

The Strand, A Beach Musical

Once upon a time—circa the start of the twentieth century---the south bay beaches were too far from downtown Los Angeles, the journey was treacherous, and no one knew how to swim in a wild ocean. Big time investor, Henry Huntington changed all that with red car trolleys that brought beach combers safely to Redondo Beach, where they could stay in the 225 room Hotel Redondo, have a milder swim in the giant saltwater plunge and enjoy nighttime activities at the nearby amusement park. Renowned surfer and Hawaiian waterman, George Freeth was an added attraction. Tourists came for miles to watch the “man who could walk on water” as he demonstrated the first surfing ever brought to southern California.

On this historic morning, a young boy, Willy walks the beach as a family of baby sea turtles hatch in the sand and make the treacherous journey to the water. (*“Life’s an Ocean”*). Snag, the arrogant seagull swoops down and grabs one of the baby turtles, but Willy is nearby and scolds him to let her go. As Willie releases, the golden baby into the water with its brothers and sisters, he names her Honey Girl. George Freeth, checking on the waves introduces himself to Willy and they become friends. Willy hurries back to the hotel to get a good spot to watch the surf demonstration, performed by his new friend. (*“Wave Slide/ He’enalu”*). As the demonstration ends, someone in the crowd asks the question, “I wonder if this surfing thing will ever catch on?”

(*“Timeline Transition”*) takes the story to present day where Honey Girl, has returned with her dutiful grandson, Napoleon, to the waters near her birthplace, searching for Willy, who saved her life some eighty years ago. She remembers the location from her previous homecoming when she laid her eggs on her natal beach, as all female sea turtles do, and assures Napoleon that they are approaching the hotel landmark. He reminds her that things may have changed as she is an old turtle, but she gives him sage advice with (*“Just Go Through It”*).

Back at the hotel, wealthy and ruthless investor, Henry Harrison II has arrived to take over the hotel after the impending foreclosure. The now aging Willie, his daughter-in-law and grandchildren, Kai and Leia have fought hard to keep the historic landmark alive, but are losing the battle. Henry and egotistical, socialite son, Zack describe to Miss Hoyt, hotel manager, their plans for renovation. (*“I Love New”*).

While the Harrison men are scheming in the hotel lobby, lifeguards at the Surf Shack, Caspian, Duke, Blu and Tubes have just opened a letter addressed to Kai. As they expected, it contains his offer of admission to Yale University which they fear will take Kai away from them before the big surf contest. They quickly hide it as Kai arrives just in time to help beautiful Angeline Harrison rent a beach chair. Kai, the hero of the surfer, lifeguard crew, is as smitten with her as she is with him (*“Standing Right in Front of Me”*), though they both insist they are not looking for a girlfriend/boyfriend. Plans are made for a sunset walk when Angeline can learn more about “this historic hotel.”

When Kai returns from the beach, he finds his mother, Eloise and sister, Leia reflecting with Willy, his grandfather, on all the lives and memories that have passed through the hotel's doors (*"These Doors"*). Zack watches from afar and shakes his head at their ridiculous sentimentality as he heads to the beach.

Once on the beach, Zack complains of the sand getting into his shoes until he becomes intrigued with the spirited surfer girl, Leia. Caught up in the admiring comments of the surfers watching her, he sits down near her backpack to meet her. (*"Look at Her"*) When she arrives, he pretends to like poetry and Robert Frost as much as she does, but Aberdeen the seagull calls him out with, "You've never even heard of Robert Frost, have you?"

Kai waits anxiously on the beach for Angeline to arrive for the sunset walk. When she arrives late, claiming not to know when the sunset is---he teases her about her sheltered upbringing and proceeds to show her all the famous sites around the hotel property.

At dinner, Henry and Zack accidentally reveal to Angeline that their purposes for the trip are not merely leisure, but to take over the hotel by getting it "out from under that goofy family and all their ties to the past and build something brand new." Angeline flees and the Harrison men solidify their plan to carry out their unscrupulous ways. Leia overhears in shock as she exclaims, "A poetic surfer, huh?" On her way back to the hotel, she comes across the distraught Angeline who confides how shallow her life has become due to her father's "get rich quick" schemes. Leia encourages her with, "I can show you what to do." (*"Every Time I Try to Stop"*)

At the beginning of ACT II, famous starlet, Rosalee Moonraker returns to the hotel to host its anniversary celebration and Henry Harrison finds himself intrigued, pretending that, "we have so much in common", while aside, he tells the audience that his "wrecking crews are on the way."

Meanwhile at the lifeguard Surf Shack, Caspian is dancing when he remembers about the letter he has hidden. Although the acceptance deadline is imminent, Caspian decides to withhold the information until the surf contest is won. He is sure that Kai will forego college if the hotel is saved, and he would surely be willing to (*"Take One for the Team"*).

As they head off with their plan, a spat is brewing at the beach when Zack faces off with the surfers. After Zack suggests that the beach people waste their lives away, Kai and the surfers answer back with (*"Sun Keeps on Risin"*). Staying behind to clean up the beach, Kai is joined by Angeline who apologizes for the intentions of her father and brother.

As the next scene begins, Napoleon urges Honey Girl to rejoin the migrating turtles before they all get separated. She urges him to go on without her as she has found the place where she wants to spend the rest of her days. Meanwhile, Grandfather Willie is

on the rock at water's edge looking for Honey Girl. As he reminisces about the stretch of beach where he has spent nearly ninety years, (*"There's No Place Like Home"*) Honey Girl swims to the rock. In disbelief that she has made it home, he shares that they will soon lose their beloved beaches to the developer's plans. At that moment, Harrison and Rosalee emerge, having overheard and Harrison's heart is miraculously changed. He promises to restore the hotel to its grandeur and make the Strand his home. (*"There's No Place Like Home-Reprise"*)

The anniversary party is going strong when Willie and Harrison return arm in arm. When he promises to keep the hotel standing, Harrison receives cheers from all except his son. He attempts to explain his change of heart and Kai tries to soften the blow with (*"Hear Me in my Inspiration"*), as the entire party joins in. Zack eventually promises to try the new plan as well as learn some poetry for Leia.

Aberdeen comments on "the little love fest" as Kai notices some envelopes hanging out of Caspian's pocket. Kai reads his college acceptance letter aloud and the crowd cheers. He thanks them, but insists that he will go to college in town and never leave the hotel or his home.

Eloise suddenly remembers the second letter which Willie has already opened and left behind. It turns out to be from the Historical Preservation Society, mandating the hotel as a National Historic Landmark which cannot be architecturally altered. Knowing how much Willie hoped for this, the group looks around to congratulate him. Eventually, he is spotted swimming further and further out to sea with his beautiful gold sea turtle, Honey Girl. The group watches and freezes as the lights dim. The voice of Willie speaks to the audience about his life on the ocean. (*Life's an Ocean*).

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Characters

Honey Girl, Baby:	Newborn Sea Turtle born in the early 1900s.
Belinda:	Newborn Sea Turtle born in the early 1900s.
Elvis:	Newborn Sea Turtle born in the early 1900s.
Honey Girl, Grandmother	Grandmother Sea Turtle, close to 90.
Napoleon:	Honey Girl's Grandson
Young Willie:	Young boy at beginning; eventually hotel owner
Old Willie:	Hotel owner and grandfather of Leia and Kai
Gibbons:	First Hotel Manager 1900s
Henry Harrison I:	First Real Estate Developer 1900s
George Freeth:	Surfer brought from Hawaii to Hotel in early 1900s
Henry Harrison II:	Son of HH; Developer in present day
Angeline:	Harrison II's daughter who falls for Kai
Zack:	Harrison II's son who falls for Leia
Eloise:	Willie's daughter-in-law; Kai and Leia's Mom
Kai:	Surfer Boy, Willie's grandson
Leia:	Surfer Girl, Willie's granddaughter, Kai's Sister
Caspian:	Surfer. Head lifeguard. Fiercely loyal to Kai, but a little dingy
Blu	Female Surfer, Lifeguard. Big heart, but thinks she's a princess
Tubes	Surfer, Lifeguard---Very Organized & Particular
Duke	Surfer Lifeguard---Recently developed a love of Shakespeare
Hoyt:	Hotel Manager
Snaggy:	Seagull in opening
Aberdeen:	Seagull in later days
Snag:	Aberdeen's friend
Rosalee Moonraker	Starlet who spent her youth at the hotel
Surfers	
Construction Team	
Beach Crowd	
Tourists/Characters on the Strand	
Surfers	