

The Fish Who Wanted to be a Shark

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West Virginia State Winner

Second Place, Grades 3-4

“HaHa! You a clown? ‘Cause you sure look like one!” Copper’s bullies teased him. Clown-face, as his bullies called him, was a clown fish, the smallest one in the school. “I wish I was a shark,” Copper mumbled to himself. “Then who would be laughing Sharktooth?” He said the name Sharktooth like it was a bag of rotten worms that was soaking in salt water for five days.

Mr. Tigerfish, the principal of the school, tried to settle things between him and Sharktooth. He and the other fish still kept at it! Copper wished and wished he could be bigger, but it never happened. It was still terrible at the school. Sharktooth was still mean. The older Copper got, the more Sharktooth picked on him!

After a few more years of getting picked on, someone threw a wish-bone into the ocean, and it landed in Sharktooth’s fins. “Ohhh!” Sharktooth said to his friends, “I’m going to get a wish!”

“Not if I can help it!” Copper thought. He swam to Sharktooth as fast as his fins could carry him and grabbed one side of the wish-bone. The wish-bone snapped in half between their fins, sending Copper flying backwards!

Copper looked up in a daze, wondering who had gotten the bigger half of it. He looked into his fins and realized he did! He rubbed it with his tiny fin, and a fish emerged from his half of the wish-bone. A lot of smoke came out with her, dirtying up the ocean.

“I can grant you a wish,” she said in a spooky voice that made Sharktooth whimper, “if you are worthy!...Ok let's get down to business!” Sharktooth and Copper exchanged a look of confusion. “You are

the lucky winner! You have the bigger half, so here are the rules,” she spit out, talking as if it was a sports game, “you get two wishes. And well... that's all!”

Copper was amazed. “I want to be a shark!” Almost instantly, Copper went from puny to gigantic. “Yes! I’m free! Sharktooth who is the big one now?” Copper swam away going towards the boats. “Now!” said a voice above him, “That's the one! He will give us a feast!”

Nets came down on Copper, pulling him up out of the ocean. The fish lady with the power popped up beside him. “It’s the life of the shark,” she said. “I could save you, but you have to wish it.”

“I want to be a fish again! I want to! I don’t want to be food!” Copper whined. He could hear the sailors confusion as he slipped through the net and drifted into the ocean.

After that it went back to normal, even though Sharktooth was scared of him, and looked at him like he would burst into flames. Nobody spoke of Copper as a shark again. Copper became vice principal for Mr. Tigerfish, then became head of the school. After his ordeal though, he was fearful anytime he saw a boat