

Dialogue Sample from THE LITTLE MERMAID

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[THE LITTLE MERMAID, PEARL, with her three sisters, CORAL, ANEMONE and LUNA, have saved the PRINCE who had been swept overboard in a storm. As the three sisters prepare for the SEA KING's ball, they worry about PEARL who has been left alone to take the human safely to shore.]

CORAL

(Putting a shell comb in her hair)

So what do you think? I want my hair perfect for the sea ball tonight.

ANEMONE

(Swimming nervously)

How can you even think of a party, Coral, with Pearl gone?

LUNA

Please stop swimming about, Anemone. I'm nervous enough.

CORAL

If I don't think about the party or my hair or something else, anything, I will be as hysterical as you two and what good will that do?

LUNA

Why did we let her follow the ship alone?

ANEMONE

Father will never forgive us.

LUNA

Let's hope she's back before he misses her.

CORAL

Why did she go all soft for a human anyway? I prefer my men with fins.

LUNA

Let's hope this little phase passes and she gets over her infatuation with the world above.

CORAL

It won't last. What's she going to do, flop around on the beach like a fish out of water?

ANEMONE

(Worried)

She was so different when she swam away ... as if she belonged to someone else.

LUNA

There was no stopping her ... as if she were pulled by the tides.

CORAL

I promise you, if she returns in time for the ball, she'll get over this little romance tonight.

(Imitating THE LITTLE MERMAID)

"His face, his face." Don't worry. Father has invited everyone to the ball. Wait until she sees the faces of some of those Mermen.

ANEMONE

I hope you're right.

CORAL

Of course, I'm right.

(SHE takes a comb from LUNA'S hair
and puts it in her own hair.)

Now, how about this one?

LUNA

Coral!

(ANEMONE and LUNA scold CORAL as THE
LITTLE MERMAID enters.)

ANEMONE

Pearl!

LUNA

You're all right!

ANEMONE

We've all been sick with worry.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

I'm sorry. I stayed until I knew he was safe. Oh, Coral, you look beautiful.

CORAL

Thank you, but don't do that to me again. I've had a terrible stomach ache ever since you left.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

You were worried. Did you think that old Sea Witch had eaten me?
(SHE laughs.)

ANEMONE

It's not funny, Pearl. She has powers. She might turn you into, who knows, an eel or a ray ... maybe her servant.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Or a human?

CORAL

More likely, a tuna.

LUNA

Quit joking and don't do such a thing again, Pearl.

(THE LITTLE MERMAID reflects on her own words.)

THE LITTLE MERMAID

A human ...

LUNA

Pearl? ... Pearl?!

THE LITTLE MERMAID

What? Oh, forgive me ... I'm sorry I frightened you.

CORAL

So what about your handsome human? Did he finally stand on his own two feet?

THE LITTLE MERMAID

He walked off the ship into the arms of his father. Such happiness ... such joy.

(Sadly)

And then they walked away on land where I could not see him.

CORAL

Well, a happy ending. How nice. Go get dressed.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

For what?

LUNA

Father's giving a ball tonight.

ANEMONE

Everyone's invited.

CORAL

And there will be more handsome Mermen than you can ... Tell me, are you sure this looks best?

THE LITTLE MERMAID

(Suddenly serious)

Dear sisters, I love you all.

(SHE moves away to be alone.)

ANEMONE

So moody. I'll be glad when she grows up.

LUNA

I fear she already has grown up.

CORAL

Well, she will tonight! Anyone ready for a little romance?

(SISTERS exit. THE LITTLE MERMAID weeps. SEA KING enters and watches her, unseen. THE LITTLE MERMAID wipes her eyes but there are no tears.)

SEA KING

No tears fall from the eyes of a Mermaid, Pearl.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

(Startled)

Father!

SEA KING

What do you know of tears, my Pearl?

THE LITTLE MERMAID

(Afraid HE knows of her meeting with a human)

Tears? ... Great Mother told me that salt water falls from the eyes of unhappy humans.

SEA KING

Humans? How can I warn you of the world above?

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Are we so different? Merpeople and humans?

SEA KING

How fortunate I am to have four perfect daughters. Three, when they were born, swam to the arms of their mother. But the forth, the youngest, swam straight to the surface, like a human desperate for air. And I, then a young Merman, swam with all my strength to catch you. We broke through the surface together. You, longing for the air and sun as your sisters for sustenance from the body of their mother. I held you in my arms and brought you to your frantic mother. For days we both held you tightly until the water became your home. But I cannot hold you anymore, Pearl. Are we alike, humans and Merpeople? I do not know. I once saw a human save his nearly drowning son and hold him tightly, desperately as I held you. And water fell from his eyes. But water does not fall from your eyes, Pearl. You would be helpless on land and I could not save you. The Great Scroll says we were made to swim the oceans. Come.

(THE LITTLE MERMAID puts her head in her hands.)

SEA KING (Continued)

Collect your thoughts, but not for long. The Sea Witch is near. Come soon with your laughing voice and help Coral decide how to wear her hair.

(THEY smile at each other. SEA KING starts to go.)

SEA KING (Continued)

Little Mermaid, if they shed so many tears above the surface, can humans be happy as we?