

THE LEGEND OF THE WARSAW MERMAID

A long time ago, a prince from the Mazowsze Region took his men and went hunting. In the forest, he saw a wild beast and was determined to kill it. He was close enough to shoot at it the arrow from his bow, but as he took his aim, the beast suddenly disappeared. Thoroughly surprised, the prince decided to stop at the nearby river for a drink of water. As he bent over to drink, he saw the mermaid.

The mermaid told the Prince to follow the arrow she shot from her bow. The prince followed the arrow along the river's edge until he reached a clearing. In the clearing he saw a run-down fisherman's cottage under a large oak tree. He went to the cottage to ask for food. Inside, the Prince saw a young woman sitting by the fireplace feeding her twin babies: a boy and a girl. The young woman shared her food with the Prince.

After the meal, the Prince and the young woman sat in front of the cottage and looked out at the river. The prince insisted that the young woman name her baby son, Wars and her baby daughter, Sawa. He told her to clear the land around the cottage and plant crops. He gave this land to the young woman and her children. He knew that they would work hard to make the land valuable and a village would result. This village would become Warsaw.

As the young woman listened to the Prince, she saw the mermaid rise from the river's waves. The mermaid said the village would grow into a beautiful city because of the hard work of the simple fisherman who chose to live there.