

**SCENE TWO: KING TRITON'S COURT**

*(Our eyes adjust to the murky depths of the sea; a school of silver FISH flicker past in perfect formation, their tails flashing with iridescent light. Three or four diaphanous JELLYFISH undulate in the gentle current. It's a tranquil, pleasant place, this seabed at the bottom of the ocean floor. A trumpet blast summons everyone to King Triton's Court: MERMEN, MERMAIDS, STING RAYS, CRUSTACEANS and a myriad of wonderful SEA CREATURES. KING TRITON enters, flanked by WINDWARD and LEEWARD, two trumpetfish. His Royal Court is now officially in session. Everyone swims to attention. Beneath Triton's imposing presence and commanding nature lurks the harried single father of seven girls. He holds a trident like a scepter.)*

**KING TRITON**

Benevolent Merfolk! Creatures of the Deep! Today marks a special anniversary—for many years ago on this fateful day I inherited my father's Kingdom and banished the Sea Witch Ursula forever!

**ALL SEA CREATURES**

Hail King Triton!

*(King Triton laughs, delighted by their devotion to him.)*

**KING TRITON**

And so it's time to celebrate our victory! In honor of the occasion, may I introduce our Master of Ceremonies ...

*(Windward and Leeward swim forward.)*

**WINDWARD**

Presenting the Court Composer—

**LEEWARD**

Horatio Thelonius Ignatius Crustaceous Sebastian!

*(The crab SEBASTIAN scrambles forward. He speaks with a Jamaican accent.)*

**SEBASTIAN**

*(to the crowd)*

Mornin' to y'all!

*(The crowd whistles for Sebastian.)*

**KING TRITON**

So tell us, what have you in store?

**SEBASTIAN**

I got a special song, just for the occasion! And it's gonna be performed by none other dan your seven love-lee daughters! I wrote this little number for my star pupil—

# KING TRITON

*(knowing full well)*

And who might that be?

# SEBASTIAN

Your youngest! Ariel! Such a voice, dat child! Notes as clear as ice, pitch as pure as water! Why, I haven't heard such magnificent sound since — well ...

# KING TRITON

*(finishing Sebastian's thought, touched)*

... since Her Royal Highness, may she rest in peace.

# SEBASTIAN

You're gonna be a proud Papa, you'll see!

*(sotto)*

If only she'd show up for rehearsals once in a while ...

# KING TRITON

Let the merriment begin!

*(With that, six of King Triton's offspring — all vivacious, winning young MERSISTERS — swim onto the stage.)*

#4 — Daughters of Triton

Mersisters

# MERSISTERS

AH, WE ARE THE DAUGHTERS OF TRITON

GREAT FATHER WHO LOVES US AND NAMED US WELL:

# AQUATA

AQUATA

# ANDRINA

ANDRINA

# ARISTA

ARISTA

# ATINA

ATINA

# ADELLA

ADELLA

# ALLANA

ALLANA

**MERSISTERS**

AND ARIEL!

IN CONCERT WE HOPE TO ENLIGHTEN  
THE HEARTS OF THE MERFOLK WITH MUSIC'S SWELL  
AQUATA ...

**AQUATA**

AH-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA

**MERSISTERS**

ANDRINA ...

**ANDRINA**

AH-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA

**MERSISTERS**

ARISTA ...

**ARISTA**

AH-AH-AH-HA-HA

**MERSISTERS**

ATINA ...

**ATINA**

AH-AH-AH-HA-HA

**MERSISTERS**

ADELLA ...

**ADELLA**

AH-AH-AH-HA-HA

**MERSISTERS**

ALLANA ...

**ALLANA**

AH-AH-AH-HA-HA

**MERSISTERS**

AND THEN THERE IS THE YOUNGEST  
IN HER MUSICAL DEBUT.  
OUR SEVENTH LITTLE SISTER,  
WE'RE PRESENTING HER TO YOU  
TO SING A SONG SEBASTIAN WROTE  
HER VOICE IS LIKE A BELL  
IT'S OUR SISTER, ARIEL ...

*(The Mersisters reassemble to pave the way for Ariel.)*

**(MERSISTERS)**

SISTER, ARIEL!

**SEBASTIAN**

Not again, child!

#4A — *Where's Ariel?*

**KING TRITON**

Ariel! Where in the name of Poseidon has that sister of yours gone?

*(As all scatter, Sebastian and the Mersisters overlap in a tumult of words, creating a general kerfuffle:)*

**SEBASTIAN**

Apologies, sire, but that girl — she's gonna be the death of me! Swimmin' when she should be singin'.

**AQUATA**

If I'd had that solo, this would never have happened.

**ARISTA**

That girl is angling *for trouble* —

**ATINA**

I say, give her the hook —

**ALLANA**

Fish puns? Aren't we better than that?

**AQUATA**

Honestly, Daddy! You let Ariel get away with *everything* —

**KING TRITON**

*(trying hard to keep the peace)*

Now, now. I love all my daughters equally —

**ATINA**

Oh, please. That answer's as canned as tuna and twice as oily!

**AQUATA**

Arista's prettier than Ariel. Andrina's smarter. Allana's sweeter, Atina's — *older*, and Adella! Let's face it, Daddy; you're the only male attention Adella's ever gonna get —

ADELLA

Hey! What've *you* got that Ariel doesn't?

AQUATA

Naked ambition and a willingness to kill.

KING TRITON

ALL RIGHT, THAT'S ENOUGH!

*(blustering to Sebastian)*

One son, Sebastian! Was that too much to hope for?

SEBASTIAN

Please, sire! Don't go pointin' your Pappy's trident at me!

KING TRITON

Oops. Sorry, Sebastian ...

SEBASTIAN

Ya might go whippin' up a hurricane by mistake.

*(A contrite Ariel bursts into the court, followed by Flounder.)*

AQUATA

Well, look what the catfish dragged in!

ARIEL

Daddy, forgive me, I'm so sorry —

KING TRITON

Ariel, young lady —

ARIEL

I just forgot, that's all —

KING TRITON

As a result of your careless behavior —

SEBASTIAN

Careless and *reckless* behavior!

KING TRITON

— the entire celebration was —

SEBASTIAN

Ruined! Completely destroyed! This concert was going to be the pinnacle of my distinguished career.

KING TRITON

Sebastian —

**SEBASTIAN**

Now, thanks to you, I'm the laughing stock of the whole Kingdom!

*(The Mersisters erupt in a chorus of overlapping protests:)*

**ATINA, ARISTA**

We gave up a date with a whale of a guy —

**AQUATA**

I don't sing backup for anybody —

**ADELLA**

Mama loved me best, but she's gone —

**KING TRITON**

DO YOU MIND?!?

*(The Mersisters hastily exit. King Triton is finally alone with his youngest and speaks tenderly.)*

Ariel. Please. You've been given such a gift...

**ARIEL**

I know — my mother's voice.

**KING TRITON**

It's a wondrous talent, one that demands stewardship and care. So please. Ariel.

*(raises Ariel's chin so that her eyes meet his)*

For the sake of her memory —

**ARIEL**

I will, Daddy. I promise.

*(Ariel embraces King Triton.)*

**FLOUNDER**

*(unable to keep silent any longer)*

It wasn't even Ariel's fault! That know-it-all seagull started goin' on and on —

**KING TRITON**

Seagull? Seagull!

*(really angry now)*

You went up to the surface again?

**ARIEL**

*(guilty)*

Nothing happened.

**KING TRITON**

You could've been seen by one of those barbarians! One of those humans!

**ARIEL**

Daddy, they're not barbarians!

**KING TRITON**

They're dangerous—traps and harpoons!

*(softening for an instant)*

Like it or not, Ariel, you're my youngest. My baby! And so I worry about you the most—

**ARIEL**

But I'm old enough to look after myself—

**KING TRITON**

*(flaring again)*

As long as you live under my reef, you'll obey my rules!

**ARIEL**

If you'd just listen to me for once—

**KING TRITON**

That's the last time you're ever swimming to the surface! Understood?

**ARIEL**

You're so unfair!

*(Ariel bursts into tears and swims away, followed by Flounder.)*

**KING TRITON**

*(a father's frustration)*

Agh! Heaven help me! She's headstrong! Willful! Stubborn as a barnacle—

**SEBASTIAN**

Teenagers! Give 'em an inch, and they swim all over you.

#5 – If Only (Triton's Lament)

King Triton

**KING TRITON**

I can govern a kingdom, but I can't control my own daughter. I was too harsh. She'll learn to fear me—I don't want that. She needs her mother, Sebastian. And so do I.

IF ONLY SHE WERE HERE,  
SHE'D KNOW JUST WHAT TO SAY.

**(KING TRITON)**

SHE'D FIRMLY AND YET GENTLY  
HELP THE GIRL TO FIND HER WAY  
SHE'D KNOW WHAT TO FORBID  
AND WHAT WE MUST ALLOW  
SHE'D HAVE THE STRENGTH AND PATIENCE  
THAT I LACK, SOMEHOW ...  
OH, WHAT I WOULD GIVE  
TO HAVE HER BACK RIGHT -

**SEBASTIAN**

Now, now, sire! It's difficult, sure. But ya got to toughen up, not melt down. For Ariel's sake! I'm telling ya, dat child needs constant supervision! Someone who can watch over her, keep her out of trouble -

**KING TRITON**

That's not a bad idea. Someone to safeguard her every move -

**SEBASTIAN**

Her every dog-paddle!

**KING TRITON**

Her every side-stroke -

**SEBASTIAN**

Her every dive!

**KING TRITON**

And you are just the crab to do it!

**SEBASTIAN**

What?

**KING TRITON**

You heard me! From now on, Ariel is your responsibility!

*(King Triton exits emphatically.)*

**SEBASTIAN**

Mine? But Your Majesty, she's a clever mermaid! I'm just a crustacean!

*(follows King Triton out, continuing to plead)*

Surely you ought to pick someone higher on the evolutionary scale ...