



Two blue creatures on a California beach lay there.

Immobile.

The sun sets behind them. Dazzling. Burnt yellows and deep purples and angry oranges.

1: Well.

2: Well.

1: I told you.

2: What?

1: I told you this would happen.

2: So?

1: So. Acknowledgment.

2: Of?

1: Would be nice.

2: Oh, calm down.

A sound—a phenomenally loud crunching.

It stops.

2: *Shhh.*

1: It can't sense us.

2: If you can sense it—

1: That's not how that works.

2: Idiot.

1: Know-it-all.

2: Lazy.

1: Dictator.

One more enormously loud thud:

2: Oh, god, oh god—

1: Stand up straight.

2: They're coming for me—

1: Put your sail up.

2: No, no, no, no, no—

1: Take this gust like a true hydrozoa—

2: STOP THAT. What gust? That's not wind—

1: It was a metaphor.

2: What!? It's—it's—oh, god, SKIN? Is it SKIN?

1: Shut it. Don't argue. Better not to argue.

2: What do I do?

1: Don't negotiate.

2: It's getting closer—

1: So the wind blows—
A small relative of the mighty Portuguese War—
From bubble to bubbles...

2: STOP EULOGIZING.

1: This one did all they could—
Known to some as a LOUD conceited colony—

2: SHUT IT.

1: Couldn't bear the truth.
Not in life, nor death.

2: ENOUGH!!!

1: ...

2: ...

1: ...

2: Am I still here?

1: ...

2: Did it take me?

1: ...

1 starts giggling.

2: OH FUCK YOU.

...

Is it gone?

1: You tell me.

2: It's gone—

1: How can you be sure?

*A moment.
They're both waiting for the coast to be clear.*

2: You know they have these things called ears?

1: Who?

2: The sand-shakers.

1: Dears?

2: Ears.

1: Yes.

2: Where'd you learn that?

1: Oh, you float, you listen, you pick things up.
If you don't always have your tentacles up your polyps.

2: —

1: Ask me what ears are for.

2: No.

2: Please.

1: Why?

2: What else are you going to do?

1: No.

2: If you do, I promise I'll stop—

1: What are ears for?

2: NPR.

1: Good lord, Velella.

2: What?

1: Where do you come up with this stuff?

2: No, no, it's true! They sit sometimes like we do.
They let the wind move around them or move them, I don't know.

1: Monsters.
Worse than slugs.
Disgusting.

2: But they just ground themselves—

1: Bull shit.

2: What?

1: They're always moving.

2: No, no, sometimes they sit.

1: Oh, yeah, and then what? What do they do with their rears?

2: EARS.

1: Whatever.

2: They listen to other sand-shakers.

Ones that aren't close to them.

It's probably cause they can't hear inside themselves—

Unless they want to eat. Or reproduce?

I think they listen to other people's colonies...

On NPR.

1: ...

2: Also BBC.

1: ...

2: OH!

(A foreign word:) POD CASTS.

1: If you don't mind, I'd like to just feel the sun.

2: Sorry.

1: You promised you'd stop.

If I asked.

It's getting darker, faster.

2: Velella.

1: Yes, Velella.

2: I'm cold.

1: Yes.

2: Are we...

1: Dying?

2: Yes.

1: Tide line.

2: What?

1: Just focus on the tide line.

2: So we are...

1: What?

2: I don't want to say it.

1: Stranded.

2: Stranded?

1: That's right, sailor.

2: Am I still blue?

1: Stupid question.

2: I heard the rot makes you gray.

1: Sun's down. How'm I supposed to tell—

2: Don't lie.

1: Velella.

2: Velella.

1: You're not gray—
You're near me—

2: So?

1: And that means nothing terrible can happen.

2: How do you know what's going to happen?

1: I know.

2: You do?

1: Absolutely.

2: Tell me.

1: —

2: Please.

1: Hmmm.

A sand-shaker is going to get so close to us, we'll be able to see it's rears.

2: EARS.

1: Have it your way.

2: That's what they are! For listening.

1: Uh huh.

And then it'll take a big yellow bucket.

2: Oh, I know about those! I know about buckets—

1: Will you stop interrupting me?

2: Sorry.

1: A big yellow bucket.

2: I love those.

1: ...

2: Sorry. I'm sorry.

Don't stop.

1: Filled with the most beautiful water in the world. The freshest foam. The saltiest, too.

And then the bucket will move, and you won't feel the crabs in the sand,

Or the crystals or the hermits or the weeds or the plankton—

You'll wonder, again...

Am I dying?

But then you'll capsize and float—

Somewhere between the horizon

And the sun—

And when you're finally all alone—in the middle of the ocean,

When the wind stops, and it's just you and you'll have forgotten me,

You'll bud.

You'll make thousands of Velellas.

And every single one will hail the sun like you taught them to with a salty smile.
...

2: And then?

1: They'll float away.
And you'll put your sail back up.

2: Oh good.

1: Yes.

2: Yes.

1: Yes.

2: What do we do until then?

1: Velella.

2: Velella?

1: Shh...

2: Are you going to answer my question?

1: I did.

2: Oh.

1: Yes.

2: Velella.

1: Velella.

*The sun sets.
They shine.*