

**LOVE AND DEATH IN EDEN AUSTRALIA by Sharon Baker**

**A darkly funny play about murder, nature and  
Discovering our true identity  
Based on a true tale!**

**Characters can be any age, any race.**

## **LOVE AND DEATH IN EDEN, AUSTRALIA**

**SYNOPSIS: Discovering Eden, Australia's bizarre history, an American marine biologist discovers her True Self.**

### **CHARACTERS**

**GEORGE: Age 40, A legendary whaler from Eden, Australia. His offstage voice is heard at the beginning of the play.**

**LOUIS BUNUNAGI: Age 30-45, The Eden RV/Tent Campground Manager. A descendent of Aboriginal Australians. Authoritative.**

**SARAH WILSON: Age 30-45, An American marine biologist. A single science geek who wears no makeup, hair in ponytail, extreme natural beauty.**

**ANDREW BRIERLY: Age 30-45, A seafood restaurant owner from Sydney Australia, on a fishing vacation In Eden. Descendent of the Eden whalers, handsome, great sense of humor.**

**(Cast may be any race or culture; any age from 30-80.)**

### **SETTING**

**An RV/Tent Campground in Eden, Australia, near the Pacific Ocean. Contemporary time.**

**The simple set features 3 outdoor camp chairs around a small campfire. ( A translucent trashcan with a flickering fake candle, simulating a campfire.)**

**Upstage is a painted mural illustrating a pod of orca killer whales chasing humpback whales. An Eden tourism banner.**

**The whimsical logo on the Banner reads:**

**Welcome to Love and Death in Eden, Australia**

### **SOUND**

**Important SFX: ocean, wind, seabirds, orca and humpback whales in distress, humpback whales singing happily free, music by The Moody Blues**

## **SCENE ONE**

**(The stage is dark. The audience listens, in total darkness. The play begins with SFX of a strange wildlife murder, conveyed through sound only. GEORGE, Eden's legendary whaler, on a hunt.)**

**(SFX: screaming orca whales and humpback whales; ocean waves and wind, seabirds)**

**GEORGE's Voice: (yelling)**

**Okay Old Tom! Humpy! Cooper! Tybee!**

**Jump on his blowhole! Suffocate him!**

**My harpoon's ready: Let's kill this humpback whale!**

**(SFX of GEORGE'S grunting as he expertly harpoons the whale.**

**SFX of humpback whale screaming.**

**SFX of George's delighted laughter. The humpback whale slaughter is accomplished. )**

**GEORGE'S Voice: (calling out) Good work, orcas! Whale tongue for you and whale meat for our village! Let the Feasting begin!**

**(SFX of orca killer whales, the dying humpback whale, scary music)**

## **SCENE TWO**

**(Lights up on stage)**

**( SARAH, and LOUIS sit in outdoor chairs around a glowing campfire, talking. She is taking notes.)**

**SARAH. Eden's history is so blood curdling, Louis. It's difficult to believe.**

**LOUIS. From 1842 to 1930, death here made life possible. (He points over the audience's head) Right off this coast.**

**SARAH: Do you tell this story to all your campground visitors?**

**LOUIS. People are curious about bizarre happenings. Especially kids!**

**(hands her his card) (grins) Please call if you have nightmares. Campground Managers wish everyone a happy vacation.**

**SARAH. (nervous laugh) No worries mate, as you Aussies say, charmingly, no worries, mate. We Marine biologists are used to strange animal behavior. Researching creatures for years.....I've heard my share, but Eden is by far .....**

**LOUIS. Bizarre is our claim to Fame, that's for sure.**

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 2)**

**SARAH. (studying her scientific notes) So I'll summarize what you've told me:**

**(reading notes aloud)**

**For nearly one hundred years, orca killer whales rounded up humpback whales, right off this coast, herding them, like sheep, to whalers waiting in boats....so the whalers could harpoon the humpback whales to death? Is that true?**

**LOUIS. Good listener, Miss Wilson.**

**SARAH. (reading more notes) And the most vicious orca killer whale was named Old Tom-, who led his pod of orcas, named Humpy, Cooper and Tybee--**

**LOUIS. Yes, Old Tom and his orca gang would signal the whalers and the Aboriginals to begin the hunt...by leaping out of the sea and calling to the men on shore.**

**SARAH. Crazy.**

**LOUIS. Old Tom would actually tow the whaler's boats out to the ocean, so the whalers could quickly thrust their harpoons into the humpback whale. And then,**

**(From stage right, ANDREW swaggers in, carrying an ice chest full of beer and a fancy fishing pole. He joins SARAH and LOUIS at the campfire.)**

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 3)**

**(SARAH, taking notes, ignores ANDREW.)**

**ANDREW. G'day Mates. Louis, I see you're boring this lovely visitor with our Killer Whale history?**

**SARAH to LOUIS. (Both ignore ANDREW, who sits in the third camp chair, fiddling with his fishing pole and ice chest) Then?**

**LOUIS. This part is kinda grotesque, Miss Wilson: The dying humpback would open it's mouth, screaming, and**

**ANDREW. (aggressively taking over the story) And the masterful orca killer whales would devour the whale's lips and tongue, while it was still alive.**

**(SARAH takes off her glasses, puts down her pen and drops her notes, shocked at this brutal image)**

**SARAH. Masterful?**

**ANDREW. (continuing matter of factly) After the whale drowned, it sank to the ocean floor. Days later, the floating carcass was retrieved by the whalers, towed to shore. The hungry orcas and the Village feasted for weeks. An incredible team effort Between Men and Beasts.**

**ANDREW. (becoming more charming) By the way, I'm Andrew Brierly. On vacation from Sydney. Getaway from my seafood restaurant, brought my true loves. Holds up his fishing rod and pats his beer cooler.)**

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 4)**

**SARAH. (shaking her head in disbelief) Sarah Wilson, Marine Biologist, from Miami, Florida. All my years of studying bizarre wildlife behavior, I've never heard anything like this. Maybe it's just folklore?**

**(The two men exchange glances. Should they tell her?)**

**(ANDREW takes out his wallet, opens an old newspaper clipping and reads aloud)**

**Dozens of newspapers published true accounts. From my great grandfather's diary:**

**"Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 1843. The orca killers are on the humpback whale, surrounding and darting at his tongue. They attack the whale in packs, and seem to enter keenly into the sport, rising and plunging about the boat, preventing the whale from escaping his captors. The whale dies with one tremendous shudder. --Oswald Brierly"**

**SARAH. (surprised) Who was Oswald Brierly?**

**ANDREW. (proudly) My Great grandfather Oswald Brierly was one of the greatest whalers in Eden. Old Tom, the legendary orca killer whale, helped him round up the humpbacks. Old Tom saved my great grandfather from drowning when he fell out of his boat. Several times.**

**(SARAH, astonished, scribbles more facts furiously into her notebook.)**

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 5)**

**LOUIS.** And I grew up hearing about my great grandfather, an Aboriginal whaler named Bunuangi, from the Weecom Tribe. I'm Louis Bunuangi. We Aboriginals believe the orcas are our deceased relatives. They brought us humpback whales for survival.

**SARAH.** (her notes are all over the ground, she tries to pick them up, then drops them back on the ground.)

**LOUIS.** You seem to be taking all this personally, Miss Wilson.

**ANDREW.** Sorry we've upset you, Mate.

**SARAH.** (snapping) I'm not your Mate. I'm a Marine Biologist. Ok, hearing Eden's history.... I'm a bit emotional; the reason is... oh you'll think I'm crazy.

**ANDREW AND LOUIS.** Miss Wilson, we like crazy!

**ANDREW.** (joking) Nobody visits our secret Paradise, unless they're crazy. Once they hear our history, sane folks leave right away. You're still here.

**(All three laugh)**

**LOUIS.** So Sarah?

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 6)**

### **SCENE THREE**

**(SARAH, now in a spotlight during her monologue confession)**

**SARAH (hesitates). Well. You've probably noticed: I'm a science geek. Obsessed with marine creatures. Not popular on dating sites. I've spent more time under water than on land. (rueful pause) I could tell you way more about whales, than about my human relatives. (sad realization)**

**LOUIS and ANDREW. (murmur) Familiar.**

**SARAH. So- a few years ago, while kayaking in Johnstone Strait, British Columbia, on a research project- An orca killer whale-she must've weighed close to ten tons- swam up to my kayak. Looked me right in the eye. She could've smashed my kayak to bits, and eaten me, there and then. But for why- I can't explain- we just stared into each other's eyes..... Mesmerized. For a very long time. A beautiful, incredible, .....Connection.**

**(SARAH peers at ANDREW and LOUIS to see if they think she is crazy. They do. They love this weird lady scientist from the USA. They smile and encourage her to continue.)**

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 7)**

**SARAH ( empowered by sharing her transcendent experience) I should have been terrified, right? I should have paddled the hell away, right?**

**SARAH. (Big realization and pronouncement)  
I was ecstatic!  
It was the happiest day of my life.**

**SARAH. (louder now, standing up to act out her words)  
I should have stepped out of my kayak, wrapped my arms round her beautiful Dorsal fin, and .....**

**(Cue SFX orca sounds, ocean waves, wind. seabirds. SARAH gazes out to the audience, as if seeing the ocean, lost in her fantasy.)**

**SARAH (lost in happiness) Why didn't I go???????????**

**(ANDREW AND LOUIS, applaud wildly, thrilled by her outlandish confession. She's crazy, so are they. These three new friends have so much more to share.)**

**( Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 8)**

## **SCENE FOUR**

**(Lights up on SARAH, LOUIS, ANDREW, sitting around the campfire. Perhaps they are in different seats.**

**SARAH'S confession has transformed her from Solo Science Geek, to a bold confident woman. LOUIS and ANDREW admire her courage, brains, beauty, chutzpah.)**

**SARAH. So Mates, here it is: If that orca and I are....Family? Then hearing my Family's dark- very dark - history.... Does that mean..... I'm a killer too?**

**(LOUIS and ANDREW consider this absurdity, and then make silly faces to lighten the moment.)**

**ANDREW. (Teasing her, to lighten up) Well Miss Wilson, you're definitely a killer in the looks department.**

**(SARAH scowls at ANDREW. She doesn't give a rat's ass that she is stunningly beautiful. Then she breaks down at her crazy confession and they laugh. Sparks ignite between them.)**

**LOUIS: (joining the fun) And for sure, Miss Wilson, you're a killer marine biologist. Beauty with Brains.....**

**(Sparks fly between SARAH and LOUIS now)**

**(SARAH, mocking them both, stands up, takes her hair out of the ponytail. It swishes to her shoulders. She owns her beauty, her brains, her courage.)**

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 9)**

**SARAH. (boldly) Call me Sarah. Brains are more important than Beauty, don't you agree?**

**(They guys shrug no! yes! and silliness erupts. The three new friends are having too much fun.)**

**ANDREW. Time to celebrate.**

**(He opens his cooler, takes out 3 beers, pops the tops, hands beers all around and all toast, swigging happily.)**

**(Cue SFX of happy humpback whales singing, swimming around Planet Earth, the ones that got away.)**

**ANDREW. (toasting) To Sarah!**

**LOUIS. (toasting) To Sarah!**

**(Sound effects up, very loud beautiful ocean sounds)**

**SARAH. (toasting) To Eden!**

**Lights fade to black. Walk out music is RIDE MY SEESAW, by The Moody Blues.**

**The END**

**(Love and Death in Eden, Australia, page 10)**

**Sharon is an award winning Travel Journalist, author of 5 guidebooks and 300 travel essays, under the name Sharon Spence Lieb.**

**Her play, LOVE AND DEATH IN EDEN AUSTRALIA, received a successful reading last summer, at “Stages of the Sun,” a festival of 8 innovative new plays, presented by the South Florida Theatre League.**

**Sharon Baker lives in Bluffton, SC, writing plays, painting whimsical nature scenes, and enjoying life with family and friends.**

**Contact her: [sharonspencelieb@gmail.com](mailto:sharonspencelieb@gmail.com), 843-505-1667**

**Enjoy Sharon’s Youtube video, MAY I CALL YOU SISTER? About her transformation from fearful to fabulous.**

**Sharon’s first children’s book, WHERE IS THE MAGIC, will Be published and available worldwide on Amazon, July, 2024.**