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How the Inkfishes Protect Themselves

Mary Graham Bonner

Inkfishes aren't black at all — they look very much like ordinary jellyfish. They're called inkfishes because when an enemy comes near, they release a cloud of dark ink from a little ink-pocket near their mouths. The clever thing is that they can see perfectly through the ink, but their attackers can't. The enemy flounders around in the dark water, striking blindly, while the inkfish slips safely away.

Inkfishes and jellyfish are, by nature, great friends. Little Kitty Inkfish and Nelly Jellyfish were especially good companions, and one day Kitty asked her mother if Nelly might come to stay for a whole week. Old Mrs. Inkfish said yes, and the invitation was sent.

Such excitement as followed! All sorts of parties and entertainments were planned, and Nelly Jellyfish arrived at exactly the right hour, which is the mark of a good guest.

The first afternoon of the visit, a party was given in Nelly's honor — a number of other jellyfish invited, the water bright and warm, everyone in high spirits.

Then a large and dangerous fish came circling near.

He saw the jellyfish — a fine, fat gathering of them — and said to himself: *Here's where I have a supper party of my own.* He dove toward little Nelly Jellyfish, and all the jellyfish trembled with fright.

But as quickly as you could blink, the inkfishes released their ink. The water went black. The great fish lunged and struck and lunged again, finding nothing, while the inkfishes pulled their jellyfish friends to safety and watched with amusement from the clear water beyond.

The fish sneezed. He made terrible faces at the taste of ink. He flailed about until at last he gave up and disappeared.



When the danger had passed, the jellyfish clustered around their inkfish friends and congratulated them warmly. Nelly Jellyfish felt quite certain she would be in excellent hands for the rest of her visit.

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