

The Girl and the Little Whale



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Maya loved the ocean more than anything. Her yellow raincoat was always ready, and her tote bag was covered in stickers of fish, crabs, and one smiling whale. On windy days, she stood at the harbor and listened to the waves. 'What are you saying?' she whispered to the sea. The ocean only shushed and splashed, keeping its secrets.



One Saturday, Maya visited Grandpa Sol. He wore his navy fisherman's sweater and a silver whale-tail pendant. His round glasses twinkled as he opened a wooden box. 'These are old whale recordings,' he said. 'I made them from my little boat.' Maya leaned close. 'Do whales really talk?' she asked. 'Listen,' said Grandpa Sol, 'and you will hear them.'



He pressed a button, and the room filled with strange sounds. Clicks! Whistles! Long, low calls that hummed like a giant's song. Maya's dark brown eyes went wide. She heard a funny knock-knock-knock, then a squeaky hello. 'That sounds like friends saying hi!' she said. Grandpa Sol smiled. 'Whales talk to each other all the time,' he said. 'They use sounds instead of words.'



Maya listened again and again. Each click and call seemed to tell a story. She imagined a little blue-grey whale calf with a spiral-shell charm on its flipper. In her mind, the calf clicked a cheerful hello. 'I'm here!' it seemed to say. Maya giggled. 'Whales are like friends calling across the playground,' she said. Grandpa Sol nodded. 'Exactly,' he said. 'They say hello, share news, and stay together.'



That night, Maya could not stop thinking about the whale sounds. She wanted everyone to hear them. 'I'll make a classroom exhibit!' she declared. She drew a big poster of the ocean with a smiling whale. She wrote: WHALES TALK WITH SOUNDS. Then she asked Grandpa Sol to help her record more clicks and calls. 'This will be fun,' he said.



On Monday, Maya brought her recordings to school. Her teacher, Ms Lee, wore a green cardigan and a lanyard with a tiny whale charm. 'Can I share my whale sounds?' Maya asked. Ms Lee smiled. 'You can use the corner by the window,' she said. Maya's curly buns bounced as she set up her exhibit. She hung blue paper waves and placed a small speaker on a desk.



At recess, Maya practiced her presentation. She clicked her tongue and whistled, trying to sound like a whale. Her friend Ben laughed. 'You sound like a squeaky door!' Maya laughed too. 'Whales don't use words,' she explained. 'They click and call. It's like a secret code.' Ben looked curious. 'Can I help?' he asked. 'Sure!' said Maya.



Maya and Ben worked together. They made paper whales and hung them from the ceiling. Maya painted a big blue ocean on a cardboard box. She added a sign: LISTEN TO THE WHALES. Ms Lee gave them a small microphone. 'Now everyone can hear the whale voices,' she said. Maya felt proud. Her exhibit was almost ready.



On the day of the exhibit, Maya's heart thumped. Would her classmates like it? She pressed play, and the room filled with clicks, whistles, and deep calls. The children gasped. 'It sounds like music!' said one. 'No, it sounds like talking!' said another. Maya explained how whales communicate. 'They say hello and share news,' she said. 'They use clicks and calls like friends.'



The children listened carefully. They heard a knock-knock-knock and a long, low moan. 'What does that one mean?' asked Ben. Maya smiled. 'Grandpa Sol says it might be a whale calling its family,' she said. 'Whales talk to each other all the time.' The class was amazed. They wanted to hear more. Maya played another recording, and everyone leaned in.



Then Maya had an idea. 'Let's make our own whale sounds!' she said. The children clicked their tongues and whistled. They tried to copy the whale calls. Ms Lee clapped her hands. 'What a wonderful way to learn,' she said. 'Animals communicate in remarkable ways.' Maya beamed. Her exhibit was a big hit. Everyone loved listening to the whale voices.



After school, Maya told Grandpa Sol all about it. 'The whole class loved the whale sounds!' she said. Grandpa Sol's crinkly eyes sparkled. 'You are a good listener,' he said. 'That is how we learn about animals.' Maya hugged him. 'I want to learn more,' she said. Grandpa Sol gave her a new recording. 'Here is a whale song from the deep ocean,' he said.



That night, Maya listened to the new recording. She heard clicks, whistles, and a soft, rumbling call. She imagined the little whale calf with the spiral-shell charm swimming beside its mother. 'Hello, Maya!' it seemed to click. Maya smiled. She knew that whales were talking, and she was listening. She fell asleep with the ocean in her ears.



The next day, Maya brought the new recording to class. Ms Lee let her share it during science time. The children closed their eyes and listened. They heard the whale's deep voice and imagined the ocean. 'It's like being underwater!' said Ben. Maya nodded. 'Whales are talking all the time,' she said. 'We just have to listen.'



Ms Lee asked Maya to teach the class a whale fact. Maya stood tall. 'Whales use clicks to find food and calls to talk to friends,' she said. 'They are like us—they like to stay in touch.' The children clapped. Ms Lee smiled. 'Maya has taught us something important,' she said. 'Animals have amazing ways to communicate.'



Maya's exhibit stayed in the classroom for a whole week. Children from other classes came to listen. Maya felt happy. She knew that whales were talking, and now everyone could hear them. She looked at her poster and smiled. The ocean was full of voices, and she was learning to listen.