

CLIMATE PROTEST

by

Ben Joseph

Ben
Justin
Vanessa
Ariel
Audience Member #1 - Anna
Audience Member #2 - Nico

INT. A MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - EVENING

Parents, middle schoolers, and audience members are seated quietly at this school's production of "The Little Mermaid." It's the scene where Ariel sings "Part of Your World." She's really milking it. Suddenly, Henry, Vanessa and Ben barge through the doors wearing shirts that have like the earth crying or something like that. The trio chant "save the planet" as they march down the aisle and onto the stage.

BEN

(nudging Ariel
aggressively with his
leg)

Move girl. Can't you see we're
protesting up here?

Ariel looks pissed as she crawls off stage

JUSTIN

Our planet is dying!

VANESSA

No one is doing anything!

BEN

(drastically less
enthusiastic than the
other two)

We have to make a change.

JUSTIN

Will your child's production of The
Little Mermaid matter when this
auditorium is underwater?

VANESSA

Will your oat milk lattes matter
when all your local Starbucks are
underwater?

BEN

(still clearly not into
it)

Will catching your husband cheating
with his secretary matter when his
office burns to the ground-I mean
is underwater.

VANESSA AND HENRY NO!

A full beat later

BEN
Probably not.

VANESSA
The time to act i-

AUDIENCE MEMBER #1
Sorry, uh, why is the one on the
left not into it?

Vanessa and Justin shoot looks at Ben.

BEN
I'm sorry ma'am, do you mean stage
left or house left because you
could be referring to me, but you
could also be referring to Henry so
you've created a little confusion
up here.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #2
I think it's pretty obvious she was
talking to you man.

BEN
Fine. Your suspicions are correct.
I am not in the best place to be
saving the planet right now.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #2
Then why are you interrupting this
middle school show?

Ben glares at Justin.

JUSTIN
Ben, please don't.

BEN
No, Justin, I'm done living in the
cages you imprison me in. These
people deserve the truth.
(to audience member)
Honestly, sir, I wanted to do a
song.

The audience members don't know how to respond.

BEN (CONT'D)
But not just a regular song. An
important song. With lyrics that
would change the world. But I guess
Henry was right: a song could never
change the world.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #1
So can we resume the show now?

The audience cheer in agreement.

BEN
Listen to them, Justin. This audience wants a show. And I'm going to give it to them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #2
We're good.

BEN
Well just wait. Because you're about to get so much better.
(pointing at the booth)
Hit it, Trevor!

A karaoke version of Beyonce's "Halo" starts playing from the auditorium speakers

VANESSA
How do they have your music?

BEN
I blackmailed the stage manager as soon as I had the idea.

Ben runs upstage, pulls a mic out of his pocket, and dramatically faces away from the audience.

BEN (CONT'D)
(to the tune of Beyonce's "Halo")
Remember those icebergs Mother nature built? Well girl they're melting now. Feels like we didn't even put up a fight. Global leaders ain't make a sound (no sound). We're letting global warming win. But there's a way to turn this around. Stop burning fossil fuels. (Wow) Global warming's over now!

Ben tries to start a clap with the audience but it doesn't catch on.

BEN (CONT'D)
It's like you've all been awakened

Ariel flops back on stage in hopes of reclaiming her moment.

ARIEL AND BEN
(singing in unison) Every
rule I had you breakin.

BEN
(shocked that Ariel would
do this)
I'm sorry what the fuck do you
think you're doing?

ARIEL
I just thought we could maybe sing
together-

BEN
Well you thought wrong. And now
you've ruined this for everyone,
Ariel. I hope you're happy when the
world you claim to desperately want
to be apart of is destroyed because
you needed this moment to be about
you. God, if I were a sea witch I
would steal your voice too just to
save these people from having to
listen to your screeching.
(to Vanessa and Henry)
Cmon guys, lets get out of here.
Truman Middle's production of
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang starts in
less than 30.

Justin, Vanessa and Ben run off stage.