

SCENE 2

*The beating sound of American Native Indian drums begins. The backdrop behind **THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA**, who is standing to the right of the backdrop, is showing Carolyn Mary Kleefeld's paintings of Edmund's cabin, repeatedly. The sound of the drums gets louder. Swathes of red light start to wash the stage. **THE BIRD DANCER** enters on to the stage, strutting. Then he starts to dance dramatically and frantically, using up all of the available stage space for several minutes (or longer). He and the drums suddenly stop. He stands, wings upright, for several moments in the silence. Then we hear the very loud sounds of a chisel carving into wood, repeatedly. Then some very loud hammering and some very loud sawing. Then silence. **THE BIRD DANCER** exits, strutting. The backdrop starts to show film and photos of Big Sur. **THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA** is spotlighted.*

THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA (*rhythmically*):

Here, the clutter
Of nonsense,
The politics
Of survival
Went out of my mind.

Here, it was the poetry
Of nature
That soothed my thoughts.

Here, the mischievous
Blow of the wind
Smoked the dust paths.

Here, the angels
Of sunlight
Teased the tall redwoods
Gathered like gods.

Here, the aloneness
Was crowded with silence.

The loud sound of the ocean and the wind.

THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA (*loudly*): I was trying to get away from that whole commercial world. I stopped thinking about being a successful artist. I just wanted to do it, and have (*emphasising*) pure creative freedom.

The sound of the ocean and the wind go down in volume.

VOICES OF POETS 1 and 2 (*together and rhythmically*):

He stood
Evening time,
Letting
The rhythms,
The masterful rhyme,
The moving prayer,
The telling
Swell
Of the ocean
Calm
The depths
Of his mind.

He stood,
Hearing
As clear as truth,
The music
Of a memory
Mislaid
By
Birth.

THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA (*fondly*):

In this suburb of Atlantis, (*he laughs*) beauty dripped in each moment. My life became pregnant with the humbling and sacred energy of this paradise at the edge of the world. (*Pause*) I began to connect with the cosmic forces, the sensual fruits of life, the eternity-glazed furniture of nature, the mind's illuminations of focused observing. I began to see how the extraordinary resides in the ordinary, how there are deep wells in the surfaces of things.

How the landscape is a work of art, confirming the creator, the life-force, in its silent retreats and the holiness of its many symphonies of songs.

VOICE OF POET 1 (*rhythmically*):

The orchestra
Of insects—
Unseen—
Performing
On the ocean's
Edge.

A flare of protests,
An urgent humming,
Loud tiny music,
Up against (*pause*)
The wash of the waves.

THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA (*fondly*): The whole of my being was open to all that surrounded me. My bohemian senses were tuned into the ever-present process of life.

The backdrop shows a photo of a giant cactus.

VOICE OF POET 2 (*rhythmically*):

Giant Cactus: Big Sur (*pause*)

A cluster of green blades,
A slow growth of sculptured stillness

Taller than a man.
A Buddha of a plant.

A threatening stance—
And flames of praise.

THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA: And death.

The backdrop shows a photo of a dead cactus.

VOICE OF POET 1 (*rhythmically*):

Dead Giant Cactus: Big Sur (*pause*)

Corpse of an alien,
Ash-grey.

Pathetic limbs
Of impotent leaves.

Spidery bone
Of a body.

A dried-out
Piece of beach wood.

A sculpture
Of skeletal fingers.

No longer pepper-green, (*pause*)
No longer flaring.

The backdrop shows photos of Big Sur.

THE GHOST OF OLD EDMUND KARA: Ah, life (*emphasising*) and death. (*Pause*) The ever-teasing mysteries for humankind. The birth of a wave, the death of a wave. The mischievous sweet birds fluttering from bush to bush, with their living code of poems, and the clinical machine of the searching hawk, its arrogant glide and its fabulous eyes of death. (*Pause*) I liked looking at life straight in the face. I liked seeing it for what it really is and stripping it of any cosmetic doctoring or glamorising. (*Pause*) Here I became very aware of the power that is infused in all of life—from every star in the heavens to every minnow in the sea. I began to believe in a central seed consciousness that is fused in all of the universe. The visual manifestation of it for all humans is in their Earth-bound existence, in all that is seen and felt. (*Pause*) Many, many times, I stood or sat on the balcony of this cabin and I watched a full moon on its stage of the starry sky, my mind mesmerised and my soul aching with its raw detachment.

The backdrop shows a photo of a full moon over Big Sur. Then a photo of the

moon fills the backdrop.

VOICE OF POET 1 (*slowly, rhythmically, and with confidence*):

Full Moon, Big Sur (*pause*)

I light up
The white flowers,
Torches
That now worship the seeds in my sky.
I dazzle the limp pool
Where the Eve-shaped woman,
As pale as my smile,
Swims in my dream.

I polish
The trunks of the trees
With their growing thoughts
Of my silver blood.

I manifest
My eternity
In the goddess eyes
Of a statued cat.

I startle
The strange, gripped land
With my tiring milk
Of coldness.

I claim
The night's far borders
With the diamond thirst
Of my depths.

I drug
The renegade moments
With the ancient spell
Of my silence.

And I make

The metallic muscles
Of the ocean,
Flexing their flow of energy,

Carry the cargoes
Of my tambourine soul.

The backdrop shows film or photos of the Pacific Ocean.