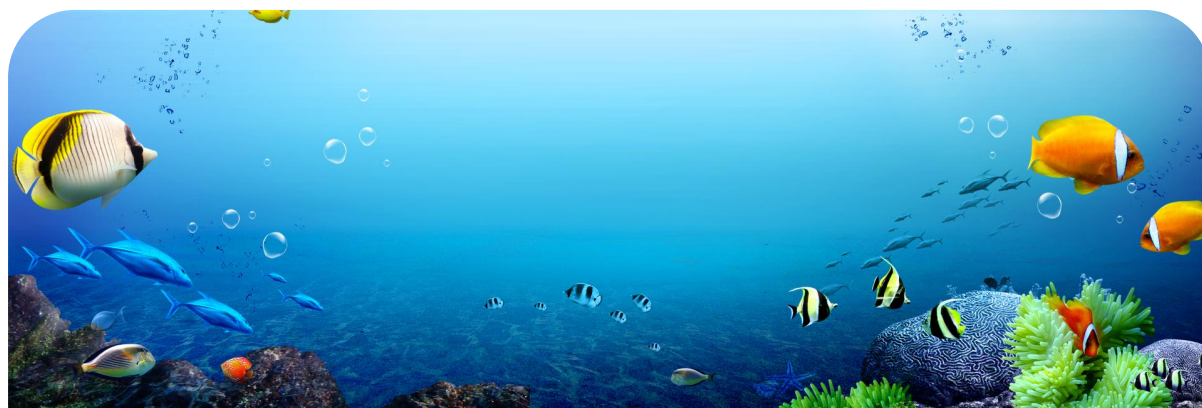


## The daughter of the sea

In the distance of the sea, the water is so blue, like the most beautiful cornflower petals, and at the same time so clear, like the brightest glass. However, it is very deep, so deep that no anchor chain can reach the end. In order to reach the surface from the bottom of the sea, many church steeples must be connected one after another. People on the bottom of the sea live here.



But people must not think that there is just a seabed covered with white sand. No, the strangest trees and plants grow there. Their branches and leaves are so soft that as long as the water flows slightly, they will shake as if they were living things. All the big and small fish swim around among these branches, like birds in the sky. The deepest place in the sea is where the Neptune Palace is located. Its walls are made of coral, and its high pointed windows are made of the brightest amber; but the roof is covered with black clam shells, which open and close automatically with the flow of water. This is strange and beautiful, because every clam shell contains shiny pearls. Any pearl can be the main decoration on the queen's hat.

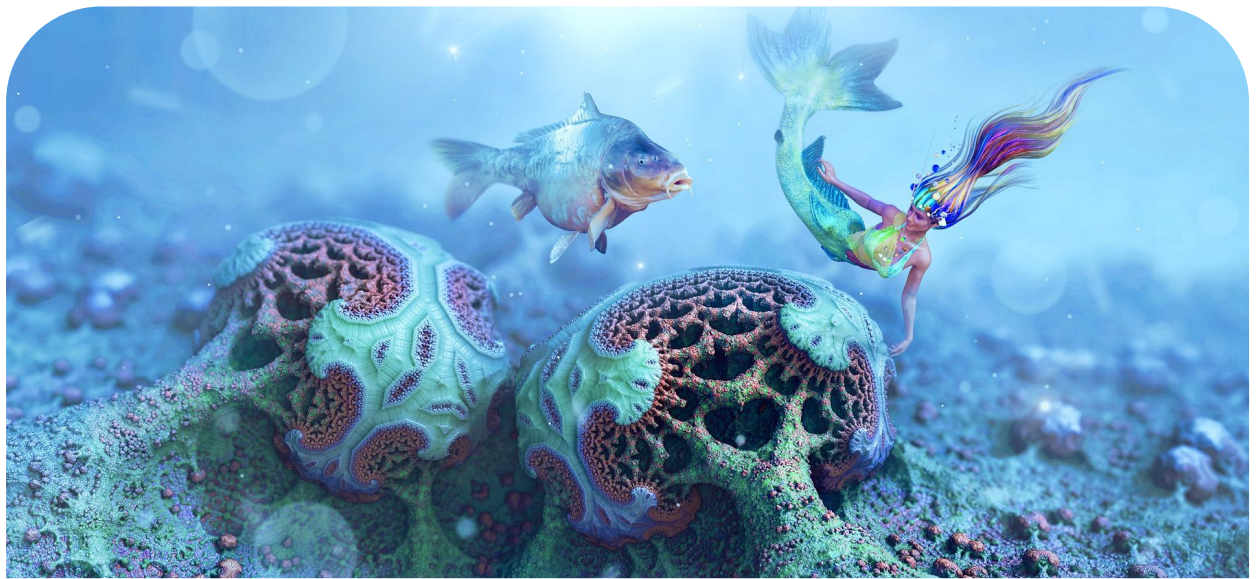
The Sea King who lives there has been a widower for many years, but he has an old mother to manage the housework for him. She is a clever woman, but she always feels incomparable to her noble origin, so she always wears a dozen oysters on her tail—the rest of the nobles can only wear half a dozen each. In addition, she deserves great praise, especially because she loves those little sea princesses very much—some of her granddaughters. They are six beautiful children, and among them, the youngest is the most beautiful. Her skin was light and tender, like rose petals, and her eyes were blue, like the deepest lake. However, like other princesses, she has no legs: the lower part of her body is a fish tail.



They can spend the entire long day in the palace, in the hall with flowers growing on the wall. Those big windows with amber inlays were open, and fishes were swimming towards them, just as swallows would fly in when we opened the

windows. But Yuer kept swimming towards these little princesses, looking for something to eat in their hands, and letting them touch themselves.

There is a large garden outside the palace, with many fiery red and dark blue trees growing inside; the fruits on the trees are as bright as gold, the flowers bloom like a burning fire, and the branches and leaves are constantly shaking. The ground is full of the finest sand, but it is as blue as the flame of sulfur. There, there was a strange, blue light shining everywhere. You can easily think that you are high in the air instead of on the bottom of the sea, and there is a blue sky above your head and feet. When the sea is very quiet, you can catch a glimpse of the sun: it is like a purple flower, emitting various colors of light from its calyx.



In the garden, every little princess has her own little place where she can plant as she pleases. Some set up their flower beds like a whale, and some feel that it is best to set up their flower beds like a little mermaid. But the youngest one arranged her flowerbed round, like a round of the sun, and at the same time she

only planted flowers that were as red as the sun. She is a weird child who doesn't like to talk very much and always thinks about something quietly. When other sisters decorate their gardens with the strangest things they got from the sunken ship, she only wanted a beautiful marble statue except for the bright red flowers like the sun in the sky. This stone statue represents a beautiful man. It was carved out of a white stone and sank to the bottom of the sea with a distressed ship. She planted a weeping willow as red as a rose next to the stone statue. The tree grows very lush. Its fresh branches and leaves hang down to the stone statue, all the way to the blue sandy bottom. Its reflection has a purple-blue hue. Like its branches, this shadow is never static, and the roots and tops of the tree seem to be playing a game of kissing each other.

Her greatest pleasure is to hear some stories about the human world above. Her old grandmother had to tell her all her knowledge about ships and cities, humans and animals. One thing that made her feel particularly good was that the flowers on the ground gave off their fragrance, but the flowers on the bottom of the sea could not; the forest on the ground was green, and what people saw was swimming among the branches. The fish can sing so clearly and nicely, which makes people feel happy. The "fish" that the old grandmother said was actually a bird, but if she didn't say that, the little princess would not understand her story, because she had never seen a bird before.

"When you turn fifteen years old," the old grandmother said, "I will allow you to float to the surface. Then you can sit on the rocks under the moonlight and watch the huge ships sail by your side. You too. You can see the woods and the city."

In the year that is about to come, one of these sisters has reached the age of fifteen; but what about the others—meet, they are one year younger than the other. Therefore, the youngest princess had to wait five years before she could float up from the bottom of the sea and take a look at our world. But each promised the next that she would tell everyone what she saw and discovered on the first day, because what their grandmother said was really not enough—they really didn't know what they wanted to know. how many!

None of them was as desperate as the younger sister, and she just had to wait the longest, and at the same time she was so silent and thoughtful. I don't know how many nights she stood by the open window, staring upward through the deep blue water, watching the fish waving their tails and wings. She also saw the moon and stars-of course, the light they emitted was a little faint, but through a layer of water, they looked much larger than in our eyes. If something resembling a dark cloud floats under them, she knows that this is not a whale swimming over her, or a boat carrying many passengers. But these travelers never imagined that there was a beautiful little mermaid below them, stretching

out her pair of white hands toward the keel of their ship.

The oldest princess is now fifteen years old and can rise to the surface of the water.

When she came back, she had countless things to talk about: But she said, the most beautiful thing is when the sea is calm and the waves are calm, lying on a sandy beach under the moonlight, clinging to the coast and staring at the big city as bright as countless Star-like lights, listen to music, noises, and the sounds of carriages and people, watch the round towers and steeples of the church, and listen to the jingle bells. Just because she can't get there, she wants these things most.

how fascinating the youngest sister is! When she stood by the open window at night, looking up through the deep blue water, she thought of the big city and the hustle and bustle of it. So she seemed to hear the church bells floating towards her.

In the second year, the second sister got permission to surface and swim anywhere. When she jumped out of the water, the sun had just set; she thought the sight was really beautiful. She said that the whole sky looked like a piece of gold at this time, and the clouds—well, she really couldn't describe their beauty!

They passed over her head, suddenly red and sometimes purple. However, what flies faster than them, like a long veil, is a group of wild swans flying across the water. They flew to the sun, and she also swam to the sun. But the sun went down. A rosy sunset slowly disappeared between the sea and the clouds.

Another year passed, and the third sister appeared. She is the most daring of them, so she swam into a big river that flows into the sea. She saw some beautiful green hills with rows of grapes planted on them. The palace and the country estate were faintly exposed in the lush woods; she heard how beautiful the birds sang, how warm the sun was, and sometimes she had to sink into the water so that her scorching face could get a little cool. In a small creek she met a group of small children in the world; they were swimming naked in the water. She really wanted to play with them for a while, but they were taken aback and ran away. So a little black animal came over—this was a puppy, a puppy she had never seen before. It barked at her so fiercely that it made her scared, and quickly fled to the sea. But she will never forget the magnificent forest, the green mountains, and those cute little babies who can swim in the water—even though they don't have tails like fish.

The fourth sister is not so bold anymore. She stayed above the desolate sea. She said that the most beautiful thing is to stop at sea: because you can look far and far around from here, while the sky hangs above it like a huge glass clock. She

had seen ships, but they were far away from her and looked like a seagull. She had seen happy dolphins turning somersaults, and huge whales spraying water from their nostrils, as if countless fountains were surrounding them.

It's the fifth sister now. Her birthday happened in winter, so she could see things that other sisters hadn't seen when they first surfaced. The sea was stained green, and huge icebergs moved around. She said that each iceberg looks like a bead, but it is much larger than the church tower built by humans. They appear in all sorts of weird shapes; they shine like diamonds. She once sat on one of the biggest icebergs, and let the sea wind blow her slender hair and all the boats, bypassing the place where she was sitting, and fleeing far away in panic. But at dusk, a dark cloud suddenly appeared in the sky. The lightning flashed, and the thunder blasted. The huge black wave lifted up the whole piece of ice, making them gleam in the blood-red thunder and lightning. All the ships took their sails, creating an atmosphere of panic and horror, but she sat quietly on the floating iceberg, looking at the blue network power, flexing into the reflective sea.

Any one of these sisters, as long as it is the first time to rise to the surface of the sea, is always very happy to watch these fresh and beautiful things. But now, they are already big girls, and they can float wherever they like to go, so these things no longer arouse their interest too much. They are eager to come home. A month later, they said: It's better to live in the sea—how comfortable is at home!



At dusk, these five sisters often float up arm in arm and line up on the water. They can sing nice songs-more beautiful than any human voice. When the storm was about to come and they thought that some ships were about to be in trouble, they floated in front of these ships and sang a very beautiful song, saying how lovely it was under the sea, and told these sailors not to be afraid of sinking to the sea; however These people do not understand their lyrics. They thought it was the sound of a giant wind. They also didn't think they would see anything beautiful on the bottom of the sea, because if the ship sinks, the people on it will drown, and they can only reach the palace of the sea king if they are dead.

One night, when the sisters surfaced so arm in hand, the youngest sister stayed alone behind, looking at them. It seemed that she wanted to cry, but the mermaid had no tears, so she felt even more uncomfortable.

"Ah, how I wish I was fifteen years old!" she said. "I know that I will like the world above and the people who live in that world."

At last she really reached fifteen years old.

"You know, you can leave our hands now," said her grandmother, the Queen

Mother. "Come on, let me dress you up like your sisters."

So she put a wreath of lilies on the little girl's hair, but each petal of the flower was half a pearl. The old lady asked eight big oysters to be attached tightly to the princess's tail to show her noble status.

"This makes me really uncomfortable!" said the little mermaid.

"Of course, in order to be beautiful, one should suffer a bit," the old grandmother said.

Hey, she really wants to get rid of these decorations and throw this heavy wreath aside! The red flowers in her garden are much more suitable for her to wear, but she dare not do that. "Farewell!" she said. So she was light and bright like a blister, coming out of the water.

When she stretched her head out of the sea, the sun was already down, but all the clouds were still shining like roses and gold; at the same time, in the reddish sky, the big white star was blinking beautifully and brightly. Eyes closed. The air is mild and fresh. The sea is very calm, and there is a big ship with three masts parked here. There was only one sail on the boat, because there was no wind. The sailors are sitting around the mast line and on top of the sail.

There is music and singing here. When the dusk gradually became dark, all kinds of lanterns were lit up together. They look like flags of various countries of the world floating in the air. The little mermaid kept swimming towards the ship window. Every time when the waves lifted her up, she could see through the window glass like a mirror, there were many gorgeously dressed men standing inside; but the most beautiful of them was the prince with big black eyes. : Undoubtedly, he is less than sixteen years old. Today is his birthday, and it is for this reason that it is so lively today.

The sailors danced on the deck. When the prince walked out, more than a hundred rockets shot into the sky at once. The sky was illuminated like the day, so the little mermaid was very frightened and quickly sank to the bottom. But after a while she stretched her head out-at this time she felt as if stars were falling towards her in the sky, and she had never seen such fireworks. Many huge suns made a hissing sound around, and dazzling big fish leaped into the blue sky. All this is reflected in this clear and peaceful sea. The whole body of the boat was illuminated so brightly that even every small rope could be seen, and of course the people on the boat could see clearly. Ah, how beautiful this young prince is! When the music slowly faded away in this glorious night, he and the sailors shook hands, laughed, smiled...

It was late at night, but the little mermaid couldn't keep her eyes off the ship and the beautiful prince. The colorful lanterns went out, the rockets no longer fired into the air, and the sound of the artillery stopped. But there was a buzzing and rumbling sound in the depths of the sea. She was sitting on the water, floating on the ground together, so she could see what was in the cabin. But the ship speeded up: its sails were all splayed one after another. The waves rose, heavy dark clouds rose, and lightning struck in the distance. Ah, the terrible storm is coming soon! The sailors all lowered their sails. The huge ship swayed forward on the violent sea. The waves are rising like a huge black mountain. It wants to break the mast. But the boat was like a swan, and suddenly it plunged into the Hongtao, and then raised its head on the high waves.

The little mermaid thought this was a very interesting voyage, but the sailors did not think so. The ship was cracking now; its thick walls were bends by the hitting sea waves. The mast broke off at the mid-waist like a reed. Then the ship began to tilt, and the water rushed in into the cabin. Only then did the little mermaid know that they were in danger. She must also watch out for the beams and wrecks of the boat drifting on the water.

The sky became pitch black immediately, and she couldn't see anything. But when the lightning struck, the sky appeared very bright again, so that she could see everyone on the boat. Now everyone is trying their best to find a way out for

themselves. She paid special attention to the prince. When the ship cracked and sank into the depths of the sea, she saw him. She immediately became very happy, because he was coming to her now. But she remembered that human beings cannot live in water, unless he becomes a dead person, he cannot enter her father's palace.

No, we must not let him die! So she swam between the floating beams and planks, never thought they might kill her. She sank deeply into the water, then floated up high in the waves, and finally she finally reached the prince's side. In this raging sea, he never had the power to float again. His arms and legs began to lose support. His beautiful eyes have been closed. If the little mermaid hadn't come in time, he would have drowned. She lifted his head out of the water, letting the waves carry her and drift anywhere with him.

At dawn, the storm has passed. The boat didn't even have a fragment. The bright red sun rose, shining brightly on the water. It seemed to breathe life into the prince's face. But his eyes are still closed. The little mermaid kissed his delicate high forehead and straightened his drenched long hair back. She thought his appearance was very similar to her marble statue in the small sea garden. She kissed him again, hoping that he would wake up.

Now she saw a piece of land and a group of blue mountains spread out in front

of her, and the shining white snow on the top of the mountain looked like a sleeping swans. Along the coast is a beautiful green forest, in front of the forest there is a church or monastery-she doesn't know what it is called, it is always a building anyway. There are some lemon and orange trees growing in its garden, and tall palms stand in front of the door. The sea forms a small bay here. The water is very calm, but from here to the vicinity of the rocky cliff with a lot of fine sand, it is very deep. She held the beautiful prince to swim there. She put him on the sand and very carefully put his head high in the warm sun.

The bell rang from the majestic white building, and many young women walked out through the garden. The little mermaid swims far into the sea, and swims behind a few big rocks on the sea. She covered her hair and breast with a lot of sea foam, so that no one could see her little face. She was staring here to see who would come to the poor prince.

After a while, a young woman came over. She seemed very surprised, but it was not long before she found many people. The little mermaid saw the prince gradually awakening, and smiled at the people around him. But he didn't make a smile at her: Of course, he didn't know she was the one who saved him. She felt very sad. So when he was carried into the tall house, she sorrowfully jumped into the sea and returned to her father's palace.

She has always been a quiet and thoughtful child, and now she has become even more so. Her sisters all asked her what she saw when she rose to the surface for the first time, but she couldn't say anything.

Many evenings and mornings, she surfaced and swam to the place where she once put the prince down. She saw that the fruit in the garden was ripe and picked; she saw the snow on the top of the mountain melt; but she could not see the prince. So every time she comes home, she always feels more painful. Her only comfort was sitting in her little garden, holding a beautiful marble statue similar to the prince in her hands. But she never took care of her flowers anymore. These flowers seemed to grow in the wilderness, spread all over the ground: their long stalks and leaves intersected with the branches, making the place very dark.

In the end she couldn't stand it anymore. But as long as she tells one sister what she is worried about, the rest of them will know. But apart from them and one or two other mermaids (they only tell the secret to a few of their confidants), no one else knows. One of them knew who the prince was. She also saw the celebration on the ship. She knew where the prince came from and where his kingdom was.

"Come on, little sister!" the other princesses said. They put their hands on each other's shoulders, and they rose to the surface in long rows, swimming to a place

they thought was the palace of the prince.

The palace is built with a kind of luminous pale yellow stone, and there are many large marble steps inside-one step still extends into the sea. Ornate, golden round towers stretched into the air from the roof. In the middle of the columns surrounding the entire building, there are many marble statues. They look like living people. Through the bright glass of those tall windows, one can see some magnificent halls, with precious silk curtains and brocade hanging inside, and large pictures on the walls-just looking at these things is also very pleasant matter. In the center of the largest hall, there is a huge fountain spraying water. The water filaments shot straight to the glass dome above, and the sun shot down through the glass, onto the water, onto the plants growing in this large pool.

Now she knows where the prince lives. She spent many evenings and nights on the water here. She swam far to land, farther than any other sister dared to go. Indeed, she even swam into the narrow river, until below the magnificent marble balcony-its long shadow reflected on the water. She was sitting here, looking at the young prince, who thought he was the only one in the moonlight.

For several nights, she saw him riding the gorgeous ship with many flags amidst the sound of music. She peeked above through the green rushes. When the wind



blew her long silver mask, if anyone saw it, they always thought it was a swan spreading its wings.

For several nights, when the fishermen set their torches to go fishing, she heard them say many words of praise to the prince. She became happy and felt that when the waves hit him half-dead, she came to save his life; she remembered how tightly his head was lying in her arms, how passionately she kissed him . But he didn't know these things at all, and he wouldn't even dream of her.

She gradually began to love human beings, and gradually began to hope that she could live among them. She felt that their world was much bigger than hers. Indeed, they were able to travel on the sea by boat and climb up the towering mountains. At the same time, their land, including forests and fields, stretched out, making her endless. She wished to know a lot, but none of her sisters could answer all her questions. So she could only ask her old grandmother. She really knew the "upper world"-this is the proper name she gave to the maritime nations-quite well.

"If humans don't drown," the little mermaid asked, "will they live forever? Will they die like the people we live in the sea?"

"Not bad at all," said the old lady. "They too will die, and their lives are even

shorter than ours. We can live to three hundred years old, but when our lives here are over, we become foam on the water. We don't even leave a tomb to our beloved here. We don't have an immortal soul. We never get a life after death. We are like that green seaweed. As long as it is cut off, it will never be green again! On the contrary, human beings have a soul; it lives forever, even if the body turns into dust, it is still alive. It rises to the clear sky, and it rises to the shining ones all the time The stars! Just as we rise to the surface of the water and see the world on earth, they rise to the mysterious and gorgeous places that we will never see."

"Why can't we get an immortal soul?" the little mermaid asked sadly. "As long as I can become a human being and can enter the heavenly world, even if I only live there for one day, I am willing to give up the hundreds of years of life I can live here,"

"You must never think of this," the old lady said. "Compared to the human beings above, our life here is much happier and better!"



"Then I will only die and become foam floating on the water. I will never hear the music of the waves, or see the

beautiful flowers and the bright red sun? Is there no way I can get an eternal soul?"

"No!" said the old lady. "Only when a person loves you and treats you as a kinder person than his parents: only when he puts all his thoughts and love on you; only when he asks the priest to put his right hand in your hands, when you promise to be loyal to you forever, now and in the future, his soul will be transferred to you, and you will get a share of human happiness. He will give you a soul, and at the same time, his own soul can remain immortal. But such things never happen! What we think is beautiful on the bottom of the sea-your fish tail-they think it is very ugly on land : They don't know what beauty and ugliness are. In their place, a person wants to look beautiful and must have two stupid pillars-they call them legs!"

The little mermaid sighed and looked sadly at his tail.

"Let's be happy!" the old lady said. "During the three hundred years we can live, let us dance and dance. After all, this is quite a long time, and we can rest happily in our graves in the future. We will have fun in the palace tonight. A dance party!"

It was a magnificent scene that people would never see on land. The walls and ceiling of this spacious dance hall are made of thick, transparent glass. Hundreds

of grass-green and pink giant shells stood in rows on the four sides; inside them were burning blue flames, illuminating the entire ballroom, illuminating the walls, and thus illuminating the sea outside. People can see countless schools of fish, big and small, swimming towards this crystal official. Some of the scales are glowing with purple light, and some of them light up like silver and gold. A wide torrent passes through the center of the ballroom. The men and women in the sea sing beautiful songs and dance on this torrent. People who live on land cannot sing such a beautiful song.

Among these people, the little mermaid sang the most beautifully. Everyone applauded for her; she felt very happy for a while, because she knew that only her voice was the most beautiful on land and in the sea. But she immediately remembered the world above. She could not forget the beautiful prince, nor could she forget the sorrow caused by her lack of an immortal soul like his. So she secretly walked out of her father's palace: when it was filled with singing and happiness, she sat sadly in her little garden. Suddenly she heard the sound of a horn coming from the water. She thought: "He must be sailing on it: he--I love him more than my father and mother; he--I miss him all the time; I put the happiness of my life in his hands. I will sacrifice everything to win him and an immortal soul. When my sisters are dancing in the palace of father, I am going to visit the witch of the sea. I have always been very afraid of her, but she Maybe you can teach me some ways and help me."

The little mermaid then walked out of the garden, towards a frothy whirlpool—the witch lived behind it. She had never walked this way before. There are no flowers or seaweed here, only a smooth gray sandy bottom stretches towards the whirlpool. The water swirled here like a noisy waterwheel, turning everything it hits to the bottom of the water. To reach the area where the witch lives, she must walk through this vortex. There was a long journey through a hot muddy field: the witch called this place her peat field. Behind this there is a terrible forest, and her house is inside. All the trees and bushes are full of polyps—a kind of half plant and half animal. They look a lot like multi-headed snakes emerging from the ground. Their branches are all long, slimy arms, and their fingers are all soft like worms. They quivered from root to top. They hugged tightly what they could grasp in the sea, and did not relax at all.

The little mermaid stopped in front of the forest, very panicked. Her heart jumped with fear, and she almost wanted to turn around and go back. But when she thought of the prince and the soul of the man, she had courage again. She wrapped her long fluttering hair firmly around her head so that the coral insects could not catch her. She pressed her hands tightly to her chest, so she jumped forward like a fish jumping in the water, among these ugly polyps, and these polyps only waved their soft long arms behind her. And fingers. She saw that each of them had grasped something, and countless small arms wrapped it around it like a strong iron ring. Those who drowned in the sea and sank to the

bottom of the sea have white bones exposed in the arms of these coral insects. They hugged the rudder and the box tightly, the bones of land animals, and a little mermaid that was caught and strangled by them-this was the most terrifying thing for her.

Now she came to a slimy clearing in the forest. The big, fat water snakes were turning around here, revealing their pale yellow, ugly belly. In the middle of this piece of land there is a house made of dead bones. The witch of the sea is sitting here, feeding a toad with her mouth, just as we people feed a little canary with sugar. She called those ugly, fat water snakes her chicks, and at the same time allowed them to crawl around on her fat, floppy chest.

"I know what you are here for," said the witch of the sea. "You are a stupid thing! But, my beautiful princess, I will let you achieve your goal, because this thing will give you a tragic ending. You want to remove your fish tail and give birth to two pillars , So that you can walk like a human being. You want that prince to fall in love with you, so that you can get him, and therefore an immortal soul." Then the witch laughed in disgust, madly and The water snakes all rolled to the ground and crawled around. "You came just in time," said the witch. "Tomorrow after the sun comes out, I can't help you. I have to wait for a year. I can take the medicine and give it to you. You take this medicine and swim to the land before the sun comes out. You just sit on the beach. , Eat this medicine, so your tail can be

divided into two halves and shrunk into what humans call beautiful legs. But this is very painful-it's like a sharp knife slashed into your body. Anything you see Your people will definitely say that you are the most beautiful child they have ever seen! You will still keep your steps like swimming, and no dancer will dance as soft as you. But every step you take It will make you feel as if you are walking on a sharp knife, as if your blood is flowing outward. If you can bear the pain, I can help you."

"I can bear it," the little mermaid said in a trembling voice. At this time she thought of the prince and her wish to obtain an immortal soul.

"But remember," said the witch, "Once you have acquired the form of a human being, you can no longer become a mermaid, and you can no longer go into the water and return to your sister's or your father's palace. Here comes. At the same time, if you can't get the love of that prince, if you can't make him forget his parents for you, love you wholeheartedly, and ask the pastor to put your hands together to form a couple, then you won't You will get an immortal soul. On the first morning when he married someone else, your heart will shatter and you will become foam on the water."

"I'm not afraid!" said the little mermaid. But her face was as pale as death.

"But you still have to pay me!" said the witch, "and what I want is not a tiny thing. Among the people on the bottom of the sea, your voice is the most beautiful. Undoubtedly, you want to use this. The voice fascinates him, but you have to give this voice to me. I have to get your best thing in exchange for my precious medicine! I have to put my own blood in this medicine to make it sharp. It's like a knife with two quick faces!"

"But, if you take my voice away," said the little mermaid, "what else do I have left?"

"You still have a beautiful figure," the witch replied, "you still have light steps and expressive eyes. With these things, you can easily fascinate a man's heart. Well, you are already. Have you lost your courage? Stick out your little tongue, I can cut it off as a reward, and you can get this strong potion."

"Let's do that." The little mermaid said. The witch then prepared the pot of medicine and decocted the magical medicine.

"Cleaning is a good thing," she said; so she tied a few snakes into a knot and used it to scrub the jar. Then she scratched her chest and let her black blood drip into the jar. The vapour of the medicine rose into the air strangely, seemingly scary. Every once in a while, the witch added something new to the pot. When the



medicine boiled to the boil, a cry like a crocodile floated out. In the end, the medicine was fried. It looks like very clear water.

"Take it!" said the witch. So she cut off the little mermaid's tongue. The little mermaid is now a dumb, unable to sing or talk.

"When you go back through my forest, if the coral insects catch you," said the witch, "you just need to sprinkle a drop of this potion on them, and their arms and fingers will break into pieces. Flying all around." But the little mermaid didn't have to do this, because when the coral insect saw the shining potion—it shined like a shining star in her hand—they were there in her. He drew back in panic in front of him. In this way, she quickly walked through forests, swamps and turbulent vortexes.

She can see her father's palace. The torch in the large dancing hall had been extinguished, and the people in it were undoubtedly asleep. But she didn't dare to see them again, because she was a dumb now and was about to leave them forever. Her heart seemed to be broken into pieces with pain. She secretly walked into the garden, plucked a flower from each sister's flowerbed, flew a thousand kisses with her finger to the emperor, and then he floated out of the deep blue sea.

When she saw the prince's palace, the sun had not risen yet. She solemnly walked up the marble steps. The moon shines transparently and very beautifully. The little mermaid drank the strong potion. She immediately felt as if a knife that was fast on both sides had split her slender body. She fainted immediately. Falling down as if dead. She woke up when the sun hit the sea, and she felt a sharp pain. At this time, a young and beautiful prince was standing in front of her. His jet-black eyes were looking at her, making her bow her head embarrassedly. At this time, she found that her fish tail was gone, and she had obtained the most beautiful pair of white legs that only a young girl had. But she didn't wear clothes, so she used her thick long hair to cover her body. The prince asked who she was and how she got here. She looked at him tenderly and sadly with her dark blue eyes, because she could no longer speak. He took her hand and led her into the palace. As the witch had told her before, she felt that every step was like walking on an awl and a knife. But she was willing to endure the pain. She took the prince's arm and walked lightly like a blister. He and everyone looked at her gentle and light steps, surprised.

Now she is wearing expensive clothes made of silk and spun yarn. She is one of the most beautiful people in the palace, but she is a dumb and can neither sing. Can't speak either. The beautiful female slave, dressed in silk and gold and silver ornaments, came forward and sang for the prince and his parents. One of the slaves sang the most charming, and the prince couldn't help clapping and smile

at her. At this time, the little mermaid felt a sorrow. She knew that sometimes her singing voice was much more beautiful than that kind of singing! She thought:

"Ah! I only wish him to know that in order to be with him, I sacrificed my voice forever!"

Now the slaves danced gracefully and lightly to the wonderful music. Then the little mermaid raised her beautiful, white hands, stood on toes, and danced lightly on the floor—no one had ever danced like this before. Every movement of her brings out her beauty. Her eyes touched people's hearts more than the songs of slaves.

Everyone was fascinated, especially the Wang Yu—he called her his "orphan". She kept dancing, although every time her foot touched the ground, she seemed to be walking on a sharp knife. The prince said that she should always be with him from now on; therefore she got permission to sleep on a velvet cushion outside his door.

He asked someone to make a set of men's clothes for her so that she could accompany him on horseback. They walked through the fragrant woods, the green branches swept over their shoulders, and the birds sang songs behind the

fresh leaves. She and the prince climbed the mountain. Although her slender feet were bleeding, and everyone saw it, she still laughed and continued to accompany him until they saw the clouds moving underneath, like a flock of birds flying to faraway countries. until.

In the prince's palace, after everyone was asleep at night, she walked to the wide steps. In order to make her fever feet feel a little cool, she stood in the cold sea. At this moment she couldn't help but think of the people living on the bottom of the sea.

One night, her sisters floated up arm in arm. While they were swimming on the water, they sang sad songs. Then she waved to them. They recognized her; they said how sad she had made them. After this time, they came to see her every night. One night, she saw the old grandmother and the sea king wearing a crown, who had not been out of the sea for many years. They reached out to her, but unlike her sisters, they did not dare to swim close to the ground.

The prince loved her more than ever. He loves her like a good, affectionate child, but he never thought of marrying her as a queen. However, she must be his wife, otherwise she would not be able to get an immortal soul, and she would become a sea foam in the first morning of his marriage.

"Among all the people, do you love me the most?" When he took her into his arms and kissed her forehead, the little mermaid's eyes seemed to say so.

"Yes, you are my dearest person!" said the prince, "because you have the kindest heart among all people. You are the dearest to me, you are like the young man I have seen sometime Woman, but I will never see her again. At that time I was sitting in a boat-the boat had sunk. The huge waves pushed me to the shore by a temple. There were several young women working there. Pray. The youngest of them found me by the shore and saved my life. I have only seen her twice: she is the only person I can love in this world, but you are very similar to her , You almost replaced her impression left in my soul. She belongs to this temple, so my luck especially gave you to me. Let us never separate!"

"Ah, he didn't know that I saved his life!" the little mermaid thought. "I lifted him out of the sea and sent him to the woods where the temple was. I sat behind the foam, watching if anyone would come. I saw that beautiful girl—he loved her more than me. "At this moment the little mermaid sighed deeply-she couldn't cry. "That girl belongs to that temple—he once said. She will never walk into this earthly world—they will never meet again. I am with him and see him every day. I Take care of him, love him, and give my life to him!"

Now everyone is saying that the prince is about to get married, and her wife is a daughter of a neighboring king. He specially equipped a beautiful ship for this. The prince said on the surface that he wanted to go sightseeing in the neighboring kingdom, but in fact he wanted to see the daughter of the monarch of the neighboring country. He will go with a large number of entourage. The little mermaid shook his head and smiled. She can guess the prince's thoughts better than anyone else.

"I have to travel!" He said to her, "I have to see a beautiful princess. This is my parents' order, but they can't force me to take her home as my fiancée! I won't love Her. You are like the beautiful girl in the temple, but she is not. If I want to choose the newlyweds, then I will choose you first-my dear, with a pair of eyes that can speak Dumb orphan girl."

So he kissed her bright red lips, stroked her long hair, and pressed his head to her heart, which made her dream of human happiness and an immortal soul again.

"Aren't you afraid of the sea, my dumb orphan?" he asked. At this time they were standing on the gorgeous ship, which was heading towards the neighboring kingdom. He talked to her about the storm and the calm sea, the strange fishes living in the sea, and what the diver could see on the bottom of the sea. She only smiled slightly for such stories, because she knew better than anyone about the seabed.

In the moonlit night, everyone was asleep, only the helm stood by the helm. At this moment she was sitting on the side of the boat, staring at the clear water below, she seemed to see her father's palace. Her old grandmother, wearing a silver crown on her head, stood high on the top of the palace; she looked at the keel of the ship through the rapids. After a while, his sisters all floated to the surface, they looked at her sadly, and painfully twisted their white hands. She waved to them, smiled, and at the same time wanted to tell them that everything is beautiful and happy now. But at this moment, a waiter on the boat came to her suddenly. Her sisters immediately sank into the water, and the waiter thought that the white things she saw were nothing but sea foam.

The next morning, the ship sailed into the port of the magnificent imperial city of the neighboring country. All the church bells rang, trumpets blew from many tall buildings, and soldiers saluted with flying flags and bright bayonets. There is a banquet every day. The ball and the party were held in turn, but the princess had not yet appeared. People say that she was educated in a remote temple, learning all the royal virtues. Finally she arrived.

The little mermaid is eager to see her beauty. She had to admit her beauty, she had never seen a body more beautiful than this. Her skin is so delicate and white; behind her long black eyelashes are a pair of smiling, loyal, dark blue eyes.

"It's you!" the prince said, "When I lie on the shore like a dead body, you are the one who saves me!" So he hugged the shy bride tightly in his arms. "Ah, I'm so happy!" He said to the little mermaid, "The best thing I never dared to hope for has finally become a reality. You will be happy for my happiness, because you are the most People who like me!"

The little mermaid kissed his hand. She felt her heart was breaking. The first morning after his wedding will bring her to destruction, and will turn her into a sea foam.

The church bells are all ringing, and there is good news that people are riding a



horse on the street to announce their engagement. On every altar, fragrant grease burns in precious oil lamps. The priests waved the incense burner, and the bridegroom and bride held each other's hands to receive the bishop's blessing. The little mermaid was wearing silk, gold ornaments and holding the veil of the newlyweds, but her ears could not hear the joyful music, and her eyes could not see the sacred ceremony. She remembered the morning when she was going to die, and everything she had lost in this world.

On the same night, the bride and groom came to the boat. The salute rang, and the flag was flying. A golden and purple royal tent was erected in the middle of the ship, with the most beautiful cushions in it. Here, the beautiful newlyweds will spend their cool and quiet night.

The wind is blowing the sails. The ship sailed gently on this clear sea, without great fluctuations.

When the twilight gradually fell, the colored lights came on, and the sailors danced happily on the deck. The little mermaid couldn't help but think of the scene when she first floated to the surface, and remembered the same gorgeous and joyous scene she saw at that time. She danced and flew, just as a swallow being chased was flying. Everyone was cheering and praising her, she had never danced so beautifully. The sharp knife seemed to chop off her delicate feet, but

she didn't feel the pain, because her heart hurts even more than this.

She knew that this was the last night she saw him-for him, she left her family and family, she handed over her beautiful voice, she endured endless pain every day, but he did not at all do not know. This was the last night she could breathe the same air with him, and this was the last night she could see the deep sea and the sky full of stars. At the same time, an eternal night without thoughts and dreams awaits her-she who has no soul and can't get a soul. Until the middle of the night, everything on the boat was still joyous and pleasant. She was smiling and dancing, but she had dead thoughts in her heart. The prince kissed his beautiful bride: the bride stroked his shiny hair. They held hands and went to rest in the gorgeous tent.

The boat is very quiet now. Only the helmsman stood by the rudder. The little mermaid leaned her white arms on the bulwark and stared to the east, waiting for the dawn to appear-she knew that the first sunlight would kill her, and she saw her sisters emerge from the waves . They are as pale as herself. Their beautiful long hair is no longer floating in the wind-because it has been cut off.

"We have given the hair to the witch, hope she can help you so that you will not perish in the future. She gave us a knife. Take it, you see, how fast it is! Before the sun came out, You have to insert it into that prince's heart. When his blood flows

on your feet, your feet will join together again and become a fish tail, then you can restore the original shape of the mermaid, you You can come back to the water here; in this way, you can still live for three hundred years before you become a lifeless salt water bubble. Get your hands on it! Before the sun comes out, it's not that he died. , You are dead! Our old grandmother was so sad that her white hair fell off, just as our hair fell on a witch's scissors. Stabbed that prince to death, hurry back! Come on! Do it! You didn't see When it comes to the red light in the sky, after a few minutes, the sun will come out, and then you will surely perish!"

They let out a strange, deep sigh, and they sank into wave prayer.

The little mermaid opened the purple curtain on the tent and saw the beautiful bride asleep with her head in the arms of the prince. She bent down and kissed the prince's delicate eyebrows, so he stared at the sky—the morning glow gradually became brighter. She glanced at the sharp knife, then dropped her eyes to the prince; he was muttering the name of his bride in a dream. Only her exists in his thoughts. The knife trembled in the little mermaid's hand. But at this moment, she threw the knife far away into the waves. Where Wanzi sank, the waves emitted a red light, as if many drops of blood splashed out of the water. She cast her bewildered gaze at the prince again, and then she jumped from the boat into the sea, and she felt her body melt into foam.

Now the sun rises from the sea. The sun shone softly and warmly on the cold foam. Because the little mermaid did not feel perished. She saw the bright sun and countless transparent and beautiful creatures flew above her. Through them, she could see the white sails on the boat and the colorful clouds in the sky. Their sound is harmonious music. But so vain, human ears can't hear them, just as the eyes on the ground can't see them. They don't have wings, they just float in the air with their light body. The little mermaid felt that he had acquired a shape like them, and gradually rose from the bubble.

"Who shall I go to?" she asked. Her voice was the same as these other creatures, and it seemed vague, and no music club in the world could compare with it.

"Go to the daughter of the sky!" another voice replied. "A mermaid has no immortal soul, and there will never be such a soul unless she has the love of a mortal. Her eternal existence depends on external power. The daughter of the sky does not have an eternal soul, but They can create a soul through kind behavior. We fly to a hot country, where the epidemic air is hurting the people, we can blow the cool wind, can spread the fragrance of flowers in the air, we can Spread a healthy and happy spirit. Three hundred years later, when we have done our best to do all the good deeds we can do, we can obtain an immortal soul and share all the eternal happiness of mankind. You, poor individual The

fish, like us, used to fight for that goal wholeheartedly. You endured pain; you persevered; you have risen into the world of elves. Through your kind work, after three hundred years, You can create an immortal soul for yourself."

The little mermaid raised her bright arm to the sun of God, and for the first time she felt tears coming from her eyes.

On that boat, the voices and activities began again. She saw the prince and his beautiful bride looking for her. They looked at the churning foam in mourning, as if they knew she had jumped into the waves. In the dark, she kissed the newlyweds on the forehead, and she smiled at the prince. So she and the other children in the air rode on the rosy clouds and ascended into the sky.

"In this way, in three hundred years, we can ascend to heaven!"

"We may not have to wait that long!" a voice whispered. "We flew into human houses invisibly, and there are some children living in them. Every day if we find a good child, if he brings happiness to his parents and is worthy of his parents' love, God can Shorten our test time. When we fly over the house, the child will not know. When we smile at him happily, we can subtract one year from the three hundred years; but when we look When a naughty and nasty child has to cry out sadly, not every tear will add another day to our trials."