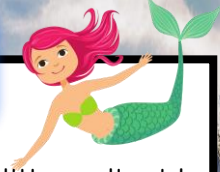




The Magic of The Lake



The water sparkles playfully in the shining sun, sending sparks of glittery liquid bouncing off the surface. The trees wave peacefully in the Spring breeze, their bark almost smiling as they creak. The snowy mountains loom over the valley like Greek Gods, protecting their home from invaders. The silence feels homely, and Florence digs her feet into the warm sand. It tickles her toes, whilst a smile tugs at her lips.

She has a sense that something else is around her, a kind of alluring feel to it. Florence is further drawn into the beauty of the scenery, not quite believing it to be real. She looks out onto the lake, watching the fish leap out of the water, like ballerinas. The palettes of colour fill her vision, a blur of dreaminess. The lake is a teardrop-silver in colour and shaped like a perfectly flat disc of metal. No sound rings out from the shimmering emptiness of space around it.



Unruffled by wind or rain, the lake sits idyllically in the valley, it is a vault still and restful. A broad span of Tuscan-blue sky is slashed above it, making it appear like nature's amphitheatre. Although Florence sits in the shade, the sun bounced off an object in her peripheral vision, and from there into her eyes. She squinted, sighing in frustration at the inconvenience of the object. Florence turns towards the object, eyes widening in shock as they land on what she sees.

Sitting on the embankment, tail glittering in the sunlight, a creature she believes to be a mermaid. The tail slinks gracefully over a rock on the shore, partially submerged in the lake. The top half of her body is beautiful and shimmering, a rippling effect coming from her ebony hair. As if she feels Florence's eyes watching her, she turns her head in Florence's direction, grey, reproachful eyes landing on her.

The mermaid looks her up and down, as if curious of Florence. "Hello?" She calls to the mermaid, flinching slightly at the way it bombards the quiet. "Follow me," she replies in an angelic voice, and with that dives back into the depths of the lake. Florence glances frantically around before standing up and taking cautious steps towards the water's edge. She takes a breath, shuts the anxious thoughts in her mind out, and dives in after, wondering what this magical lake will behold.

