



Yohance and the Calm Ocean Within

The Teacher



Seven-year-old Yohance wears his favorite shark backpack as he marches proudly into Mrs. Blake's bright first-grade classroom. Surrounding him are colorful posters of ocean life, and his eyes immediately lock onto a giant pop-up book about tiger sharks in the classroom library. He feels a wave of excitement for the day ahead, his energy bubbling like crashing waves.



During morning circle time, Mrs. Blake asks the class a question about blue whales. Unable to contain his enthusiasm, Yohance jumps up and shouts the answer at the top of his lungs, interrupting his friend. Mrs. Blake gently reminds him to raise a quiet hand, but Yohance grumbles, crosses his arms tightly, and mutters under his breath in frustration.



Later at the art table, the children queue up to pick colored paper for a sealife collage project. Yohance wants the shiny blue paper right away and tries to cut to the front of the line. When Mrs. Blake asks him to wait his turn patiently at the back, Yohance stomps his feet, buries his face in his hands, and lets out a tearful screech.



Yohance sits alone in the quiet cozy corner, tears streaming down his face as he refuses to join art time. Sitting on the plush rug, he feels a heavy mix of anger and disappointment pressing down on his chest. Mrs. Blake kneels down beside him with a gentle smile, holding out a smooth, polished shark tooth token in her palm.



Mrs. Blake softly tells Yohance that mighty sharks glide smoothly through the water, staying calm even when ocean currents get rough. She teaches him to take three slow, deep breaths—inhaling deeply like a diver going underwater and exhaling like a blowing whale. As Yohance breathes along with her, the tight knot of anger in his chest begins to untie.



The next morning, Yohance feels another surge of excitement during reading time when Mrs. Blake holds up a book about hammerheads. He starts to blurt out a fun fact, but remembers the steady ocean diver inside him. Taking a slow, deep breath, he raises his hand quietly and waits until Mrs. Blake calls on him with a warm smile.



At recess, a crowd of children gathers near the single shark-themed tricycle on the playground. Yohance wants to ride it immediately, but sees his classmate Leo steering it down the path. Instead of screaming or crying, Yohance counts to five, waits calmly by the bench, and asks politely if they can share turns using the sandbox timer.



Later that afternoon, Mrs. Blake assigns partners for a science activity, and Yohance gets paired with a classmate who prefers the volcano station over the aquarium station. Yohance feels a momentary sting of disappointment, but he squeezes his hands softly, takes a deep breath, and decides to join in with a bright, curious smile.



At the end of the week, Mrs. Blake gathers the whole class around the rug for a special recognition ceremony. She praises Yohance for his incredible effort in following class rules, taking turns, and keeping a positive attitude when things did not go his way. She awards him a shiny Star Swimmer badge, which he pins proudly to his shirt.



Walking out of school hand-in-hand with his mother, Yohance grins from ear to ear while holding his ocean book. He knows that just like the deep blue sea, he can be strong, peaceful, and cool under pressure. Guided by patience and a positive mindset, Yohance is ready to swim smoothly through every new adventure ahead.