

Part Of The Book Title

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Style Nine
(Children Book Style)

Author

Marina and the Conch

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Dedicated to Noah, Mom, and Dad

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Chapter 1

The Move to Marlon's Cove

“Look, mom! You can see all the way down to the bottom of the ocean,” Ellie Camp exclaimed, staring down into the crystal-clear water from the dock of her brand-new home. She watched in amazement as fish of all different shapes, sizes and colours quickly swam past her.

She couldn't help but wonder where they were off to in such a hurry and wished that she could follow them.

“Isn’t it wonderful?” Ellie’s mom said, walking up behind her and wrapping an arm around Ellie’s shoulders. “This is our new home!”

Ellie looked up at her mom with big brown eyes and offered her a quick smile.

“It’s great,” she said, although that wasn’t quite the whole truth.

Ellie and her family had just moved all the way across the country to Marlon’s Cove for her dad’s new job.

Before her family had moved, Ellie had been very excited about getting to live on the beach, but now that she was actually there, she missed her old friends and her old school and her old house, terribly. She let out a soft sigh and tried not to think about it.

“Hey, Ellie!” Ellie’s dad shouted from the porch of their big, white beach home. “It’s time for lunch. I made you your favourite... mac and cheese! You better come get it before I eat it all,” her dad joked.

Ellie and her mom looked at each other and chuckled.

“Alright, come on,” Mrs. Camp said, ruffling Ellie’s long brown hair. “Let’s go before the food gets cold.”

She nodded.

“Coming Dad!” Ellie called back, running across the dock, towards the house.

She sat down at the big, wooden kitchen table across from her parents.

“So, Ellie, tomorrow you’ll start your first day at your new school. Isn’t that exciting?” Her dad asked, placing a big bowl of mac and cheese in front of her. “You’ll meet so many new people and make so many new friends! Maybe you can even invite them over here to play on the beach after school.”

Ellie forced another quick smile and looked down at the food sitting in front of her. She realized she wasn’t hungry at all. In fact, she even felt a little sick to her stomach. Although it was lunchtime, and this was her very favorite meal, she couldn’t bring herself to take even one bite. She stared down at her big bowl of mac and cheese and pushed the food around with her fork. She noticed a lump forming in her throat and felt like crying.

Ellie's mom saw that she hadn't touched her food and grew worried.

"What's wrong, Ellie?" She asked, concerned. "I thought you loved mac and cheese."

Ellie stared down at the table, not wanting to look up.

"It's not that," she said quietly, her voice shaking a little. "It's just... I don't want to go to a new school. I don't want to meet new people. I miss my old school and I miss my old friends!" She cried.

Ellie's parents looked at each other, shocked.

"But Ellie," her dad said, "I thought you were excited to move here and live on the beach?"

"Not anymore! I don't want to live here. I want to go home- my real home!" Ellie cried again, shooting up from the kitchen table. She pushed back her chair, turned and ran out the front door toward the dock.

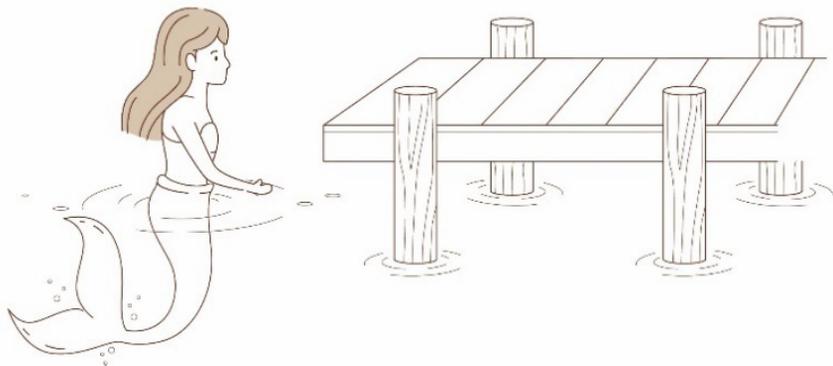
Her parents remained sitting at the table with her untouched supper, speechless.

As Ellie reached the end of the dock, she sat down on the edge and began to cry, her tears dropping in the water one by one. She wept beside the ocean, under the blazing hot sun, missing her old life and wishing there was a way for her to leave Marlon's Cove.

As she sat, quietly crying and sniffing, Ellie heard a slight swishing and splashing sound coming from the water.

What was that? she wondered. *It sounded like a big fish!*

She sniffled and wiped her eyes with her sleeve so that she could peer over the edge of the dock to investigate. The water was so clear, it made it easy for her to make out what was going on beneath the surface. As she peered intently into the water, watching a dozen little fish swim to and fro, a voice piped up behind her saying, "Hi!



Chapter 2

Marina and The Conch

“Oh-oh!” Ellie gasped in shock. *Who could that be?* She didn’t think her parents had followed her outside after her outburst. She turned around to see who had spoken... and she couldn’t believe what she saw!

There, with her arms perched on the edge of the dock, halfway in the water and half out, was a beautiful, young girl...
WITH A FISHTAIL!

Her eyes were as blue as the ocean, and her hair was gold like the sun. It fell in loose waves over her shoulders, water dripping off the ends. Her skin was like porcelain and her tail... was

glorious. It was blue like her eyes, with hints of green in her scales. Ellie had never seen anything so magnificent. Even through the water, she could tell that the girl's tail sparkled like sunlight reflecting off the ocean's surface.

"You're a... a mermaid!" Ellie exclaimed, unable to hide her shock and excitement.

"Yes, I am!" The mermaid laughed, "and you're a girl with legs!"

Ellie laughed too; she had never been described in *that* way before. She was so shocked! She had never seen such a thing. She thought mermaids only existed in fairy tales. She was at a complete loss for words and wasn't quite sure what to say but she didn't want to be rude by just staring.

"My name's Ellie," she offered. "What's yours?"

"I'm Marina," Marina offered Ellie a rather wet hand to shake. "I was swimming by and heard someone crying... was it you?"

Ellie took Marina's extended hand and gave it a shake. "Yes, it was me. I was crying," she admitted.

Marina frowned, “well what’s wrong? Why on earth are you crying? You’re in Marlon’s Cove-it’s wonderful here!” She threw her hands in the air, gesturing for Ellie to take in the beauty of the cove.

Ellie couldn’t deny that Marlon’s Cove was beautiful, and it seemed like a nice enough place to live, but it just didn’t feel like home to her.

She rested her chin in her hand and sighed. “I just moved here and all I want is to go back to my old house. I miss my friends and I miss my old bedroom... Everything is so different here!”

After she spoke, tears began welling in her eyes again. She quickly wiped them away before Marina could notice.

Marina nodded in understanding. “Yes, that would be difficult, I can see why you’re sad,” She sighed and let her head fall onto her arm. “I’ve been away from my friends for 2 whole days now and I miss them so much... but I can’t go home... not yet at least.”

Why was Marina wandering out in the ocean all alone if she wanted to be with her friends at home? Why weren’t her parents

with her? She looked like she was the same age as Ellie, who was only 10 and definitely wouldn't be allowed to wander around the sea all by herself!

“Why not?” Ellie asked, confused.

Marina swished her tail back and forth in the water, “it’s a long story. I’m sort of in training to become the next ruler of Marlon’s Cove.”

Ellie’s eyes lit up, “Wow!” She shrieked. “So, you’re like a princess?!”

“Well,” Marina began. “Almost. In order to become the Princess of Marlon’s Cove, the Queen of The Cove told me I have to keep the Marlon’s Cove Conch safe for the next 3 days... but I lost it 2 days ago and she has no idea! Nobody knows!”

“Oh no!” Ellie gasped.

“Barnacles!” Marina exclaimed in frustration. “And what’s even worse is that Marlon’s Cove can’t survive without it! If the Conch is outside of the Marlon’s Cove border for even *one second*, the beauty of Marlon’s Cove will be lost forever!”

She slapped her tail against the surface of the water, like a child stomping their foot. “So, not only won’t I be princess, but Marlon’s Cove is in serious danger and it’s all my fault!”

Ellie pondered this for a moment, not fully understanding. “Well... What’s the Marlon’s Cove Conch... and what do you mean Marlon’s Cove can’t survive without it?” Ellie asked, confused. “And how on earth did you lose it anyway?” She had so many questions.

“Well, I really shouldn’t tell a girl with legs...” Marina said. She slid the rest of her body in the water and began backing away from the dock. “It’s strictly mermaid business.”

“Wait! Don’t go!” Ellie cried. “Tell me and maybe I can help you! Let me come with you.”

Marina stopped and considered this. She was awfully lonely searching the sea all by herself. She really could use the company, and Ellie seemed to be very kind.

“Are you sure you’re up for it?” Marina asked.

Ellie’s eyes lit up and she nodded vigorously. She would do anything to take her mind off going to school tomorrow.

“Very well then,” Marina returned to the dock and began telling Ellie the story of the Marlon’s Cove Conch and how she lost it.

“The Marlon’s Cove Conch is the heart of Marlon’s Cove. It’s the reason the water is so crystal clear, and the sky is so blue. It’s the reason the fish are every colour of the rainbow, and the reason the sand is as white as snow. Without the Conch, the water will turn dark and murky. You won’t even be able to see the fish through the cloudy surface! The sky will turn grey and the sand will do the same. The flowers and the trees will begin to wither, and wilt and the beauty of Marlon’s Cove will be gone for good!”

Ellie listened intently. Marlon’s Cove was so beautiful. Even though she was a little unhappy about moving here she didn’t want to see it’s beauty fade away.

Marina continued. “I know the Conch is here in Marlon’s Cove somewhere, because it’s still just as beautiful as ever... but as soon as the Conch leaves the cove, then we’re in big trouble.”

Ellie nodded. “I see,” she said. “But how did you lose the Conch? Where could it be?”

Marina smirked. “That is where the story gets interesting. My sister, Athena stole it from me! She wants to be Marlon Cove’s next princess, but the Queen chose me,” Marina was visibly annoyed. “She’s trying to sabotage me. Athena thinks if the Queen finds out I lost the Conch, then she’ll choose Athena to be the next Marlon’s Cove princess instead of me.”

Ellie shook her head. “How awful! Betrayed by your own sister.”

Marina nodded sadly. “We used to have so much fun together, but she let jealousy get in the way of our friendship.”

Ellie could see tears pooling in Marina’s ocean blue eyes and couldn’t bear to see her so upset. “Let me help you find the Conch!” She exclaimed



Chapter 3

The Adventure Begins!

“Oh, Ellie!” Marina cried, “I’m so happy you want to help me! Now neither of us will have to be alone!”

Ellie beamed, grateful for her new friend and excited to leave all her fears and worries about moving behind her... For a little while at least.

“Well,” Marina started, splashing warm salt water up at Ellie, who laughed and jumped back. “What are you waiting for? Get in the water!”