

Part of Your World

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*Ever wondered which Disney Princess Jessica would be the most like? Seth points out a striking resemblance to one of the most famous princesses in this Murder, She Wrote Slice of Life. Set in 1989 (sometime between Seasons 5 and 6), this conversation takes place right after Seth and Jessica have gone to see *The Little Mermaid*.*

"I'm telling you, Jess, I felt like I was looking at you."

"How is that even possible, Seth? The last time I checked, I did not have flowing red hair and a green fish tail."

Seth Hazlitt shook his head at his best friend as she brought a tray of chamomile tea over to them. People thought they knew everything there was to know about J.B. Fletcher, the esteemed mystery writer, but he knew a thing or two about Jessica Fletcher, the woman, that most people wouldn't even dream of... such as the fact that she was a die-hard Disney fan. Whether on television or in theaters, she had seen every animated feature that Disney had ever made, from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* on up and loved them all, not to mention that *Mary Poppins* was one of her favorite movies. And the songs, oh boy, did she know just about every Disney song ever written. "When You Wish Upon A Star," "Little April Shower," "A Spoonful of Sugar," you name it, she could sing it. Seth's personal favorite, though, was Jessica's rendition of "Bibbidi Bobbidi Boo." The song and her voice were a match made in heaven and never failed to tickle Seth every time he heard it.

Yes, Jessica was a Disney nut, and now she had some new material to add to her repertoire. That evening, Seth had taken Jessica to the local movie theater to see Disney's newest animated movie, *The Little Mermaid*. However, he'd gone rather grudgingly. Not that he didn't like Disney movies – for Pete's sake, who didn't? – but the princess movies like *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella* just weren't his cup of tea. He loved the ones with some action and some catchy music, like *Peter Pan*, *The Sword in the*

Stone, and *The Jungle Book*. Nevertheless, Jessica had been so excited about the film that he couldn't help but take her. He'd figured that they could at least spend some quality time together and he would get some popcorn out of the deal. What he didn't expect was to find himself utterly engrossed in the movie. The animation was stunning and the music was pure ear candy, but neither one was what had Seth so enthralled. He couldn't for the life of him figure out why Ariel, the mermaid, seemed so familiar to him... until it hit him that the answer was sitting right next to him munching popcorn.

"Maybe you're not a mermaid princess, but you and Ariel are an awful lot alike."

Jessica barked a laugh. "Seth, I don't think so. If I ever fell in love again, heaven forbid, I wouldn't be so desperate that I'd give up my voice just to be with a man."

"Well, I'm certainly glad to hear that. Your voice is too pretty to lose."

"*Seth...*"

He ignored her modest protest and continued on. "That being said, you do have a beautiful voice like Ariel did, but that's not the most important thing. I noticed that she's clever and resourceful just like you."

"I'm not a rocket scientist, Seth."

"Oh yeah? How many scrapes have you managed to get yourself out of? And how many cases have you cracked in the last five years or so, Madame Detective? A hundred or more?"

"I don't know! I've become mired in so many mysteries that it's impossible to keep count. And just because I've gotten myself out of scrapes doesn't mean I'm a genius. I just rely on my wits and common sense to find the right solution, no matter what I'm up against."

"So did Ariel. Remember the way she trapped that shark when she and Flounder were being chased? The shark got stuck in the anchor that she swam through and couldn't chase after them anymore. It's kinda like the story you told me about that idiot you tricked in the fun house five years ago. Remember? You confronted him with the murder and told him you had

a roll of microfilm that he'd love to get his hands on. When he tried to shoot you, he wound up shooting a mirror and shattering it. You tricked him with the old magician's mirror act and got him arrested for the murder. See? Just like Ariel."

Jessica shook her head, smiling in spite of herself. "Are you through?"

"Not yet, I'm not. You're also headstrong and stubborn, just like she is."

"Headstrong and stubborn? I am not!"

Seth laughed. "You are too! How many times has some jack wagon of a police officer told you to keep your nose out of a murder investigation and you've done what you wanted anyway? Ariel was told not to go to the surface and to stay away from humans, but did she listen? No way, José, she did exactly what she wanted. She went after what she wanted and got it, just like you always go after what you want in a murder investigation and get your solution."

Jessica was laughing by this time. "All right, I'll admit to being headstrong, but stubborn, no."

"Not wanting to admit you're stubborn? You're being stubborn right now."

"Oh, hush. Do you have more?"

"Ayuh. She's independent and so are you, but that goes without saying. And she's a collector."

"Me, a collector? What do I collect?"

"Please, Jess. You've collected so many awards for your books and trophies of all kinds from your mysteries, you're going to need your own secret grotto to hold it all."

"Anything else?"

Seth grinned. "Well... Ariel saved Prince Eric's life. You saved mine when I ate that poisoned apple not too long ago. And even though you weren't singing, it was your voice that woke me up and let me know I was gonna be all right." He took her hand and squeezed it. "And so I am."

Jessica smiled and returned his squeeze. "I'm so glad you are."

Seth drew her into a warm embrace. "And I'm glad just to be a part of your world."