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The Little Mermaid

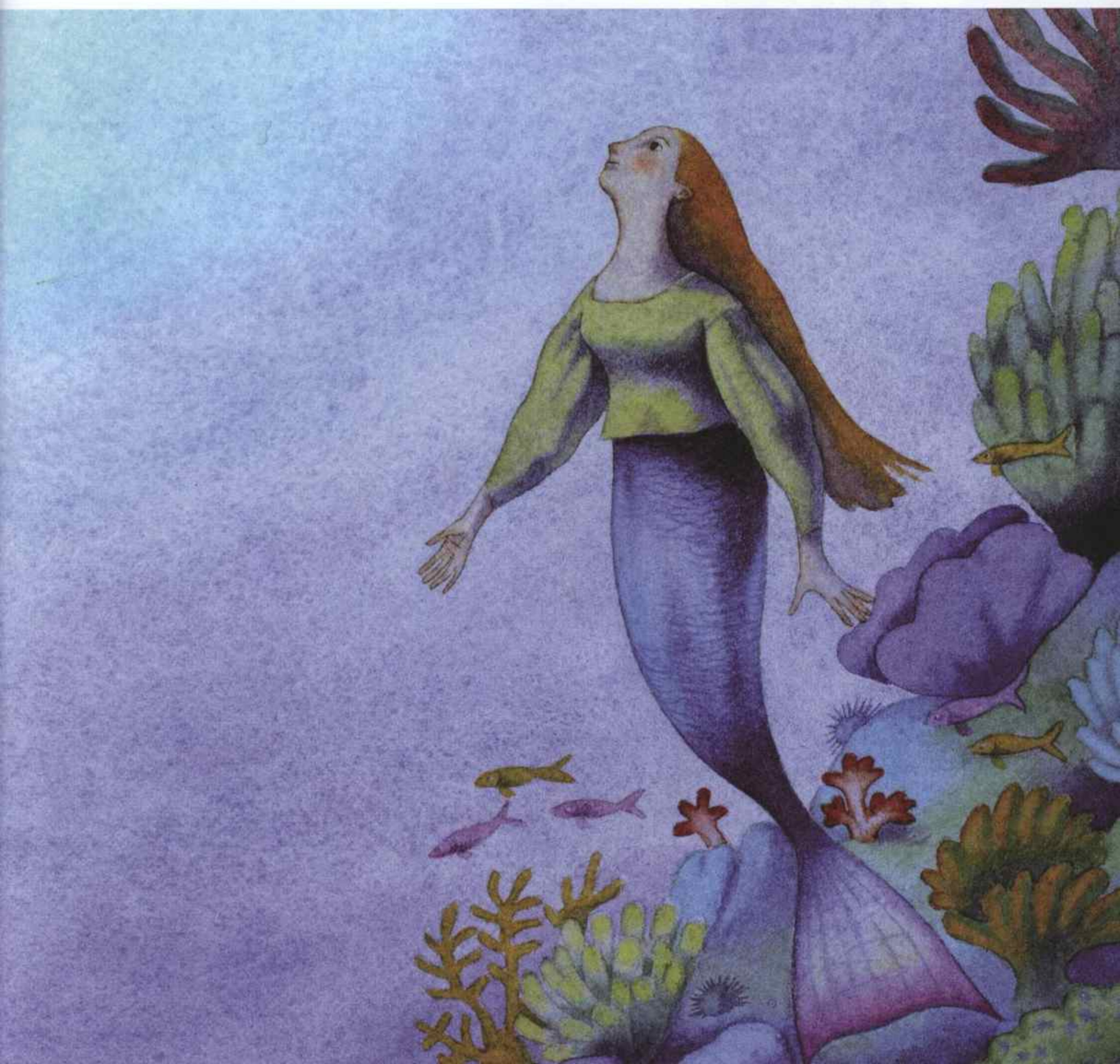
Retold by **Judith Percival**
Illustrated by **Giovanni Manna**



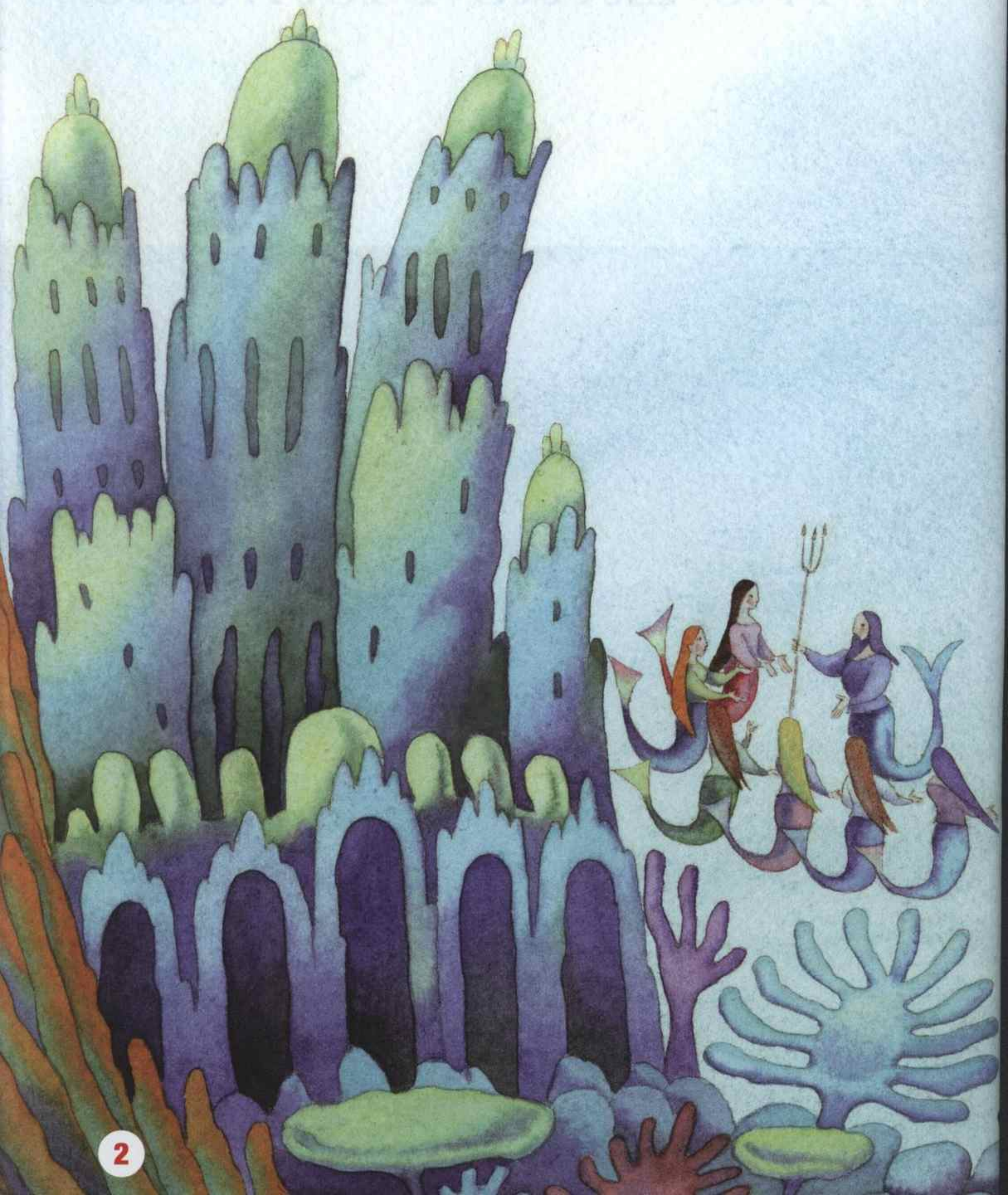
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The Little Mermaid



The little mermaid lives in a beautiful castle in the deep blue sea. She lives with her five sisters and her father, the Merking. Her sisters tell her stories of the world.



They tell her stories of ships and people, stories of music and songs, stories of the sun, the moon and the stars.

The little mermaid wants to go and see the world.

‘When can I swim up to see the world?’

says the little mermaid.

‘On your birthday,’ says her father.



Very soon it is the little mermaid's birthday.

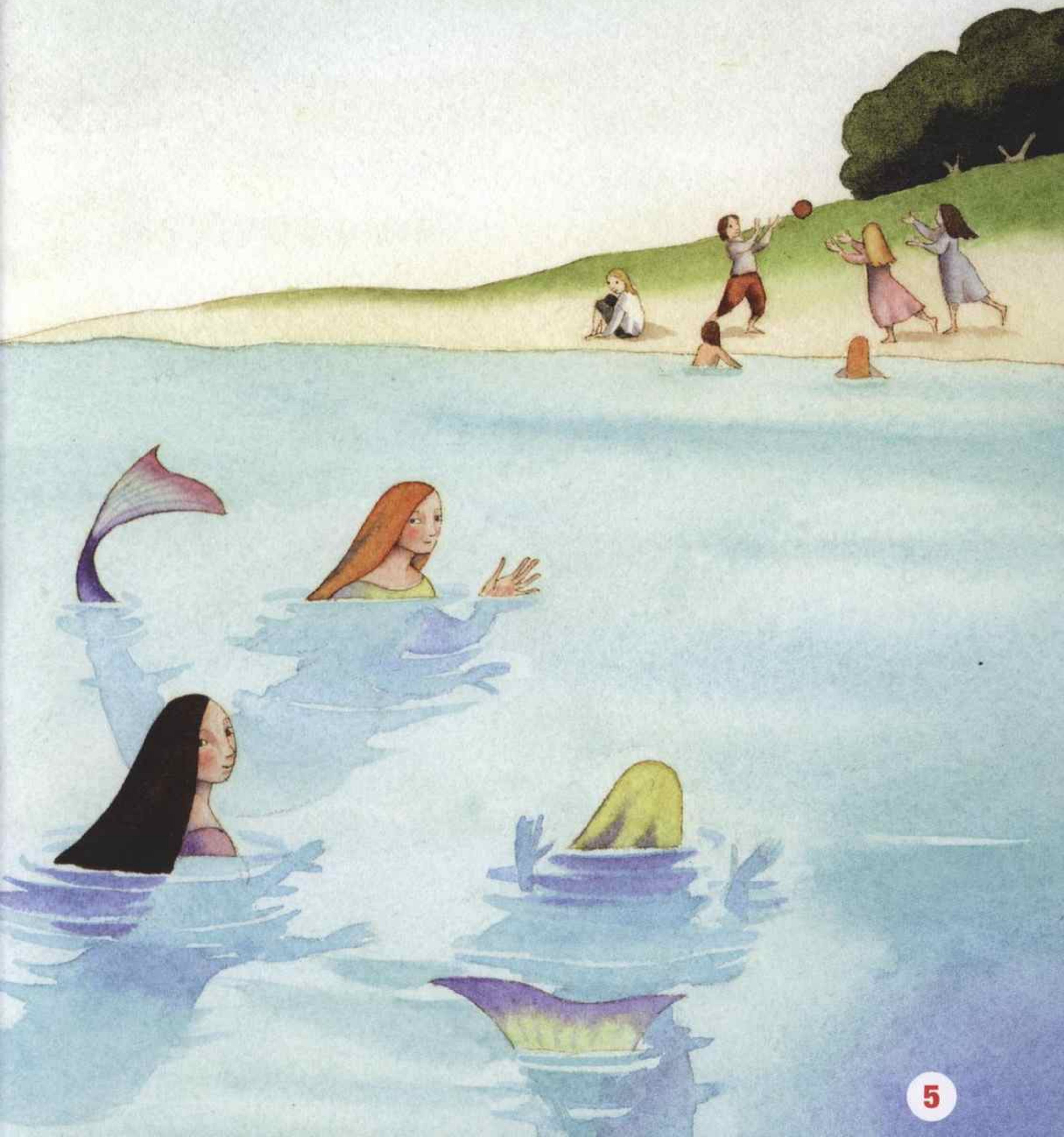
'I'm so happy,' she says to her sisters. 'Now I'm old enough to swim up and see the world.'

'Yes, today is a special day,' say her sisters.



The little mermaid swims up and up and up! She sees the sun in the sky and birds flying in the sky. She hears the birds singing and the water splashing on the beach. She sees children playing on the beach and laughing.

‘The world is wonderful!’ she says.



The next day the little mermaid tells her sisters that she wants to swim up and see the world at night.

‘Please come with me,’ she says.

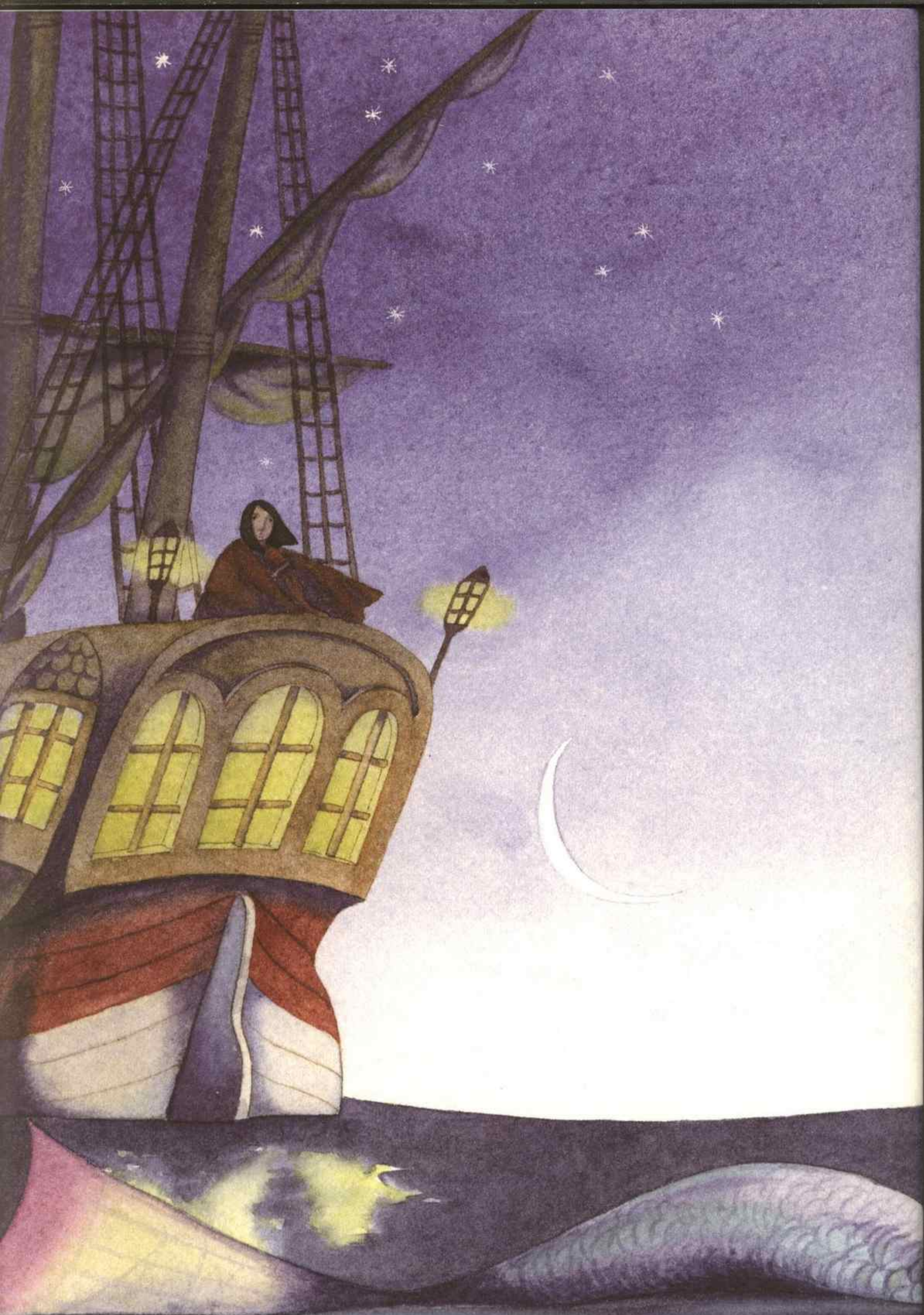
‘The world is dark at night,’ says one of her sisters.

‘There’s nothing to see,’ says another sister. ‘Our world here at the bottom of the sea is always colourful and beautiful. Stay here with us.’

‘No,’ she says. ‘I can go alone. I want to see the moon and the stars!’







*
* The little mermaid swims up and up and up! She sees the dark blue sky, the moon and thousands of stars.

* 'The world at night is wonderful!' she says.

Then she sees a big ship. There are beautiful lights on the ship. She hears music playing and sees people dancing. It's the Prince's birthday party.

The Prince is very handsome. The little mermaid wants to dance with him. But mermaids with tails can't dance...



Suddenly the sky becomes dark and the wind blows. The sea becomes rough, and there are big waves. The little mermaid hears thunder, and she sees lightning in the sky. There is a storm, a terrible storm!



The big waves hit the ship! The wind blows and blows and the ship turns over.

The Prince falls into the sea. He falls down, down, down to the bottom of the deep blue sea!

The little mermaid quickly swims down, down, down and saves the Prince.



The little mermaid swims to the beach with the Prince. The Prince is very tired. He opens his eyes and smiles at the little mermaid.

'Thank you,' he says. 'But please don't go. Stay here with me.'



'I can't,' says the little mermaid. And she swims home to her sisters.

'I must tell you about the storm,' says the little mermaid. And she tells her sisters the story of the Prince's birthday party, the beautiful lights, the music, the dancing and the terrible storm.



'I don't want to be a mermaid, I want to be a girl. I want to have legs and dance with the handsome Prince,' says the little mermaid

'That's impossible!' say her sisters. 'You're a silly little mermaid. Mermaids can never be girls!'



'Come here,' says one sister. 'I want to tell you a secret! You can have legs and you can be a girl. You must go to the Merwitch. She can help you, but you must give her your tail!



The little mermaid swims to a dark, ugly place. There are no beautiful, colourful sea plants. There is ugly, grey seaweed.

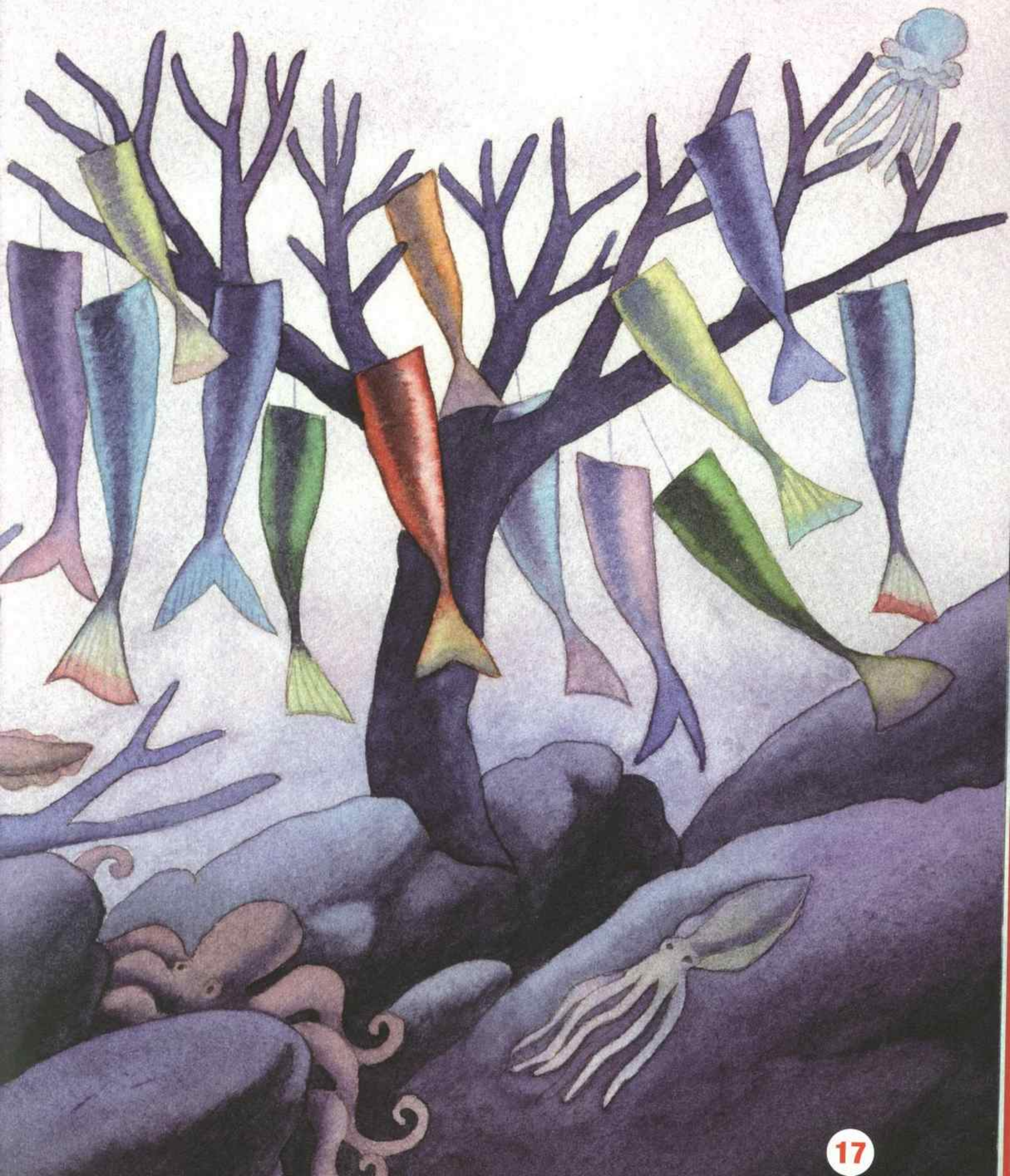
There are no beautiful, colourful fish. There are ugly, grey sea worms and... a tree with mermaids' tails!



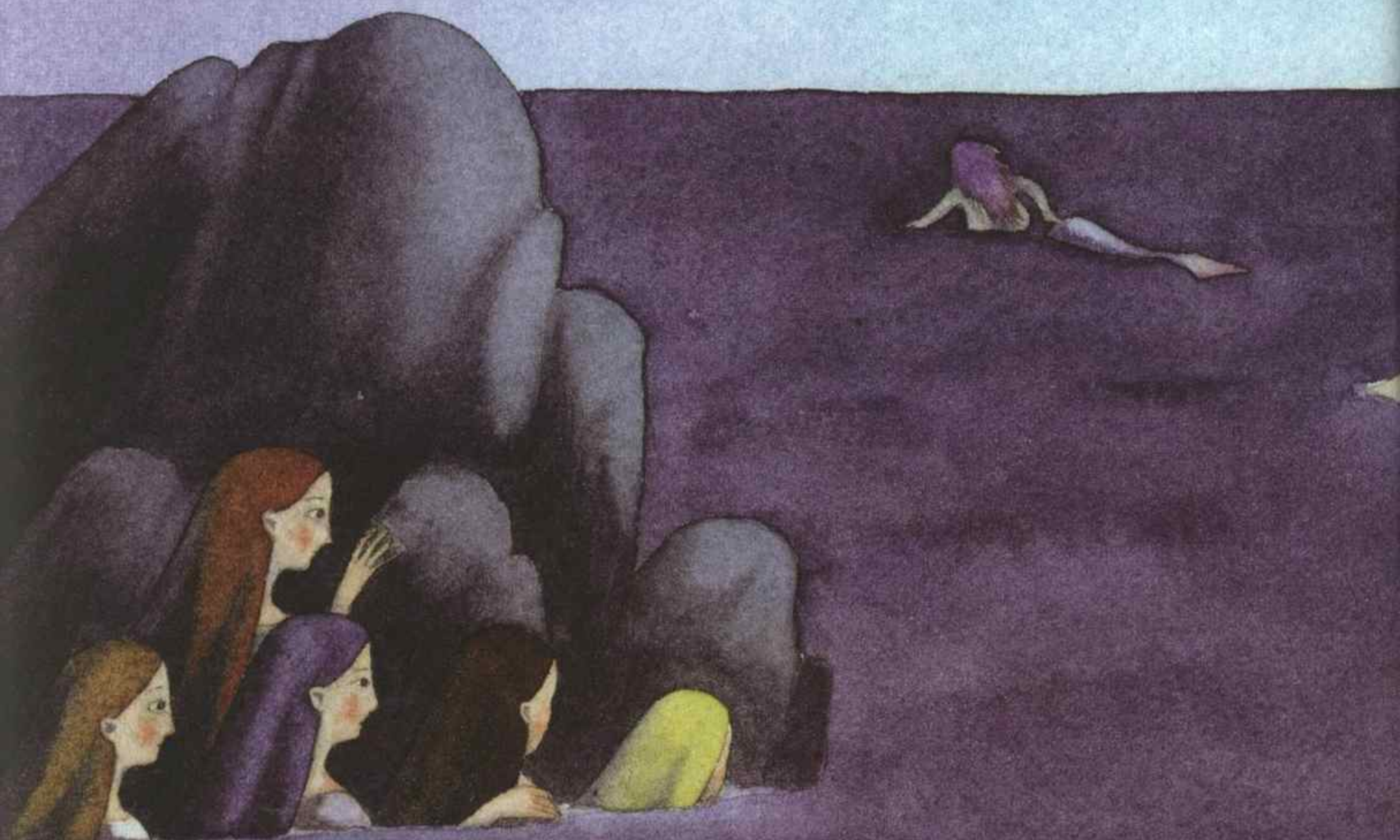
'What do you want?' says the Merwitch.

'I want to be a girl,' says the little mermaid.

'I can give you a magic drink, but... you must give me your beautiful tail!' says the Merwitch.



The little mermaid says goodbye to her sisters.
'Don't go,' they say. 'Don't drink the magic drink.
Don't give your beautiful tail to the Merwitch. Please
stay here with us!'
'I can't,' says the little mermaid. 'I want to go to the
Prince.'

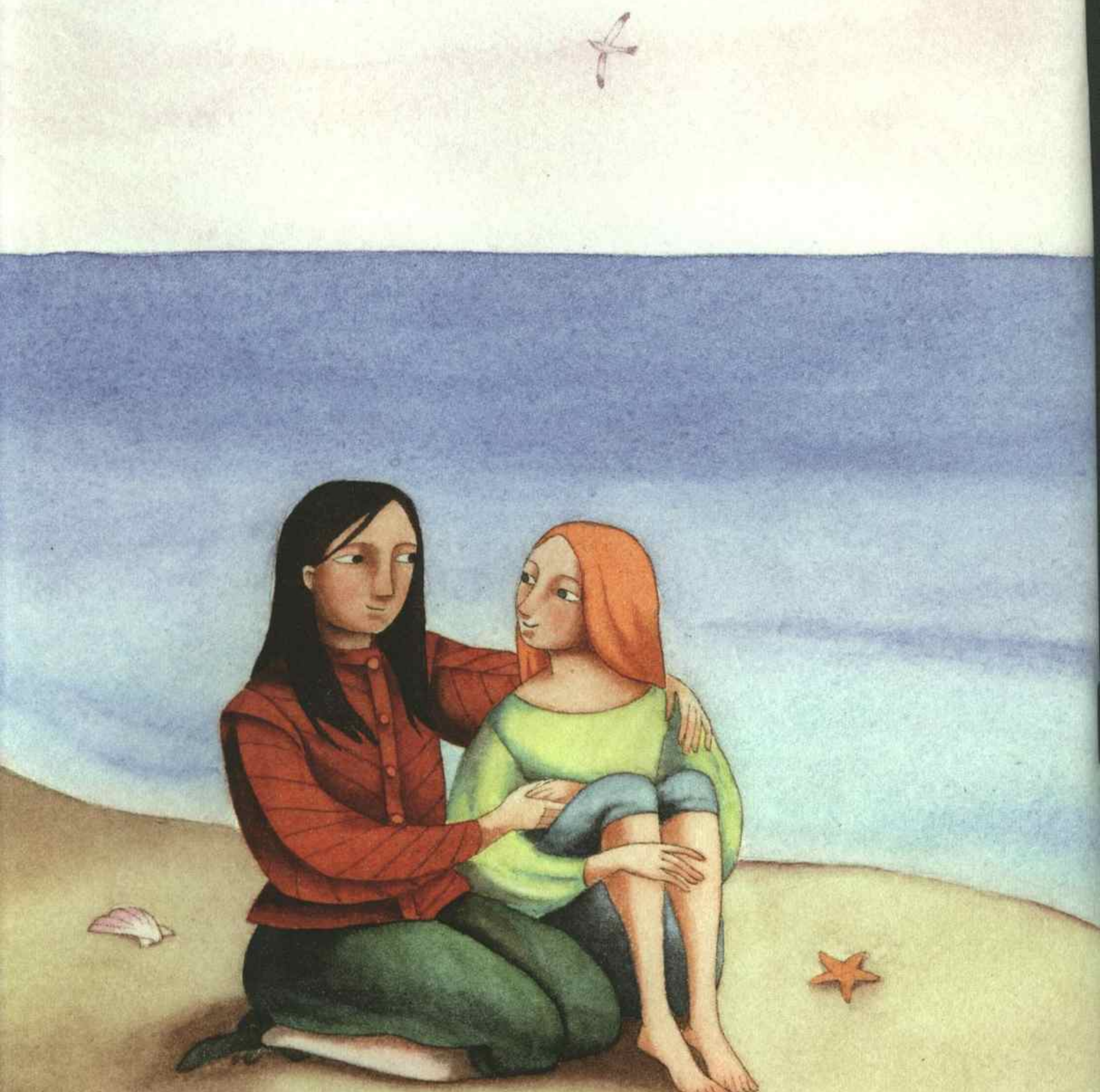


The little mermaid swims to the beach and drinks the magic drink. Her sisters stay behind a rock. They see the Merwitch swim home with the little mermaid's beautiful tail.

'Our little sister's a girl now,' say the sisters.



In the morning the Prince sees the little mermaid sleeping. He goes to her and looks at her beautiful face. The little mermaid opens her eyes and smiles. 'I know you,' says the Prince! 'You're the mermaid! The beautiful mermaid from the storm!'



‘I’m not a mermaid now,’ she says. ‘I’m a girl.’
‘You’re my beautiful mermaid from the sea,’ says
the Prince. ‘I’m a very happy man and I want to stay
with you forever!’

