

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.

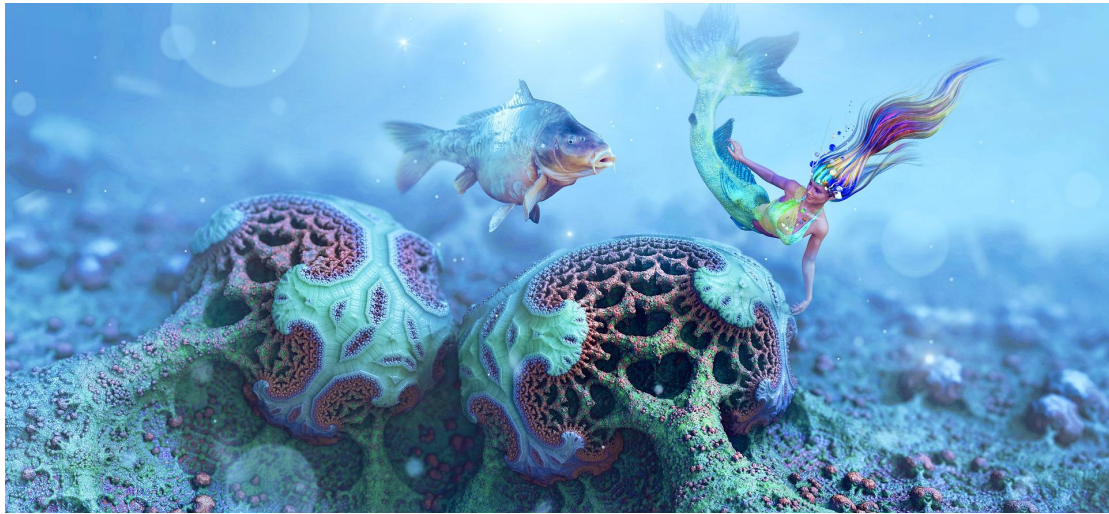
The Sea King who lives there has been a widower for many years, but he has an old mother to manage the housework for him. She is a clever woman, but she always feels incomparable to her noble origin, so she

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