Pergrin and the Mermaid

Adapted by Mistress Dervila ni Leanon

Based on Favorite Folktales from Around the World, page 347

Welsh

Time:About 1:37

Pergrin was amazed. He had just taken his boat into a little recess in the rocks, and there was a mermaid. She was combing her hair, and never saw him until he grabbed her. He dragged her back to his boat, where she cried and wept.

[crying] "What do you want with me, cruel man? Let me go!"

"I want treasure - gold and silver!"

"I have no gold, I have no silver. But I promise if you let me go I will give you three shouts at the time of your greatest need." Her tears had softened Pergrin's heart, so he let her go back to her people in the deeps.

Years passed and he forgot about her and her promise. But one day, when he and his son were out fishing and the sea was still and calm, she raised her head above the ocean right next to his boat.

"Pergrin! Pergrin! Pergrin! Go back to shore! Go back to shore! Go back to shore!" He and his son did as she said and turned back for shore right then and there, and the moment he tied up his boat a great storm struck the sea. Twice nine other fishermen had gone out that day, and all drowned for not hearing the mermaid's warning.

Full bibliography of source:

Yolen, Jane, editor. Favorite Folktales from Around the World. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986. ISBN: 0-394-75188-4