



# Echo's Lucky Charm



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# Bay's Announcement

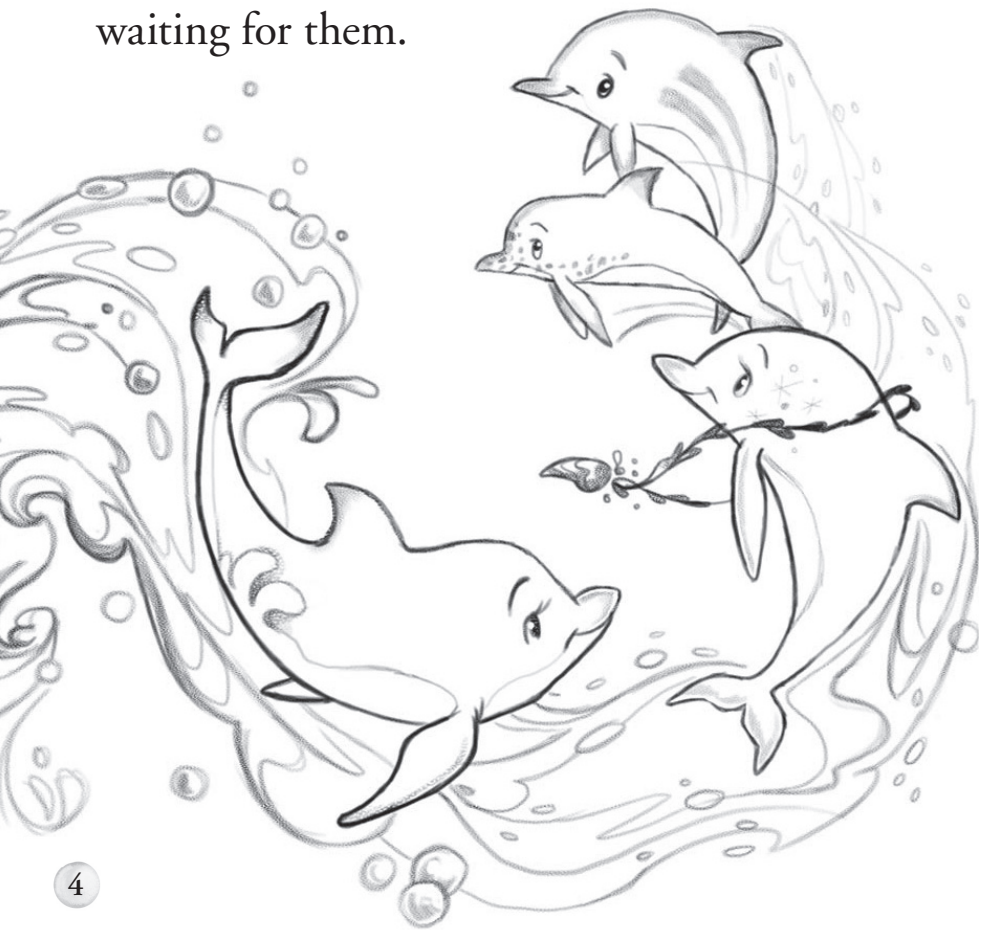
“HURRY UP, PEARL—WE DON’T WANT TO BE late to Magic class!”

“I’m coming!” Pearl called to her friend Echo. “Wait for me!”

She waited one more moment as a large grouper swam in front of her. Coral Cove Dolphin School was located in a quiet lagoon sheltered by a large, circular coral reef. Lots of sea creatures lived on or near the reef, so

there were always plenty of fish, mollusks, and crustaceans swimming or crawling through the school.

As soon as the grouper had passed, Pearl flicked her tail to catch up with Echo. Just ahead, their friends Splash and Flip were waiting for them.



“We’d better hurry,” Splash said, doing a somersault in the water. “Bay doesn’t like it when we’re late.”

Pearl smiled. She knew they weren’t going to be late. But it was no surprise that Splash wanted to swim faster. He loved swimming fast, doing flips, jumping, and spinning.

“Okay, let’s go!” Pearl said. “I hope we practice our guiding today. It’s so much fun!”

One of Pearl’s favorite parts about going to school was learning all about dolphin magic. As the protectors of the ocean, dolphins used their magical powers to help other creatures. For instance, Pearl’s family pod lived near an island where sea turtles hatched. Her parents helped the baby turtles swim safely out to sea and find food, mostly by using a magical ability known as guiding. That was a type of

mental magic in which dolphins sent gentle messages to other creatures to show them what to do. Pearl couldn't wait to get better at magic so she could help her parents help the baby turtles!

Soon Pearl and her friends were swimming into the part of the cove where they went for Magic class. The rest of their school pod was already there. On the first day of school, the teachers had divided all the students into smaller groups for their classes. There were eight dolphins in Pearl's school pod, including her and her three best friends.

"It's good to see you all again," Bay said. Bay was Pearl's favorite teacher, and she taught Pearl's two favorite subjects—Magic and Music. The pod had already had Music class that day.

“Is everyone ready to get started?” Bay asked.

“I’m ready!” Splash exclaimed, doing a flip.

“Good. I have an important announcement today,” Bay said. “You’ve all been doing very well in class, so I’ve decided you’re ready for your first test. It will be three days from now.”

A test? Pearl blew a nervous stream of bubbles out of her blowhole. This would be their very first test since starting school just a few days earlier. Pearl wasn’t sure she was ready!

“Now let’s get to work so you’re prepared for the test,” Bay said. “We’ll start today by practicing our guiding. Be patient for a moment—I need to call over some creatures to help us.”

She began to sing. A small school of about

a dozen brightly colored cardinal fish swam closer, attracted by Bay's beautiful song.

Bay stopped singing and looked at the class. "I want you to divide into pairs and try guiding these fish," she said.

Splash's eyes widened. "All of them at once?"

Pearl felt nervous again. Her parents often guided whole groups of baby turtles. But so far, Pearl and the other students had only tried their guiding skills on one creature at a time.

Well, most of the other students . . .

"Have you done this before?" Pearl whispered to Echo.

Echo's mother had especially strong magic. She was famous all throughout the Salty Sea because she'd once saved a whole group of Land Leggers from drowning when their



boat sank. Even though most young dolphins waited until they started school to learn any magic, Echo's mom had already taught her a little bit.

Echo nodded. "Mom helped me guide a small school of angelfish a few times," she whispered back. "By the way, do you want to be partners?"

"Of course!" Pearl said.

The other two female dolphins in the pod went first. Bay told them to try guiding the cardinal fish into turning around and swimming the other way. Pearl could see that the girls were trying hard. But they only got one of the cardinal fish to turn the way they wanted. The others got confused and scattered in every direction.

"Oops," said one of the girls, a slender little

dolphin named Harmony. “I hope that’s not on the test.”

Bay chuckled. She sang a few notes of her song to bring the school of cardinal fish together again. “Don’t worry. I know this is a more difficult exercise than anything we’ve done so far,” she said. “Pearl, Echo—why don’t you give it a try?”

“Okay,” Pearl said. She and Echo swam to the surface to take a breath of air. When they were back underwater, the two of them touched their fins together. Magic was always stronger when dolphins worked as a team.

“Ready?” Echo asked. “Let’s guide!”

Closing her eyes, Pearl focused her magic energy, adding it to the energy already pouring out of Echo. When she opened her eyes, Pearl saw that the fish had all stopped. They were

hanging still in the water, fins vibrating.

“More!” Echo whispered. Pearl saw her friend touch the pretty striped shell she always wore as a necklace. Even more energy pulsed out through the water.

“Hey!” Splash exclaimed. “There they go!”

The fish were moving again—this time in the opposite direction! Pearl sent out one more burst of energy, feeling proud of herself and Echo. They’d done it!

“Good work, girls!” Bay sounded pleased. “Very good.”

Magic was the last class of the day. When Bay dismissed the class, Splash and Flip stayed behind to talk to the other boys in the pod. Pearl and Echo swam slowly toward the school entrance.

“We were great partners, weren’t we?” Echo

said to Pearl. “We were the only ones who got all the fish to turn around at the same time!”

“Yes, that was fun.” Pearl smiled. “I saw you touch your shell while we were doing it. How come?”

Echo touched her necklace again. “It’s my lucky shell,” she said. “My mom gave it to me.”



“Oh, right. You told me that before.” Pearl nodded. “But why do you call it your lucky shell?”

“Because I think it must have a little bit of my mom’s magic in it,” Echo explained. “I always do better at magic when I touch it.”

“Really? Cool!” Pearl looked at the necklace again, impressed. She wished she had a lucky shell of her own!