

## The little mermaid is searching for a friend

(English translation corrected by Marion Rojon)

The little mermaid is all alone. She is sadly sitting on a rock, considering her lonely reflection in the water.

„Oh my goodness“, she sighs „ I am longing for a friend who is exactly like me. With a fish fin, with long fair hair and with a wonderful voice. I have been looking for her everywhere. I have been searching behind every water plant, every coral and behind every reef. But I couldn't find her anywhere. I am the most lonely creature in the ocean.“

The little mermaid is so desperate that she buries her face in her hands and weeps bitterly. She forgets everything else around her. But that is a mistake - there is something wrong with the sea. It becomes restless and wild, like a marine earthquake, though there is no wind at all. What is going on? Now an enormous head appears. It is nothing less than the head of a dragon, living in the sea. Unnoticed by the

mermaid, the monster swims closer and closer. His green and scaly skin is shining. His eyes are glowing fiery-yellow. Two fearsome horns are growing out of his head.

In his own way the dragon looks as strange as the mermaid does, however being very different.

Attentively he contemplates the strange creature with the fish fin.

„Shall we be friends?“, he hisses in a friendly way.

As a result of his words, the little mermaid finally raises her head. When she notices the dragon she is really frightened.

„F-friends?“, she stammers. „T-this doesn't work.“

The monster is a bit slow on the uptake. „Why not?“, he wants to know.

The little mermaid swallows her fear. „Well, because ... we are very different“, she bravely makes clear.

„Just look at both of us.“

But the dragon takes no refusal. „Are we too different to go for a swim together?“, he obstinately asks. His eyes are sparkling in an adventurous and inviting way.

The little mermaid is about to say: “Indeed. That is what we are.” But then she closes her mouth and thinks about the proposition. In fact she is more keen on going for a swim than sitting around on a rock and wallowing in self-pity. Why shouldn’t she stop being sad for a while? And so she smiles and says: “Swimming together would be nice.” In fact it is absolutely not in order for a mermaid to swim together with a dragon.

The sea monster is delighted with the promise. Instead of shimmering green he flushes with joy. The mermaid jumps into the water and swims with the dragon as if it were a competition. This is really fun. In the open sea, the dragon is faster than the mermaid – because he is taller and stronger. But in the coral reef,

the mermaid has the edge over the monster – because she is smaller and more mobile. The day passes in the twinkling of an eye.

„That was great“, the dragon says beaming with happiness at the end of the day. „I haven’t been that happy for such a long time.

„I feel the same“, the mermaid admits. „Sharing the time with you was great fun.“

The dragon is pleased with the praise.

„So we are friends now?“, he wants to know.

But the mermaid shakes her head and denies. All of a sudden she looks very sad again. „We can swim together. But we cannot be friends“, she insists.

“Because we are too different.“

The dragon does not understand. Because he is still a little bit slow on the uptake. „We are too different in order to do what?“, he asks in a silly way. „Isn’t it

sufficient to swim together?“

The mermaid sighs. „We are too different to sing together“, she explains patiently. „This is very important for a mermaid.“ She sits down on a rock and starts to sing with her wonderful voice. The song is about longing and unfulfilled dreams.

The dragon listens deeply moved. He likes the song very much. The sea monster has never before heard anything so beautiful. He would like to sing as beautifully as the little mermaid. The sea monster tries hard but only a smoky growl comes out of his throat. It sounds very different from the mermaid`s voice. But the dragon cannot be that easily discouraged and carries on singing obliviously. „Frizz, frizz“, he makes again and again. Smoky clouds are rising as a result of the dragon`s attempts to sing like a mermaid. The efforts inflame his throat. The monster no longer shimmers dark-green but glows bright red. For the first

time in his life he gets a nasty sore throat. Now he is not even able to growl any more. He only croaks like an ordinary raven. The sea monster is very ashamed.

The little mermaid tries to console him taking him into her arms because he has tried so hard to sing like a mermaid.

„Maybe “, she emotionally whispers, „we can be friends after all.“

But the dragon is no longer sure of that. He feels very miserable. His breath is feverishly hot. When the sea monster coughs, he spits fire by mistake. The fire heats up the water and lights the sky. It looks beautiful. The mermaid is fascinated. Never before she has seen and experienced something so wonderful. She would like to be able to spit fire herself. The mermaid tries. But nothing except spit is coming out of her throat. But nevertheless the mermaid goes on trying because she cannot be easily

discouraged either. „Spit, spit,“ she makes again and again. She continues until her throat hurts. And her wonderful voice is hoarse. Now the little mermaid croaks like an ordinary raven as well. Never before something so embarrassing has happened to her. The mermaid is very ashamed.

The dragon tries to console her caressing her cheek - she has tried so hard to spit fire like a dragon.

„This is true friendship“, he emotionally whispers.

This time the little mermaid does not contradict the dragon. Because she feels exactly the same as the sea monster that is different from her in such a fascinating way. Since that moment the little mermaid and the dragon have become friends.

