

Emily Windsnap is a wonderful children's novel series by Liz Kessler.

(Characters created by Liz Kessler)

Emily Windsnap adjusts her navy buttoned shirt and looks down at her jeans. "Mom, I've told you, I'm a mermaid! I don't wear jeans... I wear fins!" Emily's mom doesn't seem to approve. She shakes her head and sighs, "For as long as you are on this boat," she says, you will be in human form... by that, I mean legs!"

Emily lives on a boat docked in the harbor with her mother... Who never seems to approve of her tail.

Emily stomps of the boat. Her loud feet and tall, pale, skinny body make disturbing noises throughout the pier. *Stomp! Stomp!* Glaring at a classmate, whose family owns the popular arcade across the street, she jumps into the crashing waves. The water seems murky from here, but that doesn't bother her. Emily Windsnap brings adventure and danger with every flap of her fin! Today, Emily was determined to solve a mystery.

Her legs seem to go stiff as she presses them together and closes her green eyes, waiting for the metamorphosis to be over with. A school of guppies, swimming close by, seem to feel a connection with Emily. She reaches her hand out to them and giggles, she knows that the guppies will show her the way...

After hours of pointless swimming, Emily's tail feels sore. She sinks down to the whimsical sand. As her head touches the bottom depths of the ocean, her hand gets pushed by a nearby current. It touches a shell as she takes her last inhalation... Or so it seems.

A pod of dolphins, consisting of about a dozen, notices a large abundance of food. Many other pods, which mermaids call superpods, join in. Superpods consist of around one thousand individuals.

The large superpod notices Emily's body on the sand and sensed she was hurt. They started to whistle, a form of dolphin communication. Somehow, the mysterious dolphins awake Emily Windsnap.

After this rare, memorable moment with the dolphins, a mermaid, seemingly a few years older than Emily, starts to speak. She has a strong English accent, making her speech difficult to comprehend.

"You are also looking for it, Ms. Windsnap?" the mermaid questions Emily. Emily Windsnap flaps her tail only the slightest to stay upright. "So I heard," says Emily, "The queen lost the Ring of Elements." The other mermaid laughs, letting some fry play in the petite bubbles emerging from her

mouth. "These baby fish have been following me around for days!" she says. "Anyway, lean in real close."

Emily obeys and leans in closer. The mermaid, called Zera, opens her palm and exposes the Ring of Elements to open waters.

"I found this ring," Zera says. "Turns out, it's the Ring of Elements. It has no power when on me, or any merperson I have tested. I have a theorization that it could have an immense performance on you... You, Emily Windsnap, are not from strictly one element... But from all."

Emily pauses in the water. "You really do assume that?" she asks. "Undoubtedly." Zera beams at Emily. "Try it on, Windsnap."

Emily slips the ring on her boney finger. The high seas no longer are polluted, but are unblemished.

"You now carry authority with every flap of your fin and every step on land," Zera recalls. "You can create peace or war. Unity or conflict of the elements is now because of you. You control them, Windsnap. You can do this in many ways..."

Zera glides away and Emily is shocked. Dolphins surround her and the elements. Though this should have been a perfect day... A thought is resounded in her head.

*How will you use this ring, Emily Windsnap?*

The thought of creating a war of the elements makes Emily anxious. She starts to bawl. Throwing the ring into the sand... the ocean loses its glow. "I am a Windsnap," Emily says. "I will find the elements when I'm ready. Or, someone else, merperson, or human, will protect these waters. Until then, all of our actions shall determine war or peace, not only mine." Says Emily. "The ring is free!" she screams.

Story by: Sophie G Quarles

Kiewit Middle School, grade 6

Final Word Count (including subtitle, introduction, story, and end credits.) Words: 722