

The Rainbow Fish

By Marcus Pfister



Far out in the sea lived a fish. No ordinary fish, however.

He was the most beautiful fish in the entire ocean.

His scales shimmered with all the colours of the rainbow.



The other fish admired his colourful scales and called him Rainbow Fish.

"Come on, play with us, Rainbow Fish!" But Rainbow Fish was proud and swam past them.



A little blue fish swam along behind him. "Rainbow Fish, wait for me! Please give me one of your glittering scales. They are so beautiful and you have got so many!"



"Give you one of my scales? What are you thinking of?", cried Rainbow Fish. "Get away from me!"

Shocked, the little blue fish swam away.



Still sad, he told his friends about it. From then on nobody wanted any more to do with Rainbow Fish.

They turned away when he swam past them

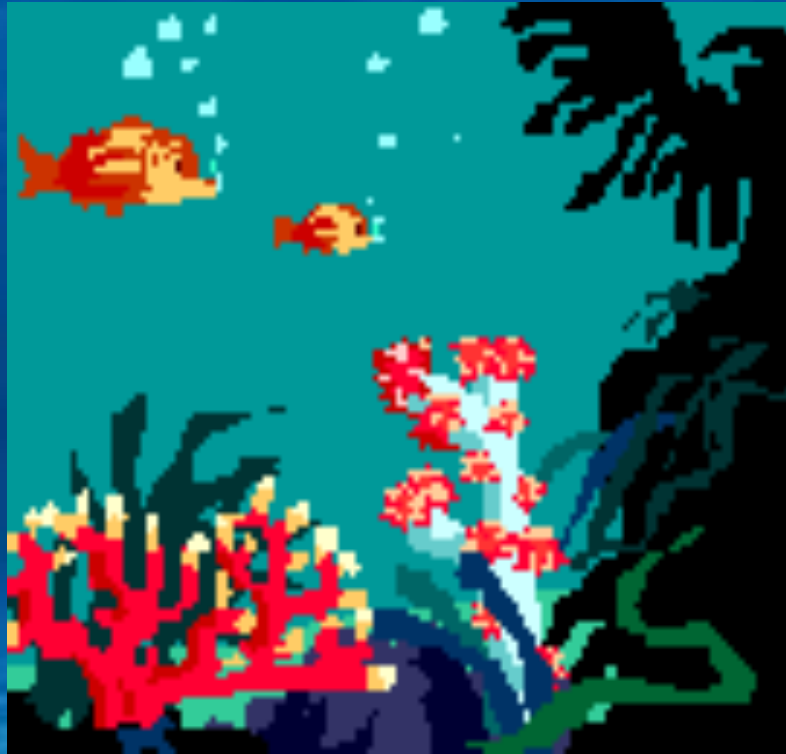




What use were Rainbow Fish's beautiful scales, if they were no longer admired by anyone?

Now he was the loneliest fish in the entire ocean!

One day he poured out his sorrow to the starfish. "I'm so beautiful. Why doesn't anyone like me?"



"In a cave behind the coral reef lives the wise octopus. Perhaps he can help you," the starfish advised him.



Rainbow Fish found the cave. It was very dark here. He could hardly see anything.



Then suddenly he saw two glowing eyes.

"I have been expecting you," said the octopus in a deep voice. "The waves have told me your story. Listen to my advice: give every fish one of your glittering scales. Then you may not be the most beautiful fish in the ocean, but you will be happy again."





"But ..." Rainbow Fish began to say, but octopus had already disappeared in a dark cloud of ink.

"Give away my scales? My beautiful glittering scales?" thought Rainbow Fish, horrified.

"Never! No. How could I be happy without them?"



Suddenly he felt the light touch of a fin. The little blue fish was back!

"Rainbow Fish, please, don't be angry. Please give me one of your glittering scales, a small one."

Rainbow Fish hesitated.

"A very, very small scale, he thought. Why not, I will hardly miss it."



**Rainbow Fish
carefully pulled off
the very smallest
of his glittering
scales. "Here, I'll
give you this one!
But now leave me
in peace!"**



"Thank you, thank you very much!" burbled the little blue fish excitedly. "You are kind, Rainbow Fish."

Rainbow Fish felt quite strange.

He watched the little blue fish for a long time as he swam away happily through the water with his glittering scale, turning this way and that.



The little blue fish darted through the water with his glittering scale. Soon Rainbow Fish was surrounded by other fish. All of them wanted to have a glittering scale. Rainbow Fish shared out his scales and felt happier and happier as he did so. Finally Rainbow Fish had only one glittering scale left. He had given away all the others! And he was happy, happier than he had ever been!

"Come on, Rainbow Fish, come and play with us!" called the others. "I'm coming!" said Rainbow Fish and went happily with the other fish.

THE END

