

# Rusalka: A Mermaid's Tale

LIBRETTO by Diane Garton Edie

Cast (in order of stage appearance):

Prince	tenor
Rusalka	soprano
Sea King	baritone
CREATURES OF THE CORAL REEF	Student Chorus
SPINY URCHINS	Student Chorus
Jezibaba	mezzo soprano
Prime Minister	baritone
Foreign Princess	mezzo soprano

Please note: *Text in italics is sung*; **any text in boldface applies to CHORUS**; student roles are **CAPITALIZED**; stage directions are in blue.

---

## Act One

---

🎵 Track #1 Copyright Notification

🎵 Track #2 Overture

(The Prince arrives at the seashore, searching for a mermaid (Rusalka) he has seen playing in the ocean. He becomes trapped by a huge blob of kelp and – as he's struggling to escape – the mermaid rescues him!)

🎵 Track #3

**CHORUS** (Creatures of the Coral Reef):

*Ho ho ho,*

*Ho ho ho,*

*We have a secret you don't know!*

*Dear Rusalka, mermaid daughter*

*She loves one above the water*

*Now she's rescued him who sought her*

*Ho ho ho, try to catch us, off we go!*

*Ho ho ho,*

*Ho ho ho,*

*We have a secret you don't know!*

*Ev'ry evening we could see her*

*Hoping somehow love would free her*

*Then a man came down to meet her*

*But the sea witch trapped him in the undertow!*

*Ho, ho, ho!*

🎵 Track #4

**King:**

*My loyal creatures, naughty creatures of the coral reef*

*Hail! I'm the Sea King full of majesty*

*Now hear my orders*

*Tell me all the gossip and the news concerning kingdom folk!*

*Is the black tip sharky acting kind of snarky?*

*Or does angel fishy move her tail too swishy?*

*Tell me of my daughter!!*

🎵 Track #5

**King:**

You, urchins! What's this I hear about Rusalka?

**SPINY URCHINS:**

**Help the mermaid! Yes, you must! Be a father wise and just.**

**Give advice, agree to guide her. She would like a world that's wider!**

**King:**

*Spiny little schemers*

*Help romantic dreamers*

*Youthful wishes, mermaids, fishes*

*I'm a patient Sea King!*

**Rusalka:**

*Hail to you my father dear*

**King:**

*Where have you been sneaking?*

*Were you in the shallows near*

*On the surface peeking?*

**Rusalka:**

*Oh my father, listen please*

*I am full of sadness*

*It is lonely underseas*

*How I yearn for gladness!*

**King:**

*You call this lonely?*

**Rusalka:**

*Won't you hear my tale?*

**King:**

*But, is it foolish?*

**Rusalka:**

*It's about a male*

**King:**

*Is the merman kind of odd?*

*Funny-looking like a cod?*

**Rusalka:**

*Stop all this teasing, my request is serious*

*I must be human to find joy delirious*

*I must be human to find joy delirious*

*Help me find my love*

*Human must I be.*

**King:**

*Daughter, daughter, it is dangerous!*

*Oh beware the magic you are seeking!*

*You will suffer you will suffer painfully -*

*You must drink a potion foul and reeking!*

**Rusalka:**

*Oh my father, I'll be brave*

*Say good bye forever*

*Let me join him, my love save,*

*All my past ties sever!*

**King:**

*Woe is me, woe is me, what a mate!*

*My daughter, my daughter, such a fate!*

*Heed me now, mortal love is your doom!*

*Jezebaba, that ugly witch, she's the only one can help you!*

*Mermaid, daughter, woe!*

 Track #6

**Rusalka:**

*Father, come back! This could be my one chance for*

*happiness. Every evening a young man comes down*

*to the water's edge. I believe he is searching...for me.*

*Once he almost drowned, but I rescued him. Look -*

*the moon has risen...will he return?*

*Moonlight now shines on the ocean shore*

*Gleaming path leads to a meeting.*

*Once again, love to me restore*

*Vision of joy ever fleeting!*

*Once again, love to me restore*

*Vision of joy ever fleeting!*

*Oh moonlight mystic glow, hover,*

*Gently my love your beams cover.*

*Oh moonlight mystic glow, hover,*

*Gently my love your beams cover.*


*How I long for the man I saved!*

*Mermaid dream transform me truly:*

*A human, mortal maid*

*Mortal maid*

*A human, mortal maid!*

 Track #7

**Rusalka:**


*The water's chilly, chilly! Jezebaba, Jezebaba!*

**King:**

*Careful now, Rusalka, danger! Danger! Danger! Danger!*

**Rusalka:**

*Jezebaba, Jezebaba!*

 Track #8

**Jezebaba:**

*Wailing, weeping, no more sleeping*

*Can you not see dawn is creeping?*

**Rusalka:**

*Jezebaba, Queen of sea kelp  
Hear my honest plea: I need help!*

**Jezebaba:**

*Noisy bubble, I hear trouble  
Who's disturbed my coral rubble?*

**Rusalka:**

*Rusalka here, magic teacher  
Into woman change this poor creature!*

**Jezebaba:**

*Little mermaid, swim before me  
What's this favor you implore me?*

**Rusalka:**

*Awful fins, change to legs these!  
Make a potion now I beg please!*

**Jezebaba:**

*Down your gullet trickles, tickles  
Yummy combo tastes like pickles  
Saline liquid steeping, brewing  
Let us see how well it's doing*

 Track #9**Jezebaba:**

*Moozshie, goozshie muck, moozshie, goozshie muck,  
Mermaid begs for human luck!  
Tentacle of jelly, tooth of spotted moray  
Squid ink black and smelly, on to earthly foray.  
Eyeball of a hammerhead,  
Granulated minnow dead  
Magic potion - do not dread,  
Drink it up now do not dread!*

**Jezebaba:**

*If you fail to find happiness as a human, do you swear  
to return to the sea and serve me as a kelp slave?*

**Rusalka:**

*Yes, yes!*

**Jezebaba:**

*Goody.  
Moozshie, goozshie muck, moozshie, goozshie muck  
Mermaid begs for human luck!*

*Take this prickly urchin*

*Careful, little swimmer*

*Mix with sturgeon*

*Hope begins to glimmer!*

*Sucker of an octopus - blend it in the slimy juice,*

*Sauce is thin but will reduce,*

*Quite delicious - slimy juice!*

*Moozshie, goozshie muck, moozshie, goozshie muck*

*Little human on your way*

*With a curse, with a curse: He won't hear a single word  
you say!*

 Track #10**Prince:**

*Beside the ocean will I see today*

*A little mermaid as she swims away?*

*What kind of magic rescued me?*

*I was overcome; who set me free?*

*Someone's emerging from the sea*

*Do you think this could be the one girl for me?*

*Could I but dare to touch or hold her?*

*Being so close just makes me bolder!*

*What is this vision oh so sweet?*

*Wakening spirit dear soul*

*Fantasy standing here now we meet*

*You were my unforeseen goal!*

*Beautiful dream come true, I am in ecstasy*

*Are you a reverie? Speak to me, my lovely!*

*You are a fairy tale standing here by the shore*

*Walk along by my side I can feel my heart soar!*

*What is your name, who can you be, my rhapsody?*

*Why are you silent - won't you speak to me?*

*My darling, my dearest, speak to me!*

 Track #11**Prince:**

*You are a vision do not vanish as lunar tide pulls waves  
away.*

*I wonder, can you understand me? Come now, be mine,  
come away!*

*Dear water nymph, beauty, believe me, I pledge my love!*

*I pledge my love!*

*Now follow, now follow now follow!*

*I pledge my love!*

🎵 Track #12

**Jezebaba** (during scene change):

Here, you finish! I have to go. (changes into Foreign Princess costume)

**Sea King:**

Why you old...

**Jezebaba:**

Uh, uh, uh! Remember: I'm a witch; you're just amphibious. Now, back off, soggy man, and stay out of the magic business!

**Sea King:**

Well, at least I can go up to the castle and keep an eye on the old battle ax! (changes into Prime Minister costume)

---

**Act Two (Scene 1)**

---

**Prime Minister (Sea King in disguise):**

*Now what? Now what?*

*What is happening?*

*Tell me, tell me, all of you,  
tell me now, tell me now!*

🎵 Track #13

**CHORUS (Foreign Dignitaries)/Prime Minister:**

*Such a rumpus, what a party!*

*But to stare is not polite!*

*First, the prince is so charming*

*Don't look now, it's alarming*

*How that Foreign Princess tries to break up romance  
here tonight!*

*First the Prince is so charming*

*Don't look now, it's alarming*

*How that Foreign Princess tries to break up romance,  
break up romance here tonight!*

*This one starts to flirt now; that one looks so hurt now  
Scandal might become a brawl soon- what is happening  
in the ballroom?!*

🎵 Track #14

**Princess (Jezebaba in disguise):**

So, Prince, why did the turtle cross the road?... To get to the Shell Station!

**Prince:**

You are the life of the party, Princess! Isn't she too much, my dear?

**Princess:**

Some people just don't have a very good sense of humor, you handsome devil.

**Prince:**

Maybe...but I think she's silent for a mysterious reason. I can't understand her, though, so I don't know what she's thinking or feeling.

**Princess:**

(aside)

Well, THAT'S pretty obvious! Humans...duh! Too bad he can't figure it out and she can't tell him! Ha!

**Prince:**

*We've been together seven days*

*All week she spoke with silent gaze*

*A mystery, how she fascinates*

*If only she could communicate!*

*Did she appear to me by sorcery?*

*Won't you explain - it's not too late?*

**Princess:**

*You have been waiting quite a while - with no response  
or answer.*

**Rusalka:**

*Just look at this Princess blush and smile!*

*She sees most clearly that all this talk will enhance her.*

**Prince:**

*I'm feeling rude and horrible - we two can chat so easily!*

**Princess:**

*Her chatting skill's deplorable*

*Not even weak or measly*

**Rusalka:**

*I cannot stop the pounding of my heart*

**Prince:**

*I cannot bear the thought of us apart!*

**Princess:**

*(to Rusalka)*

*Now say farewell and face the music, tootello!*

**Prince:**

*What is she feeling?*

**Rusalka:**

*Feeling, feeling*

**Prince:**

*What is she feeling? I need to know, what? Tell me, tell me!*

*Dearest, tell me now, why can't you be like me?*

*Why this mystery, silent one -*

*So secret, strangely quiet, different, a mystery, my mystery for all eternity!*

**Rusalka:**

*(aside)*

*Oh, my heart is breaking*

*Can it be - who is she?*

*Is this the witch? Oh no, that cannot be!*

*My precious dreams of love are shattered now!*

*Oh pity, oh pity, oh pity me for all eternity!*

**Foreign Princess:**

*(aside)*

*How successful - my clever little plan*

*Your guests are wondering what is happening?*

*Sir, shall we all go home and say goodnight?*

*We hope that you'll be happy, come what might.*

**Prince:**

*Forgive my bad behavior, I beg your pardon!*

*Your kind remarks have wakened my attention.*

*This ball must be a celebration, my troubled heart I must not mention.*

*Let us celebrate, my troubled heart I shall not mention!*

**Foreign Princess:**

*I see this lady has a patient talent*

*She tolerates it though you display your manners fine and gallant*

*Or do smoldering eyes, full of passion deep*

*Hold you in bondage, bondage - you a prisoner keep?*

 Track #15
**Foreign Princess:**

*Hello?!*

**Prince:**

*Forgive me if my mood seems strange. You see, I, I, I...*

**Foreign Princess:**

*(aside)*

*Has she cast a spell on him...what about MY magic?*

**Prince:**

*I'm very confused.*

**Princess:**

*Well, good luck sorting things out!*

**Prime Minister:**

*Your majesty, your other guests await - shall we return to the party?*

**Prince:**

*Oh yes, of course, by all means*

**Prime Minister:**

*Ladies?*

**Rusalka/Prince/Foreign Princess:**

*Ah, such a lovely night*

*Oh will my dream take flight?*

**Prime Minister:**

*What a royal mess tonight!*

**All:**

*See the glowing firefly, feel the wafting breeze*

*Life is full of promise*

**Prime Minister:**

*beware changing air! Beware what will be!*

**Rusalka/Prince/Foreign Princess:**

*Change is in the air!*

*Skies begin to darken, to the discord hearken*

**Foreign Princess:**

*watch me as I wreck this romance, watch me now!*

**Rusalka/Prince:**

*all my life for one I've waited is it he/she*

**Prime Minister:**

*what will be?*

**All:**

*Ah such a lovely night, ah will our dreams take flight?*

(This next part is a quartet with everyone singing different words)

 Track #16
**Rusalka:**

*Oh what a party, I wish that I were glad!  
There is no chance for me, not one I fear!*

**Foreign Princess:**

*Oh dear, look at her ...sad!  
I've spoiled it, she has no chance... now it's clear  
Oh dear, just look at her she's pitiful, lost and so sad!*

**Prince:**

*Oh dear me, many guests – it's no fun - too bad!  
I thought that my love, my own true love at last was near!*

**Prime Minister:**

*Oh dear, what a party - the host is mad!  
This ball's a flop – well, maybe next year!*

(Courtly dance with CHORUS (Foreign Dignitaries)); Foreign Princess shoves Rusalka out of the way; Rusalka runs off, Prime Minister escorts CHORUS offstage and they change back to Creatures of the Coral Reef)

 Track #17
**Sea King:**

*Sorrow! Sorrow! Woe is you, Rusalka, woe!  
Out at sea we all miss you so - follow!*

*Though it was romance brought you here  
Silence and sadness remain near  
You were a mermaid beautiful  
Now return daughter dutiful  
Leave behind human suffering  
Coral reef creatures love to sing!*

*You were enchanted by a man.  
Unions like this lead to misery.  
Though he will promise all he can,  
Heartbreak will plague you eternally.  
Woe is you, Rusalka, sorrow!  
Facing a lifetime full of woe!*

 Track #18
**Rusalka:**

Oh Father, it is true my heart is breaking, but returning to the sea will not bring me happiness.

**Sea King:**

And, why not? The creatures of the reef do nothing but laugh (CHORUS laughs) and sing (CHORUS la la's) and eat (CHORUS makes munching noise) all day long!

**Rusalka:**

Yes, but I must return to the sea not as a frolicking mermaid, but as Jezibaba's seaweed slave.

**Sea King:**

What, a slave to that hideous witch?

**Rusalka:**

I promised to serve her as a kelp maiden if I failed to win my prince.

**Sea King:**

My dear daughter, even I cannot help you now.  
Farewell.

**Rusalka:**

*Forsaken, forsaken!  
Ah me, forsaken, forsaken am I, I may not lead a happy life!  
I'm neither mermaid nor a woman, my love rejects me as his wife!  
I'm neither, I'm neither, not woman nor a mermaid  
Oh, my love rejects me as his wife!  
Forever lonely  
I am so lonely, I am so lonely!  
Ever cursed am I, doomed to fail, he can't hear me say goodbye!*

*Warm-blooded human, his heart is cold  
Warm-blooded human, his heart is cold  
He could not hear me, he did not try,  
And now forever, I say goodbye! (exit)*

 Track #19

**Prince:**

Why are we here? What is happening? I'm so confused: she can't speak, yet somehow I'm beginning to understand her...and I've made her so sad. Please tell me, what shall I do?

**Foreign Princess:**

Hmmm. It's almost as if she's.... I don't know... spellbound! Well, maybe she'll give you one last chance.

**Prince:**

*Help me now Princess, give advice -  
What to do what to do, what to do!*

**Foreign Princess:**

*There is no choice now: follow your heart  
Nothing on earth can keep you apart! (fiendish laugh)*

*(Rusalka enters as kelp maiden and the Prince – taken aback by her appearance – rejects her)*

---

## Act Two (Scene 2)

---

 Track #20

**Rusalka:**

*What shall I do?  
Now I am lost, lost forever in the sea!  
I'm defeated!  
Jezibaba, was it you, oh was it you, oh was it you?  
What am I to do?*

**Jezibaba:**

*Yo ho, who is this ugly kelp girl?  
Can it be you who needs my help, girl?  
Were you that little mermaid who believed her love  
could transform a man?  
That handsome prince who could not hear you, maybe  
he just would not hear,  
You now ask me to help you again?*

**Rusalka:**

*Ah Jezibaba, what's my life to be?  
An undersea slave and not a wife-to-be?*

**Jezibaba:**

*That romance went somewhat badly  
Now you're living rather sadly  
Though he charmed you with a kiss,  
Told you tales of wedded bliss,  
Human marriage you will miss!  
You made a promise now you live with it  
I might have cheated, but, you never fit!  
Your pretty dream of love cannot come true  
So, stop this whining, there's work to do!*

 Track #21

**SPINY URCHINS:**

**Hail to you, oh magic one!  
You have had your evil fun.  
Here's a chance to do some good:  
Let that prince try as he would to see her beauty  
beneath the surface -  
Now that will serve a greater purpose!**

**CHORUS (Creatures of the Coral Reef):**

***Ah, what a lovely night!  
Ah let their dream take flight!  
Like the silver flying fish gliding over each wave,  
If they can but make one wish, we know they will be  
brave!  
Ah, what a lovely night! Ah, let their dream take  
flight!***

 Track #22

**Jezibaba:**

All right, all right! Urchins, if you will stop this infernal tickling and pestering, I will make a proclamation! Hear ye, hear ye, Rusalka has one last chance to win her prince!

*(CHORUS cheers)*

**Jezebaba:**

But (to Rusalka) he must recognize your inner beauty,  
my hideous little clump of seaweed. And, since he  
rejected your sacrifice to live on the land, he must now  
join you to live underwater! If he does these two things  
- (to audience) fat chance -  
You'll live happily ever after. Good luck, honey.

**Prince:**

*Pulled as if by the tide I'm drawn to shore!  
Might I find her whom I adore  
I could not hear nor could I see  
This was my love, the one for me!  
Tangled and captive as was I,  
Now let me rescue her or I'll die!*

**Rusalka:**

*Oh my love join me in the brine  
Give up your human life on land  
Live underwater  
Ah be mine!*

(exit and re-enter w/Sea King & Jezebaba)

🎵 Track #23

**Rusalka/Prince/Sea King/Jezebaba:**

*Life above, life below,  
With understanding love can grow!  
On the land or in the ocean we (Jezebaba: sings "they")  
communicate emotion  
With a pledge of true devotion -  
Ho, ho, ho, happy future off we (Jezebaba: sings "they")  
go!*

(dance with CHORUS)

---

**THE END**

---