

RUSALKA: THE LITTLEST MERMAID

Based on the opera *Rusalka* by Antonín Dvořák and
The Little Mermaid by Hans Christian Andersen

Music by Antonín Dvořák
Libretto by Joshua Borths

Originally written for Florida State University Opera Outreach in 2013
Revised for Arizona Opera 2016
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SCENE 3

The scene shifts to a cave at the bottom of the ocean where the Sea Witch lives, banished from the other mer-people. The Sea Witch enters. She lets out a great and terrifying laugh. Her only companion, a sea creature (puppet), swims into the cave. The creature whispers in her ear.

SEA WITCH

Really?... You saw the youngest sea princess save a human?... A Prince?... And she sang to him as he was unconscious?... Young love is strange.

Talking to the kids in the audience But, why can she be allowed to find her "true love" while I'm banished to the bottom of the ocean with *limited* magic? Long story short, how did it come to this?!

The creature shakes his head.

I SHOULD RULE THE SEA... I SHOULD RULE THE SKY...
Getting an idea I SHOULD RULE BOTH SKY AND SEA!

I AM WAITING PATIENTLY
FOR THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITY.

To the sea creature OH, MY POOPSIE, WHAT A DAY
WAITING HERE TO WASTE AWAY.

BUT IF SOMEONE "SWUM: HERE SOON,
I COULD FINALLY CHANGE MY TUNE!
IF THIS GIRL CAME TO MY POOL,
THEN THE WORLD WOULD BE MINE TO RULE!

Scared, Rusalka enters.

RUSALKA

Trying to get the Witch's attention Hello?

SEA WITCH

Well, hello my dear. What perfect timing! I was just thinking how lovely it would be to have guests over for oysters.

RUSALKA

Am I at the right place? Are you the Sea Witch?

SEA WITCH

That depends... Are you alone, isolated, and desperate with nowhere left to swim?

RUSALKA

Yes.

SEA WITCH

Then...

DARLING, COME TO ME. WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!
WE—LIKE YOU—WANT TO BE FREE!

LET ME GUESS WHAT BOTHERS YOU, AND I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

Appraising her YOU HAVE AN AIR ABOUT YOU.
I BET YOU HAVE A LOVE THAT'S TRUE.
IS HE FROM THE WORLD ABOVE—

Yes!

RUSALKA

--AND YOUR FAMILY FORBIDS YOUR LOVE?

SEA WITCH

How did you know?

RUSALKA

OH, I HAVE THE PERFECT SPELL!
ONCE IT'S CAST THEN ALL IS WELL!

SEA WITCH

POOR UNFORTUNATE,
IF YOU LIKE THE PATH YOU'VE SET,
I WILL WRITE UP OUR CONTRACT.

She pulls out a scroll and hands it to Rusalka. Rusalka starts to read it.

GO AHEAD, READ IT WELL, ONCE THAT'S DONE I CAN INCANT THE SPELL.

The following dialogue is underscored. The Witch quickly is annoyed at Rusalka taking so long to read the contract and snatches it out of her hands.

That's enough reading. Here's the deal: I will turn you into a human for three days.

RUSALKA

Three days?

SEA WITCH

Three days. In that time, you must get your "Prince-y" to kiss you. If you do, you will remain human. If he doesn't, the you will... uh... cease to exist.

Rusalka gasps.

I'm not done. If you return to the water at any point during those three days, the spell will immediately be broken. So, please... don't ruin my plans and return to the sea. Got it? Any questions?

Rusalka looks at the contract.

RUSALKA

Yes. What does it say in this fine print?

SEA WITCH

Oh, nothing much. It just says that in exchange for my spell, you must give me... your voice.

RUSALKA

My voice?!

SEA WITCH

Yes, your voice. Now, don't blow this out of the water. You won't need your voice. There are other ways to communicate in the human world.

Rusalka hesitates. She looks out to the audience. She makes her decision.

RUSALKA

I'll do it. It's the only way to be free of the water and be who I'm meant to be.

Rusalka signs the contract.

The Sea Witch casts the spell. She transforms into a human and loses her voice.

SEA WITCH

Aside to the audience I now have her voice! I can set my plan into action and take the kingdom over for myself. *To Rusalka* Now, start swimming! You don't want to be down here when you become 100% human, do you? Go!

Rusalka quickly exits.

The witch laughs and exits.

Contact Opera Classroom for a full perusal script/score!