



A fairy tale about Polish mermaid

I version

A long, long time ago, a prince from the Mazowsze Region took his men and went hunting. In the forest, he saw a wild beast and was determined to kill it. He was close enough to shoot at it the arrow from his bow, but as he took his aim, the beast suddenly disappeared. Thoroughly surprised, the prince decided to stop at the nearby river for a drink of water. As he bent over to drink, he saw the mermaid. The mermaid told the Prince to follow the arrow she shot from her bow. The prince followed the arrow along the river's edge until he reached a clearing. In the clearing he saw a run-down fisherman's cottage under a large oak tree. He went to the cottage to ask for food. Inside, the Prince saw a young woman sitting by the fireplace feeding her twin babies: a boy and a girl. The young woman shared her food with the Prince. After the meal, the Prince and the young woman sat in front of the cottage and looked out at the river. The prince insisted that the young woman name her baby son, Wars and her baby daughter, Sawa. He told her to clear the land around the cottage and plant crops. He gave this land to the young woman and her children. He knew that they would work hard to make the land valuable and a village would be great. This village would become Warsaw. As the young woman listened to the Prince, she saw the mermaid rise from the river's waves. The mermaid said the village would grow into a beautiful city because of the hard work of the simple fisherman who chose to live there. The mermaid promised to come back when the city would be in danger to defend it.



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II version

Once upon a time there was a young fisherman called Wars who lived in a little hut near the River Vistula.

Every day he took his fishing boat and rowed towards the middle of the river to catch some fish. One day he saw a beautiful girl bathing near one of the islands in the river. He immediately fell in love with her.

From that day on the fisherman and the beautiful girl, whose name was Zawa, met every day. It was quite obvious that the girl also loved the young man. When Wars suggested that they should marry, Zawa started crying and told him that she was a mermaid and being one she could never marry a mortal, but she promised to bring him a present when they would meet again.

The next day, when Wars rowed towards their meeting point in the river, there was Zawa waiting for him. She was holding a sword in her right hand and a shield in her left. She told Wars that they would never meet again, but shield and sword would be her present for him. Whenever he used them in a battle he could not be defeated. Moreover she foretold him that he would become a great hero and the founder of a wonderful city. Before Wars could bid the beloved girl farewell, the mermaid disappeared.

Wars was very sad, he could never forget his first love. Everything the mermaid had told him became true. Wars became a famous hero and in return for his services he was given land at the banks of the River Vistula where he founded a prosperous city. In memory of their great love he called it WARSZAWA.