Once upon a time, deep in the mysterious depths of the ocean lived a mermaid. Not just any mermaid. This one was the first and only daughter of the underwater prince and princess and so she was the one to take the throne and lead.

Well, I am sorry to say but she was nothing like a princess. Or yes, like the ones you meet in the old fairytales - spoiled, arrogant and self centred. But what all the creatures of the ocean thought (and I happen to very much share this opinion) is that a princess should be curious, enthusiastic to learn, compassionate and kind.

Well the little mermaid was not kind and not at all willing to learn. Actually, she drove her teachers mad. The last one, Mrs. Octopus went crazy. She was burning red most of the time and really tired from all the ways of trying to get little one interested in learning.

“No, not interested.”

“No. I don’t need to know.”

“Can I have a mirror please?”

She did love to look at herself, to comb her hair and touch her smooth skin.

Mrs. Octopus quit and ran away. As did Mrs Shark before her. And Mr Seahorse before her. Her parents were desperate and did not know what to do. Sunday came with a traditional Sunday morning brunch. This morning, Manta came to visit and while having a morning snack, mother princess shared her worries about her daughter.

Manta listened attentively and when mother princess was finished she said:

“Can I tell you a story?” she asked.

And then she told a story old as the time, when Mother Earth was looking for a special someone to carry the wisdom of Earth and Moon. A special someone to be an ambassador of the deep wisdom that will be spread throughout the Oceans and help to sustain a world in healthy balance. But who could that be, she wondered…

“Someone with the same love and respect I have for all the beings of my world. Someone who is a protector and someone who nurtures, someone kind and calm, yet unstoppably devoted…Someone wise.”

And then she saw a turtle giving her back to a tired bird as a shelter from a windy long travel. She saw her giving sanctuary to little fish beneath her and she saw her travelling with such calm determination through oceans, helping everyone on her way. Seeing that she said,

“Turtle will be the carrier and ambassador of the ancient wisdom!”

It was done and Turtle became Earth and Moons apprentice, following their knowledge, collecting their magic for 13 moons. That is how she got 13 signs on her shell.

Little Mermaid was peeping through a hole in door and she was impressed by what she had heard. So was her mother who asked Manta if she might know of a Turtle that would be willing to tutor her daughter. And so it came that a week later, Mrs.Turtle came to the underwater palace, seeking the little Mermaid.

With her dark calm eyes she hypnotised little Mermaid who actually forgot to behave unkindly.

“Come let us go out,” said Turtle.

“Are we not staying in and learning?” asked the little Mermaid, looking confused.

“We are going out and we will learn,” answered Turtle calmly.

“Can I take my mirror?” asked the Mermaid.

“Oh you will have plenty,” said The Turtle with a mysterious smile and swam on.

This was too much. Learning outside, a lot of mirrors,…, Little Mermaid could not help but follow. They swam through the high grasses, passing the coral reefs.

“Oh look, Mr Fish working like crazy in the sand!”

“Yes, he is making a home for his wife.”

“And look there! So nice, two crabs are helping each other with the food.”

Turtle observed and listened and when they returned home she asked the Little Mermaid,

“So, do you remember how you were impressed by the devoted work of Mr Fish and the kind cooperation of the crabs?”

She nodded and wise Turtle continued.

“When you see something in the outer world and it touches you, it means that is a quality that you also have or you have the potential to have it. See in this world, the world is a mirror, always showing what you can change, develop or be thankful you are.”

Little Mermaid was impressed. Their teaching expeditions were frequent. Every day the interest of Little Mermaid was less in looking at herself in the mirror, but more in looking into the Life of the Ocean. Her heart was getting bigger with the new learned interest in others and compassion towards them and she started to feel a connection to it. She understood how everyone plays a role in the web of life and how important everyone is. Thus she was became a good princess.