



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Dolphin Rescue

It was a cool, winter morning off the coast of Florida. A diver wore a wet suit, and oxygen tank and flippers. He rolled over the side of his boat. He splashed into the water and drifted deep below the sea. He sensed that something might be about to happen. Suddenly, the diver heard a loud, clicking sound followed by a whistle. The clicking grew louder and louder until it pounded in his ears. It sounded like a creaking door.

Then, he saw three dolphins swimming quickly towards him - a father, a mother and a baby. The baby dolphin's tail had become tangled in a huge ball of fishing line.

The little dolphin appeared scared and hurt. Its parents brought it even closer to the diver. They stopped about three feet away from him. What did those clicking noises mean? What were they trying to tell him? Were they asking for help?

The dolphins inched even closer. They allowed the diver to touch them. The parents held the baby between their flippers. They placed it on the sand in front of him. Suddenly, the frightened baby tried to swim away, but its parents brought it back. Using his nose, the father nudged the diver's arm upward a few times. It was as if he were urging him to "start working."

Despite their appearance, dolphins are not fish, but mammals like people. If they become sick or injured in water, they may drown. The diver knew that without his help the baby dolphin could not swim and would probably die. Could he really free the baby from the huge ball of tangled line? He took off his gloves and stroked the baby's smooth, silky skin. Suddenly, the three dolphins swam away. The parents swam under the injured baby, helping to support it.

They returned a minute later. The diver realized that they had gone to the surface to breathe. "I'll have to work fast," he thought.

The fishing line cut into the baby dolphin's skin. The dolphin cried as the diver tried to gently loosen the line. The father clicked. He seemed to want the diver to work faster. He worked carefully with his diving knife to try and free it. The mother dolphin stroked her baby with her nose. She hovered near it like a nurse. The father nudged the diver impatiently. Finally, the baby dolphin's tail was free. The parents clicked excitedly, and they swam rapidly toward the surface.

Floating above was a fishing boat. The father dolphin slapped his tail hard on top of the water. The surprised pair of fishermen heard the warning. They headed toward the shore. The dolphin chirped and whistled to his family. Then, they dove back below the waves.

When they returned, the three dolphins circled the diver. They clicked and the father looked into his eyes and nudged the diver with his nose, as if to say, "Thank you." Then, he clicked again, and the family again swam toward the surface. In the days that followed, the diver couldn't stop thinking about the dolphins. Had the baby survived? Then one day, he saw some dolphins racing near his boat. He heard a familiar whistle. In the middle of the group, he thought he saw the baby dolphin. He watched with joy as the little dolphin leaped happily through the waves.