SAMPLE OF SCRIPT FOR THE SIREN’S CALL

*Scene changes to Matthias’s house. Mother is cleaning the house. Ruth sits in her chair listening to the birds singing outside.*

Mother I wonder where your brother has got to.

Ruth He was playing with Jaren over by the woods.

Mother How do you know that?

Ruth I could hear them, shouting and fighting with sticks. I couldn’t hear exactly what they were saying, but I know it was them.

Mother Well, it’s no wonder he’s late coming from so far away. I’ll never get to the tavern on time if he doesn’t come back soon.

Ruth He’s on his way. I can hear him running through the brook.

Mother I sometimes forget how good your hearing is, Ruth.

Ruth I can only listen to the world around me, it’s not so surprising. My ears make up for my lack of sight.

Mother I know they do, Ruth, though it doesn’t seem fair that you were born unable to see the world around you.

Ruth Don’t be sad, Mother, I’m not. There are times I wished I could see, but then I listen to the birds singing and I wonder if I would appreciate how beautiful their songs are if I was like everyone else. Who would sit and listen to them then? Would I take the time if I could go where ever I wanted or would their songs be lost to me? Listen to that robin outside, singing his heart out. Isn’t he magnificent? What more could I want.

Mother You’re right. I suppose I don’t take the time to listen to their voices. For a blind child, Ruth, I sometimes think you see far more than the rest of us.

Ruth Matthias is here. He’s coming up the path.

*Matthias enters. He’s been running and is worn out.*

Mother Finally, Matthias. I thought you had got lost. You know I have to be at the tavern by four, or they’ll dock my pay for being late, and we can’t afford that right now.

Matthias Which is why I went down to the harbour today. They’ve almost finished building the Valiant and tomorrow they start looking for a crew. If I sign on as the Cabin Boy, you won’t have to worry about paying for me anymore, and I can send money back to you.

Mother Matthias, we’ve already discussed this. I know you’re trying to help, but you can’t go off on a sailing ship.

Matthias Why not?

Mother Because I need you to look after your sister when I’m at work. If you want to help out, I’m sure we can find you a job in the village during the mornings.

Matthias I don’t want to work in the village. I want to go out and explore and see the world. I want to have adventures and bring back things that people have never seen.

Mother I know you do, but it’s just not possible right now Matthias.

Matthias When will it be possible?

Mother I don’t know.

Matthias Never, that’s when! I’m going to have to stay here forever just because of Ruth. It’s not fair. Dad would have let me go!

Mother If your father was still alive we would have been able to manage, but I can’t alone. I need you here to help with Ruth.

Matthias Why can’t you take her with you to the tavern?

Mother You know how unkind people can be about her. She’s better off here.

Matthias So we have to do everything for Ruth to make her happy. What about me? This is all I’ve ever wanted. If I don’t go tomorrow I might never get another chance.

Mother I have to go, Matthias. We’ll discuss tomorrow morning. Look after Ruth.

Ruth Goodbye, mother.

Mother Take care.

*Mother exits. Matthias sits down sulkily on a chair.*

Ruth Do you want to play a game?

Matthias No, I don’t. All I want is to get away from this place and now I can’t all because of you.

Ruth I’m sorry, Matthias.

Matthias You should be. You ruin everything.

*There is a silence as Matthias sulks and Ruth sits listening. Bird song echoes around the room.*

Ruth The birds are singing beautifully today, Matthias. Listen to them.

Matthias I can hear them.

Ruth They sound so happy. Doesn’t listening to them make you feel happy too.

Matthias No.

Ruth Maybe it would if we went outside to listen. It’s warm today. We could sit out in the garden and sing with them.

Matthias No.

Ruth Please, Matthias.

Matthias No, because all I think of when I hear them is how they’re free and I’m not. They’re mocking me.

Ruth I said I was sorry, Matthias.

Matthias No you’re not. You get to sit here and listen to your precious birds singing all day, but I have to sit here and babysit you instead of exploring the world. I’m stuck in a cage.

Ruth I’m in a cage too. How do you think I feel? I can’t go where I want to either or do any of the things I would like to and I never wanted to make you angry. Listening to them is the only thing that makes me happy. Please, can we go out and hear them and sing with them.

Matthias I don’t want to and I don’t have time to take you outside, I’ve got things to do.

Ruth It won’t take long.

Matthias Stay in your chair.

Ruth Please Matthias.

Matthias Stay in your chair, where you belong. I’m busy.

Ruth I’ll go by myself then.

*Ruth stands and tries to walk across the room, but she crashes into the chair Matthias has left in the wrong place and in turn knocks everything off the table.*

Matthias I told you to stay in your chair! What a mess! Now I’ll have to clean up after you.

Ruth I’m sorry, Matthias.

Matthias Why do you have to be such a pain!

Ruth I didn’t mean to be.

Matthias But you are, always! I wish you weren’t around, then I could join the sailors and do what I wanted to for a change instead of having to put up with you! Now, go outside and get out of my way whilst I clean up this mess.

*He grabs her by the hand and marches her outside* *and plonks her on a chair.*

Matthias Now stay here.

Ruth You wouldn’t really want me gone would you, Matthias? Say you didn’t mean it.

Matthias I meant every word. I wouldn’t care if I never saw you again.

Ruth You don’t mean that Matthias, you’re just upset.

Matthias I mean every word. I hate you and I wish you would just go away. I wish you weren’t around. I wish I never had to see you again. I wish you were out of my life forever!

*Matthias storms back in to the house. Ruth sits crying in the chair. Scene changes. Matthias’s voice echoes around repeating the I wish section over and over again with the sound of the sea crashing behind him. The Sirens slowly enter. They stand together, then walk as a group slowly off stage. Scene changes back to the house, Matthias is cleaning up the mess and muttering about Ruth. He stops, hearing music.*

Matthias Ruth, is that you? I’m not in the mood to listen to singing. Ruth, stop it.

*He goes out to the chair, but Ruth isn’t there.*

Matthias Ruth? Ruth! Where are you? Ruth?

*He sees her walking away slowly, like she’s possessed, being drawn to the music.*

Matthias Ruth! Where are you going? Ruth!

**SIREN’S SING**

*He runs after her. During the song, the Sirens lure Ruth towards them. She follows as if under a spell, then she disappears into their world. Matthias runs on behind her to see her disappear through the portal, but he can’t catch up her in time. He shouts her name but she doesn’t hear him. He tries to open the portal, but can’t, she has gone forever. He suddenly realises he’s not alone and turns round to face the Sirens.*

Matthias Who are you?

Leucosia We are those with voices as beautiful and strong as the sea. Some call us a figment of imagination, others a curse, but most call us the Sirens.

Matthias What have you done to my sister? Where did she go?

Thelxiepeia We did what you wished for. We took her far away.

Parthenope She’s in our world now, where she can sing for us and listen to the beautiful sounds of the world as much as she likes.

Matthias Give her back!

Ligeia But I thought you wanted her gone, Matthias.

Peisinoe Now you can join our friends the sailors and adventure around the world.

Matthias But I never…

Sirens I wish you were out of my life forever!

Thelxiepeia That is what you said.

Matthias But I didn’t’t really mean it. She’s my sister give her back.

Peisinoe No. You made a wish and it can’t be taken back. You should be happy, you got what you wished for. Many people never do.

Matthias Please. I didn’t mean it. I never thought she would actually go away. Please, I’m begging you to give her back.

Leucosia It’s too late, Matthias. She belongs to us now and we will never let her go.

Ligeia Enjoy your freedom. After all, it is what you wanted!

*The Sirens laugh and fade away.*

Matthias No. Come back! Ruth! *(he pounds on the portal shouting her name, calling for her again and again, but there is no reply.)* Ruth, please! I didn’t mean it! I’m so sorry! Ruth!

*An old woman (Galwin) in a long cloak enters selling clothes pegs to the audience, she hobbles over to Matthias.*

Galwin Can I interest you in some pegs, Sonny? Made from the finest woods, crafted by my own hand.

Matthias I’m not….

Galwin I know, clothes pegs not your thing. How about…. (she starts pulling bizarre items out from her sleeves etc., and finally reveals the inside of her cloak is covered in watches. For each item Matthias tries to interrupt to say he’s not interested, but she interrupts him again and again, until eventually he snaps at her)

Matthias I’m not interested in buying anything!

Galwin Why didn’t you say. No need to get testy, young man.

Matthias I’m sorry, but now isn’t a good time. I have to find Ruth.

Galwin You’re not going to find her here.

Matthias What do you know? You don’t even know who Ruth is and I don’t have time to talk to some crazy old hag!

Galwin Crazy! Crazy! Yes I suppose I might be a bit crazy, but then isn’t everyone.

Matthias I’m not crazy.

Galwin No. Perhaps not. Stupid, but not crazy.

Matthias What do you mean stupid? You don’t even know me.

Galwin Anyone who wishes a sister away in a place that the Sirens like to visit is stupid. Everyone knows they like to lure people away and you gave them the perfect reason and the power to do it. S.T.U.P.I.D. Stupid.

Matthias How do you know about that?

Galwin Oh… so now you want to talk to the crazy old hag, hmm? Well, I might be a bit busy to talk to you.

Matthias Please. Tell me what you know.

Galwin Alright, but you need to seriously learn to control your temper. That’s what got you into this mess in the first place. That and pure selfishness. Do you really think you’re sister wanted to hold you back, hmm? But you went and blamed it on her anyway, didn’t you? Yes. You did. And then you made a dark wish. You wished her gone forever and that’s a pretty dark wish, let me tell you. Now, the Sirens are cruel, evil creatures and they love to drown the sailors, this is pretty common knowledge, but what isn’t known is how they feed off dark wishes. You gave them the power and not only that, but you handed them the perfect person to appreciate them. They love to sing and your sister loves to listen to music. She was just what they wanted and you gave them the chance, so now they have all the power. They’ve taken her into their world to keep her there for all eternity. She could choose to leave on her own, but I think that she will fall under their spell and so your chances of seeing her again are fairly bleak.

Matthias Are you saying I can’t get her back?

Galwin I said bleak, not impossible, do pay attention boy.

Matthias So there is a way?

Galwin Perhaps, but you’ll need help and the sort of help you’ll need doesn’t come cheap.

Matthias but I don’t have any money.

Galwin money isn’t what you’ll need to pay. There are things far more valuable than money, and that is what you’ll have to give up.

Matthias Like what?

Galwin Oh, all sorts of things, now do you want to save your sister or not?

Matthias Of course I do.

Galwin Then we’d better get going. The longer she spends in their world the more chance there is that you will never be able to free her. Come on Matthias, time is of the essence!

Matthias You know my name and everything that has happened, but I don’t know anything about you.

Galwin I’m Galwin, and all you need to know for now is that I’m the only person who is going to help you, so are you coming or not?

Matthias Where are we going?

Galwin Firstly, to leave your poor mother a well worded letter so she doesn’t have a complete panic when she gets home from work and finds you both gone, the poor woman, then we’re off to visit an old friend of mine. Quick march, Matthias, we’ve got a lot to do.