The Little Dugong's Friend

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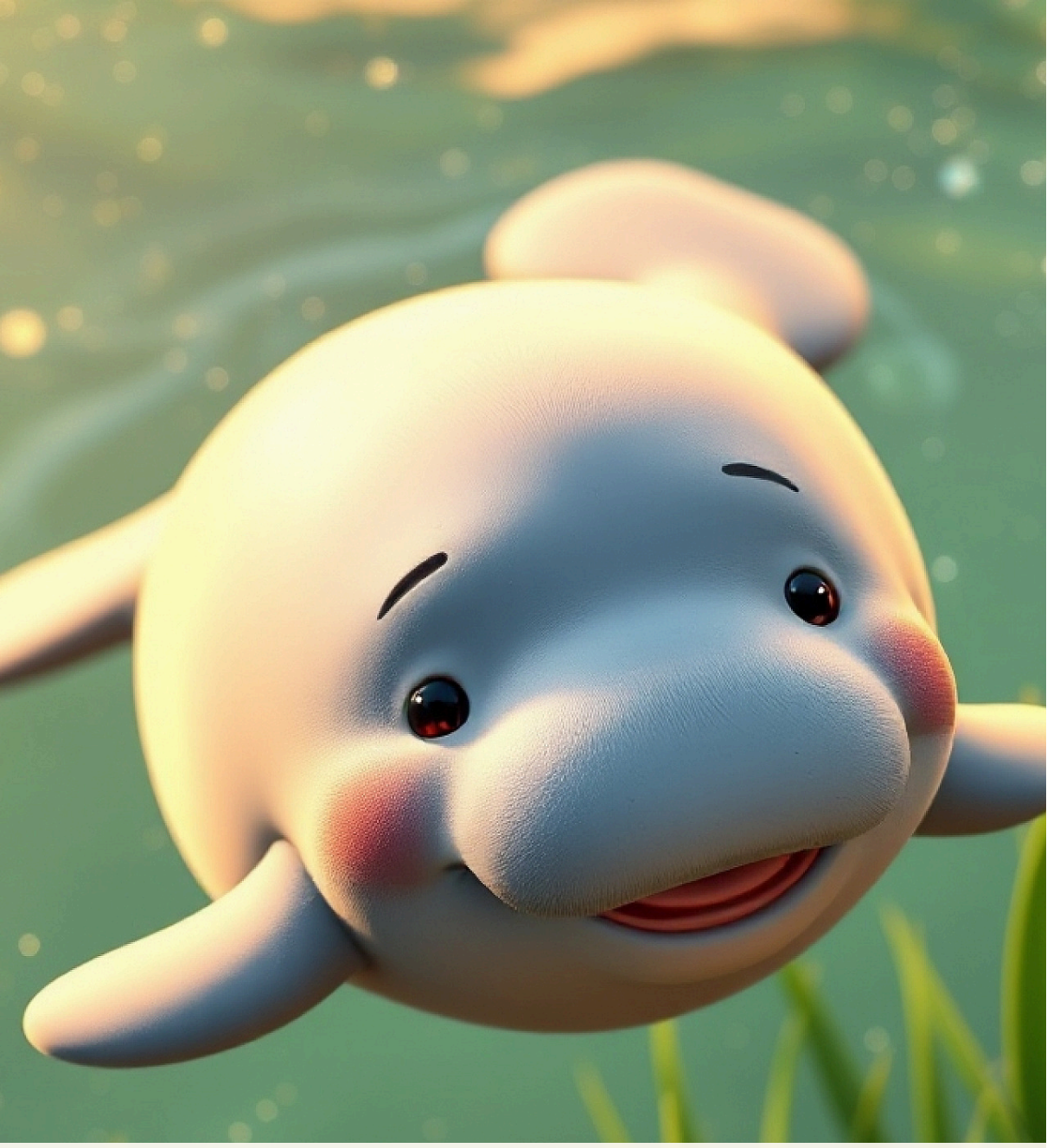

In the warm, sparkling ocean, a little dugong named Dilly swam slowly through the water. Her soft grey-blue skin was wrinkled like gentle waves, and her cream belly glowed in the sunlight. She wore a bracelet woven from pale green seagrass, a gift from her mother. Dilly loved to explore the bright seagrass meadows near her home, humming a happy tune as she swam.

One sunny morning, Dilly noticed a new shape gliding above the seagrass. It was a green sea turtle with a beautiful patterned shell of green and amber. The turtle's flippers moved gracefully through the water. Dilly felt curious and a little shy. She hid behind a tall seagrass blade and peeked out with her small dark eyes.

The turtle spotted Dilly and swam closer with a friendly smile. 'Hello! I'm Tilly,' she said. 'I'm looking for tasty seagrass.' Dilly giggled. 'I'm Dilly! This meadow is my favorite.' Tilly adjusted her tiny kelp-fibre satchel and said, 'Would you like to explore together?' Dilly nodded, and they swam off side by side, already becoming friends.

Every day after that, Dilly and Tilly played in the ocean. They chased bubbles, raced around coral, and played hide-and-seek in the seagrass. Tilly showed Dilly how to dig for juicy seagrass roots, and Dilly showed Tilly how to somersault in the water. They laughed and splashed, and the ocean felt like a big, happy playground.

One afternoon, they swam farther than ever before. The water grew quiet and the colors faded. They found a seagrass meadow that looked sad and damaged. The blades were brown and broken, and the sandy bottom was covered with bits of plastic and old fishing line. Dilly's eyes grew wide. 'Oh no,' she whispered. 'What happened here?'

Tilly swam down and gently touched a broken seagrass blade. 'This meadow is hurt,' she said. 'The seagrass can't grow with all this trash.' Dilly felt a lump in her throat. 'But this is where so many sea creatures live! We have to help.' Tilly nodded bravely. 'We can fix it together. Let's start by clearing the debris.'

Tilly opened her kelp-fibre satchel and pulled out a small net made of woven seaweed. She carefully gathered pieces of plastic and old line. Dilly used her broad, bristly snout to push away broken shells and tangled bits. They worked side by side, and slowly the sandy bottom began to show through. 'Look, it's working!' Dilly cheered.

After the trash was gone, Tilly reached into her satchel again. 'I collected seagrass seeds from our healthy meadow,' she said. 'We can plant them here.' She showed Dilly the tiny seeds, each one no bigger than a grain of sand. Dilly's eyes sparkled. 'How do we plant them?' she asked. Tilly smiled. 'We tuck them into the sand, gently.'

Dilly and Tilly planted seeds all across the sad meadow. Dilly used her flippers to fan the sand over each seed, and Tilly patrolled to make sure every seed was safe. They worked until the sun dipped low and the water turned golden. 'We'll come back tomorrow,' Tilly promised. 'And every day until it grows.' Dilly nodded, tired but hopeful.

Days passed, and Dilly and Tilly visited the meadow every morning. They watered the seeds by fanning fresh seawater over them and chased away curious crabs that might dig them up. Some days they sang little songs to the seeds, hoping they would grow faster. 'Grow, little seagrass, grow!' they sang together, giggling.

Then one morning, something wonderful happened. Tiny green shoots poked out of the sand! Dilly gasped. 'Tilly, look! They're growing!' The shoots were small but bright green. Tilly did a happy flip in the water. 'Our hard work is paying off!' They swam around the meadow, checking each new blade and cheering for every sprout.

As the sun shone through the water, a soft glow appeared in the middle of the meadow. The glow shaped itself into a small, floating creature woven from seagrass blades. Tiny golden eyes blinked, and a crown of white sea flowers rested on its head. 'I am the Old Seagrass Keeper,' it said in a gentle voice. 'You have healed my meadow.'

Dilly and Tilly floated in awe. 'Thank you for caring for the seagrass,' the Keeper said. 'Because of your friendship and hard work, this meadow will grow bright and magical once more.' The Keeper waved its ribbon-like fronds, and a shower of sparkling dust floated down. The seagrass blades began to grow taller, turning a brilliant, glowing green.

Soon the meadow was full of life. Fish darted between the bright green blades, and tiny seahorses clung to the stems. The water sparkled like diamonds. Dilly and Tilly swam through the magical meadow, their hearts full of joy. 'We did it!' Dilly shouted, spinning in circles. Tilly laughed. 'We did it together!'

The Old Seagrass Keeper blessed them with a gentle smile. 'Remember, little friends,' it said, 'the ocean thrives when we care for it together.' Then it faded into the seagrass, leaving behind a soft shimmer. Dilly looked at her bracelet and Tilly touched her satchel. They knew they would always protect the ocean, side by side.

From that day on, Dilly and Tilly explored the ocean and kept every meadow safe. They taught other sea creatures to clear trash and plant seeds. And whenever they swam past the magical seagrass meadow, they smiled. Their friendship had made the ocean a better place, and they knew that caring for the sea was the best adventure of all.