

A Reader's Theater Script for  
*The Neptune Project*  
Written by Polly Holyoke  
Script Adaptation by Gail Shipley, TBA Committee Member

**Readers:**

Nere

Robry

Ner's Mother

Narrator

**Nere:** I want the truth, and I want it now. I'm sick of your secrets!

**Mom:** You'll get the truth but we don't have time for dramatics. Roll up your sleeve. I need to give you a shot. Robry, you're about to get one, too.

**Nere:** Why do I need a shot?

**Mom:** To keep you alive where you're both going.

**Nere:** Aren't there better hospitals inland?

**Mom:** You're not going inland. You're going to meet your father.

**Nere:** What? Are you crazy?

**Mom:** No, I'm not crazy.

**Nere:** Dad died two years ago.

**Mom:** No, we faked his death during that storm so that the secret police would believe he was dead.

**Nere:** Dad's alive? You lied to me. You know I cried for months. How could you do this to me?

**Narrator:** At first Nere can't believe her, but she sees the truth in her eyes. She feels like screaming for joy. Her father is alive! And then she wants to hit her.

**Mom:** Because we both felt that the work he was doing was too vital and too dangerous. We couldn't risk you telling anyone that he was still alive, nor could we take a chance that the secret police might someday torture that information out of you.

**Narrator:** The level, matter-of-fact way she speaks gives Nere chills. Nere's mother takes advantage of her momentary shock and confusion to plunge the needle deep into her arm.

**Nere:** Ow, that stings!

**Mom:** Sorry, sweetling.

**Narrator:** Nere sees a flicker of humor in her eyes as she kisses her forehead.

**Mom:** I'd give you a candy, but I don't have any. All right my brave boy, it's your turn now.

**Robry:** This is going to change us all the way, isn't it?

**Narrator:** My mother looks startled. Then she searches his face carefully.

**Mom:** How long have you known?

**Robry:** Since we studied the Eugenics Wars in school, and I came home and took a long look at my feet. I'm glad, though, truly. I'm ready to go.

**Nere:** What do you mean this is going to change us all the way? Where are you ready to go?

**Robry:** Into the ocean, for always. I think your parents altered our genes before we were born to create a new species of human that can survive under the waves.

**Narrator:** Nere stares at Robry, trying to sort through his impossible words. Suddenly, she hears a scraping sound overhead. Someone is moving the table back from the trapdoor. They freeze. Have the soldiers found them? Nere's heart gallops in her chest. Her mom calmly takes a lethal-looking solar pistol out of a drawer, powers it up, and points it toward the trapdoor. Her mother owns a solar pistol? She can't believe that she has one, or that she looks so comfortable handling it. Nere's mouth goes dry as the trapdoor swings open.

**Nere:** Who is on the other side of the door?

**Robry:** Is it the secret police?

**Nere:** Will mom have to shoot her solar pistol?

**Robry:** Will we survive the dangers of the ocean?

**Mom:** Will Nere and Robry find her father?

**In Unison:** To find the answers read, *The Neptune Project* by Polly Holyoke.

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