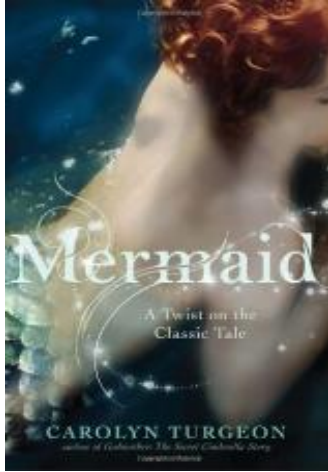


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# Mermaid: A Twist on the Classic Tale

by Carolyn Turgeon

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## About the Book

Two sheltered princesses, one wounded warrior; who will live happily ever after?

Princess Margrethe has been hidden away while her kingdom is at war. One gloomy, windswept morning as she stands in a convent garden overlooking the icy sea, she witnesses a miracle: a glittering mermaid emerging from the waves, a nearly drowned man in her arms. By the time Margrethe reaches the shore, the mermaid has disappeared into the sea. As Margrethe nurses the handsome stranger back to health, she learns that not only is he a prince, he is also the son of her father's greatest rival. Sure that the mermaid brought this man to her for a reason, Margrethe devises a plan to bring peace to her kingdom.

Meanwhile, the mermaid princess Lenia longs to return to the human man she carried to safety. She is willing to trade her home, her voice, and even her health for legs and the chance to win his heart?.

A surprising take on the classic tale, **Mermaid** is the story of two women with everything to lose. Beautifully written and compulsively readable, it will make you think twice about the fairytale you heard as a child, keeping you in suspense until the very last page.

## Discussion Guide

1. Mermaid is based on Hans Christian Andersen's **The Little Mermaid**. Have you read the story? Have you seen the Disney film? What are some of the differences and similarities between the other versions and this one?
2. What do you think of retellings of fairy tales? How do you account for their popularity? Do you think there's any special power in taking a known story and envisioning it in a new way?

3. How would you describe the mermaid world in this book? Is this an attractive world to you? Why or why not? How does it compare to the human world in the book?
4. What does Lenia find so compelling about the human world? Does she have an accurate view of it?
5. Think about Lenia's choice to return to the sea witch and trade her voice for legs. Would you ever make such a sacrifice --- for love, for salvation, or for any other reason? Why or why not? Talk about the theme of sacrifice in the book. Who is making sacrifices and for what purposes?
6. Compare Lenia and Margrethe. What do they have in common, and how are they different? What do you think about the relationship that develops between them?
7. How would you characterize Margrethe and the choices she makes? Does she change throughout the book?
8. If you could switch places with Lenia or Margrethe, whose life and world would you rather inhabit for a day, and why?
9. Describe Prince Christopher's relationships with Lenia and Margrethe. Does he behave honorably toward them both? What do you think of him?
10. Mermaids are an incredibly popular subject in many cultures. What do you think accounts for their appeal? What makes mermaids such a rich subject for the imagination? Can you think of other books in which mermaids play an important role?

## Author Bio

Carolyn Turgeon is the author of **Rain Village**. She is working on her third book about a mermaid.

## Critical Praise

"Turgeon has done a superb job of creating compelling characters and conflict from a story already familiar to readers."

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### **Mermaid: A Twist on the Classic Tale**

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