

"Powerful Polly"

It was a warm tropical morning. Polly the pufferfish swam slowly alongside the bright blue, green, and yellow coral reef near her underwater home. She watched as a sea anemone gently waved in the current, then glanced around looking for a spot to rest. The salty ocean water warmed her round body and small fins. She began to relax.

On the other side of the reef, a tiger shark also watched the sea anemone and the floating pufferfish. "That fish looks like tasty prey," the predator thought to himself. "It's just floating along, and I don't think it even notices I'm here. I'm going to sneak up and eat it." The shark swam a little closer.

A moment later, Polly floated by the waving sea anemone. Suddenly, she noticed something striped on the other side, moving her way. "A tiger shark!" she thought. Her spines trembled with fear. That was her worst enemy! She had to do something to protect herself from being eaten, and fast!

At first, she considered trying to swim away, but she knew the shark was much too fast. In a panic she thought, "What should I do? How can I defend myself?"

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Singer, Marilyn. *Venom*. Plain City, Ohio: Darby Creek Publishing, 2007. Print. ISBN: 978-1-58196-043-3.

"Powerful Polly" Choice #1

Then the tiger shark swam closer. Thinking quickly, Polly swallowed the ocean water into her stomach until it was completely full. Her stretchy skin and stomach inflated until she was huge, as big as a beach ball, nearly three times her normal size!

"What IS that?" the tiger shark thought. "What happened to that fish? How did it get so big?"

Polly knew she looked frightening to the tiger shark now that she was so much bigger. She also knew she was way too big for the shark to swallow her, and the shark knew it too.

"There's no way I can eat a fish that big. It will get stuck in my throat!" the shark thought. He turned back around, swimming away from Polly and looking for something else to eat.

Polly was safe!

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"Powerful Polly" Choice #2

The tiger shark swam closer. Frightened, Polly had only a moment to think. She inflated her body quickly, and her needle-sharp, prickly spines shined in the water.

"What IS that?" the tiger shark thought. "What is all over its body?"

Polly knew she looked intimidating to the tiger shark with her prickly spines.

Still the shark came closer. One of Polly's sharp spines left a tiny, red drop of blood on the shark's nose. The shark pulled back, surprised.

"Ouch! That hurt! I don't want to eat that thing," the shark thought to himself. The shark turned around, looking back at the coral reef for something else to eat. Slowly, he swam away.

Relief washed over Polly's body. She felt proud of her sharp spines. Polly was safe!

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