

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



# Gaia's Nightmares

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by Sandra Shotlander

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EXTRACT

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**CHARACTERS****SCENE 1: GAIA AND APOLLO**

Apollo - Sun God in Greek mythology, son of Zeus.

Apollo's men

Gaia- Great Mother in Greek mythology, primordial earth goddess.

Woman-scribe-Serves Gaia.

Delphyna- Priestess daughter of Gaia.

Plants

Fish/Bird Creatures

Golden Apple Tree

Narrator

**SCENE 2: NIGHTMARE OF THE PAST**

Narrator

Plants

Tree

Soldier

Child

Woman

Healer- Wise old woman.

Fugitives

Husband

General

Guards

Prisoner

**SCENE 3: NIGHTMARE OF THE PRESENT.**

Narrator

George Armitage-Brown- A modern business-man.

Susan Armitage-Brown- George's modern wife.

Natasha- George and Susan's daughter.

Anthony- George and Susan's son.

Developer- An entrepreneur.

Counsellor- A Jenny Craig diet Counsellor

Tiffany- Friend of Natasha.

Voice of telephone operator.

Doctor

**SCENE 4: NIGHTMARE OF THE FUTURE**

Tourist guide

Group of tourists- Young man and woman posing for photos and others

Museum Exhibits- Aborigine, 2 cats, lemon tree, pregnant woman, father, singer, two musicians, 2 gardeners.

**CHARACTERS (cont.)****SCENE 5: FINALE-SAVING OF THE WHALES**

Meg: Girl approx. 10 years.

Tom: Meg's Brother close in age.

Susan: Meg and Tom's older sister

Vet

Father

Mother

Rescuers

TV Reporter

Camera Person

3 Whales- Played by Gaia, Delphyna, Woman-Scribe from Scene 1.

**MYTHOLOGICAL NOTES**

**GAIA:** Primordial earth goddess, The Great Mother in Greek mythology. Her oracle was at Delphi in a cave guarded by a serpent.

**APOLLO:** Sun god or god of light, son of Zeus. He claimed Gaia's shrine for his own.

**DELPHYNA:** Serpent daughter of Gaia. After her daughter's death, Gaia in her wrath sent nightmares to Apollo's men, laying bare what penance they would some day pay.

**GAIA THEORY**

James Lovelock, a British scientist, formulated the hypothesis in the 1970's that the Earth is a 'living' self-regulating planet.

## SCENE 1

## GAIA AND APOLLO

PROLOGUE MUSIC. LIGHTS SILHOUETTE GAIAS'S GARDEN AND SACRED CAVE, ON THE EVE OF EVOLUTION. APOLLO IS STANDING ON A HIGH PLATFORM ABOVE ENTERED FROM OFF STAGE LEFT. STAIRS STAGE RIGHT LEAD DOWN INTO THE GARDEN. BELOW ON ONE SIDE OF THE STAGE POSED, ARE THE PLANTS. ON THE OTHER SIDE IN MASKS, HALF FISH, HALF BIRD ARE THE CREATURES, ALSO IN TABLEAU. IN THE CENTRE IS THE GOLDEN APPLE TREE. DELPHYNA, GAIA'S SERPENT DAUGHTER GUARDS GAIA'S SACRED CAVE. GAIA AND HER WOMAN SCRIBE ARE IN THE CAVE . MISTS RISE. SOUND OF WIND. APOLLO'S MEN ARE OFF STAGE LIGHT UP ON APOLLO. HE BEGINS THE PROLOGUE.

APOLLO: In ancient times, alone, Gaia, Mother Earth, created Heaven and naming him Uranus she took him as a lover, thus giving birth to all heavenly beings. Alone she created the sea, and naming him Pontus, she took him as a lover thus creating the sea gods. But intruders came from the northern lands claiming her sacred shrines for their own. They supplanted her with their own gods. Even so they could not forget her.

(PROLOGUE ENDS. LIGHTS UP ON GARDEN. APOLLO CROUCHES ON THE PLATFORM ABOVE WATCHING )

NARRATOR:(VISIBLE ONSTAGE OR IN AUDIENCE AREA) Gaia walked in her garden of delights watching the world evolve.

(AS GAIA AND THE WOMAN SCRIBE COME OUT FROM THE CAVE TO SAVOUR THE MORNING, THE PLANTS AND THE BIRD/FISH CREATURES BEGIN EVOLVING. THE PLANTS MOVE IN SEQUENCES OF GROWING AND FOLDING, THE BIRD/FISH CREATURES MOVE IN A CIRCLE, ALTERNATING FISH MOVEMENTS, FOLLOWED BY BIRD MOVEMENTS. THE TREE GROWS.)

GAIA: (SAVOURS THE MORNING) Ah...

(THEY WALK TO THE GOLDEN APPLE TREE AND OBSERVE THE PLANTS AND BIRD/FISH CREATURES)

NARRATOR:Apollo watched from above.

(APOLLO BECKONS HIS MEN IN. THEY ENTER THE PLATFORM FROM OFF STAGE LEFT AND CROUCH AROUND HIM).