

8 July 2010

# Earthas Adventures

PERSONAL NEWS FOR YOU

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Finding Land People, Underwater

DEC 21, 2009 02:11P.M.

I swam toward the coast. I knew what I had to do: I had to find land people and get them to follow me back to the barrels so they could help. It was a great plan. The only problem was, I didn't know where to find land people. I'd come across land people underwater before, and they seemed to like to watch me swim. How would I find them now?

I swam towards a coral reef. It was full of colorful fish of all types and sizes. I just love reefs. To me, there is nothing more beautiful. "Excuse me," I said to an angelfish.

"Yes?" she replied. She was very pretty. Her yellow color was bright against the blue background of the water.

"Hi, my name is Eartha, and I need to find land people so I can get them to clean up this mess we found along the bottom that made Clyde sick." I didn't realize it then, but I was speaking very fast and didn't even stop to breathe.

"Um," muttered the angelfish. "What?" She was definitely confused.

I stopped, took a deep breath, and tried again. "I need to find land people who swim underwater."

"Oh," said the angelfish, realizing what I was talking about. "You want to find divers," she said.

I didn't know what that meant. "What are divers?" I asked.

"Divers are land people who swim underwater," she explained.

"Yes!" I was excited now. "That's exactly what I need! Divers!"

"Then come with me," she said. "I think I know where you can find some."

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## We need a plan

DEC 18, 2009 02:09P.M.

As we approached a nearby reef, I started to notice something wrong in the water. It smelled funny. It was hard to explain, but I could definitely tell something was wrong.

"There it is," shouted Roger. "That's what made Clyde sick."

Lying on the bottom of the reef were several large barrels, and some of them were leaking. I don't know what was leaking, but I did know it wasn't good.

"Now what do we do?" asked Paulie. "I'm not going near that stuff. I can smell it from here."

He was right. The smell was getting stronger.

"I'm not going over there again," said Clyde.

"We need to figure out a way to get this problem noticed by the land people," explained Roger.

"Land people?" I asked.

"Yes," said Roger. "We need them to see this mess and remove it."

I knew what to do. "I think I have an idea," I told them.

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## EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Finding the source of the sickness

DEC 16, 2009 02:08P.M.

I knew that Roger was upset. He rushed off ahead very quickly. Clyde, Paulie, and I had a hard time keeping up with him.

“Roger!” I shouted. “Wait!”

Roger stopped and turned around.

Swimming as fast as I could through the warm blue water, I finally caught up to him. “Where are we going?” I asked.

“I think I know what made Clyde sick,” he said. Roger was much older than I was, and he’d seen more of the ocean than I could even hope to see.

“It was the water,” explained Clyde.

“Actually,” said Roger, swimming over to Clyde. “It was something *in* the water.”

“What can we do?” asked Paulie. Paulie was obviously nervous, as usual.

“I don’t know. I’ll have to think of something.” Roger sped off, and we all followed him. I trust Roger. He was very nice to me when I was at the turtle hospital. I just knew he would come up with a good plan.

## EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Paulie to the rescue

NOV 13, 2009 06:00A.M.

The lady octopus that Paulie had met swam down to the seaweed patch and began picking the stems of seaweed, each with three berries on them. She held two of them in each of her six tentacles.

Paulie smiled, finally realizing what she was doing. When the octopus gathered the last piece of seaweed, she swam up to Paulie and said, “Lead the way.”

“Follow me!” exclaimed Paulie, darting off in the direction where he’d left his friends. All the while he was thinking, “*I did it! I did it!*”

“By the way, my name is Lilly,” said the octopus.

“I’m Paulie.”

“Nice to meet you, Paulie,” she smiled, keeping up with Paulie’s speed and trying not to drop the seaweed.

She wasn’t as fast as Paulie, so it took them a little longer to get back to the sick whale.

“Roger!” shouted Paulie. “We have the seaweed!”

Roger and I turned toward Paulie and saw the octopus carrying the seaweed. “I was wondering how he’d carry it,” I said.

“Good thing Lilly was there,” replied Roger with a bellowing laugh.

“You know her?” I asked.

“Sure do.” Roger leaned over toward me. “When you’ve been around as long as I have, you get to know a lot of people.” He turned toward Clyde the whale and added, “Hang in there, big guy. The medicine is on its way.”

Clyde just smiled as best as he could. I’m sure his stomach was really hurting him.

As Lilly swam up to Roger, she wrapped all her tentacles around him and gave him a big hug. When she released him from her six-armed hug, the two of them swam over to Clyde.

Roger told Clyde, “OK, chew these in your mouth, but don’t swallow them, just squeeze out the juice of the berries.”

I saw Paulie gasp as he watched Lilly placing her tentacles inside the mouth of a whale. Clyde chewed the berries; then he spit them out.

Roger put his flipper on Clyde’s forehead and told him, “It will take a little time for the medicine to work, but you’ll be okay.”

“Will ... will you all stay with me for a while?” he asked softly.

“You bet we will,” I said.

I swam over to Paulie and gave him a big hug. “You did real good, Paulie. Real good.” I could tell Paulie was very proud of himself.

“I had help,” he said, turning toward Lilly. He swam over to Lilly and gave her a hug. She wrapped her tentacle around him and hugged him back.

I was very curious about what made Clyde sick. He was so far from his home, and it seemed very strange to me. So I asked him.

Still tired and a bit weak, Clyde managed to reply, “I was swimming through the Gulf Stream current, and a day later I was feeling dizzy. I couldn’t figure out which way I was going, and then I ended up on the beach.”

“What could do that?” asked Paulie. “You know, make a big whale like you sick?”

Roger frowned. "I know what it was," he said, and he wasn't happy about it.

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Six arms are better than none

NOV 10, 2009 06:00A.M.

Paulie sped off toward the seaweed patch. As he made his way over the ridge, he finally saw it: seaweed spanned as far as his eye could see. It was like a green river under the ocean.

"I did it! I found the seaweed medicine!" he shouted, doing a backflip in the process. Looking around the seaweed, he realized he had a problem. *Oh no*, he thought. *How am I going to carry the seaweed?*

Paulie looked around for something he could use to carry the seaweed back to Jolly Roger. He swam around the seaweed patch trying to find a way to carry it. He picked one piece of seaweed and put it in his mouth.

"Therth no wayth I can fith all that theaweed in my mouf," he mumbled through a mouth full of seaweed. He spit out the seaweed. *I can make several trips*, he thought. He looked back and forth between where the seaweed was and the direction his friends were. *No, that won't work. Roger said I needed to hurry. I don't have time for twelve trips.* Paulie began to panic, swimming in circles.

"What's wrong, little one?" said a nearby voice.

Paulie turned to see a large female octopus hovering nearby. His first reaction was to be scared, but then he remembered he was scared of Roger too at first, and Roger had turned out to be a friend. "I ... I ... I need to, um, there's a whale, and ... um ... I have to get the ..." Paulie was nervous and panicking.

"Slow down, little one. Start at the beginning," she said.

Paulie took a deep breath and started rambling. "Eartha, Alex and I were swimming, and we saw this cave. Then the rock fell and trapped us. Then we saw a monster, but it wasn't a monster; it was a sea turtle that Eartha knew. And then we went to go see the sea turtle eggs, and Alex left 'cause he missed his family, and we saw the whale, and the whale is sick, and Jolly Roger told me to find the seaweed with the three berries, and here is the seaweed, but I can't carry more than one at a time, and if I don't make it back in time, I don't know what will happen to the whale, and, hey, I just bit my tongue." He did it all in one breath, so when he was done, he let out a long exhale.

The lady octopus blinked her eyes. "Did you say Jolly Roger?" she asked.

"Yes," said Paulie, his eyes bright. "Do you know him?"

"Yes. He is a friend of mine." She looked down at the seaweed patch, and said "Hmmm."

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Finding the medicine

NOV 08, 2009 08:00A.M.

Paulie swam as fast as he could, trying to locate the seaweed patch that Jolly Roger told him about. "I gotta find the seaweed patch. Seaweed ... seaweed," he mumbled to himself.

He wasn't watching where he was going when he bumped into a large grouper fish. The impact made him bounce right off the big fish like he were jumping on a trampoline.

"Hey," bellowed the grouper. "Watch where you're going, little man!" He pointed at Paulie with his fin.

Paulie backed away. "I'm sorry," he replied, his voice shaking from nervousness.

"Where were you heading in such a rush?" asked the big fish in a menacing tone.

"I ... I ..." stuttered Paulie. He took a deep breath, and then he said, "I need to find some special seaweed for a friend. He's sick. I'm sorry I bumped into you, but I am in a real hurry."

"Heh, heh, heh," laughed the large fish. "I like you, little man. You've got spirit." His voice was deep and powerful. "This seaweed you need—what does it look like?"

"It's got clusters of three berries on it. I need to find at least twelve pieces. I was told it was somewhere in this direction."

"Oh. Yes, I've seen that seaweed patch." The grouper pointed toward a ridge in the distance that had a large piece of fan coral at its peak. "It's on the other side of that ridge."

Paulie smiled. "Thank you! Thank you so much." He took off in the direction of the ridge at top speed, determined to complete his mission.

"Good luck, little man." shouted the grouper as he watched the little fish dart away.

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Helping a sick whale

OCT 14, 2009 05:48A.M.

After finding a sick whale that had been pushed back into the water after being beached, Roger and I escorted it back to the area where we'd left Paulie and Alex. Whales usually prey on smaller fish, so you can imagine how Paulie felt when he saw this. We were bringing a potential predator right to him!

"Aaaaaaaah!" screamed Paulie.

"Not so loud," said the whale.

"I'm sorry," whispered Paulie. "Don't eat me. I'm Paulie. I'm your friend. Do you understand me, friend? Paulie is your friend!" Paulie was panicking.

"Relax, Paulie. He's hurt and needs our help," I said.

"Is he gonna eat us? If he gets better, is he gonna eat us then?" whispered Paulie.

"No," said Roger.

I looked over at Alex and saw he was still watching a family of stingray swimming and playing nearby. I knew something had been bothering him for some time, but he hadn't decided to share it with me. As his friend, I felt it was my duty to see if I could help him. I swam over to Alex.

"What's wrong, Alex?" I asked.

Alex looked sad. "I miss my family," he said.

I placed my flipper on my friend's back. "If you want to return to your family, I totally understand."

Alex looked up at me, "I know I said I'd go on this adventure with you, but I really do miss my family." He looked down toward the sand. "I hope you're not upset with me."

I lifted his face with my flipper so he could look at me. "Alex, you are my friend. If you need to go, you go. We will always be friends." I smiled at him. "Who knows," I said. "Maybe we will see each other again someday."

Alex smiled, and I gave him a hug. He then swam over to Paulie.

"Paulie, I'm leaving," he said.

Paulie was upset. "Was it something I said? Is it something I did? Whatever it is, I won't do it again. Unless it's something I didn't do, then I'll make sure I don't not do it again."

Alex hugged Paulie. "It was not something you did or didn't do. I just really want to be with my family." Paulie hugged him back. "I'll miss you," said Alex.

Alex nodded at Roger, and Roger nodded back, knowing that Alex was grateful for his hospitality.

Alex swam off toward the coral reef. It made me sad to see him go, but I knew he was doing what he felt was best.

I then turned my attention to the whale and to Roger.

I asked Roger quietly, "Do you know what is wrong with him?"

"Yes," he replied. "Clyde is suffering from a common illness that comes from polluted waters."

"Clyde?" I asked, not realizing that was the whale's name.

"Yes, his name is Clyde." Roger turned to Paulie. "Paulie, I need your help."

"Me?" asked Paulie. "What can I do?"

"You can swim fast, can't you?"

"Yes!" shouted Paulie. He knew he could swim fast—very fast. After all, he outran two barracudas. "Yes, I can!"

"Okay, I need you to find some seaweed. It's special seaweed that can help cure Clyde."

"Who's Clyde?" asked Paulie.

"Right over here," shouted Clyde, as loud as he could, waving his fin at Paulie.

"The seaweed we need has clusters of three berries, and it grows about five feet tall," explained Roger. "If you head in that direction, you should come across a field of it. I need you to bring me at least twelve pieces of seaweed that have those berries. Can you do that?"

"Yes, I can." replied Paulie, saluting Roger.

"Oooohh!" moaned Clyde.

Paulie turned to leave, and Roger stopped him. "Paulie?"

"Yes?"

"Hurry!"

EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Heading ashore

OCT 10, 2009 05:37A.M.

Jolly Roger, Alex, Paulie and I headed to the beach. We exited Roger's cave through an opening on top of the cave, which was a secret entrance only Roger knew about. As we swam toward the shoreline, I noticed Alex was watching a small family of stingray swimming nearby. He didn't say anything, but I got the feeling he was missing his family.

Roger really knew his way around this area of the ocean. I guess with age comes wisdom! He pointed out some very tasty seaweed patches. I'll spend my whole life learning from him!

As we approached the shoreline, Roger told Alex and Paulie where it was safe for them to stay. From their position, they could see the sea turtles approaching the shore to create their nests.

I poked my head out of the water and saw something odd. "Roger," I called out. "Something's going on."

Roger poked his head out of the water and saw the same thing I did: Some big fish was on the beach. It was lying there and people were pouring water on it. Others were digging a trench in the sand in front of the big fish.

"Oh my," said Roger. "It's a whale, and it's stuck on the beach."

"What can we do?" I asked.

"Well, I think we should wait and see if they can get it back into the water. If so, we will see if we can help it."

We watched as the people did their best to get the whale back into the water. Slowly, the whale was pushed along the trench, now being flooded with water to make it easier for it to move. Unlike sea turtles, whales don't have flippers to help them down the beach.

As soon as the whale entered the water, Roger and I moved in.

"Are you all right?" asked Roger.

"Oh," said the whale. "My head hurts, and my stomach hurts." It looked around. "I'm not really sure which way I'm going."

"Can you swim?" I asked.

"Yes," the whale replied.

"Come with us. We will help you." said Roger.

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Roger's cave

OCT 08, 2009 05:36A.M.

Paulie swam up to Roger's sleeping area, flopped down onto a bed of seaweed, and bounced a few times. Alex and I just watched him.

"What?" Paulie asked, looking at us. "He said his home is our home." Paulie continued to bounce on the seaweed patch.

Roger's cave was full of things he had found over the years. There were some drinking cups, shiny coins, and even some candle holders.

"I found most of these items in sunken ships," explained Roger.

"You went inside them?" asked Paulie, still bouncing on Roger's bed.

"Sure, I did."

"Wow!" said Paulie.

Paulie looked at a wall. It had some scratches on it as if something were being counted. "What's this?" he asked.

"That's my calendar," replied Roger. "Tonight is the full moon." He turned to me and asked, "Do you and your friends want to join me on shore to watch the nesting?"

I wasn't sure what he was talking about. "Nesting?" I asked.

"This is the time when female sea turtles go ashore to lay their eggs," he explained.

"Sure!" I replied. I had never seen nesting before, and I'm still too young to do it myself.

"Um." We were interrupted by Alex. "Paulie and I can't go ashore—you know, 'cause I'm a stingray and he's a fish."

"You can still come and stay offshore in the water," I told him.

Paulie, still bouncing on the bed, stopped mid-bounce. "When do we leave?"

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Making friends

OCT 05, 2009 06:22A.M.

My friends and I were relieved to know that the cave monster was not a monster at all, but it was my friend Jolly Roger! Roger and I had met at the marinelifelife center where I was cared for when I got tangled in fishing line. Roger led us into the wide open cavern that he called his home, and inside, it was amazing! There were large columns in the corners, and it was filled with lot of shiny things.

“Are you sure he’s not going to eat us?” whispered Paulie. He still wasn’t sure that Roger wasn’t a monster. Roger was an adult loggerhead turtle, so he was very large. His shell was scratched and scarred from years of ocean adventures.

“He’s not a monster,” I told Paulie. “He’s my friend. I’m sure he’ll be your friend too.”

“Great plan,” said Paulie. “If we make him believe that I’m his friend, then he won’t eat me.” Paulie looked around. “I need to find a housewarming gift.”

Roger swam over to Paulie, who was looking around the cave for something to give to him. “I’m not going to eat you, Paulie,” Roger said.

Paulie stuttered in fear, “B..b..because I’m your friend. Right?”

Roger laughed. “Yes, Paulie. Any friend of Eartha’s is a friend of mine.”

Alex swam up to Roger, “I’m Alex. It’s nice to meet you Roger.”

“Nice to meet you, too, Alex.”

Paulie swam in front of Alex. “I’m Paulie.”

Roger laughed, “Yes, I know.”

Roger stretched his flippers wide. “Eartha, Alex, Paulie, welcome! My home is your home.”

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## The cave monster

SEP 18, 2009 06:01A.M.

The three of us didn’t move an inch. We just stared at the end of the tunnel where something was looking back at us. It was still too dark for us to see what it was.

“It’s gonna eat us,” whispered Paulie.

It seemed like we were just staring at each other for hours, but it was really only a few minutes.

“What are we going to do?” asked Alex in a very quiet voice.

I decided that it was time to act. “We’re going to see the monster.”

Both Paulie and Alex looked at me like I was crazy. But what else could we do? We couldn’t stay here forever. We needed to move forward. I started swimming forward slowly.

“Eartha, don’t!” shouted Paulie, covering his mouth after realizing he’d said that very loudly.

From the end of the tunnel came a deep, low, monstrous voice, “Eartha.”

I stopped, a little scared for the first time. Paulie panicked, “It knows your name!” he screamed. “You’re on his lunch menu! We gotta get out of here.” He swam in circles. Up and down, left and right. In somersaults, and figure eights. “I’m gonna be an appetizer!” he shouted. He continued to swim like a crazy fish, then smacked his head on the cave wall and knocked himself out.

I caught Paulie and held him in my flipper as I peered down the cave tunnel. The dark figure at the end of the tunnel was now moving toward us.

“We should go,” whispered Alex.

I turned to him and asked, “Go where? The entrance is blocked.”

“Eartha?” the voice said again. This time it sounded like it was asking a question.

I took a chance and replied, “Yes?”

“Ha, Ha, Ha,” laughed the approaching dark shadow.

As the shadowy figure got closed, Alex hid behind me. The figure was only a few feet away now, and I was able to see it more clearly.

“It’s good to see you again, youngin.”

It was then that I recognized that voice. “Roger?” I asked. “Jolly Roger?”

This was no monster. This was an old friend. The sea turtle I knew as Jolly Roger came into clear view.

I had met Roger when I was being cared for at the turtle hospital. He was also a patient there. I had never thought that I would see him again. He was very kind to me and explained the whole process of being treated and released back into the ocean.

“What are you doing in this cave?” I asked.

“This is my home,” he said.

I looked around at the cave walls. “This?”

“No. Follow me,” he said, turning to guide us down the tunnel to the light ahead.

I cradled Paulie in my flipper, and Alex and I followed Roger.

We exited the tunnel into a huge, open cave.

“*This* is my home,” he said.

I looked up and all around. All I could say was “Wow!”

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EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Exploring the cave

SEP 16, 2009 06:03A.M.

Paulie was shaking. He was convinced there was a monster at the end of the cave tunnel. I wasn't scared, but I was being careful. The light we were seeing was coming from the very end of the tunnel, and it was getting brighter the closer we got to it. The walls of the tunnel were narrow in some places and wider in other places. Being the larger of the three of us, I had some trouble squeezing through some spots. But with the help of Alex and Paulie pushing me from behind, I made it through. After one push through a small opening, I led us into a larger room of the tunnel.

Paulie looked toward the side of the tunnel. “Did you see that?” he whispered.

I looked toward the wall, but didn't see anything.

“Over there. Look!” shouted Paulie.

Again I looked and saw nothing. It was then that we started hearing some clicking sounds. We all stopped to listen. The clicking began to get louder and louder.

“The monster!” cried Paulie, as he swam to hide behind me.

There were more and more clicks, and they were getting louder. I looked

at the end of the tunnel, and something swam in front of the light. It was very big, and it blocked all the light for just a moment.

“I don't think it's a monster,” said Alex.

Paulie was still hiding behind Eartha. He poked his head out, “Yes, it is. First it clicks. Then it eats you.”

Alex swam over the edge of the wall, “Look.”

Paulie peeked out from behind Eartha again, expecting Alex to get eaten by the monster.

“These are snapping shrimp. They make that noise when they snap their little claws closed,” explained Alex.

Paulie wasn't fully convinced. He slowly swam over to where the shrimp were. Once he saw them, he smiled. “Aw, shucks,” he said. “You don't look like a monster.” He stretched out with his fin to touch the shrimp, and it snapped its claw down on his fin.

“Ahhhh!” cried Paulie. “He's got me! The shrimp monster's got me.” He swam around, shaking his fin, trying to get the shrimp to release him. He shook his fin as hard as he could, but it wouldn't let go. “It's gonna eat me!” he shouted. The other shrimp were now clicking even louder. Another shrimp grabbed his tail, and then one grabbed his other fin. One even latched onto his front tooth. He spun round and round, trying to get the shrimp to let go. He swam backwards into the wall of the tunnel, and the shrimp let go—well, not all of them, one was still holding on to his tooth. He crossed his eyes to be able to see it, and then grabbed it with his fin and yanked it off.

I was glad the shouting was over. But I realized that someone else heard the shouting, too. I looked down the tunnel and saw that whatever it was that swam in front of the light earlier, it was now blocking all the light. And it was looking down the tunnel right at us.

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## EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## The cave-in

SEP 14, 2009 06:00A.M.

Over the past few days, Alex and I have learned more and more about our new friend Paulie the parrotfish. He tells us stories. Actually, Paulie hasn't stopped telling us stories. He likes to swim backwards while he talks, facing us as we swim:

"... and when I was two years old, I got caught in a net, and my parents had to chew through the net to get me out," Paulie said. "And I once got caught in a plastic bag, and had to swim with it on me for a while until I learned I could swim backwards ... Another time, I got chased by two barracuda and was rescued by a sea turtle and a stingray." After saying that last part, he tilted his head, "Hey, wait a minute, that was you!" He chuckled as he continued to swim backwards.

"It seems you've gotten pretty good at swimming backwards," I told him.

"Yup," replied Paulie. "I'm what you'd call an expert at it." As he finished his sentence, Paulie backed into a reef wall. This made me and Alex laugh.

We watched as several pieces of coral and rock broke off, revealing a small cave entrance.

Paulie shook off the piece of coral that landed on him, "I'm all right," he said. "I have a hard head." He was still facing backwards and didn't see the cave. "What?" he asked.

"Look!" I said as I swam closer to the small opening to look inside. It was a cave. The opening was just wide enough for me to fit through. I began to swim through the opening.

"Where are you going?" asked Alex.

I turned back toward Alex, "I'm going to explore the cave."

Alex swam up to the opening and looked inside, "Are you sure it's a good idea?"

I turned to Alex, "We are adventurers. This is what we're out here to do, right?"

Paulie swam up to the opening and looked in, "What if there is a monster in there, or a shark, or a monster shark?"

"There is only one way to find out," I told him.

Alex went in first, and then I started to go through the opening. I thought I could fit, but I got a stuck halfway. I wiggled and wiggled until I was able to fit through. But all my wiggling made more coral and rocks fall. One big rock started falling, and Paulie saw it. He didn't want to be alone, so he swam fast through the opening and bumped right into me.

I turned around and saw that the entrance to the cave was now blocked by all the falling rocks. It was now even darker in the cave since there was no light coming in from the opening.

Paulie got scared. He started trying to push the rock away from the opening, but it didn't budge. Then he tried chewing on the rock with his large front teeth.

"Paulie!" I called out to him. "It will take you a month to chew through that." Paulie stopped chewing and spit out a piece of rock.

"Let's see if we can find another way out." I smiled at him and motioned for him to come with me.

Paulie looked at the rock again, and I knew that he was thinking, "I can eat that." He lowered his head, and slowly swam over to join me.

"Look," said Alex.

We all looked down the tunnel and saw a small glowing light coming from the very end.

I looked over at Paulie and could see he was still scared. I pulled him closer to me and smiled.

I turned to Alex, "Let's go."

## EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## A new friend for our adventure

AUG 25, 2009 07:43A.M.



After our encounter with the barracudas, Crunch and Nibble, we had made a new friend.

"Paulie, you're a parrotfish, right?" asked Alex.

"Yup! My dad was a parrotfish, and my mom was a parrotfish, and that

makes me a parrotfish, too,” replied Paulie.

“You’re pretty funny,” said Alex.

Paulie frowned. “You mean I’m funny looking,” Paulie was sad.

“No. That’s not what I meant,” Alex tried to explain. Paulie began to swim away.

“Where are you going?” I asked him.

Paulie said sadly, “Thanks for the help, but I guess you’re no different than the rest.”

He was swimming away slowly when I approached him. “What’s wrong?” I asked.

Paulie stopped and turned to face me. “Since I was a small fish, I’ve been made fun of because of the way I look,” he explained. I looked at him. I swam around and looked at him from both sides and from the back.

“Oh, I get it. It’s because you’re a fish, right?”

Paulie shook his head. I scratched mine. “Is it because you’re colorful?”

“No,” said Paulie. “It’s because of these.” He pointed to his large front teeth.

“What’s wrong with your teeth?” I asked.

“Well, if you haven’t noticed, not all parrotfish have teeth this big,” explained Paulie.

I looked at his teeth. “Hmmm,” I said, “I’d say you’re unique.”

Paulie was puzzled. “What does that mean?”

“It means you’re special. You’re one of a kind.”

Paulie thought about what I’d said. Then he brightened up, “I can chomp more coral than other parrotfish.” He smiled, “Watch this.” He swam over to a section of coral and began chomping. He was right. Parrotfish eat coral and make sand out of it. He was eating more coral than any other parrotfish I had ever seen.

“Wow!” I shouted.

Paulie swam back over. “Did you see that?”

“I sure did,” I told him.

“Other fish make fun of me because of my large teeth. Those two meanies, Crunch and Nibble, have been teasing me and other fish for years.” He looked up at me, “Today was the first time they got a taste of their own medicine.” Paulie looked at me and Alex and asked, “So what

are you two doing around here?”

“We’re on an adventure,” explained Alex. “We’re exploring the coral reef and then beyond to the open sea.”

Paulie did a somersault. “Wow! Can I go, too?” Before we could answer, Paulie continued, “I can swim real fast, and,” he swam under a nearby shell, half his body sticking out, “I can hide real well. You can’t see me! I’m over here!” He darted out from under the shell. “I can also find food.” He picked up the same shell he was hiding under.

“That’s a shell,” said Alex.

Paulie chomped on the shell, “Yeah, it tastes good, too.” He continued to munch on the shell.

I turned to Alex, “Well, we could use some protection on this adventure.” Alex smiled.

“Woohoo!” shouted Paulie as he swam in circles and in somersaults.

#### EARTHA’S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Nobody likes a bully

AUG 23, 2009 12:34P.M.

As Alex and I made our way along the edge of the coral reef, our peaceful journey was interrupted by a colorful fish zooming past and yelling, “Help!” Following it were two silver fish. One was thin, and the other was more round. They raced by, chasing the colorful fish who continued to shout, “Help!” as he swam.

“What was that all about?” I asked Alex.

His eyes were wide. “I have no idea. But I think we should check it out.” I smiled.

We took off as fast as we could after the three other fish. Around the bend and through the coral arch, we raced to catch up with the others. We stopped at a seaweed patch and looked around.

“Which way did they go?” asked Alex. I looked around, not knowing which way to go. I floated up a little and saw a small cave at the edge of the seaweed patch.

“This way!” I shouted as I darted off. Alex did his best to keep up with my speed. At the mouth of the cave were the two silver fish. I knew this type of fish. They are called barracudas. The barracuda is an ocean fish that has long, fang-like teeth. “Leave that fish alone!” I demanded. The two fish spun around to face me, their sharp, pointy teeth visible now.

“Who are you?” asked the skinny fish.

“My name is Eartha. Who are you?”

“My name is Crunch, and this here is Nibble,” replied the skinny fish, pointing at his partner.

“What do you want with that other fish?” I asked.

“Nothing. We’re just having a little fun; that’s all.”

“Well, play time is over. Leave the little fish alone,” said Alex, finally catching up.

Crunch kicked up sand at us. “Why don’t you two go collect shells or something and leave us to our fun.”

Alex was about to approach Crunch when I held out my flipper and stopped him. “I think that’s a great idea.” I said, smiling down at Alex.

I swam away while Crunch and Nibble laughed. They turned back toward the colorful fish and asked, “Where were we?” But just as they began to swim back into the cave, they heard a voice behind them.

“I’m back.” It was me, and in my mouth was a huge clam shell. Crunch and Nibble spun around and cried out as I covered them with the large shell.

From under the shell I could hear them shouting, “Let us out!”

I shouted so the two trapped barracuda could hear me, “What’s wrong? We’re just having a little fun.”

Alex giggled. I flipped the shell over. I pointed my flipper at Crunch and said, “Nobody likes a bully. Now, scram!” He and Nibble didn’t hesitate. They swam away as fast as they could.

I approached the cave. “You can come out now.”

Slowly exiting the cave was a small parrotfish. He was very colorful and had very large front teeth. “Are they gone?” he asked nervously.

“Yes,” I told him.

The parrotfish looked around, making sure the coast was clear, then swam up to me and hugged my head. “Thank you!” He then swam to Alex and was about to hug him, too, but stopped when he saw Alex’s stinger. Alex lowered his stinger, and the parrotfish proceeded to hug him.

“What’s your name?” I asked.

The parrotfish smiled and said, “My name is Paulie, um, but my friends call me Paulie.” Alex and I looked at each other and chuckled.

... To be continued! ...

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## EARTHA’S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

# The coral reef is full of beauty

AUG 09, 2009 10:59A.M.

Brain Coral

Photo by Thespis377 via Flickr.com

Alex and I have been traveling along the edge of the coral reef, heading toward the open ocean. There are so many beautiful colors in the coral reef. There are also so many really cool shapes. The coral reef is made up of all these different types of coral. Alex taught me that even though coral looks like a rock, it’s actually alive. Coral is made up of thousands of little creatures called anemone (Say Ah-Nem-Moe-Nee).

The sea fan is one type of coral that is shaped like a fan. Its branches stretch out just like a tree. We’ve seen sea fans in different colors, such as yellow, red and blue. I thought that the sea fan was really neat until Alex showed me brain coral. Brain coral looks like a brain! It’s a little creepy, but it’s still really pretty. It’s round in shape and has lines going through it like a maze.

Coral is very fragile, and it should never be touched. Another type of coral is called fire coral. It’s called that because if you touch it, it burns. I thought it was odd that something that looks like a rock could burn you. But Alex told me that the fire coral is related to the jellyfish. Those tiny little anemones (remember how to say that?) have stingers like a jellyfish, and they sting you when you touch them.

We also saw very tall coral called pillar coral. This grows straight up and can reach up to eight feet tall! Imagine a piece of coral as tall as your bedroom. Wow!

As we make our way to the open ocean, Alex will be teaching me more about the coral reef and all its wonders.

Eartha

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## EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Exploring the coral reefs

AUG 02, 2009 10:58A.M.

Alex and I spent the past few days just swimming around the coral reefs. It is so beautiful underwater! We've seen some amazing butterflyfish and king angelfish. Yesterday, we saw a bright blue fish that I have never seen before; Alex said it's called a "Blue Tang." The coral reef is full of so many different types of fish. I wish I could make friends with all of them, but that would take years. There were also people snorkeling above us. They were wearing masks and breathing through tubes. (Alex said that's the snorkel.)

I could spend many more days here just looking around the reef, but we want to head out to explore the open water. This area is called the Caribbean. There were many stories of pirate ships and other sailing ships that sank here a long time ago. Alex and I hope to find and explore some of these ships, and with any luck, we'll make some new friends.

Eartha

## EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## The lost seahorse

JUL 26, 2009 03:11P.M.

As Alex the stingray and I explored the reef, we heard crying coming from an area of the coral. We looked and looked, but could not find where the crying was coming from. Then we saw it. Clinging to the branch of a piece of coral was a baby seahorse.

"Why are you crying?" I asked the tiny little fish.

"I can't find my mom and my dad," replied the little seahorse. The little fin on his back was fluttering as he hung onto the coral with his tail.

"We'll help you find them," I said.

"Really? That would be great." The seahorse let go of the coral and fluttered over to me.

"Seahorses aren't very good swimmers, and when a boat passed by above, I got swished away from them," he explained.

"My name is Eartha, and this," I said, pointing to Alex, "is Alex."

"My name is Skip," said the little seahorse.

I moved under Skip, "Okay, hang onto my shell tight, and we'll see if we can find them. Do you know which way they went?" Skip latched onto my shell, just behind my head, then pointed with his long nose in the direction his parents went. "All right," I said to him. "Here we go."

I took off swimming, being careful not to go too fast to knock little Skip off. "Yeeeeehaaaaaw!" shouted Skip, who was really enjoying the ride. "I've never gone this fast before."

Alex swam closer to the bottom, looking around for Skip's parents. I was doing loops, rolling around and around, to help make my new friend happy. We swam up and down, all around the coral reef, until Alex shouted, "I think they are over here."

Around a small notch in the coral were two adult seahorses. "Skip!" they shouted.

"Over here, Mom!" yelled Skip.

The two parents were holding onto a branch of coral when they saw their young son ride up on my back. I approached them and lowered myself to allow Skip to flutter to them. "Thank you so much," said Skip's father.

"My pleasure," I responded.

Skip fluttered up to his parents and wrapped his body around them. Skip's mother swam up to me and Alex, and she gave each of us a kiss on the forehead. "Thank you for returning Skip to us. We seahorses are not as fast of swimmers as you two are. It would have taken us a long time to find him."

Alex used his big fin and pointed up toward another passing boat. "Small sea animals need to be careful of the big waves that boats make. That's why, when I was younger, I swam toward the bottom."

"Thanks for the tip, and for the ride," said Skip.

"Where are you two off to now?" asked Skip's mom.

"We're on an adventure to explore the reef, and from there, the great blue beyond."

Skip's eyes lit up. He turned to his mom, "Can I go with them?"

Skip's mom replied, "Sorry, dear. You're too young to go exploring."

"Aw, Mom!" cried Skip. He then turned to me and suggested, "Maybe someday I can travel with you and Alex."

"Sure," I said. "That would be fun." Skip smiled.

Alex and I waved as we swam away from Skip and his parents. We were happy to be able to help Skip, and most of all, to make a new friend.

Eartha

EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## My new friend, Alex.

JUL 23, 2009 12:24P.M.

As I mentioned before, I made a new friend: Alex, the stingray. He's super-smart and knows his way around the local reef. We swam to the other side of the reef today and saw a boat lying all the way on the bottom. We both swam to the bottom to look at it, and we saw it had a big hole in the side. Did we go in? You bet we did; we're adventurers!

We slowly entered the boat. It was empty except for a few crabs that tried to shoo us away. Above us was another hole that was just big enough for me to fit through. Swimming around small places with a big shell is not as easy as it looks. On the top of the boat there wasn't much to see. Alex said it was a fishing boat that sank in a storm. He said there are lots of boats at the bottom of the ocean and that one day he wants to find a treasure ship.

"What's a treasure ship?" I asked him.

He said, "It's a big boat that was filled with shiny coins and gems, which sank many years ago."

Wow, I thought, Now that would be an adventure.

We swam around the boat a few times and saw some yellow jack fish swimming around the front of it. We then went back to the reef to see what everyone else was doing.

Wow, my first sunken boat. I wonder what tomorrow will bring for me?

Eartha

EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## Oops, I did it again!

JUL 22, 2009 11:47A.M.

When I was at the Loggerhead Marinelife Center getting well, I had many people come to see me. The day I left, there were more people visiting. Well, yesterday I was swimming around some people who were cleaning up the reef, and today, I saw even more people here! I popped my head out of the water and people on the beach were picking up trash, too.

Did I do that? I think because the underwater people saw me yesterday, they told their friends about me, and today everybody showed up. It feels good to be helping. Maybe you can help, too. Next time you go to the beach or a park, take a paper garbage bag and help pick up trash.

Oh, I almost forgot: I made a new friend. His name is Alex, and he's a stingray. He was caught in a plastic bag, and the underwater people were able to help him. We've become fast friends. He's funny because he's not afraid of anything. He's smart, too. He knew where we were. He said the

place where we are is called the Bahamas. It's a funny word. When he said it, I laughed and said "Bahama, Bahama, Bahama." Try it, and see if it makes you laugh.

Tomorrow, we are going to the other side of the reef. I like making new friends.

Eartha

EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## First story

JUL 21, 2009 08:21A.M.

Hi Everyone!

This is my first story. I am telling a seagull named Philip all about my day, and he is going to find Selma or Gus and tell them the story to pass on to Dan. So here we go!

Today I was swimming near a pretty coral reef. I saw an angelfish, a clown fish and even some other parrotfish. I also saw a person swimming underwater; I think he took my picture. I hope he got the pretty side of my shell! I swam a little closer to the man and saw what was under him on the reef. It was garbage. This made me very sad. I know what it is like to be tangled in fishing string. However, I was happy to see the man was actually cleaning the reef. He had a bag with him that was like a net, and he picked up the garbage and put it in the bag. This made me happy.

As I swam around the reef, I saw more people underwater cleaning the reef. Some of the people's bags were already full. It made me think of all the turtles, fish and other sea creatures that all that garbage could have hurt. I was glad those people cared enough to clean up the reef.

Some of the people had cameras, so to say thank you, I swam around them in circles and let them take my picture.

That's it for now.

Eartha

EARTHA'S SEA TURTLE ADVENTURES

## How all this works

JUL 18, 2009 10:28A.M.

Hello! Welcome to Eartha's StoryBlog!

I know you are wondering how a sea turtle can tell a story. Well, I can tell you it's not easy, but sea turtles are very smart, and our Eartha figured out a way to tell me what she is up to. Then I get to tell you!

When Eartha comes to the surface of the water, she will find a seagull to tell the story of her recent adventure. The seagull travels to find other seagulls close to South Florida—There are two seagulls in South Florida, one named Selma and the other named Gus. Eartha's story is passed to one of these seagulls, and then they seek out a parrot named Clyde.

Clyde, who can speak some English, finds me, and tells me, as best as he can, what Eartha's story was. I do my best to figure out the story, and where Eartha is, and then I get to share that story with you.

Its sound easy. But, sometimes seagulls get things confused, so I'll let you know if something smells fishy.

I hope to have a story from Eartha very soon.

Dan

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