

ACT ONE

#1 – Overture

SCENE ONE: THE WATER'S SURFACE

(ARIEL, a beautiful young mermaid with red hair, crashes through the surface, resplendent in the sun. At the sight of the verdant trees, the buoyant clouds and the magnificent sky, her face beams with enthusiasm.)

#2 – The World Above

Ariel

ARIEL

THIS IS WHERE I BELONG
BENEATH THE CLEAR WIDE BLUE HERE!
I FEEL COMPLETELY NEW HERE IN THE WORLD ABOVE!
IT'S LIKE MY LIFE WAS WRONG
AND SOMEHOW, NOW, AT LAST I'M IN
MY OWN SKIN
UP HERE IN THE WORLD ABOVE!

THERE'S SO MUCH LIGHT HERE
LIGHT AND SPACE!
THE SUN'S SO BRIGHT HERE
UPON MY FACE!
IT FEELS SO RIGHT HERE
WARM AS LOVE ...
LIFE SEEMS TO BE
SOMEHOW CALLING TO ME
FROM THIS STRANGE NEW WORLD ABOVE!

(In the distance, Ariel hears a voice cry:)

PRINCE ERIC

(offstage)

Steady as she goes! Windward, ho!

(Ariel watches in wonder as an enormous ship comes careening across the waves.)

ARIEL

A ship!

(Ariel takes cover in deeper waters as a PILOT and SAILORS appear on a ship.)

#3 - Fathoms Below

Pilot, Sailors, Prince Eric, Grimsby

PILOT

I'LL TELL YOU A TALE OF THE BOTTOMLESS BLUE

SAILORS

AN' IT'S HEY TO THE STARBOARD, HEAVE HO!

PILOT

BRAVE SAILOR, BEWARE, 'CAUSE A BIG 'UNS A-BREWIN'

SAILORS

MYSTERIOUS FATHOMS BELOW!

FATHOMS BELOW, BELOW!

FROM WHENCE WAYWARD WESTERLIES BLOW!

WHERE TRITON IS KING

AND HIS MERPEOPLE SING

IN MYSTERIOUS FATHOMS BELOW!

(PRINCE ERIC bounds on deck; he's a handsome, affable lad with a buoyant, adventurous nature. From his humble sailor togs, one would never guess that he's a bona fide Prince. With him, his droll British guardian, GRIMSBY.)

PRINCE ERIC

Isn't this perfection, Grimsby? Out here where the seas meet the skies, surrounded by nothing but water —

GRIMSBY

Oh, yes, it's simply ...

(bending over the rail, seasick)

... delightful ...

PRINCE ERIC

THE SALT ON YOUR SKIN AND THE WIND IN YOUR HAIR

AND THE WAVES AS THEY EBB AND THEY FLOW!

WE'RE MILES FROM THE SHORE AND GUESS WHAT — I DON'T CARE!

GRIMSBY

AS FOR ME, I'M ABOUT TO HEAVE HO!

PILOT

Toe the line!

SAILORS

I'LL SING YOU A SONG OF THE KING OF THE SEA
AN' IT'S HEY TO THE STARBOARD, HEAVE HO!
THE RULER OF ALL OF THE OCEANS IS HE
IN MYSTERIOUS FATHOMS BELOW!

GRIMSBY

King of the sea? Why, that's nautical nonsense—nothing but a superstition!

PILOT

THE KING OF THE OCEAN GETS ANGRY
AN' WHEN HE GETS ANGRY, BEWARE!
I'M TELLIN' YA, LAD, WHEN KING TRITON IS MAD
HOW THE WAVES'LL BUCK, ROCK TO AND FRO!

PILOT, SAILORS

HOLD ON, GOOD LUCK, AS DOWN YOU GO!

VOICE

AH-AH-AH-AH, AH-AH-AH-AH ...

PRINCE ERIC

What is that? Do you hear something?

GRIMSBY

Milord, please ... enough sea-faring! You've got to get back to court—to honor your father's dying wish and take up his crown!

PRINCE ERIC

Suppose I don't want his crown?

GRIMSBY

You'd forsake his Kingdom?

(even more incredulous)

All of his treasures?

PRINCE ERIC

Treasures? You mean like this?

(holds a silver chalice aloft)

Who needs it? We drink straight outta the bottle, don't we, boys?

(The Sailors roar their approval; Prince Eric tosses the cup to one of them.)

Or this?

(brandishes a candelabra)

Not when we've got the sun and the moon to light our way!

(Prince Eric tosses the candelabra; a sailor catches it and all cheer.)

(PRINCE ERIC)

Or this?

(raises a gilded fork)

No, thanks! I'd rather eat with my bare hands—

(Prince Eric tosses it and the fork goes sailing through the air, off the side of the ship, into the water with a "splash!")

GRIMSBY

You're a prince, sire! Not a common sailor—!

PRINCE ERIC

These men are anything but common! They're free, Grimsby—truly free. They don't have to answer to anyone but the Sea.

(with longing)

I'd rather be a sailor than a prince any day.

THIS IS WHERE I BELONG!
EV'RYTHING SEEMS MORE REAL HERE!
STRANGE HOW AT HOME I FEEL HERE
IN THE TIDE'S SWIFT FLOW!
AND WHEN THE PULL IS STRONG,
I ALMOST THINK I HEAR THE SEA,
WILD AND FREE,
CALLING ME FROM FATHOMS BELOW!

VOICE

AH-AH-AH-AH, AH-AH-AH-AH ...

PRINCE ERIC

There it is again!

PILOT

We ought to head back to shore, Your Majesty.

GRIMSBY

Indeed, we should!

PRINCE ERIC

Not while I'm captain. Now, follow that voice—to the ends of the earth if we have to!

PILOT

Aye-aye, Captain!

PILOT, SAILORS

THERE'S MERMAIDS OUT THERE IN THE BOTTOMLESS BLUE

(PILOT, SAILORS)

AN' IT'S HEY TO THE STARBOARD, HEAVE HO!
WATCH OUT FOR 'EM, LAD, OR YOU'LL GO TO YOUR RUIN
MYSTERIOUS FATHOMS BELOW!

(The ship sails into the horizon. Ariel appears, just in time to snatch the sinking fork from oblivion. She holds it up; it catches the sun's rays; it makes prisms in the air.)

ARIEL

(admiring it)

Why, it's beautiful!

(A splash, and FLOUNDER appears. He's a rambunctious young fish, and Ariel's best friend.)

FLOUNDER

Hey, Ariel! There you are!

(Ariel hides the fork behind her back.)

ARIEL

Flounder!

FLOUNDER

(gazing at the strange terrain)

Whoa. Freaky.

ARIEL

What's the matter? Haven't you been to the surface before?

FLOUNDER

Yeah. Sure. Me and the other fish in my school, we come up here all the time.

ARIEL

Is that so?

FLOUNDER

Sure! We're not scared of sharks. Or boats. Or fishermen.

(with a nervous gulp)

What's a "chum bucket"? Are those for real?

ARIEL

You *are* afraid, aren't you?

FLOUNDER

No, I'm not! I'm here now, aren't I?

(a telling beat)

With you.

ARIEL

Flounder, you're blushing ...

FLOUNDER

It's sunburn. You get it up here.

ARIEL

Are you flirting with me?

FLOUNDER

Gross! Blech! No way!

(then)

But if I was—?

(Ariel ruffles Flounder's fins and gives him a peck on the head. Flounder is hopelessly smitten.)

ARIEL

Hey, guess what I found today! It was floating in the wake of a giant ship ...

FLOUNDER

Treasure?

ARIEL

I'll say! Look!

(shows him the fork)

Have you ever seen anything so amazing in your entire life?

FLOUNDER

Cool! What is it?

ARIEL

I don't know ...

(SCUTTLE the seagull flies down toward the shore. His feathers are askew, giving him the appearance of an avian Albert Einstein. Ariel spies him.)

SCUTTLE

(holding up a finger to test the wind)

Airspeed, check!

(glancing down at the ground)

Altitude, check!

(wiggling his feet)

Landing gear, check!

(a squawk)

CLEAR THE RUNWAY! AWK! Hello, Ariel!

ARIEL

... but I know just who to ask!

(And Scuttle lands.)

(waving the fork)

Scuttle, look what we found!

SCUTTLE

More human paraphenicular, eh? Wow - this is special. This is very, very unusual. You've asked the right bird; I happen to be an expert on that very specie-ality!

FLOUNDER

Can you tell us what it's for?

SCUTTLE

Oh, this is rare, ridonkulously rare. And in Sistine condition!

ARIEL

What? What is it?

SCUTTLE

It's a dinglehopper!

ARIEL

A dinglehopper?

SCUTTLE

Commonly used in saloons, yes, of the beauty variety.

(demonstrates)

Humans they like to wear their hair in tails, pony or pig or duck, it's all the same to them. A primp here and a twirl there and—*voilà!* A Pompadour-able. And all thanks to—

ARIEL

(marveling)

The dinglehopper!

SCUTTLE

Give ya two sand dollars for it.

ARIEL

Scuttle, no—

SCUTTLE

I'm tellin' ya kid, on the open sea, ya won't get more than a few clams. But I'm prepared to offer—

ARIEL

I'm not selling it, Scuttle! I'm saving it for my collection!

SCUTTLE

Howza 'bout a swap?

(brandishes an old-fashioned tobacco pipe with an enormous bowl)

I got something stupelicious! Museum quality, really. A banded, bulbous ... snarfblatt.

(Ariel and Flounder "ooh" and "ahh.")

Second cousin to the tuba.

FLOUNDER

It makes music?

SCUTTLE

Sure thing, kid.

(Flounder blows into the pipe; seaweed pops out the other end.)

I ain't just blowin' smoke. Why, it makes music so fantabulous — so absolutely marvica —

ARIEL

(suddenly stricken with panic)

Music? Oh no! The concert! Oh my gosh, my father's gonna kill me!

FLOUNDER

The concert was today?

#3A – Oh No, the Concert

ARIEL

I completely forgot! Come on, Flounder. Thank you, Scuttle.

SCUTTLE

Ya change your mind and wanna sell, call me first, ya hear?