

# **The Boy and the Friendly Shark**



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Leo was a small boy with light brown skin, short curly dark brown hair, and a bright, curious smile. He loved the ocean more than anything else in the world. At night, he dreamed of swimming in the deep blue sea. In his dream, the water was warm and clear, and fish swam all around him like shiny silver stars.



Leo wore his blue and white striped swim shorts with the drawstring tied tight. He floated in the dream ocean, feeling the gentle waves rock him like a cradle. Colorful fish darted past his nose, and a sea turtle glided by slowly. He smiled and paddled his bare feet, eager to see what lay beyond the coral.



Suddenly, a large shape moved through the water. It was a shark! Leo's heart thumped fast, and he froze with wide, worried eyes. The shark had smooth grey-blue skin and a pale cream belly. It swam closer and closer, its fin cutting through the water. Leo wanted to swim away, but his legs felt like jelly.



The shark stopped right in front of Leo. Then it did something surprising: it gave a wide, gentle smile. 'Hello there,' said the shark in a warm, rumbling voice. 'My name is Finn. Don't be scared. I'm friendly.' Leo blinked his large brown eyes. A talking shark! He wasn't sure what to say, so he just whispered, 'Hi, Finn.'



Finn's round amber eyes sparkled kindly. 'You look like a brave explorer,' he said. 'Would you like to see the reef? It's full of wonders.' Leo felt his fear slowly melt away. He nodded and gave a small smile. 'Okay,' he said. 'I'm Leo.' Finn flicked his curved fin, and they swam side by side into the blue.



They swam over a rainbow of coral. Pink, purple, orange, and green branches waved in the water like magic trees. Tiny fish darted in and out, and a big blue fish with yellow spots peeked from a cave. 'Wow!' said Leo. 'It's like an underwater garden.' Finn grinned. 'This is the reef,' he said. 'It's home to many sea animals.'



Finn led Leo to a patch of seagrass where a sea turtle was munching on plants. 'This is Myrtle,' said Finn. 'She's been swimming here for many years.' Myrtle looked up and winked. Leo waved shyly. Myrtle said, 'Hello, little one. Finn, are you teaching this boy about our reef?' Finn nodded, and Leo felt proud to be there.



Finn showed Leo how tiny fish hide in the coral for safety. He explained that the reef is like a busy city under the sea. 'Every creature has a job,' Finn said. 'The cleaner fish eat tiny bugs off bigger fish, and the coral gives us all a home.' Leo listened carefully, his brown eyes wide with wonder.



Then Finn grew a little serious. 'Sometimes people leave trash in the ocean,' he said. 'It can hurt the reef and the animals.' Leo frowned. 'That's not nice,' he said. Finn nodded. 'But we can help. If we keep the ocean clean, the reef stays healthy and happy.' Leo promised to remember that.



Leo noticed a shiny plastic bag floating near the coral. 'Look!' he said. 'That could hurt a turtle.' Finn smiled. 'Good eyes, Leo. Let's pick it up.' Together they grabbed the bag and carried it to a safe place. Leo felt good helping his new friend. 'You're a natural ocean guardian,' said Finn. Leo beamed.



The sun began to set in the dream, painting the water with gold and pink light. Leo knew it was time to go. 'I wish I could stay,' he said. Finn gave him a gentle nudge. 'You can always come back,' he said. 'And remember: sharks are friends, not scary monsters. Understanding helps fear go away.' Leo nodded and hugged Finn's fin.



Leo woke up in his own bed, warm and happy. He remembered the reef, the turtle, and Finn's friendly smile. He wasn't afraid of sharks anymore. At breakfast, he told his mom all about his dream. 'Sharks are amazing,' he said. 'And we need to keep the ocean clean for them.' His mom smiled and said, 'That's a wonderful idea.'



That afternoon, Leo drew a picture of Finn swimming over the colorful reef. He showed it to his friends and told them, 'Sharks aren't scary. They're just like us—they want a clean home and friends.' His friends listened with big eyes. Leo felt proud that he could share what he learned.



Leo started picking up litter at the beach with his family. He knew that even small actions help the ocean. He thought of Finn and Myrtle and all the fish in the reef. 'I'm an ocean guardian,' he said to himself. And he smiled his bright, curious smile.



At night, Leo closed his eyes and hoped for another ocean dream. He imagined swimming with Finn again, exploring new reefs and meeting more sea friends. He knew that understanding others—whether sharks or people—makes the world a kinder place. And he drifted off to sleep with a happy heart.



In his dream, Finn was waiting. 'Ready for another adventure?' asked the friendly shark. Leo laughed and swam beside him. They raced through the blue water, past swaying coral and dancing fish. Leo knew he would always be brave in the ocean, because he had a friend like Finn. And that made all the difference.