

# Tore and the Town on Thin Ice



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"Tunza" means "to treat with care or affection" in Swahili. UNEP hopes to inspire caring for the Earth through creative literature that sparks the interest and awareness of children, their parents and teachers.

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## About the Mother of the Sea

In Inuit traditions of Greenland and North America, water animals first sprang from Sea Mother's body. Depending on the region, people also call this goddess at the bottom of the ocean 'Sedna', 'Nuliajuk', or 'Arnarquassaq'.

All the evil and pollution of the world is said to flow to the sea and settle in Sedna's thick hair. The community must send a healer to dive into the deep and comb away the grime. Only then can people and other creatures return to health.

“We’re going to win....We’re going to win!” Tore yelled to his dogs as they sprinted across the frozen river toward the finish line. He had trained with the dogsled all winter, and this race was the last before the finals. But just as his sled was gliding toward the river bank, it crashed through the ice, dumping Tore into the shallow but freezing water.

The watching children laughed. Tore ran home, trying not to cry as his fists clenched in anger.



"But it's ALWAYS frozen solid this time of year," he complained to his parents, "It's not fair!"





"You're right," said Tore's mom, running a warm bath for him. "The ice is changing. We can't rely on it as we used to. Even experienced hunters fall through now. So don't be ashamed."

"But it's not fair. I should have won," Tore insisted.

Tore's dad, maddeningly calm as usual, said, "The question is, what are you going to do about it?"

"I'm never going to sled again!" Tore thundered.



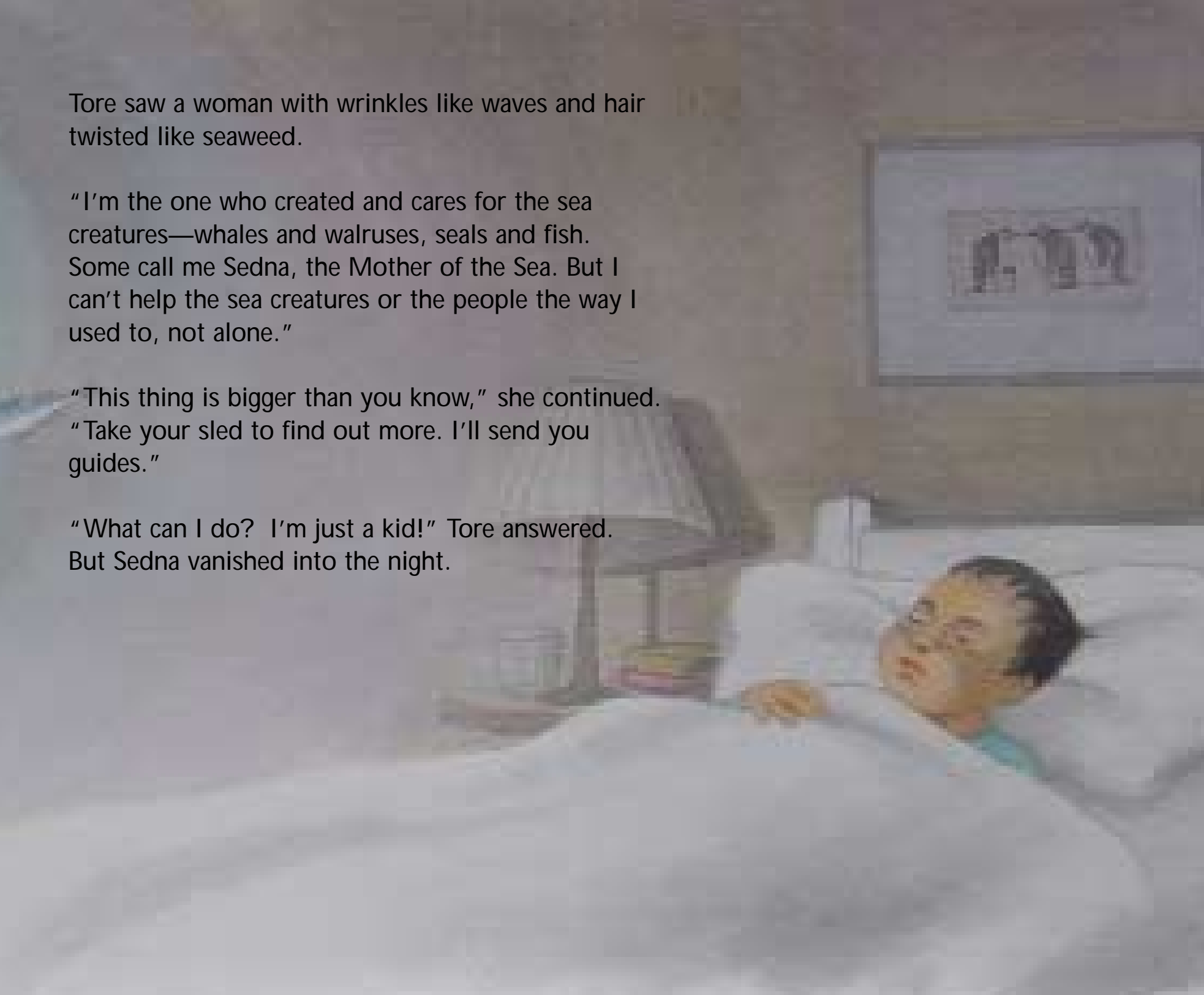
That night, after sleep had finally shut Tore's eyes, he heard a voice.  
"You have a right to be angry, Tore. But use that anger to learn and  
see what you can do."

Tore saw a woman with wrinkles like waves and hair twisted like seaweed.

“I’m the one who created and cares for the sea creatures—whales and walruses, seals and fish. Some call me Sedna, the Mother of the Sea. But I can’t help the sea creatures or the people the way I used to, not alone.”

“This thing is bigger than you know,” she continued.  
“Take your sled to find out more. I’ll send you guides.”

“What can I do? I’m just a kid!” Tore answered.  
But Sedna vanished into the night.



The next morning, Tore harnessed his dogs and set out to learn. He noticed that patches of permafrost—earth that had always been frozen—were thawing, creating holes in the ground.

“Sedna sent me,” someone startled him.



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