THE GIRL FROM THE OCEAN

Written by Cristina Zenato
Illustrated by Sharktopia
When I was eight years old I decided that one day I would be a guardian of the ocean and I would have sharks for friends. My mom would always stand guard as I swam under the waves to meet my ocean friends. I didn’t like when she told me to come out of the water because I was so cold I would shake. All I wanted was time underwater and to know and understand all the sea creatures.
Most of my childhood summers were spent in Bordighera, Capo Ampelio. That's where you can find these rocks. This was my favorite playground!

I remember my mom standing watch on the rocks as I swam below the waves. She was wearing a full bathing suit, her hair was short, one hand would always be on her hip, and the other hand was on her face as a visor against the sun and the glare. That’s how she stood the whole time, making sure I would surface from my explorations.
Now (as an adult), I am a scuba diving instructor who spends her days underwater, taking care of the reef and the Ocean so that all the creatures can live safe and remain healthy.

My favorite underwater friends are the Caribbean Reef sharks. I spend a lot of time with them each day. When they have hooks in their mouths, they come to me to help them feel better.

I live on the island of Grand Bahama, in The Bahamas. You will have to dive below the waves to find me!
Dive in and create your own scene!

This booklet contains some of Cristina’s underwater friends from childhood, along with some new Ocean friends, and plenty of decorative pieces (coral, stones, etc.).

There are four background pages included. You can see most of the combinations on this page, but feel free to get creative and change it up. You can also use cardboard, construction paper, newspaper, or other materials instead of these background sheets.

Steps to create your own scene:

- Color and cut-out Cristina, her friends, and the items you’d like to include.

- Choose which background sheets you’d like to use and color those as well! Or use a different material for your background as mentioned above. Use tape or glue if you need to hold your background sheets together.

- Add Cristina, her friends, and the decorations to your background. You can use tape or glue to keep the cut-outs in one place. Or, keep them loose so you can create different stories! You can store the cut-outs in an envelope or folder to keep them safe.