

Treasure

by
Victoria Chen

*This piece can be staged with any number of performers... within reason.
This piece should also aim to be as visceral as possible. All senses have to be activated.*

.....

Before house opens the audience is outside as if V is hosting a soiree. There are snacks, drinks and tea laid out for people.

V comes in from the main entrance as well, with her a suitcase, as if she just rushed over from the airport and late for her own show. She ad-libs apologies.

Thank you for waiting! I'm so sorry for being late!

She notices the food spread.

Oh I brought food!

She opens her suitcase, which contains Asian snacks. She takes the food out and encourages people to try, laying them on the table and passing them around.

House opens, audience enters.

V closes the door and settles in.

Thank you all for coming! It's so great to see so many faces here! How is everyone doing?

She makes short small talk.

She explains her lateness.

... But thankfully I only brought this (*she gestures to her suitcase*) with me. When I left, all I had in this was a sweater and my laptop, but my mom wanted me to feel close to home so she bought me all those snacks. Who wants some?

She passes the snacks around.

It's my mom's way of taking care of me without coming along with me. Her way of proving that she's still a mother, even though her children are not with her. That's probably the hardest part of being a parent: when you have to let your child face the world on her own and you can't protect her anymore. And what if she forgets about home? What if she forgets about you?

Parents need their children more than they are willing to admit. They'll say, "Why can't you take care of yourself? Now I need to go through the trouble of buying you all this food. I'm so glad you're leaving so I don't have to bother about you anymore." But secretly they love it. They love fussing over their children. And deep down, they are going to miss it. "What if the children never come back again? I will give them all this food so that they will always think of home, and then they will miss home, and then they will want to come back, and my children will be with me once again."

That's assuming the children consider that place home. But I love the idea of leading a nomadic life, to live out of a suitcase. Material possessions take too much weight. There is no limit to the amount of experiences, emotions and memories I can store in here (*she points to her head*) and here (*she points*

to her chest). But my hands can only hold so many postcards, rocks or magnets before my arms get tired and the rest fall off.

When I migrated, I decided that my life possessions would have to be packed into suitcases, and whatever I could not bring would no longer belong to me. Anything that I left behind could be given away. When I got to the airport, the amount of things I officially owned totaled at 50 kilograms.

A panorama of V's student accommodation is projected. She gives a tour of her room.

And then when I moved out of my student accommodation in summer, I gave more possessions away to charity.

She takes out her ukulele.

But this is something that travels everywhere with me. It belonged to my sister, but she left it when she migrated, so I took it with me when it was my turn.

Spotlight on V as she plays a song.

I find the simplest and yet most difficult subject to talk about is myself, because I don't really like being myself. When I was young I pretended to be so many things... and pretending to be those things made me so much happier than being myself. Do you feel the same way? Or maybe you can talk about yourself for hours. In that case I would love to listen. I love all kinds of stories.

The definition of 'bildungsroman' is projected.

Stories that have a journey. Especially. The best part about going on a journey is that you are never the same person as when you started. When I was a child, I imagined that I was transported to a different world every time I entered a lift. The door would open, and I would be in underwater, or in space, or in a castle 500 years ago, or 2000 years into the future. It's always more fun to be in any other part of the universe than where you're currently at. It's always more fun to be on an adventure,

V ties her hair. Or another person similar in stature appears.

This is the bildungsroman of a girl called Treasure.

Lights dim.

Treasure was born on a tiny island far away, in the middle of the world.

She draws a large circle.

If you took the world and split it into half—(she draws a horizontal line through the circle)—Treasure was born right there. (She draws a diamond in the middle.) And if you look really closely, the tiny island was in the shape of a diamond.

The story is dramatized. Music and lights.

A long time ago, a prince from the Land of Gold fled his palace in a boat with his court to avoid being murdered by traitors. Suddenly without a home, he decided to find a new kingdom to rule. However, they were soon lost in the middle of the ocean and a huge storm threatened to tip the boat over. The court believed that the sea god was unhappy that the men had disturbed its peace, and so threw all their gold, their jewels and anything valuable overboard. Still, the storm continued and waves crashed against the boat.

“Your Majesty, you have to give up your crown!” the men cried. The prince heaved his crown over the boat and immediately the storm ceased. The rain petered out, the waves retreated, the clouds parted, and the bright sun shone down. Right in front of the boat was an island. “Let’s go there”, the prince said, and there they sailed.

Upon setting foot on the sand, the prince noticed a lion staring right at him.

The gaze is held. Slowly the lion shrugs away and the prince follows.

The lion led the prince up to the edge of a cliff, where he saw the sea shimmer off into the horizon, and not a dark cloud in sight. The lion stared at him again, then turned and leapt off the cliff!

And as the lion leapt into the air, its hind legs transformed into a fish tail, and the mermaid-lion—the merlion dived into the water.

The prince is bewildered. The sound of the beach.

“This is an island of magical happenings. I shall name this island ‘Lion City’, and I will rule this land to my last breath, and my sons and daughters will take my place. I will not build walls, for anyone in search of a new home will always be welcome.”

The stage starts to transform over centuries.

Over centuries many others from the East Indies found themselves a new home and a better life in the Lion City. From the Middle Kingdom, many settlers came in huge junks, including Treasure’s great-grandparents, who had her grandparents, who had her parents, who had her. Lion City was an island of immigrants, a community of people who left their birthplace to find a new place to call home.

When Treasure was born she was the tiniest baby that the family had seen in almost a hundred years. Nobody dared to hold her except her mother, for she was fragile and delicate.

“What shall we call her?”

(After a moment) “Treasure.”

Wind chimes, music starts. Lights fade to black, music continues.

The merlion was never seen again. But the Lion City grew and grew as settlers from all over the world came in search of a new home.

The Lion City grows outwards and upward, foliage beside man-made structure... a mini landscape of Singapore is formed. A few bananas are hanging around. A panorama of Singapore's cityscape is projected, iconic landmarks and all.

Dramatic lights cut. V unties her hair.

I actually haven't been back home since August last year, but I didn't feel at home back in Singapore.

I don't think or behave like the people there... I just look like them.

Projected on the screen are three rows of images: 1) eyes, 2) nose, 3) smile. All of them are from Singaporean Chinese females, taken from the front and move randomly from left to right like a horizontal slot machine.

V ties her hair.

Treasure had a button nose and eyes the colour of coals that disappeared when she smiled. She grew up among people who had noses like buttons and eyes the colour of coals that disappeared when they smiled. *(Pointing at various eyes)* This one applied to study the art of constructing and designing buildings in Wales before transferring to London. This one played the piano and mesmerized her way to Boston. This one would be studying the patterns of stars and celestial objects in Hong Kong.

And Treasure...

Lights out. Voice over comes on for the following as it is typed out on the screen:

1 April 2012.

I've had enough of being the person that's left out all the time. That's one reason why I think college isn't worth the time and money. Sure people do listen to me when I'm with them, then after we say goodbye it really is goodbye.

I don't want to be the loser, don't want to be the shortest girl—always taken for granted simply because of my size. And perhaps race, depending on where I go. I don't want to be stereotyped. Any attempt to break the stereotype just makes me stereotyped into the kind of people who is enforcing my identity on others.

No. it's really not worth it. Paying thousands of dollars to feel insignificant all over again and then spending the decade after working to pay off the loans...

The voice over fades quickly over the following as the lights go up. V is looking at the audience, hair tied again. More bananas have appeared. Some have packed their bags and left.

Sometimes I believe that I'm being short-changed. That I deserve more than I currently have. But I also believe that you deserve what you get. So maybe my situation is really what I deserve. Maybe I really am a boring, average, normal nobody who keeps insisting that there's something else inside of me that the world is too blind to see.

Who am I kidding but myself right.

(Overlapping with voiceover) Treasure felt like a boring, average, normal nobody. She didn't feel like she was meant to go anywhere. All her friends would say goodbye and once more she would be the person left out.

Suddenly the island seems too small. The buildings arch over her and the garden thickens. She feels claustrophobic and suffocated.

Tall buildings. An overgrown garden. She couldn't see the sea shimmer off into the horizon.

Treasure had to get out. There were valleys and caves and bigger jungles with leaves of different colours and cities with taller buildings and different shapes waiting for her with open arms. She would parachute off a plane into the middle of a parade welcoming her into the city. Or she would jump off a ship after sailing across the world for 30 days and the people would be waving flags and singing in celebration of her arrival!

She didn't feel at home anymore. She felt lonely, lost, restless, uncomfortable. Maybe if she found a place to call home, all these feelings would go away.

But what did home feel like?

The definition of 'wanderlust' in both English and Icelandic is projected.

A voice sounding like her mother's is almost unheard. "Stay home, this is where you belong. Stay here."

V waves the voice away.

I cannot stay at one place. I need to keep moving.

*The forlorn wind comes and leaves are swept off branches.
The leaves start to sing:*

Our darling Treasure smallest of us all

Listen closely to the worlds that call

Beyond these shores are other lands for you

Don't be scared to venture past this view

We left our world to call this land our home

*Don't you wish to find one of your own?
If you're not happy here then you must go
We love you and give our blessings so
Remember to come back after you're done
Without you our family won't be one*

Night falls.

In Treasure's bedroom in Singapore she built this cave called the Glow Worm, which looked like this.

*She switches on the fairy lights and lies down underneath them.
She wills her surroundings to fade away.
She imagines that it is night time, and she is lying on a field of grass or a road or a bench somewhere else
looking up at the stars.*

V contemplates.

Maybe one of them could be her new home.

Music trails in.

Treasure imagined many places.
She imagined a never-ending wall that stretched to two different seas.
She imagined a lake with the whitest stones and the clearest waters.
She imagined a town with two hundred hidden elves.
She imagined a city that had two buildings stretching so high to the sky that they disappeared.

Then one day, she imagined a highland. She had dreamed of it before. This highland had castles and lakes. And in one of the lakes was a monster with a long neck. Everyone there had red hair, wore skirts and enjoyed music and dancing.

Bagpipes.

Glasgow.

No.

Music cuts.

What?

V overhears her mother and grandmother. She gets up and switches off the lights, and listens.

*She is my daughter, and I say she cannot go.
Why not?
It's not safe.*

She can take care of herself.

That's what you think.

She's not a child anymore. You have to let her go.

It's too far away, way farther than where her older sister has gone! And now even her older sister doesn't want to return anymore.

It is part of our lives to let our children go. Back in the Middle Kingdom, young men left homes when they were not much older than Treasure. Some travelled for days, others travelled for weeks to the city to sit for the scholars' examination. Like you and I, their mothers worked their whole lives for that one chance at success. Staying in the village removed all chances of a better future. Some of them never made it to the city, but their families believed it was worth a try.

I stayed.

Yes, but you chose to stay. I would have let you go otherwise.

I'm happy here.

This is about Treasure.

I know.

So why are you letting your fear get in the way of what she wants?

I—

Your grandmother left the Middle Kingdom and it broke her mother's heart. But she found a better life here in the Lion City. She spoke fondly of her family back in the Middle Kingdom but she never regretted crossing the seas for this new life. She was happy here, and so am I, and so are you. But Treasure isn't. Like her ancestors, her desires lie somewhere else.

How am I going to go through with this?

I won't lie; the easiest part is saying goodbye.

What kind of mother would I be to send my daughter so far away?

You aren't any less of a mother to do so. It takes courage, strength and faith in your child to let her see the world on her own. If she doesn't like what she finds, she will come back.

A dramatized silent conversation between Treasure and her mother.

My mom tried to give me more clothes to bring along. It broke my heart to say no. In Chinese culture, clothing binds a person to her home.

A bedtime story from childhood, when Treasure's world was no larger than her mother's range of vision.

A long time ago in Ancient China, under the full moon, a poor farmer came across a young maiden bathing in the river and fell in love with her. When she finished bathing, she realized that her clothes had gone missing! She wept, lamenting that she would be unable to return home without her gown. Just then, she saw the farmer and they fell in love.

Many years passed, and they got married and had children. While he worked in the fields, she spent her days weaving and cleaning the house, but she got very homesick. One day, she revealed her true identity to the farmer: the young maiden was actually a goddess and was trapped on earth because she had lost her heavenly robes. She explained that if she didn't return to the heavenly kingdom, she would die very soon. The farmer then brought out a set of robes—it turns out that he had hidden her robes the night he saw her bathing in the river. She put on her robes, thanked the farmer, and flew up to the heavens.

*Treasure's mother helps her put on her coat.
The drawing of the globe appears again. V outlines the path.*

So Treasure flew over the Bay of Bengal, beyond the Arabian Sea and across the Mediterranean. With feelings of eagerness and uncertainty like the scholars of the Middle Kingdom who traveled before her, she flew over places that the Lion City's settlers had come from, going way beyond those lands to her second home.

When you grow up on an island, you are aware that there is a limit to the space you can call "home", which is where the sand reaches the sea. It makes the decision to leave the island much clearer when water separates you from the rest of the world. You can't conveniently step into the next city. And in Asian cultures, family comes first. When you make the choice to cross those waters, no matter where you go or where you choose to call home, the family you leave behind expect you to return.

The mother's voice is faintly heard again.

I think the bad thing about being Asian is that when you travel to other countries, the food you like becomes very expensive. Burgers and hotdogs cost almost the same everywhere. Back home I got them for a dollar each... less than 100 kroner. But if I were to buy them here it'd be at least 200 kroner.

The goblins in Treasure's new home did not all have red hair and wear skirts. And of course they didn't all look the same. Some of them had eyes the colour of the sea, and some of the hills. Their skin was almost the same colour as the clouds. When the sun kissed them, their skin blushed. And the goblins had magical powers.

The goblins were curious to meet someone from an island far away. They thought she sounded funny. Treasure was surprised. She'd sounded like that her whole life. The goblins asked a lot of questions, but didn't get the details right.

Overlapping and repeating voiceovers that Treasure has no opportunity to respond to:

““You must be having a completely different experience from your life in Saigon!”

“Could you speak some Singaporeanese?”

“You speak really well for someone from Shanghai.”

“So you’re not Chinese right? Because you’re not from China.”

“How come you can speak English if you’re not from here?”

The goblins were surprised she could speak their language. They had expected anyone with coal eyes and button noses to be completely different. So they tried to pretend she was just like them.

But she wasn’t.

But they pretended.

But she wasn’t.

But they pretended.

But she wasn’t!

She wasn’t like them!

Treasure compares the goblins with herself. They talk among themselves and don’t notice her. She does her hair to look more like them. Then she changes into their outfit. She listens to them talk, imitates some words, then goes over and starts talking like them.

“Why are you trying to sound like us?”

“You still don’t sound like us.”

“You’re just faking it.”

“You’re not from here.”

I’ve lived with you for so long that I’m starting to be like you. I can’t help it.

“That makes sense.”

The goblins try to include Treasure but she still looks very different. Treasure’s phone rings and she answers, sounding like her usual self. The goblins mutter among themselves disapprovingly.

“Yeah, she’s definitely not like us.”

“She shouldn’t even try.”

The goblins leave. Treasure yells after them.

Well of course I’m not like you! I come from a different part of the world! And in the Lion City, everyone came from different parts of the world. And they didn’t speak each other’s language, let alone sound like each other. So you know what the people did?

The definition of 'Singlish' is projected.

They started to share words from the different languages with each other, and slowly it developed into a language that now everyone in the Lion City understands. But although we speak the same language, we still sound different, because we are different, but that's okay!

So why did I still feel trapped?

The goblins cast a spell on Treasure. She was now invisible and inaudible. Treasure didn't feel at home anymore. The nights got longer than the days and Treasure felt the light seep out of her.

Another horizontal slot machine photomontage comes up, this time with faces of females from different parts of Asia.

It's not a bad thing to say that somebody is Asian. It's a fact.

Do you like the snacks? They're good right?

She makes small talk about her memories with those snacks.

It's also amusing that Asians are considered the minority when we make up more than half the world. One time I applied for a film casting—it's when you audition to play a role in a movie—and you have to fill out your details like height, weight, hair colour, eye colour, all of that... and when they got to skin colour, one of the options was "Asian". What is an 'Asian' colour?

She waits for a response from the audience.

What is an 'Asian' colour?

Treasure ties her hair, then decides to let it be.

She catches her reflection amidst the photomontage of Asian women.

So what if I know what I look like I am on the outside... I don't even know what my insides are made of anymore. This one fought for women's rights to attend school when violent students overthrew the Land of the Pure. This one was the first woman to rule over the Islands of St. Lazarus. And this one spoke up for the people in the Land of the Fast and Strong through peaceful protest. All I've wanted to do is try to find home, and now I've lost myself as well.

V lies under the Glow Worm again. A dramatised childhood bedtime story.

Legend has it that thousands of years ago in the Middle Kingdom, there was a beast resembling a lion that came on the first day of every spring to terrorize villagers and take their children. After many years of living in fear, a villager suggested banging loud pots and pans to scare away the beast. When spring came, all the villagers hid in their kitchens in wait of the beast. Hours passed in silence. Finally,

they heard a low growl, and the beast prowled into the village, sniffing walls and barrels to find a child to eat. Suddenly everyone burst out onto the street screaming and shouting at the beast! They banged woks, pots, pans and bells and set off fireworks! The beast ran off with nothing to eat, but it was so frightened that it never returned again.

On the first day of spring every year since, the villagers have celebrated their victory by making loads of noise and performing a Lion Dance. As time went by, the Lion Dance was performed to ward off evil spirits and keep villages safe.

I want to be a lion!

Do you?

No! I want to be a queen!

A lion is considered the King of the Forest. If you are a lioness, that makes you queen of the forest.

I am the queen of the forest!

And will you protect mommy from evil spirits?

YES!

That's really brave of you. That makes you lionhearted.

I'm a lion!

You're anything you want to be, my darling Treasure.

Wind blows and rain patters. Treasure contemplates again.

The mother's voice weaves through the storm, calling her home.

The smells and sounds and colours of the Lion City float back into her memory. The prince's voice is heard.

"I will not build walls, for anyone in search of a new home will always be welcome."

The new citizens of the Lion City rejoiced with every boat that stopped by the harbour. They traded and shared textiles, spices and ideas with the rest of the world. They celebrated everything together, starting with the god of beginnings and transitions, then the spring festival with the lion dances, the feast of Saint Valentine, the festival of lights, the fullest moon... Eventually, they started sharing families, as their sons and daughters fell in love and started their new lives in the Lion City. Word spread throughout the earth about the Lion City. It became known as one of the best places in the world. Everyone wanted to move there. So more families came, more houses were built for more families, more schools for their children, more markets for their food, more cars for their convenience, more libraries for their imagination, more banks for their money, more offices, hospitals, shopping malls, parking lots, religious centers... the city was on the brink of bursting.

It wasn't time to go back yet. She didn't miss the island, but she longed for its sun. It gave her energy. It gave her warmth. And now, all she had were the withering glimmers of the stars.

She contemplates again, the mother's voice starting to throb, not menacingly.

And Treasure imagined and imagined and imagined and imagined.

She imagined a place of eternal light. A place where large rainbows sliced through the storm and lit the way. A place where light would shine, even in the dark.

Overlapping voiceovers with mother's voice and song of the ancestors:

(Repeating) She didn't miss the island she had left behind, but she longed for its sun.

The sun the tiny island it gave her energy it wasn't time to go back yet it gave her warmth smells she remembered the tiny island the withering glimmers of the stars where light shone even in the dark the sun

She didn't miss the island she had left behind, but she longed for its sun. The Sun...

She contemplates even further.

Slowly the glimmering stars glow brighter and brighter and start dancing above Treasure.

Music and atmosphere. Icelandic choral chanting or whistling.

The sequence builds to a climax and stops abruptly.

Beat. A decision. V runs off.

Dramatic lights cut. The bananas seem to glow. Music.

V wheels in her suitcase and opens it, revealing winter clothes, toiletries and a few possessions.

When I moved to Reykjavik, this was all I brought. All of them added up to 20 kilograms.

She gives a tour of her suitcase, passing some items around. She collects her possessions and keeps them.

A dance story with the suitcase as Treasure sneaks away from Glasgow. A mother's voice still reaching out.

Treasure decided to find light. The goblins didn't see her leave. Going, going, going, going... she realized she didn't know where to go. There was nobody to ask. She imagined them laughing at her.

You want to find a land where lights shine even in the dark? HAHAAHAHAHA! Silly girl! You're dreaming!

That's exactly what I'm doing, because dreams can become real too. But how do I get there?

And she heard the winds start to whisper and the leaves shudder in anticipation.

Leaves slowly fall from above. Quiet giggles are heard.

Where...

Where...

Where...

Where do I go?

Our darling Treasure look how far you've come

And still there is no place you can call home

Those before you found a place to go

*A diamond island that you used to know
Believe that dreams are real because they're true
But keep in mind that dreams are nightmares too
Keep steady and remember who you are
The answer is a land that isn't far
Richer jewels are found on journeys longer
Seek heather to protect your travels yonder*

The leaves giggle, the trees whisper.

*Heather...
Heather...
Heather...*

*And crickets. Treasure starts on her journey.
The environment changes and morphs around her. Gradually, it turns grey and dull.
Treasure gets tired. And then she realizes she's lost. She tries to retrace her steps.
As she exits the space Treasure comes in from the other end of the space and walks in the same direction.
As she exits the space Treasure comes in from the other end of the space and walks in the same direction.
As she exits the space Treasure comes in from the other end of the space and walks in the same direction.
The environment changes ever so slightly. Franticness sets in.
The sequence repeats.*

No... No... No! No! No! No!

Treasure starts to cry. And slowly, a little heather flower emerges and glistens.

*Treasure, dry your eyes you little dear
You've already shed one too many a tear
Your path was destined to lead you here
Heather has one word, it's 'persevere'
Look how far you've come since yesteryear
When you're lost in darkness never fear
The end is not as far as it is near.*

Back to normal. Treasure kisses the flower.

Thank you Heather.

Treasure gets up and brushes herself.

A boat sails past in the distance.

*A stream of bananas walk waddle past and she follows, then the bananas split into different directions. They seem a little lost. She tries to help them find their way. Some take her advice and set off, and some just wander off.
Treasure is alone again, but somehow she feels otherwise.
She finds her direction and walks off.*

*The wind starts to sing the songs of the ancestors, progressing into an Icelandic choral rendition before switching from English to Icelandic.
It is the darkest part of night.*

Treasure had to find light.

She would find the highest point in the world, where the clouds parted for the soil and the skies kissed the earth. And there, there she would see the most beautiful light in the world, a light so magnificent and breathtaking, that one touch of the light and she wouldn't feel tired anymore. Her strength would return and she would be happy, and she would be home.

She was very close now. She could feel its energy radiating, her body getting warmer, the light finding its way into her body.

*A growl. Treasure freezes. Seemingly fading into existence: a lion staring at her. The gaze is held.
A dance with the lion that grows until Treasure realizes she is merely dancing with herself.
She finds that she enjoys dancing with herself and continues.
A ray of green streaks across the sky, and another immediately after it!
Treasure looks up.
The lights fade. She searches the skies for them.
And then from behind, a tiny light is born. It grows and forms a curtain that is slowly drawn across the sky.
On the other side of the sky another light is born and grows into a curtain, both travelling slowly.
And directly above Treasure, bars of light slowly streak down towards her.
The north winds are blowing gently. Music, singing and voices envelop her. She reaches to touch the light and as she brushes against its rays she experiences a true moment of happiness that overwhelms her.
And then she realizes that the voices are that of her mother's, calling her home.*

"Come home. We miss you. Come home."

*Treasure is slowly lowered to the ground. The voice trails off.
The leaves start to sing:*

*Our darling Treasure you follow our ways
You long for better nights and brighter days
It's in your blood to search for something more
Your ancestors did all that once before
Search on but remember halfway through
You'll be heading back from where you flew
Birds that migrate return in the summer
And so we wait for you our great-granddaughter*

The lights still shine. Gentle breeze.

I... I don't know how to get home.

Where is home?

She sees the expanse of the sky and sea and the universe beyond the stars and lights.

It's really far away.

She sees the full moon.

Can you imagine... that one day within this lifetime, there will be people whose passports will declare them as citizens of the moon instead of a country on this earth? And the moon residents will look at this planet and say, "I wish I could fly there, there's not enough space over here." And they won't know that on our side of the universe we are looking at them and feeling the same way, and this is how they got to the moon in the first place.

Treasure realizes she is in the middle of nowhere.

Maybe a mother will point at the earth and tell her daughter, "that is where your ancestors came from." And maybe the daughter will grow to be lonely, lost, restless and uncomfortable. She will want to visit the earth and her mother will say, "No. It's not safe. It's too far away. What kind of mother would I be to send my daughter so far away?"

She looks at her suitcase.

'Come home. We miss you. Come home.'

She opens her suitcase and tries to find the voice, but it is just a suitcase... that seems to call out to her.

The daughter will go anyway, and she will travel through the mountains and forests and cities, and she will think, "how exciting, this is nothing like home." Every night she will look up and say, "my home is so beautiful, it is the best place in the... world. But it is not time to go home yet." One night, she will notice a group of people staring at the sky. "Look, it's the lunar eclipse!"

Seized with terror, she will rush to the nearest space station. After hours of space travelling she will be so relieved to land back on the moon. Her mother, tears in her eyes, will say, "We wished and waited for you to come home. For every day we miss you on the moon, you have lived a month on the earth. Look at how you've changed my precious one, you've grown so much and we didn't get to see it happen!"

A decision.

(To herself) I want to go home.

The stars glow in the shape of bananas. They echo her wishes. The other lights fade out.

I want to go home.

Heather? Are you there?

Heather emerges and glistens.

Heather. I'm going home.

Isn't this home now?

This is where the eternal light is. I feel strong and free, I feel warm even when the North winds blow. But my family doesn't feel home without me. I need to go back and change that. And after I do, I'll find my way here again. Or even if I don't, I'll find somewhere else. I'll keep searching for this light. This light that shines in the dark.

She is slapped with a realization. As the darkness grows, Treasure starts to glow like the bananas.
Heather:

*Treasure I am proud of how you've grown
Now that you've travelled the world alone
You've learnt much more than you've ever known
Remember a heart without love is just a stone*

*The breeze turns into a strong wind. Heather's petals are blown away and surround Treasure. The lights grow and Treasure's entire journey from start to finish is replayed—or is it a new journey? Images of her friends and Asian women shuffle in. The goblins' voices are heard. The songs of the leaves and trees.
The lights converge and blind everything else, then slowly fade into darkness.
Slowly, the Glow Worm lights up to reveal V lying in it and staring at the stars.
The sounds and smells of the Lion City fade in.
The bananas are more than ever and some of them are glowing.
V stares a moment more, then gets up and switches off the lights.
She disassembles the Glow Worm and keeps them.
V's mother enters.*

Ready?

Yup.

Why haven't you packed?

I'm packed.

Where?

V pats the yellow suitcase.

That's all?

What more do I need?

V's mother looks around the room. She wishes she could be packed into the suitcase.

Your room is so messy. It's a good thing you're leaving so I don't have to clean up after you anymore.

Good for you.

I'll give everything away.

Okay.

And then I'll be free to do whatever I want!

You should.

When you come back you'll have nothing.

I'll be alright.

Don't come crying to me when you need something.

It is only when you have nothing, that you realize you have everything.

Sure.

(Mimicking) Sure.

You're on your own now.

I know.

Mom can't help you anymore.

I know.

A loud silence.

Make sure you eat well.

Okay.

V's mother leaves.

(Calling) We gotta go!

V stands up and gives her room a final look. She bids it a silent goodbye.

V's mother helps her put on her coat. She embraces her daughter farewell, and then bursts into tears.

V doesn't cry, but she is not emotionless.

They stand wrapped in each other's arms. Finally V's mother pulls away and lets her daughter go.

V grabs her yellow suitcase and exits.

Needle through cloth in mother's hands, a coat for her travelling son

Carefully sews a seam from strands to warm her precious one

Eyebrows furrow with concern for the young man's steps alone

Secretly fears her son will not return, the journey ahead unknown

Her love is unconditional, this burden she will bear

The son will be eternally grateful for this priceless coat to wear

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End of Play