



Newport, Maine

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LITTLE MERMAID'S LITTLE SISTER

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Cast (13):

Little Mermaid A teenage mermaid ready to risk it all to become human for a human who wants to become a fish

Little Mermaid's Little Sister: A wily girl with a strong sense of how to look out for herself and those she loves

Prince: A love-struck, ocean-loving teen that just can't see what is right before his eyes

Little Prince: The Little Brother of the PRINCE, a helpful friend

Finn the Sea Dog: A trusted guide under the sea

The Sea Witch: She comes off tough, but definitely has a soft spot; loves to laugh at her own jokes

Little Mermaid's Stepmother: A pageant mer-mom who knows how to catch a man

Queen: She can't wait for her son to come out of the clouds to take the helm

King: His iPhone is of most interest

Volta, Electra, Viva, and Zappa: a swarm of four fun-loving eels

Set Requirements:

- 1) a Rock where the mermaids congregate in the ocean;
- 2) the deck of a ship, ideally raised above the level of the ocean;
- 3) the Cave of the Sea Witch

Prop List:

Hairbrush
Bottle of hairspray
Curling iron
A smart phone
Dog whistle
Dog biscuits
Poop bag and fake poop
Potion ingredients:
 green herbs, white powder, fish eyes
Potion vials (4)
A plastic bellow
A flower
A wall calendar
Rachel Carson's *The Sea Around Us*
Empty water bottles (8-12)
Mask and snorkel
Eye mask
A spell book
Deck of cards

Sound:

Whale song
Storm
Daybreak

Jennifer Reck has had plays produced for the Maine Playwrights Festival, PortFringe, and the Crowbait Club. *The Little Mermaid's Little Sister*, her first full-length production, was commissioned and produced by the Children's Museum & Theatre of Maine in collaboration with A Company of Girls, and premiered in April 2017.

THE LITTLE MERMAID'S LITTLE SISTER by Jennifer L. Reck. Cast of 13: 8F, 4M, 1 either. About 60 minutes. *(Perfect for any professional, amateur or educational group performing for children or young people.)* The Little Mermaid gives up her voice to become human for the Prince, but the Prince wants to be a fish. Nothing makes sense on land or sea until the Little Mermaid's Little Sister takes on the Sea Witch to make things right. Along the way she is helped by her sea dog, Finn, held hostage by a mischievous swarm of eels, and plays a friendly game of Hearts. **Order #3202**

THE LITTLE MERMAID'S LITTLE SISTER

SCENE ONE -- At lights up, the LITTLE MERMAID sits on the ROCK, humming and brushing her hair dreamily. A SWARM OF EELS approaches.

LITTLE MERMAID: Legs! Legs! Legs! How I long for legs! Long, long legs! Then I could dance with PRINCE and be a part of his world above the sea!

(Seated, she taps her tail about as if doing a few dance moves.)

SWARM OF EELS: *(in odd falsetto voices, in unison)* Play with us! Play with us! Come play with us!

LITTLE MERMAID: I am almost sixteen – practically an adult. I don't "play" anymore.

SWARM OF EELS: *(in odd falsetto voices, in unison)* Play with us! Play with us! Come play with us!

LITTLE MERMAID: Thank you eels – I'm not interested.

VOLTA: I think you'd find it most amusing!

ELECTRA: You can run!

VIVA: You can hide!

ZAPPA: *(jumping forward)* And we'll come seek!

LITTLE MERMAID: Go on now!

(The SWARM OF EELS starts to swim off but circles back, undeterred.)

VOLTA: What about Simon Says?

ELECTRA: Marco Polo?

VIVA: Red light green light?

ZAPPA: Lava?

SWARM OF EELS: *(in unison)* Infection?!

LITTLE MERMAID: Those all sound like wonderful games – please go play them somewhere else!

(SWARM OF EELS exit as LITTLE SISTER enters. They greet LITTLE SISTER with a special handshake as they pass.)

LITTLE SISTER: *(to audience, outside of her sister's hearing)* Hello – I bet you can guess who she is
(Gesturing to her sister.)

Any guesses? That's right – she's the Little Mermaid, and she's pretty famous. She's my big sister. That makes me The Little Mermaid's Little Sister. Anyone ever heard of me? No? I didn't think so. I'm not so famous – but sometimes I think I should be. And once you see our story, you'll know what I mean.

Now, – first things first: Mermaids are supposed to stay deep under the ocean, far away from the human world, and never let ourselves be seen. The only exception is our 15th birthday. That day, we're allowed to swim to the surface to see life above the sea.

The day my sister turned 15, she swam to the surface – and fell into love with The Prince! There was a big storm. He was tossed into the sea and my sister saved him. And now, – he's the only thing she and my stepmom ever talk about!

And oh, – can you keep a secret? A big secret? I'm only 10, but sometimes I go to the surface to play with The Prince's little brother. I know I'm not supposed to – but no one down here ever wants to play with me besides the electric eels! Just watch – Want to play freeze tag?

LITTLE MERMAID: Go play with the eels.

LITTLE SISTER: Do you know what happens when an eel tags you?

(BEAT. She raises her hands in the air and imitates being shocked.)

Buzzzzzz!

(BEAT.)

Please play with me!

LITTLE MERMAID: I can't.

LITTLE SISTER: Why?

LITTLE MERMAID: If you must know,

(Stroking her tail.)

I am trying to minimize the use of my tail muscles –

LITTLE SISTER: Because....?

LITTLE MERMAID: No reason.

LITTLE SISTER: Why?

LITTLE MERMAID: No –

LITTLE SISTER: – WHY?

LITTLE MERMAID: – to make it easier to change to legs.

LITTLE SISTER: To what?!

LITTLE MERMAID: Go play with the eels sea squirt.

LITTLE SISTER: How would you get legs?

LITTLE MERMAID: None of your mollusk mantels.

LITTLE SISTER: How?

LITTLE MERMAID: None of your sea urchin suckers.

LITTLE SISTER: How?

LITTLE MERMAID: None of –

LITTLE SISTER: HOW?

LITTLE MERMAID: The Sea Witch!

LITTLE SISTER: Are you crazy?!

LITTLE MERMAID: It's my only choice –

LITTLE SISTER: Only choice? What about keeping your tail?

LITTLE MERMAID: Not an option. The Prince can't dance with a fish!

(STEPMOTHER enters.)

STEPMOTHER: That's right darling.

(Takes the hairbrush and starts brushing LITTLE MERMAID's hair.)

The Prince can't dance with a fish! Sometimes we have to make little adjustments to make a man notice us!

(Bumps LITTLE SISTER in the hip with her hip.)

LITTLE SISTER: Losing her tail is a "little adjustment"?

STEPMOTHER: Well, sure it is – in the scheme of things. Did you know that when I met your father I had a blue tail – but then I heard that he preferred red tails – so I painted my scales red to catch his eye.

(As the STEPMOTHER speaks, she pulls a bottle of hairspray from her holster and sprays the LITTLE MERMAID.)

LITTLE SISTER: First of all, it's kind of gross when you talk about our dad like that. Second of all, your tail is blue.

STEPMOTHER: Oh that – well the chemicals in the paint made me very, very sick until it wore off – but it sure did get your father's attention! Come here and let me do your hair. It's a mess.

(Pulling a curling iron out from her holster.)

LITTLE SISTER: *(backing away)* I like my hair the way it is –

STEPMOTHER: Oh, you don't get it. Sometimes you have to make a little adjustment to get a boy to notice you.

LITTLE SISTER: I think I get it. It's just not something I'm gonna to do. Your curler burns my head and I like my tail blue.

LITTLE MERMAID: You're too young to get it. When you get older, you'll be into this too.

LITTLE SISTER: I don't think so. There are bigger things that I want to do.

STEPMOTHER: Oh, just you wait until you meet your Prince and have to catch his eye.

LITTLE SISTER: I think if he didn't even notice me, I'd find someone who likes me the way that I am.

STEPMOTHER: That's cute! The way you think things work – you just don't get it yet.

LITTLE SISTER: I'm gonna go now.

(Exits.)

LITTLE MERMAID: She's too young to get it. I remember when I didn't get it too.

<END SCENE 1>

SCENE TWO -- the *LITTLE MERMAID* and the *STEPMOTHER* return to their grooming activities. *LITTLE SISTER* swims away from the rock to the deck of the ship. Unseen, she watches a scene unfold between the *PRINCE*, the *KING AND QUEEN*. The *PRINCE* is reading a book when his parents approach him. The *King* is looking at his phone the entire scene. The *Queen* is drinking a bottled water.

QUEEN: *(surprising the PRINCE)* Why are you reading son? When you become king, people will read books for you –

PRINCE: I like to read –

KING: *(without looking up from his phone)* Reading is nice.

QUEEN: So what are you reading?

PRINCE: I'm reading about

(mumbles)

life under the sea.

QUEEN: About mice making cheese?!

PRINCE: About life under the sea.

QUEEN: Under the sea?! Leave that to the fishes son! One day you will be king of all you see – you don't need to worry about what happens down there.

PRINCE: But *before* I become King, I want to work to help the ocean – to study marine conservation.

QUEEN: *(suspicious)* Like a gap year?

PRINCE: Like a gap year,
(*mumbles*)

or two or three or ten.

KING: (*still looking at phone*) Cousin Albert dressed his wiener dog up in a hotdog bun! Look! He's like a little hotdog on legs!

QUEEN: And that gap year will help you when you are king by....?

PRINCE: It's not about being king.

QUEEN: (*BEAT*) Ah – What about offshore drilling?! Discovering new oil fields, – under the sea.

PRINCE: Mother – you're not getting this!

QUEEN: Oh no son, I think I get it.

(*Launching into a pompous monologue.*)

But a proper prince knows his dominion. He rules the land and the sea. He rules everything he sees! What the fish do? He doesn't care what they do. The sea is for our use. We need its oil and someplace for our waste. – And of course loads and loads of seafood to pile upon our plates!

PRINCE: But a turtle in a net is a reason to fret. We can't get new ones! And when we're all done with this ocean, we can't just move on to the next!

QUEEN: (*sighing*) Conservation simply sounds out of place son, for a prince who would be king and rule over everything he sees. Frankly your gap year, sounds like a waste year.

(*To the KING.*)

Let's get on dear and let the boy "read".

KING: (*giggling to himself and showing the phone to the Queen*) Look at this kitten stuck in a toilet paper roll!

QUEEN: Hah! How'd you get stuck in there little guy?!

(*BEAT. In baby talk.*)

Did you take a gap year?

(*The KING and QUEEN exit, laughing. As they exit, The QUEEN drops her empty water bottle into the ocean. The PRINCE watches his parents go, picks his book back up to read for a moment and then puts his book in his lap.*)

PRINCE: (*imitating the Queen*) Did you take a gap year?

(*Tries again unsuccessfully to read, as if speaking toughly to his mother.*)

Yes, I want to take a gap year – a very long gap year to save the sea – from people like you. And you know what? I want something else. I want gills! Gills – for breathing under water. Gills! Water-gulping gills! I long for under-water respiration! It would be such an inspiration – to breathe underwater like a fish

(*BEAT*)

- with my Little Mermaid!

(*BEAT*)

I bet the Sea Witch can help!

(*The PRINCE opens and closes his mouth twice in an imitation of fish respiration. LIGHTS up on the LITTLE MERMAID on the ROCK, LITTLE SISTER remains hidden, taking all this in.*)

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- The Little Mermaid's Little Sister -- by Jennifer L. Reck

LITTLE MERMAID: *(to herself, outside of PRINCE's hearing)* Legs! Legs! Legs! Legs! How I long for legs! Long, long legs! To walk upon the land!

(PRINCE and LITTLE MERMAID, in unison, and then in alternating phrases. During the confusion THE SWARM of EELS enters and swims madly about.)

PRINCE: Gills! Gills! Gills! Water-gulping gills! How I long for under-water respiration! To swim with The Little Mermaid!

LITTLE MERMAID: Legs! Legs! Legs! How I long for legs! Long, long legs! To dance with the Prince!

PRINCE: *(sigh)* Gills.

LITTLE MERMAID: *(sigh)* Legs.

(LITTLE MERMAID and PRINCE exit.)

<END SCENE 2>

SCENE THREE -- *LITTLE SISTER has witnessed everything at the DECK of the ship.*

LITTLE SISTER: Oh no! This isn't good at all –

(Calling out a birdsong at THE DECK of the ship to get LITTLE PRINCE's attention.)

Chick-a-dee-dee-dee! Chick-a-dee-dee-dee!

(receiving no response, clears her throat)

Hoo! Hoo!

(BEAT)

Caw! Caw!

(BEAT)

Little Prince! Little Prince!

(The LITTLE PRINCE enters the DECK of the ship.)

LITTLE PRINCE: Hi! Want to play shipwreck?

LITTLE SISTER: Oh that game's so fun – but we can't! There's no time – my sister is going to ask the Sea Witch to change her tail into legs so she can be with your big brother on land! AND – your brother is going to ask the Sea Witch to get gills so he can be with my sister under the sea!

LITTLE PRINCE: Gross!

LITTLE SISTER: I know!

LITTLE PRINCE: What are we going to do?

LITTLE SISTER: We must hatch a plan – a clever plan!

LITTLE PRINCE: We can't let them go through with this – if your sister becomes human to live on land with my brother – and my brother becomes a fish to live under the sea with your sister, – then nothing would make sense!

LITTLE SISTER: Nothing would make sense!

LITTLE PRINCE: So we must hatch a clever plan –

LITTLE SISTER: *(thinking)* – a clever plan indeed!

LITTLE PRINCE: Or nothing will make sense!

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- The Little Mermaid's Little Sister -- by Jennifer L. Reck

(BEAT.)

What if we sit them both down and explain what's going on and ask them to reconsider?

LITTLE SISTER: That won't work! They never listen to us!

(BEAT.)

We have to beat them to the Sea Witch's Cave!

LITTLE PRINCE: To the Sea Witch's Cave!

LITTLE SISTER: But you can't breath under water.

LITTLE PRINCE: I can hold my breath?

LITTLE SISTER: No.

LITTLE PRINCE: But you shouldn't go alone!

LITTLE SISTER: Then I'll take my sea dog Finn!

(Blows a dog whistle.)

– Finn! Finn! Here, boy... Here, Finn!

<END SCENE 3>

SCENE FOUR -- FINN the Sea Dog enters.

LITTLE SISTER: Do you know the way to the Sea Witch's Cave?

FINN: *(shaking head yes)* Woof! Woof!

(FINN leads the LITTLE SISTER off with confidence. At first it is a jolly adventure. At some point, FINN stops behind a rock to poop.)

Whatcha doing Finn?

FINN: *(grumpy for being disturbed)* Woof! Woof!

LITTLE SISTER: Sorry!

(To audience.)

I think Finn had some "business" to take care of.

(The LITTLE SISTER takes out a poop bag and bags up Finn's poop, She continues to hold the poop bag in her hand. She gives Finn a pat on the head and a biscuit for taking care of his "business." As they continue their journey, the light darkens and things get spooky.)

[Sound effect: Whale song]

(The SWARM of EELS flit by one by one in an eerie, frightening manner. FINN stops to growl at them, making sure it is safe to journey further before letting the LITTLE SISTER pass. As they finally reach the Sea Witch's Cave, FINN puts his tail between his legs and tries to back away.)

It's okay Finn. We're going to be okay. I think.

FINN: Woof!

(As the LITTLE SISTER and FINN approach the Sea Witch's Cave, they stop, trying to gather their nerves. Inside, the SEA WITCH is brewing potions and humming to herself.)

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Gulping, the LITTLE SISTER knocks on the door of the Sea Witch's Cave.)

SEA WITCH: Who's there? Go away!

LITTLE SISTER: No!

SEA WITCH: *(opening the door)* What did you say? How dare you?! –

(Seeing the poop bag in the LITTLE SISTER's hand.)

- Oh what's that? Did you bring me an offering?

LITTLE SISTER: *(realizing she means the poop bag)* This? No –

SEA WITCH: Then go away!

(The SEA WITCH slams the door. The LITTLE SISTER knocks on the Sea Witch's Cave.)

Go away!

FINN: Woof! Woof!

(FINN tries unsuccessfully to get the LITTLE SISTER to go.)

LITTLE SISTER: No, we got this Finn!

(Knocking again)

Not without giving you your offering!

SEA WITCH: *(opens the door and holds out her hand, suspiciously)* Well then, let's have it!

LITTLE SISTER: *(holds out the poop bag)* You, uh – you want this?

SEA WITCH: Well, if you've brought me an offering, then YES – I want it!

(Nervously, the LITTLE SISTER hands her the poop bag. The SEA WITCH takes the bag and passes it under her nose slowly in one direction, then the other direction, and then back again for good measure. She gingerly unties the bag and samples the goods inside. She tries to maintain a stern look but is obviously pleased.)

I accept your offering.

LITTLE SISTER: *(eyes wide in amazement)* You're welcome?

SEA WITCH: What do you want?

LITTLE SISTER: I need your help.

SEA WITCH: Oh, what is it dear? – Let me guess. You fell in love with a human Prince and now you want to grow legs so you can marry him? I will help you, of course – all I need is your voice.

LITTLE SISTER: What? Gross – no! But my sister wants legs so she can be with the human Prince she loves – and I have to help her – because the Prince wants to be a fish!

SEA WITCH: Ha, ha, ha – now that just wouldn't make any sense, would it?!

(She laughs and then sneaks one more "treat" from the bag.)

So what do you want me to do about it? I haven't got all day.

LITTLE SISTER: When she comes to you, I need you to give her the potion that will change her tail into legs – BUT MAKE SURE IT WILL ONLY LAST UNTIL MIDNIGHT – that way she'll have a chance to realize what a dummy she's being before it's too late.

SEA WITCH: So you want the Cinderella special, fishy-style? You've got it – for the small price of your voice!

LITTLE SISTER: What? No way!

SEA WITCH: Your eyesight?

LITTLE SISTER: *(defiantly)* Uh-uh.

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SEA WITCH: (*fishing for a "yes"*) Your sense of smell?

LITTLE SISTER: Nope.

SEA WITCH: Taste?

LITTLE SISTER: NO!

(*BEAT.*)

What do you want all that stuff for anyway?

SEA WITCH: You don't get something for nothing from me.

LITTLE SISTER: (*BEAT*) What do you do Monday afternoons?

SEA WITCH: I sit in my Cave

(*BEAT.*)

alone, maybe mix up a potion or two, do some seaweed crafts, walk my pet turtle –

(*suspicious*)

– why?

LITTLE SISTER: What if I came by on Mondays after school and we play cards?

SEA WITCH: But nobody comes around here –

LITTLE SISTER: Yeah – that's what I thought.

SEA WITCH: (*Obviously excited by the idea but trying to retain her cool*) Can we play Go Fish?

LITTLE SISTER: Yes.

SEA WITCH: War?

LITTLE SISTER: Yes.

SEA WITCH: Crazy Eights?

LITTLE SISTER: Whatever you want.

SEA WITCH: And you'll let me win?

LITTLE SISTER: No.

SEA WITCH: Okay, – but if you lose, you give me your voice!

LITTLE SISTER: No –

SEA WITCH: Okay – but you have to bring me a bag of treats every Monday.

LITTLE SISTER: (*looking at Finn*) Okay – deal.

SEA WITCH: I will have a special potion ready for your sister when she comes for her legs! See you Monday!

LITTLE SISTER: I'll bring the cards –

SEA WITCH: and?

LITTLE SISTER: and Finn will bring the treats!

(*The LITTLE SISTER AND FINN exit. The SEA WITCH is left alone in her Cave. She hums to herself while she mixes up a potion.*)

<END SCENE 4>

SCENE FIVE --

SEA WITCH: *(to herself)* What do I need for a potion for a girl who wants legs for a boy who wants gills? Hah! A pinch of oarweed. A dash of sugar kelp. Badderlocks. Powdered shark skin and pickled whale bone. I must be very careful – the wrong combination could turn out to be poisonous – hah! Buyer beware.

(Displeased)

Now what did I forget? Of course – one fish eye.

(She opens the fish eyes, eats one and puts another in the potion. As she adds the final ingredient, a flash of light and sound indicates her work is done. Having completed the potion, she corks it.)

There now! That should do it! At least to my satisfaction! And really, who else's satisfaction matters anyway?!

(Looking at the calendar on the wall.)

How many days to Monday anyway? One, two, three, four, five! Five days.

(Sighs. LITTLE MERMAID enters and knocks on the door to the Sea Witch's Cave.)

SEA WITCH: *(opening the door)* Monday already?

LITTLE MERMAID: What?

SEA WITCH: Oh. Go away. I'm closed!

(Slams the door.)

LITTLE MERMAID: *(knocking on the door)* Wait! Please help me!

SEA WITCH: *(opens the door half way)* Why should I? What have you brought me?

(Thinking fast, the LITTLE MERMAID takes a flower from her hair and holds it out to the SEA WITCH. Suspicious, the SEA WITCH takes the flower and passes it under her nose slowly in one direction, the other direction, and then back again for good measure. She makes a face of extreme displeasure at the flower's smell and then very reluctantly allows the LITTLE MERMAID entrance.)

SEA WITCH: Disgusting. Do you have anything else?

LITTLE MERMAID: No.

SEA WITCH: Well then, make it quick. I haven't got all day. What do you want?

LITTLE MERMAID: I want to be human.

SEA WITCH: Human! Do you know how bad they smell?

LITTLE MERMAID: I once rescued a prince when he fell overboard during a storm – and he didn't smell bad at all. In fact, he smelled quite nice.

SEA WITCH: So you want to be human for this prince then, huh?

LITTLE MERMAID: Yes – and to know what life is like up there.

SEA WITCH: What's so great about up there?

LITTLE MERMAID: I don't know yet – but I want to find out! Can you help me?

SEA WITCH: Mermaid to human is very, very difficult.

LITTLE MERMAID: But can you?

SEA WITCH: And it's not without risks – you'll smell just like one of them you know!

LITTLE MERMAID: Please?!

SEA WITCH: (*cooing*) Oh my dear. Of course I'll help you!

(She rummages for the potion and holds it out. Just as the LITTLE MERMAID is about to take it, the SEA WITCH snatches it back.)

But it will cost you your voice!

LITTLE MERMAID: Okay.

SEA WITCH: Okay?

LITTLE MERMAID: Okay?

SEA WITCH: Okay then!

(The SEA WITCH takes out a plastic bellows and sucks the LITTLE MERMAID's voice into the bellows and then expels it into a potion bottle.)

What a lovely addition to my collection!

(The SEA WITCH thrusts the potion in the LITTLE MERMAID's hand)

Now take this and go!

(The LITTLE MERMAID opens her mouth to say "Thank you" but nothing comes out. The SEA WITCH shakes her head.)

<END SCENE 5>

SCENE SIX -- *The LITTLE MERMAID swims away. As she approaches her ROCK, the SWARM OF EELS enters.*

SWARM OF EELS: (*in odd falsetto voices, in unison*) Play with us! Play with us! Come play with us!

(Receiving no response, they try again.)

Play with us! Play with us! Come play with us!

(The LITTLE MERMAID sadly shakes her head.)

VOLTA: Being almost 16 doesn't look like any fun.

ELECTRA: Practically being a grown-up is so dull!

VIVA: A total bore!

ZAPPA: What a snore!

VOLTA: Let's not waste our time then.

ELECTRA: Yeah – let's move on –

VIVA: – and find someone –

ZAPPA: – more fun!

(The SWARM OF EELS exit and the LITTLE MERMAID sits on the ROCK, tries unsuccessfully to make some sounds and then contemplates drinking the potion. Just then, the LITTLE SISTER enters.)

LITTLE SISTER: Oh, hi sis. What do you have there?

(Waits for a response that doesn't come.)

Looks like a potion?

(Waits.)

Not going to tell me?

(Waits.)

Oh, I know – none of my business, right?

(With an increasingly incredulous look on her face.)

- Oh no, – you didn't?! – You gave the Sea Witch your voice for that potion!

(The LITTLE MERMAID shakes her head no.)

You did too!

(The LITTLE MERMAID shakes her head no.)

Then say something!

(The LITTLE MERMAID wrinkles her nose to express her displeasure at being caught without her voice in the face of a sassy little sister. The STEPMOTHER enters with the hairspray and curling iron.)

STPMOTHER: *(to the LITTLE MERMAID)* There you are darling. I was looking everywhere for you.

(Fussing with her hair.)

You're losing your curls.

LITTLE SISTER: She gave her voice to the Sea Witch for a potion to become human!

STPMOTHER: Awh, so sweet – I remember when I gave up my voice for a boy at that age too!

LITTLE SISTER: We have to help her!

STPMOTHER: Help her? But she has the potion! She's about to meet her destiny! To get her Prince!

LITTLE SISTER: Without a voice?!

STPMOTHER: Not ideal, – but all in all, a minor detail when it comes to love –

(While the LITTLE SISTER and the STEPMOTHER argue, the LITTLE MERMAID slips away with the potion and swims to the deck of the ship.)

LITTLE SISTER: A minor detail?!

STPMOTHER: *(to the LITTLE MERMAID)* You tell her –

LITTLE SISTER: She's gone!

<END SCENE 6>

SCENE SEVEN -- *At the deck of the ship, the LITTLE MERMAID looks around but sees no one. The LITTLE MERMAID opens the vial of potion. She hesitates for a moment, looking at her tail. She looks away and drinks the potion down. LIGHTS and SOUND signify the transition and when all comes back to order, she has legs in place of a tail. The LITTLE MERMAID tries a few careful steps but is very clumsy, like a child learning to walk. She gets tired quickly and sits back down. She takes a seat and looks at her legs and feet and toes like the new objects they are. Presently, the PRINCE appears on the deck walking with his nose in a book. From the opposite side, THE KING appears, walking with his nose stuck in his phone. Neither sees the LITTLE MERMAID and the two almost collide into each other and into the LITTLE MERMAID when they meet.*

KING: (*irritated*) Who are you? How did you get here?

PRINCE: Do I...?

(*BEAT*)

You look

(*BEAT*)

– no, – that’s impossible.

(*The LITTLE MERMAID shrugs her shoulders and points to herself as if to say “Look, it’s me!”*)

KING: What? Who is she?

PRINCE: I don’t know Father. But she reminds me of the mermaid who rescued me when I fell overboard.

But it’s not her – obviously, she was a mermaid not a human. And she had the most beautiful voice –

(*The LITTLE MERMAID points to herself as if to say “Look, it’s me!”*)

KING: Are you still telling that story about your mermaid rescuer?! You’re getting too old for that son.

PRINCE: (*to the LITTLE MERMAID, hopefully*) Can you sing?

(*BEAT.*)

Can you talk?

(*The LITTLE MERMAID opens her mouth and moves her head like she is singing but nothing comes out.*)

KING: (*fakely*) Oh, the poor mute thing. She must be one of the servant’s daughters. Go along then – run off to the servant’s quarters. Find your parents. We don’t need anything right now.

(*The LITTLE MERMAID wrinkles her nose to express her displeasure and shakes her head “no”.*)

PRINCE: Father – she doesn’t want to go – and she doesn’t have to – I want her to stay here with me. I’ll read to her.

(*The LITTLE MERMAID nods enthusiastically to the idea. The KING begins to wander off stage, still preoccupied with the phone in his hand.*)

KING: I’m sure she’ll make captivating company – if only she lets you get a word in edgewise --

(*Laughs. Checking his phone.*)

I have to run –

(*The KING exits. The PRINCE smiles kindly at the LITTLE MERMAID as if to apologize for his father.*)

PRINCE: I’m sorry about my father. He doesn’t mean to sound

(*BEAT.*)

the way he sounds.

(*Opening his book.*)

Do you know Rachel Carson?

(*The LITTLE MERMAID shrugs her shoulders.*)

PRINCE: It’s called “The Sea Around Us”.

(*He begins reading a passage like a PBS narrator, full of gravitas.*)

“Between the sunlit surface waters of the open sea and the hidden hills and valleys of the ocean floor lies the least-known region of the sea. These deep, dark waters, with all their mysteries and their

unsolved problems, cover a very considerable part of the earth. The whole world ocean extends over about three-fourths of the surface of the globe. If we subtract the shallow areas of the continental shelves and the scattered banks and shoals, where at least the pale ghost of sunlight moves over the underlying bottom, there still remains about half the earth that is covered by miles-deep, lightless water, that has been dark since the world began.”

(As the LITTLE MERMAID listens to the reading, she looks wistfully out on the ocean but then lovingly back on the PRINCE. Putting his book in his lap, sighing.)

I wonder what's down there.

(BEAT.)

Do you like the sea?

(The LITTLE MERMAID sweeps out one arm to the sea and then another toward the PRINCE as if to say she gave up the sea for him.)

Does that mean you aren't sure?

(Mimicking her gesture.)

Take it or leave it?

(The LITTLE MERMAID shakes her head vigorously and then holds her hands to her heart to show her love.)

So you love it? Me too. I've read just about every book there is to read about the sea. Hey – did you know that mermaids eat tuna? It's their favorite food.

(The LITTLE MERMAID shakes her head slightly to indicate he is wrong and that tuna is gross.)

And did you know, that when the tide is high, – only if no one is looking (!) that mermaids will sneak up on shore and take your flip-flops? But never both of them – always just the one!

(The LITTLE MERMAID looks at him like he needs to do some serious fact checking.)

And did you know that there is such a thing as a merman?

(Looking around to make sure no one else can hear.)

– and I want to be one?

(The LITTLE MERMAID looks both deeply touched and horrified that she is no longer a mermaid. Not knowing what to do, the LITTLE MERMAID reaches out her hand to hold the PRINCE's hand. The PRINCE sees her gesture as a romantic one and feels very uncomfortable about it.)

Oh – whoa. Um. Wait. Hold on. Don't get me wrong. I like you – I really, really like you – just not in the hand holding way. You're a really good listener- and I'm sure there is someone out there that would be thrilled to hold your hand. I'm just not that in to humans.

(BEAT.)

I'm holding out for a mermaid.

[LIGHTS OUT]

<END SCENE 7>

(INTERLUDE)

10 more pages to the end