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**Product Code A0842-SP**

# **Under the Sea**

**A 10-Minute Play**

**by**

**Ross Peter Nelson**

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**CHARACTERS**

1W/ 1M / 1 Either

SHARKY: *Female; late 20's; real name Kim*

SQUIDLINGTON: *Male; late 20's*

SPONGE-O: *Either sex. Any age; mute – communicates via bike horn, a la Harpo Marx*

**SETTING**

*The break room of a low-budget amusement park*

**TIME**

*The present*

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*(The grounds of a low-budget amusement park. SHARKY, wearing a shark costume, and SQUIDLINGTON, dressed as a squid, are walking toward the same goal: an unobtrusive door.)*

SHARKY

Good day, Squidlington. You're well, I trust?

SQUIDLINGTON

Why I'm perfectly squidlicious, Sharky. And yourself?

SHARKY

Tooth-errrrr-riffic!

*(They notice something, probably a small child, and make a dash for the door. After some jostling, they make it inside to the employee locker room and slam the door behind them.)*

SHARKY

Made it. Little bastard was coming at us with an ice cream.

SQUIDLINGTON

They're the worst.

SHARKY

Can you help pull my head off?

*(SQUIDLINGTON tugs on SHARKY's costume.)*

Here, Sharkey, have some ice cream. Mash, mash, mash.

SQUIDLINGTON

I think it's stuck.

SHARKEY

Then your paycheck's docked for the cleaning fee.

*(The costume releases, SQUIDLINGTON goes flying.)*

SQUIDLINGTON

Whoa!

SHARKY

Oh god. Thank you.

SQUIDLINGTON

You're welcome.

SHARKY

You need help with yours?

SQUIDLINGTON

No, I'm cool.

*(SQUIDLINGTON leaves his costume on.)*

SHARKY

I wish I was. I would give serious coin for cool. Whoever designed this costume should be forced to spend an entire summer wrapped in thirty pounds of foam rubber.

SQUIDLINGTON

It's probably a violation of the Geneva Convention.

SHARKY

Yeah, I can just see the army using it on prisoners of war, "Confess, or we'll put you in the shark suit."

SQUIDLINGTON

Could they even do that? What about people who aren't allowed to eat sharks?

SHARKY

What?

SQUIDLINGTON

Shark isn't kosher.

SHARKY

That's kind of beside the point. It's not a real shark. It's a costume.

SQUIDLINGTON

I know but....

SHARKY

What?

SQUIDLINGTON

It still matters, don't you think? I mean, if you thought sharks were evil or unclean or whatever and they made you wear a shark suit...

SHARKY

I do think sharks are evil.

SQUIDLINGTON

You do?

SHARKY

I do now.

SQUIDLINGTON

I didn't know you were Jewish.

SHARKY

I'm not! I've just spent three goddamn years stuck inside this suit, earning minimum wage, being mauled by eight-year-olds, vomited on by three-year-olds, and taking surreptitious punches from fourteen-year-olds who think they're too cool for Fanta-Sea-Land. Of course I hate sharks. Don't you hate squids?

SQUIDLINGTON

No.

SHARKY

Well, good for you. You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.

SQUIDLINGTON

You're not a man.

SHARKY

Thanks for noticing. Not that anyone else does. This job has ruined my love life. Do you what it's like to be on a date and have a guy lean over and say, "What's that perfume?" and you have to answer, "Oh, that? It's the scent of foam rubber that's seeped into my pores because I sweat profusely in my shark costume." There is no soap on god's green earth that can get that smell out of your skin. Believe me, I've tried.

SQUIDLINGTON

Why is that anyway?

SHARKY

I don't know. It's probably some industrial chemical that's worked its way into my liver ensuring that I'll die a horrible death before my thirty-fifth birthday.

SQUIDLINGTON

I mean, why are you a girl?

SHARKY

I have two X-chromosomes?

SQUIDLINGTON

No! I mean, on TV, Sharky's a boy. Why did they hire you to be Sharky?

SHARKY

My voice. It's too high for most guys.

SQUIDLINGTON

I don't remember the voice.

SHARKY

The cartoon only ran one season; I'm surprised anyone does. That's the only reason some cheap-ass outfit like Fanta-Sea-Land can even afford mascots.

*(SPONGE-O enters wearing an outfit consisting of glued-on kitchen sponges and a bicycle horn.)*

SPONGE-O

*(Honk.)*

SQUIDLINGTON

Hi, Sponge-O.

SPONGE-O

*(Honk.)*

SHARKY

I rest my case.

SPONGE-O

*(Honk?)*

SHARKY

Never mind.

SPONGE-O

*(Honk.)*

SQUIDLINGTON

So has every Sharky been a girl?

SHARKY

As far as I know.

SPONGE-O

*(Honk. Honkety-honk honk.)*

SQUIDLINGTON

Really?

SHARKY

What?

SQUIDLINGTON

On TV? Bart Simpson is a girl, too?

SPONGE-O

*(Honketa-honketa-honk.)*

SQUIDLINGTON

No kidding? Rocky? What about Bullwinkle?

SPONGE-O

*(Honk!)*

SQUIDLINGTON

That's so cool. I never knew that.

SPONGE-O

*(Honk.)*

SQUIDLINGTON

See you later.

*(SPONGE-O heads out, then turns to SHARKY.)*

SPONGE-O

*(Honk-honk.)*

*(SPONGE-O waits. SHARKY realizes she didn't say goodbye.)*

SHARKY

Oh, sorry. Bye, Sponge-O.

*(SPONGE-O exits.)*

SHARKY

How do you do that?

SQUIDLINGTON

What?

SHARKY

Talk to him. Her. It.

SQUIDLINGTON

Sponge-O?

SHARKY

Yeah. Is it some kind of code?

SQUIDLINGTON

No. He just says—

SHARKY

He doesn't say anything. He honks.



SQUIDLINGTON

Well he means things, and I just ... just know what they are.

SHARKY

Like I said, you've been here too long. ... Break is almost over. Aren't you going to take off your costume?

SQUIDLINGTON

No. I like wearing it.

SHARKY

*(Poking in her locker.)*

Oh, crap! I forgot my lunch.

SQUIDLINGTON

You want my shrimp chips?

SHARKY

No thanks.

SQUIDLINGTON

I might have a can of sardines.

SHARKY

Ugh. I can just imagine smelling my own sardine breath trapped inside humid latex, mixed with the sugary caramel apple and funnel cakes outside. I would heave. But thanks for offering. ... How long have you worked here?

SQUIDLINGTON

Forever.

SHARKY

And it doesn't bother you? The heat, the screaming kids, the abuse?

SQUIDLINGTON

Not really.

SHARKY

The low pay?

SQUIDLINGTON

Better than nothing.

SHARKY

I've got a Master's degree. In library science. I should be sitting in a cool, air-conditioned building, helping people do research, find books, learn things – advancing human knowledge. Instead, I pose for blurry pictures with grimy-faced children of people I don't want to ever meet again.

SQUIDLINGTON

Why don't you do that then?

SHARKY

You think I haven't tried? Do you know how many résumés I've sent out? How many interviews I've gone on? All after futile attempts to resurrect my smashed-down hair and scrub the scent of this place from my skin so I seem like normal human being.

SQUIDLINGTON

Sharky.

*(SHARKY, in a momentary funk, does not respond.)*

Sharky?

SHARKY

Will you stop calling me that! It's our break. We're off-duty. We don't have to be in character.

SQUIDLINGTON

Sharky.

SHARKY

My name is KIM.

SQUIDLINGTON

Kim.

SHARKY

WHAT?

SQUIDLINGTON

You've something on your leg. It looks like barfed up cotton candy.

SHARKY

Aaaahh!

*(SHARKY has a bit of a run-around-, stomp-around-, intermittently-try-to-clean-her-leg- freak-out, after which, exhausted, she flops into a chair.)*

SQUIDLINGTON

You seem tense.

SHARKY

Do I? ... And just how do you cope? Or don't you have any higher aspirations?

SQUIDLINGTON

I ... I just think of other things.

SHARKY

That's it? Pretend you're not oppressed, stinking, uncomfortable, and inconsequential?

SQUIDLINGTON

It's not pretend. I rest my thoughts on the world to come.

**This is Not the End of the Play**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**