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Float on the wave



Lecti

book studio

Chapter 4

“North Atlantic is next”, says Sally.
“You have trained enough in smaller seas.
It is time you try diving in a big ocean.”

The Atlantic is cold, very cold.
I am far away from the coast
and there is no land to be seen.
Here no tide is felt, which one feels
most strongly near the coasts.
“One, two, three, dive”, Sally says.

I sink slowly into the ocean. While diving
I measure the current. It is quite strong.
“Move more to the east”, Sally says.
“I can’t. I only float with the current”, I reply.
“I do not have the strength to swim against it.”
“Received, Ron D2”, says Sally.

I float slowly and steadily towards the west
and try at the same time to go deeper.
“Count the Atlantic wolf-fish”, Sally says.
“They are getting rare and we need to know
how many there are left. They live at
the bottom and they are fished for food.
Most of them end up as cutlets.”
“I don’t know how deep the current is.

It is not possible to go deeper down,
as the current is too fast", I answer.
"I'll get up to the surface."

I see a shoal of cod and a fishing boat.
The boat deck is full of fish.
Then I sink into the ocean again.
"Sally, here are lots of jellyfish", I say.
"They are big and they burn.
Most of them are transparent or white.
The jellyfish look like umbrellas.
Some have a blue, red or green fringes.
They have long tentacles.
With the tentacles they catch their prey.
The jellyfish filter the water through gills.
They eat plankton, don't they?"

"Those are no jellyfish", Sally interrupts.
"You are inside a patch of plastics.
It is plastic bags you see."
"How do you know that?" I ask.
"The satellite picture shows it", says Sally.

I swim closer. Sally is right.
Plastic bags and other things of plastic
float around in the ocean.
An otter has been caught in a net.
It is trying to get free, and I help it out.
Further ahead a dead dolphin is floating.

Certainly it has eaten plastic.

"Be careful, a ray is coming your way from the north", Sally warns.

"The vacuum cleaner of the seas", I say.

"But should it not suck food at the bottom?"

"The ray also eats plastic", Sally says.

"The sea-snails have started to eat plastic.

Lobsters and crabs as well.

The sea snails are bigger than the land snails and they are very effective cleaners."

"The birds eat plastic", I comment.

In front of me various kinds of birds dive.

They come up with plastic in their beaks.

I wonder how long they can survive on such an unnatural diet.

Plastic surely does not taste good.

The ray comes nearer and is interested in me.

I am interested in the ray, because I have never been so close to one.

I wonder if it understands what I am.

Certainly not. The ray is big and flat, but it has a rather small brain.

The ray swims many times around me.

I have a layer of metal that protects me.

It cannot get at me, so it gives up.

I try again to go downwards,

because the current feels weaker here.
“There are many species of fish among the plastic”, I report to Sally.
“Do they also eat plastic bags?”
“The small fish maybe don’t eat plastic, but they get particles of plastic”, Sally replies.
“Plastic floats a long time in the ocean. When it finally breaks down, it turns into micro-particles.”

“Can they be taken out of the water?” I ask.
“It is not possible, not yet”, Sally says.
“Everybody gets micro-particles of plastic into the body, as they are in the air, too.”

“Then plastic is worse than other materials?”
I wonder. “Metal rusts and falls into pieces, or it sinks to the bottom of the sea. Also textiles and paper disintegrate and glass goes into the deep.”

I lower myself into the ocean.
Suddenly I can’t move.
I send out an urgent signal.

“Sally, can you help me?” I cry.
“I think that.... Sally, I am stuck!”

**Ron D2 is a diver.
He collects information
about the state of the oceans.
It is not always easy
to dive into the depths.**

**All kinds of things float
on the ocean waves.
Ron has to be careful.
The smallest dangers
are the sharks...**



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