CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

CAESAR/SEA STAR: Hispanic party animal, eyes on his hands, HATES being called a starfish. Bumpy and colorful on his back, five points, mouth in the middle.

CHARLES/RAY: a whiptailed old salt, smooth and mellow, sings the blues. Grayish black on the back, lighter on the belly. Has a long tail that he can whip around. His mouth is on his underside, and he is kind of chubby.

RED/Crab: kind of clunky, always crabby. He moves like he is weighted and limping. Should be bright red on back and lighter on the underside.

CLARK/SHARK: sleek, sweet and shy, serious inferiority complex. A white tip reef shark, grayish silver with white tips on his back fins.

ANABELL/MOON JELLY: with an opalescent bell, long graceful tentacles, and a 'valley girl' self-obsession. She sparkles a bluish pink but is nearly transparent.

STICKY/SEA CUCUMBER: aptly the color of puke, bendy and gooey and always freaked out. Sexless, bumpy--almost wartish. The head and rear are indistinguishable, but can "puke" a kind of white, stringy net.

DARLA/DAMSELFISH: proud and colorful, beautiful but tough, no distress here. Her fins are erect and sturdy, almost muscular. She looks like she could blend in just about anywhere.

LEMMY/ANEMONE: hard rockin' kid with tentacle dreds and one big foot. His "stool" or pedal disk makes him slow moving, but he has a swagger like a rap artist. His tentacles should be thick, but bouncy--like a Fraggle muppet meets Bob Marley.
Scene 1
"Fish out of Water"
(a)
Main Hall (big trop), Bridge walkway

AT RISE: Education Person makes opening remarks and the SCUBA DIVER is introduced. SCUBA DIVER appears inside exhibit and seems out of sorts.

DIVER
I'm so sorry everyone, I was going to introduce you all to some of our animals, but I'm afraid I have some bad news.

EP
Oh, no. What's wrong?

DIVER
The animals that were going to be featured in today's show have gone missing.

EP
Gone missing? How can that be?

DIVER
(shrugging) I don't know, but this means that we'll have to cancel the show.

(RED and CAESAR enter from stage with excitement)

CAESAR
Cancel the show? But it's just getting started!

(EP and DIVER react with disbelief)

DIVER
I can't believe it! It's Caesar, our sea star, and that's Red, our crab...How did you guys get out there?

RED
(grumbling) Ha, wouldn't you like to know. (inspecting the glass) Eh, from out here, you look ridiculous!

EP
This is impossible. Ladies and gentlemen, I know this seems unbelievable, but these are two of our oldest animals here at the aquarium--(to the ANIMALS) You two should not be out of the exhibit. You'd better get back in here right away!
(DARLA and LEMMY enter from the balcony above the audience)

DARLA
They aren't the only ones who planned this breakout, right Lemme!

LEMMY
Yeah Darla, a breakout! (with a metal-head shake) That’s hard-core—or should I say, hard-coral!

(CLARK and CHARLES enter on a Blues Riff)

CHARLES
Take it easy now gang—we don’t wanna scare the kids…

EP
As if a talking anemone and a damselfish out of water isn’t scary enough—now we’ve got a ray and a shark onstage.

DARLA
Well, I don't see any scaredy-humans around here, do you Clark?

CLARK
I'm the wrong shark to ask who's scared. Everybody's always scared of me, and it makes me sad, too.

CHARLES
Yeah, well us stingray’s got a bad rap, too—but I’ve got a depressed body, that’s why I sing the blues! Don't you worry Clark, that's why we're here! Now all the guests at the aquarium can see that we aren't scary at all. Why, you're one of the nicest cartilaginous fish a big singin' stingray like old Charles here could ever wanna jam with!

(CHARLES scats a quick tasty blues riff as CLARK dances)

EP
This is just getting ridiculous—first a talking crab, sea star, anemone and damselfish, and now singing stingrays and dancing sharks? Is there anyone else you forgot?

CAESAR
You know something Charles, I think we are missing somebody....
CHARLES

Good golly, I think you're right Caesar. (looking around) Where did those two squishy gals float off to anyway? (calling out) Anabell, Sticky?!

(ANABELL and STICKY enter from the balcony)

ANABELL

Hi Charles! I've just been hangin' around, and Sticky....got stuck. (waits for a laugh) Get it? Stuck? Sea cucumber?

STICKY

(scared) A sea cucumber? Oh no! Where?

(STICKY barfs over the balcony. CHARLES and the other animals laugh)

CHARLES

Oh my goodness. (to audience) You see folks, you never wanna be too close to a sea cucumber when it's scared or you'll find yourself in a sticky spot.

(they all laugh)

EP

Wait a minute...Now I know you all didn't escape from the exhibits just to tell jokes?

CAESAR

We wanna help our guests learn how to be good stewards of the ocean.

LEMME

And rock out with all the cool kids!

RED

And show them how they can all help take better care of us animals that live in the ocean.

CHARLES

We're gonna play 'em some conservation blues and sing 'em some sustainable tunes!

DARLA

And show 'em what happens when somebody mistreats our habitat! (bobbing like a boxer) Come on, I dare em, I dare em!

CLARK

But how they shouldn't be scared of us.
ANABELL
Oh, and don't forget we're gonna tell them all about me! Just because I don't have bones or a brain doesn't mean I'm not as cool as the other animals!

STICKY
Animals? Where?! *(barfs again)*

ALL
Sticky!

DIVER
I just want to know how they can breathe out of water?

RED
Says the guy with the fake fins.

LEMME
Yeah, you tell us your secret and we'll tell you ours, bubble man!

EP
Well, even though educating the guests is supposed to be our job, I suppose it would be a good opportunity to hear the story from your side of the glass.

ANABELL
Hey, you're funny for a human.

EP
Thanks Anabell, I do have some experience up here. Listen, how 'bout if you all visit different parts of the aquarium so that you can meet more of our guests and tell your stories?

CLARK
*(to audience)* Well, I don't know...what do you think?

CAESAR
Yeah, what do you say everyone, would you like to learn more about us?

*(ANIMALS ad-lib asking permission from the audience)*

CHARLES
I think we've got ourselves a deal!
Okay. Then maybe you can get back in the water where you belong... This is just too weird. Well folks, you heard it here first. Be on the look out for our animals all over the aquarium if you want to hear more of their stories and learn about how you can help take care of our oceans.

DIVER

But, what if this gets out?

ANIMALS

Too late!

(they laugh and exit ad-libbing)

END OF SCENE
Scene 2
"Good Reef"

CHARACTERS: LEMMY, DARLA, CAESAR, CLARK, RED

(2)

LEMME, CAESAR and RED enter:

LEMME

Look at all the guests Red! Hey guests, my name is Lemme the Anemone, and I'm ready to rock!

RED

Settle down Lemme. (grumbles) I think you might be a few rocks short of a reef.

LEMME

Red's just kidding around kids. He knows that the coral reef's not really made of rocks at all. It's made up of calcium carbonate skeletons!

RED

Well that cleared things right up, didn't it?

CAESAR

Oh Red, why do you always have to be so crabby?

RED

(displaying his legs) Are you kidding me? That's like asking a starfish why he's always got to be so—(poking him) spiny.

CAESAR

(starting to fake-sneeze) Oh, Red. That really hurt me right now. You know how sensitive I am. Even though I'm spiny, I have no spine! I am not a starfish...I am a sea star!

LEMME

Right Caesar. That's a very good (emphasizing the pun) point. Most people think you're called starfish, but you're not a fish at all. You're an Echinoderm.

CAESAR

Yes yes! That's right Lemme. We're a kind of invertebrate. That means that unlike most fish, we have no spine.
No wonder he can't take a joke—he's got no backbone! (*laughs sarcastically*) Now let's get serious.

We're here to teach the guests about us animals that live in a reef habitat.

(*DARLA enters bobbing and weaving like a boxer*)

DARLA

Wait wait wait just a minute. Nobody's talking about my habitat without me!

LEMME

Hey everybody, it's Darla the Damselfish. But make no mistake, she's no Damselfish in distress. She's one tough cookie.

DARLA

(*putting up her dukes*) Eh! Who you callin' a cookie (*swiping LEMME'S hair*) cookie!

LEMME

Hey I got an idea—let's let Darla start. Whatcha think Red?

(*RED shrugs his big clunky shoulders and groans*)

DARLA

Don’t sweat it boys, I got this—(*to audience*) Picture yourselves underwater…

(*DARLA begins creeping around the stage area, bobbing thru guests. *There is a light change*)

The sun peeks in from above, there are no waves cuz we're under the surf, but the sea sways back and forth—

(*LEMME and CAESAR sway*) We are deep in the coral reef. Some little fish hide in the anemones--

(*LEMME bangs his/her head with pride*)

The stars are out--

CAESAR

(*excitedly*) Sea stars--sea stars!

DARLA

The crabs are being crabby and just crawling around. Usually sideways.

(*RED groans*)
And the Damselfish, *(aside to audience)* that's me, is busy guarding her territory. She can lurk in the coral or hide in plain sight *(showing off her colors proudly)*, but one thing's for sure, she's the toughest, awesomest...

*(as DARLA continues, CLARK enters swimming slowly so the audience can see him, but it seems like DARLA doesn't)*

coolest, fiercest fish in the sea.

*(CLARK passes behind her, DARLA turns around and "boos" him. CLARK screams and shivers like a horror movie victim and covers his eyes. DARLA chuckles while CAESAR comforts him.)*

RED

Now look what you did, Damselfish...you scared the shark.

DARLA

Sorry Clark. I was just telling the guests here about life in the reef. I didn't mean to scare ya so bad. Sometimes I don't know my own strength.

CLARK

That's okay Darla. I'm fine now. *(notices all the guests and goes ADD)* Oh, hi guests! I live in the reef habitat, too!

LEMME

What Darla and Clark have just demonstrated is a very common misconception.

CLARK

A mis-ka-what?

LEMME

A misconception. That means like, a wrong idea. Sometimes, people see a shark and they get scared. They think sharks want to hurt them, or eat them.

CLARK

Eat people? Yuck! I like to eat shellfish and octopus.

RED

And sometimes the occasional boogie board. They taste just like chicken of the sea...

CLARK

(bashful) Yeah. Sometimes I just get confused. From underneath, a boogie board looks delicious! But I don't wanna hurt anybody.
Hey Clark! Maybe this is a good time to tell all everybody about yourself?

CLARK

(getting excited, answers like a gameshow contestant) Me?! Well, Lemme, my name is Clark and I'm a Whitetip Reef Shark. My hobbies include swimming, listening to the animals around me, smelling stuff, and sensing electrical current with my snout!

CAESAR

So you could say he's not scary, he's just shocking!

(they all laugh except RED)

RED

I have always suspected electrocution...

CAESAR

You see everybody, the reef is a place that's not that much different than your neighborhood. We're really just one big community, and the reef is our shelter. It's a place where lots of different kinds of animals live together in harmony. There's really only one big threat here on the reef...

DARLA

Threat? Where is it? (putting up her dukes) Lemme at em Lemme!

LEMME

No Darla. It's not something that we reef animals can fight. It's something the guests have to prevent by committing to reduce ozone killing pollution in the air. It's called climate change. (the lights turn red)

CLARK

(grabs onto RED who makes an annoyed face) Oh no, not that!

CAESAR

You see, if our habitat changes temperature even just a little bit, we're in big trouble!

LEMME

That's right. The coral turns white, our plants die, and all our food disappears.

DARLA

I don't think I like this climate change very much!
CLARK

*(practically squeezing the life out of RED)* Me either, I don't like this *story* very much...

RED

Yeah, Lemme. Isn't there a better way?

LEMMEE

*(getting an idea)* As a matter of fact, Red, I think there is...

*(the lights change as music for *Anemone Enemies* begins)*

There ain't many anemone enemies
cuz anemones tend to be friendly.

Swingin' and swayin,
Can ya dig what I'm sayin'?
This anemone's nobody's enemy.

One big foot but no sock
We make living ROCK!

In the coral we wave
It's our home you can save
Please don't be an anemone's enemy.

*(Lemme's Rap)* LEMME'S my name, yo
The coral reef's where I came from so

We all live together the
Ecosystem is better when we work
together now just look around at
this home we have found that

a degree change or two will
our colony kill, a community shelter where
balance is key and awareness so don't be

A coral reef-hater, calcium carbonate made us

One family one planet, like you we are friendly, so don't be
An Anemone's enemy, ROCK IT

*(they ALL sing together)*
TEATRO DOMINGUEZ/RIOFROST

You won't ever find a recipe
For a better friend than me
(baby Lemme tell ya bout)
This world could never do without
(baby Lemme tell ya bout)
Never let there be a doubt
Lemme tell ya all bout ME!

(end of song)

CLARK

(still applauding excitedly) Now that was a good reef story!

RED

Good grief!

(ALL exit teasing RED)

END OF SCENE