





Chapter 1

Merfolk of all ages filled Ocean Tides Park, working on sandcastles and sculptures. Crews from the kingdom of Astoria set up amusement rides while vendors stocked their carts and stands with treats and sweets.

“This is going to be the best Sand Sculpture Festival ever!” Princess Cascadia said to her younger sister, Princess Nixie. Cascadia had volunteered to organize the festival this year. She had already graduated from the

Royal Mermaid Rescue Crew School, so she didn't have to attend Rescue Crew classes on the weekend and had plenty of time to plan the event.

Mermaids from across the Eastern Kingdoms were flocking to Astoria City for the biggest, most exciting event of the year.



School was canceled for a week so they could enjoy the festival.

“What do you think of my seapony sculpture?” Nixie asked. “I’ve been working on it for three days!”

Cascadia smiled at her sister. “I can’t believe you made it yourself.”



"I bet you win a prize for sure," said Cascadia's seapony partner, Periwinkle.

Nixie blushed happily. "That would be amazing! But I have a little more work to do."

Gorgeous sculptures were scattered throughout the park. And right in the middle was a huge sandcastle. Everyone at the festival could add their own shell or special touch to it. It was the centerpiece of the event and would become a permanent feature of the park.

"I hope there's coral candy," Nixie said.

"Mmm. Kelp cones, too," Cascadia said.

"Help!" called out a voice on the rescue shells around their necks. All members of the Royal Mermaid Rescue Crew wore one

to answer calls for help around the Eastern Kingdoms.

Cascadia picked up her shell. "This is the Rescue Crew. What's the emergency?"

"A whirlpool is tearing up my front yard," said a voice through the shell.

"A whirlpool?" Cascadia shook her head like she was hearing things.

"I didn't make it!" Periwinkle laughed. "I've been with you the whole time." Periwinkle's sea savvy was conjuring small whirlpools.

"I know it wasn't you." Cascadia frowned. "But I've never heard a call for a whirlpool before." Surely, this was a mistake. She spoke into her shell. "Where are you?"

"The conch homes, on the south side."

“I’ll be right there,” Cascadia replied.

Nixie looked worried.

“I’m sure it’s nothing,” Cascadia assured her. “We’d know if a whirlpool had swept through. They’re very rare.”

“I should come with you,” Nixie said.

Cascadia shook her head. “I can handle this myself. Have a good time finishing your sculpture.”

Nixie smiled. “Thanks. You’re the best big sister.”

Cascadia and Periwinkle swam to the rows of shell homes just outside the city. An older mermaid was waiting on her porch. Cascadia recognized her from many other calls. Mrs. Sherkston was the type to worry. One time she thought a ghost was in her



oven. It was a hermit crab. Another time she thought someone had stolen her purse, but it was on her shoulder!

“What’s wrong, Mrs. Sherkston?” Cascadia asked.

“Thank goodness you’re here,” Mrs. Sherkston said. “This tiny spinning monster

whooshed through my front yard and left such a mess!" The seagrass in her front yard was indeed torn up.

Cascadia smirked, suspecting the tiny spinning monster was actually a rambunctious young merkid, excited for the festival.

Mrs. Sherkston clenched her hands. "It was a whirlpool, I tell you! Haven't seen one of those since I was a child. Could mean a big storm is coming."

"Well, it doesn't look like anyone else's yard was hit," Cascadia said. "And I don't see a whirlpool anywhere now. No one else has called one in. I think everything is safe. I'll ask someone from the city to come over and repair your yard once the Sand Sculpture Festival is over. Everyone's busy working on that."