

DISNEY'S THE LITTLE MERMAID - SYNOPSIS

Out on the open sea, the sun is beaming, and a magnificent blue sky is accompanied by buoyant clouds. Suddenly, a beautiful young mermaid with red hair crashes through the surface; her name is Ariel. Ariel yearns to be out of the sea and onto land ("The World Above"). Elsewhere, above the sea, a handsome Prince Eric and his crew are searching for treasure. In the midst of sailing, Eric hears a mysterious voice and wishes to pursue it. Despite the protests of his crew and his guardian, Grimsby, they sail on ahead to seek out the source of the singing ("Fathoms Below"). Ariel reappears as Flounder, a rambunctious young fish and her best friend, meets up with her. As the two converse, Ariel reveals a mysterious object that she found: a fork... but she doesn't know that. Just then, Scuttle the seagull flies down. Ariel spies him. When Scuttle finally lands by the duo, Ariel approaches to show him the fork. Scuttle proclaims to be an expert on "human paraphenicular" and begins to offer rare and unique items in exchange for it. As Scuttle and Flounder play around on an odd pipe that makes music, Ariel becomes stricken with panic – she is late for a very important concert! Ariel and Flounder zoom off as Scuttle carries on with his human oddities.

Far beneath the murky waters, we transition to King Triton's Court. A trumpet blast summons everyone to assemble as King Triton takes reign with a scepter-like trident. He announces a celebration: for the day marks a significant anniversary, the day that Triton inherited his father's Kingdom and forever banished the evil Sea Witch, Ursula, from the Kingdom. In commemoration, Triton announces the performance of an original composition; its composer, Sebastian, steps forward. He is a small crab with a Jamaican accent, and he introduces the musical number and its performers: King Triton's seven beautiful daughters. The girls swim onto stage and begin their performance. As the music climaxes and the sisters prepare to make way for Ariel's grand entrance, she is nowhere to be found ("Daughters of Triton"). The performance is abruptly halted as all begin to scatter, looking for the young girl. With Flounder not far behind, Ariel bursts in. The sisters pounce on her and scold her; King Triton asks for privacy. Now alone, he reminds her that she has been gifted with her mother's singing voice and not to squander it. All is better as the two embrace, until Flounder mistakenly mentions a seagull and the surface. Triton recoils and becomes enraged, warning her of the dangers that humans present. Ariel, feeling hurt, bursts into tears and swims away. King Triton expresses his frustration with Sebastian and admits that she needs someone in life who can be her own guardian angel of sorts; Triton elects Sebastian for the job and, despite his every effort to refuse, he sends him on his way to begin ("If Only – Triton's Lament").

We are led into Ursula's lair as two sneaky eels, Flotsam and Jetsam, slither into view to report on Triton's festivities. Ursula emerges from the darkness, a larger-than-life femme fatale with eight floating tentacles. She rues the day that her brother, King Triton, double-crossed her to take control of the Kingdom, and has been planning her revenge for quite some time ("Daddy's Little Angel"). Ursula reveals her plan to lure Ariel away and steal the girl's singing voice... in order to get back at Triton. The eels are dispatched to begin their pursuit of Ariel.

From the deep emerges a veritable museum of human artifacts that Ariel has collected over the years, dominated by a huge, discarded bust that resembles Prince Eric. Ariel, distraught after her fight with King Triton, sits among her treasures, holding her newly acquired fork. Flounder tries to comfort her as Ariel vents. After Flounder leaves, Ariel sits alone, surrounded by her "stuff." She marvels at her collection and continues to dream of walking on land ("Part of Your World"). Sebastian appears in her grotto, startling Ariel, who is in mid-thought. As he informs her of Triton's assignment, a massive ship passes overhead. Feeling an inexorable pull, Ariel swims up to the ship as Sebastian chases after her. Above water, sailors prepare for a storm. Prince Eric is lamenting his deceased father's expectations to be King; Grimsby reminds him that he must take on this role and that he must also find a Queen soon. Ariel and Flounder bob up to the surface as Scuttle looks on from nearby. Lighting strikes and a storm begins; the trio are separated by the wind and rain, and the ship above is swallowed by crashing waves. It breaks apart as Eric disappears into the voracious sea.

While a storm rages above, Ariel rescues Prince Eric from beneath the waves by guiding him up to the shore and laying him down safely. Ariel, Flounder and Scuttle look on cautiously, unsure of what to do. Suddenly, Prince Eric's chest heaves with life. Ariel now gazes longingly, stricken by his strength and beauty. Grimsby yells out, startling Ariel and Flounder. They quickly vanish as Grimsby comes to Eric's side. Prince Eric recounts his tale of rescue by a singing girl, but the story is immediately batted away. The two walk away as Ariel secretly looks on ("Part of Your World – Reprise").

Back in the Kingdom, Ariel's sisters are in a huddle, gossiping about Ariel. They come to the conclusion that her antics must be the result of love. Flounder overhears and is consulted by the girls – he wholeheartedly agrees

("She's in Love"). Sebastian enters, still searching for Ariel. The sisters, meanwhile, are grilling Flounder, who accidentally reveals that it may be a two-legged human. The girls rush off.

On the beach, Prince Eric is alone and scanning the horizon. He cannot get Ariel's voice out of his head and continues to think about her ("Her Voice"). Grimsby enters and attempts to get his mind off the mysterious girl by suggesting a majestic ball on the eve of his 21st birthday. He will invite the most eligible bachelorettes from far and wide to compete for his love. Prince Eric, at first reluctant, finally agrees as he realizes that a singing contest will be the only way he can find the girl who rescued him. He is elated.

Meanwhile, beneath the open water, Ariel sits and plucks a flower. Sebastian appears and voices his concern for the young girl. She reminds him that her life under the sea feels incomplete, but he interjects: the human world is a mess but the sea world is her true home ("Under the Sea"). As Sebastian rejoices with the other underwater creatures, Ariel sneaks away. King Triton then barges in with his other daughters, who have told him of Ariel's love for a human. Triton demands that Sebastian take him to her. Back at the grotto, Ariel is speaking to the heroic bust. As she confides in it, we hear a rumble as King Triton rushes in. He is furious, demanding to know the truth of her interaction with a human. Ariel begins to argue with her father, which only makes him more enraged, using his trident to blast and obliterate the bust. The bust crumbles into a million pieces and, as Triton swims away, Ariel searches for the spyglass she took from Prince Eric; it is still intact. She clings onto it as Sebastian unsuccessfully tries to reason with her ("If Only – Ariel's Lament"). As Sebastian departs, Flotsam and Jetsam slither out from the darkness; Ariel realizes that she is no longer alone. The eels pretend to comfort the child and present a solution on behalf of her Aunt Ursula. Ariel is both scared and skeptical but, when the evil duo suggest a spell that could turn her into a human and get her out of the Kingdom, she relents and agrees to go with them ("Sweet Child"). As she heads into Ursula's lair, Flounder arrives just in time to see her disappear into the deepest voids of the sea floor.

In the lair, Ursula greets Ariel enthusiastically. As the two play a subtle game of cat and mouse, Ursula closes in on her ploy to trick Ariel ("Poor Unfortunate Souls"). She offers Ariel a spell: she can become human for three days – and three days only... unless she is kissed by the Prince. If the Prince kisses her, she will stay human forever. If she is not kissed and the three days pass, her soul is forever Ursula's. She explains to Ariel that there is also a "fee" for the deal. In exchange for this opportunity, she must give away her voice. Ariel initially refuses but, after some pushing, she signs the contract; Ursula's maniacal laugh grows as Ariel's voice soars... and then begins to vanish. She is suddenly propelled into a magical spin and thrust up toward the surface. As her scales fall, she sheds her tail and grows human legs. Ariel crashes violently through the water's surface and takes her first breath as the curtain drops.

Act Two

As the curtain rises, Ariel is basking in the morning sun. She stares at her legs in wonderment and, slowly, tries to stand. Suddenly, Scuttle flaps in while Sebastian and Flounder watch on from the water. When Ariel opens her mouth, no sound comes out. Flounder steps in to explain. With what seems like an impossible feat, the group becomes sad and blue; Scuttle will have none of it, though, and encourages the group to maintain optimism ("Positively"). Prince Eric bounds onto the beach and catches sight of Ariel. He tries to engage her but, without a voice to respond, he cannot. Concerned for her well being, he lifts her up and heads off to the palace.

Back at the Kingdom, Triton is full of worry. His trusted advisors return without news, which worries him even more. At the same time, we see Ariel in a lavish bubble bath; awaiting servants to warm, feed and clean her. While they attend to her, we hear inside her head ("Beyond My Wildest Dreams").

As she and Prince Eric depart for dinner, we are introduced to Chef Louis, a French culinary perfectionist with an affinity for blades, who is preparing lobster bisque. It is then revealed that Sebastian has followed Ariel to the palace, and he is cowering underneath a table as Chef Louis tries to catch him ("Les Poissons"). Ariel now finds herself at the dinner table in the banquet hall with Prince Eric. As dinner begins, she starts discovering new and exciting things. Eric is more than amused. Time passes and Chef Louis appears to present the main course. As he lifts the silver dome, we see it is Sebastian. He jumps off the table and runs away. Mayhem begins as a chase ensues ("Les Poissons – Reprise"), but Sebastian escapes.

Eric and Ariel come sauntering into the ballroom following an eventful dinner. She is smiling, and he is giggling. The two share a moment, and Prince Eric offers his hand, insisting that she can say just as much through dance. They grow closer as the dance continues ("One Step Closer"). Just as Ariel is about to kiss the Prince, a mysterious voice is heard from afar. He is taken aback by it and bids Ariel goodnight. Sebastian enters and threatens to march her back to King Triton, but he eventually changes his mind and takes her to bed. Meanwhile, back in Ursula's lair, they are watching the events unfold through her magic shell. They are concerned that Prince Eric is falling for Ariel and must do something drastic to change this ("Daddy's Little Angel – Reprise").

The next evening, Ariel and Prince Eric are in a small rowboat, drifting in gentle waters. Sebastian and Scuttle look on from nearby, realizing that they must encourage Prince Eric to kiss Ariel somehow... and so a plan goes into action. The two use the animals of both land and sea to create a romantic atmosphere, encouraging Eric to make the move ("Kiss the Girl"). With the help of the animals, Prince Eric learns her name and establishes a genuine connection with the mysterious, voiceless girl. Just as he leans in to plant a memorable kiss on Ariel's lips, Ursula instructs the eels to jolt the boat. They do, and it works as the kiss is interrupted. Prince Eric notices the lateness of the day and returns to the palace with Ariel.

It is nighttime. Ariel is in her bed, disappointed and hopeless. Prince Eric is elsewhere, thinking about both Ariel and the mysterious voice. King Triton is in his own chambers and Sebastian is back at the palace. All four reflect on the situation and what the future has in store ("If Only – Quartet").

The next day, we find a large crowd in the Ballroom. The contest begins as princesses step forward from a long line to sing for the Prince Eric. Six of them compete but, after an entire day of singing, he is not satisfied. The sun is beginning to set; time is running out ("The Contest"). Desperate to win him over, Ariel steps forward. She cannot sing, but she can convey her feelings through the dance steps Eric taught her. He is now beginning to realize that perhaps she is the one. Just then, the voice echoes throughout the palace. Although Prince Eric is drawn to it, he has made his choice and tells Grimsby to turn everyone else away! As he leans in to kiss her at last, a giant Ursula peers over the palace wall. With the mighty sweep of two mammoth tentacles, Ursula wipes the guests away and grabs for Ariel and the Prince. A struggle ensues; Ursula successfully yanks Ariel into the water with her.

Back at the lair, Ursula is dragging Ariel along as she tries to fight. King Triton appears and demands her return. Ursula displays the contract that Ariel signed, but proposes a compromise: his daughter's freedom for his soul and power. Triton does not hesitate and, much to Ariel's dismay, signs the scroll. Ursula cackles as the eels imprison the King. In a moment of glee, Ursula becomes distracted and Ariel grabs the magic shell; her voice returns, breaking the spell. In desperation, Ursula attempts to reason with Ariel, but she refuses and destroys the shell. Ursula vaporizes into a cloud of ink; King Triton is free. The two embrace and reconcile as he now realizes where his daughter truly needs to be... on land. He magically restores her to human form and they swim to the surface.

On the beach, Prince Eric and Grimsby have just concluded a full day of searching. Ariel and King Triton appear from the water, where she introduces her father to Prince Eric. Eric and Grimsby are astonished but now understand. After receiving a blessing from both families, Prince Eric decides that Ariel will be his one and only. A crowd gathers to witness the happy occasion as the two profess their love for each other, and Ariel's friends celebrate from the sea as the curtain slowly falls ("Finale Ultimo").