

The Rainbow Fish Musical

A small-cast undersea adventure

Script, music, and lyrics by Austin Zumbro
Adapted from the book written and illustrated by Marcus Pfister,
translated into English by J. Alison James

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

	<i># of lines</i>
<u>Actor One</u>	
RAINBOW FISH	159
the sheltered prince. Young, naïve, and self-centered, his self-worth has been defined by his beauty his entire life. Since he has never left the reef where he is famous, his limited worldview has been continually reinforced.	
<u>Actor Two</u>	
LITTLE FISH	46
a kid-fish. Unafraid and curious, but also aware that those qualities don't always add up to positive social interactions. Believes being annoying is an acceptable outcome for getting what you want.	
<u>Actor Three</u>	
STARFISH	83
the court jester. A happy, unflappable simpleton.	
MS. MINNOW	11
the teacher. Gentle and guiding.	
<u>Actor Four</u>	
OCTOPUS	22
the soothsayer. A sage, handy, cave-dweller who lives far from the coral reef.	
PUFFERFISH.....	12
the stuffy aristocrat. Style editor for the <i>Coral Chronicle</i> .	
HERMIT CRAB	19
a kid-crab. Part of the school. A happy, unflappable nerd.	
<u>Actor Five</u>	
SARDINE	25
a kid-fish. A little sarcastic.	
CLOWNFISH	16
another stuffy aristocrat. Garden Society president annoyed by circus clown remarks.	



SETTING

This timeless tale takes place on a coral reef beneath the ocean waves. Feel free to use your imagination to create whatever undersea ambience you desire. Anything from ribbons of blue material to coral cutouts to projections can be used to create your underwater environment. The only required set pieces are a rock for STARFISH and in Scene Six, a suggestion of a cave entrance from which OCTOPUS emerges.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene One: The Coral Reef

Scene Two: Near the Garden Party

Scene Three: The School of Fish

Scene Four: A Visit with Starfish

Scene Five: The Journey

Scene Six: The Octopus

SEQUENCE OF MUSICAL NUMBERS

MC1	The Rainbow Fish.....	Ensemble
MC2	Starfish	Starfish
MC2a	Starfish Exit	Starfish
MC3	A Little Bit Above.....	Rainbow Fish
MC4a	School Song–Part One	School
MC4b	School Song–Part Two.....	School
MC4c	School Song–Part Three.....	School, Rainbow Fish
MC4d	Looking for Mackerel	Starfish
MC5	Go Ask an Octopus.....	Starfish, Rainbow Fish, Ensemble
MC6	The Journey	Rainbow Fish, Ensemble
MC7	Give It Away	Octopus, Ensemble
MC8	Finale.....	Ensemble
MC8a	Curtain Call–The Rainbow Fish.....	Instrumental

THE RAINBOW FISH MUSICAL

Scene One The Coral Reef

1 LIGHTS UP DIM: The stage is bare, sparsely decorated, or hidden behind a curtain or screen. MUSIC CUE 1: “The Rainbow Fish.”

ENSEMBLE: (*From OFFSTAGE.*)

5 WAY OUT IN THE WIDE BLUE OCEAN,
UNDERNEATH THE CRASHING WAVES,
THERE’S A WORLD OF LIGHT AND MOTION
WHERE THE FISH ALL PLAY THEIR GAMES.

CAST YOUR EYES BELOW THE SURFACE.
HOLD YOUR BREATH, WE’RE DIVING DEEP.
10 AS WE PULL ASIDE THE CURTAIN
TO FIND THE WONDERS UNDERNEATH.

(*LIGHTS UP FULL and if used, the CURTAIN RISES. ACTORS TWO–FIVE ENTER and bring the playing space to life, pulling ON set pieces, operating any moving parts, donning costume pieces, etc.*)

15 THROUGH A FOREST OF KELP
MANY MILES FROM THE SHORE,
THERE’S A VOLCANIC SHELF
RISING UP FROM THE FLOOR,
AND THAT’S WHERE YOU’LL FIND OUR TINY
20 KINGDOM OF CORAL.

THOUGH OUR KINGDOM IS SMALL,
IT IS WIDELY ACCLAIMED
FOR THE WONDERFUL SIGHT
THAT OUR KINGDOM CONTAINS—
25 THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CREATURE BENEATH THE WAVES,
THE RAINBOW FISH!

ACTOR FOUR: Denizens of the deep! Residents of the reef! Are you prepared to witness the most fabulous of fishes? (*ALL cheer.*) I can’t hear you! (*ALL cheer again.*) Then put your fins together for
30 the Rainbow Fish!

RAINBOW FISH: (*ENTERS.*)

HELLO! I’M THE RAINBOW FISH.
FUNNY RUNNING INTO YOU LIKE THIS.
OH! YOU’RE HERE FOR ME? WHAT A SURPRISE!
35 I GUESS YOU BETTER GO AHEAD
AND FEAST YOUR EYES ON THIS.
(*Shows off his scales in full.*)

1 DON'T BE SHY!
I KNOW YOU LOVE TO WATCH ME AS I FLOAT BY,
BECAUSE YOU NEED A LITTLE BEAUTY IN YOUR LIVES.
AND THAT'S SOMETHING I'M HAPPY TO PROVIDE!

5 **ENSEMBLE:**

EV'RYONE LOOK AT THE RAINBOW FISH.
LOOKS SO FINE IN HIS SHINING SCALES.
EV'RYONE LOOK AT THE RAINBOW FISH!
THE RICHES DRIP FROM HIS FINS AND TAIL.
10 OH, WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE TO BE,
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FISH IN THE SEA?
(MUSIC VAMPS under dialogue until next music cue. [See PRODUCTION NOTES.])

SARDINE: There you are, Little Fish. Come on, we're supposed to be
15 with the school.

LITTLE FISH: But, Sardine, look! It's the Rainbow Fish!

SARDINE: Yeah, so what? Ms. Minnow's going to mark us tardy.

LITTLE FISH: I can't go yet. I haven't asked my question.

SARDINE: Again? Why do you keep doing this?

20 **LITTLE FISH:** Because! *(MUSIC UP)*
HE'S SO WONDERFUL!
HE'S SO WONDERFUL!
AND I WONDER IF HE'D WANT TO BE MY FRIEND?
SO EV'RY SINGLE DAY,
25 I ASK IF HE CAN PLAY,
BUT HE ALWAYS JUST SWIMS PAST.

SARDINE:

COME ON!
YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE US LATE.

30 *(Drags LITTLE FISH OFF [See PRODUCTION NOTES.] as RAINBOW FISH comes up on STARFISH, sleeping on a rock. MUSIC VAMPS under dialogue until next music cue.)*

RAINBOW FISH: Hey, Starfish. I think my scales are looking extra good so far. What do you think?

35 **STARFISH:** What? Who's that? Is that Mackerel?

RAINBOW FISH: No, it's me, the Rainbow Fish.

STARFISH: Oh! Hey, buddy! You haven't seen Mackerel, have you? He owes me a sand dollar.

RAINBOW FISH: No, I haven't. But, Starfish, I'm asking how you like
40 the show so far?



- 1 **STARFISH:** Mmm... which show would that be?
RAINBOW FISH: Mine. You know how every day I swim around the reef so everyone can see my scales?
STARFISH: Aw, no. I must have missed it! Guh. Typical Starfish.
- 5 **RAINBOW FISH:** No, Starfish, it's happening. Right now. Look! I swim around like this, and the other fish all stop and tell me how great I am. (*PUFFERFISH and CLOWNFISH ENTER, tripping over themselves in their eagerness to please.*)
CLOWNFISH: Rainbow Fish! There he is!
- 10 **PUFFERFISH:** There he is!
CLOWNFISH: (*Pushing past and bowing low.*) Oh, Rainbow Fish, excuse me.
PUFFERFISH: (*Pushing past and bowing lower.*) Excuse me. Rainbow Fish, we—
- 15 **CLOWNFISH:** Hey, look out! (*As the dispute gets more heated, the PUFFERFISH puffs up, and the CLOWNFISH has to help her "de-puff."*)
STARFISH: Oh, I get it. It's like the circus.
RAINBOW FISH: No. It's not supposed to be.
STARFISH: Then why are there clowns?
- 20 **CLOWNFISH:** We are not clowns!
STARFISH: Well, you are a clownfish.
PUFFERFISH: Clownfish is the president of the reef's Garden Society.
CLOWNFISH: And Pufferfish writes the Style and Culture column for the *Coral Chronicle*.
- 25 **STARFISH:** Oh, yeah! You're the one who writes all those puff-pieces.
PUFFERFISH: (*Puffing up in embarrassment.*) Well, I never!
CLOWNFISH: Rainbow Fish, the Garden Society is hosting a party today to celebrate a new grove of anemones.
PUFFERFISH: And the readers of the *Chronicle* must know, will the
- 30 Rainbow Fish be in attendance?
RAINBOW FISH: I don't know.
STARFISH: (*To PUFFERFISH.*) Will there be snacks?
CLOWNFISH: (*To STARFISH.*) We aren't talking to you! (*MUSIC UP*)
PUFFERFISH/CLOWNFISH:
- 35 RAINBOW FISH, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL!
THE SHINING JEWEL OF THE REEF!
YOUR GLIMMERING SCALES GROW FINER EV'RY DAY!
WE ARE VERY IMPORTANT FISHES
AND WE'RE HERE ON IMPORTANT BUSINESS.
- 40 WE WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO A FANCY FISH SOIREE!

1 WE HOPE YOU'LL ATTEND, 'CAUSE ALL OF OUR FRIENDS
THINK YOU ARE JUST THE TRENDIEST THING.
TO EV'RY EVENT AT WHICH YOU PRESENT
YOU LEND SUCH A SENSE OF CELEBRITY!
5 YOUR SCALES REALLY CATCH THE EYE!

RAINBOW FISH:

WELL, I GUESS I COULD TRY TO FLOAT BY.

(CLOWNFISH and PUFFERFISH EXIT, bowing low and thanking RAINBOW FISH profusely. STARFISH slides OFF opposite.)

10 YEAH, EVERYWHERE I GO I'M THE CENTER OF ATTENTION.
I'M THE MUCH BELOVED SUBJECT OF A PUBLIC OBSESSION.
THE MOMENT THAT THEY NOTICE THAT THEY'RE FLOATING IN
THE PRESENCE
OF AN OPALESCENT, IRIDESCENT, LUMINARY LEGEND,
15 THEY GO CRAZY!
THEY GO CRAZY FOR ME.
AND THAT'S THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE,
'CAUSE I'M AMAZING!

OTHER FISH: *(ENTER.)*

20 EV'RYONE LOOK AT THE RAINBOW FISH!
OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT TO SEE.
EV'RYONE LOOK AT THE RAINBOW FISH!

RAINBOW FISH: *(During this verse, OTHER FISH EXIT.)*

NO, THERE'S NEVER BEEN ANOTHER ONE QUITE LIKE ME!

25 I'M THE CREAM OF THE CROP.
I'M THE TIP OF THE TOP.
EV'RYBODY LOOKS UP TO ME.
AND THEY'RE ALL SO IMPRESSED
BY THE WAY THAT I DRESS
30 THAT THEY CLAMOR INCESSANTLY.
THEY ALL WANT A GLIMPSE OF ME!
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FISH IN THE SEA.

(Starts to EXIT as LITTLE FISH ENTERS, a little out of breath. MUSIC VAMPS under dialogue until next music cue.)

35 **LITTLE FISH:** Rainbow Fish, wait!

RAINBOW FISH: Oh, hello. My, aren't you a little fish? Are you supposed to be here all by yourself?

LITTLE FISH: Well, I'm supposed to be in school, but I kind of snuck away so I could ask you something.

40 **RAINBOW FISH:** I get it. You saw your hero swimming by, so you snuck out of that boring old school to get a better look. Don't worry. I won't tell.

1 **LITTLE FISH:** What? No, school isn't boring. It's really fun. We all swim together and learn stuff and play games.

RAINBOW FISH: Huh. I guess I wouldn't know since I've never actually swum with a school. You know, there's never been another fish like

5 me in the entire ocean.

LITTLE FISH: Oh, I know! I'm your biggest fan. But, that's actually what I wanted to ask you. I always see you swimming by yourself. Would you ever like to come swim with me in my school?

RAINBOW FISH: Uh, that's... nice of you to offer.

10 **LITTLE FISH:** So you'll do it?

RAINBOW FISH: I didn't say that.

LITTLE FISH: Why not?

RAINBOW FISH: Look at me. I don't think I'd really fit in with the group.

LITTLE FISH: But you would! Ms. Minnow says we should always try

15 to include everyone.

RAINBOW FISH: Yeah, but I'm not everyone. I'm the Rainbow Fish. Who else has scales like these? *(He shows them off a little.)*

LITTLE FISH: They really are amazing.

RAINBOW FISH: I know. *(MUSIC UP.)*

20 **LITTLE FISH:**
THEY'RE INCREDIBLE.

RAINBOW FISH: You're welcome.

LITTLE FISH:
SO INCREDIBLE.

25 **THEY'RE THE FINEST SCALES A FISH COULD EVER WEAR.**

RAINBOW FISH:
GO AHEAD! I KNOW YOU LOVE TO STARE.

LITTLE FISH:
THEY'RE WONDERFUL.

30 **RAINBOW FISH:**
I KNOW I'M WONDERFUL!

LITTLE FISH:
AND I WONDER IF THERE'S ONE THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

RAINBOW FISH: What?!

35 **LITTLE FISH:** **ENSEMBLE:** *(ENTERS.)*
JUST ONE SCALE!

JUST ONE TINY
LITTLE SCALE!

40 THEY'RE THE CREAM OF THE CROP!
THEY'RE THE TIP OF THE TOP!
THEY'RE THE BEST THERE'S
EVER BEEN.

1 I'M SURE THERE MUST
BE ONE YOU WOULDN'T
MISS. EV'RYBODY LOOKS UP TO THEM
BECAUSE...

5 IF YOU SHARED WITH ME, A BEAUTY BEYOND BELIEF.
OH, HOW HAPPY THE TRENDIEST THINGS
I WOULD BE! ON THE REEF
WITH A SCALE FROM ARE THE SCALES OF
THE RAINBOW FISH! THE RAINBOW FISH!

10 **RAINBOW FISH:** *(Throws a tantrum.)* No! *(Silence. The OTHER FISH scatter, leaving LITTLE FISH cowering in front of RAINBOW FISH. MUSIC OUT.)* Who do you think you are?!

LITTLE FISH: I'm sorry, I just thought—

RAINBOW FISH: What? You thought you could come here and take
15 my scales?

LITTLE FISH: No!

RAINBOW FISH: I know what you thought. You thought you could be like me!

LITTLE FISH: I just—

20 **RAINBOW FISH:** Well, you can't. You're just an ordinary little fish, and there's nothing special about you.

LITTLE FISH: I just thought you could share—

RAINBOW FISH: Get away from me! *(LITTLE FISH swims OFF. RAINBOW FISH seethes.)* Wow, some fish, huh? You think they're nice, and then it
25 turns out they just want to take your things. *(MUSIC CUE 2: "Starfish.")*

STARFISH: *(ENTERS.)*
OH, WELL, I'M
LOOKING FOR THE ROCK
I'M GONNA SIT ON.
30 WHICH IS THE ROCK?
I GOTTA PICK ONE.
(MUSIC continues under. As the rock.) "Pick me, Starfish!" Okay, Rock! Hang on a second... rocks don't talk. *(As the rock.)* "I'm not really! That's just you!" Oh, yeah! That's true!

35 ZOOBY SHOOBY DOOBY KERPLOP!
(Plops down on a rock. MUSIC OUT.)

RAINBOW FISH: Starfish, can you believe what that Little Fish just did?

STARFISH: *(Sits up, startled.)* What!? Who's that? Is that Mackerel?



1 **RAINBOW FISH:** No! It's Rainbow Fish.

STARFISH: Oh! Hey, buddy. You haven't seen Mackerel, have you? He owes me a—

RAINBOW FISH: Sand dollar. Yeah, I know.

5 **STARFISH:** Whoa! How'd you know that?

RAINBOW FISH: You told me earlier. Just before those fancy fish invited me to their party.

STARFISH: That's right, I did! Hey, you haven't seen him, have—

RAINBOW FISH: No, I haven't.

10 **STARFISH:** Oh, well. What were you saying about a little fish?

RAINBOW FISH: It doesn't matter. I've got more important things to think about, like this fancy party.

STARFISH: I don't know why you want to go to that thing. It sounds boring.

RAINBOW FISH: It's a party for important fish, and I'm important,
15 so that's where I belong. You probably can't understand because you're just ordinary.

STARFISH: That's true! Boy, I'm lucky I've got you to explain this stuff to me.

RAINBOW FISH: Yeah, well, I've got to go now.

20 **STARFISH:** Why?

RAINBOW FISH: I have to go to the party, Starfish.

STARFISH: Ooh! There's a party?

RAINBOW FISH: Yes! The fancy one! That's what we were just talking about!

25 **STARFISH:** Oh. Well, I thought there might be two parties.

RAINBOW FISH: Bye, Starfish. *(EXITS.)*

STARFISH: *(To the rock.)* Hey, Rock, why didn't the rock like going to parties? *(As the rock.)* "I don't know, Starfish, why didn't the rock like going to parties?" *(As Starfish.)* "It wasn't much of a pebble
30 person." *(MUSIC CUE 2a: "Starfish Exit.")*

ZOOPY SHOOBY DOOBY KERPLOP!

(MUSIC OUT. EXITS, humming.)

End of Scene One

Scene Two

Near the Garden Party

CLOWNFISH and PUFFERFISH ENTER from one side. RAINBOW FISH ENTERS opposite and starts to approach. They don't see him at first.

35 **RAINBOW FISH:** *(To CLOWNFISH and PUFFERFISH.)* Hello!

- 1 **CLOWNFISH:** Uh-oh. He's here! I thought you said he wouldn't come?!
PUFFERFISH: I didn't think he'd show his face after what happened.
CLOWNFISH: Okay, just don't look at him and maybe he'll swim past.
(*They try to avoid eye contact.*)
- 5 **RAINBOW FISH:** Um, hello?
PUFFERFISH: (*Looking anywhere but at RAINBOW FISH.*) My, look at those beautiful fronds.
CLOWNFISH: Oh, yes. That's one of the new bubble-tip anemones.
RAINBOW FISH: Can you not hear me? Hello!? (*Shouts.*) It's me! The
- 10 Rainbow Fish! (*PUFFERFISH puffs up.*)
CLOWNFISH: Rainbow Fish! Please, keep your voice down.
RAINBOW FISH: Sorry. I didn't think you could—
PUFFERFISH: What are you doing here, Rainbow Fish?
RAINBOW FISH: You invited me. I'm here for the party.
- 15 **PUFFERFISH:** We didn't think you'd actually come. Not after... well, you know.
RAINBOW FISH: What?
CLOWNFISH: You wouldn't share a scale with that Little Fish! And you yelled!
- 20 **RAINBOW FISH:** But—
CLOWNFISH: Look, the other fish, they, uh... they won't be happy to see you here. It's supposed to be a party, after all, and—
RAINBOW FISH: Because I wouldn't give a scale to that Little Fish? They're mine!
- 25 **PUFFERFISH:** Oh, we know. It's just... maybe you should lay low for a while.
RAINBOW FISH: "Lay low"? I can't lay low. I'm the Rainbow Fish! I have to be where everyone can see me!
CLOWNFISH: (*Aside.*) Maybe that's the problem...
- 30 **RAINBOW FISH:** (*Fiercely.*) What?
PUFFERFISH: Don't worry, Rainbow Fish. Just give it some time to blow over. Go be with your friends. Play a game.
RAINBOW FISH: I don't do that. (*The OTHERS get embarrassed.*)
CLOWNFISH: Oh. Well, then, you can do whatever you like doing
- 35 instead. (*CLOWNFISH and PUFFERFISH bow quickly and EXIT.*)
RAINBOW FISH: Instead of what? Instead of being ordinary? This is what I do! This is who I am! (*MUSIC CUE 3: "A Little Bit Above."*)
WHO DO THEY THINK THEY ARE?
WHAT DO THEY THINK THIS IS?
- 40 GIVE AWAY MY SCALES?

1 NO! I'M THE RAINBOW FISH!
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FISH IN THE SEA.
AREN'T I RIGHT WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO BE?
JUST A LITTLE BIT ABOVE THE REST,
5 SO THEY CAN WATCH ME PASSING BY.
THAT'S WHERE THEY LOVE ME BEST,
UP WHERE MY SCALES CATCH THE LIGHT.
I'M THE WONDER OF THE DEEP,
THE SHINING JEWEL OF THE REEF.
10 I'VE SPENT MY LIFE
UP IN THE LIGHT
SO EV'RYONE CAN SEE.
I NEVER CARED ABOUT GAMES.
I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT FRIENDSHIP.
15 WHY WOULD I NEED IT WHEN
I HAD EV'RYONE'S ATTENTION?
I MADE MY HOME UP ON THE HIGHEST SHELF.
HOW WAS I TO KNOW THAT I WAS BY MYSELF?
JUST A LITTLE BIT ABOVE THE REST.
20 AND MAYBE IT'S LONELY SOME OF THE TIME,
BUT THAT'S WHY THEY LOVE ME BEST.
BECAUSE I'M THE ONLY ONE OF MY KIND!
I KNOW I'M SUPPOSED TO BE
THE SHINING JEWEL OF THE REEF.
25 I'VE SPENT MY LIFE
UP IN THE LIGHT.
WHERE ELSE WOULD I BE?
(MUSIC OUT.)

STARFISH: (ENTERS, through the AUDIENCE if possible. MUSIC CUE 3b:

30 "Starfish Entrance.")

OH, WELL, I'M
WALKING ALONG
ON THE SEA BED,
TALKING TO ALL
35 OF MY "SEA" FRIENDS!

(To AUDIENCE. This can be improvised.) Hello, friends! I see you. Get it?
"See friends?" Hmmm, tough crowd. Oh, hello. What kind of fish are
you? I like your hat. Are you a baseball fan? I always root for the Marlins.
The Marlins! Get it? No? Hmmm... (Eventually plops ONSTAGE.)

40 ZOOBY SHOOBY DOOBY KERPLOP!
(MUSIC OUT.)

- 1 **RAINBOW FISH:** Hey, Starfish.
STARFISH: (*Startled.*) What? Who's that? Oh, it's just you again.
RAINBOW FISH: I guess no one's excited to see me today.
STARFISH: Huh? No, it's not you, buddy. I was just hoping it was
5 Mackerel. I don't know if you've heard, but that guy owes me a—
RAINBOW FISH: Yeah, I heard.
STARFISH: Hey, he wasn't at that fancy party, was he? Boy, that'd be just like him. Going to some fancy party when he knows he still owes me a sand dollar.
- 10 **RAINBOW FISH:** I don't know. They didn't want me there.
STARFISH: Really? But didn't they invite you?
RAINBOW FISH: I guess they changed their minds.
STARFISH: Huh.
RAINBOW FISH: But who cares about them?
- 15 **STARFISH:** Yeah! Who cares?
RAINBOW FISH: Telling me to relax and play a game. I'll show them. Maybe I will!
STARFISH: Yeah!
RAINBOW FISH: I'll go swim with some ordinary fish.
- 20 **STARFISH:** Yeah! Some ordinary fish!
RAINBOW FISH: I'll go swim with Little Fish's school!
STARFISH: Yeah!
RAINBOW FISH: Yeah!
STARFISH: Yeah!
- 25 **RAINBOW FISH:** Bye, Starfish! (*EXITS.*)
STARFISH: Bye, Starfish! (*Beat.*) Wait, I'm Starfish. Uh-oh. Am I supposed to be going somewhere? (*EXITS, mumbling.*)

End of Scene Two

Scene Three
The School of Fish

The scene changes over to the school as the LITTLE FISH, HERMIT CRAB, and SARDINE ENTER. MUSIC CUE 4a: "School Song—Part One."

- 30 **LITTLE FISH/HERMIT CRAB/SARDINE:**
THIS IS OUR FUNNY LITTLE
SCHOOL OF FISH,
WHERE WE LEARN AND PLAY
EV'RY DAY LIKE THIS.



1 **SINCE HAPPINESS STEMS**
FROM THE FRIENDS YOU'RE WITH
WE ARE HAPPY IN OUR FUNNY LITTLE SCHOOL.
(LITTLE FISH sighs and peels off from the group. MUSIC OUT. HERMIT
5 *CRAB and SARDINE confer quietly and then carefully approach*
LITTLE FISH.)

HERMIT CRAB: Was he really mad?

LITTLE FISH: Yeah, I think so. He yelled and everything.

SARDINE: Well, what'd you think was going to happen? He's the
10 Rainbow Fish!

LITTLE FISH: I just asked if he could share one scale.

SARDINE: But he's the Rainbow Fish! That's like asking a crab to
share its shell!

HERMIT CRAB: Hermit crabs actually share their shells all the time.
15 This is a hand-me-down from my cousin.

SARDINE: Yeah, but you wouldn't share your shell with me, right?

HERMIT CRAB: No, but you're a sardine. You don't need a shell.

SARDINE: But what if I really wanted it?

HERMIT CRAB: Why? What do you want it for?

20 **SARDINE:** I don't know.

HERMIT CRAB: Well, I'm definitely not going to give it to you if you
don't tell me why you want it.

MS. MINNOW: *(ENTERS.)* Is everything all right?

HERMIT CRAB: Sardine wants my shell for something, but he won't
25 tell me why.

SARDINE: That's not what I—

HERMIT CRAB: I think it's for some kind of prank.

MS. MINNOW: Sardine, that doesn't sound like appropriate
school behavior.

30 **SARDINE:** I never really wanted it! I'm a sardine! What do I want a
shell for?

HERMIT CRAB: I don't know, because you won't tell me!

MS. MINNOW: Okay! I think it's time we had a little fun, don't you?
Maybe a game?

35 **LITTLE FISH:** I don't know if I feel much like playing today, Ms. Minnow.

MS. MINNOW: Oh, dear. Well, you don't have to play if you don't want
to. But a game with only three of us doesn't sound like nearly as
much fun.

1 **SARDINE:** Yeah! Come on! I want to play hide and seek, and it's no fun with just Hermit Crab.

HERMIT CRAB: Why? Because I'm too good at it?

SARDINE: No, because you always choose the same hiding spot.

5 **HERMIT CRAB:** (*Adjusts his shell.*) Well, you know, if the shell fits...

LITTLE FISH: Okay, I'll play.

MS. MINNOW: All right! All together now! (*MUSIC CUE 4b: "School Song–Part Two." Optional additional ACTORS ENTER.*)

SCHOOL:

10 HERE IN OUR FUNNY LITTLE

SCHOOL OF FISH,

WE FRISK AND FROLIC

AND SPLASH AND SPLISH,

'CAUSE HAPPINESS STEMS

15 FROM THE FRIENDS YOU'RE WITH

SO WE'RE HAPPY IN OUR FUNNY LITTLE SCHOOL.

(*The SCHOOL is split between GROUP A and GROUP B to create a kind of call and response. It does not matter which specific fish are in each group.*)

20 **GROUP A:**

WE PLAY OUR GAMES...

GROUP B:

FLITTING BACK AND FORTH!

GROUP A:

25 BENEATH THE WAVES.

GROUP B:

PLAYING FISHY SPORTS!

GROUP A:

WE'RE GIVING CHASE.

30 **GROUP B:**

TAG, YOU'RE IT!

GROUP A:

A GIVE AND TAKE.

GROUP B:

35 NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO TAKE THE LEAD.

GROUP A:

I WILL FOLLOW YOU...

GROUP B:

IT'S FUN TO BE...

- 1 **GROUP A:**
AND THEN YOU WILL FOLLOW ME...
- GROUP B:**
A COMMUNITY...
- 5 **SCHOOL:**
IN THE DEEP BLUE SEA.
INDEED, WHAT A HAPPY LITTLE SCHOOL ARE WE!
(MUSIC OUT.)
- RAINBOW FISH:** (ENTERS.) Hello.
- 10 **LITTLE FISH:** Rainbow Fish! *(The OTHER FISH all bow immediately. LITTLE FISH looks around startled and then also bows.)*
- RAINBOW FISH:** Please. You don't have to do that. *(They cautiously begin to look up.)*
- MS. MINNOW:** Rainbow Fish. How unexpected.
- 15 **HERMIT CRAB:** Are you here to yell at us?
- RAINBOW FISH:** What? No, why would I do that?
- SARDINE:** Because Little Fish asked you for a scale.
- RAINBOW FISH:** No, I'm not here to yell. I'm here to swim with the school.
- 20 **LITTLE FISH:** Really?
- RAINBOW FISH:** Yes. My other plans kind of fell through.
- LITTLE FISH:** Wow! Okay! We were just playing a game.
- RAINBOW FISH:** Oh. All right. Yes, I can do that.
- HERMIT CRAB:** Whoa! Are you really going to play with us?
- 25 **RAINBOW FISH:** I just said I would.
- SARDINE:** But you never do. Little Fish asks you every day, and you usually just ignore her.
- LITTLE FISH:** He's here now, okay?
- MS. MINNOW:** That's right. Sardine, Hermit Crab, is that the kind of
- 30 welcome we give here at school?
- HERMIT CRAB:** No.
- MS. MINNOW:** So let's try it again, shall we?
- SARDINE:** Okay. (MUSIC CUE 4c: "School Song–Part Three." They begin to sing again. RAINBOW FISH hangs back, skeptical.)
- 35 **SCHOOL:**
HERE IN OUR FUNNY LITTLE
SCHOOL OF FISH,
WE FRISK AND FROLIC
AND SPLASH AND SPLISH,

- 1 'CAUSE HAPPINESS STEMS
FROM THE FRIENDS YOU'RE WITH
SO WE'RE HAPPY IN OUR FUNNY LITTLE SCHOOL.
- GROUP A:**
- 5 WE PLAY OUR GAMES...
- GROUP B:**
FLITTING BACK AND FORTH!
- GROUP A:**
BENEATH THE WAVES.
- 10 **GROUP B:**
PLAYING FISHY SPORTS!
- GROUP A:**
WE'RE GIVING CHASE.
- GROUP B:**
- 15 TAG! YOU'RE IT!
- GROUP A:**
A GIVE AND TAKE.
- LITTLE FISH:** (*Notices RAINBOW FISH isn't participating.*)
WHY AREN'T YOU PLAYING?
- 20 **GROUP B:**
TAKE THE LEAD.
- GROUP A:**
I WILL FOLLOW YOU...
- GROUP B:**
- 25 IT'S FUN TO BE...
- GROUP A:**
AND THEN YOU WILL FOLLOW ME...
- GROUP B:**
A COMMUNITY...
- 30 **SCHOOL:**
IN THE DEEP BLUE SEA.
INDEED, WHAT A HAPPY LITTLE SCHOOL ARE WE!
(*MUSIC continues under following dialogue.*) Rainbow Fish,
what's wrong?
- 35 **HERMIT CRAB:** Maybe he doesn't know how to play.
SARDINE: Who doesn't know how to play chase?
RAINBOW FISH: It's not that. It's just... this doesn't really seem like
my kind of game.
- MS. MINNOW:** Well, what kind of game would you like to play?
- 40 **LITTLE FISH:** Yeah! Teach us something!



1 **RAINBOW FISH:** Okay. How about... You all go over there.
SARDINE: Okay.
RAINBOW FISH: Oh, yeah. Just like that.
LITTLE FISH: This is going to be great!

5 **HERMIT CRAB:** Yeah!
LITTLE FISH: What happens next?
RAINBOW FISH: Okay, now, I do this! (*MUSIC UP*)
AREN'T I BEAUTIFUL?
AREN'T I BEAUTIFUL?

10 JUST SIT BACK AND WATCH ME AS I SHINE!
SARDINE:
WHAT'S HE DOING? I DON'T GET IT. WHAT'S THE GAME?
RAINBOW FISH:
BEAUTIFUL!

15 **LITTLE FISH:**
HE'S SHOWING US HOW TO PLAY...
RAINBOW FISH:
I'M SO BEAUTIFUL!
LITTLE FISH:

20 ...SO WATCH AND LEARN!
SCHOOL:
AND NOW IT'S TIME TO TAKE OUR TURN!
WE PLAY OUR GAMES...

SARDINE:

25 EV'RYBODY LOOK AT ME!
SCHOOL:
BENEATH THE WAVES!
HERMIT CRAB:
SEE HOW I SHINE!

30 **SCHOOL:**
A GIVE AND TAKE!
LITTLE FISH:
THIS IS REALLY, REALLY FUN!
SCHOOL:

35 THAT'S HOW WE PLAY!
RAINBOW FISH:
THAT'S NOT HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED!
SCHOOL:
IT'S FUN TO BE...

- 1 **SARDINE:**
LOOK AT ME, I'M LIKE THE RAINBOW FISH!
- SCHOOL:**
COMMUNITY!
- 5 **HERMIT CRAB:**
NEVER HAD AS MUCH FUN AS THIS!
- RAINBOW FISH:** No, no...
- SCHOOL:**
DEEP BLUE SEA!
- 10 **RAINBOW FISH:** No, no...
- SCHOOL:**
YES, INDEED!
- RAINBOW FISH:** No, no, no!
- SCHOOL:**
- 15 WHAT A HAPPY LITTLE SCHOOL ARE WE!
(MUSIC OUT.)
- RAINBOW FISH:** Stop! (*OTHERS all bow their heads.*) Because you're doing it wrong! You're all supposed to stay over there and be my admirers, not get up and do what I'm doing.
- 20 **LITTLE FISH:** But it's more fun if we all get a turn.
- SARDINE:** Yeah, we want to play together.
- RAINBOW FISH:** Well, that's not how I play.
- MS. MINNOW:** Rainbow Fish, if you want to swim with the school, you're going to have to learn how to—
- 25 **RAINBOW FISH:** I don't want to swim with the school! I just want you to look at me! (*The OTHER FISH all bow their heads again.*) Don't do that! I want you to look at me! Don't you like looking at me?
- MS. MINNOW:** I think we should let Rainbow Fish have some time to himself.
- 30 **RAINBOW FISH:** Fine! Leave! I don't need you! (*They scatter. Frustrated.*) I didn't have to do this. This was a special thing for them, not me. Rainbow Fish came to their school, and they didn't even want to watch my show. It's like they didn't even care about my beautiful scales! They just wanted to... what? Play tag? Sing songs? What about what I want? (*Beat.*) I'll just go somewhere else. Somewhere
- 35 fish still appreciate me. (*Starts to leave, but hesitates.*) But... where? Now the whole reef is mad at me. (*Sits, melancholy.*)

End of Scene Three

Scene Four
A Visit with Starfish

1 STARFISH bumbles IN, mumbling. MUSIC CUE 4d: “Looking for Mackerel.”

STARFISH: Mackerel? (*Looks around.*) Nope. Mackerel? (*Looks around.*) Nope.

ZOOBY SHOOBY DOOBY KERPLOP!

5 (*MUSIC OUT.*)

RAINBOW FISH: Hey, Starfish.

STARFISH: (*Startled, as usual.*) Whoa! Who’s that?

RAINBOW FISH: It’s me, Rainbow Fish.

STARFISH: Rainbow Fish! Hey... don’t you owe me a sand dollar?

10 **RAINBOW FISH:** No, that’s Mackerel.

STARFISH: Right, Mackerel! You haven’t seen him, have you?

RAINBOW FISH: No. But he’s probably avoiding me.

STARFISH: Does he owe you a sand dollar too? Boy, I’ve just about haddock up to here with that guy.

15 **RAINBOW FISH:** No, Starfish. All the other fish keep swimming away every time I try to show off. They don’t like me anymore! They won’t even look at me!

STARFISH: Oh, no! Hey, it’s okay. Come here and tell old Starfish all about it.

20 **RAINBOW FISH:** Okay...

STARFISH: You maybe want one of my world-famous hugs?

RAINBOW FISH: Yeah.

STARFISH: All right. Come here. (*After a little maneuvering, STARFISH flops onto RAINBOW FISH’S back.*) How’s that? Feel better?

25 **RAINBOW FISH:** To be honest, it’s a little disappointing.

STARFISH: Yeah. Being disappointing is what my hugs are famous for. (*Ends the hug.*) You’d think with six arms I could give better hugs.

RAINBOW FISH: Starfish, you only have five arms.

STARFISH: What? One, two, three, four, five... Oh, right. Maybe that’s
30 the problem.

RAINBOW FISH: I think the problem is the other fish.

STARFISH: Really? I thought maybe it was because I don’t squeeze hard enough. But, maybe everyone I know is just really bad at being hugged.

35 **RAINBOW FISH:** I’m not talking about your hugs, Starfish. I’m talking about my problem.

STARFISH: Oh, right! Sorry, I get distracted.

- 1 **RAINBOW FISH:** So, earlier today this Little Fish came up and asked if I wanted to swim with her school.
- STARFISH:** Okay, yeah. I'm with you. I'm following.
- RAINBOW FISH:** And I told her I couldn't because, you know, I'm the
- 5 **Rainbow Fish.** I'm special.
- STARFISH:** Sure. You're the most beautiful fish in the whole entire ocean.
- RAINBOW FISH:** Exactly! But then—get this—she asked if I could share one of my scales!
- STARFISH:** Whoa! Cool!
- 10 **RAINBOW FISH:** No! Not cool!
- STARFISH:** Oh, sorry... I guess you lost me again.
- RAINBOW FISH:** I can't share my scales, Starfish! They're the reason I'm special. If I let other fish have them, then I wouldn't be special anymore, and no one would look at me.
- 15 **STARFISH:** Right. But I thought you said they don't look at you now.
- RAINBOW FISH:** I know! That's the problem.
- STARFISH:** Huh.
- RAINBOW FISH:** I really am beautiful. Why doesn't anybody like me?
- STARFISH:** That's a puzzler.
- 20 **RAINBOW FISH:** What do you think I should do?
- STARFISH:** I don't know.
- RAINBOW FISH:** You don't even have an opinion?
- STARFISH:** It's really not my area of expertise. (*MUSIC CUE 5:*
"Go Ask an Octopus.")
- 25 I CAN TELL THAT YOU'RE DOWN IN THE DUMPS!
YOU'RE WRESTLIN' WITH A QUESTION
THAT HAS JUST LEFT YA STUMPED!
I WISH I COULD HELP YA,
BUT I'M NOT EQUIPPED.
- 30 I KNOW WHAT I'M GOOD AT
AND THIS ISN'T IT.
- RAINBOW FISH:** What are you good at, Starfish?
- STARFISH:** Cartwheels!
- RAINBOW FISH:** Huh.
- 35 **STARFISH:**
BUT THOUGH I'M NOT UP TO THE TASK,
I DO KNOW WHO YOU SHOULD ASK—
THE MOST QUALIFIED CREATURE
IN THE WHOLE SALTY SEA.



1 AND BELIEVE IT OR NOT,
IT'S GOT TWO MORE LIMBS THAN—
 (Speaks.) Wait, that isn't right. *(Counts own limbs.)* One, two, three,
four, five... *(Then, quickly.)* ...six, seven, eight. *(Looks up.)* Nope.

5 IT'S GOT THREE MORE LIMBS THAN ME!
GO ASK AN OCTOPUS!

RAINBOW FISH: An octopus?

STARFISH:
AN OCTOPUS!

10 **RAINBOW FISH:** An octopus.

STARFISH:
AN OCTOPUS IS AN OPTIMAL CONSULTEE!
I'D LOVE TO HELP, BUT I'LL NOT BECAUSE
I BET YOU'LL FIND AN OCTOPUS

15 WILL DO A FAR, FAR BETTER JOB AT THIS THAN ME!
GO ASK AN OCTOPUS!

RAINBOW FISH: Are you sure?

STARFISH:
YES, I'M POSITIVE!

20 AND SO I POSIT OPTIMISTIC'LY...
WHEN OTHER FISH DON'T HAVE THE FOGGIEST,
TO AN OCTOPUS, IT WILL BE OBVIOUS
BECAUSE AN OCTOPUS IS THE SMARTEST FISH IN THE SEA.
(MUSIC VAMPS under the following dialogue.)

25 **RAINBOW FISH:** I thought that was supposed to be dolphins.

STARFISH: Whaaat? No, dolphins are mammals. And besides, they're
too silly.

RAINBOW FISH: That doesn't mean they're not smart.

STARFISH: True. But you don't want advice from a dolphin. When

30 dolphins have to make a decision, how do you think they decide?

RAINBOW FISH: I don't know.

STARFISH: They flipper coin! *(Pulls out a coin.)* Like this—heads or tails?

RAINBOW FISH: Tails.

STARFISH: *(Flips coin and looks.)* Ah, that was a fluke.

35 **RAINBOW FISH:** Can we maybe move on from the dolphin puns?

STARFISH: What do you mean?

RAINBOW FISH: Come on. A dolphin's tail is called a "fluke." You had
to know you were making a joke.

STARFISH: Oh no! I dolphin-ately didn't do it on porpoise!

40 *(MUSIC UP.)*

1 WELL, IF YOU
WANNA KNOW ARITHMETIC, A SEA CUCUMBER
CAN TELL YOU WHAT THE DIFF'RENCE IS
BETWEEN TWO NUMBERS,
5 BUT IF YOU'RE LEARNING CALCULUS
AND NEED A DIFFERENTIAL,
CHECKING WITH A NAUTILUS
IS HIGHLY PREFERENTIAL.
IF YOU'RE NOT
10 SURE IF YOU SHOULD USE
A SEMICOLON OR A COMMA,
ASK THE HUMUHUMUNUKUNUKUAPUA'A.
BUT FOR EV'RY OTHER MANNER
OF GRAMMATICAL MISTAKE,
15 IT'S BEST TO ASK A HERRING
OR A HADDOCK OR A HAKE.
UNLESS IT IS A QUESTION
OF A DEFINITE ARTICLE.
THAT WOULD BE A QUESTION
20 BEST DIRECTED TO A BARNACLE.
LOBSTERS...
ENSEMBLE: (*ENTERS.*)
WAH...
STARFISH:
25 CAN HELP YOU OUT WITH A JOB SEARCH.
ENSEMBLE:
WAH-AH...
STARFISH:
BUT BE CAUTIOUS
30 BECAUSE THEY'RE OFTEN CONNECTED TO MOBSTERS.
ENSEMBLE:
WAH-AH.
STARFISH:
YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK A PRAWN—
35 **ENSEMBLE:** A prawn?
STARFISH:
TO FIND OUT WHAT IS GOING ON.
BUT IN THIS CASE I THINK
ALL OF THE ABOVE WOULD BE WRONG!
40 YOU NEED AN OCTOPUS!

1 **ENSEMBLE:** An octopus!
STARFISH:
AN OCTOPUS!
ENSEMBLE: An octopus!

5 **STARFISH:**
YOU NEED SOMEONE TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX, BECAUSE
YOUR PROBLEM IS EXTREME!
AND I'M CONFIDENT THAT AN OCTOPUS IS THE THING!

RAINBOW FISH:

10 I NEED AN OCTOPUS!
ENSEMBLE: That's right!
RAINBOW FISH:
I NEED AN OCTOPUS!
ENSEMBLE: You got it!

15 **STARFISH:**
I'M POSITIVE THAT THAT'S WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU!
WHEN THE CONSEQUENCE
OF YOUR PROMINENCE
IS STANDOFFISHNESS
20 FROM THE POPULACE,
THEN AN OCTOPUS
WILL KNOW JUST WHAT TO DO!

ENSEMBLE:
AN OCTOPUS WILL KNOW JUST WHAT TO DO!

25 **STARFISH:**
ZOOBY DOOBY SHOOBY DOOBY
ZOOBA DOOBA SCOOPY DOOBY
ZOOBA DE DOOP DE DOOP WAH!
(MUSIC OUT. ENSEMBLE EXITS.)

30 **RAINBOW FISH:** Thanks, Starfish!
STARFISH: Happy to help! (*STARFISH starts to leave.*)
RAINBOW FISH: Wait! But how do I actually find an octopus?
STARFISH: Oh, yeah. That's tricky. They're all very secretive and
mysterious. And they can change colors to camouflage themselves.

35 **RAINBOW FISH:** Really?
STARFISH: Yeah! You might think you're just looking at a regular old
rock or something, and then boom! Octopus! (*The two of them
notice the rock STARFISH was sitting on. They approach it cautiously.
STARFISH taps it.*) Octopus? (*STARFISH taps more vigorously.*) Well,
40 if it is an octopus, it's very convincing.

1 **RAINBOW FISH:** Where does an octopus usually live?
STARFISH: There used to be one that lived in a deep cave out past the reef.
RAINBOW FISH: A deep cave?
5 **STARFISH:** Real deep.
RAINBOW FISH: And it's... past the reef?
STARFISH: Yeah. You know, out there where it drops off and the water gets dark and cold. Past the kelp forest and everything.
RAINBOW FISH: I've... uh... never been out that far.
10 **STARFISH:** Through the kelp forest?
RAINBOW FISH: I've never even left the reef.
STARFISH: Really? Well, you're probably fine. Fish that leave almost always come back.
RAINBOW FISH: What about the fish that don't?
15 **STARFISH:** I assume they're having so much fun they don't want to come back.
RAINBOW FISH: Or maybe something bad happens to them?
STARFISH: No! You think so? Gee, if that was what I thought, I'd be pretty nervous about going out there by myself. *(Beat.)* Well, toodles! *(STARFISH cartwheels OFF. RAINBOW FISH approaches the edge of the reef.)*
20

End of Scene Four

Scene Five
The Journey

ACTORS TWO and FIVE and optional additional ACTORS swim in the shadows. MUSIC CUE 6: "The Journey."

ENSEMBLE:

25 OUT THERE!

RAINBOW FISH:

SOMEWHERE OUT THERE IN THE DEEP,
LIVING FAR BEYOND THE REEF,
IS THE ANSWER THAT I NEED.
30 AN OCTOPUS'S GUIDANCE,
I KNOW I HAVE TO FIND IT,
BUT IT'S FRIGHTENING TO LEAVE.
I'M FLOATING AT THE EDGE,
STARING DOWN THE LEDGE
35 WHERE EV'RYTHING I'VE KNOWN COMES TO AN END.
I'VE SPENT MY LIFE



1 UP IN THE LIGHT,
BUT NOW I MUST DESCEND.
(The set changes as RAINBOW FISH begins the journey to OCTOPUS'S cave.)

5 DOWN! DEEPER THAN I'VE EVER BEEN BEFORE.
DOWN TO THE OCEAN FLOOR!
THROUGH THE SHADOW OF THE FOREST OF KELP.
OUT INTO THE INDIGO BELOW.
INTO THE DEEPEST CAVES I'LL GO

10 SEEKING OUT THE OCTOPUS'S HELP.

ENSEMBLE:

YOU HAVE TO GO FORWARD
SO YOU CAN GO BACK TO HOW IT WAS,
SO YOU CAN GET BACK THERE UP ABOVE.

15 YOU WANT TO GO BACK!

RAINBOW FISH:

SO I'LL GO FORWARD,
THOUGH THE WAY MAY NOT BE CLEAR.
I WILL LEARN TO FACE MY FEAR

20 OUT HERE,
ON MY OWN...
BUT BACK THERE,
WAS I ANY LESS ALONE?

I WANT TO GO BACK.
IS THAT WHAT I REALLY WANT?

25 TO LIVE JUST LIKE A PICTURE IN A FRAME?
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL.
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL.
BUT NOW I THINK IT WOULDN'T FEEL THE SAME.

30 *(MUSIC OUT. ENSEMBLE EXITS.)*

End of Scene Five

Scene Six
The Octopus

RAINBOW FISH sighs. The VOICE of OCTOPUS comes, seemingly, from nowhere. It's not booming, but rather pleasant and conversational.

OCTOPUS: *(From OFFSTAGE.)* Tough day?

RAINBOW FISH: Yeah. *(A tentacle—manipulated by an unseen*

35 *ACTOR—snakes ON from behind a set piece and offers a snack.)*

OCTOPUS: *(From OFFSTAGE.)* Plankton?

1 **RAINBOW FISH:** Oh, thank you. *(Takes the food absentmindedly and the tentacle disappears. Does a double take.)* Wait, what was that? Who was that? Who's there?

OCTOPUS: *(From OFFSTAGE.)* I'm sorry. How rude of me. *(APPEARS almost magically from a dark opening suggestive of a cave entrance. OCTOPUS should be amorphous, with the principle ACTOR at the center serving as the primary focal point and manipulating two tentacles. ACTORS TWO, THREE, and FIVE manipulate the other six tentacles, swirling around and acting independently from one another. To achieve this effect, these legs may not necessarily be physically tethered to the OCTOPUS'S "body.")* I sometimes forget that I'm camouflaged. Some fish find it very startling.

RAINBOW FISH: You're... You're...

OCTOPUS: I apologize for the mess. I've been working in the garden
15 all morning and, you know, I don't get many visitors.

RAINBOW FISH: You're the octopus!

OCTOPUS: Well, I am an octopus. I don't know if I'm the octopus. That would depend on what kind of octopus you're looking for. Could you hold this for me? *(One of the tentacles holds up a gardening tool of some kind. RAINBOW FISH takes it.)* Thank you.

20 **RAINBOW FISH:** You're the octopus that Starfish told me about.

OCTOPUS: Oh, really? Which starfish would that be? I know lots of them.

RAINBOW FISH: She lives in the reef way back there. And... she's
25 good at cartwheels.

OCTOPUS: Oh. Does she give famously disappointing hugs?

RAINBOW FISH: Yes!

OCTOPUS: Hmmm. No, I've never met that starfish.

RAINBOW FISH: But, look, there's the cave she told me to look for.

30 **OCTOPUS:** Lots of octopuses live in caves. I bet she also told you I was wise, and I'd have all the answers to your problems.

RAINBOW FISH: Yes!

OCTOPUS: Then I definitely don't think I'm the octopus you're looking for. That octopus sounds special and important.

35 **RAINBOW FISH:** Look, I don't need you to be special and important. I just... I just need your help.

OCTOPUS: Oh! Why didn't you say so? I'd be more than happy to help you, Rainbow Fish.

RAINBOW FISH: You know who I am?

40 **OCTOPUS:** Of course I do. Everyone's heard of the Rainbow Fish and his beautiful scales. And... how he guards them so selfishly.

- 1 **RAINBOW FISH:** What?
OCTOPUS: Algae? (*An arm offers up another snack.*)
RAINBOW FISH: Oh, thank you.
OCTOPUS: Why do you refuse to share with the other fish?
- 5 **RAINBOW FISH:** Because, if I give away my scales, then I won't be the most beautiful fish in the ocean.
OCTOPUS: And that makes you happy? Being the most beautiful fish?
RAINBOW FISH: Well, I thought it did. Back when that was the only thing I knew.
- 10 **OCTOPUS:** And now?
RAINBOW FISH: Now, I think it makes me feel lonely.
OCTOPUS/TENTACLES: Then change.
RAINBOW FISH: How? (*MUSIC CUE 7: "Give It Away."*)
OCTOPUS:
- 15 YOU THINK YOU NEED THESE SHINY SCALES
TO BE WHO YOU ARE.
BUT THEY'VE BECOME SOME KIND OF JAIL,
LOCKING UP YOUR HEART.
AND NOW YOU SAY YOU'RE NOT SATISFIED.
- 20 NOT THE WAY YOU SHOULD.
BUT THERE'S A TRICK YOU HAVEN'T TRIED—
YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE A LITTLE.
WHY NOT JUST GIVE A LITTLE?
GIVING FEELS GOOD.
- 25 IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU ARE,
IT MATTERS WHAT YOU CAN BE,
AND YOU CAN BE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO.
YOU'VE KEPT YOURSELF SO APART,
BUT DROP YOUR GUARD AND YOU'RE FREE,
- 30 'CAUSE YOU CAN BE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO!
IT IS A BEAUTIFUL COSTUME YOU WEAR.
IT FITS A CHARACTER YOU THOUGHT YOU SHOULD PLAY.
BUT NOW I'M TELLING YOU NOT TO BE SCARED.
YOU ASK THE OCTOPUS?
- 35 I SAY YOU OUGHT TO JUST
GIVE IT AWAY.
RAINBOW FISH: But I can't!
OCTOPUS: Why not?
RAINBOW FISH: Because... I don't know what I am without my scales.
- 40 I've never been anything else.

1 **OCTOPUS:** Before today you had never left the reef. You had never crossed the ocean to find me, and look how far you've come.

RAINBOW FISH: Oh, but I— (*Optional additional ACTORS can sing with TENTACLES.*)

5 **OCTOPUS:**

TENTACLES:

CHANGE IS NEVER EASY.

OOO WAH AAA...

IN FACT, IT'S USUALLY HARD.

OOO WAH AAA...

BUT YOU HAVE ALREADY

OOO...

MADE IT THIS FAR.

WAH...

10 AND YOU MAY FEEL PULLED

OOO...

IN BOTH DIRECTIONS,

WAH AAA...

BECAUSE LOVE IS A

OOO...

TWO-WAY STREET.

WAH AAA...

BUT READY OR NOT,

OOO...

15 IF YOU GIVE WHAT YOU GOT,

OOO...

THEN I PROMISE THAT

OOO...

YOU'LL GET WHAT

WAH!

YOU NEED!

IT DOESN'T MATTER

20 WHAT YOU ARE,

IT MATTERS WHAT YOU

IT DON'T MATTER.

CAN BE,

AND YOU CAN BE ANYTHING

YOU WANT TO.

YOU-WAH!

25 YOU'VE KEPT YOURSELF

SO APART,

BUT DROP YOUR GUARD

DROP YOUR GUARD

AND YOU'RE FREE!

AND YOU'RE FREE!

'CAUSE YOU CAN BE

30 ANYTHING YOU WANT TO!

WANT TO!

IT IS A BEAUTIFUL

COSTUME YOU WEAR.

COSTUME YOU WEAR!

IT FITS A CHARACTER YOU

THOUGHT YOU SHOULD

THOUGHT YOU SHOULD

35 PLAY!

PLAY!

BUT NOW I'M TELLING YOU

NOT TO BE SCARED.

NOT TO BE SCARED!

YOU ASK THE OCTOPUS?

UH-HUH!

I SAY YOU OUGHT TO JUST

UH-HUH-HUH!

40 GIVE IT AWAY!



1 **OCTOPUS:** Give a glittering scale to each of the other fish. You will no longer be the most beautiful fish in the sea, but you will discover how to be happy. (*Begins to DISAPPEAR.*)

RAINBOW FISH: Wait! No, please don't go! It's not that simple! You say
5 I should share, but how? The other fish, they don't want anything to do with me. (*OCTOPUS EXITS and is gone.*)

"SHARE A SCALE WITH ALL OF THE OTHER FISH."

IT'S AN EASY THING TO SAY...

BUT WHY WOULD THEY CARE ABOUT THE RAINBOW FISH
10 **WHEN I'VE CHASED THEM ALL AWAY?**

(*MUSIC OUT.*)

LITTLE FISH: (*ENTERS cautiously.*) Rainbow Fish? Rainbow Fish?

RAINBOW FISH: Little Fish! What are you doing here?

LITTLE FISH: (*Bows her head.*) Please don't be angry. When I heard
15 you left the reef, I got so worried you weren't coming back. I had to come find you and make sure you were okay.

RAINBOW FISH: You swam all the way out here to find me? Through the dark and the kelp and the cold?

LITTLE FISH: Yeah! Because also, I don't want you to go! I know you're
20 leaving because of me, and I'm really sorry! All I've ever wanted is to be your friend, and that's why I asked you to play. And that's why I asked for a scale, because I know their yours, but I just thought if we shared something like that it would mean we really were friends. (*RAINBOW FISH holds out a scale.*) What? (*Beat.*) Really?

25 **RAINBOW FISH:** Yes.

LITTLE FISH: (*Takes the scale and wears it.*) Oh, wow, really? I can't believe it!

RAINBOW FISH: Neither can I. (*MUSIC CUE 8: "Finale."*)
30 SOMETHING STRANGE IS HAPPENING,
LIKE A KNOT IS CAUGHT IN MY THROAT.
BUT NOW THE KNOT'S UNRAVELING,
AND I FEEL AN INCREDIBLE RUSH OF HOPE.

I WAS AFRAID THAT IF I GAVE AWAY MY SCALES
I COULDN'T BE HAPPY ANYMORE.
35 BUT NOW I SEE THE HAPPINESS THEY BRING YOU
AND I FEEL BETTER THAN I EVER HAVE BEFORE.

RAINBOW FISH/LITTLE FISH:

OH! WHAT AN INCREDIBLE FEELING.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I NEVER KNEW.
40 GOTTA GET A LITTLE MORE OF THIS FEELING!

- 1 **RAINBOW FISH:**
WANT TO SHARE A LITTLE MORE OF MYSELF WITH YOU.
- RAINBOW FISH/LITTLE FISH:**
FEEL IT IN YOUR HEART.
- 5 FEEL IT IN YOUR SOUL.
THIS IS HOW WE START
TO BE PART OF A WHOLE.
THE MORE WE SHARE,
THE MORE WE CARE,
- 10 THE MORE THE FEELING GROWS.
(They arrive back at the reef, where STARFISH, SARDINE, and HERMIT CRAB are hanging out. MUSIC continues UNDER the following dialogue.)
- LITTLE FISH:** Look!
- 15 **SARDINE:** Oh, wow! How'd you get that?
LITTLE FISH: The Rainbow Fish gave it to me.
HERMIT CRAB: Lucky!
RAINBOW FISH: Would you like one, too?
SARDINE: Really?
- 20 **RAINBOW FISH:** Yes. Everyone can have a scale! *(Hands them out.)*
You are all so beautiful! *(MUSIC UP)*
- ALL:**
OH! WHAT AN INCREDIBLE FEELING!
- LITTLE FISH:**
- 25 WHAT A JOY TO FIND A FRIEND!
- ALL:**
GOTTA GET A LITTLE MORE OF THIS FEELING!
- RAINBOW FISH:**
GOTTA GIVE A LITTLE MORE TO GET A LITTLE MORE!
- 30 **ALL:**
FEEL IT IN YOUR HEART,
FEEL IT IN YOUR SOUL!
THIS IS HOW WE START
TO BE A PART OF A WHOLE.
- 35 THE MORE WE SHARE,
THE MORE WE CARE,
THE MORE THE FEELING GROWS.
THIS IS BEAUTIFUL!
THIS IS BEAUTIFUL.
- 40 A BEAUTIFUL TRUTH WE HAVE DISCOVERED.

1 IT IS BEAUTIFUL,
IT IS BEAUTIFUL,
WHEN WE DECIDE TO SHARE OUR LIVES WITH OTHERS.
WAY OUT IN THE WIDE BLUE OCEAN,
5 UNDERNEATH THE CRASHING WAVES,
THERE'S A WORLD OF LIGHT AND MOTION
WHERE THE FISH ALL PLAY THEIR GAMES.
ALWAYS LOOK BELOW THE SURFACE.
THAT'S WHERE BEAUTY TRULY LIVES.
10 SO LOOK INSIDE TO FIND THE
BEAUTY SHINING LIKE THE RAINBOW...
THE RAINBOW FISH!
(MUSIC OUT.)

ALL: Come on, Rainbow Fish! Come and play with us!

15 **RAINBOW FISH:** Here I come! (MC8a: *"Curtain Call–The Rainbow Fish."* ENSEMBLE bows and EXITS as the LIGHTS FADE to BLACK.
MUSIC OUT.)

END OF MUSICAL

PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES ONSTAGE

Rock.

PROPERTIES BROUGHT ON

Coin (STARFISH)

Snacks, garden tool (OCTOPUS)

Scales (RAINBOW FISH)

COSTUME SUGGESTIONS

There is an endless number of ways to costume the different sea creatures in this show, especially since all roles can be played male or female. Use your imagination and have fun! There are just a few details to make sure of when planning costumes:

RAINBOW FISH must be colorful and covered in unique scales, at least four of which can be removed and shared with others. In the original production at the Bay Area Children's Theatre (BACT), Rainbow Fish wore a powder blue suit with a colorful bow tie. Most of the shiny scales were sewn directly onto the suit jacket and pants.

LITTLE FISH should be somewhat smaller and far plainer than Rainbow Fish. In the BACT production, Little Fish wore a gray t-shirt and denim vest with dark denim shorts over fishnet-patterned leggings. A short train of ocean blue tulle completed the outfit.

STARFISH needs to have some way to indicate five "legs," whether on a headpiece or counting the actor's own head and four limbs. The BACT actor wore a red hat and a loose-fitting yellow onesie that was just webbed enough to take on a starfish shape when standing spread-eagle. A large red star was embroidered on the front of the costume.

OCTOPUS, of course, needs to have eight tentacles extending from its body, some or all of which can be animated by other members of the ensemble. In the BACT production, the actor wore a large purple and black ball gown with long, stuffed tentacles attached.

CLOWNFISH should wear something orange, perhaps with a white streak through it. Consider an orange clown wig.

PUFFERFISH wears a neutral color and has full sleeves or some other accessory to look larger when "puffed."

HERMIT CRAB needs claws of some sort.

SARDINE should be the plainest fish.



MS. MINNOW should wear or carry some accessory to indicate she's a teacher.

The ENSEMBLE in the BACT production wore blue coveralls spray painted with silvery patches over their other costumes when in the background or animating OCTOPUS'S tentacles.

MUSIC VAMPS

The rehearsal CD demonstrates the pace of dialogue required to fill the music vamps on several of the music cues. However, if you have difficulty with the length of the music vamps on the recording, you have permission to edit the recording by fading out the vamps and creating a separate track for each section of music. In this case, the next MUSIC UP cue would indicate when to start the new track.

ENTRANCES AND EXITS

At the director's discretion and depending on your playing space, it's possible that all actors will stay onstage for the entire production once they've first entered. In this case, entrances and exits should only indicate when actors step into or out of the main playing area.