

**MYRTLE DICK**

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MYRTLE DICK

Setting: Boston's MBTA Blue Line.

Time: Present

Characters

MYRTLE: a 90-year-old turtle who lives in the NE Aquarium viewing tank.

PEGGY: a young penguin who lives in the NE Aquarium viewing tank.

ROSE RED RAPSCALLION: a marine biologist wearing a red shirt.

VO: a voiceover of station announcements; can be pre-recorded.

*Production Note:*

In the first production we used paper bag puppets for the final fight sequence. In other words, real live actors for Peggy and Myrtle throughout. Upon "Unleash Heck" and the start of the charge/music, we "cut away" semi cinematically to the Red Rapsallion acting out the attack, with a Peggy puppet on one hand and a Myrtle puppet on the other. Once he died, we "cut back" to live action/life size critters. With a good RR and clever lighting this worked really well.

**MYRTLE DICK**

*Aquarium Station.*

*The ROSE RED RAPSCALLION enters the train.*

*At the other end, PEGGY runs on, disguised as a plastic water bottle. She holds the door as Myrtle crawls slowly in, disguised as a Snickers bar.*

PEGGY:

Myrtle! The doors! Hurry – inside!

MYRTLE:

Don't wait for me, Peggy. Hide!

PEGGY:

I'm hiding. Hurry up!

MYRTLE:

Stay up against the wall.

Remember: we mustn't be seen; not by no one at all.

Now hold on.

PEGGY:

Hold on to what?

MYRTLE:

Me. I've got you.

PEGGY:

If you've got me, who's got you? Whoa!

*(Peggy falls into Myrtle, who flips over. Peggy gets up, wobbly. MYRTLE calls for help. PEGGY talks to herself, in voices.*

MYRTLE:

Here! Here! Help me up!

PEGGY:

She wants to get up. "Then let her get up."

MYRTLE:

I can't.

PEGGY:

Why not?

MYRTLE:

I don't know.

PEGGY:

Let us do something, while we have the chance! It is not every day that we are needed. Not indeed that we personally are needed.

MYRTLE:

Help! I'll pay you!

PEGGY:

Come, let's get to work!

*She tries to lift Myrtle but the turtle rocks back and forth on her shell.*

*Peggy Falls.*

Help!

MYRTLE:

Help!

PEGGY:

Help!

Who farted?

MYRTLE:

I don't know. It was all that cabbage I had for lunch.

PEGGY

Are you staying there?

MYRTLE:

For the time being.

What do we do now?

PEGGY:

I was gonna aks you.

Suppose we got up to begin with?

MYRTLE:

No harm trying.

*They get up.*

PEGGY:

Child's play. That's much better.

MYRTLE:

Better? That was about as discreet as a hippopotamus eating hot dogs. In the library.

Mmm...hot dogs.

PEGGY:

Hush. What did I tell you. Do as I do, do what I say.  
We mustn't be seen or we'll give it away.

MYRTLE:

Give what away?

PEGGY:

Us! They'll send us home soon.

MYRTLE:

But I want to go home.

PEGGY:

We will. When we're through.

MYRTLE:

When?

PEGGY:

After.

MYRTLE:

After what?

PEGGY:

After *after*. Until *after*, we cannot be seen.

MYRTLE:

That's why we're in disguise? You still haven't told me what we're up to.

PEGGY:

Up to? I'm up to my neck in annoying questions.  
Just stay close to me. You've never been out of The Tank before; you wouldn't understand this place.

MYRTLE:

What's to know? This looks just like the Tank to me. It's blue, there's glass, and the people.

PEGGY:

Yes but here the people are *inside* the glass, with us.

MYRTLE:

PEGGY:

Oh you're right!

MYRTLE:

And do you see any other animals? Or water?

PEGGY:

No! It's like the world is inside out? Or we are!

Oh Myrtle, I'm hungry. All this hiding, and talk of hot dogs! Maybe one of these nice people will feed me?

MYRTLE:

Well it ain't feeding time.

And besides, they don't feed you here. You have to feed yourself.

PEGGY:

Feed myself? What kind of world is this?

MYRTLE:

You see those nuts?

PEGGY:

What nuts? Those people? They're nuts?

MYRTLE:

No the nuts on the floor.

PEGGY:

No, I see a sack.

MYRTLE:

Right, it's a sack of nuts.

PEGGY:

How do you know?

MYRTLE:

It says so.

PEGGY:

What if it's another penguin in disguise?

MYRTLE:

It's not. It's nuts.

Or a squirrel.

PEGGY:

If it's a squirrel it's got nuts.

MYRTLE:

What if –

PEGGY:

Peggy!

MYRTLE:

Myrtle.

PEGGY:

Shush your face!

MYRTLE:

Do you see what I'm talking about? That bag over there?

They're little nuts – they're nuts fair and square.

(They're not the only thing on this train that's a little nuts.)

You can eat those.

PEGGY:

Oh boy! I can't wait.

MYRTLE:

But we have to get there without tempting fate.

We'll go incognito.

PEGGY:

What's that?

MYRTLE:

It means "move quickly, dressed like trash."

Stay tight by the wall. Look left, look right, and then hit the gas!

Stop! Look again – look right and then left.

When the coast is all clear, make your move, do it deft!

PEGGY:

How do we get to that side! It's like a ocean of space with no where to hide.

They'll see us they will!

MYRTLE:

It's all right, Peggy. Be still.

BE the trash. BE the water bottle.

PEGGY:

“Be the water bottle, Peggy.”  
I don’t understand.

MYRTLE:

It’s all right, I’ll show you. Just follow my command.

MYRTLE (Cont’d)

Be ready in three, in two, be ready in – Go!

*(Myrtle trips Peggy, who rolls to the other side of the train like a water bottle would. Myrtle follows).*

What terrible fun!

PEGGY:

If you say so.

MYRTLE:

Why are you pouting? You got your nuts.

PEGGY:

I also got bruised on my butts.

MYRTLE:

Let’s rest for a while. Feel free to dig in.

PEGGY:

But these nuts have hard shells. I can’t find my way in.

MYRTLE:

Your beak. Snap your beak through the shell, while you hold tight with your feet. You crack them, and break them, and then you can eat.

*(Peggy practices this, cracking shells with her beak a few times. She gets the hang of it and kind of enjoys it!).*

PEGGY:

Myrtle? Who was that Man?

MYRTLE:

What man? I don’t know any man. I don’t know what you’re talking about.

PEGGY:

The man at the Tank? He knocked on the glass and waved? And then you said “It’s him!” And then he walked away. And then you grabbed me and we escaped? And he’s sitting there at the end of the train?

MYRTLE:



No one! He's nobody. An old friend.

PEGGY:

And old friend? From before, when you lived out here and not in the Tank?

*(Myrtle nods)*

Hey Myrtle? Would you tell me about it? About the world outside?

MYRTLE:

You've heard it all before.

PEGGY:

I know Myrtle but I love to hear your stories! Please? While I eat?

MYRTLE:

OK. Where I lived was similar to the Tank. Loads of water, and fish –

PEGGY:

And penguins?

MYRTLE:

No. No penguins where I'm from.

Only there, there's no tank. No glass holds you in.

There's just water, loads of it. You can't see where it ends.

At the edge, there's a beach, made of white sand –

PEGGY:

Like on the bottom of the Tank?

MYRTLE:

Yes. Raise your hand!

The sand is a beach; and it's just made for fun.

It's soft, and it's dry, and it's warm from the sun.

*(Peggy raises her hand)*

PEGGY:

What's the sun?

MYRTLE:

You know – that light in the sky!

The sun's so bright it makes everything dry.

I'd bury my eggs in the sand, it's so warm and snug,

The sand would wrap them and warm them like and all-day-long hug.

PEGGY:

Wow!

MYRTLE:

And you'd lie there and sit there stretched out on the beach,  
Till it got just too hot, then you'd run into the breach:  
You'd go for a dip, where the water's so cold!  
Then it's back to the beach, and you'd sleep till you're old!

PEGGY:

Why'd you leave?

MYRTLE:

Huh?

PEGGY:

I always love it when you tell me about the beach. And the sun hug. I love that part.  
Why'd you come to the tank? After all that, why'd you leave?  
What are you looking at?

MYRTLE:

Making sure my old friend is still down there.

PEGGY:

We're following him aren't we. Why Myrtle?

MYRTLE:

I've told you a lot of my stories, Peggy, about the beach, and my family. But there's  
one I never did tell you. A terrible tale. You want to hear it?

PEGGY:

Oh Boy!

MYRTLE:

It's called The Very Last Day.

On the very Last Day  
We all went to play:  
My mother, my brother, and me.  
We made up a song  
As we swam along  
We sang it in five different keys.  
And After a meal  
Of jellyfish veal  
We each picked a spot for a float.  
We'd napped for a few,  
When out of the blue  
Came a beastly big thing called a Boat!

My mum tried to scream!  
My brother to flee!  
They both made it safe to the bank.  
But that Rose Red Rapsallion  
Came quick as a stallion,  
And I ended up in the Tank.  
And that's my sad tale:

MYRTLE (cont'd)

How I wound up with whales,  
Jellyfish and dear little penguins.  
But I swear to you now  
That I'll stick to my vow:  
To never give up seeking vengeance.

PEGGY:

Him! THAT Red Rapsallion?!

MYRTLE:

We're going to kill him, Peggy.

PEGGY:

But That's wrong! Wait – WE? Who me?

MYRTLE:

I need your help. I'm old, I'm slow.

PEGGY:

But I never killed anything.

MYRTLE:

I know.  
But just as we practiced: sneak down there like waste;  
You'll get there first; I'll follow post-haste.  
Meanwhile you pin him down with your beak.  
I'll sneak up behind and throttle the freak.

PEGGY:

But Myrtle!

MYRTLE:

Remember: the sea is that way.

PEGGY:

You said we'd go home!

MYRTLE:

One day we may.  
Until then, just head towards the beach, towards the sun.

PEGGY:

I thought this was vacation, but it isn't much fun.  
Myrtle? You're scaring me. I want to go home.

MYRTLE:

You came along. No one forced you to come.  
I've waited my life to get back at that jerk.  
You can help me or not. I'm going to work.

VO:

Revere Beach Station. Doors on the Right.

PEGGY:

OK Myrtle. I'll help. Tell me what to do.

MYRTLE:

Close in on him quick; sneak up to his shoe.  
With that beak nail him down to the deck.

PEGGY:

I'm ready.

MYRTLE:

Go! Unleash heck!

*To the tune of In the Hall of the Mountain King they close in to RED. First slinking against the walls. As they get closer – and the music builds – Peggy jumps out and pins his foot with her beak. He yells. MYRTLE rips off her disguise and plunges towards his throat:*

RED RAPSCALLION:

Myrtle? Is that you? What the - ?

No! Myrtle?

*(And she latches her chompers to his throat. He gags and dies. PEGGY lets go and breathes heavily from the struggle. Until she realizes that Myrtle has given all she can give.)*

PEGGY:

Myrtle? You ok?

MYRTLE:

*(dying):*

Earn. This.

*(PEGGY is alone!)*

PEGGY:

Myrtle? Wake up! We have to go home. Wake up Myrtle we have to go back to the tank. It's almost feeding time.

*(The Doors open.)*

VO:

Wonderland. Last stop. No passengers. No passengers.

PEGGY:

Ok. All right. I guess I'll get off.

The sun! It's so warm! Oh, It's so soft!

That's it, ain't it Myrtle? You taught me to live.

To find food, self-defense – what a lesson to give.

Look at all that water! It's just like back home!

Only now there's fresh air, and a whole world to roam.

The water – so big! I can't see the end!

Goodbye sweet Myrtle! Godspeed my dear friend.

The sand feels so soft and my feet fit so snug!

Oh Myrtle. The sun. It's just like a hug!

*(PEGGY slowly steps off the train, and walks to the water.)*