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Once upon a time, there was an excitable, artistic, and musical manatee named Maggie. Maggie loved to swim through kelp, bounce on jellyfish heads, and bake seaweed pastries with her mothers. But most of all, Maggie loved to play dress up. Even though she had a closet full of costumes, Maggie always dressed up as a mermaid.
Maggie is a manatee.

Maggie loves to swim in kelp.

Maggie loves to bake seaweed with her mother.

Maggie loves to dress up in different clothes.

Maggie loves to dress up as a mermaid.
Although Maggie was a great many things, she was self-conscious about her size. All the other students in her school were sleek and slim dolphins, and Maggie...well, Maggie was exactly what any healthy manatee should be: **round, hefty, buoyant, and vulnerable.**
Maggie is a big manatee.

All Maggie’s friends are dolphins.

All Maggie’s friends are small and thin.

Maggie is big and round and a good floater.

Maggie is healthy but is different.

Adapted from the original text, *Maggie the Moomaid*, written by Rachel Terlop, illustrated by Marianella González.
Her mother would stop and remark, “Maggie, you are the most beautiful mermaid in the sea. You really can be anything you want to be.” But when Maggie changed into her flashy scales and colorful fish tail, in her eyes, she became a wondrous mermaid in the sea.
"You are beautiful, Maggie!" said Maggie's mother.

You are a beautiful mermaid too."

Maggie loves to wear colorful mermaid clothes and a long mermaid tail.

Adapted from the original text, Maggie the Moomaid, written by Rachel Terlop, illustrated by Marianella González.
Maggie, due to her self-conscious and vulnerable nature, preferred to dress up as a mermaid most days of the week (when she wasn’t at school, of course). She was a mermaid when she and her mothers swam to the grocery store, when she was at dinner, and when she got icy kelp cream.

When fellow fish, manatees, or any other ocean mates would stop to admire Maggie, her mothers would always say, “You are so special and unique. You can do anything you set your mind to.”

Adapted from the original text, *Maggie the Moomaid*, written by Rachel Terlop, illustrated by Marianella González.
Maggie does not dress up at school.

Maggie dresses up as a mermaid at home.

Maggie dresses up as a mermaid in the store.

People tell Maggie "You are special."

"You can do anything!"
One day, when Maggie was at the Krill Grill with her mothers, a group of dolphins from her school came in as well. Maggie was dressed in her most fabulous mermaid outfit, and was eager to show off to her classmates.

However, once the pod of dolphins saw Maggie, one scoffed, “Maggie! You are nothing but a sea cow. You could never be a mermaid. *Mermaids are slim and sleek like us dolphins.*”
Maggie goes to a restaurant.

Maggie is a mermaid.

Maggie sees her dolphin friends.

Her dolphin friends say, "You are not a mermaid."

Mermaids are thin and small!"
Maggie was stunned. She was hurt, discouraged, and downright sad. Maggie thought to herself, "My mothers always remark, "Maggie, you are the most beautiful mermaid in the sea. You really can be anything you want to be." I want to be a mermaid, but I have always been a manatee. My mothers are manatees, and I love being like them, too."
Adapted from the original text, *Maggie the Moomaid*, written by Rachel Terlop, illustrated by Marianella González.

Maggie is sad.

Maggie loves being a mermaid.

Maggie loves being a manatee.
Sensing their daughter’s distress, Maggie’s mothers pulled her aside and said, “Maggie, do you remember what we always have told you? You are a beautiful mermaid when you are dressed up, but you are also a beautiful, healthy manatee in your own skin. Other creatures don’t get to decide who you are. That is your choice, not theirs.”
Adapted from the original text, *Maggie the Moomaid*, written by Rachel Terlop, illustrated by Marianella González.
Maggie, considering her mothers’ words, decided to ignore the nonsense of those dolphins. She quickly devised a plan, and had no time to waste! Maggie swam home with her mothers as quickly as possible to start creating her newest dress up outfit.

Adapted from the original text, Maggie the Moomaid, written by Rachel Terlop, illustrated by Marianella González.
Maggie has an idea.

Maggie swims home to create the best dress up clothes.
Maggie decided to take advantage of the nickname manatees are commonly given – sea cow – and combine it with her most favorite underwater creature: mermaids! Maggie, always the creative thinker, crafted a moomaid costume.
Maggie thinks. Manatees are called sea cows.

Maggie sews special clothes.

Mermaid clothes and sea cow clothes together.

Maggie called it Moomaid clothes.
With great luck, Maggie’s show-and-tell day was the following morning, and she got permission to bring her newly created moomaid costume to school.

When Maggie came to the circle to share, she swam up and presented herself with a hearty, “Ta-da!” Maggie went on to explain her moomaid costume to her classmates. “Moomaids are manatee mermaids! And I am unique because I am the only one in the entire ocean.”
Maggie brings her Moomaid clothes to school.

It is show and tell.

Maggie tells about her special clothes.

Maggie is the only Moomaid in the ocean!
The dolphins in Maggie’s class were speechless. Maggie was right – she was the only moomaid in the sea. After just a moment, one of the dolphins called out, “I want to be a moomaid, just like you, Maggie!”

Soon, the rest of the pod circled around Maggie and began asking her about her costume.
Maggie's dolphin friends love her clothes.

The dolphins want to be like Maggie!

The dolphin friends want to be special too.
It didn’t take long for the entire school to start dressing up like a moomaid. Every dolphin, manatee, and fish put their own unique spin on the costume, but none was quite as bright and colorful as Maggie’s. She realized that everyone had a little moomaid in them, and that perhaps all it takes to bring it out is one brave creature who stands out from the rest.
Maggie's friends dress up like a Moomaid.

Every friend was a special Moomaid.

Every friend is a little Mermaid.

Every friend is a little Manatee.

Every friend is different.

Maggie was happy.
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