

Fish 'n Ships

An underwater musical about life and the environment

A musical play by Cenarth Fox
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Orchestrations and Backing Tape/CD

Fish 'n Ships is scored for piano, guitar, bass, drums, percussion, flutes, clarinets, saxophones, trumpets and trombones. The band parts are for hire and will give your show a terrific boost. There is a stereo tape and/or CD with rehearse and perform versions of the musical score.

Production Package

Groups staging a **FOX** play or musical receive support in many ways. There are free Production Notes (*set-design, costumes, lighting, props, etc*) a free copiable activity booklet with art work for posters and tickets, follow-up ideas and script analysis. With musicals, free lyric sheets for chorus members. There are photos, programs and reviews of previous shows and video tapes of most shows may be borrowed.

To the Director

Whilst some characters are obviously male [Groper] or female [Octopus], the gender of most of the cast is not important.

Premiere Performance

Fish 'n Ships was first staged in December 1990 in Fish Creek, Australia by the talented students of Fish Creek Primary School. The show was a great success.

Reviews of this popular musical staged by primary and middle schools

The adult audience thoroughly enjoyed the well-written lines ... the music was bright and bubbly ... responses have been extremely positive ... a meaningful, professional show. The dramatic ending made all think about our waterways

Middle Park PS

Romance, comedy, music and morals, all narrated by a worm dangling from a fish hook! These are some of the endearing qualities of FISH 'n SHIPS **Fish Creek PS**

Our show was once again very successful. Thank you for your support and above all for the terrific show **Killarney Vale PS**

The backing-tape has been great and lifted the performances all round **Kahibah PS**

A great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all – our best show yet – a great show.

Burringbar PS

A great success **Glenhuntly PS**



Fish Creek PS

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Synopsis

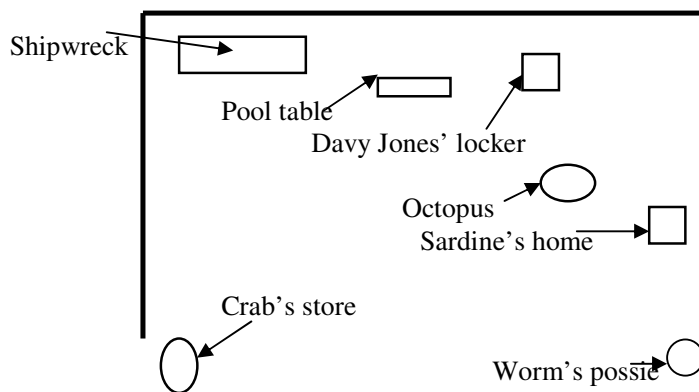
Our story takes place on the ocean floor not far from where you live. Life in the neighbourhood below the waves is pretty much like anywhere else. The residents work and play. Some are wealthy, some drift with the tide while others struggle to keep the angler from the door. It's a normal, average community. Just like yours.

Costumes and Movement

Poetic licence abounds. The characters stand upright and walk as humans. CRAB can scuttle, SHARK and HERRING strut, GROPER plods, PENGUIN does a sophisticated silly-walk, SARDINE bubbles. They don't attempt to swim. Use costumes [even just headgear, a dorsal fin, etc] to suggest the character or you can go overboard and make them look life-like. More suggestions in the free *Production Notes*.

Set Design

There is only one basic set. The remains of a wrecked sailing ship stand UR. Two large rocks are DR and LC. These form homes for certain characters. OCTOPUS lives on the LC rock and CRAB beneath the DR rock. SARDINE and her family live in a tin [naturally] beside the LC rock. WORM appears on a hook. Ouch! It's really a small ledge [hard to see] supporting a large safety-pin [a metre long at least]. WORM always appears on a raised area DL. He [or she] could slide in from an unseen ramp offstage or be lowered from the roof. When not speaking, WORM is in darkness. Perhaps small electric fans [noiseless] could be placed behind the rocks thus allowing greenery to sway. The greenery is attached to the roof by very thin wire. Here's a sketch of your set. Use different levels, i.e. the characters can appear on the rocks, the wreck as well as the sea-bed.



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Musical Items

1.	Overture	Orchestra
2.	The Water Is Fine	Company
3.	Tourists	Herring, Crab & Company
4.	Dignity	Penguin & Company
5.	Marriage	Groper & Octopus
6.	Tourists - Reprise	Herring & Company
7.	Bring Back the Black Bow-Tie	Penguin & Company
8.	Enter The Diver	Orchestra
9.	Gourmet Garbage	Diver & Company
10.	Filthy Rich	Company
11.	Filthy Rich - Reprise	Company
12.	Business	Herring & Diver
13.	A Free Feed	Company
14.	Curtain Calls	Company
15.	Playout	Orchestra

Characters

Herring	<i>shyster, get-rich-quick entrepreneur, con-merchant, a baddie</i>
Penguin	<i>dreamer, lives in the past, old-school-tie, stiff upper lip, just a goodie</i>
Sardine	<i>poor, over-worked battler, a fighter for basic fish rights, a goodie</i>
Octopus	<i>snob, vain, self-centred, greedy, foolish, a baddie</i>
Shark	<i>failed criminal, bungles most heists, stupid, bully, a baddie</i>
Groper	<i>friendly, slow, well-meaning, tries hard, a bit backward, a goodie</i>
Worm	<i>a philosopher, wit, raconteur, wise, a goodie</i>
Crab	<i>ditherer, collector, harmless, scatter-brained, a goodie</i>
Diver	<i>liar, human version of Herring, a baddie</i>
Chorus	<i>(a) Sardine's siblings</i> <i>(b) Penguin's supporters - all super-conservative and jolly good folk</i> <i>(c) other fish and sea creatures [different species in all shapes, sizes and colours]</i> <i>(d) Tourists - some of the COMPANY fish become tourists. If you have a large COMPANY, this is one way of dividing the masses. Otherwise, some COMPANY fish will need to don sunhats, sunglasses, cameras etc for their limited roles as tourists.</i>

FISH 'N SHIPS 4

No. 1 Overture

(Slowly bring up dim lights towards the end of The Overture. It must be dim so that when various actors are highlighted, they stand out in the generally dim lighting. Besides, it's night. Some principals are frozen on stage. CRAB is DR/DC, HERRING is UR, OCTOPUS LC on her rock, PENGUIN is UL on the coral and GROPER is DR. When "alive", each character works on their home or personal appearance or, in GROPER'S case, his bunch of flowers - a dozen sepia seaweeds. The Overture ends and a bright light comes up on WORM seated [skewered] raised DL. WORM addresses audience. Good lighting cues here. Light always on WORM when speaking. Also on other soloists when named. Crossfade lights. Don't allow lights to spill over stage)

Worm Good evening. (*"Good afternoon" if performed at day*) My name is Worm and as I'm just hanging around, I thought I might introduce our players. Now I know what you're going to say. What's a garden worm doing in the ocean? Well you've heard of a fishing licence. This is poetic licence. Now, first crab off the rock is Crab. (*Light CRAB who scurries about rock DR fussing, tidying outside of his home*) He's a collector. Keeps anything and everything. Shells, stones, sea-weed, soggy sailors. You name it, he's got the biggest collection this side of Plymouth Rock.

Crab (*To no-one in particular*) Anyone seen my sea shells by the sea shore?
(*Cross-fade lights. Down on CRAB up on OCTOPUS who preens herself on rock LC*)

Worm Now there's a pretty kettle of fish. Octopus. Some say she's beautiful. *She* says she's beautiful. But it sure don't make her happy. She'd have to be the ocean's most glamorous bundle of misery.

Octopus (*Complaining*) I'm bored. I'm miserable. I'm depressed. (*Louder*) Mother!
(*Cross-fade lights. Down on OCTOPUS up on SHARK who crosses to locker UC*)

Worm Oh no! Here's Shark. Mister Mystery. What's he got in that sack? Is that his packed lunch? He won't tell and I sure ain't askin'.
(*SHARK opens locker, looks around, tosses in sack, closes locker. He threatens everyone*)

Shark Hey! Nobody touches this locker. Okay?
(*COMPANY afraid of SHARK who moves to pool table and plays. Lights down on SHARK*)

Worm And it's not even his locker. Belongs to Davy Jones. (*Lights up RC on SARDINE who enters leading a dozen or so identical sardines. They move to their tin [home] near OCTOPUS LC*) Ah here's my friend. *Everyone's* friend. It's Sardine and family.

Sardine Squeeze up! Closer! Tighter. (*The sardines squeeze up against one another and form a tight bunch*) That's what's it's going to be like inside. In you go.
(*The sardines enter their home which is a tin with a roll-up front-door. Once inside, each sardine exits via a black cloth covering an unseen exit through/beside the rock and thus off-stage. The sardines bank up on stage. It's a tight fit getting everyone into the tin. All we can see are a few pairs of sardine legs standing very close together. The rest have departed off-stage. The last few have to push and squeeze to get in. WORM continues speaking as soon as the sardines start to enter their tin*)

Worm It sure is crowded in there. The whole family live in that tiny tin. Talk about sub-standard housing. In fact, they're squeezed in like sardines.
(*Cross-fade lights. Down on SARDINE who rolls down the front of the tin once her family are inside. Lights up UL on PENGUIN who bowls in and declares in loud voice*)

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- Penguin** *(To everyone)* Greetings! I'm your local candidate. A vote for me is a vote for you.
- Worm** Oh dear. Would you look at that. *(PENGUIN waddles importantly from UL to DR. En route he nods, doffs hat, greets others. He pauses briefly DR chatting with CRAB)* Meet Penguin, a politician, perfectionist and pilloried pain in the posterior.
- Penguin** *(Turns and speaks to WORM)* I say, none of this disrespect business, thank you. *(Turning back to CRAB)* Now, what was I saying?
- Worm** See what I mean? *(Cross-fade lights. Down on PENGUIN up on GROPER who enters DR and adjusts posy)* Ah, now there's a friendly face. It's Groper. The kindest, friendliest, most lovable dummy in the ocean. And to make matters worse, he's in love.
- Groper** *(Offers flowers to audience)* Ah, these are for you. *(Lights fade on GROPER who moves DR. Lights up on HERRING on shipwreck UR)*
- Worm** Look out, here's trouble. It's Herring the hustler. *(HERRING hangs sign on shipwreck as he speaks)*
- Herring** Roll up, roll up, see the latest shipwrecks. And just for today it's the *Titanic!* *(He continues preparing for customers)* *(Slowly bring up all lights. All characters come alive, chorus FISH enter now if not already)*
- Worm** The *Titanic!* Blimey! Talk about a con fish. *(MUSIC BEGINS)* So there they are. You've met the crew, now let's launch this musical in style. All aboard! Bye! *(Lights dim on WORM who could exit. COMPANY sing)*

No. 2 The Water Is Fine

- Company** *Oh the sea, yes the sea, oh the big, blue sea
Come on in the water is fine.
Oh the deep, yes the deep, oh the neap, steep deep
Feel that beautiful brine.
You can swim on the surface or dive down below
Where life on the bottom is all go, go, go! Oh
The sea, yes the sea, oh the big, blue sea
Come on in the water is fine.*
- Shark** *Anyone here like surfin'?*
- Company*** *Yes we do!!*
- Group A** *Oh we love to go surfin' on the seven seas
Yeah we love to go surfin' in a gale or breeze
And when we go surfin' with our favourite shoal
You can bet we'll be surfin' where the breakers roll.*
- Groper** *Anyone here like swimmin'?*
- Company** *Yes we do!!*
- Group A** *Oh we love to go swimmin' 'cos the sea's so fine
Yeah we love to go swimmin' in the salty brine*

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Company *And when we go swimmin' we are oh so wise
Everyone should try swimmin', healthy exercise.
Yes life is often hectic as you all can plainly see
Yes life is quite eclectic on the bottom of the sea.
Oh the sea, yes the sea, oh the big blue sea*

(Song ends. Most, if not all the CHORUS exit in various directions, miming small talk or they could remain on stage chatting, visiting, etc. PENGUIN exits UL, GROPER exits DR, SARDINES exit into their tin [we can see some legs squeezed together when lid is rolled down almost to the floor], SARDINE herself remains outside fixing the tin, light is dimmed on WORM who could even exit off-stage on his unseen ledge, OCTOPUS attends to her tentacles on the rock, CRAB fusses around his rock DR, HERRING fusses around signs at the ship UR and SHARK, pool-cue in hand, moves C and calls to all)

Shark Okay, who's for a game of pool? *(No response)* Come on, come on, I need a pool pal. *(To CRAB)* Hey Crab. You'll do.

Crab *(Fussing)* Sorry, Shark. Can't possibly. Tomorrow perhaps. *(Fusses)*

Shark *(Thinks CRAB stupid)* You're an idiot, Crab. You're all idiots. *(Sees OCTOPUS)*

Octopus *(Continues preening)* Ah, Octopus. Come on, darling. Let's have a quick game of pool. *(Continues preening)* Can't you see I'm brushing my tentacles? Do you know how long it takes to wash, set and brush eight of these things?

Shark Forget the tentacles, sweetheart. Just look at your advantage in reach.

Octopus *(Annoyed)* Look, I've told you. The answer's no. It's a stupid game, you're a macho moron and I *(Emphatic)* don't want to play. *(Goes back to preening)*

Shark *(Angry)* Hey, easy with the insult, sister. *(Softer)* You're the one who's stupid. *(Looks around. Frustrated)* Talk about boring. What's with you guys? You scared or something? I'm not gonna eat you. *(Pause)* Well?

Herring *(Dusting his sign)* Give it a rest, Shark. *(SHARK looks at HERRING)*

Shark What did you say?

Herring *(Comes down to SHARK)* Come here. Listen Rambo, you're flogging a dead sea-horse, mate. Everyone knows you're a pool Shark.

Shark *(Angry)* That's slander. A dirty lie! I am *not* a pool Shark!

Herring *(Cool)* Come on, cut the baloney. Look, it takes a cheat to know a cheat. I fleece 'em at tourism, you do it with pool.

Shark *(Threatens the unflappable HERRING)* Are you calling me a cheat?

Herring And a con-merchant and a crim. *(SHARK furious)* Look, take it easy. Calm down. *(Walks him DL. Conspiratorial)* I was going to suggest a deal.

Shark Deal? What sort of a deal?

Herring I draw the crowds to see my phoney shipwreck. Once they're here, you can flog pool lessons from an old pool shark.

Shark *(Delighted)* Hey! I like it. Keep talkin'.

Herring With a cut for me, of course.

Shark Of course. I'll give you a cut all right. I specialise in cuts.

Herring Think about it, buster. In the meantime, go and bone up on your billiards.

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Shark *(Delighted)* I will. Fantastic. *(Slaps HERRING a bit too hard and darts upstage to continue playing pool)* Thanks a bunch, Herring. Thanks a bunch.
(HERRING shakes his head at the crude and thick SHARK. CRAB calls from DR)

Crab Oh Herring! May I have a word? *(The two move DC)*

Herring Look Crab, can you make this quick. I'm expecting some punters.

Crab Have you got any more of those gold coins, jewellery and treasure?

Herring Tons. There are two shipwrecks over by the reef. They're full of junk.

Crab *(Excited, begging)* Oh could I have some? Please? Please?

Herring Take the lot, it's only rubbish.

Crab *(Overjoyed)* Oh thank you, Herring, thank you.
(TOURISTS enter. They are perhaps CHORUS members dressed for the occasion. They're dressed in summer clothes and are on vacation. They carry shopping bags, cameras, wear hats/caps, etc. They spread around admiring the scenery)

Herring Listen, Crab, I've gotta tell you this. That stuff is junk. Gold is junk!
(MUSIC BEGINS. HERRING sees TOURISTS) But if you wanna make some real money, here's the caper.

No. 3 Tourists

Herring	<i>Wanna make a buck?</i>	Crab	<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna make a quid?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna make a yen?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Do you? Do you?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna own a bank?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna make a mint?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna see your dreams come true?</i>		<i>Pooh!</i>
	<i>Wanna reach the heights?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna hit the top?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna make it big?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Do you? Do you?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna grab the lot?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna take the pile?</i>		<i>No!</i>
	<i>Wanna see your dreams come true?</i>		<i>Pooh!</i>
Company	<i>Tourists are lovely, we bring in heaps of dough Everywhere we go, watch our money flow. Tourists are lovely, we feather your nest Tourists, dear tourists are simply the best.</i>		
Herring	<i>See them take a little picture.</i>		
Company	<i>Snap, snap.</i>		
Herring	<i>Photo.</i>		
Company	<i>Snap, snap.</i>		
Herring	<i>Print sir? Slide sir? How about a guide, sir? See them spend a lotta money.</i>		

FISH 'N SHIPS 8

Company *Cash, cash.*

Herring *Moolah.*

Company *Cash, cash.*

Herring *Trip sir? Ship sir? Thank you for the tip, sir.*

Company *Tourists are lovely, your pockets we line
Tourists, dear tourists are simply divine.
(Dialogue during the song. HERRING makes big announcement)*

Herring *Right this way, folks. Souvenirs. Special today. (Holds hand aloft as if holding this wonder product - it's mimed) Bits of the teeth from the whale that swallowed Jonah! (Huge gasp from COMPANY who besiege HERRING frantically trying to buy) Okay, okay, one at a time. (As he does business. Keep all this moving) Visa? (Or other well-known credit card) Certainly madam. (To crowd) Get your authentic souvenirs! Buy! Buy! Buy!
(This dialogue must be slick and over-the-top. Make it fit the music. During coda, COMPANY exit singing/waving to HERRING. They're happy. He's loaded. HERRING moves C counting his takings)*

Herring *(Counting) One hundred, two hundred, three hundred, three hundred and fifty. (SHARK replaces pool cue and wanders down) Wow! (Pockets notes. To SHARK) Not bad for five minutes work.*

Shark *(Jealous) It's not fair.*

Herring *Oh it's fair, mate. Fair and legal. Well, if not who's counting? (In close to SHARK) Your trouble is you don't know how to make a decent killing. You're too messy. No class.*

Shark *I do all right.*

Herring *Yeah but no finesse. Punters don't mind a rip-off so long as it's done with style. You charge in like a frenzied Shark, ripping things to shreds.*

Shark *(Offended and defensive) Oh yeah? Well I get results.*

Herring *But you scare 'em. Look pal, there's more than one way to scale a fish. Try being nice. (SARDINE comes out of her tin reading a sheet on a clipboard.)*

Shark *(Shocked and disgusted) Nice! Nice!*

Herring *Just on the outside. Lotsa smiles up front while really, you're taking 'em for a ride. (Sees SARDINE) Here's a go. Watch this. (To SARDINE) Oh morning Sardine. (HERRING all smiles and waves. SARDINE gives polite restrained nod)*

Shark *Sardines! (Scoffs) Ha! Small fry.*

Herring *(To SHARK) Little fish are sweet, Sharkie. Little fish are sweet. (Moves to SARDINE. SHARK follows) Lovely to see you, darlin'. (Big wink to SHARK) How's my little cutie pie?*

Sardine *(Not impressed) I've told you before, I am not your darlin' and I'll never be your cutie pie.*

Herring *(To SHARK) Humour 'em. It always works. (Back to the reading SARDINE) And what can I do for my favourite fishie today?
(Another wink to unimpressed SHARK)*

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- Sardine** Apart from not calling me darlin' and your favourite fishie, you can sign this petition.
(SARDINE shoves clipboard/pen at HERRING who takes them still smiling)
- Herring** A petition. Hey, that's a big word for a pretty little thing like you.
(SARDINE fumes, SHARK still unimpressed. HERRING winks again at SHARK then speaks with condescension)
- Sardine** *(Quite annoyed)* Just cut the baloney, buster and *(Points at clipboard)* sign it.
- Herring** *(Teasing)* Ooooh. Temper, temper.
- Shark** *(Into HERRING)* Hey mate, you're wasting your time.
- Herring** *(Grins at SHARK)* No way. Watch this. *(To SARDINE)* Of course I'll do anything to help a lovely little thing like you. *(Big signature from HERRING who returns clipboard but pockets pen)* I'm really big on public relations.
- Sardine** And the pen.
- Herring** Oops. *(Chuckles)* Hey, nearly tricked ya. *(Returns pen)* I like a sharp operator, even if you are female.
- Sardine** Oh I'm sharp all right. I've even tricked you.
- Herring** *(Suddenly anxious)* What? What d'ya mean?
- Sardine** This petition is for better housing and to stop tourists.
(SHARK laughs heartily. HERRING is furious because he's shot himself in the foot and been outsmarted by a female)
- Herring** *(Outraged)* What!?! *(Furious)* You, you ... hooked me!
- Shark** *(Still laughing)* Whoa! She sure caught you, mate.
- Herring** *(Angry with SARDINE)* Cross off my name. Now! Cross it off!
- Sardine** Sorry, no can do. Besides I'm sick of the money spent on tourists. Some of us haven't even got a decent home.
- Herring** *(Snaps at her)* You've got a home. There. Look at it.
- Sardine** You call that living? We're squashed in like ... sardines.
- Herring** Well understand one thing, sister. I've got plans for *more* tourists.
- Sardine** *(Shocked)* *More* tourists!?
- Herring** And I'm goin' to build another old-shipwreck. A genuine plastic 16th century shipwreck up there *(Indicates upstage)* next to the other one.
- Sardine** That's fraud. You're a criminal.
- Herring** *(Takes it as a compliment)* Oh, very kind, thank you very much.
- Shark** *(Suddenly upset)* Hang on, hang on. That's my pool table up there.
- Herring** Yeah, I forgot to tell you. It's gotta go.
- Shark** *(Wild)* Gotta go! No way, stingray! Over my dead body.
- Octopus** *(From her rock)* Oh excuse me. Will you hooligans squabble somewhere else?
- Shark** *(Snaps at OCTOPUS)* Back off, sister. Just keep out of it.
- Octopus** And while you're building a new shipwreck, you can move that filthy old locker.
- Shark** *(Furious)* What!?! That's mine! You can't touch that! *(Double shock)* Filthy!?
- Herring** I agree. Dump the locker. It's bad for business.

FISH 'N SHIPS 10

- Shark** *(Ropeable)* What!!?
- Sardine** Around here, tourists are more important than public housing.
- Herring** Of course they are. Tourists are top priority. They bring in heaps of dough.
- Octopus** *(Being a snob)* Yes but tourists are mainly *(Ooo! Yuk!)* middle-class.
- Herring** Tourists are essential for this economy.
- Sardine** Yes and you've signed the petition for better housing!
(HERRING furious, grabs clipboard. SARDINE holds on and tug-o-war begins. SHARK grabs HERRING from behind and tries to pull him back. OCTOPUS leans over tries to help SARDINE. All four shout the following lines at once.)
- Herring** Give me that thing! Give it to me! *(Continues)*
- Sardine** You signed it. It's mine. Let go! *(Continues)*
- Shark** Leave my pool-table alone. And my locker! *(Continues)*
- Octopus** Get rid of the wreck, the locker and the tourists! Everything! *(Continues)*
(The slanging match is loud, brief and lively. Everyone stops as soon as the music begins. MUSIC BEGINS. EVERYONE freezes. PENGUIN enters RC and moves to frozen protagonists)
- Penguin** *(Distressed)* Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear.
(PENGUIN sings and moves among the frozen fighters. Once the chorus is reached, the quartet comes alive and listens as PENGUIN continues. The COMPANY [including PENGUIN'S friends/family] enters from various directions and joins the singing)

No. 4 Dignity

- Penguin** *The trouble with the world today is plain for all to see
We're loud and rude and often crude with lewd discourtesy.
We need to harken back to days of yore
When manners helped create esprit de corps.
Let's get back to dignity, simple, unadulterated dignity
Let's say goodbye to harsh acerbity
Catch a bit of culture and some courtesy.
Oh let's get back to dignity and let the peaceful, good times roll
If we mind our p's and q's then ourselves we will infuse
With a life of dignity. Oh, oh! Oh, oh! Oh, oh!
(Spoken) Gosh, aren't we terribly dignified!*
- (Song ends. Everyone freezes. Dim main lights. Light WORM)*
- Worm** Well now. What do you think of our motley mix of mariners? Some are trying to make a fast buck, some a quick kill, some are poor and need better housing, some are happy to just get on with life and some are, how shall I put it, a bit keen on themselves. And conflict seems to be the flavour of the month. Sometimes I think a better word for life is conflict. That's life, that's conflict. And that's particularly true in love. I mean if love makes the world go round, conflict is the spanner in the works.

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- Worm** *(Lights come up gradually DR/LC. GROPER hesitates into spot DR and OCTOPUS comes alive on rock LC admiring her tentacles)* And here's a perfect example. Good old Groper is here because of love. Ah, but will love produce happiness or heartache? Time will tell. *(To GROPER as lights dim on WORM)* Good luck, Groper. I have a feeling you're gonna need it.
(Main lighting returns but not brightly as COMPANY exit in many directions. Principals retire to their homes, HERRING to wreck, SHARK to pool-table. PENGUIN and Co. exit UL. WORM exits. GROPER slicks his hair, straightens his tie which becomes even more crooked and ill-fitting and moves slowly to C. He's nervous. Light area of GROPER and OCTOPUS. He clutches a posy of plankton which is bit worse for wear [like GROPER])
- Penguin** Hello Octopus. *(No response. GROPER clears his throat and speaks louder)* Hello Octopus. *(Still no response. OCTOPUS continues preening)* I've brought you these. *(He moves closer holding out posy)* Octopus.
- Octopus** *(Speaks at last. Aloof)* What? Oh, it's you.
- Groper** I've brought you these. *(GROPER again extends posy)*
- Octopus** *(Looks down her nose, sneers)* A dozen puce plankton. How cheap.
(She resumes preening. GROPER withdraws the posy and is unsure of his next move)
- Groper** *(Pause. Tries again)* Would you like to go for a swim?
- Octopus** Where? The Bahamas? Honolulu? Fiji? Somewhere chic and exotic?
- Groper** Ah, I was thinking more of Port Melbourne. *(Use name of local low-key beach)*
- Octopus** *(Groans with disgust)* Do you mind? *(Sarcastic)* Oh and I suppose you'll drive me there in your new Porsche? Or is it a Ferrari? Yes, I bet it's a red Ferrari.
- Groper** It's not red, it's blue.
- Octopus** *(Suddenly interested)* You've got a blue Ferrari?
- Groper** No, a blue bicycle.
(OCTOPUS furious at being sucked in and disgusted at the thought of riding a bicycle)
- Octopus** *(In pain at thought of him. Groans)* Oh, do me a favour. Go and play in the nets.
- Groper** *(Misguided innocence)* But there's a sign on the wharf that says every female wants a fish with a bicycle.
- Octopus** *(Can't believe he's so stupid)* Ohhh. Give me a break. You know something? You are pathetic. *(Pause. GROPER looks pathetic)* Listen dopey, they say the truth hurts and you've gotta be cruel to be kind. What I want and what you have are oceans apart. Savvy? *(MUSIC BEGINS)*
- Groper** *(Doesn't understand)* Sorry. I don't follow. *(OCTOPUS sighs with desperation)*

No. 5 Marriage

- Octopus** *I want a knight in shining armour, I want a prince, a sheik, a lord
I want a life with thrills and adventure, I hate, I hate being bored.
I want a duke with all his dukedom, I want a count or baron no less
I want to rise above my station in life and become a baroness.*

FISH 'N SHIPS 12

Groper *I'd like a caring lass, nothing flash,
'Specially a sharing lass, no need for cash
Even a daring lass, don't mind the rash
Give me a caring lass and we will make a splash.*

Duet *Marriage has something for everyone
Easily done, can be fun.
Marriage has something for everyone, everyone.*

Octopus *Some marry for money, they don't need a shove.*

Groper *Some marry for romance because they're in love.*

Octopus (Spoken) *Love! You're joking!*

Duet *Marriage has something for everyone, everyone!*

Groper *(Spoken) Excuse me. Would you like to dance?*

Octopus *What? Dance? (Reluctant and grumpy as she takes his hand) Oh, all right.
(Warns him) And don't tread on my tentacles!*

(The couple dance a graceful waltz before repeating the song. Alternatively, another couple or team of couples [dressed in formal ball-outfits] take the sea-floor and dance for the principals. Make the dance routine a spectacular but graceful event. All lights would dim and a follow-spot follow the graceful couple/s. Why not use a mirror-ball? OCTOPUS has six tentacles [plus two arms] none of which protrudes in front thus enabling GROPER to partner her a la Fred and Ginger. Alternatively, OCTOPUS could leave her extra tentacles on her rock. If substitute dancers are used, make their exit and the re-appearance of the real Octopus and Groper a smooth transition. Perhaps dim all lights for a second. The singing resumes after the dance. Duet ends, OCTOPUS is gallantly assisted back onto her rock [assuming she left it to dance]. General lighting comes up as dawn breaks. GROPER then offers the posy. OCTOPUS spurns the posy and resumes her preening. Poor old GROPER wanders away DR. He stops as CRAB comes out and the two mime a brief chat. They're friends both being low-fliers. SARDINE comes out and attends to her home. HERRING comes out of the wreck and removes the lifebuoy which says TITANIC. This takes a bit of doing. SHARK enters RC with a lumpy sack and again, suspiciously, unlocks the locker and shoves the sack inside. SHARK feigns total innocence and resumes a spot of pool. CRAB bids farewell to GROPER, patting him on the back and GROPER exits DR. CRAB spots HERRING and scuttles up to the wreck)

Crab *Herring! Oh Herring! May I have a word?*

Herring *(Struggling with the lifebuoy) Not now, Crab. I'm extremely busy.*

Crab *I was wondering if you had any more gold?*

Herring *(Pushing CRAB) Here, hold this. (CRAB takes lifebuoy. HERRING removes note from a pocket) Now let's see. Today's (Insert day of the performance e.g. Friday)
That means tourists from Japan.
(HERRING darts into the wreck leaving CRAB confused and frustrated)*

Crab *(Calling) Herring! This is important. Please. (Pause) Herring?
(HERRING suddenly darts out holding another lifebuoy marked YOKOHAMA)*

Herring *(In a flap) Out of the way. I'm busy. (HERRING hangs lifebuoy on wreck)*

Crab *I know you're busy but I've come about the gold.*

Herring *(Steps back to admire the lifebuoy) What do you think?*

Crab *Very nice. Now about the gold?*

Herring *(Sees the lifebuoy held by CRAB) Oh no! (Grabs lifebuoy and sandwich-board and exits with them to wreck) We can't have these here.*

Crab *(Confused but calls) I only want the gold. (Pause) Herring?*

FISH 'N SHIPS 13

- Herring** *(Enters in a flap)* Oh Crab, I need your help. Listen, what's Japanese for "cheap souvenirs"?
- Crab** I don't know. I can't speak Japanese.
- Herring** *(In a flap)* Oh you're useless. What am I going to do? *(Wanders DC bowing, practising for his Japanese tourists)* Ah so. Good morning honourable punters. *(More bowing)* Good morning valuable customers. *(More bowing. CRAB joins him)*
- Crab** Herring, about the gold?
- Herring** *(Annoyed at interruption)* Will you go away? Can't you see I'm practising my Japanese?
- Crab** The gold.
- Herring** What? Oh, take it. Take the lot! Just go away!
- Crab** *(Scuttles to wreck)* Thank you, Herring, thank you. *(Crowd noises heard offstage)*
- Herring** *(Panics)* What was that? Oh no! They're here!
(He rushes up to the wreck, has a quick check maybe straightens lifebuoy then moves DC just as a group of American tourists enter DL. They could be the same tourists who entered before. They wear colourful summer clothes with sunglasses and cameras. They mime frantic chit-chat and stay close together. They are excited. Rhubarb! Rhubarb! Rhubarb! HERRING speaks in a loud voice and causes them all to freeze and stop rhubarbing)
- Herring** *(Big bow)* Ah so. Welcome honourable tourists from land of rising sun. *(Big tourist buzz)* My name Yoko Herring, descended from Tokyo Rose Herring. *(Another big buzz from tourists. HERRING bows again and remains in bent position)*
- Tourist** *(Kentucky fried-chicken accent)* Say excuse me, I say excuse me buddy, but what in tarnation's goin' on round here?
(HERRING stands upright, faces front, looks aghast and nearly dies)
- Herring** Buddy!? Tarnation!?
- Tourist** We're all, I say we're all from the You-nited States of America.
- Herring** *(Still aghast out front)* America! Oh noooooo! *(This is drawn out but skilfully changed as HERRING suddenly undergoes an instantaneous personality change to hip, funky African-American guide. Slaps tourist's palms and starts raving)* Hey, right on, bro! Wow! Uncle Sam. Licidee-split, man! Cool! Jive! *(HERRING moves to tourists allowing them to high-five the groovy HERRING. He keeps grooving)* Get down and boogie, man. Goll-ee. Sun of a gun. Right on, man. Wow! Hot diggidee-dog! Yes sir, yes m'am! Wow! *(etc)* *(HERRING has regained his cool and is now into full swing. He leads the tightly-packed bunch of tourists around using his phoney American accent. The tourists are sucked in. Aren't they all?)* Okay folks, step right this way. *(He leads them DR stopping beside CRAB'S rock)* Now this folks is none other than the Plymouth Rock. *(Gasps from tourists)* When the Pilgrim Fathers stepped ashore, this hunk o'rock broke away and landed right here. *(Tourists gasp, murmur and take lots of photos. CRAB comes down laden with gold)*
- Crab** Excuse me. Can I get through?
- Herring** Crab. Buddy. Say, how ya doin' man?
- Crab** *(Can't understand jargon)* Buddy? How ya doin, man? Sorry. I don't speak Japanese.

FISH 'N SHIPS 14

- Herring** (To *TOURISTS*) Now here's a genuine Yankee, folks. This guy's got Mom's apple pie and the fourth of July written all over him.
- Crab** I'd like to go inside please. (*TOURISTS* open up and *CRAB* starts to exit into his home) Oh and thank you very much for all the gold.
(Exits as *TOURISTS* gasp at the sack of gold *CRAB* bundles inside)
- Tourists** (Stunned, excited) Gold!
- Herring** Yes folks, weve got heaps of gold here. It's everywhere. (Big murmur from *TOURISTS*) Okay tourists, let's step this way. (*HERRING* heads upstage, sees the Japanese lifebuoy and immediately sidetracks the group *LC*) Ah but first, this rock. This rock came from the Grand Canyon and was used to build the Statue of Liberty.
(*TOURISTS* gasp and take photos. They touch the rock in awe. Meanwhile *HERRING* races upstage, grabs the lifebuoy and turns it around revealing its new name - S.S. *HAMBURGER*. *HERRING* wipes his brow and comes down *C* to the *TOURISTS*)
- Herring** Okay folks, this way for a real treat. (*TOURISTS* turn and face *UR*) This famous shipwreck is one of America's living treasures. It's the wreck of the steam ship *Hamburger* under good old Captain McDonald. (*TOURISTS* gasp and take photos) Many years ago in Boston, it played host to a giant tea party. The Boston tea party. They had tea, french fries, tea, hamburgers, tea, fillet o'fish, tea and a hot apple slice. (Huge reaction from *TOURISTS*) Today it's a living monument. Oh yes folks, we really care about our history. (*TOURISTS* impressed) Now, as promised, our special tour treat is ... (Big voice, big sell) the America's Cup! (*TOURISTS* gasp. *HERRING* moves *DR*) So come on, right this way. (*TOURISTS* move downstage) That's it. Spread out.
(*HERRING* helps *TOURISTS* form a line across front of stage. They're agog. *HERRING* collects megaphone and stands *DL*. He speaks through megaphone) And they're off! (*HERRING* is a race-caller. *TOURISTS* gasp, point and look up. Remember the boats are above the actors) First to show out is *Stars 'n Stripes*. She leads into the straight. The skipper's cracked the spinnaker and *Stars 'n Stripes* leads by two lengths. Now they round the turn and head for home it's still *Stars 'n Stripes*. The others just can't catch her. Oh what a race! And as they greet the judge, the winner is (Big voice) *Stars 'n Stripes!*
(Huge cheer/clapping from *TOURISTS*. Build excitement during the race call. *HERRING'S* voice becomes louder and more frantic as the call progresses. The *TOURISTS* catch the build-up. They get involved. Some could call "Come on *Stars 'n Stripes*" "Go *Stars 'n Stripes*" etc. *TOURISTS* hug one another, jump up and down with excitement. Not for long. *HERRING* gets them moving. Time is money. *HERRING* discards the megaphone *DL* and gets the crowd into line)
- Herring** Okay folks, you've been fabulous. Now you go tell your friends about *Red Herring Tours* and remember, you all be sure an' have a nice day. (*MUSIC BEGINS*)
- Tourists** (Happy) Thank you! It was wonderful. (etc)
(They mime placing notes in *HERRING'S* hand or upturned cap. He smiles and nods his appreciation. *TOURISTS* keep smiling, tipping as they sing)

No. 6 Tourists Reprise

Company *Tourists are lovely, we bring in heaps of dough
Everywhere we go, watch our money flow, oh
Tourists are lovely, we feather your nest
Tourists, dear tourists are simply the best.*

Herring *See them take a little picture*

Company *Snap, snap.*

Herring *Photo.*

Company *Snap, snap.*

Herring *Print sir? Slide sir? How about a guide, sir?
See them spend a lotta money.*

Company *Cash, cash.*

Herring *Moolah.*

Company *Cash, cash.*

Herring *Trip sir? Ship sir? Thank you for the tip, sir.*

Company *Tourists are lovely, your pockets we line
Tourists, dear tourists are simply divine.*

(TOURISTS happily exit DR/RC during last few bars of song. HERRING is waving. TOURISTS do likewise. General lighting returns. HERRING moves happily upstage and tidies wreck. Company FISH enter from different directions. They're out for a stroll, going shopping, returning from work or school. They stop and chat, greet one another, etc. They fill the set.

If the TOURISTS are required back on stage as COMPANY fish, they [the TOURISTS] must quickly remove their cameras, sunglasses, etc and discreetly re-enter. OCTOPUS preens on her rock. GROPER enters DR with another posy of plankton and takes it to OCTOPUS who mimes her disgust. GROPER is heartbroken. SARDINE comes out with her family and they all have clipboards and approach other fish and get them to sign the petition. Small sardines have smaller clipboards. CRAB scurries upstage to the wreck and emerges with a bar of gold. He takes it into his rock/home DR. SHARK enters RC with another mysterious bundle, again suspiciously dumps it into the locker and takes up pool. It's a busy little place. Don't take too long over this. If fact PENGUIN could enter immediately song ends. Like the tide, keep the show moving. PENGUIN enters and moves DC. He could have more penguins in tow. PENGUIN stands on small box and makes loud but dignified public announcement)

Penguin *Ladies and gentlefish. Your attention please. (The OTHERS stop what they're doing and gather round) I wish to advise I am standing for parliament.
(Big "ooo" from OTHERS both at the news and PENGUIN'S slightly posh accent)*

Shark *Get out of it! I'm the shark around here. (A few laughs)*

Penguin *I represent the Dress-For-Dinner-Party. (Another big reaction from OTHERS)
We promise to bring back the bow-tie.*

Sardine *(Calling) Oh yeah? And what'll you do for public housing?*

Penguin *The days of denim are dead. (Polite applause from other Penguins [if used] or other fish including OCTOPUS) Let us return to the days of manners and polite society. Let us, (Big voice) dress for dinner.*

FISH 'N SHIPS 16

(MUSIC BEGINS. Much applause from PENGUIN'S supporters. COMPANY joins Reprise)

No. 7 Bring Back the Black Bow-Tie

Penguin

*Every day in every way life seems more abrupt.
Gone are manners, out is style
Most behaviour's infantile
We rudely interrupt. (Someone taps PENGUIN on shoulder)
(Spoken) Do you mind? I'm trying to sing!
(Sung) What is needed, must be heeded, pip, pip, tally-ho,
Is a return to certain things we did so long ago.
Bring back civility
Bring back good taste.
Bring back gentility
Stylish and chaste.
Bring back tranquillity
Good manners amplify.
Let's all dress for dinner
And bring back the black bow-tie.*

(PENGUINS [if used] join PENGUIN and entire COMPANY in reprise of the chorus. It's a strict tempo, elegant, staccato and rather posh presentation. Very stylish. Song ends and COMPANY freezes. These moments are important. It's as if a movie has been put on hold. Each character must be in a position in which it is easy to freeze. Cross-fade lights. Down on COMPANY, up on WORM who, as usual, is observing from on high)

Worm

The Dress For Dinner Party? What's that got to do with public housing and commercial corruption? Look, I have to tell you something, I'm not all that keen on our friends Herring and Penguin. I mean can either of those two characters be trusted? Once upon a time a gentle fish's word was their bond. (Shaking finger or head) Alas, not any more. (Lights start to dim on WORM) And if you don't believe me, take a look at this.

(Cross-fade lights. Down on WORM, up on COMPANY. Once lights are up, PENGUIN comes alive and continues speech. Once PENGUIN speaks, the COMPANY comes alive)

Penguin

Remember, a vote for the Dress-for-Dinner-Party means a vote for dignity, decorum and ... (PENGUIN'S attention is distracted upwards [to the roof of the stage] and he speaks in a most undignified fashion) ... damnation!

(Gasp from COMPANY. Some amused at PENGUIN'S slip, some aghast)

Octopus

(Haughty) Penguin, that's disgraceful. Whatever happened to dignity?

Penguin

(In a flap) No! (Pointing upwards) Look!

(COMPANY look upwards [i.e. to the roof] UC. Most may need to turn. They gasp, cry out, fall back in shock, cling to one another in fear)

Herring

(In fear) It's a fisher-person! (COMPANY shriek, begin to panic)

Shark

(Moving C rubbing his hands with glee) He's mine. I saw him first. Caucasian 'n chips. Yum, yum.

(COMPANY exit in all directions. Choreographed panic. They bump into one another as they rush to escape. HERRING grabs SHARK)

Herring No Shark. Hide! (*SHARK is pulled DR to hide behind the rock*)
Shark (*Protesting*) But he might play pool. He might be a snooker-freak!
Herring He might be a murderer! (*MUSIC BEGINS*)
(*SHARK suddenly scared and hides with HERRING. The main characters can be seen hiding. CRAB in his rock [near SHARK and HERRING] and SARDINE and OCTOPUS in/on the rock LC. PENGUIN is DL by the smaller rocks. The COMPANY could be off-stage or some could be in the wreck and the coral upstage*)

No. 8 Enter The Diver

(*Instrumental music plays. Lights change to create eerie effect. The whole set is bathed in a new colour and a shaft of light shines brightly UC. Pause. Build suspense. The stage is now in darkness except for the slim shaft of light upstage. Suddenly into this light appears a Diver. He wears the old-fashioned diving-outfit of suit with bowl-like headgear. A tube extends about a metre from and above his helmet - poetic licence. It would normally go up through the roof. Alternatively, the Diver is a modern human in a wet-suit, flippers, goggles and air-tank on his back. His air-pipe is under his chin. Whatever the outfit, the DIVER walks slowly and in ponderous fashion. He enters first by climbing down unseen steps upstage. The steps are hidden by and are part of the coral and rocks.*)

(*From the darkness, the DIVER steps onto disguised steps on the coral and into the shaft of light. He descends slowly and in a way which suggests he is floating down. The front of his helmet or goggles is open i.e. has no glass. He has one of those toy-pipes which blow bubbles. Don't make the pipe too obvious. The bubbles float out of the helmet. They could come out the front or, with a hole in the top of the helmet, they could emerge from the top. The bubble mix is sold in most magic shops. If you can find a better way to make bubbles, use it. If in modern gear, you could put a bubble-machine in/on the air-tank on his back. So the Diver descends, slowly. The music and lighting set the mood. Once the Diver "hits" the ocean floor, he looks around then moves C. As he does so, the music stops and the lights return to normal, i.e. the shaft of light fades and general lighting returns. Suddenly, HERRING steps out from rock DR and challenges the startled DIVER*)

Herring Halt! Remove that helmet [pipe] and identify yourself.
Diver No. I can't. I'll drown. (*Murmur from OTHERS*) Please, I mean no harm.
(*Gradually they emerge, even the COMPANY creatures. Slowly and carefully they study the new arrival. Suddenly the DIVER is hit by rapid-fire questions*)

Herring Okay fisher-person, it's time for an explanation.
Octopus (*Bossy*) Who are you? What's your name?
Diver I'm Diver. I'm a human from the dry land above. (*Hubbub from COMPANY*)
Penguin (*Snobby*) Tell me, is there a bow-tie under that suit?
Diver (*Confused*) What?
Sardine (*Testing the new arrival*) Will you sign my petition?
Diver Pardon?
Crab (*Enthusiastic*) Do you collect things?
Diver (*What's going on?*) Sorry?
Shark (*Pool-sharkish*) Do you fancy a game of pool?
Diver Look fair go. I'm here to help.
Company (*Surprised*) Help!?

FISH 'N SHIPS 18

- Diver** Yes. I'm from the caring, considerate world above (*Pointing*) and I'm looking for fish and other marine folk who'd like a new lease of life. (*Hubbub from OTHERS*)
- Herring** (*Closing in*) Anything to do with tourists?
- Penguin** (*Likewise closing in*) How about dressing for dinner?
- Sardine** (*Moves in*) What'll it mean for housing?
- Shark** (*Moving in*) Snooker or billiards?
- Diver** (*Holding up hands*) Now hold it, hold it. Please. (*OTHERS settle*) I represent certain people in big business. They want to help you, no, save you.
- Company** (*Surprised, frightened*) Save us!?
- Diver** Yes. Now don't be alarmed but ... you're living on a time-bomb! (*Big reaction from COMPANY*) It's called ... the Blackhouse Effect.
- Company** (*Loud*) The Blackhouse Effect!
- Penguin** Is that the same as the black-tie effect?
- Diver** (*Ignores PENGUIN*) What I mean is you're living on huge deposits of oil.
- Company** Oil!?
- Diver** It's a terrible, life-destroying liquid. (*More worry from COMPANY*) If the oil escapes through a hole in the sea-zone layer, you'll all suffocate and die. (*COMPANY is greatly distressed. Much muttering and anxiety*)
- Herring** (*Distressed*) I'm making far too much money. I can't afford to die.
- Shark** (*Equally distressed*) Yes and I'm a movie star. I'm supposed to be in Jaws 5! (*or JAWS 6 or whatever they're up to*)
- Company** (*All speak at once*) Not me ... I don't want to die ... No, please ... What'll we do? ... Are you sure? ... This is terrible ... (*etc*)
- Diver** (*Appeals for calm*) Please, please be quiet. (*Hubbub fades*) There's no need to worry. Humans are kind and wise. They have agreed to remove the oil. (*Cheering and clapping from COMPANY*) And, and ... (*Waits for excitement to subside*) and in return for letting them save you from the horrible oil, the humans are going to give you a whole range of free products. (*Big buzz from COMPANY*)
- Herring** (*Suspicious*) Just a minute. Hang on. Something for nothing? What's the catch?
- Diver** That's it. Catch is right. We humans have been catching fish for ages. Now it's time we put something back! (*Buzz of excitement from COMPANY*)
- Sardine** (*Amazed*) You mean you want to give us something? (*MUSIC BEGINS*)
- Diver** Sure do. And best of all, it's free! (*Huge cheer from COMPANY*)

No. 9 Gourmet Garbage

- Diver** *For years mankind bait fishes in the ocean
With hook and spear and net in every sea
For years mankind ate fishes with devotion
Good seafood beats the pants of fricassee.*

FISH 'N SHIPS 19

*But now the time has come to start repaying
With something great that will enthrall
I know you're going to love this gift from up above
It's a precious present for you all.
Help yourself to gourmet garbage
Try a little zinc or lead.
How about a serve of arsenic?
Heavy metals easily spread.
Pesticides are practically perfect.
Sewerage stands us in good stead.
Help yourself to gourmet garbage
Rubbish that'll knock you dead.
Rubbish that you'll flock to
Rubbish that will knock you dead!*

(Dialogue during song. DIVER dominates. The COMPANY is hooked. Ouch!)

Diver Yes dear fish and creatures of the sea. *(Big gesture to direction in which rubbish is to appear)* Here it is! Quality trash, premium waste. A gift from mankind. We want to put back a little something. We want to give instead of take. *(Various black plastic containers appear. They could be lowered from the roof or simply passed down from the darkness upstage along a chain of excited COMPANY members. Bold symbols denoting POISON or DANGEROUS GOODS etc are seen on containers. COMPANY excited, DIVER keeps ripping out the spiel. The containers are stacked C/UC)* Okay, how's this? For colour there are agents orange, purple and white. *(COMPANY buzz)* We've got enough chemicals to sink a ship. *(Realises the joke)* Hey! Sink a ship! We might just do that. *(COMPANY excited but DIVER keeps firing)* We've got debris, refuse, tailings, trash and toxins. You can build with it, play with it, swim with it, swim with it. *(Gets pun)* Swim with it! Perfect! *(COMPANY love this possibility. DIVER rallies COMPANY. The enthusiasm builds, they cheer and then sing)* Yes folks, this is quality and it's free! *(Big cheer from COMPANY who join DIVER in repeat of the chorus. Song ends and EVERYONE is excited. They're delirious. This new product seems fantastic. How can they get some? What must they do? COMPANY beseech DIVER for the product)*

Company I'll take some ... Where can I get it? ... What have I got to do? ... How much does it cost? *(etc. DIVER again calls for calm)*

Diver Okay, okay! Cool it! *(Eventually calm is restored but buoy are they keen)* Now listen. There's something for everyone. I represent some of the most generous people on Earth. They are prepared to give you their Gourmet Garbage! *(Hubbub from COMPANY. Big voice from DIVER)* And remember, it's free!

Company *(Thrilled)* Hooray!

Diver And I'll remove that terrible black oil without spilling one single drop. *(Much applause from COMPANY)*

Penguin *(Loud)* The human has saved the sea! Humans are wonderful!

FISH 'N SHIPS 20

(More clapping and cheering)
Company *(Thrilled)* That's marvellous ... Fantastic! *(etc)*
Diver *(Calling over the hubbub)* Okay. Okay, I'd better get going, but I'll be back with lots of gourmet garbage for everyone! *(COMPANY roar. DIVER starts to exit UL)* Bye!
(DIVER exits upstage where lights dim to conceal departure. If dark enough, exit could be behind the rock LC. COMPANY call and wave to DIVER whilst PRINCIPALS gather DC)
Company Bye! See you later! Thanks a million! *(etc as PRINCIPALS gather DC)*
Herring This is sensational. This will mean more tourists.
Sardine It'll mean better housing.
Shark I'm gunna pot black!
Penguin Pot black-tie. *(MUSIC BEGINS)*
Groper I'll become attractive.
Crab More things to collect.
Octopus We're going to be rich!
Company *(Re-joining the PRINCIPALS)* Filthy rich!

No. 10 Filthy Rich

Company *No more workin' for a salary
No more work for lousy pay
No more food with hardly a calorie
We've found a fortune today.
Goodbye debt and bad receivership
Goodbye life of losing fast
Goodbye class of underachievership
We've found a fortune at last!
We're goin' to be so filthy, filthy rich
Everyone'll bitch at our new-found niche.
It sure ain't kitsch to make this status switch
To filthy, filthy, filthy rich.*
Herring *I'm gonna wallow in wealth*
Octopus *I'm gonna play in my pile*
Shark *I'm gonna sink in my tidy sum.*
Crab *I'm gonna tramp in my treas [Short for treasure]*
Penguin *I'm gonna melt in my mint*
Octopus *I'm gonna roll in a king's ransom.*
Sardine *I'm gonna bop in my boom*
Groper *I'm gonna win with my wad*
Penguin *I'm gonna nouveau riche unseat.*
Herring *I'm gonna feather my nest*
Shark *I'm gonna stash it away*
Company *I'm gonna play 'n stay on Easy Street!*

FISH 'N SHIPS 21

(Song ends with EVERYONE frozen in ecstatic pose. BLACKOUT. COMPANY make silent exit in darkness. Slowly light comes up on WORM who shakes his head slowly, believes they're stupid)

Worm Something for nothing? Gourmet garbage? Come on, that's crazy. Don't they know there's no such thing as a free lunch? I mean, how can they be so stupid? I've got this feeling that diver person is ... well, a little strange. I'm not so sure all humans are kind and responsible. And what about that old saying? Beware of divers bearing gifts. *(Shakes head in disbelief. GROPER enters DR carrying posy of plankton and crosses to OCTOPUS on rock LC. Cross-fade lights. Down on WORM. Up on OCTOPUS)* And here comes another loony. Groper's just asking for trouble. *(Despairs)* Oh why won't he learn?

Groper *(Boldly, for him)* Hello, Octopus. *(OCTOPUS goes on preening)* I've brought you a posy of plankton.

Octopus *(Preening. Off-hand)* Get lost. I'm busy.

Groper *(Excited, for him)* I'm going to have some gourmet garbage at my place. I'm going to be filthy rich.

Octopus *(Doesn't even look at him)* Are you still there? Go away.

Groper I'll have something. I'll be important. You needn't feel embarrassed talking to me. When I get some garbage, I'll be somebody.

Octopus *(Finally stops preening and addresses GROPER)* You? Ha! You'll have nothing. Il zilch. Zip! Zero! Niente! *(GROPER stunned)* Listen Groper. Once a nobody, always a nobody. You've got no class, loser. Can't you see I'm only interested in success, in someone who's made it. *(Snatches his posy)* This! *(Disgusted)* This is cheapsville.

Groper *(Shocked)* But isn't it the thought that counts?

Octopus *(Scoffs)* Sentiment? Baloney. That's for losers. *(OCTOPUS tosses posy towards DC. GROPER looks pathetically at it then slowly moves to pick it up and exits DR. OCTOPUS returns to her rock. General lighting returns. Suddenly a large bundle of polystyrene foam garbage drops out of the roof above C or is thrown onto the stage - safely. It's marked "GARBAGE" or "TRASH". This light material will almost float to the floor giving the impression it's a heavy object retarded by water. HERRING spots it from UR)*

Herring *(Moving C)* Hey! Look at this. *(OTHERS except GROPER enter from different directions. Even the CHORUS fish come out, curious yet excited. Lots of rhubarbing)*

Shark It's mine! I'm having this lot! *(OTHERS protest)*

Crab *(Inspecting)* Is there any gold?

Penguin Is it formal gourmet garbage?

Sardine *(Announcing)* This piece is the foundation-stone for better housing.

Octopus I want my photo taken with it. *(COMPANY all talk at once. Some argue. "I saw it first" "I'm first" "No, I am!" "The Diver said I could have it" "No he didn't" "Yes he did" etc. Lots of chat and gesticulating. Suddenly DIVER appears on coral upstage. He calls loudly)*

Diver Righto! What's all this noise?!

(COMPANY go quiet, turn and look upstage. DR, two characters continue their argument not noticing the interruption. They are stopped by others. DIVER comes down C clutching more garbage)

FISH 'N SHIPS 22

Herring (To DIVER) Diver, didn't you say I could have this garbage?
Shark No, Diver. You said I could. (OTHERS put in their two-bob's worth)
Diver (Now amongst them C/DC) Just, just ... hold it. (Silence) Now there's garbage for everyone. And quality too. No rubbish here. (COMPANY admire the new garbage) Everyone can have some. (Happy murmur from COMPANY)
Penguin I still can't get over your generosity, Diver. You really are most kind.
Diver Please, don't mention it. We're glad to give it away. We have this urge to share. Not all humans are selfish and greedy. Now, how about we leave this pile of gourmet garbage right here as a sort of monument to mankind?
Herring Great idea. I'll make it a tourist attraction.
Diver I'll bring lots more and everyone can have their own serve of sludge.
Shark Okay, Diver, let's cut to the chase. (Sudden tension) Let's get serious. How much?
Diver Oh, Shark, I've already told you. It's free. Gratis, complimentary.
Octopus You don't understand. Shark means how much will he get.
Diver Oh, sorry. Well, as much as you like. I could fill the ocean with garbage! (Huge murmur from COMPANY. "Fill the ocean ... Wow!" etc)
Penguin I think this calls for a speech. (COMPANY protest but PENGUIN proceeds and they quieten) Large ones and little fish, on behalf of the ocean inhabitants, thank you Diver for telling us about the Black ... er
Sardine Blackhouse Effect.
Penguin (Miffed) I know. (Continues) About the Blackhouse Effect, and I'm sure gourmet garbage will change our lives forever. (Polite applause from COMPANY. DIVER raises his hand for silence)
Diver No problem. Mankind is always keen to give away its abundant produce. Now, we've agreed this pile remains a monument. You folk go about your business and I'll return with some great new gunk, some more terrific trash for ... (Big voice) everyone!
(Big cheer from COMPANY plus applause. MUSIC BEGINS. DIVER exits behind rock LC as COMPANY launches into happy reprise)

No. 11 Filthy Rich Reprise

Company We're goin' to be so filthy, filthy rich
Everyone will bitch at our new-found niche
It sure ain't kitsch to make this status switch
To filthy, filthy, filthy rich!

(EVERYONE exits happily in various directions. SHARK exits RC. General lighting dims but concentrates on the garbage C. Silence. SHARK enters from RC lumping another mysterious parcel on his shoulder. He again suspiciously opens the locker and heaves the parcel inside. He locks the locker, looks around then moves down to the garbage. He inspects it, breaks off a piece and mimes eating it. CRAB comes out from his rock and SHARK ducks down on the LC side of the garbage, hiding. CRAB goes up to the wreck and disappears. Pause)

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Herring *(Angry. From inside the wreck)* Take it, just take it! Take the lot. I've told you, the gold it's absolutely worthless.
(CRAB suddenly appears carrying a gold bar or two. They're heavy and he struggles back and into his rock DR. SHARK rises, breaks off another piece and starts eating. CRAB comes out and sees SHARK)

Crab Hey! *(SHARK nearly dies. He turns to CRAB placing garbage behind his back)*

Shark *(Covering up)* Crab! Wow, you gave me a fright.

Crab *(Moving in causing SHARK to back-pedal)* What are you doing? What are you hiding?

Shark Nothing. Nothing. I'm just inspecting the garbage.

Crab *(Accusing)* No you're not. You're eating it. That's sacrilege.

Shark Sac-ra? Sac-ra what?

Crab You're in trouble. I'm going to report you. *(Heads upstage)*

Shark *(Going after CRAB)* No wait. Crab, please. Look, ah, how would you like some more gold?

Crab *(Suddenly excited)* Gold? Have you got? *(Looks up to locker then back to SHARK)* You mean in your locker?

Shark What? Oh that. Yeah. Ah, Davy Jones is a term which means final resting place of ...

Crab Of gold?

Shark Yeah, that's it.

Crab So that's what you've been putting in Davy Jones' locker?

Shark Yeah. Well gold fillings anyway. So you forget about me and the garbage and I'll tell you where there's another shipwreck full of gold and jewels.

Crab *(Being won over)* Well, I suppose I could make an exception.

Shark *(Bustling CRAB LC)* Atta boy. *(Pointing offstage DL)* Now scuttle over that reef, turn left where the tide ebbs and it's number thirteen Coral Drive.

Crab *(Exits excited)* Oh thank you. *(Calling as he goes)* Thank you.

Shark *(Grins)* So long, sucker. *(Heads back C and gets stuck in at the garbage)*

Octopus Brilliant.

Shark *(Suddenly panics)* What!? Who's there? Who said that?

Octopus *(Cool and admiring)* It's me, handsome. Up here.

Shark *(Turns to OCTOPUS)* Oh, it's you.

Octopus I love the way you assert yourself. I absolutely adore a winner.

Shark *(Back to eating garbage)* Yeah, well right now this winner's dead set flat chat.

Octopus Yes but not too busy to keep your promise.

Shark *(Madly munching)* Promise? What promise?

Octopus To marry me.

Shark *(Chokes)* Me? Marry you!? You've gotta be joking.

Octopus Ah no. You said we'd get hitched as soon as you made a pile. Remember?

Shark *(Stuffing bits of garbage into his pockets)* No I don't. So sorry kiddo, but I'm off to explore the big wide world.

Octopus *(Angry, despairing)* But you can't! You promised to marry me.

PREVIEW ENDS

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4 Drovers Way

Burton

Carnforth

England LA6 1HU

Tel 01524 781868

inquiries@foxplays-uk.co.uk

Australia & North America

FOX PLAYS

PO Box 2078

Richmond South

Victoria, Australia 3121

Tel +61 3 9429 3004

Fax +61 3 9428 9064

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Some More Shows From FOX PLAYS

Germs

Germs is the most popular FOX musical ever. The set, costumes, story and music are fantastic. Inside a human a group of germs spread disease. The human fights back with medicine designed to kill the germs. It's a deadly duel. But some germs plan a revolt - a bloodless coup. The tension builds to a gripping climax. What is the secret the germ leaders dare not reveal? Will the human die? Will the germs die? Thousands of delighted performers and many more audience members have loved this show. It continues to delight. 12 M or F roles, chorus, 1 set, 85 mins. *Germs* is a winner. It's even been performed by the medical staff of a hospital!

Jungle

A stunning musical about all sorts of important things. The animals in the jungle are worried about disappearing species of humans. The young people are unemployed and up to monkey business. The older folks feel that respect and good manners are dead or dying. One new scheme to boost unemployment involves educating folk about Tarzan and Jane. Croc is selling stition. Super stition. Zebra wants a new pedestrian crossing named after him. Then a circus hits town with of all things, performing humans! The songs are powerful and memorable. The Animal Anthem is quite moving. The costumes are weird and the set mysteriously wonderful. It's a great show for all ages.

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