

**THE LITTLE MERMAID**

A Fairytale Retold

By Dale Ahlquist

## Cast of Characters

20 Females; 26 Males; 4 Either

<u>BLUE:</u>	The second youngest of the mermaids.
<u>PERIWINKLE:</u>	The youngest of the mermaids.
<u>AZURE:</u>	One of the mermaids.
<u>SAPPHIRE:</u>	One of the mermaids.
<u>INDIGO:</u>	One of the mermaids.
<u>PEARL:</u>	One of the mermaids.
<u>QUEEN MOTHER:</u>	The Queen Mother, grandmother of the mermaids
<u>SEA KING:</u>	The King of the Sea, father of the mermaids.
<u>WITCH:</u>	The Sea Witch.
<u>FLIP:</u>	One of the Sea Witch's urchins.
<u>DRIP:</u>	One of the Sea Witch's urchins.
<u>SLIP:</u>	One of the Sea Witch's urchins.
<u>CRUST:</u>	A pirate.
<u>SCALE:</u>	A pirate.
<u>WUMP:</u>	A pirate.
<u>CARP:</u>	A pirate.
<u>SLUG:</u>	A pirate.
<u>CAPTAIN RAT:</u>	Captain of the pirates.
<u>CAPTAIN TORVALD:</u>	Captain of the three sailors.
<u>HENSON:</u>	A sailor of Captain Torvald.
<u>SWENSON:</u>	A sailor of Captain Torvald.

<u>JENSON:</u>	A sailor of Captain Torvald.
<u>SOREN:</u>	The Prince of the land kingdom, son of Rhener and Hedda.
<u>ADLER:</u>	Prince Soren's friend.
<u>RHENER:</u>	The King of the land kingdom, father of Prince Soren.
<u>HEDDA:</u>	The Queen of the land kingdom, mother of Prince Soren.
<u>PRINCESS IDA:</u>	A chatty princess from another land kingdom.
<u>PRIEST:</u>	A priest.
<u>SONIE:</u>	A town gossip.
<u>SONDA:</u>	A town gossip.
<u>SORGA:</u>	A town gossip.
<u>SOBIE:</u>	A town gossip.
<u>1<sup>st</sup> LADY:</u>	A lady who lives in the town.
<u>2<sup>nd</sup> LADY:</u>	A lady who lives in the town.
<u>3<sup>rd</sup> LADY:</u>	A lady who lives in the town.
<u>4<sup>th</sup> LADY:</u>	A lady who lives in the town.
<u>5<sup>th</sup> LADY:</u>	A lady who lives in the town.
<u>6<sup>th</sup> LADY:</u>	A lady who lives in the town.
<u>1<sup>st</sup> BOY:</u>	A peasant boy.
<u>2<sup>nd</sup> BOY:</u>	A peasant boy.
<u>3<sup>rd</sup> BOY:</u>	A peasant boy.
<u>4<sup>th</sup> BOY:</u>	A peasant boy.
<u>1<sup>st</sup> FISH MERCHANT:</u>	A fish merchant.
<u>2<sup>nd</sup> FISH MERCHANT:</u>	A fish merchant.

<u>3<sup>rd</sup> FISH MERCHANT:</u>	A fish merchant.
<u>4<sup>th</sup> FISH MERCHANT:</u>	A fish merchant.
<u>MEAT VENDOR:</u>	A meat vendor.
<u>COBBLER:</u>	The town cobbler.
<u>HERALD:</u>	The Land King's herald.
<u>SEA HERALD:</u>	The Sea King's herald.
<u>(Optional) Extra Sea Creatures:</u>	The Sea King's royal train of sea creatures.

## Scene Breakdown

### ACT I

- Scene 1 – A Pirate Ship
- Scene 2 – Undersea Palace
- Scene 3 – Street
- Scene 4 – At Sea Aboard Ship
- Scene 5 – Shore
- Scene 6 – Undersea Palace

### ACT II

- Scene 1 – Cave Of The Sea Witch
- Scene 2 – Shore
- Scene 3 – Undersea Palace
- Scene 4 – Town Square
- Scene 5 – Seaside
- Scene 6 – Hallway In Palace
- Scene 7 – Room In Palace
- Scene 8 – Town street
- Scene 9 – Ship

### Approximate Length

75 minutes

### Time

1300's

### Place

A kingdom on a coast

ACT II  
Scene 1

Setting: Cave of the Sea Witch. The “garden” consists of creepy living plants, with grasping arms.

At Rise: Enter BLUE, looking around, very frightened. She attempts to make her way through the “garden” while the plants try to get her. She appears to be almost through them, when suddenly...

(FLIP, DRIP and SLIP appear and grab BLUE)

FLIP  
Look who’s here, look!

DRIP  
A pretty mermaid!

SLIP  
Such a pretty mermaid!

FLIP  
Looks like we rescued you!

DRIP  
Rescued you from the garden!

(Enter SEA WITCH)

WITCH  
Flip! Drip! Slip! What are you doing?

SLIP  
Look what we found in your garden!

WITCH  
Hmm. A visitor. Lucky she caught me at home. I’m not here much anymore.

FLIP  
Lucky the garden didn’t catch *her*.

DRIP  
But *we* caught her.

SLIP  
We’re pretty good, the way we rescued her?

WITCH

You worthless little pips. You're the ones that are lucky I don't flick you into some abyss somewhere.

FLIP

But look, look! Look who we caught!

DRIP

We caught her! Look!

SLIP

The pretty mermaid!

(They get carried away with their celebrating)

WITCH

Flip! Drip! Slip! That's enough.

(To BLUE)

Never mind my urchins. They're harmless. Mostly. Just irritating.

(URCHINS make an awful noise, as if they've been insulted)

WITCH

Quiet!

FLIP

But don't we get a reward?

WITCH

A reward?

DRIP

A reward!

SLIP

For bringing you a princess!

WITCH

A princess? Coming to see *me*...?

FLIP

Yes! Yes! She's a princess!

DRIP

A princess!

A princess!

SLIP

Stop! You're worse than a headache. Go away!

WITCH

We won't go away till we get our reward!

FLIP

They are also tiring. Here's what you get for asking for a reward.

WITCH

(The WITCH points her pointy fingers at them with an obviously magical gesture, holding the pose while the URCHINS scream in agony)

Stop! Stop!

DRIP

We'll go away!

SLIP

(The WITCH stops)

But not too far! I still may need you.

WITCH

(Exit URCHINS, slinking away)

So...a princess. Which one are you?

WITCH

Blue.

BLUE

How very naughty of you to come to me.

WITCH

I...I know I'm not supposed to be here.

BLUE

Of course you do. What would your father think?

WITCH

Why does my father have to know?

BLUE



WITCH

Well, I won't tell him, if that's what you're worried about. You don't have to worry about me telling your mother, either.

BLUE

Don't you know? My mother's dead.

WITCH

Dead? And how did she die?

BLUE

I don't know.

WITCH

Don't know?

BLUE

No.

WITCH

Don't you ever wonder?

BLUE

I...I...

WITCH

Aren't mermaids supposed to live three hundred years?

BLUE

Why are you asking me this? Do you know how she died?

WITCH

Maybe she isn't dead.

BLUE

Do you think so? Do you know?

WITCH

Maybe *I'm* your mother.

BLUE

No!

WITCH

Why would that be so bad?

Because you're a witch!

BLUE

You don't like witches? Then what are you doing here?

WITCH

Because...you're a witch.

BLUE

(Pauses)

And?

WITCH

Because you... can do things.

BLUE

And what is the *thing* are you interested in?

WITCH

I want...to become human.

BLUE

Hmm...Not a small thing. But then, no one comes to the Sea Witch to buy minnows.

WITCH

Can you do it? Can you make me human?

BLUE

Why do you want to become one of the land people? Is your tail not good enough for you? You think the dirty land is better than the nice clean sea?

WITCH

(BLUE looks around in some discomfort, noticing that the sea is not very clean where she is)

I want...I want to try to get a soul.

BLUE

A soul... I see. A soul. Only one way to do that.

WITCH

I know.

BLUE

WITCH

You know? Have you already fallen in love with a human? Or were you planning to catch one like a fish. Bad metaphor, hmm? You obviously know how this works. You have to get him, whoever he is, to fall in love with you and marry you.

BLUE

I'm sure I can make him love me.

WITCH

If you don't, if he marries another, you lose. You lose everything. All your trouble, and there will be trouble, all for nothing. No soul, no life up there or down here. You'll just be foam on the sea. Long before your time.

BLUE

I know.

WITCH

And I don't care what happens to you.

BLUE

You are so...so...

WITCH

Evil? That's what some people think. They might be right.

BLUE

I was going to say cruel.

WITCH

And are you sure you really want to do this? You can leave right now instead.

BLUE

Yes, I'm sure.

WITCH

Open your mouth.

BLUE

Why?

WITCH

Do you want to do this or not?

BLUE

Yes. I do.

WITCH

Then do exactly as I say!

BLUE

What are you going to do?

WITCH

I'm going to put something into you and take something out.

BLUE

That doesn't sound—

WITCH

Do you think this is going to be easy?

(Picks up clam shell)

You will drink this. It is the potion that will transform you. Don't ask what is in it. You will drink it and your tail will disappear and you will gain two ridiculous human legs, so that you will look human, and so that you can walk. But every step you take on the land will feel as if a knife is stabbing into your new little foot. It will be very, very painful.

BLUE

But...

WITCH

Hesitating? I don't blame you.

BLUE

Do all humans have such pain when they walk?

WITCH

No. But you won't be human yet. You'll only be a mermaid under a spell. You'll only be human if you get a soul.

BLUE

Oh, I understand.

WITCH

You understand nothing. The potion takes about ten minutes to take effect. You'll want to swim to the surface quickly. Harder to swim without a tail. And along with the legs, you'll be getting lungs.

BLUE

Lungs?

WITCH

You'll need lungs to breathe the air up there. Another reason you'll want to reach the surface quickly. Lungs are no good under water. You know that humans drown when they try to breathe the water.

BLUE

And...

WITCH

And what?

BLUE

You said you were going to take something out of me.

WITCH

Oh yes. You have to give something up to get something. There is always a price to pay. It's only fair.

BLUE

What...what are you...

WITCH

(Matter-of-factly)

Your voice.

BLUE

My voice! No! How can I...?

WITCH

How can you win his love without your voice? Well, you won't be able to talk him into it, that's for sure. But you'll have your beauty. Those lovely eyes, that charming smile, all that...*love* of yours. Who needs words? Who can believe words, anyway?

BLUE

My voice...

WITCH

Make your decision. I'm not going to try to talk you into it.

BLUE

I...I'm ready.

WITCH

I doubt it.

(She picks up a lobster claw)

Open your mouth. First, the price.

(She puts the claw into BLUE's mouth, and when she pulls it out, a horrible scream is heard from outside of BLUE)

Doesn't sound as pretty when it is all by itself.

(Raises the clam shell to BLUE's mouth)

Now, drink this.

(BLUE chokes on it)

That's it. Ten minutes. Don't mind the urchins. As I say, they won't harm you. But mind the flowers. They will. If they clutch you, you'll spend the rest of your very short life in my garden.

(BLUE desperately moves through the creepy plants, evading them, and exits)

BLACKOUT

Scene 2

Setting: The Shore.

At Rise: SOREN stands, wistfully looking out to sea.

(Enter ADLER)

ADLER

And here you are again. Prince Soren, you need to stop coming down here and staring at the sea. We're not going back there. Everything I warned you about—all the bad things—they all happened. It was a miracle that you didn't drown.

SOREN

It wasn't a miracle. It was... She saved me. I was drowning. She brought me to the surface. She brought me to the shore. I couldn't swim. It was...right about here. And then she was gone.

ADLER

Where did "she" go?

SOREN

I think she went back into the sea.

ADLER

That's impossible, you know.

SOREN

She might come back.

ADLER

Or you might have imagined the whole thing.

SOREN

I couldn't believe how she could swim. It was as if she was part fish.

ADLER

Maybe it was a mermaid.

SOREN

Well, at least you're imagining good things, Adler.

ADLER

Prince Soren, it's time to leave the shore.

SOREN

Do you know if mermaids sing, Adler?

ADLER

(Pauses)

Um. Sure.

SOREN

I think she sang. I remember hearing singing that night. I thought it might have been an angel, and that I was dying.

ADLER

I will see you back at the palace.

SOREN

I'll be along in a minute.

(Exit ADLER. SOREN stares out at the sea for a little while longer, then turns to leave. Suddenly BLUE appears from the sea. She is standing with a blanket wrapped around her. SOREN stops and turns around and sees her. He looks around trying to figure it out.)

SOREN

Where...where did you come from?

(She turns and indicates the sea)

SOREN

The sea? Are you...?

(She hopes he recognizes her)

SOREN

But...it can't be. You're not...sorry...what's wrong with me. You've obviously been in trouble. Are you alright?

(She nods happily)

SOREN

You...seem to be. Were you shipwrecked?

(She shakes her head "no")

SOREN

Were you thrown overboard?

("No")



SOREN

Well, that's good. That's no fun. Believe me. But, where's your home? It's obviously not the sea.

(She is at a loss to respond. Shrugs her shoulders.)

SOREN

You have no home?

("No")

SOREN

Well, what's your name?

(She shakes her head and gestures to her mouth)

SOREN

You...you can't talk?

(Slowly shakes her head)

SOREN

(Disappointed)

So...you obviously can't sing either.

(She is crestfallen)

SOREN

Then it wasn't you.

(Truly at a loss)

SOREN

Well! Let's get you out of that wet blanket and into some dry clothes. You came to the right place. I know people who know about dresses. Come.

(She takes his hand, then takes a step and winces)

SOREN

What's the matter? Did you step on something? Did you hurt yourself?

(She shakes her head no, brushing it off)

SOREN

Okay, let's try again.

(She takes another step and masks the pain, smiles)

Better? SOREN

(“Yes”)

No wonder, you need some shoes. Well, I know a cobbler.

(“Thank you”)

So you can't tell me your name. SOREN

(“No, sorry”)

But I'll have to call you something. Maybe a color. SOREN

(An eager “Yes”)

Well, it's a beautiful day. Beautiful blue sky. The sea is blue. SOREN  
(Looks around)

(She nods encouragingly)

I found you here on the shore of the sea. How about...Amber. For the golden yellow sand on the shore. SOREN

(She wrinkles her face in a “how did that happen?” expression)

At least I can tell you my name. It's Soren. SOREN

(“Nice to meet you”)

I suppose I should tell you that I'm a prince. SOREN

(“Very nice!”)

(Considering the situation) SOREN

How about this! Mysterious beautiful woman washes up on shore. She does not speak. She is found by a prince, who must solve the mystery. Sounds like a good plot for a story. It's just not believable.

(He escorts her off)

BLACKOUT