

CHARACTERS:

OLIVER (a 12-year-old boy)
CARRIE (an 11-year-old girl)
JULIE (Oliver and Carrie's mother)
GREG (Oliver and Carrie's father)
SPLASH (a magic harbor Seal)
LUCKY (a horseshoe crab)
NOVA (a starfish)
CAL AMARI (a squid)
SWIMMERET (a baby lobster)
FILET O. SOLE (a soul singer)
CHOPPERS (a shark)
ROCKY (a remora)
BIG MEAN HERMIT CRAB (a crabby hermit)
THE SEAL OF APPROVAL (a wise grey seal)

ACT I

Scene 1

OLIVER and CARRIE are on a summer boat trip with their parents JULIA and GREG. They are crossing the Mystic Sea to Fisherman's Island on the anniversary of their grandfather's disappearance. OLIVER, CARRIE, and JULIA are standing on deck at the railing, while GREG steers the boat with a big wheel. OLIVER and CARRIE have a blanket wrapped around their shoulders that covers their upper bodies.

JULIA

It was on this date, five years ago, that your Grandpa, Cappy Crabcakes disappeared. Right near this very spot, they say. He'd set sail early that morning for the waters off Fisherman's Island.

OLIVER

Why was he going there?

JULIA

A big school of bluefish had been spotted and Grandpa wanted to catch some to sell at the market. We didn't have much money then and Grandpa wanted to help us out. He loved you both so much.

CARRIE and OLIVER

We loved him, too.

JULIA

The waters were calm and it was warm and sunshiny — just like it is right now. Other fishermen who were in the area that day said the wind picked up all of a sudden. The sea became terribly rough! The waters tossed and turned and turned and tossed! A huge wave must have knocked poor Grandpa overboard! His boat was found but nobody ever saw him again.

JULIA, CARRIE, and OLIVER heave a big sigh.

JULIA

What do you children remember most about him?

CARRIE

He was very round and had such soft, smooth cheeks!

OLIVER

I remember he always wore this special thing on a chain around his neck. It was gold and had a picture inside!

CARRIE

That's called a locket, silly!

JULIA

Do you remember who was in the picture?

OLIVER

Carrie and me when we were babies?

JULIA

That's right! Do you remember what Grandpa always called you?

OLIVER and CARRIE

His little treasures.

The wind suddenly picks up and the water becomes choppy. They have to shout over the noise of the wind and water. (SOUND OF WIND)

CARRIE

Oh, dear! That was a big wave!

(SOUNDS OF WIND AND SPLASHING WATER)

JULIA

My goodness, Greg! The sea is getting so rough!

GREG

(struggling with the wheel) I can't understand it! The weather report said the Mystic Sea would be calm all day! No wind or storms!

(SOUNDS OF WIND AND WATER INTENSIFY)

JULIA

I'd better go below with the kids!

GREG

Make sure their life jackets are on securely!

OLIVER and CARRIE remove the blanket that's been wrapped around them to reveal they aren't wearing life jackets.

JULIA

They're fine - I checked them before we left shore. Oliver! Carrie! When did you take off your life jackets?

OLIVER

We never put them on.

JULIA

You mustn't ever ride on the boat without them – you know that!

OLIVER

I don't need a life jacket! You always say I swim just like a fish!

CARRIE

Me too!

OLIVER and CARRIE goof around, acting like fish.

JULIA

Children, this is no time to be acting silly!

Suddenly, a huge wave washes over the deck and everyone screams and sways back and forth. (SOUND OF WAVE) In slow motion, OLIVER and CARRIE falls overboard as JULIA tries to save them and GREG struggles with the wheel. The "boat" with JULIA and GREG on it moves slowly back and out of sight. OLIVER and CARRIE move their arms and legs as though they are in the water, trying to swim.

OLIVER and CARRIE

Help! Help!

SPLASH THE MAGIC SEAL appears.

SPLASH

FINLESS CREATURES, NEVER FEAR!
SPLASH THE MAGIC SEAL IS HERE!
O GOOD SPIRITS OF THE SEA,
LISTEN TO MY EARNEST PLEA!
GIVE THESE SINKING ONES THE GIFT
TO BREATHE BENEATH THE WAVES THAT DRIFT
KEEP THEM BOTH ALIVE AND WELL
WITHIN THE MYSTIC SEA TO DWELL
LIKE ALL THE FISH WHO SWIM AND SLEEP
AND FROLIC IN THE OCEAN DEEP!

SPLASH makes a final flourish of her flippers. OLIVER and CARRIE begin to sink below the waves, spinning down, down, down to the bottom of the Mystic Sea. They hit bottom and stop.

CARRIE

Oliver, where are we?

OLIVER
I don't know, Carrie. Hold my hand!

CARRIE
It's okay - I'm not scared.

OLIVER
Well, *I'm* scared! (*extends hand, she takes it*) I think – I think – we're – on the bottom of the sea. And I can breathe!

CARRIE
So can I!

OLIVER?
But how can that be?

CARRIE
I don't know! Wait! There was this seal. And she could talk! She said some kind of a spell.

OLIVER
You must have been imagining things. There's no such thing as Splash the Magic Seal!

CARRIE
Aha! So you did see her, too!

OLIVER
I thought *I* was just imagining things! There's no such thing as a magic seal! I mean, there are harbor seals, and gray seals, and harp seals, and leopard seals, and even elephant seals. But who's ever heard of a *magic* seal?

CARRIE
We're on the *bottom* of the *ocean*! We can breathe underwater like fish! I think that proves that magic seals are not just a pigment of our imagination!

OLIVER
You mean a *figment*! A pigment is a color!

CARRIE
What color is it?

OLIVER
All of them!

CARRIE
Whatever! Oh, Oliver! We're lost at sea. Just like Grandpa. What if we never see our family ever again?
(*cries*)

OLIVER
Please don't cry. There's just got to be a way we can find our way home!

CARRIE

CARRIE

We're not supposed to be able to breathe underwater but we can! It's really cool!

OLIVER

Pardon my saying so, but you're kind of strange looking yourself. What kind of creature are *you*?

LUCKY

Lucky's the name! I'm a horseshoe crab. I happen to be one of the oldest creatures in the whole Mystic Sea. My ancestors were around more than two hundred and fifty million years ago!

CARRIE

Ancestors?

OLIVER

That means people in your family who lived a long time ago.

CARRIE

Like Grandpa?

OLIVER

Kind of. How do you do? My name's Oliver and this is my sister Carrie.

LUCKY

I'm so happy to meet you. This is my lucky day! I don't know anyone who's ever met a human bean – pardon me, I mean *being* before. Wait until I tell all the other horseshoe crabs!

LUCKY starts to go.

CARRIE

Please don't leave us, Mr. Lucky. We're lost.

OLIVER

It's very nice here, but we want to go home.

CARRIE

We don't want to end up lost at sea forever, like our Grandpa.

OLIVER

Can you help us?

CARRIE

Please?

LUCKY

How did you say you got down here?

OLIVER

A magic seal put a spell on us.

LUCKY

Oh, my! That *does* shed a whole new light on things!

Why, no! We didn't know fish made movies!

LUCKY frantically gestures to CARRIE.

NOVA

Fish? Didn't you hear me, strange creature? *I'm a sea star!* We're not fish at all. We're echinoderms! *Echinoderms!*

OLIVER

Echino-what?

NOVA flings herself melodramatically onto her rock and pouts.

LUCKY

Echinoderms are the family of sea creatures that includes sea urchins, sea cucumbers, and sand dollars!

NOVA

But I'm worth much, *much* more than a measly sand dollar! Why, I was paid three million clams for my last movie alone! What other star do you know who can get a dressing room filled with gold doubloons from the wreck of an old pirate ship? I'm going to have a talk with my agent. Next time, I want *triploons!*

OLIVER

What are some of the movies you've been in?

NOVA

You have to *ask?* Let's see - there was Sea Monsters Inc., Aladdin and His Magic Lamprey, The Piano Tuna, Splashdance, Scuba Doo, Sea Star Trek *and* Sea Star Wars!

CARRIE

Gee, you really *are* a big star! May I please have your autograph?

NOVA

Don't bother me, kid - I'm busy. Come back on Tuesday!

LUCKY

Miss Nova, may we please ask you a question before we go?

NOVA

Now what?

LUCKY

Could you tell us, please, if we're very far from the Seal of Approval?

NOVA

I've never met her myself, but I've heard she is out that way, somewhere. *(looking at herself in mirror)*
Are you gorgeous!

CARRIE

Thanks, Miss Nova.

NOVA

(captivated by her reflection) Uh-huh.

Lucky? CARRIE

Yes? LUCKY

Do you really think you can find her? CARRIE

Find who? LUCKY

The Seal of Approval. CARRIE

Er – um – of course I can! I'm sure we're not too far now! LUCKY

I'm getting scared! What if we run into that big, mean hermit crab? CARRIE

Enter CAL AMARI. He speaks with an Italian accent.

Did-a you say – mean old-a hermit crab? CAL AMARI

Eek! Who are you? CARRIE

You can call me Cal. My full name is Cal Amari. CAL AMARI

What are you? CARRIE

Can't-a you tell? I'm a squid. CAL AMARI

That's like an octopus, right? OLIVER

You could-a say that. But I got-a two more tentacles! The octopus, he only has eight – but look at me, I got ten. Scusi - if-a you don't mind my saying so, you don't have very many tentacles. CAL AMARI

That's because we're people. CARRIE

OLIVER

Yeah!

LUCKY

Human beans!

CAL AMARI

People? Human-a beans? Those nasty creatures that – that - live up on-a the land?

OLIVER

Well - yes.

CARRIE

But we're not *all* nasty!

CAL AMARI

Mamma mia! Please-a don't eat me!

OLIVER

What?

CAL AMARI

I've-a heard about you guys. You like-a to catch the poor squids and cook us and – and eat us!

LUCKY

(to OLIVER and CARRIE) Do human beans really eat squids?

OLIVER

Well, yes, some of them do.

NOVA

How absolutely ghastly!

CARRIE

But not us. So you're safe.

CAL AMARI

Whew! I feel-a so much better now!

LUCKY

Signor Amari, these children got lost at sea and have to get home. Splash the Magic Seal put a spell on them so they could live underwater like we do. But they miss their Mom and Pop.

CAL AMARI

Tell-a me about it. I haven't-a seen my Mama and Papa since I took a wrong turn in the Mediterranean and ended up here inna the Mystic Sea! (*cries comically*)

LUCKY

Oh, my! I didn't mean to upset you! It's just that I'm taking the children to find the Seal of Approval so they can get home –

CAL AMARI

NOVA

Don't mind if I do. Rest is *so* good for the complexion!

CAL AMARI

(being chivalrous) Signorina Nova, you sit right here.

OLIVER, CARRIE, LUCKY, NOVA, and CAL AMARI lie down on a big green blanket. They fall asleep and snore. Suddenly, SWIMMERET the baby lobster pops up from under the seaweed bed.

SWIMMERET

Waaaah!

OLIVER, CARRIE, NOVA, LUCKY, and CAL AMARI jump.

SWIMMERET

You woke me up!

CARRIE

Oh, my goodness! It's a lobster!

OLIVER

A baby lobster!

CARRIE

How can you tell?

OLIVER

He's wearing a lobster bib!

CARRIE

I thought those were just for people to wear when they eat lobsters!

SWIMMERET

Waaaah!

OLIVER

Good job, sis! Now he's crying again! Baby lobster, what's your name?

SWIMMERET

*(pouting)*Swimmeret.

CARRIE

Swimmeret, we are very sorry we woke you from your nap. We are very tired, too – and that bed of seaweed looked so comfortable!

SWIMMERET

It *is* comfortable! But I don't want to share it with anyone!

OLIVER

Aren't you being kind of selfish?

SWIMMERET

Well, of *course* I'm a kind of shellfish – anyone can see that! Lobsters are crustaceans!

LUCKY

Crustaceans can be very – uh - *crusty* when they've been awakened from their naps. But sometimes if you pay them a compliment, it will put them in a better mood.

OLIVER

It's worth a try.

CARRIE

You know, I've seen lots of lobsters but this one is the cutest I've ever seen. Just look at that pretty shell! Except I never knew lobsters were brown – I always thought they were red.

OLIVER

That's just when they get cooked.

SWIMMERET

Waaa!

OLIVER

Uh – and - he's very sweet, too. I mean – he has a very sweet personality.

SWIMMERET

Don't try to butter me up!

CAL AMARI

Looka here, my friend. I understand where you are coming from. We squids get eaten, too. But thesea human beans, they are not gonna eat you. They just want to get home to their Mama and Papa.

SWIMMERET

Really?

CAL AMARI

Crossa my heart anda hopea to – um. Never mind!

NOVA

Now dry your tears! Only I am allowed to be a diva around here!

SWIMMERET

You mean I can go with you?

LUCKY

Sure! We're going to find the Seal of Approval!

SWIMMERET

I'm just a baby. Will somebody hold my claw?

CARRIE

As long as you promise not to pinch us!

FILET O. SOLE

The Seaaaal of Approval! Well, now, I thought you were comin' to see me.

CARRIE

I didn't know fish could sing.

FILET O. SOLE

Honey, can we *ever*! Just listen to *me*!

(sings to the tune of "Rescue Me"; she is very flat)

RESCUE ME

I GOT CAUGHT IN A NET!

RESCUE ME

I DON'T WANT TO BE ET!

NOW YOU GOTTA GET ME OUT!

CAN'T YOU HEAR ME SCREAM AND SHOUT?

COME HERE AND RESCUE ME

COME HERE BABY, HELP ME BABY, GRAB ME BABY, SAVE ME BABY

HELP THIS POOR BOTTOM FEEDER, BABY

CAN'T YOU SEE I BEEN CAPTURED?

RESCUE ME!

She takes a bow. LUCKY and CAL AMARI clap while NOVA looks unamused.

SWIMMERET

Waaah!

LUCKY shushes him.

CAL AMARI

Brava! Bravissima! *(he stops when he sees NOVA scowling at him)*

FILET

That ol' number usually gets everybody's flippers tapping and fins snapping! Why so glum?

CARRIE

We're very far from home and we miss our Mom and Pop.

OLIVER

That's why we're looking for the Seal of Approval.

CARRIE

We're hoping she can help us.

FILET O. SOLE

Well, now. No wonder you're down in the gills. Maybe another little song would cheer you up!

LUCKY

Miss Filet O. Sole, we couldn't take up any more of your time — since you have to get ready for your show and everything!

OLIVER

Yes – you’ve been way too nice to us already!

FILET O. SOLE

(ignoring them) Nonsense! Here’s another one of my greatest hits!

(sings to the tune of “I Feel Good” by James Brown)

I FEEL FLAT!

I KNOW WHERE IT’S AT!

I FEEL FLAT!

I KNOW WHERE IT’S AT!

SO FLAT, SO FLAT, CAUSE I’M A SOLE!

LUCKY, CARRIE, and OLIVER clap to be polite – and to interrupt.

LUCKY

Oh, thank you, Miss Filet O. Sole! We’d love to stay and listen some more but we must be on our way.

FILET O. SOLE

Well, then I’m coming right along with you! Running into me was no fluke! You’re gonna need some music to cheer you up along the way! My one-fish show at Oysters Rockefeller Center will just have to wait!

NOVA

Oh, goody!

FILET O. SOLE

I just hope we don’t run into that big, mean Hermit Crab they say lives out the way you’re going! I heard he’s as big as a blue whale and as ferocious as a great white shark!

LUCKY

Th- th - that big and mean, huh?

FILET O. SOLE

Mmm-hmmm! That’s what they say.

They continue on the journey.

OLIVER

I’m starting to think that hermit crab couldn’t be real. I mean, how could he be as big as a blue whale?

CARRIE

Yeah! And as ferocious as a great white shark?

SOUND: DEEP BASS NOTE OF “JAWS” THEME

OLIVER

Oh, no!

CARRIE

Yikes!

SWIMMERET
That sounded scary!

CAL AMARI
Mama mia!

NOVA
Maybe it's just – just – whales with gas!

SOUND: DEEP BASS NOTE OF "JAWS" THEME, EVEN LOUDER

LUCKY, OLIVER, CARRIE, CAL AMARI, NOVA, SWIMMERET, and FILET O. SOLE all jump, then huddle together.

LUCKY
(terrified) When you hear that sound, it can mean only one thing!

EVERYBODY
Shaaaaaark!

CHOPPERS THE SHARK enters with by his sidekick, ROCKY REMORA. They are old-fashioned gangsters. LUCKY tries to shield OLIVER and CARRIE, who try to shield SWIMMERET; CAL A MARI tries to hide NOVA and FILET.

CHOPPERS
Well, well, well, Rocky – what have we here?

ROCKY
I dunno, Choppers! I ain't never seen no fish like dose two finless creatures before!

CHOPPERS
Yeah – they're kinda weird lookin'. What are you doin' hangin' around my neighborhood?

ROCKY
Choppers don't like no weird fish hangin' around his neighborhood, ya dig?

LUCKY
We mean you no harm!

CHOPPERS
You mean us no harm! Well, that's a goood thing because we was gettin' reeeeaal scared! *(laughs)*

ROCKY starts laughing, too. CHOPPERS stops laughing first but ROCKY continues laughing until he sees CHOPPERS glaring at him.

CHOPPERS
So – youse didn't answer my question!

ROCKY
Yeah – youse didn't answer the boss's question. Er – ah – what was the question?

(being brave) I will-a tell you. These creatures, they're – uh – human-a beans.

LUCKY

Beings!

CAL AMARI

Beings!

CHOPPERS

Human beings, eh? I hoid all about human beings. Yeah. They're the ones who don't like sharks – ain't they?

ROCKY

Hey — anybody what don't like Choppers here don't like Rocky Remora neither!

OLIVER

(stepping bravely out from behind LUCKY) It's not that we all don't like sharks. Actually, some of us think sharks are kind of cool.

CHOPPERS

Kind of cool? Kind of cool?

ROCKY

Sharks are *totally* cool – you dig? When you're a shark, you're a shark *all the way!*

CARRIE

Yes – yes – that's right! But – but some people are – afraid of sharks.

CHOPPERS

Well, now - why is that, I wonder? Hmmm. Let's see. Could it have something to do with our great big teeth? *(shows his big teeth)*

ROCKY

Great big teeth!

EVERYBODY, all in a big cluster, takes a step back.

CHOPPERS

And our great big jaws? *(shows his big jaws)*

ROCKY

Great big jaws!

EVERYBODY, all in a big cluster, takes another step back.

CHOPPERS

And the way we like to sneak up on human beans when they're swimming and help ourselves to a tasty snack?

ROCKY

Tasty snack!

But why? We promise we won't bother you.

BOOMING VOICE

In all the years that I've lived in this shell, I have never let anyone pass by, and I am *not* about to start now!

CARRIE

Are you afraid we'll steal your treasure?

BOOMING VOICE

*(extra loud and scary)*How do you know about my treasure?

OLIVER

Nova told us about it!

NOVA

I plead the fifth!

LUCKY

We don't want your treasure, we just want to pass by. We're on a very important mission!

BOOMING VOICE

And what mission is that?

OLIVER

We have to find our way home.

CARRIE

We're lost.

OLIVER and CARRIE

We miss our family.

HERMIT CRAB'S VOICE

*(softly)*Home. Lost. Family. These words have meaning for me.

CARRIE

Do hermit crabs have families, too?

HERMIT CRAB'S VOICE

Oh, I'm not a big, old hermit crab. I'm just a crabby old hermit.

The HERMIT CRAB opens the door of his shell and stands in the doorway. He is only a human – a gaunt old man with a bushy gray beard and tattered clothes.

EVERYONE

Gasp!

LUCKY

A human bean!

CRABBY HERMIT

I can't believe my eyes! People! Why, I haven't seen another soul in a very, very long time.

FILET O. SOLE

But there are lots of soles in the Mystic Sea!

CRABBY HERMIT

Yes, of course. I know all about fish! I've been living all by myself in this giant shell for a hundred years, or so it seems.

CARRIE

Poor thing.

OLIVER

You've been lonely.

LUCKY

No wonder you're so crabby!

CRABBY HERMIT

Yes, but I'm really not mean – I'm just afraid someone will steal my beautiful treasure. So whenever sea creatures swim close to my shell, I yell at them using this shell as a megaphone to make my voice sound louder and scarier! (*shows a conch shell*)

CARRIE

I promise we will not steal your treasure!

OLIVER

We just want to pass by so we can find the Seal of Approval and go home.

CRABBY HERMIT

I will let you pass. But once you go, I'll be all alone again. (*sighs*)

LUCKY

Why don't you come with us?

EVERYONE

Yes! Please do! The more, the merrier!

CRABBY HERMIT

I don't know if I could.

CARRIE

Are you afraid to leave your treasure?

OLIVER

Is it big and heavy? I'll help you carry it! (*flexes bicep*)

LUCKY, CAL AMARI, NOVA, FILET

We can all help!

Wait!
CRABBY HERMIT
(turning back.) Yes?
SEAL OF APPROVAL

I – I have something you might like!
CRABBY HERMIT
And what might that be?
SEAL OF APPROVAL

It’s my treasure. I’ve been guarding it for many years. I keep it next to my heart. It is small, but of great value. You may have it – if it means these children may have your permission to return home!
CRABBY HERMIT
Show me. *(extends hand.)*
SEAL OF APPROVAL

CRABBY HERMIT pulls a gold locket on a chain from under his tattered shirt and hands it to the SEAL OF APPROVAL.

(sadly) Please. Take it.
CRABBY HERMIT

(to OLIVER) I’ve seen that before!
CARRIE

(to CARRIE) It looks like a locket!
OLIVER

The SEAL OF APPROVAL opens the locket and looks inside.

How peculiar. There are two little creatures inside this golden shell. Like two tiny pearls in an oyster.
SEAL OF APPROVAL

(sadly) Those were my grandchildren. The picture was taken many years ago – before I was lost.
CRABBY HERMIT

(thoughtfully; looking at locket) I see.
SEAL OF APPROVAL

Excuse me, sir, but what were your grandchildren’s names?
CARRIE

CRABBY HERMIT

GREG
Did *you* rescue our children, sir?

GRANDPA
Actually, *they* rescued *me*!

JULIA
Your voice – it sounds so familiar.

GREG
Do we know you, sir?

OLIVER and CARRIE
It's *Grandpa*!

JULIA
But Grandpa's been lost at sea for five long years!

GRANDPA shows them the locket. GREG and JULIA embrace GRANDPA.

GREG
Dad! It is you! But how can it be?

GRANDPA
That's a *very* long story! Let's just say today was my lucky day!

OLIVER
Can we go now?

CARRIE
Yes – let's go home!

GRANDPA
Home. That's the sweetest word I've ever heard.

GREG
As soon as we get aboard, everybody's putting on life jackets! You, too, Dad!

GRANDPA
Aye, aye, captain!

JULIE
We don't want to lose *any* of our treasures ever again!

OLIVER
I promise we'll be careful from now on.

CARRIE
After all, magic seals don't come along every day – not even in the Mystic Sea!

JULIA and GREG