

The Girl and the Little Seal



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Maya pulled on her red rubber boots and zipped up her yellow raincoat. Today was special: she was visiting the ocean with her class. She could already smell the salty air and hear the waves crashing. Her black braids bounced as she ran ahead on the sandy path. The sea stretched out wide and blue, sparkling in the morning sun.



At the edge of the beach, a sign said 'Seal Resting Area.' Maya slowed down and looked closely. There, on the warm sand, lay a little seal pup. It was plump and round, with silvery grey fur and faint dark spots. Its big glossy black eyes blinked sleepily. A small blue tag on its rear flipper showed it came from the marine centre.



Maya's heart went thump-thump. She wanted to get closer, to see the pup's tiny whiskers and soft flippers. She took one step forward, then another. But a gentle voice called out, 'Hold on, little one!' Maya turned. A tall woman in a teal polo shirt and orange vest hurried over. She wore round glasses and a wide friendly smile.



'I'm Ms. Rosa from the marine centre,' the woman said. 'That pup is resting. Wild babies need space to grow strong.' Maya nodded, but she still wished she could be near. Just then, a boy in a blue cap ran up. 'Wow, a real seal!' he said. 'I'm Leo. Can we pet it?' Ms. Rosa shook her head kindly.



Ms. Rosa led Maya and Leo to a safe distance. 'We observe quietly,' she said. 'We don't touch, feed, or chase seal pups. Their mothers leave them on the sand to rest while they hunt for food.' Maya watched the pup yawn. Its small snout twitched. She noticed how peaceful it looked, breathing slowly in and out.



Leo had lots of questions. 'Why does it have a blue tag?' he asked. Ms. Rosa explained, 'Our centre tagged it to check on its health. We help seals that are sick or hurt, but healthy pups just need quiet.' Maya thought about how she felt when she was tired after a long day. She liked to be left alone to rest, too.



Ms. Rosa gave them each a pair of binoculars. 'Now you can see the pup without getting close,' she said. Maya looked through the lenses. The seal pup came into focus, its big black eyes shining. She could see its whiskers and tiny flippers. 'It's even cuter this way!' she whispered. Leo agreed. They watched quietly for a long time.



Then Maya had an idea. 'Can we help teach other people?' she asked. Ms. Rosa's hazel eyes lit up. 'Yes! We need junior volunteers.' She gave Maya a bright yellow vest and Leo a stack of leaflets. The leaflets said, 'Give seals space to rest.' Maya felt proud. She would help protect the pup and all its wild friends.



More visitors arrived on the beach. Some wanted to run up to the seal. Maya took a deep breath and walked over. 'Excuse me,' she said politely. 'The seal pup is resting. Please watch from here.' She pointed to the safe line. The visitors looked surprised, then nodded. They stepped back and raised their cameras from afar.



Leo handed out leaflets with a big smile. 'Seals need quiet,' he told a little girl. 'We can watch them with binoculars!' The little girl's eyes grew wide. Maya showed her how to use the binoculars. Together, they watched the pup stretch its flippers. It yawned again, showing tiny teeth. Everyone stayed calm and quiet.



As the sun climbed higher, the seal pup lifted its head. It looked around with its glossy eyes. Maya held her breath. Would it be scared? But the pup just blinked and settled back down. Ms. Rosa whispered, 'You see? When we give them space, they feel safe.' Maya smiled a gap-toothed smile. She had helped keep the pup peaceful.



Later, the pup wiggled toward the water. It flopped and splashed into the waves. Maya waved goodbye. 'Come back soon!' she called softly. Ms. Rosa put a hand on her shoulder. 'You did a great job today. You observed, you protected, and you helped others learn.' Maya's heart felt warm and full.



Back at the marine centre, Ms. Rosa gave Maya a sticker shaped like a seal. 'You're an official junior volunteer now,' she said. Leo cheered. Maya stuck the sticker on her yellow raincoat. She looked at the poster on the wall: 'Wild babies need room to rest and grow.' She understood it perfectly now.



On the bus home, Maya thought about the little seal pup. She had wanted to get close, but she learned that the best way to love wild babies is to give them space. She couldn't wait to come back and help again. Maybe next time she would see the pup swimming in the ocean, strong and free.



Maya told her family all about her day. 'I helped protect a seal pup!' she said. Her parents smiled. 'We're proud of you,' they said. Maya fell asleep dreaming of the ocean. In her dream, the seal pup swam happily, its blue tag glinting. She knew she had made a difference, one quiet step at a time.



The next weekend, Maya returned to the beach with Ms. Rosa and Leo. They set up a table with leaflets and binoculars. Visitors came to learn how to watch seals safely. Maya felt happy and useful. She knew that every small act of kindness helps wild babies rest and grow. And that is the best way to love them.