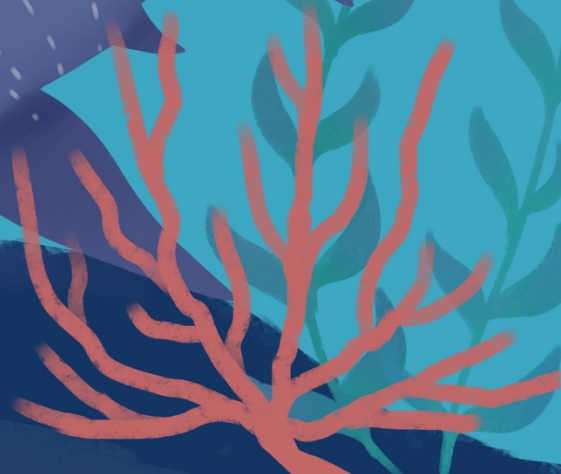
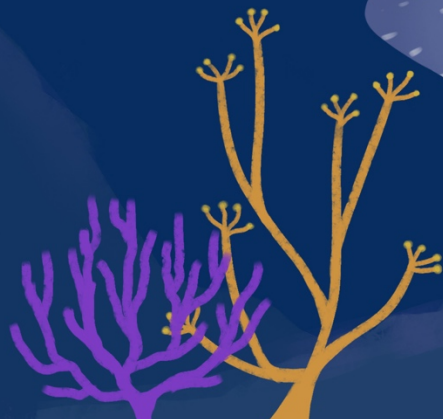
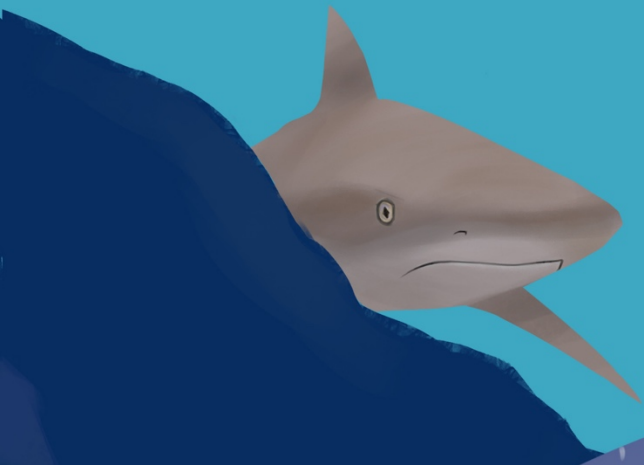


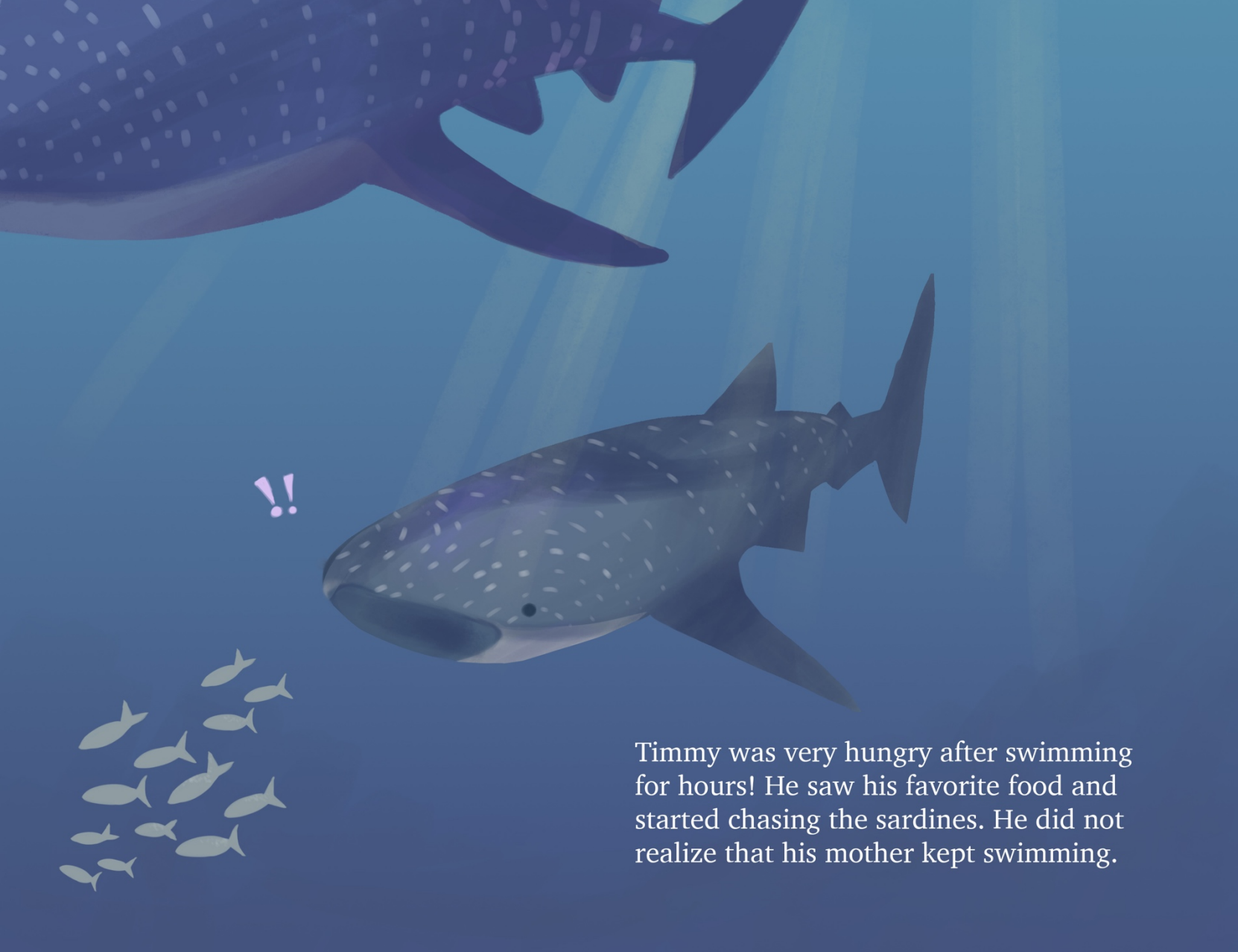
THE GREAT REEF CHASE

by: VIVIAN WENG





In the vast, mysterious ocean, there was a whale shark named Timmy. He was traveling through the ocean with his mother to warmer waters to escape the cold winter. Timmy was very curious about everything, and wanted to explore the ocean.



Timmy was very hungry after swimming for hours! He saw his favorite food and started chasing the sardines. He did not realize that his mother kept swimming.

When he finally caught up to the fish, he opened his mouth wide to catch the fish. He thought to himself: “Finally! Something to eat!” He sucked in mouthfuls of water and filtered out the fish.



But then, Timmy realized that his mother was gone. He realized he was lost in the ocean and tried to look around...



but he saw nothing.

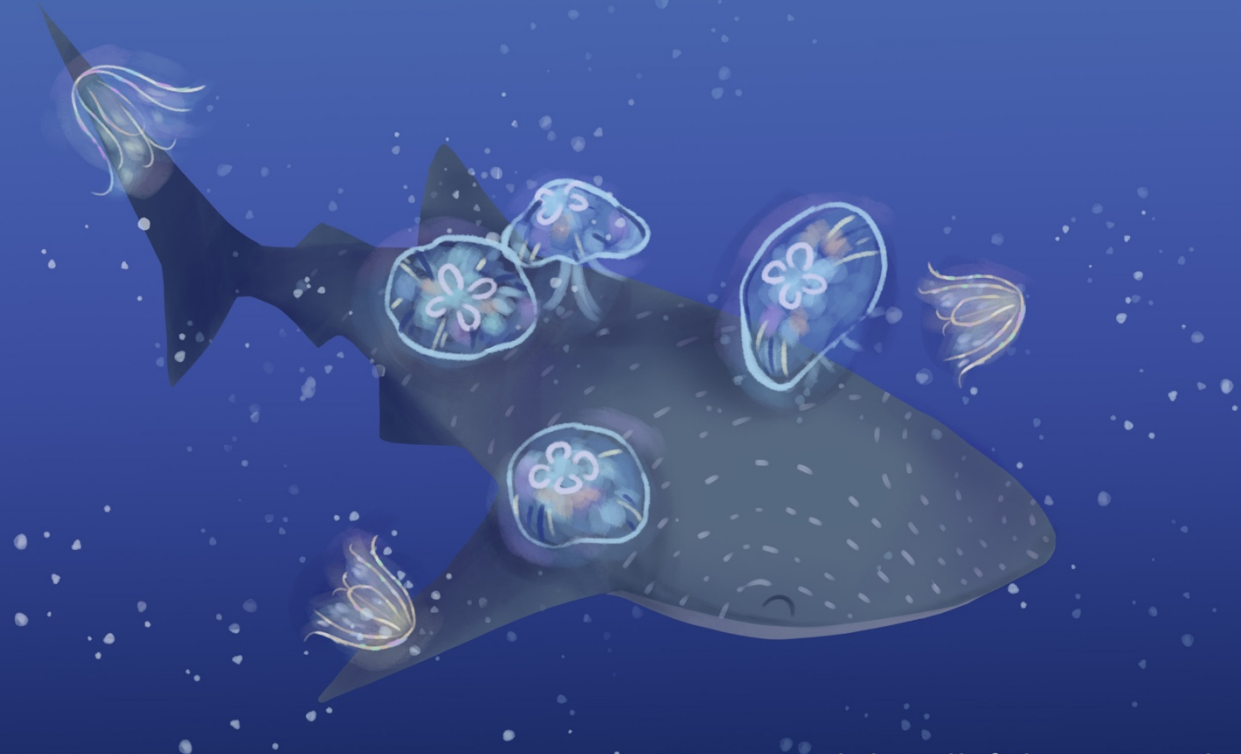
He blinked his eyes, and then he saw something beautiful in front of him. Were these jellyfish? They glowed in the dark water and floated around, Timmy had so many questions!



Timmy swam towards the shiny creatures, and started asking them questions!

“How are you guys glowing? I wanna do that too!”

“We’re bioluminescent jellyfish! Sometimes we use our lights to talk to eachother!”

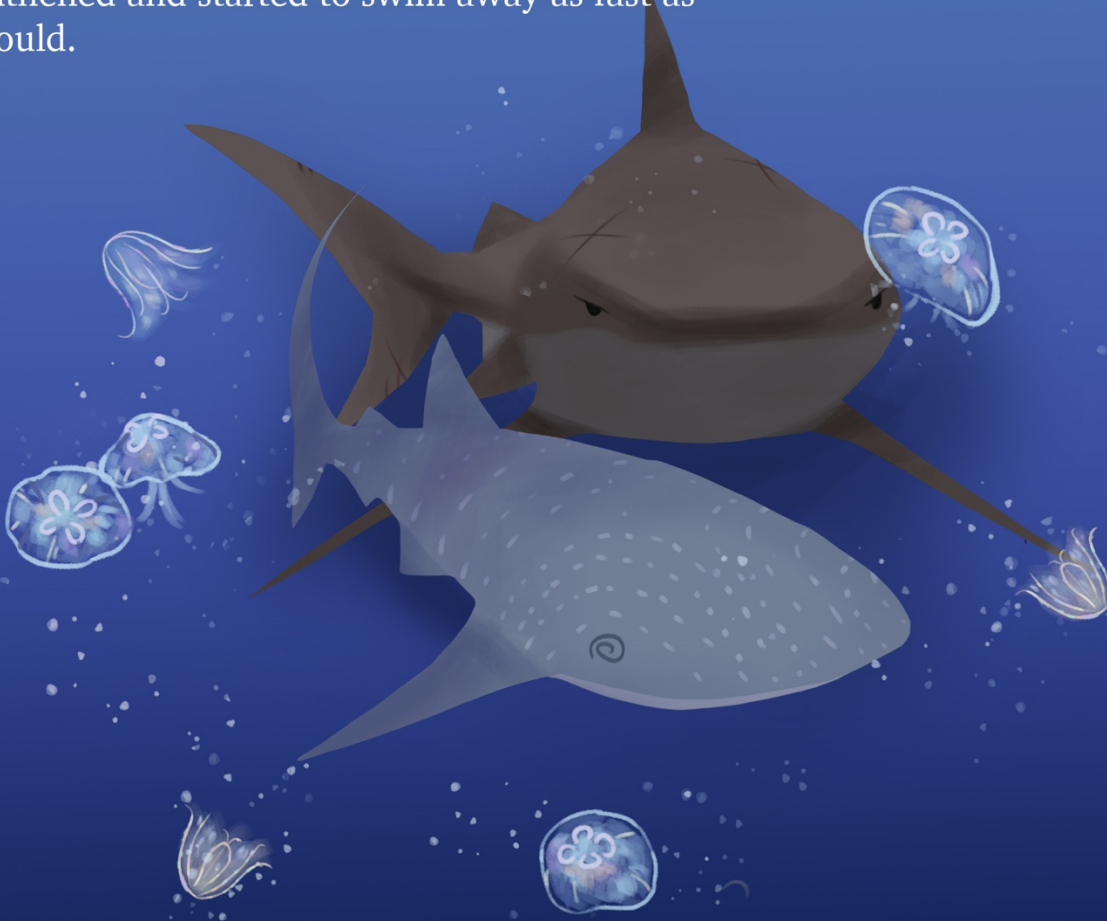


Timmy and the jellyfish continued to chat and Timmy was no longer so afraid of being alone.

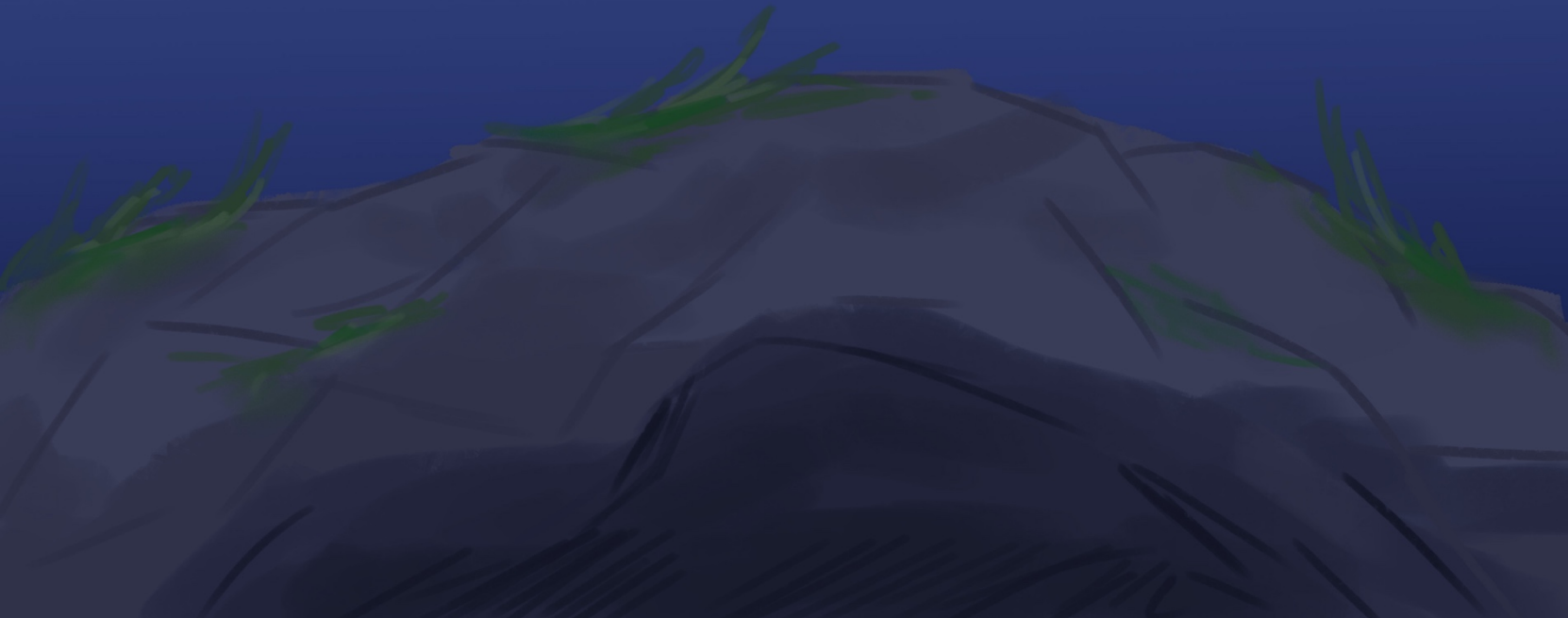
Timmy felt a chill down his spine.
Something didn't feel right. He felt
scared again but he didnt know why.



There was a shark behind him. A shark with many scars on his face. Timmy was immediately frightened and started to swim away as fast as he could.




Timmy immediately panicked, and started swimming downwards towards the floor of the ocean. He saw a cave, and without thinking, immediately swam towards it.



He kept swimming faster and faster into the depths of the cave. The deeper he swam, the darker it got.



A cartoon illustration of a shark in a cave. The scene is viewed from a first-person perspective, looking out from a dark, rocky opening. In the foreground, the snout and eyes of a light-colored shark are visible, looking towards the viewer. In the middle ground, a larger, blue shark with white spots is swimming away from the viewer into the dark cave. The cave walls are dark and jagged, creating a sense of depth and confinement.

Timmy was stuck at the end of the cave, with the shark right in front of him.

“Don’t eat me please!”, Timmy exclaimed.

“What? I don’t want to eat you. I was going to ask for directions because I’m very lost, but then you started swimming away really fast! Oh, and my name is Larry. I’m a reef shark, and I accidentally got lost from the reef I live in!”

“I’m lost too! I’m Timmy. I got separated from my mama. Do you want to stick together for a while?”



Timmy and the shark, Larry, then try to find their way out of the cave.



Timmy and Larry had to first find their way out of the cave. Neither of them remembered where the entrance was, so they tried to swim towards where they first came from.



The background is a dark, muted blue. In the center, there is a faint, light-colored outline of the United States, including the 48 contiguous states and Alaska. The map is rendered in a simple, almost abstract style with thin lines. The text is positioned at the bottom center of the image.

But it seemed like they had gotten even more lost.

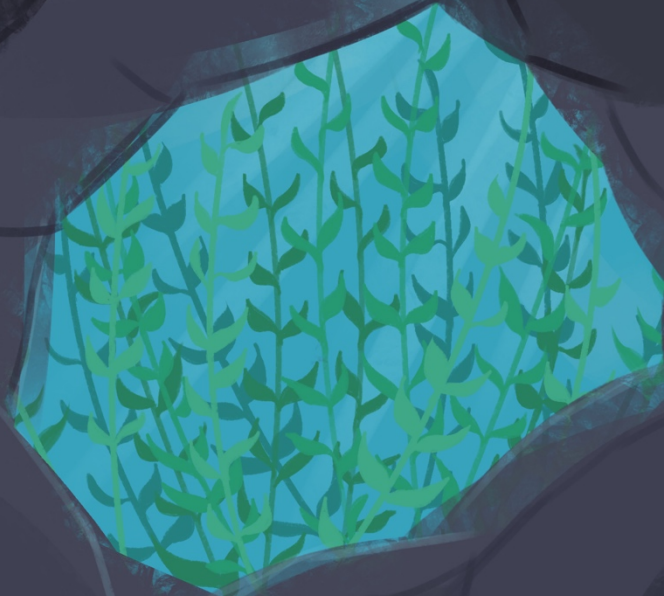


But right before they were starting to
give up, they saw something twinkling
in the distance!

Timmy and Larry decided to follow the glowing jellyfish, in hopes that it would lead them to the way out. Timmy explained how he had met these jellyfish before, and how they're good luck!

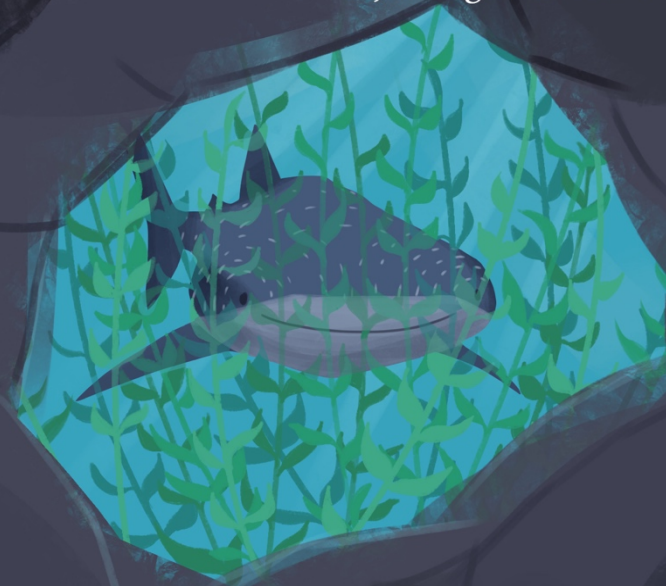


As they swam through the seemingly unending tunnel, they almost gave up. But a few moments later, they saw a glimpse of open water!



“We made it Larry! Aren’t you going to swim through?”

“I can’t... that’s the type of seaweed that gave me these scars. I swam too fast once through it, and got cut all over. You go ahead! I’ll find another way out!”

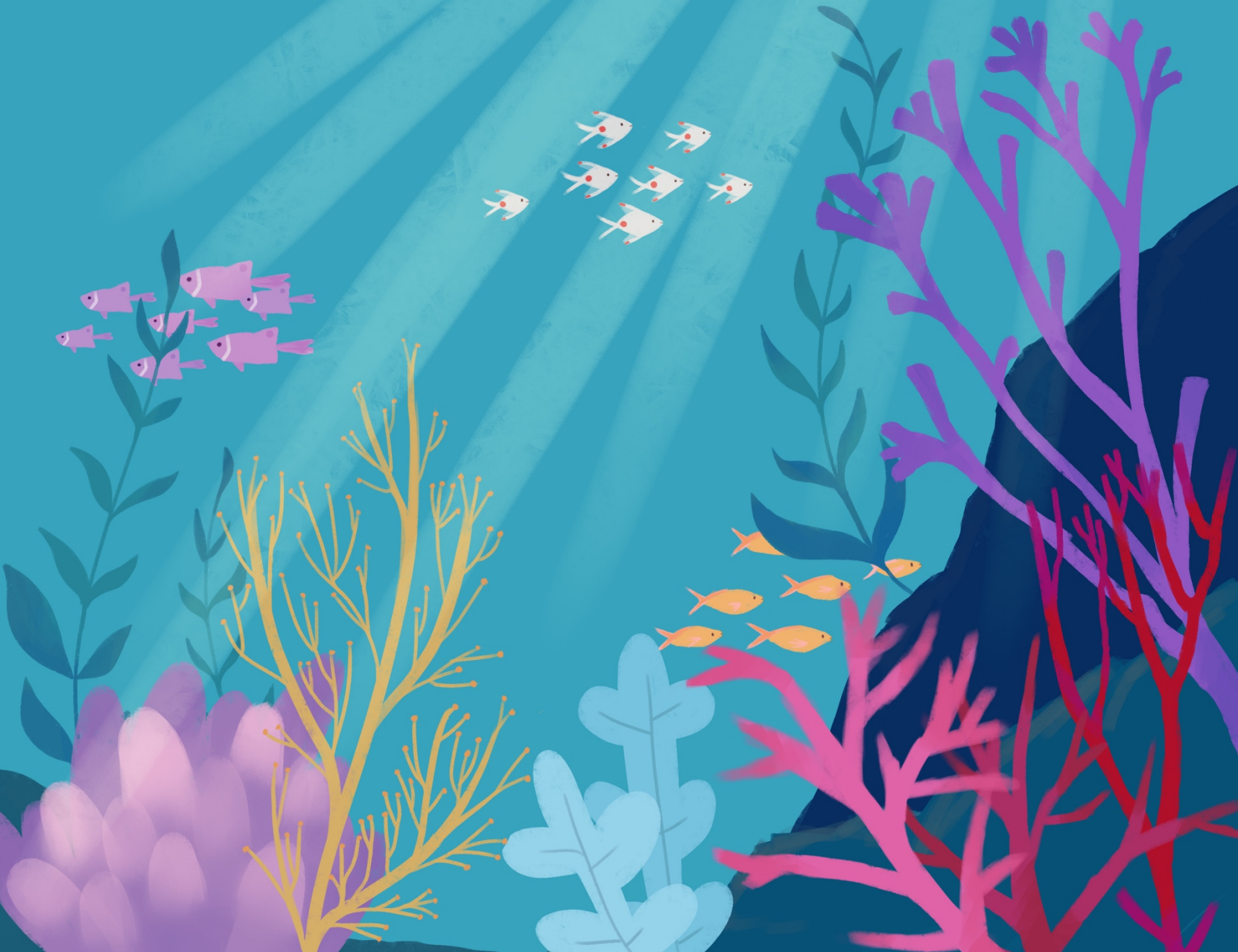


“C’mon you can do it! Just go really slow, I promise you won’t get cut!”



“Larry you did it! We made it out the cave!”





“Larry! That’s my mom! We made it to the Gulf of Mexico! This must mean we went through the legendary hidden cave! We found the reef so fast!”



“I was so worried about you! But I knew you’d find me eventually! Who’s your friend over there?”



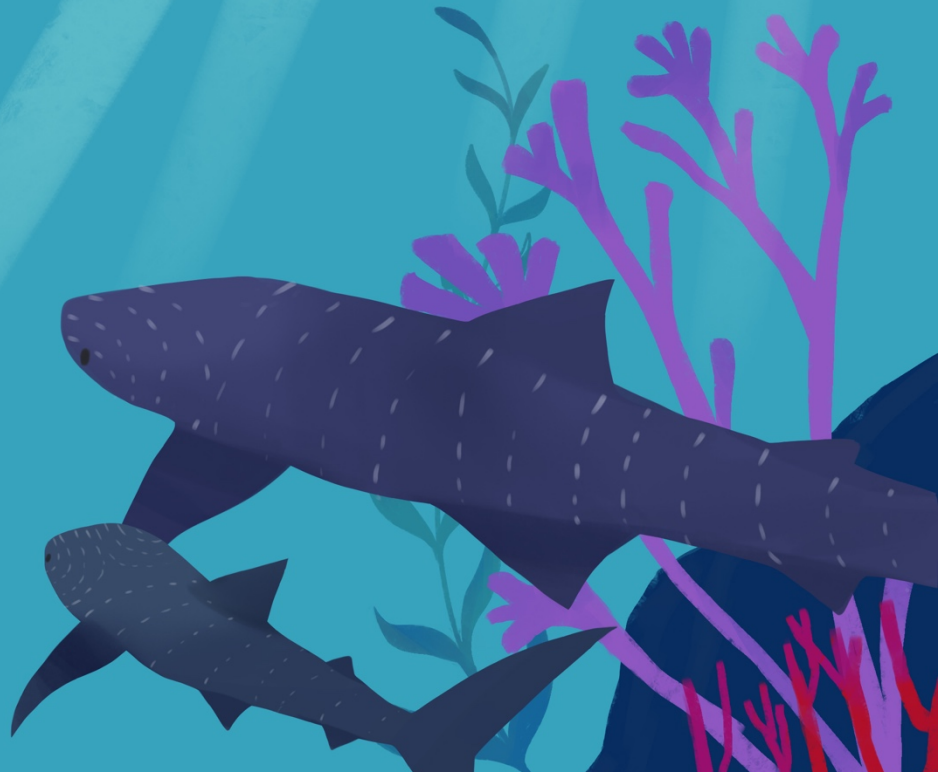
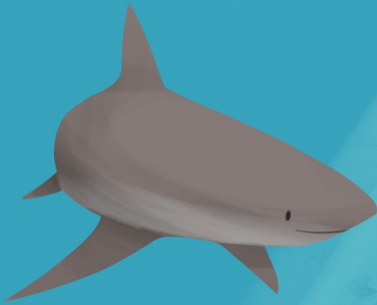
“This is my friend Larry! I met him while I was trying to find you. He was trying to find a reef, so we worked together! We got lost in a cave together and found our way out! The jellyfish helped us!”

“That’s wonderful! I’m so proud of you, you must have found the mythical cave that hasn’t been found in years! This means that we can use it in the future to find this reef again! ”



Timmy and Larry eventually had to part ways, as Larry still wanted to explore the reef more, and Timmy and his mother wanted to find other whale sharks.

“Bye Larry! I hope we meet again!”





THE END.

thanks for reading!





Text copyright © 2023 Vivian Weng
Illustration copyright © 2023 Vivian Weng
All rights reserved

For more works, visit vivianweng.com