The Little Mermaid: (Reissue)
(Charles Santors) by Charles Santore

Gorgeous, Heartbreaking Picture Book

The Little Mermaids universal longing for freedom, independence, and love is made real by Santores sensitive presentation. School Library Journal said, The opulent full-page watercolors are a perfect complement to this stylish and authentic interpretation of Hans Christian Andersens fairy tale.

My Personal Review:
I cant say enough about Santores illustrations; the best ones are exquisite, the less-than-best ones detailed and very lovely to look at. The text remains largely unchanged, though Andersen purists will never be satisfied. The story itself, like all good fairy tales, is complicated and open to many different interpretations. Perhaps you are of the feminist stance that views this tale, and all others of its ilk, with horror because of the pain and disfigurement the protagonist must endure to become acceptable to her love interest, or maybe you are the more old-fashioned, evangelical sort who sees the little mermaids quest for a soul as noble, self-sacrificing,
and the definition of true, selfless love. Or maybe, like me, youre somewhere in between. (;

Whatever your views on this classic tale, its still a cracking good story, one that has appealed to the old souls in children everywhere for years, and its only made more beautiful and poignant by Charles Santores wonderful illustrations. (Not to mention the fact that it is an old school fairy tale, which means no candy-coated, neatly wrapped up Disney-fied ending. Expecting everyone to live happily ever after is probably not sending our kids the best message!) If you are an Andersen fan -- or just a lover of fairy tales -- buy it. I have yet to find a better version.

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