

Life of Pi

by

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Adapted for the stage

by

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*FINAL BROADWAY DRAFT

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- A HOSPITAL ROOM. MEXICO. 1978.

A sparse, white room with a bed. A NURSE, 40's, enters.

NURSE

Buenos días Pi. Tienes visita. Es hora de salir.
(Good day Pi. You have visitors. Time to come out.)

There is no one here. She exits.

Caption: MEXICO. 1978.

She returns with MR OKAMOTO, Japanese, 50's, suited with a large briefcase and LULU CHEN, East Asian Canadian, 20's, smartly dressed.

Venga mijo, sal. Parecen buena gente.
(It's alright son, come on out. They look like nice people.)

NURSE indicates under the bed.

LULU

Mr Patel I'm Lulu Chen from the Canadian Embassy here in Mexico... I'm sorry we haven't met until now. I've managed to trace your paperwork in Winnipeg. How are you feeling?

Nothing.

May I introduce Mr Okamoto from the Japanese Ministry of Transport.

MR OKAMOTO

Good morning Mr. Patel. I am here to talk to you about the sinking of the ship Tsimsum.

No answer.

There's been no news for eight months. All parties are very anxious to hear your recollection of events. I'm compiling the official report about the tragedy.

No answer.

Do you mind if I record our conversation?

MR OKAMOTO removes a tape recorder from his briefcase, sets it up on the table.

LULU

Do - you - speak - English? ¿Necesita un traductor?
(Does he need a translator?)

NURSE

No. Sólo es tímido...¿Quieres un dulce, Pi?
(No. He's just shy...Do you want a sweet Pi?)

The NURSE brings out a bag of sweets and PI's hand appears from under the bed to take one.

LULU

Butterscotch- my favourite.

PI PATEL, 17, Indian, slim, in pajamas, peeks out from underneath the bed.

PI

Would you like one?

LULU

No but thank you. Will you join us?

PI comes out tentatively and climbs onto the bed with a box.

PI

What's the tape for?

MR OKAMOTO

It is for all concerned parties - the ministry, the shipping company, the families of the missing crew, the businesses that lost cargo.

LULU

We're very sorry for *your* loss Mr Patel.

MR OKAMOTO is awkwardly silent.

Are you comfortable?

PI

...Yes...And you?

LULU

I'm very comfortable thank you.

MR OKAMOTO

May I begin?

MR OKAMOTO puts on the tape recorder. NURSE exits.

PI

Have you come all the way from Tokyo?

MR OKAMOTO

Yes I arrived yesterday. Miss Chen took me to see the lifeboat this morning.

PI

Did you have a good trip?

MR OKAMOTO

I did thank you.

PI

I've had a terrible trip.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes...I'm so sorry...February 19th, 1978. This interview in the Benito Juarez Infirmary, Tomatlan, Mexico is about the sinking of the ship Tsimtsum. Could you please state your full name.

PI

Piscine Molitor Patel.

MR OKAMOTO

Piscine. That's an unusual name.

LULU

It means swimming pool in French.

PI

But you can call me Pi.

MR OKAMOTO

How old are you Mr Patel and where are your family from?

A sad silence.

LULU

He's seventeen and his family was from Pondicherry in India. Were they under threat Pi? We know there's political unrest in India at the moment. Why did they leave Piscine? Why choose Canada?

PI

For a better life Miss Chen. I imagine your family did the same.

LULU does not know what to say.

D'you have anything to eat?

LULU

Erm...I have some cookies.

LULU gets a packet of biscuits from her bag. PI takes them. He puts them in the box.

MR OKAMOTO

Can you tell me what happened the day the ship sank?
Was another ship involved?

Silence.

An explosion perhaps? Would you speak for the
recording please?

PI

You're here for my story.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes.

PI

How should I begin? Once upon a time?

MR OKAMOTO

We're not children Mr Patel.

PI

We're all children Mr Okamoto.

MR OKAMOTO

The Tsimtsum left Manila eight months ago and that was
the last time it was seen. You are the only known
survivor. I need to know what happened.

Silence.

PI

Are you a religious man Mr Okamoto?

MR OKAMOTO

That's a rather personal question....erm...no...not really...

PI

Why not?

MR OKAMOTO

Well faith is...erm...not something that...

PI

Many of us lose God along life's way.

MR OKAMOTO

I didn't lose God.

PI

Then what do you believe?

MR OKAMOTO

Mr Patel I'd really like to...

PI

Please.

MR OKAMOTO

I've never been a believer. Religion is a habit rather than a truth. A crutch in times of need.

PI

So you're an atheist.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes.

PI

I respect that. Atheists are believers of a different faith. It's agnostics I don't understand. They don't commit to anything. Choosing doubt as a philosophy of life is like choosing immobility as a mode of transport...I will tell you everything Mr Okamoto... because my story will *make* you believe in God.

Butterflies fly around PI. MR OKAMOTO and LULU cannot see it.

Once upon a time, I lived in Pondicherry's botanical gardens in the zoo. It was a huge zoo, spread over acres and acres, big enough for a train to explore but now it's so small it fits in my head....

A giraffe peers through a window of the hospital. MR OKAMOTO and LULU cannot see it.

- PONDICHERRY ZOO. INDIA. 1976.

Cages and animals. The sound of exotic animals calling out. A goat enters chased by RANI, Indian, a teenager.

RANI

Buckingham! Buckingham! Stop him Piscine.

PI cuddles BUCKINGHAM.

PI

Where are you going Rani?

RANI

I was taking Buckingham to the vet but he chewed through the rope.

BUCKINGHAM runs away, RANI fails to catch him. PI laughs.

You're no help Pissing Patel.

PI

Stop it.

RANI

That's what they call you at school. Piss, Piss, Pissing Patel.

PI

Stop calling me that. That's not my name anymore.

RANI

What're you talking about?

PI

From now on I'm called Pi.

RANI

Like pumpkin pie?

PI

No. like an irrational number Rani I'm not easy to describe...As in 3.141...er...

RANI

...59265358979.

PI

Exactly!

RANI

323846264338....

BUCKINGHAM bites RANI.

Ow! Buckingham!

RANI exits.

PI

My older sister Rani. A math genius and really annoying.

FATHER enters in a hurry.

Baba...?

FATHER

Can't chat Piscine. Black n' White's being difficult. If only I could train him. I've got to sort him out.

FATHER exits.

PI

When Father was a boy he went to the circus and fell in love with the animals. So when Pondicherry wanted a zoo, he applied to run it.

AMMA OS

(calling) Piscine! Where are you?

PI

Coming Amma! *My mother looked after all of us.*

AMMA, 40's, Indian, enters holding a basket of bananas. PI tries to take one.

AMMA

No darling, they're for the orangutan. Orange Juice is a new mother now Piscine so she needs extra minerals in her diet and these bananas are full of potassium. I'm a bit worried about her, I think she's lost weight. Oh tell your father, your uncle and auntie are coming for the blessing.

AMMA exits. FATHER is guiding two ZEBRAS, one of them uncooperative, into an enclosure.

FATHER

Open the gate son.

PI

Baba, Mamaji and auntie are coming for the blessing.

FATHER

Is that today? Black n' White is being stubborn and aggressive Piscine. At least in this zoo I'm in charge and he can't get away with it. In your pen. Yaa Black n' White. Yaa! I'm in charge.

The ZEBRA bolts into the enclosure. FATHER exits.

RANI is standing by the hyena cage with MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR who has a camera focussed on the animal.

PI

Hi auntie! *I had to call my auntie Mrs Kumar at school because she taught me science.* What are doing?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

I want a close-up picture of this hyena for your class. Always remember observation and analysis are key to understanding the natural world Piscine. Oh my word!

RANI

What is it?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

It's a tooth!

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR gets close to the cage to take photos of the tooth.

Crocuta crocuta can crush an entire wildebeest with those teeth.

PI is near the cage looking at the tooth.

Don't get too close Piscine.

The HYENA runs at PI. He stumbles back.

RANI

Are you alright?

PI

I got the tooth!

He holds it up and gives it to MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

That's brilliant but don't tell your father. I'll get into trouble. I'll show this tooth to the class Piscine.

PI

Pi.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Pi Patel? I like it.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR exits.

PI walks through the atrium. MAMAJI enters.

PI

Mamaji!

MAMAJI

Have you seen your auntie Piscine? She keeps wandering off to look at the animals.

PI
I'm called Pi now Mamaji.

MAMAJI
What? Why?

PI
It was Mamaji who named me...

MAMAJI
But Piscine is a name to be proud of. Not only is it auspicious but it's French. When I studied in Paris it was the finest swimming pool of them all - The Piscine Molitor. I swam every day after my lectures, the water was so clean you could make your coffee with it. A pool the gods would swim in.

PI
...and he's the one that taught me to swim.

MAMAJI
Tomorrow in your swimming lesson we must work on keeping your body flat and streamlined, stretching your hands as far as they'll reach out and just moving forward. Got it?

PI
Got it.

MAMAJI
Good.

MAMAJI exits.

Orange Juice!

ORANGE JUICE, an orangutan, is in her cage with her baby. AMMA has the basket of bananas.

AMMA
As a new mother Orange Juice, the last thing you'll be thinking of is yourself but you need to get your energy back and these bananas will make you both strong. I'm not sure she's eating enough Piscine.

PI
Can I try Amma?

PI gives the baby a banana.

Here you go little one. Take good care of your Amma and she'll take care of you.

FATHER, RANI and MAMAJI enter and MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR takes a family photograph.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Smile!

PI

Wait! Buckingham!

BUCKINGHAM jumps into the photo.

Our life was idyllic but the government was in turmoil, arguing, causing chaos. There were riots on the streets, it wasn't safe anymore so people stopped coming to our zoo. But father never gave up and thought a fresh exhibit would bring in new business.

AMMA, RANI, MAMAJI and MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR enter. They stand around an empty cage.

MAMAJI

I'm afraid we can't stay long.

AMMA

Thank you for coming.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Is the Bengal tiger working Gita? Are there more visitors in the zoo?

AMMA

It's too early to tell, it's only been a week.

PI

Auntie have you seen we've put goats in the rhinoceros enclosure?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Is that safe?

AMMA

Well, our rhino was lonely, so I thought the goats might be good company.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

That's inspired. If only our politicians could learn from your animals.

AMMA

How d'you mean?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Look at this fighting in parliament, it's just an inability of political parties to cohabit.

MAMAJI

They don't need to like each other they just have to share.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Exactly.

FATHER enters with papers.

AMMA

There you are! Mamaji let's do the blessing.

FATHER

Why do we have to do this now?

AMMA

You know why. We must give thanks for the tiger and today is auspicious.

MAMAJI peers into the empty cage.

MAMAJI

Where is he?

FATHER

Why? Are you planning on putting a tika on his forehead?

MAMAJI

Very funny.

FATHER

This is the feeding cage. They've bolted the gate until lunchtime. He's back there in the enclosure.

MAMAJI

Maybe we should be more frightened out here? What is it you always say?

MAMAJI/PI

"Man is the most dangerous animal in this zoo".

FATHER

That's the truth Mamaji.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

I totally agree.

MAMAJI prepares for the blessing.

MAMAJI

What's the tiger's name?

FATHER

I don't know. The paperwork finally arrived today.

PI takes the papers from FATHER and reads.

PI

It's...Richard Parker.

AMMA

Really?

FATHER

That's what it says.

AMMA covers her head.

AMMA

Thank you Mamaji.

MAMAJI does puja.

MAMAJI

Om namo namah. May the god's bless this tiger and this zoo. May these challenging times make us stronger.

(intones) Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah

Sarve Santu Niramayah Richard Parker

(May everybody be happy.

May everybody be free from disease.)

PI, FATHER and RANI giggle.

Sarve Bhadrani Pushyantu

Maa Kaschid Dukhabhaag Bhavet

(May everybody have good luck.

May none fall on evil days).

Om Shaanti Shaanti Shaanti

(Peace, peace, peace.)

FATHER

We live in modern India. Surely we can leave these silly rituals behind.

MAMAJI

And you live by the sea. Surely you can at least learn to float.

AMMA

Mamaji that was perfect. Thank you.

PI and RANI are peering into the enclosure.

PI

Where is he? I haven't seen him all day.

RANI

I think he's behind that tree.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

I'm sorry Gita we have to go. I have to prepare my classes for the week.

AMMA

Of course.

MAMAJI

And we must get back before the demonstration starts. They'll barricade the roads.

PI

I'll be at the swimming pool after school tomorrow Mamaji.

MAMAJI

Excellent.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

(to Pi and Rani) See you both in class! Bye everyone.

MAMAJI and MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR exit as the zookeeper runs on urgently, speaks to FATHER and exits.

PI is impatient at the edge of the enclosure.

PI

Richard Parker?!!

RANI laughs.

AMMA

What's wrong Santosh?

FATHER

They found razors in the elephant's apples!

AMMA

Hoi Ram. Did the elephants eat them?

FATHER

No but they could have.

PI is restless with expectation.

PI

Come out Richard Parker!

RANI.

I can't see him at all.

FATHER is upset.

FATHER

First our poor monkey had her arm broken by some hooligan and then the flamingo died after its beak was smashed with a hammer. Man *is* the most dangerous animal in this zoo Gita and this cruelty is filtering down from the top.

AMMA

Don't upset yourself thinking about it.

FATHER

This government show us bad behaviour has no consequences. People are looting, fighting, vandalizing property and no one is held accountable.

AMMA

Calm down darling.

FATHER

We need order. Order Gita!! The Congress Party needs taming. I'd snap my whip and show them who's the dominant beast, who's the alpha male!!

AMMA

Come to the temple tomorrow with me Santosh it's peaceful there...

FATHER

Praying's pointless. There're riots on our streets, violence in our zoo, that's the reality. I can't protect us anymore . We'll have to leave.

AMMA

What do you mean?

FATHER

Leave India.

AMMA

We can't. The zoo is our home. Where would we go? This is where we belong. We'll lose everything if we leave.

PI is getting bolder by the empty enclosure, leaning dangerously into the cage.

PI

Richard Parker! We're waiting to see you. Come out!!

FATHER
Piscine!!! What are you doing?

PI
Nothing!

FATHER
Come here at once!

PI
Rani did it!

RANI
I didn't do anything!

AMMA
Piscine you must never do that.

PI
I was trying to get him to come out.

AMMA
You should know better Rani.

RANI
Why is it always my fault?

FATHER
Silence! Both of you! What animal is Richard Parker?

RANI
A Royal Bengal tiger Baba.

FATHER
Tigers are EXTREMELY dangerous. Do you hear me?!
Jai!

The zoo keeper enters, speaks to FATHER and exits.

AMMA
Your father's under a lot of pressure at the moment. He doesn't mean to shout.

FATHER
We've been too soft Gita. It's time for them to grow up and for all of us to face the facts.

The zookeeper reappears with BUCKINGHAM, the goat.

By protecting them from the truth, we're not keeping them safe.

AMMA
They understand the dangers. I've told them.

FATHER
We have to show them reality.

FATHER nods to the zookeeper who opens the enclosure.

PI
Baba? What are you doing?

He puts the goat inside the cage.

RANI
Baba?

FATHER
Never forget this. (to the zookeeper) Open the door to the feeding cage.

AMMA
Santosh.

The zookeeper opens a second door within the cage, releasing the tiger in with the goat.

BUCKINGHAM bleats and tenses as RICHARD PARKER emerges from the darkness.

PI
Get Buckingham out Baba. Please.

RICHARD PARKER pounces - a screaming goat. He drags the goat into his lair.

PI and RANI are shocked. AMMA is upset. FATHER stony faced.

RANI
Why did you do that? That's horrible. Why would you let that happen? I don't understand.

PI
Buckingham never hurt anyone.

AMMA
Darling he is just an animal.

PI
I loved him.

RANI
I'm going to my room.

FATHER
No. You'll stay here.

PI and RANI remain.

You think this is a safe place? The Himalayan bears. One strike of their claws and your innards will be scooped out and splattered over the ground. Do you understand?

Silence.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

RANI/PI

Yes Father.

FATHER

The hyenas have the strongest jaws in nature. They'll eat you while you're still alive. Do you understand?

RANI/PI

Yes Father.

FATHER

The orangutans, as strong as ten men, they'll break your bones like twigs.

RANI/PI

Yes father.

FATHER

Don't think any animal is harmless. Life will defend itself no matter how small it is. This world is dangerous. It's a mistake to think we're safe. Do you understand?

RANI/PI

Yes Father.

FATHER

Good.

FATHER is upset and exits.

AMMA

We have to teach you these things my darlings.

RANI exits. AMMA tries to hug PI but he rejects her.

One day I hope this will make sense to you.

AMMA exits. RICHARD PARKER emerges and sits down content, making a purring sound.

PI

Buckingham didn't deserve that. He was so frightened. You had a choice, you could've let him live. Are you happy and well fed now? Is that why you're purring? You're a murderer and I hate you Richard Parker. I hate you!

The fences exit and PI is momentarily left with an uncaged RICHARD PARKER. It's a dangerous moment.

RICHARD PARKER is gone.

Soon after, the government declared a state of emergency and riots became more frequent. Baba said we had to leave India. I was scared to leave and scared to stay. So many zoos wanted us and our animals but our visas were denied. Baba was frustrated but Amma was relieved and made us carry on as normal-

AMMA O.S.

Santosh?! The market closes soon!

- PONDICHERRY MARKET.

A colourful market, vendors with baskets of wares - fish, fruit, vegetables, flowers.

The market was next to a street with three buildings - a short mosque, a curved temple and a tall church. I had all these questions in my head so I visited all of them.

FATHER MARTIN, Black, 40's appears by a church window.

Father if God is good and kind, why is there so much violence in the world? Why is there so much suffering?

FATHER MARTIN

God never abandons those who love Him Pi. We endure suffering but through our faith we'll spend eternity in peace.

PI

But when we die where do we go? What happened to Buckingham's soul Pandit-ji?

PANDIT-JI, Indian, 40's appears in the temple pavilion.

PANDIT-JI

Remember the cycle of samsara Piscine, of birth, life, death and rebirth, where every soul is a piece of the Creator so everything has a whisper of the divine in it. Buckingham's soul is being reborn.

PI

But I feel so angry Mrs Khan. It's unfair. Sometimes I want to kill Richard Parker myself.

ZAIDA KHAN, Indian, 40's appears in the arch of a mosque.

ZAIDA KHAN

Strive for forgiveness and mercy Pi. Without forgiveness, life is an endless cycle of resentment and revenge. In Islam when you take two steps towards God, God runs towards you.

PI

I loved that street.

AMMA enters with RANI and FATHER carrying bags. The leaders are gone.

FATHER

Gita don't buy too much food. Our papers might come through any minute.

AMMA

We still have to eat. Did you get your Gold Flake.

FATHER

Not yet.

AMMA

Don't forget your tobacco or you'll run out. Maybe we should just stay here.

FATHER

I've reapplied to Canada. Jai is at the visa office getting an update.

RANI

When will we know? I don't want to miss a year of school.

AMMA

Let's leave things to fate and see what happens Rani. Oh I forgot, we need lychees.

PI

I'll get them.

AMMA

Such a good boy.

PI goes to buy lychees. FATHER MARTIN is nearby buying bread.

FATHER MARTIN

Piscine good to see you. Will you be at choir again on Friday?

PI

Yes, I will Father.

FATHER MARTIN

Mr Patel. I was sorry to hear about the vandalism at the zoo. Business must be hard.

FATHER

Thank you Father. It is.

PANDIT-JI is buying marigolds.

PANDIT-JI

Namashkar Mr and Mrs Patel. Pi I hope I'll see you at temple on Friday? The new statue arrived, it's blessed Lord Vishnu in the form of a fish.

PI

I'll be there Pandit-ji.

AMMA

Are you going to temple now Piscine?

PANDIT-JI

You could join him this week Santosh?

FATHER

Erm...well...I'm not sure I can make it.

ZAIDA KHAN is at a stall.

ZAIDA KHAN

Pi, As-Salaam-Alaikum.

PI

Wa-Alaikum As-Salaam.

ZAIDA KHAN

Mrs Patel The dates on that stall have gone up three hundred percent! What next?

AMMA

I know. Even rice has doubled.

ZAIDA KHAN

Piscine when you come to mosque on Friday...

AMMA

Mosque?

ZAIDA KHAN

... You'll hear the new Imam. He has a magnificent voice and his call to prayer is joyful.

PI

I'll be there Mrs Khan.

FATHER MARTIN

Sorry to disappoint you but Pi will be at choir on Friday.

PI

In the afternoon.

FATHER MARTIN

We're singing 'Hail Mary star of the ocean' this week.

AMMA

What choir?

FATHER MARTIN

Members of my congregation. Pi has a truly uplifting voice.

AMMA

Do you Piscine?

ZAHIDA KHAN

No Father, Pi will be at mosque on Friday.

PI

In the evening.

FATHER

Why are you going to mosque Piscine?

PANDIT-JI

I think you have your wires twisted, Pi will be at temple on Friday.

PI

In the morning I'll be there in the morning.

FATHER

What's going on Piscine?

AMMA

Have you really been going to mosque, temple and church?

PI
Yes Amma.

RANI
So that's where you've been sneaking off to!

FATHER
Why?

Everyone looks at PI.

PI
Well...er...I just want to love god. and they're all next door to each other.

The leaders look unhappy.

AMMA
Darling you can't be all three. That's just the way things are. You have to choose one. Which one do you choose?

PI
I've been thinking a lot about Death. Does it really matter if Buckingham went to heaven, the afterlife or was reincarnated? You're asking me to pick the better story. Why do I have to choose? Aren't they just versions of the same thing?

The leaders gasp. JAI, the zookeeper, runs on to speak to FATHER.

AMMA
Leave this with us. We'll sort him out.

The LEADERS leave.

FATHER
Any news Jai?...Oh my goodness!

AMMA
What is it?

FATHER
They're reviewing our applications Our visas might be approved.

RANI
When would we leave??

FATHER
Next month.

AMMA
So soon? There's so much to do!

RANI

What about college? Can I apply now?

PI

When we get there can I be baptized and get a prayer rug?

AMMA

Darling, no one has three religions. Tell him Santosh.

FATHER

Well...erm...you're already Hindu, why not just stick with that?

PI

Mamaji has two passports. He's Indian and French.

RANI

That's a really good point.

AMMA

That's completely different Rani. France and India are nations on earth.

PI

So how many nations are there in the sky?

AMMA

All these questions must wait. Let's get home before curfew and start packing.

FATHER

And let's focus on getting to Canada.

- THE TSIMTSUM.

A cargo ship. Ladders lead from the top to the lower deck. PI and FATHER on deck.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

Grutzi yaschikye! (*Load the crates!*)

PI

Where are the animals baba?

FATHER

They're unloading them on the dock now.

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) Your cargo's arrived. (English) Cargo!

PI

Where did Amma go?

FATHER

She's unpacking everything in our cabins. Trying to make home away from home.

PI

This ship is so big. I feel like we'll get lost in it.

Crates of animals are being loaded.

FATHER

Be careful! The hyenas are in that crate. Steady!

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) Go carefully. It's a hyena.

FATHER and PI direct foreign sailors. Inside the crate the hyenas laugh loudly.

FATHER

This way. This way. They're nervous. They only laugh when they're nervous.

CAPTAIN

(English) Ok. Ok.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR enters with MAMAJI who wears an inflatable rubber ring.

PI

Mamaji! Auntie!

MAMAJI

We couldn't let you leave without this.

FATHER

You never give up!

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

I tried to tell him.

MAMAJI

When you get to Canada Santosh, learn to swim.

FATHER

It's so good to see you both.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

We had to come.

Sailors carry another heavy crate.

PI

Could you glide Orange Juice please, she hates sudden movement.

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) It's an orangutan! Go slowly. (English)
Careful!

PI peers into the crate.

PI

The baby looks scared Baba.

FATHER

He'll be alright when they stop moving. Check the lock
is secure Piscine.

AMMA and RANI come up from below deck.

RANI

You came!

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Of course we did. How are your cabins?

RANI

About the same size as the animals quarters.

AMMA

And buried at the bottom of the ship.

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) Move! Out of the way!

CAPTAIN clears the way for a large crate. PI follows the crate.

PI

Can you hear me Richard Parker? I hope you hate being
in there. I hope you suffer all the way.

RICHARD PARKER claws and roars from within. They drop the crate.

(Japanese) It's a tiger!

SAILORS

(in different languages) Tiger! Tiger!

FATHER

I'll sedate him again, he'll sleep it off. Cats get very
seasick.

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) It's just an animal. Come on, get it loaded.
One, two, three... lift!

PI

You can hear the water from our cabin. D'you want to come see auntie?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

I don't think there's time.

FATHER

I wish we didn't have to go but what choice did we have? Come with us. It's not safe to stay here.

MAMAJI

It's different for you, you have children. We'll be alright. Things will change and you'll come back. When I went to Paris I thought it was forever. But here I am.

FATHER

You must be careful.

MAMAJI

We will be.

AMMA

You'll visit us?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

When you're settled. Rani, give the University of Toronto everything you've got. You got top of the class in your final exams. Your understanding of mathematics is pure instinct. You have a talent.

RANI

Thanks auntie.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

I see you building bridges.

MAMAJI

No pressure. One bridge will do. Piscine?

PI

Yes Mamaji.

MAMAJI

You're such a confident swimmer now. For your next challenge - you must conquer the open sea.

AMMA

Hoi Ram.

FATHER

The pool is good enough.

MAMAJI

Think big Santosh. Remember Piscine - body streamlined, stretch your hands as far as they'll reach out and just keep moving forward. You could join him with your floatie my friend.

FATHER

In your honor when we get to Canada, I'll take lessons.

MAMAJI

Finally!! Bravo! We shall miss you all terribly.

The ship's horn blows.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

Bistro. Bistro. (*Quickly! Quickly!*)

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

We'd better go my love.

MAMAJI

Or they'll make us walk the plank.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

Davai! Davai! Davai! (*Come on! Come on! Come on!*)

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Safe travels everyone. Write to us!

AMMA

We will.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

Shuva! (*Get a move on!*)

MAMAJI

Durga Durga.

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) Hurry up – go!

RUSSIAN SAILOR

Ok Ok Piyakali. (*Let's Go!*)

Hugs and kisses. MAMAJI and MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR exit. PI watches them go.

PI

Bye Mamaji! Bye auntie!

FATHER

Bye India!

RANI

Don't forget us!

AMMA

Santosh did you get Gold Flake?

FATHER

No.

AMMA

But I told you specifically...

PI

Bye!!

FATHER

They'll have tobacco in Canada Gita and anyway you don't even smoke...

AMMA

But they won't have Gold Flake, they won't have Arun ice cream. Their televisions aren't Onidas, their cars aren't Ambassadors.

PI still waving.

PI

I can still see them.

FATHER

Listen to me, it's going to be alright.

AMMA

But we'll be so far from everything we know. How can you be sure?

FATHER

Because the four of us are together.

AMMA smiles.

PI

They've gone and I'm hungry.

RANI

You're always hungry.

AMMA

Of course you are.

A Russian SAILOR passes, bottle of drink in hand.

Excuse me, could you help us? Is there...?

RUSSIAN SAILOR

(Russian) Bok Ty Moi, Passagerie! (*Oh god, passengers!*)

He exits.

AMMA

We'll find the dining room.

The CAPTAIN, Japanese, enters.

Excuse me could you tell us...

The CAPTAIN shouts at a sailor and exits.

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) Wind up the anchor chain. (English) Anchor up!!!

AMMA

Not very friendly are they?

A COOK, French, male, 40's, enters in stained uniform. AMMA stops him.

Excuse me.

COOK

Quoi?

AMMA

Where is the restaurant?

Nothing.

The cafeteria perhaps?

Nothing.

FATHER

Do-you-speak-English?

AMMA

We-need-fooooooood.

AMMA does an elaborate mime to help her explanation.

COOK

(strong French accent) You think I am an idiot?

AMMA

You speak English! That's such a relief. D'you have a menu we could look at?

COOK

Menu? Would you like à la carte? Or prix-fixed?

FATHER

Oh is there a choice?

COOK

Would you like to choose your seat overlooking the gardens before you choose your cut of meat?

AMMA

What gardens? Oh I see. The thing is we need...

COOK

What is it you want? Boeuf bourguignon?

AMMA

No, we don't eat beef.

COOK

Saucisse de Strasbourg?

PI

Did you say sausages? We can't eat...

COOK

Confit of duck? Would that be more to your taste?

FATHER

You must have other choices.

COOK

Mais oui. Chicken a la Bretonne?

PI

Do you have anything vegetarian?

COOK

French fries ...

RANI

That sounds nice.

COOK

...cooked in horse fat.

PI

Yuk!!!

The COOK looks angrily at PI and advances on him.

RANI

Baba...

PI

I'm sorry. It's just that we don't eat meat so we were wondering please, if you might have any vegetables?

COOK

Merde! What a shit hole this is. This is a cargo ship, no passengers. I feed the crew what I 'ave in the kitchen. I am not waiter. I do not take order. I cook, you eat. Six o'clock. No choice.

The COOK stomps off.

RANI

Are you alright?

PI

They've got no vegetables. What will we eat?

RANI

I saw them loading sacks of potatoes on the deck.

AMMA

Were they? You laughed at me this morning Santosh.

FATHER

I know.

AMMA

Didn't I tell you?

FATHER

You did.

RANI

What did you tell him?

AMMA

I bought my masalas just in case . I'll make potato poriyal.

PI

I love you Amma.

FATHER

When am I going to learn you're always right.

AMMA

Come on everyone. Down to our cabin and then I'll find the kitchen.

AMMA, FATHER and RANI start to exit.

RANI

You coming?

PI

In a minute.

RANI

Three flights down and left.

PI

Got it.

She exits.

PI goes to the edge of the ship and calls out.

Canada?!! We're coming!! Are you ready for us!? Pi Patel is coming! And just so you know - I AM A VEGETARIAN!!!

A SEQUENCE OF TIME PASSING.

Caption - 4 days out of Manila.

Dead of night. A group of sailors drink grog. None of them speak English. The RUSSIAN SAILOR pours PI a cup of grog.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

(Russian) What's with all the chickens in the hold?

He clucks and imitates a chicken.

PI

They're for Richard Parker. He's a monster.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

Richard Parker?

PI

It's a strange story. The hunter who caught the tiger was called Richard Parker. But the shipping clerk mixed up the names so the tiger was called Richard Parker when he came to our zoo.

The confused RUSSIAN SAILOR makes a toast.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

Zoo!

The ladders to the upper deck are swinging in the wind. The CAPTAIN enters.

CAPTAIN

(Japanese) The wind has changed. Get back to work.
(English) Storm coming!

RUSSIAN SAILOR and SAILORS exits. RANI enters.

RANI

What are you doing up here Swami Jesus? Trying to convert the crew?

PI

I couldn't sleep.

RANI

Me neither. I thought you might have swum ashore to go on hajj. Or sailed to Rome for your coronation Pope Pius?

PI

So funny.

RANI

There's still time to row home and plan your own bar mitzvah.

PI

Rani!

RANI

If you go temple Thursday, mosque Friday, synagogue Saturday and church Sunday, you only need three more religions to be on holiday forever!

AMMA and FATHER enter from below deck.

FATHER

Why are you both up?

RANI

Couldn't sleep. And you?

FATHER

There's water on our cabin floor. Just an inch, nothing to worry about, but we thought we should let someone know.

The wind picks up. The ship jolts, a metallic grinding sound.

RANI

What was that?

Sailors pass shouting to each other. It starts to rain.

FATHER

Excuse me! Hello? There's water on the floor of our cabins.

AMMA

Maybe they can't hear you.

FATHER

I'm sure it's normal that water seeps in a little.

AMMA

I don't know. Perhaps.

FATHER

I'll just go and tell one of the crew.

The wind is louder. ORANGE JUICE races on, panicked.

RANI

Oh my god! Baba!

AMMA

How did she get free?

FATHER

They didn't secure her properly. They didn't listen.

PI

Where's the baby?

AMMA

I can't see him. No wonder she's anxious poor thing.

FATHER

Stay back Gita. Orange Juice come on now, let's get you back safe.

AMMA

Be careful Santosh.

FATHER

I will...Come on now old girl... it's me...

The ship jolts ORANGE JUICE leaps up and down. The HYENA enters.

PI
Oh my god! Baba!

AMMA
How did he get out of his crate?

FATHER
Everyone stay back.

The HYENA chases ORANGE JUICE off.

I have to get the gun.

AMMA
Oh god.

RANI
I'll go with you.

AMMA
No.

RANI
I can help.

FATHER
Alright you can come. The gun's in the storeroom.
Piscine stay with your mother, go back down to the
cabin.

AMMA
Be careful.

FATHER
We'll be fine darling.

Exit FATHER and RANI.

On the upper deck the CAPTAIN shouts orders, sailors run in all directions.

AMMA
Come on Piscine. Let's go downstairs.

The wind is howling. The rain beats down. On the upper deck the CAPTAIN and sailors put life jackets on. They shout above the wind.

CAPTAIN
(in Japanese) *Lower the lifeboats.*

RUSSIAN SAILOR
(in Russian) Kakiye (*Which ones?*)

CAPTAIN
(in Japanese) *All of them.*

RUSSIAN SAILOR
(in Russian) *Da Tavarische, kapitian. Nyet! (Yes sir.)*

PI
What's wrong?! What's going on?!

They can't hear him.

AMMA
There's water on the deck Piscine.

The ZEBRA bursts out of the dark.

PI
Somebody's opened all the crates Amma.

AMMA
Who would do that?

PI
I don't know!

AMMA
Oh my goodness Black n'White! It's alright old boy, it's alright.

The ZEBRA runs in terrified circles.

PI
Don't get too close.

A screeching metallic noise, the lights flicker, the ZEBRA bolts knocking AMMA over as he exits. The ship lurches. PI cannot see AMMA.

Amma? Amma? Are you alright?

The Russian SAILOR runs on.

RUSSIAN SAILOR
Spasatel-nya shlyupka! (Lifeboat!)

PI
My mother's over there.

RUSSIAN SAILOR
(in Russian) *Korabli toignyet (It's going down. You have to jump.)*

PI
Amma !!!

They push him to the edge.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

(in Russian) Nyet!

PI

No!

RUSSIAN SAILOR

(in Russian) Ty dolzien prigniet! Prigniet! (*You have to jump! Jump!*)

PI

My mother! She's there. Stop it. I have to get to her.
Amma...? Amma!!!

They pick him up and throw him off the ship. PI flies through darkness and lands in...

- THE HOSPITAL ROOM

PI is traumatized. MR OKAMOTO and LULU are there.

LULU

Pi, you're in the hospital, can you hear me? You're alright. There's nothing to be frightened of.

PI

But there is Miss Chen because it's at your weakest point that Fear attacks you. Fear crept into my mind - 'no one will think of you Pi. You're not important'. I tried to silence her 'leave me alone, I'm going to be alright' - but Fear grew stronger. I fought her - 'stay calm Pi, stay visible and they'll find you' - but Fear crushed me and broke me Miss Chen. She filled my body with terror - my lungs, guts, tongue, ears, muscles, knees, heart pounding, sphincter releasing. Everything surrenders to Fear and then...and then...

LULU

Ssshh, it's alright. You're safe now. Look around you. You're here in the hospital. You're completely safe.

PI

Fear poisons everything, so you must shine a light of language on it because if you don't, it becomes a wordless darkness, and you will never defeat it.

MR OKAMOTO

Mr Patel I'm sorry but can we return to the moment the ship sank...

LULU
 Could I have a word Mr Okamoto?

LULU takes MR OKAMOTO to one side.

This boy is obviously distressed. We need to stop.

MR OKAMOTO
 This case will close in three days. I have to know what happened. Everyone is waiting for this report.

LULU
 I'm suggesting care and consideration.

MR OKAMOTO
 I was led to understand the Canadian embassy would assist me in this matter Miss Chen.

LULU
 And we have Mr Okamoto.

MR OKAMOTO
 I have to catch a plane tonight.

LULU
 I understand that but as consular officer my priority is to protect this boy.

MR OKAMOTO
 Should I call your superior? Would he be more helpful?

LULU
 I think you'll find he is on annual leave and I am in charge.

MR OKAMOTO
 Well if that's true help me get the facts.

LULU
 Then you must acknowledge *the fact* that five days ago when he was brought here, he was close to death...

PI
 We're all closer than we think Miss Chen. Death envies life because life is so beautiful.

The ocean is returning. Only PI can see it.

MR OKAMOTO
 Did you hear a distress signal as the ship sank? Was there a fire of any kind? Did the engines cut out? Was there a collision?

LULU
Mr Okamoto I must insist...

MR OKAMOTO
If you could just tell me what happened...

- THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Pi is in the lifeboat. The ZEBRA, flies through the air and lands with an ugly thud, his leg broken.

PI
Oh Black n'White! You've broken your leg.

The Tsimtsum groans and sinks.

Vishnu preserve us, Allah protect us, Christ save us.

The sound of splashing.

Amma? Baba? Rani? Are you there? Oh my god! Rani?
Swim! Can you hear me? Swim! Make your body flat
and streamlined. Stretch your hands as far as they will
reach out and just keep moving forward. You can do it. I
know you can. I'm here Rani. Swim. Kick...Here. Catch
hold! I've got you!

He extends an oar into the water.

...OH...MY... GOD!...

It is RICHARD PARKER. PI prods him away.

Get away. Get away from me. You can't come on here
Richard Parker.

RICHARD PARKER grabs onto the oar.

Let go Richard Parker! Let go. I don't want you here. Go
away. Get lost.

PI pushes him away, RICHARD PARKER can hold on no longer and is gone.

Drown! Drown! Drown! Jesus, Mary, Mohammed and
Vishnu help me! God help me!

PI is shaking. As time passes he calls out.

Amma?! Baba?! Rani?!

Pi sleeps. The ZEBRA cries in pain and wakes him.

Help will come Black an' White and they'll fix your leg.
We're going to be fine. We'll be rescued soon. You
mustn't worry.

A rat runs across the deck.

Look! Another survivor! There's bound to be more of
us. We just have to wait. We'd be an unusual
cohabitation that auntie will want to hear all about.

A HYENA pops out from under the tarpaulin and bolts to the other side of the boat.

Oh my god. You?! You made it! Can we share the boat?
Can that work? If I remain over here and we all stay
calm. What do you say?

The HYENA catches the rat and gulps it down in one. HYENA stands alert and looks at PI.

Am I next?

In a halo of divine light, the Virgin Mary appears. Her flaming red hair silhouetted by the sun. It
looks like AMMA on an island of bananas held together by a net...

Hail Mary, star of the ocean! Amma? Hello!!!! Thank
you. Thank you. I knew you'd be alive. I knew it. I could
feel it in here. It's a miracle. How I love you, how I've
missed you.

But it is ORANGE JUICE the orangutan.

Orange Juice! It's Orange Juice and you're alive!

ORANGE JUICE steps gracefully off the bananas onto the boat. As PI grabs the net the bananas
float apart.

Banana split!

ORANGE JUICE seems to laugh. The HYENA screams. The ZEBRA weakly neighs. PI laughs
as he pulls the net aboard.

ORANGE JUICE sways with the boat, looking sick. She leans over the edge to throw up.

It's motion sickness Orange Juice. It'll pass. Any
moment we'll be rescued. Baba will be on another ship
looking for us...It's going to be fine.

Time passes. A large sea turtle appears in the water.

Hello Mr Turtle. Will you tell someone I'm here? Tell
them I'm four days out of Manila and Pi Patel's my
name...

The Turtle swims away. Pi sleeps but is woken up as the HYENA runs around the edge of the lifeboat, yipping.

What are you doing? Why are you doing that? You're making the boat tip.

The HYENA starts to eat the ZEBRA.

Stop it! Leave him alone!! Oh Vishnu help us, help us please! STOP IT!!!

The ZEBRA cries in pain. ORANGE JUICE raises herself full height and gesticulates back.

Be careful Orange Juice don't go near him. He's dangerous.

The HYENA puts its jaws around the ZEBRA's broken leg and it comes away in its mouth.

Leave him alone, he deserves to live. Stop! Stop it!!

The HYENA eats the leg. ORANGE JUICE stands tall and demonstrates her size and strength. HYENA leaps at ORANGE JUICE. She thumps the HYENA on the head and stuns him.

You're so brave Orange Juice. I didn't know you were so brave. Thump him Orange Juice. Throw him overboard.

HYENA recovers. ORANGE JUICE hits the HYENA again but the HYENA goes for her throat. The HYENA appears with ORANGE JUICE'S decapitated head in its mouth.

You dog! Why are you looking at me like that? Is it me next? Is that what you think? You'll wait till I'm asleep and take me in the middle of the night. Eat me half in half out like Black an' White? No! No!!! I won't let you. That's not how this ends.

Pi edges forward with his back to the tarpaulin and raises his fists like a boxer.

I'll fight you to the death! Come on you filthy crocuta crocuta! Come on!...You ugly dog! It's just you and me, one on one...Why are you backing away? Are you afraid? Well you should be.

Pi emits his fiercest roar. He does not see RICHARD PARKER emerge from underneath the tarpaulin.

Baba was right - man is the most dangerous animal!!!

The HYENA, simpering, bends down in deference.

Pi turns and sees RICHARD PARKER. Huge and fierce, RICHARD PARKER releases an ear splitting, bone shaking roar and lunges for the hyena.

INTERVAL**- THE HOSPITAL ROOM.**

PI is in bed. MR OKAMOTO and LULU nearby.

MR OKAMOTO

You're saying you were on a lifeboat for 227 days with an orangutan who arrived on a raft of bananas, a zebra with a broken leg, a hyena who ate the zebra then beheaded the monkey and a Bengal tiger who ate the hyena but not you?

PI

Orangutans are apes, not monkeys. But otherwise that's right.

MR OKAMOTO

How is that possible?

PI

I admit it's unexpected.

MR OKAMOTO

This story you are telling us is... incredible.

PI

I agree.

MR OKAMOTO walks over to the tape machine and speaks clearly.

MR OKAMOTO

Have you seen a psychiatrist Mr Patel?

LULU

What Mr Okamoto is trying to say is that he is concerned for you Pi - are you talking to anyone?

PI

I'd say that was obvious.

LULU

I mean counseling. It can be very helpful. I've had some myself...

PI

Why?

LULU

It was a difficult time and...

MR OKAMOTO

If I can just get back to the point. I don't believe your story Mr Patel. It's unbelievable.

PI

What is?

MR OKAMOTO

Everything.

PI

But the ship did sink.

MR OKAMOTO

No I mean the rest.

PI

What do you mean? Be specific.

MR OKAMOTO

Well...bananas don't float... they're too heavy.

PI

No they're not.

MR OKAMOTO

They are.

PI

I'll prove it.

MR OKAMOTO

No, that's not...

He brings out two bananas from the box under his sheet.

PI

Fill that sink, drop these bananas in and we'll see who's right.

MR OKAMOTO

I'd like to move on.

PI

I insist.

LULU takes the bananas. She goes to a sink.

Thank you.

LULU

My pleasure.

MR OKAMOTO

Mr Patel, all I want...

PI

Would you like to sit down Mr Okamoto?

MR OKAMOTO

I'm perfectly fine.

PI

Being on your feet is exhausting. You use a lot of energy but don't realize it.

MR OKAMOTO

I simply want to get to the bottom of...

PI

You should sit down.

MR OKAMOTO

Is the sink full?

LULU

Not yet...

PI

Putting your feet up stops swelling and helps the heart to reach all areas.

LULU

The sink's full.

PI

Are the bananas in yet?

LULU

They're in.

PI

And?

MR OKAMOTO

Are they floating?

LULU

They're floating.

PI

So they are floating?

LULU

They're floating.

MR OKAMOTO

It would take a lot of bananas to hold up an orangutan.

PI

It did. There was close to a tonne ...

LULU

I had no idea that bananas can float.

PI

Could I have my bananas back, please?

LULU

They really do float.

PI

So now do you believe me Mr Okamoto?

MR OKAMOTO

Give him his bananas.

The floor is part hospital, part sea. PI puts the bananas back in the box, he rummages in the box urgently looking for something.

LULU

Have you lost something Pi?

PI

Yes! Yes! There must be some here....

LULU

Some what?

PI

Food. I need food.

LULU

There's food in your box.

PI

And water. There must be water somewhere.

LULU
Shall I get you some?

PI
But where will you get it from?

LULU
The tap.

- AT SEA.

Dusk.

Caption: 5 days at sea.

PI is on the boat, searching. RICHARD PARKER is asleep. PI finds a ration box as RICHARD PARKER wakes up.

PI
This is mine Richard Parker and I'm not leaving without it.

PI throws the ration box into the water just as RICHARD PARKER pounces.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Rama, Sita, Durga and Shiva.

PI leaps off the boat and climbs onto the raft.

I was too fast for you Richard Parker. Too fast.

PI secures the ration box and looks through it and finds a tin.

Oh Allah be praised - water... You're a genius Piscine.
Genius! Distilled water compliments of the MacDonald-Bernier Company, Boston, Massachusetts. Oh sweet Jesus. Thank you, thank you Allah. How do I open it?

PI looks in the ration box, there is no opener. He tries to open the tin. He's getting more and more agitated.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR enters.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR
Stop it Pi. Patience.

PI
But I can't open it.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR
Don't get emotional. What do you need?

PI

A can opener.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Which you don't have. So? Remember - observation and analysis...

PI

I need something sharp.

He bashes the can against a corner of the ration box.

It's not coming out.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

We did this in class...

PI

Make another hole opposite.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Yes.

PI

Because the second hole allows air in so that the water can...

PI does so and it works.

PI/MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

FLOW!

He drinks.

PI

I'm drunk auntie! But to be drunk on water is noble and ecstatic isn't it?

PI reads the biscuit wrapper.

Larson's Biscuits made in Oslo, Norway. Wheat flour. Malt. Vitamins and glucose. No animal fat!

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Glucose keeps the body in working order and is the most important source of energy in all organisms.

PI is ripping open more biscuits and ramming them into his mouth.

Wait Piscine. Don't eat without thinking.

Pi stops.

Calculate what you have and how long it'll last.

PI

Rani was the mathematician...

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Do it.

PI

There are eighteen packets of fortified biscuits left.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

How many in each pack?

PI

Six.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

So how many in all?

PI

Erm...ninety...?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

No.

PI

One hundred?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Stop guessing. Do the math.

PI

I can't.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

If you'd paid more attention in class...

PI

One hundred and eight.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Good Pi. See what you can do if you try. So if you eat three a day?

PI

...36 days.

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

So now we know where we are. You can have one more.

PI

Just one?

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Just one.

He eats.

PI

Norwegian cuisine is the best in the world auntie!

MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR

Use logic and maths Pi, use everything you have and defy the odds.

RICHARD PARKER comes out from under the tarpaulin and sits on a bench looking at PI.

PI

What about him auntie? I can't stay here. This isn't safe. I need to get on that boat. How do I get on that boat?

But she is no longer there.

Logic and maths Pi. Analysis. What do you have?...I have food and water for 36 days and he has nothing. Nothing! I'll wait for him to die and defy the odds.

- Time passes as PI eats all the biscuits and drinks all the water. He discards the wrapping and cans into the sea. It floats away.

Caption - 30 days later

- *The sun rises*, burning hot.

PI, dehydrated on the raft, rummages in the ration box.

PI (CONT'D)

How are you still alive Richard Parker? Analysis Pi. Four packs of biscuits, one can of water, ten umbrellas, a homemade knife and... 'Survival at Sea'.

Military drums play and ADMIRAL JACKSON marches on and salutes, a 1940's US Naval Officer.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Ten-hut! That book was reissued several times because of my clear, succinct and practical approach. My photograph was rejected for the cover.

PI looks at the ADMIRAL.

But my name is there.

PI

(reading) Admiral Daniel P Jackson.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

At your service. Follow instructions carefully...Do not drink urine.

PI

I need drinking water...

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Or sea water. Or bird blood.

PI

I could never do that!

ADMIRAL JACKSON

You can survive up to seven days without fresh water.

PI

Seven days?

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Turtle blood is a good, salt-free drink...

PI

I'm not drinking blood!

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Their eggs are a real treat.

PI

I JUST NEED WATER!!

ADMIRAL JACKSON delves into the ration box and opens one of the umbrellas.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Rain catcher.

PI

So that's what they are.

Rain catcher after rain catcher open and float like jellyfish.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

A means of collecting and funneling rainwater into a suitable container beneath. Rainwater is safe to drink but always check for bugs that may have climbed or fallen in.

PI

Durga! Durga!

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Yes...indeed...and just a suggestion but you'd be better off on that boat. This is really not a sea-worthy craft.

PI

But there's a tiger on that boat.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

And remember, latitude can be measured with fingers.

PI

What should I do about the tiger?

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Keep occupied. The idle mind may sink. Community singing can lift spirits.

PI

You're not listening to me!

ADMIRAL JACKSON

I'm giving instructions. That's my job.

PI

Look!

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Sweet Lord! Bengal tiger bit of a problem. What's your plan sailor?

PI

I'm going to wait it out. I've got water now and some food but he's got nothing. I'm going to wait for him to die first.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Smart thinking. Worth a go. Roger that. Don't forget to check your water regularly. Yarn spinning can be a good way to pass the time. If you have the will to live, you will.

ADMIRAL JACKSON exits.

It starts to rain, the rain catchers dance in the sea. PI on the raft, drinks fresh water. Flying fish swim in shoals, then intermittently burst out of the water. PI watches them in awe. They are beautiful.

RICHARD PARKER enters swimming. He tries to get on the lifebuoy.

PI

You can't come here, get away Richard Parker. Get away! You can't come here.

RICHARD PARKER catches a fish and swims back to the boat to eat. He laps at the seawater.

You have food and you can drink seawater. I'm going to die first unless I can get on that boat.

GHOST FATHER enters.

GHOST FATHER

Piscine?

PI

Oh god.

FATHER

What can you hear?

PI

I'm losing my marbles.

GHOST FATHER

Listen Piscine.

PI

Hunger makes you mad.

GHOST FATHER

It's prusten.

PI

It's that purring noise again.

GHOST FATHER

Tigers make many sounds Piscine. A full-throated ahh-ooonh during the mating season. A threatening growl when they charge. Prusten is the quietest of calls, a puff through the nose expressing friendliness and harmless intentions.

PI

You said tigers are dangerous.

GHOST FATHER

Yes I know but...

PI
He ate Buckingham.

GHOST FATHER
Yes but...

PI
HOW IS HE SUDDENLY HARMLESS?!

RICHARD PARKER puffs air through his nose again.

GHOST FATHER
He's not but he's had a meal. That fish made him calm and sleepy. It's a window of possibility son.

PI
A window?

GHOST FATHER
A small window. This is your chance. Tame him while he's happy Piscine and cohabit.

PI
How am I supposed to do that?!!

GHOST FATHER
Why does a circus trainer shout and snap his whip in the ring?

PI
To establish dominance and create order.

FATHER
Exactly. Do this and be safe. Yaa Black n'White.

PI
Yaa Richard Parker!

GHOST FATHER
Let the trumpets blare, let the drum roll sound, let the greatest show on earth begin! Roll up, roll up, roll up, and prepare to be amazed! because it is my pleasure to present to you...

PI is terrified.

It is my pleasure to present to you...Come on Piscine...you can do this...

PI
The Pi Patel, Indo-Canadian, Trans-Pacific, Floating Circuuuuussssss!!

GHOST FATHER

Yes!!! Get on that boat son.

PI climbs aboard the boat. RICHARD PARKER is on alert.

PI

I'm in charge Richard Parker. I'm in charge.

GHOST FATHER

Use the whistle. Intimidate him. Establish your territory.

PI blows his whistle. RICHARD PARKER leaps at PI who jumps off the boat and swims to the raft.

PI

I can't do it Baba.

GHOST FATHER

Get back on the boat. Provoke him. A consistent noise signals aggression.

PI

I can't Baba. I can't.

FATHER

This is your only chance.

PI climbs back onto the boat. RICHARD PARKER is tense and aggressive.

PI

This is my boat Richard Parker. This deck is mine. Get back! Get under there!

GHOST FATHER

Don't break eye contact! Blow your whistle. Make some noise son.

RICHARD PARKER chases PI who stays on the boat longer before leaping off into the water.

FATHER

Piscine? Piscine where are you?

PI

Over here!

FATHER

Big cats get seasick. Rock the boat. Did you hear me Piscine? Rock the boat! Take the upper hand. You're the alpha male. Use what you have.

PI gets back on the boat, rocking and blowing the whistle.

PI

Yaa Richard Parker Yaa! I'm the alpha male! Are you feeling sick? I'll make you sicker. This is my boat Richard Parker! This is my boat!

RICHARD PARKER backs away under the tarpaulin.

- HOSPITAL

PI stands on the bed, swinging the oar to keep everyone back. LULU and MR OKAMOTO are alarmed.

LULU

Pi it's me.

MR OKAMOTO

Be careful Miss Chen. Mr Patel!

LULU

Watch out.

PI swipes at MR OKAMOTO and misses.

Hello! Nurse?! We need help here!

PI

This is my boat!

MR OKAMOTO

Is she coming?

LULU

Hello?!

PI

This is my boat!

The NURSE runs in.

LULU

He just started shouting.

The NURSE tries to coax PI down. PI thinks she's his mother and grabs her hard.

PI

Amma!!! I did it! I won! God is with me Amma. Tell Baba God is with me...

NURSE

Ven y siéntate Pi. Todo está bien hijo. Relájate.
(Come and sit down Pi. Everything's fine my son. Rest yourself).

PI realizes she is not his mother.

PI

This is my boat!

NURSE

Tranquilo. No pasa nada.
(Come on now, there's a good boy).

PI will not settle.

Te voy a dar un medicamento para que te sientas mejor,
 ¿vale?
*(I'll give you some medicine to make you feel better,
 yes?)*

She brings out a syringe.

MR OKAMOTO

I'm sorry, what's that?

PI

God is with me.

LULU

¿Qué es esto, enfermera?
(What is that please nurse?)

NURSE

Un sedante
(A sedative).

LULU

It's a sedative.

MR OKAMOTO

She mustn't put him to sleep. I need his testimony.

PI

This is my boat!

LULU

He's clearly very distressed.

MR OKAMOTO

Please Miss Chen. This is important.

PI
And I will not die!

LULU
Pide que al señor Patel no se le duerma. Quiere terminar su entrevista.
(He asks Mr Patel is not put to sleep. He wants to finish his interview.)

NURSE
Simplemente le calmará.
(It will just calm him).

MR OKAMOTO
I have to leave soon. If he falls asleep I won't get what I need.

LULU
She says it will just calm him down.

The NURSE injects PI. PI lies back as the sedative takes hold - the ceiling is a magnificent planetarium of stars, the floor flecked by millions of lit-up specks of plankton and fish. LULU and MR OKAMOTO do not see it.

MR OKAMOTO
Are you feeling better Mr Patel? May we continue?

PI
This is a Hindu boat. The tarpaulin, my life jacket, the lifebuoy, the five oars, six oarlocks, the plastic whistles are all orange. It's a Hindu colour.

MR OKAMOTO
Orange is the standard colour for survival.

PI
Have you noticed the heavens are miraculous?

MR OKAMOTO and LULU are gone. PI is on the...

- LIFEBOAT.

Night. A crescent moon in a star flecked sky. The sea lit by fluorescent fish.

PI is fishing with the net. Something pulls and he tries to pull it up but it's struggling.

PI
I'm sorry, so sorry. Forgive me.

He pulls the net up - it has a fish and seaweed in it. He grabs the fish and kills it with his knife.

(MORE)

PI (CONT'D)

Oh blessed Lord Vishnu! You saved the world by taking the form of a fish and now you save me. Thank you, thank you for your sacrifice.

PI blows his whistle and throws the fish to RICHARD PARKER.

Here Richard Parker!

PI takes the seaweed and eats. It tastes horrible. He feels sick but keeps eating. RICHARD PARKER steps forward and eats.

This seaweed is delicious. A delight to dine with you Richard Parker. We're going to be alright. I'll tell you a secret Richard Parker. You really scare me but when I'm with you I feel better. Can you hear that?

Sounds of sea, fish, insects.

It's like the muezzin's call to prayer. It's magnificent out here.

PI stands and points at things as he speaks.

Listen! Can you hear me!! We're still alive and all is well. This is God's food. This is God's clothing! This is God's cat! This is God's ark! These are God's wide acres! This is all God's creation!

An oil tanker's horn blasts nearby.

Oh my god! Is that a...a ship? At last! Richard Parker...a ship! We're saved!

The horn blasts again, closer, loud, deafening.

People...Hello! It's a cargo ship Richard Parker. Over here! Can you see me? I'm here! Down here! Please look down. Hello!

The ship, a mile high of black wall, just misses the lifeboat but overturns the rain catchers. The waves rock the lifeboat and the oars, the net and ration box fall out. It is a devastating sight.

Stop! Wait! How can I survive without the net? Without rain-catchers, without water? See me. Please! I'm here! I won't survive if I lose everything!!

The ship is gone. PI rails to the heavens.

Why are you testing me? Did I do something terrible in a former life? Why is this happening? Why is this happening?!!

Caption : 5 days without water

RICHARD PARKER circles and painfully poops.

PI (CONT'D)

You can't do that there. This is my territory. My boat.

PI picks up the faeces, rolls them about, sniffs them loudly, and glares at RICHARD PARKER who looks mortified.

No!

PI blows the whistle. RICHARD PARKER slopes away under the tarpaulin. PI looks at the faeces.

It's just food isn't it? It's re-processed food.

PI smells the faeces and takes a generous bite. He chews and then spits it out, retching, ashamed.

Oh god help me. Someone help me please.

A knocking on the boat. PI sees a large sea turtle.

Hello Mr Turtle. How are you? Have you eaten something delicious? Tell me every detail of your meal. How old are you sir? Fifty? One hundred? I'm like an old man but I'm...how old am I? Am I still seventeen?

ADMIRAL JACKSON enters.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Turtles make an excellent meal. Their blood is nutritious and salt-free.

PI

No!

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Seize every opportunity. Lay it on its back and insert the knife...

PI

It's a living creature.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

You've been on the water for a hundred and thirty seven days. It's a miracle you're still alive.

PI

Yes.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

A turtle is a restaurant on legs, there are seven different types of meat within the one carcass.

PI

I'm Hindu. I've never eaten meat in my life.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

If you don't grab it now you will die.

PI grabs the turtle which struggles hard. He yanks it on board the boat. The turtle tries to escape.

PI

It's frightened.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Of course it is. It's under attack. Fight harder.

PI

I'm sorry Mr Turtle. I have to do this. Please forgive me, forgive us our trespasses...

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Flip it on its back!

PI does and it retreats into its shell.

PI

Clever turtle. Protecting itself.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Sever the arteries and veins in the neck.

PI

I can't.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

It's survival of the fittest.

PI

I can't do it!

ADMIRAL JACKSON

The world is one long chain of food Pi. In the end it's eat or be eaten. Which do you choose?

Beak snapping, flippers beating wildly, head shaking side to side. ADMIRAL JACKSON puts the knife in PI's hands.

Kill him! Kill him now!

PI

Kali help me!

ADMIRAL JACKSON guides PI's hand down and they slice the turtle's neck. Blood shoots out.

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Drink it.

ADMIRAL JACKSON makes PI kneel and drink.

PI

It's Amma's cool mango lassi, that's what it is...

ADMIRAL JACKSON

Keep everything. Everything has a use. The shell can be a bowl, shelter, protection. The meat is dinner, breakfast, lunch...

PI cuts through the turtle shell. RICHARD PARKER emerges. PI blows his whistle and they eat like animals.

Never forget above all you are a gentleman. Gentility is the only thing that separates man from beast. Remember the definition of a gentleman is he who uses a napkin even when dining alone.

ADMIRAL JACKSON exits as they continue to eat.

GHOST RANI enters.

GHOST RANI

You've been vegetarian all your life Piscine.

PI

You've no life left Rani.

GHOST RANI

No animal ever passed your lips.

PI

I had no choice.

GHOST RANI

Choice is all you have left. You've always talked about the sanctity of life.

PI

I know.

GHOST RANI

You can't still be Hindu if you choose to eat meat.

PI

I'm just so hungry.

GHOST RANI

What have I always told you? Faith is impossible in the real world.

PI

I still have faith. I still believe.

GHOST RANI

How can you? Look where you are. Look at this.

PI

But I'm alive.

GHOST RANI

And we're at the bottom of the sea. What God would do that?

PI

I don't know.

GHOST RANI

And if he does exist I wouldn't want anything to do with him.

PI

Rani, oh dear Rani...I'm losing track of everything...I count the days but I keep forgetting...is it today? Dear Amma, my Amma....How I miss you.

GHOST AMMA arrives.

GHOST AMMA

My baby boy.

PI

Amma! Is it today?

GHOST AMMA

Yes.

PI

Shall I sing for you as usual?

GHOST AMMA

That would be just lovely.

PI
Is Baba with you?

GHOST AMMA
Always.

PI
Happy...birthday...to you...happy birthday...to you...

GHOST FATHER enters holding a ghost cake with candles. MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR and MAMAJI are there also.

EVERYONE EXCEPT AMMA
Happy birthday dear Amma, happy birthday to...

GHOST AMMA blows out the candles. Darkness.

Caption: 10 days without water

The sun rises.

PI waves his hand in front of his own face.

PI
Where are you Richard Parker? I can't see anything.

Something bumps the boat.

Hello? Is someone there?...Did you feel that Richard Parker?

RICHARD PARKER
(French accent) Yes I did.

PI
Oh my god - you can speak! I knew it! Why haven't you said anything 'til now?

RICHARD PARKER
I was shy.

PI
I have so many questions.

RICHARD PARKER
Me too. What would you eat if you could have anything?

PI

That's easy. I would eat black gram dhal, spicy tamarind sambar and mixed vegetable sagu. Vegetable korma, potato masala and cabbage vada, masala dosa, spicy lentil rasam, stuffed eggplant poriyal...

RICHARD PARKER

I see.

PI

...coconut chutney, mint chutney, green chili pickle, naan, popadoms, parathas, mountains of rice...

RICHARD PARKER

I would have...

PI

Almond payasam, jaggery pancake...

RICHARD PARKER

...Beouf bourguignon, tripe and calf's brains in a brown butter jus, veal kidney, saucisse de strasbourg, marinated rabbit in red wine...

PI

Oh my goodness...

RICHARD PARKER

...horse fat, sweetbread braised with a mushroom sauce.

PI

You're making me feel sick.

RICHARD PARKER

Brain soufflé. Confit of duck. Frogs!

PI

Is there anything you won't eat.

RICHARD PARKER

I eat everything.

PI

Can I ask you something?

RICHARD PARKER

Mais oui.

PI

Have you ever eaten a human being?

RICHARD PARKER

Yes, two of them. A man and a woman.

PI

Why did you eat them?

RICHARD PARKER

Need.

PI

Why d'you have a French accent when you were born in Bangladesh?

RICHARD PARKER

Do you have any food?

PI

No...but I have a story.

RICHARD PARKER

Tell me then.

PI

Once upon a time there was a banana, it grew till it was firm, yellow and fragrant. It fell to the ground, someone found it, ate it and that person felt good.

RICHARD PARKER

What a beautiful story! It takes the breath away! Do you have a banana?

PI

No.

RICHARD PARKER

Come, my brother, let us be together and feast on each other's company.

PI embraces someone but it is a MAN.

PI

You're not Richard Parker.

MAN

Who's Richard Parker?

The MAN's hands are round PI's throat.

PI

Help! Help me...!

RICHARD PARKER leaps and the MAN screams as RICHARD PARKER eats him.

(MORE)

PI (CONT ' D)

Richard Parker? Are you still alive? Where's the man?
Did you kill him?

RICHARD PARKER sits next to PI.

How I wanted to stroke you at the zoo but Baba
would've been furious. And now my dear friend, here
we are. You're the only reason I'm alive. I believe in you
Richard Parker. It's just you and me.

The boat stops moving.

The rocking's stopped. We're not moving. Are we dead
Richard Parker?

PI puts a hand out of the boat and feels solid ground.

It's land! Firm, solid, rooted land! Allah be praised!

He stands up.

- THE HOSPITAL ROOM.

PI is half at sea, half in the hospital. MR OKAMOTO and LULU are nearby.

I smell fresh water. I drink and drink and I can see again!
It's an island. I'm in paradise. 'Hello?! hello? Is anyone
there?' A babble of voices answer me.

A cacophony of chattering meerkats reply.

Meerkats, hundreds of thousands of them everywhere. I
have company!!!

RICHARD PARKER exits.

Richard Parker leaps from the boat and runs inland but
I'm so drowsy I'm falling asleep in the boat. I watch all
the meerkats climb up to every branch of every tree to
sleep.

LULU

Pi I think you should slow down.

PI

But I saw something bobbing in the lake, it looked like a
dead shark. It seemed to dissolve, I must've dreamt it.
But then wonder of wonders I found fruit - fragrant,
juicy, ripe fruit, at the top of a tall tree. I was so happy. I
plucked that fruit and took an enormous bite.

(MORE)

PI (CONT'D)

It was the best thing I'd ever tasted, sticky and sweet, but there was something inside it and when I took it out of my mouth, I found a human tooth.

LULU

Pi please...

PI

I tore open another fruit and found a molar in it and then another, it was an incisor.

LULU

You really need to...

PI

I plucked every fruit and found thirty-two teeth. A complete set.

MR OKAMOTO

Mr Patel please stop this...

PI

It was almost dark, the air was thick with scent, I was getting drowsy again. I had to get to the boat but the ground burned my feet and that's when I understood - that island was carnivorous.

LULU

Pi that's the end of the story, stop now.

PI

No. You have to listen to me! That island lured me in with fresh water by day then deadened my senses at night turning to acid, digesting any flesh it could find. That *was* a shark I'd seen in the water. That's why the meerkats slept in the trees! They had to, to survive.

Frantic squealing of meerkats.

So I ran for the boat but I could hear Richard Parker howling in pain.

RICHARD PARKER howls.

I couldn't leave him could I? He saved my life. So I roared and shouted, he came running, jumped in the boat and we went back out to sea and the thing is, I saved him...

MR OKAMOTO

Mr Patel please...A meat eating island? Human teeth embedded in a fruit? These things don't exist.

PI

Only because you've not seen them.

MR OKAMOTO

Absolutely right. We believe what we see don't we Miss Chen?

LULU

It does sound unlikely.

MR OKAMOTO

Your island is botanically impossible. No scientist would believe you.

PI

Scientists don't know every plant that exists.

MR OKAMOTO

They know the fundamental rules of botany. I have an uncle who taught me a lot about botany actually. He's a bonsai master and he said...

PI

A what?

MR OKAMOTO

A bonsai master, you know, little trees, less than two feet tall. You can carry them in your arms. They can be very old. My uncle has one that's over three hundred years old.

PI

Three-hundred-year-old trees that you carry in your arms? Whoever heard of such things? They're botanically impossible.

MR OKAMOTO

But they exist, Mr. Patel.

PI

I believe what I see.

Silence.

MR OKAMOTO

How could you survive in a lifeboat with a tiger? It's unbelievable!

PI

If you stumble at belief, what are you living for? Isn't love hard to believe?

LULU

I think Mr Okamoto is trying to...

PI

Don't bully me with politeness!

LULU

I'm not I'm just...

PI

Life is hard to believe. God is hard to believe. What's your problem with hard to believe?

LULU

He's trying to be reasonable.

PI

So am I! I applied reason and logic at every moment. But be excessively reasonable and you risk throwing out the universe with the bath water.

LULU

Pi please calm down.

PI

How can I be calm? You should have seen Richard Parker! Huge. Teeth like this! Eyes that drilled into your soul. A ferocious terrifying creature...

MR OKAMOTO

Enough! That ship sank without trace. Lives were lost. Families, businesses, the government - all want answers. I've been in my job for twenty years Mr Patel, I'm a senior, trusted member of a very respectable firm and my record thus far, has been spotless...I came here for the truth. Instead you give me fantastical, imaginary, fictitious tales. A tamed tiger? A chance encounter with a Frenchman in the middle of the Pacific ocean?! I have tried to steer you towards the facts. But anyone reading my report will laugh me out of office. I will be humiliated, dishonored, and ridiculed.

Silence.

You are the sole survivor of this tragedy. You bear no responsibility for what happened. You're an innocent victim. I just want the truth.

PI

Tigers exist, lifeboats exist, oceans exist. Because the three have never come together in your narrow, limited experience, you refuse to believe that they might. You don't believe in anything.

MR OKAMOTO

Mr Patel please...What you are saying is...at the very least, improbable.

PI

So is winning the lottery but someone always wins.

MR OKAMOTO walks away.

LULU

Pi you mentioned the cook on the Tsimtsum was a Frenchman. Maybe the man in the other lifeboat was the cook?

PI

How should I know? I was blind!

LULU

I'm sorry for all you've suffered Pi and I think you should rest now. Mr Okamoto, as he can't tell you what really happened we should finish there.

PI

What really happened?

LULU

Yes.

PI

So you want another story?

MR OKAMOTO

I want the truth.

PI

Doesn't the telling of something always become a story?

MR OKAMOTO

A story has an element of invention. I don't want invention. I want facts.

PI

You want a story that confirms what you already know. You want dry, yeast-less factuality. A story without animals.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes!

LULU

We want a different story.

PI

Alright then.

MR OKAMOTO

Thank you.

PI

The ship was sinking. The sailors threw me off deck. I swam for the lifeboat knowing that my entire family was drowning. Terrified, I wouldn't have made it if the cook hadn't pulled me in.

From underneath the bed the COOK emerges. The RUSSIAN SAILOR lies on the floor with a broken leg.

The sailor I befriended on the ship lay on the floor of the boat in agony. The bone from his leg poking out through his skin. As the days passed, with no shelter and the sun unrelenting, I lost hope. And then ...through blinding rays of sunshine, like a vision of the virgin Mary, my mother came to us on a raft of bananas. I felt such joy in my chest I thought I'd burst. My beautiful, loving Amma.

AMMA arrives, on bananas. As she steps on board the bananas disperse and float away. PI grabs the net.

I grabbed the net without thinking. Thank god I did because it meant we could fish. As the bananas broke up and dispersed I said 'Banana split' ...

COOK, AMMA and the SAILOR laugh.

It was such a relief to laugh. Amma comforted the sailor as best as she could.

RUSSIAN SAILOR

(Russian) Tak Bol N'ya. Tak Bol N'ya! *(It hurts so much!)*

AMMA

We don't understand you but we'll be fine. They're looking for us.

PI

The Cook was a horrible man. Because of the heat and the sailor's rotting leg we were surrounded by swarms of fat, black flies. He would eat them.

COOK

Would you like to join me?

PI

Amma was so polite.

AMMA

Thank you but no.

PI

He wasn't.

COOK

Idiots!

PI

I was so hungry all the time. We ate very little. Cook caught a rat on board and sliced it. I was glad Amma didn't see that I ate some. The sailor's foot became black and bloated.

COOK

His leg needs amputation.

AMMA

He needs a doctor.

PI

Cook insisted if we didn't help him he'd die. So Amma and I held him down.

COOK amputates the leg. The SAILOR screams.

I was going to throw the limb overboard but Cook went mad.

COOK

No you idiot! We'll use it as bait. That was the point.

AMMA

The point? Are you saying we cut this poor man's leg off for bait?

COOK

We need food or we'll die.

AMMA

You animal! We have food.

PI

She searched the ration box.

AMMA

Where are the biscuits? Where are they? There were so many packets...

COOK

He ate them with me.

PI

I was half asleep Amma. He gave me a biscuit. I ate without thinking ...

COOK

Only one, was it?

PI

I'm sorry Amma, I'm sorry...

AMMA

We're all alone Piscine, all alone.

PI

The sailor died, cook butchered him. He cut up everything, his skin, intestines, his torso, arms, shoulders and legs. Amma and I watched. The Cook was covered in his blood.

AMMA

Where's your humanity? Have you no shame? That poor man! You monster! Monster!

PI

She slapped him. He moved as if to hit her back but he didn't that time. Instead he ate a piece of the sailor.

COOK

Tastes like pork. I feel stronger already.

PI

Amma cried like I've never seen before. Days and days went by. Cook killed a turtle and we all ate a feast of blood and meat. And at times like that I looked at him with...love.

COOK

We'll find land soon.

AMMA

This is delicious. Thank you so much.

COOK

A little red wine jus would make it better but at least we know it's fresh.

They laugh.

PI

The days turned into weeks, we were starving. I couldn't hold on to a fish, it wriggled out of my grasp and swam away. Cook hit me. Then Amma hit him and then... Cook. Killed. Amma...Time passed and I killed cook.

PI is back in the hospital with LULU and MR OKAMOTO.

Solitude began. I turned to God. I survived.

LULU

What a horrible story.

MR OKAMOTO

(to Lulu) Both the zebra and the sailor broke a leg, did you notice that?...And the hyena bit off the zebra's leg while the Cook cut off the sailor's.

LULU

You're right. And the Frenchman he met in the other lifeboat, didn't he admit to eating two people?

MR OKAMOTO

He did.

LULU

And the Cook ate the sailor maybe the mother also...Do you think the Cook decapitated his mother?

MR OKAMOTO

That's just terrible.

LULU

The stories match. Four animals, four people.

MR OKAMOTO

Wait...does that mean that...he was the tiger?

Silence.

I think I have all I need. I am very sorry about what has happened to you. Thank you for your time Mr Patel. You've been most helpful.

MR OKAMOTO packs up the tape recorder.

LULU

Get some rest Pi. I'll be back in a couple of days and we'll talk through your relocation to Winnipeg.

PI

Don't you want to know the rest of my story?

MR OKAMOTO

What do you mean?

PI

Don't you want to know what happened to Richard Parker?

LULU

Yes. Yes of course we do.

- COAST OF MEXICO

A golden beach with trees in the distance.

PI

We drank rain, we ate nothing. When we reached land, I barely had the strength to be happy about it. All I knew was the rocking stopped and there was wind in trees. We slid out of the boat like snakes.

They lie in the sand together, PI's hand almost touching RICHARD PARKER's. Voices in Spanish call 'Hello?' 'Are you alright?' 'Is someone there?'

Can you hear?...Can you hear?... voices...like music in the wind.

PI stands with difficulty. RICHARD PARKER does the same. They both look to the voices.

I'm here! Hello?! We're here. Thank god! I love you Richard Parker. I love you completely. They're coming for us. Look! Help is coming. We're saved.

PI looks at RICHARD PARKER who remains for a moment then turns around and walks in the opposite direction into the trees.

PI is weeping.

I was absolutely certain after all we'd been through that he'd look at me, somehow he would say goodbye properly...but he didn't. Richard Parker, companion of my torment, awful, fierce thing that kept me alive, disappeared forever and I was orphaned again.

- THE HOSPITAL.

LULU takes PI's hand. MR OKAMOTO takes a handkerchief and wipes his eyes.

It's essential in life to conclude things properly because only then can you let go. I'm filled with words I should've said...

LULU

I'm so sorry about what happened to you.

MR OKAMOTO

I truly wish you all the best.

PI

Before you go Mr Okamoto, I'd like to ask you something.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes, of course.

PI

I've told you two stories that account for the 227 days I was at sea.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes.

PI

You can't prove which story is true. But in both stories the ship sinks, my family dies and I suffer.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes.

PI

So tell me, which story do you prefer? Which is the better story, the story with animals or the story without animals?

MR OKAMOTO

That's an interesting question...

LULU

The story with animals.

MR OKAMOTO

Yes. The story with animals is the better story.

PI

Yes. Thank you...And so it goes with God!

MR OKAMOTO and LULU exit. PI is alone.

We see MR OKAMOTO's report being typed up.

MR OKAMOTO V.O.

As you will read from my report the interrogation was difficult. Mr Patel was fragile and could shed no light on the reasons for the sinking of the Tsimtsum. The cause remains impossible to determine. No further action is required and I recommend that the case should be closed...If I could just say...this is an astounding story of courage and endurance in the face of unimaginable difficulty.

RICHARD PARKER joins PI. The hospital becomes a vast planetarium of stars. They stand together regarding the heavens.

Few castaways have survived so long at sea as Mr Patel and none in the company of an adult Bengal tiger.

BLACKOUT.

CHARACTERS

- PI (male, Indian, 17)

- NURSE
AMMA
ORANGE JUICE (female, Indian, 40's)

- FATHER
GHOST FATHER (male, Indian, 40's)

- RANI
GHOST RANI (female, Indian 20's)

- MR OKAMOTO
CAPTAIN (male, Japanese, 50)

- LULU CHEN (female, Chinese Canadian, 20's)

- COOK
voice of RICHARD PARKER (male, Black or white, 30-40)

- MAMAJI
PANDIT-JI (male, Indian, 40's)

- MRS BIOLOGY KUMAR
ZAIDA KHAN (female, Indian, 40's)

- FATHER MARTIN
REAR ADMIRAL JACKSON
RUSSIAN SAILOR (male, Black ,40's)

- RICHARD PARKER
- BABY ORANGUTAN
- BUCKINGHAM
- ZOOKEEPER
- SAILORS
- RAT
- ZEBRA
- HYENA
- TURTLE