



The mermaid & the sailor

Little Lie

Mystery, Romance

Once upon a time there was this little mermaid who was looking for a husband who could make her a woman on two legs. She swam to all the big and small waters in the world to look for him and eventually she ended up in a small lake, somewhere in a country where you have the most beautiful and proud men that you had ever seen.

She waited for days in a lake under the mangroves until the first group of boys arrived. They were there to play in the water. The mermaid was so enthusiastic that she immediately drew their attention and began swimming towards them. The boys were still young and had never seen a creature like her before. They were so shocked that they screamed and ran away, leaving the mermaid behind in confusion. After a while she realized that the boys wouldn't come back and also other boys stayed away. There wasn't a child in the region that dared to swim in that lake again, because it was now marked as being hunted. For a long time the water in the lake stand still and the mermaid waited and waited.

Fortunately, not everyone believed those silly stories about scary water creatures and another group of swimmers was about to arrive. This time the mermaid was much more careful and slowly she swam in their direction. She came closer and closer to the men, they were older and taller than the boys. They were not scared. The men rather looked surprised and out of curiosity they began to form a circle around her. In the beginning they seemed to like her, but then they started asking her a lot of questions. Now it was the mermaid who began to feel uncomfortable. Their curiosity made her to feel silly and somebody laughed out loud when she showed her fish tale. While they came closer they made fun of her and tried to grab her flapping tale. When one of the men touched her neckless of sea shelves, she went straight down under the water, swam through their legs far, far away from them. They jelled: 'Come back, we won't hurt you!' But the mermaid wouldn't

come back, because they had made her heart beat rapidly of fear.

That night the mermaid cried and cried. She didn't understand what went wrong and began to have doubts. Didn't she behave properly? Was she in the wrong country? She waited for a full moon to appear and then she went to the Mother of the Moon to ask what she had done wrong. The Mother of the Moon answered that if she wanted to become a full grown woman on two legs, she was not suppose to expose herself like that, because true love reveals itself. Although the words of the wise woman were comforting, she still wondered, if she wasn't suppose to do anything, how would that man of true love find her? The Mother answered that the man with the purest of heart will notice her, the man with the strongest of heart will follow her and the man with the bravest of heart will share her destiny.

With these words in mind the mermaid returned to the lake and waited, hidden behind the mangroves. This time she didn't come out when another group of swimmers came by. They were professional swimmers and the mermaid regained hope. Only, nothing happened. The athletes could swim almost as good as she can, but they seemed very occupied with themselves. So after their exercises, the water in the lake stand still again. Years went by without anyone noticing the creature behind the mangroves. There were moments that a young man glanced in her direction, but always without seeing her. It wasn't even helpful that the mermaid had grown taller into a full grown woman, but of course, still without the lady-like legs. She waited and waited and became each year more and more sad. Only during the nights she came into the open water to swim, talk to the fish and share her loneliness with them. The fish would listen to her and reminded her of Mother's words that true love reveal itself.

Then one day a group of new swimmers arrived. This group was quite different than all the other ones that had swim in the lake. This group seemed to be a mixture of young and old, men and women, even children were among them. These people came in a bus plastered with colorful flowers and they set up their tents in the sandy shores. They talked and laughed out loud and they played lively music. They came with all kinds of attributes and animals like monkey's and snakes. The whole day they were doing acrobatic tricks in the water and during the nights they sat around the camp fire singing, while they were eating roasted fish and meat. The mermaid watched them closely. They seemed nice. They talked with friendly sounds in an unknown language that wasn't familiar in this region.

Then the strangest thing happened. One morning the mermaid watched them from behind the mangroves and saw how they were bathing and playing with the kids. She suddenly noticed that one of the acrobats was looking in her direction. In the beginning she thought he was looking at the bushes, but then their eyes met and she felt some chills. He was actually seeing her. She remembered the first phrase of the wise woman's words: the one with the purest of heart will notice you. Somehow it frightened her and she disappeared in the shadows of the trees.

The next day he stood there again and their eyes met also this time. He began to swim to her. It happened so fast that she could hardly think what to do. He came closer, looked under the branches and said: 'Hello, what's your name?' She was so shy that she couldn't answer him, she could only smile and then disappear under the water again. The day after he was better prepared and came to her with some fruits in his hands. He offered her a pear. For some moments they didn't do much than smiling to each other and eating the juicy fruit. His face looked very friendly. The mermaid sank slowly in the water and swam in circles around him. He kept following her with his eyes. Then she waved her arm, inviting him to come with her. She remembered the second phrase of Mother's message: the man with the strongest of heart will follow you.

She crossed the lake towards the passage that was leading to the river where the water was much more restless. All this time she looked behind her back, to see that he was still there, following her to the big waters. The flood became higher and higher until the strong waves started to break against the rocks. Here they entered the open sea. For the mermaid the high tide didn't carry any danger, but for him it was different. He had to use all of his body strength to keep up with her and avoid being dragged down and splashed against the rocks. He was out of breath but kept on following her under the waterfalls, into the salty water where also other sea creatures lived. There were moments that he could only see a string of her hair or the shelves of her neckless. He followed her until the sun went down and his body fell down from exhaustion in the warm sandy beach.

He laid there for hours with his eyes half closed. He could only see a glance of her and he saw how she was sitting on her knees nearby. She sat there the whole night, looking at him and she saw how he found his breath again. So far he followed her from the lake, to the river, over the rocks, to the sea. Was he also brave enough to follow her into the ocean? She wasn't suppose to tell him about the secret world under the water, so she kept her silence and waited patiently until he fell asleep. Then she kissed him goodbye, hoping she would see him

again someday.

The next morning, he woke up, alone. He thought he had dreamt about crossing high tides of water, following a beautiful creature with a long fish tale, that had kissed him goodbye. But how could that explain that he woke up somewhere on a beach without knowing where he was? He was also far away from his family and friends. He had no idea where he was and how to find his way back home. For some time he sat there in the sand staring at the sea, with his arms around his legs, wondering what he should do next. He closed his eyes and he remembered vaguely her gentle touch on his lips. Then he realized that he couldn't go back home before he would know whether that young woman with the fish tale was somebody real. He got up and started walking across the island, looking for wood to build a boat. He worked the whole day and night to chop a craft out of a palm tree. He worked until he fell a sleep that had more dreams about a mermaid that was diving in and out the water. Eventually the long fish tale disappeared in the waves, right before sunset.

The following morning he pushed the boat from the offshore and sailed out. The first days the weather was fine and the water was calm, but further on the ocean, the water was restless. It started raining and his body shivered in his little boat. Then came the storm and he thought he would collapse and drown to the bottom of the sea. Then came thunder and lightning that made the ocean a terrifying place to be. He thought he saw dark creatures in the water that were there to hunt him down. The waves became so big that he could touch the grew of the clouds. They had thrown his ship somewhere. Months went by without knowing where he was, the wind took him to all the big and small waters in the world, but never he saw a side of the mermaid. She would only appear in his dreams and then the next morning he would find a shelve in his boat.

The sailor grew a big beard. He began to loose hope of finding the mermaid or his beloved home again. He was tired of traveling and laid down staring at the clear blue sky. This was a warm day and the water was peaceful than ever. There was almost no wind. He suddenly became aware that he was crossing low tide and that the boat speeded up by itself. He raised up and with two hands on the boat, he carefully looked over the side. He could see clearly the bottom of the ocean and saw this big fish tale that was coming from under the boat. He knew for sure it was the tale of the mermaid and that she was taking him to the lowest tide were the sun colors red before it goes down into the water.

The sun was not yet under when they arrived at the horizon. She came from under his ship and he could see

that she still had that long dark hair and that neckless of shelves on her chest. She reached out to him and he took her hand, stepped out of the boat into the water. He touched the ground for the first time again, here the surface was below his knees. She was smiling at him and he smiled back. 'I have never known your name', he said and she answered that question with a whisper in his ear that felt like the kiss of a sea breeze. Her name was not just a name, it was a promise. A promise that he was going to keep, because he proofed to be the one who was the purest, the strongest and the bravest of heart. She could finally share her secret world with him and nobody saw a glance of the mermaid and the sailor again.

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