

Ish the Fish and the Fisherman

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A little fish, by name of Ish, there once was. He was a golden fish with golden scales and golden gills and shining golden tail. He even had golden eyes with golden twinkles in both of them. And freckles, he had golden freckles.

How did he come to be, this little fish in the sea?

He came one day as a sunnyray singing from the sun.

‘Lah-tee-dah! Lah-tee-dah!’ he sang as he sped through space as straight as an arrow and splashed into the ocean.

Down he sank into the darkness under the waves.

“Oh no, this is not for me,” said the sunnyray. “This darkness is not for me! It’s much too gloomy.”

He turned – and the water made him wobble – he twisted – and the waves made him wave – he twirled – and the water made and shaped him and he swam as a fish to the top of the sea and lived in the light of the sun.

Little Ish swam the seven seas. Up the waves and down the waves he swam, up and down, up and down until at last he came to an island and swam about it. It was tall and pointy. It had green trees and yellow sands and the water was blue.

He found a fisherman fishing from a rock. Little Ish decided to bite his bait and bite he did. Soon he was flopping on the rock.

“Oh, please let me go,” said Ish. “I am just a little fish. I will give you anything you ask.”

The fisherman was kind and threw him back into the water and didn’t ask for anything.

Ish swam around the island. It took him a whole day to swim around the whole island. He found the fisherman sitting on the rock. High above his head was a small cloud.

“Fish! Fish!” called the fisherman. “My wife wants. She won’t leave me in peace until I ask it of you.”

"What is it?" asked Ish.

"She wants a pearl to make her beautiful."

"Does she need it?" asked Ish.

"Perhaps," said the fisherman. "She's no great catch."

"She has her pearl," said Ish, and swam away.

Ish swam around the island. It took him a whole day to swim around the island. He found the fisherman sitting on the rock under a bigger cloud.

"Didn't you go home?" asked Ish the Fish.

"Yes, I did," said the fisherman, "but my wife wants."

"What does she want this time?"

"A lovely body and fine hair," said the fisherman.

"Does she need it?" asked Ish.

"Not for me," said the fisherman.

"Then she doesn't have it," said Ish, and swam away.

Ish swam around the island. It took him a day to swim around the island. He found the fisherman sitting on the rock. He had a black eye and the sun had stopped shining altogether.

"Why do you have a black eye?" asked Ish the Fish.

"My wife beat me and wants. She sent me back to ask you once more for fine hair and a fine body. Please give them to her."

"Okay," said Ish. "She has them," and off he swam around the island.

A day later he found the fisherman sitting on the rock. He looked unhappy and the sea was gray and choppy.

"Fish! Fish!" he cried when he saw little Ish. "My wife wants again."

"What does she want this time?"

"Dresses and shoes and maids to look after her. She says it takes so long to get ready that the day is almost spent before I can look at her."

"Does she need them?" asked Ish.

"Not by me," said the fisherman. "I'm not fussy. But she'll beat me if I don't get them."

"Then let her have the maids and shoes and clothes," said Ish, and swam off around the island.

When Ish got back the waves were wild and pounding the shore. The fisherman stood looking forlorn and lost.

"What does she want?" asked Ish.

"Men to look at her now that she's lovely."

"Are you not enough?" asked Ish.

The fisherman shrugged.

"Let her have them," said Ish, and off he swam around the island.

The fisherman was waiting. The sea was raging, the winds howled and the clouds were black. Ish found him looking gloomily into the water.

"What does she want now?" asked Ish.

"She wants a different husband," said the fisherman.

"She has him," said Ish, and swam away.

Ish swam around the island. It took him the whole day. When he got back the sea was so wild that the waves ran up the beach and tore the houses apart. The wind whipped the mountain and the forests fell. The fisherman was standing upon the rock waiting for Ish. He was dressed in fine clothes and looked handsome and rich.

"Does she like her new man?" asked Ish.

"Yes," said the fisherman, "but I don't."