



The siren and the apples

Evan was a bright, good-looking, red-headed young man who lived all by himself on a small island in the North Sea. Just imagine, the island was so tiny that you could look in any direction and never lose sight of the sea.

As lonely as an owl, Evan was very bored. He sowed the land, but the soil was so dry that he never harvested more than a few potatoes and turnips, just enough to survive.

Evan spent the day waiting for it to be five o'clock. That was when he stopped working. He'd put on his striped sweater, his jeans, a woolen cap to keep his ears from freezing, and he'd go down to the sea.

He loved looking for crabs among the rocks and discovering the places where the seagulls hid their nests. But what Evan loved most of all was fishing.

He'd catch silvery herring or shiny sardines. And sometimes with a little luck, he'd even catch an absent-minded tuna.

That afternoon, without knowing why, Evan decided to change spots and go fishing on the other side of the island where the waves crashed hard and the sea currents drew the fish up to the surface.

"This is a good place to fish, yes sir," thought Evan and he stopped near the rocks.

Evan started to get his fishing line ready. He carefully put a worm onto the hook and tossed it into the sea to see if the fish were biting.

Evan stood there fishing, gazing at the horizon, and thinking that sooner or later he would have to leave his beloved island to find work in a faraway place.

What Evan never suspected was that he was about to live the fantastic story of The Siren and the Apples.

Yes, because that peaceful January afternoon, a beautiful siren emerged from the depths of the sea.

When he saw her, Evan was terrified. He was so shocked at first that he fell back on the rocks and lost his fishing line.

But the siren was so pretty that Evan couldn't take his eyes off of her.

That was when, on an inexplicable impulse, Evan gave the siren the apple he had brought with him for lunch.

The apple was so sweet that after her first bite, the siren and Evan fell madly in love.

Oh, love! The days passed by and every afternoon at five o'clock on the dot, the siren and Evan met on the other side of the island.

They'd spend hours talking to each other about their lives and they loved each other more and more each day.

Until one sad afternoon, Evan confessed to the siren that when spring came he would have to leave.

"This can't go on," said Evan, his eyes brimming with tears. "I have no choice but to go off to a distant country to earn a living."

And that same evening, Evan and the siren said goodbye to each other.

But before he set sail for the other side of the sea, Evan planted an apple tree among the rocks.

"So that you will always remember me, my love."

The siren, sick with melancholy, swam to the surface of the sea every day in tears and silence to watch the apple tree grow taller and taller.

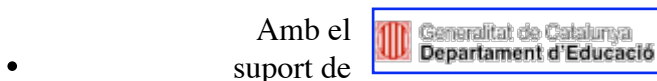
Then one day, the apple tree bore its first fruits. Big, shiny, red apples that were so luscious to look at that I could eat one this very minute.

But the siren waited patiently for the apples to ripen and fall from their own weight into the water.

Ever since then, the siren emerges from the water every afternoon at five o'clock on the dot to eat an apple as sweet as the memory of her beloved Evan.

That was many, many years ago. But if one day you visit the tiny island in the North Sea, you will see how even today, every afternoon at five o'clock on the dot, the siren still surfaces from the sea to eat an apple.

Script: J.M. Hernandez Ripoll



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