Benjamín
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Benjamín (Benjamin)

Benjamin is a sperm whale, the only one of his kind in the waters where he lives. However, he really wants to be a dolphin. He watches the dolphins jumping and singing and wishes he could be like them. But when he jumps, he makes such a splash that he floods the beaches where the seagulls are nesting, much to their annoyance. The dolphins just laugh at him and swim away too fast for him to follow. Benjamin's only friend is Minerva, a turtle, who appreciates him for the unique creature that he is.

One day Benjamin becomes so lonely that he "gets sick with sadness." He stops swimming and lets himself drift towards the shore, where he would inevitably get stranded on the beach and die. Minerva realises what's happening and quickly tells the other animals they need to save him: "If he dies, we'll have no more sperm whales. There are few enough of us sea turtles, but Benjamin is the only one of his kind."

Suitable to read to children from around ages 3-6, this is a very nicely told story about diversity and friendship. Benjamin knows he is different from all the other sea creatures, and longs to be part of the dolphin family as he has no family of his own. The dolphins reject him at first because he is different, but his friend Minerva understands him and encourages the other sea creatures to also appreciate what is unique about him. Benjamin becomes part of the dolphin family but that doesn't mean he has to be exactly like them; this teaches children about the importance of being yourself while also celebrating difference. The book also shows children how feeling different and alone can make people feel very sad and depressed, encouraging them to be compassionate to others who may be feeling this way.

While the story does have some serious moments, the overall effect is warm and joyful, with bright, attractive illustrations …

In conclusion, this is a heart-warming, well-told story about inclusion and diversity that will also be fun to read with young children to get them excited about some of the amazing creatures that live in the sea.

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