

The Dead Sun

This play is free to download and perform. The only condition is that you must **email Alex at abroun@bigpond.net.au** and let him know **where and when you produced his script**, listing the **director, cast and theatre**. If you have any production photos send them along as well and they may just end up on this website.

a short play

by

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Cast

KE-LO

TUNG

TWAN

Setting

Kitchen.

Time

Dusk.

The Dead Sun

Fairfield, Sydney. Kitchen. 7pm.

A kettle is boiling on a kitchen bench. **KE-LO** enters.

She turns the kettle off and takes a cup from the cupboard. She scoops some green tea leaves into a metal strainer and holds them in a cup. She pours some boiling water onto the strainer.

She leaves the strainer in the tea for a few moments then she removes it. She picks up her tea and blows on it, waiting for it to cool. She sips her tea.

TUNG enters, unseen by **KE-LO**. He stands watching **KE-LO**. **KE-LO** sips her tea.

KE-LO turns and sees **TUNG**. Surprised, she gasps and drops her tea. The cup smashes on the floor. Pause.

KE-LO sways and stumbles towards the table. She sits. Pause. **TUNG** moves towards the broken cup.

KE-LO: No. Leave it.

TUNG: I should ...

KE-LO: I will do it later.

TUNG: But your back ...

KE-LO: My back is fine. (PAUSE) Sit with me.

TUNG moves to the table. He sits. **KE-LO** looks at him.

KE-LO: You scared me.

TUNG: Scared ? You should know my face by now.

KE-LO: Surprised. You surprised me. You appeared so ... suddenly.

TUNG: The gate was open.

PAUSE.

TUNG: No tears now. You have cried enough.

KE-LO: I think I shall never stop crying.

TUNG: You have cried enough.

KE-LO: You have been away so long ... this time. Where have you been ?

TUNG: No questions.

KE-LO: So long. Why ?

TUNG: No questions.

KE-LO: Who are you to say 'no questions' ?

TUNG: We have this time. Let us share it.

KE-LO: Share ? But what shall we do ?

TUNG: Talk. Say things that need to be said.

KE-LO: But Twan should be here.

TUNG: I came when I knew.

KE-LO: You always come when ...

TUNG: Knew that he won't ...

KE-LO: Be here. (BEAT) He has suffered too.

TUNG: You have suffered most. (BEAT) How is he ?

KE-LO: Better. He works.

TUNG: So do you.

KE-LO: He is busy.

TUNG: He was always busy. You made time for me.

KE-LO: I always made time for you.

TUNG: You loved me.

KE-LO: I loved you.

TUNG: More than anything.

KE-LO: Even more than ...

TUNG: I knew. I always knew.

KE-LO REMEMBERS SOMETHING. SHE STANDS, SUDDENLY.

KE-LO: Did you see your lilies ? I have looked after them.

TUNG: I saw them.

KE-LO: You came in through the garden. You must've have ...

TUNG: They are beautiful.

KE-LO: But the garden is so small.

TUNG: Big enough.

KE-LO: I know what they are called now. Stargazer lilies. I thought if I looked after them, kept them alive, then you would know that we were always here. Always ...

TUNG: And I do.

KE-LO: (SUDDENLY DARKER) But there is no sun now.

TUNG: It shines still.

KE-LO: Just clouds and rain. Your flowers stare up at a grey wall. The sun is dead where we live.

TUNG: But it is shining right now.

PAUSE.

KE-LO: How long will you stay ... this time ?

TUNG: More questions.

KE-LO: You have been away so long.

TUNG: I am here now.

KE-LO SUDDENLY GOES TO A DRAW. SHE TAKES OUT A SMALL BELL. SHE RINGS IT. A DELICATE TINKLE.

KE-LO: Here is your bell. Remember you must keep it by your bed. The Doctor said -

TUNG: Enough now.

KE-LO: In the night, if ever you need us, you can just ... (SHE RINGS THE BELL)
We are in the next room.

TUNG: Enough.

KE-LO: I will hear the bell and come to you. I will ...

TUNG: I remember.

KE-LO: He said that if you had the puffer - you would be alright.

TUNG: And I am.

TUNG STANDS.

KE-LO: You are leaving ? Already.

TUNG: I have little time.

KE-LO: But you ... Your father ...

TUNG: Quiet now. You must listen to me.

KE-LO: You can not leave so soon !

TUNG: Please. You must listen.

KE-LO: Why have you come ?

TUNG: Because it is time.

KE-LO: Time ? For me ?

TUNG: No.

KE-LO: For Twan. No - please. I can not ...

TUNG: I am your son. It is time to -

KE-LO: Forget. I will never forget.

TUNG: Forgive.

KE-LO: Who ? Who must I forgive ?

TUNG: You must forgive.

KE-LO: I am your mother.

TUNG: And I am your son. And you must forgive.

PAUSE. SUDDENLY:

KE-LO: Go. Leave here.

TUNG: I am your son.

KE-LO: My son would not try to take this away from me.

TUNG: Why must I not -

KE-LO: Because it is all I have left. All I ... have ...

SHE COLLAPSES TO HER KNEES. **TUNG** GOES TO HER. HE KNEELS BESIDE HER AND MAKES THE ACTION OF STROKING HER HAIR, EVEN THOUGH HE IS NOT ACTUALLY TOUCHING HER.

KE-LO RESPONDS TO HIS HAND AS IF HE WAS TOUCHING HER.

TUNG: You have my stargazers. You have my photos. You have my love.

KE-LO: I - can - not - bear - this.

TUNG: You are the strongest person I know.

KE-LO: I should've done something.

TUNG: You did everything you could. But now you must do the hardest thing. You must forgive.

KE-LO: For - give. Why ?

TUNG: For me. For - me.

KE-LO: Tung.

TUNG: Ke-lo.

KE-LO: Mother.

TUNG: Son.

TUNG STANDS. HE LOOKS TOWARDS THE DOOR.

KE-LO: No ! Please.

TUNG: Twan will be home soon.

KE-LO: But you must wait. You must talk to him.

TUNG: I can not.

KE-LO: He must know..

TUNG: I - can - not.

TUNG GOES TO THE DOOR.

KE-LO: Why must you always leave ?

TUNG SMILES.

TUNG: Look after my lilies. Keep them gazing up - at the sun.

KE-LO: The stars.

TUNG: The sun.

TUNG EXITS. KE-LO WATCHES WHERE HE HAS GONE. PAUSE. TWAN ENTERS FROM THE FRONT DOOR. HE SEES KE-LO ON THE FLOOR.

TWAN PLACES HIS BAG DOWN. HE GOES TO KE-LO AND PICKS HER UP. HE PLACES HER BACK IN THE CHAIR.

TWAN GOES TO THE BROKEN CUP ON THE FLOOR. HE PICKS UP THE PIECES AND PLACES THEM IN THE BIN. HE TAKES A CLOTH AND WIPES THE SPILT TEA FROM THE FLOOR. HE PLACES THE CLOTH NEATLY BACK OVER THE TAP.

PAUSE. HE SITS NEXT TO KE-LO. SILENCE.

KE-LO: Our son came home today. (PAUSE) He came through the garden, past his lilies. He thanked me for looking after them. I asked him to stay ... I asked him to wait for you ... but he would not. (SMILING) He told me to keep his lilies gazing up at the stars.

TWAN: The sun.

KE-LO: The stars.

PAUSE.

TWAN: (STANDING) I will make some tea.

TWAN GOES TO THE COUNTER.

KE-LO: (SUDDENLY ANGRY) How can you be like this ? So cold. Your son returns. Your only son. He returns to us and you say nothing. Nothing ! How can you be so cold.

TWAN: Sit down my love. We will have some tea.

KE-LO GOES TO HIM. SHE BEGINS STRIKING HIM.

KE-LO: No ! I want you to say something. Our son has come back to us. Our son. I want you to say something.

TWAN SLOWLY GRABS HER ARMS. HOLDING THEM. PAUSE. WE HEAR ONLY KE-LO'S BREATHING, THEN:

TWAN: You were asleep. You were dreaming. (PAUSE) You were asleep. You were dreaming.

KE-LO MOVES AWAY FROM TWAN.

TWAN: And in your dream ...

KE-LO: I heard a ringing.

TWAN: A tiny bell ...

KE-LO: Calling me from my dream.

TWAN: You knew.

KE-LO: A mother knows. A mother always knows -

TWAN: When their child is in danger. You heard the bell

KE-LO: Through the paper thin wall between us.

TWAN: You heard him gasping for breath.

KE-LO: I rose from my bed and I ran into his room.

TWAN: You saw him on the bed ...

KE-LO: Choking and blue.

TWAN: You gave him his puffer.

KE-LO: Choking and blue.

TWAN: You placed the puffer in his mouth.

KE-LO: Choking and ...

TWAN: Soon he was better. No more choking. His was breathing again. You saved him. You saved our son.

KE-LO: blue ...

PAUSE. KE-LO LOOKS UP AT TWAN. TWAN IS SURPRISED, CONCERNED.

KE-LO: I did not hear the bell.

LONG PAUSE.

TWAN: He did not ring the bell.

KE-LO: I did not run to his room.

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TWAN: We did not run to his room.

KE-LO: We slept on.

NOW THE TEARS ARE **TWAN'S**.

TWAN: We slept ... on.

KE-LO: But in the morning we ...

TWAN WATCHES KE-LO.

KE-LO: In the morning ... I woke up.

TWAN EMBRACES HIS WIFE. HE IS SOBBING NOW.

TUNG EMERGES FROM THE SHADOWS AT THE REAR OF STAGE, WHERE HE HAS BEEN WATCHING.

KE-LO LOOKS UP TO SEE HIM. TUNG SMILES AND TURNS TO EXIT.

KE-LO WATCHES HIM LEAVE.

THE LIGHTS FADE.