster: What's the rush?

Nurse: The Man upstairs wants me urgently.

Quartermaster: Not only the Man upstairs sweetie, the one downstairs too! (He tries to put his arms around her). How about it, honey?

Nurse: (She pushes him away). How about what?

Quartermaster: I expect nothing more than the rest.

Nurse: That is?

Quartermaster: To get together, somewhere private.

Nurse: How private?

Quartermaster: So private that even our clothes are a crowd!

Nurse: With me? (She laughs). That's definitely not what I had in mind. (The *Quartermaster* tries to re-embrace her). Stop it, I told you he is waiting... (She points upstairs).

Quartermaster: Big fucking deal.

Nurse: Deal or no deal, he still is the Captain. That says it all.

Quartermaster: It may be so upstairs but down here, I am the *Quartermaster*.

Boatswain: (Enters the stage). And I am the *Boatswain*.

Quartermaster: So choose between us two. Or even both of us if you fancy. I'm not known to deny an exceptional threesome. The Captain can wait for his turn, although he is not into this kind of fun.

Nurse: But he is in control of everything. He is the authority. (She walks out, but the *Quartermaster* stops her).

Quartermaster: Controls! You make it sound like it matters. He controls, but I'm in charge.

Boatswain: So am I.

Nurse: Good for you, so while you are both in charge, what is his part upstairs?

Cook: (Enters the stage) Power, so you better hurry, cause you don't want to see him get mad unless you have a damn good excuse you for your delay.

Nurse: I do, the truth, I won't lie about that stuff.

Quartermaster: The truth?

Nurse: Yes.

Quartermaster: Then, you better hurry. That asshole is capable of screaming for hours.

The Quartermaster and the Boatswain take her in their hands and push her up a few steps.

Nurse: (Entering the captain's cabin) Good morning, Captain.

Captain: What the hell took you so long, my sweet girl?

Nurse: Well, you know...

Captain: I know, I know. (Pause). I'm waiting for a doctor, and I want you to be here. He may need you during the journey.

Nurse: The doctor?

Captain: Yes, the doctor. (Pause). He will give us all the necessary details for this trip as well as any related orders.

Nurse: He will, not you?

Captain: What can I say? I! For this journey, the administration has appointed the doctor in charge of the orders. (Pause). Take a sit don't stand up. Ah, I almost forgot, honey, did you bring the blood pressure gauge with you?

Nurse: No, do you want me to check your blood pressure?

Captain: If you don't mind!

Nurse: Mind? What are you talking about! I'll just go and get it, I won't be late.

The Nurse comes down the stairs and exits from the stage. The Cook strolls in and sits in a chair.

Cook: Its beyond me! Bloody idiots, open their mouth and say every bullshit they want. (Pause). I wonder how they came up with these stories for me. Anyway, I shouldn't take these morons seriously. (The *Nurse* enters the stage running). What's the rush? Have a seat for a moment.

Nurse: Oh, I can't, he is waiting for me.

Cook: What do you need the pressure gauge?

Nurse: He asked me to check his pressure.

Cook: Why? Did last night's company rise it?

Nurse: What company?

Cook: Yesterday, he was drinking in a bar in the company of some hookers.

Nurse: But, yesterday, it was forbidden to leave the boat!

Cook: 'Forbidden' for everyone else except him.

Nurse: Are you serious?

Cook: What do you think?

Nurse: That's why he wants to check his blood pressure?

Cook: What did you imagine that he got the blues?

Nurse: What do I care about? If he wants to cause problems to his health, that's his right.

Cook: Sure, but he is the one in charge here. What if something happens to him, what are we supposed to do?

Nurse: I guess there must be specific procedures in such cases. (Awkward pause) Anyway, it's not like we're gonna die or something.

Cook: I didn't say that I just think it is better to avoid any changes. We are used to him, so he should take better care of himself.

Nurse: You are right, but it's not up to me, what can I do? Just check his blood pressure.

Cook: I am pretty sure he wants to check much more than that, anyway go now and be careful. (The *Cook* approaches her and straightens the white *Nurse* hat she wears). That's better. (The *Cook* continues to fix her up).

Nurse: Is something wrong?

Cook: No! Why would you say that?

Nurse: Just saying.

Cook: (Takes a few steps back). You shouldn't. I'm just making sure you are pretty. You are the only breath of fresh air in here, you see. (The *Cook* smiles).

Nurse: (With coquetry). Come on, you are exaggerating!

Cook: Not at all, honey! (The *Cook* caresses her cheek) Go now, the Captain is waiting for you.

Nurse: Yes, I shouldn't be late. Bye!

Cook: Bye. (The *Nurse* walks up the stair. The *Cook* grabs her by the leg). Would you like me to save you a piece of cake? It's really delicious today.

Nurse: If you want.

Cook: I don't mind.

They both leave the dining room, the Cook exiting the stage while the Nurse goes up the stairs and enters the Captain's office.

Captain: Fine, excellent (The Captain takes off his shirt and spreads his arm). Okay?

Nurse: It's okay. (The Nurse uses the gauge). You have to be careful, however, because I see it is a bit high.

Captain: High? How high?

Nurse: Nearly eighteen.

Captain: That fucking harlot is responsible for that!

Nurse: What did you say?

Captain: Nothing significant, don't pay attention. So, what were we talking about?

Nurse: Your blood pressure.

Captain: No, I'm not talking about now. When you came earlier.

Nurse: About our trip and some doctor.

Captain: Ah yes, I remember now. So, when the doctor comes, I want you to be here. You will coordinate the ship's staff for us so that everything goes according to the plan.

Nurse: Will the doctor come along?

Captain: As far as I know, yes. Make sure you take care of the sleeping arrangements. Is the dispensary room good enough, or is it too small?

Nurse: No, it's okay. It only needs a bit of cleaning. We do have a shortage of medical tools, though. I had submitted a report. Do you remember?

Captain: Not precisely, but it doesn't matter. I have forwarded all the reports to the administration office. So?

Nurse: Will the Doctor have any special duties during the journey?

Captain: I don't know, I am sure there will be written orders, and I will let you know on time. (The phone rings. The Captain answers it). Yeah, bring him up. The doctor is here.

A female doctor enters the stage accompanied by the Quartermaster.

Doctor: Am I going in the right direction?

Quartermaster: Yes, just go straight (They reach the steps). Here it is.

(Pause) May I ask you something?

Doctor: Please!

Quartermaster: Is it true that we will carry lunatics?

Doctor: Yes, but how did you find out that information was supposed to be classified!

Quartermaster: No big deal, don't bother. Secrets like that always leak. We were bound to find out eventually.

Doctor: The problem is not you, and I mean the crew, it mustn't reach the press. At least the non-governmental. The journalists cause issues in such cases.

Quartermaster: Don't worry, the leak is internal, only crew knows it, and we have no contact with the outside world. Well, the Captain is up to his cabin, bye.

Doctor: Thank you (She goes upstairs and enters the captain's cabin).

Captain: Doctor, welcome aboard. At your command. (The Captain laughs). I was expecting a man, but you'll do just fine, I actually prefer you.

Doctor: Please, all I do is to accompany the herd. (She laughs cruel).

Captain: Where is it?

Doctor: Don't you know? Sorry. (The Doctor passes a folder).

Captain: (He opens it and reads for a while). Lunatics?

Doctor: Indeed, sir, completely insane. Do you find it strange?

Captain: To say the least! To begin with I have never carried such a cargo. I have carried munitions, sand, stones, vehicles, army, supplies, refugees. Finally, I retire with a loading full of lunatics. How come, though?

Doctor: Let me explain. The lady?

Captain: Oh, a thousand apologies. She is in charge of our health. Doctor, our *Nurse*.

Doctor / Nurse: (Shaking hands) Nice to meet you.

Captain: You were saying?

Doctor: Well, every now and then from the General Administration they check the records, and the patients that had no visitors for at least five years, are packed, (She laughs cruel), and sent to the island. The last place they visit before disappearing. (She laughs again).

Captain: How so?

Doctor: Who wants to go and serve out there? The "lighter" cases take care of the rest. The only doctors there are young interns. I don't blame them? (Laughs).

Captain: Of course, you are right. No one wants to go! (Pause)

Nurse: When are they coming?