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Dramatic Publishing

THE SOULS OF THE SEA

Book and lyrics by
FRANK TEDESCO

Music by
ALLEN ESTES and FRANK TEDESCO

(Additional musical compositions by
Maurizio Martinotti, Steve C. Burke,
Emil Thoroddsen, Sari Kaasinen,
David and Doug Brown)



Dramatic Publishing

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The Souls of the Sea was premiered in Gloucester Mass., August 2007, by Theatre in the Pines with the following actors and production team:

The Company

Marge	Marjorie Grace
Shirley	Lauri Hahn
Fay.	Cheryl Keating
Angelina	Justine Curley
Cosmo	Rick Doucette
Manny	Charles Vogel
Noah	Joseph Stiliano
Jack	Dave Rash
Soul 1	Gap Pallazola
Soul 2	Martin Ray
Soul 3	Fr. Ron Garaboldi
Soul 4.	Mark Natti
Widow 1	Susan Barrett
Widow 2.	Linn Parisi

Coastguard 1, Walter Ian O'Connor
Coastguard 2, George Jonathan Arnold

Artistic and Production Company

Director Nan Webber
Choreographer Carl Thomsen
Set Designer Frank Walcott
Costume Designer Edeline Lemoine
Light Designer Kevin Gerstner
Sound Designer Scott Rogers/ Dave Adams
Stage Manager Brooke O'Donnell/ Jen Arabian
Production Manager Ami Bennett/ Joe Langhan/ Joe Kaknes
Carpenter Desi Smith/ Peter Marshall
Scenic Painter Kathryn Tedesco
Photography Roger Ward/ Peter Prybot
Graphics Karl Bronk
Outreach Vickie and Peter Van Ness
Spotlight Operator Robby Moss/ Travis Moss

The Souls of the Sea Band

Allen Estes, Ardys Flavelle, Dennis "Fly" Amero, Steve C.
Burke, Matt Leavenworth, Sal Baglio, Seth Pappas, John Troy,
David Brown, Marty Richards

THE SOULS OF THE SEA

CHARACTERS

MARGE bartender, wife of Captain Cosmo,
sister of Shirley

COSMO skipper of the *Bella Figlia*,
husband of Marge

ANGELINA young waitress, girlfriend of Jack

JACK fisherman on the *Bella Figlia*,
boyfriend of Angelina

NOAH old salt, regular patron of the tavern

SHIRLEY waitress, Marge's sister,
widow of a lost fisherman

FAY barfly, daughter of a lost fisherman

MANNY Portuguese fisherman on the *Bella Figlia*

WALTER Coast Guardsman

GEORGE Coast Guardsman

SOULS lost fishermen

WIDOWS wives of lost fishermen

EXTRAS fishermen, bar patrons

MUSICAL TRACKS

- Track 1: The Souls of the Sea
- Track 2: I Remember
- Track 3: My Fisherman
- Track 4: We Men of Gloucester
- Track 5: The Always Ready Team
- Track 6: If Ever
- Track 7: Not With Ya Hands
- Track 8: Fishermen's Wives
- Track 9: Anchor Blues
- Track 10: Regulate
- Track 11: Spirits of the Sea
- Track 12: The Bella Figlia
- Track 13: Headin' Home
- Track 14: Where'd They Go
- Track 15: Christmas in Gloucester
- Track 16: We Are Waiting
- Track 17: The Fishermen Followed the Lord
- Track 18: East of the Sunrise
- Track 19: Find You
- Reprise: Find You
- Track 20: Man Overboard
- Track 21: Gloucester Is the Only Place for Me
- Track 22: The Souls of the Sea Reprise

ACT I

SCENE ONE

House of Mitch Tavern, 6:00 a.m., early December.

The tavern is quiet except for the distant howl and rattle of wind. The low lighting casts shadows on the drab walls where framed photographs of fishermen, boats and crews hang among posters advertising beer and football. Slumped motionless at the bar, old NOAH cradles his head in his arms. A large empty jug-handled beer glass rests on the bar in front of him.

(Music begins. Track 1: The Souls of the Sea)

(SOUL 1 emerges, his dark, heavy rain gear glistening with brine. As he moves downstage, SOUL 2 appears and follows him. Their torsos are draped with oilskin slickers, and their feet are swathed in thick, black rubber boots. Obscured by the wide brims of their sou'westers, their faces are pale and indistinguishable.)

SOUL 1.

WHEN I JOINED THE CREW
I WAS SEVENTEEN
AND I THOUGHT I KNEW
WHAT THIS LIFE WOULD MEAN
WITH MY BROTHERS ALL THREE MY UNCLES
AND MY DAD

WE FISHED JORGES BANK LIKE OUR ANCESTORS
HAD

SOUL 2.

OVER TIME I SAW
WHAT A MAN SHOULD KNOW
'BOUT THE DEADLY LAW
OF THE DEPTHS BELOW

(SOULS 3 and 4 emerge.)

AND THE RAGE OF THE GALES AND THE WAVES
OF DESTINY
THAT BREAK OFF THE SHOALS WITH THE SOULS
OF THE SEA

SOULS 1 & 2.

WHO UNDERSTANDS HOW EACH RECKONING
UNROLLS
LIFT UP YOUR HANDS FOR THE SOULS OF THE
SEA

SOUL 1.

WHEN OUR TIME HAD COME
WE WERE HEADIN' HOME
WE WERE RUNNIN' FROM
A VICIOUS WINTER STORM

FOUR SOULS.

AND WE PRAYED AND WE WAILED FOR OUR
WIVES AND FAMILY
NOW WE REST OFF THE SHOALS WITH THE
SOULS OF THE SEA

(Musical interlude— More SOULS emerge.)

WHO UNDERSTANDS HOW EACH RECKONING
UNROLLS

(They raise their arms.)

LIFT UP YOUR HANDS FOR THE SOULS OF THE
SEA

(They lower arms.)

SOUL 2.

THOSE AT HOME WHO WAIT
ARE FOREVER BOUND

FOUR SOULS.

TO THE SHADES OF FATE
AND THE LONGING SOUND

ALL SOULS.

WHEN THE WAVES AND THE WIND IN A
MOURNFUL HARMONY
RESOUND OFF THE SHOALS WITH THE SOULS OF
THE SEA
RESOUND OFF THE SHOALS WITH THE SOULS OF
THE SEA

(The SOULS drift backward, fading. SOUL 1 and SOUL 2 stand at the bar. SOUL 1 lifts NOAH's empty glass, flips it by its handle and places it back on the bar upside down.)

ALL SOULS *(cont'd)*.

RESOUND OFF THE SHOALS WITH THE SOULS OF
THE SEA

RESOUND OFF THE SHOALS WITH THE SOULS OF
THE SEA

(Music ends. SOULS disappear.)

SHIRLEY enters and wipes tables. She stops, winces and holds her side for a moment. MARGE enters and busies herself behind the bar.)

MARGE. They were in Portland for a week...makin' their own repairs. I don't like it! He shoulda called.

SHIRLEY. He should have. But you know...

MARGE. And here I thought they were outta range out in the weather.

SHIRLEY. Maybe he really wasn't able to call this time.

MARGE. Come on, sis. When I didn't hear from him, I got scared, and went down to the Coast Guard station. They told me where he was—up in Portland.

(ANGELINA enters with mop and bucket. She mops.)

ANGELINA. Why didn't Cosmo call you, Marge?

MARGE. 'Cause he never does.

ANGELINA. Why?

SHIRLEY. 'Cause *they* never do.

ANGELINA. Who?

MARGE & SHIRLEY. Fishermen!

MARGE. Nothin' but worry, worry and more worry.

SHIRLEY. And beating a path to the church, especially in December with the foul weather. *(She makes the sign of the cross.)* It keeps you down on your knees.

MARGE. Well, the boat's done for the season. The regs don't allow 'em to make up for those lost fishin' days...

SHIRLEY. Maybe we'll have a nice safe quiet winter for a change.

MARGE. He'll have to hire on for some piecework at the freezer plant again.

SHIRLEY. He hates that.

MARGE. Yeah, well then maybe I'll put him to work back in the kitchen.

SHIRLEY. Oh, sure.

ANGELINA. If Cosmo can't fish, what else will he do?

NOAH (*raises head*). Aaaahhhhh.

(*FAY enters, sits on a barstool opposite MARGE.*)

FAY. The boys ain't back yet?

MARGE (*noisily*). They were up in Portland for the whole damn storm...all those barrooms. Just wait 'til he gets in here.

FAY (*preening herself in a small handheld mirror*). A lot of young floozies up there.

MARGE. He'll give me one of his non-explanations like, "No troubles." He always does.

SHIRLEY. He's a skipper. That's what they do. Captain Cosmo is no different.

MARGE. He shoulda called. I'm gonna let him have it this time, you'll see.

FAY. Fishermen always cheat 'cause there's so many bimbos around who adore the rugged lifestyle. Trust me, I know.

(NOAH reaches out and touches FAY's hand. She pulls away.)

FAY. Rugged don't mean shit-stupid, cupid.

NOAH. Ooh. Those lips were made for kisses, not for curses.

MARGE *(to ANGELINA)*. I guess you could say that sometimes the men like to cut loose after a cold hard winter trip.

FAY. Yeah, they can't wait to thaw out those frozen masts.

MARGE. You ain't kiddin'... Just wait 'til I get my hands around his thick neck.

FAY. Drunken dogs in heat. Trust me, I know.

MARGE. They're not always like that, o' course. I just wish he'd call me, that's all.

ANGELINA. Doesn't he know how much you worry?

(MARGE looks at SHIRLEY and sighs.)

SHIRLEY. You just learn to hang on to the things you're sure of.

MARGE. Like, at least he's got a great mechanic aboard.

ANGELINA. Who's that?

MARGE. Manny...

FAY. Handy Manny, a dandy Porta'gee. *Me beija. (Smacks lips.)* Ah, he's just another loozah'- b'doozah.

MARGE. He's a wizard with the engine. 'Course Cosmo don't say much about that.

SHIRLEY. He doesn't say much about anything that might be important to us.

ANGELINA. Why not?

SHIRLEY. It's a fisherman thing. They don't like to talk about what goes on out there, because they're afraid we'll freak out or something. They don't lie about it exactly, but...

FAY. They don't even know when they're lyin'.

ANGELINA. Still, I can tell that Captain Cosmo is honest.

MARGE (*hand on hip*). There's different kinds of honesty, honey. Sometimes the plain truth just ain't honest, 'specially when it hurts people.

ANGELINA. I guess. But honesty is very important in relationships. Honesty and loyalty and... (*she wraps her arms around herself and sways*) ...love.

(*Laughter.*)

MARGE. It's hard to love a fisherman. There's lots of back and forth, up and down.

SHIRLEY. Hot and cold.

FAY. In and out...no doubt.

ANGELINA. Well, I think people can compromise if they want to...like you and Captain Cosmo, Marge.

MARGE. There's two sides to the story, Angelina. And ya gotta be able to switch sides all the time. Ya don't take no crap from 'em, but...

NOAH (*playing an imaginary violin*). Ah, it's just another broken trip.

MARGE. Shut up, Noah!

(*CAPTAIN COSMO enters. The room quivers as the huge fisherman trudges to the bar.*)

COSMO. Goddamn government stooges! Coast Guard cockheads! They're gonna kill us. Hi, Marge.

MARGE (*hands him a beer*). Why didn't you call me?

COSMO. Ah, too busy. Outta range...you know, I don't know.

MARGE. Bull!

COSMO. It was slow goin'. The weather was a little sloppy, but no real trouble...

MARGE. You were up in Portland.

COSMO. Yeah, ah...we're shippin' out; turnin' right around.

MARGE. What? Your days are up. You can't go out again 'til at least spring.

COSMO. The lawyer found us a clause, a loophole. We gain back extra ground-fishin' days in exchange for time spent fixin' the hull.

MARGE (*hand on hip*). I don't buy it, 'specially if that sleazebag lawyer had anythin' to do with it.

COSMO. Nah, it's true. We logged eight days in dry dock up in Portland. Some kinda double-duration allowance for the hull repair gets us sixteen more fishin' days.

MARGE. Save 'em for next season.

COSMO. Can't. The days gotta be used up 'fore the end of the year. Government rules, you know. If we leave tomorrow night, I figure we be back on Christmas.

MARGE (*points at SHIRLEY*). Shhhhhhsh!

SHIRLEY. It's okay, Marge.

COSMO. Look, we had to put in at Portland anyway to...

MARGE. I don't buy it.

COSMO. ...make repairs.

MARGE. I don't buy it!

COSMO. We were busy and I didn't want you to worry.

MARGE. Forget it, Cosmo.

COSMO. I gotta get back out there. You know I do.

MARGE. I don't know nothin'.

COSMO. We're goin' beat 'em at their own game.

MARGE. Grrreat.

COSMO. We'll finish the trip by Chris...ah, end of the month. *(Pause.)* We need the money.

MARGE. If you're wrong about the rules, they'll take the boat.

COSMO. Jamb the rules! I'm a fisherman, and I will fish! *(MARGE lowers her head and turns away.)* I'm sorry I didn't call, but...

MARGE. No you're not. You're gonna just keep doin' what you do.

COSMO. What else can I do? Come on, Marge... *(Aside.)* Can't we get together? We don't have much time.

MARGE. No, we don't have much time. *(She puts her hands over her face.)*

COSMO. You know I gotta get back out fishin'.

MARGE. That's all you ever care about. You don't even remember about...us. How you promised you wouldn't ship out in December anymore, remember? And here we are again...you don't care.

COSMO. I care about what's important.

MARGE. No you don't. Not about us, you don't.

COSMO. I do, like...

MARGE. Like that night on the beach?

COSMO. Yeah, I remember that.

MARGE. Like forgivin' and forgettin' all the hurt, remember?

COSMO. Yeah, I remember.

MARGE. Like a man overboard, seein' a light, hearin' a voice...my voice?

COSMO. How could I forget?

MARGE. And committin' to God and to each other.

COSMO. God put me here to fish!

(Music begins. Track 2: I Remember)

COSMO (*cont'd*). Ah, I don't know...

MY DAYS AT SEA
ARE LONG AND TOUGH
WITH DANGER WHEREVER I GO
AWAY FROM YOU
IS HARD ENOUGH
BUT THERE IS A COMFORT I KNOW

(*He reaches out to MARGE.*)

I REMEMBER
I REMEMBER
THE PROMISE WE SWORE BY THE SEA
ON A CLEAR NIGHT
IN THE MOONLIGHT
YOU GAVE YOUR FOREVER TO ME

(*MARGE turns toward COSMO.*)

MARGE.

WHEN CLOUDS APPEAR
AND GRAY THE SKY
IT FILLS ME WITH WORRY FOR YOU
BUT I SHED MY FEAR
MY SPIRITS FLY
'CAUSE ALWAYS I KNOW WHAT TO DO

I REMEMBER
I REMEMBER
THE PROMISE WE SWORE BY THE SEA
ON A CLEAR NIGHT
IN THE MOONLIGHT
YOU GAVE YOUR FOREVER TO ME

(Musical interlude— They dance with intimate independence.)

COSMO & MARGE.

NO MATTER WHERE
OUR BODIES GO
OUR SPIRITS ARE BOUNDLESS AND NEW
LET ALL THE HOST
OF HEAVEN KNOW
MY AGELESS DEVOTION TO YOU

I REMEMBER
I REMEMBER
THE PROMISE WE SWORE BY THE SEA
ON A CLEAR NIGHT
IN THE MOONLIGHT
YOU GAVE YOUR FOREVER TO ME

MARGE.

YOU GAVE YOUR FOREVER TO ME

COSMO.

I REMEMBER

COSMO & MARGE.

YOU GAVE YOUR FOREVER TO ME

(Music ends.)

COSMO. I gotta make some calls. I'll be back.

MARGE. I'll be here, I guess.

COSMO. The crew will be by shortly. Take care of them boys, will ya?

MARGE. Always do.

COSMO. Marge, you're okay with everythin'. *(He pauses.)*

Guess that's why I keep comin' back.

MARGE. That the only reason?

COSMO. Well, ah no. *(He and MARGE embrace.)*

ANGELINA. So beautiful.

(COSMO exits. MARGE picks up a case of bottled beer with a wreath on it.)

ANGELINA. What do you usually do around here for Christmas?

MARGE. Shhhhhush. *(Aside.)* Shirley, ah, never comes out on...that day.

ANGELINA. How come?

MARGE. Don't ask.

SHIRLEY. It's okay. She doesn't know.

ANGELINA. Know what?

MARGE. Never mind.

SHIRLEY. It's okay Margie. I want to... It's been too long... *(To ANGELINA.)* Twenty years ago on Christmas morning, I lost my husband, Buck...Buck Gomes.

ANGELINA. I'm so sorry, Shirley. I didn't mean to...

SHIRLEY. Two Coast Guard officers came by the house while the kids were still opening presents. They said my Bucky had gone overboard. It was his family's boat.

They searched for a long time, but they couldn't find him. They just couldn't find him. After twenty-two days, the Coast Guard sent us a certificate.

FAY. A long time ago my daddy didn't come home from the sea neither. He said he'd come back, but he never did. The liar.

SHIRLEY. There's no closure without the body. You always think you'll see him again. You look for him walking down the street. Sometimes, late at night, I think I hear Bucky coming up the stairs, home from a trip. One night he pinched me.

ANGELINA. Oh, oh...

SHIRLEY. It's okay. I'm fine. The kids are fine... away at college.

FAY. Away from here. That's a good thing.

SHIRLEY. My Bucky was lost. But I'll find him...in another life.

FAY. There ain't no other life. This life sucks bad enough.

SHIRLEY. Fay, your dad would not have wanted you to...

FAY. Fishermen are lowlives! They all cheat.

NOAH. Ah, only when they are able.

ANGELINA. It doesn't have to be like that. My relationship with Jack will be different, is different. (*To MARGE.*) If you love hard enough and true enough, it will keep them from running around.

MARGE. I don't know.

FAY. Angelina Polly-eena. How long you known Jack? A month? Most of which he's been at sea.

ANGELINA. So.

FAY. Ole Jacky-six-pack picks you up the first night you start workin' here. Little girl from the potato farm. Fresh meat for a drunken dogfish, and now you're...