**Birth of the Turtles**



**A**manda was really excited. They had waited many days, but finally, that night, the baby turtles would **hatch** out on the **beach**. And her Daddy was going to take her to see them!

So, Amanda and her father got up when it was still dark, took their **torches**, and carefully made their way to the beach. Her father made her **promise** to **respect** the baby turtles, not to make any noise, and to do what he told her.

Well, Amanda was willing to do almost anything if it meant that she could go and see the turtles hatch. She didn't really know what it would be like, but her older brother had told her that the turtles are born on the beach just a few **meters** from the water's **edge**.

After hatching they quickly **scuttle** towards the sea. All that sounded very exciting to her.

**Crouching** quietly, by the **dim** light of only one of the torches, Amanda and her Daddy waited. She looked all over, hoping to see Mother Turtle, and she almost missed the **appearance** of the first baby turtle.

It was so tiny!

It moved very **clumsily**, like most babies; and without waiting for either its brothers or sisters or mother, it started to scuttle towards the sea. Gradually, more and more baby turtles appeared, and all ran towards the water. Amanda and her Daddy stayed hidden and quiet, watching the wonderful show of that crazy race to the sea.

But then something happened which, to Amanda, seemed **terrible**. Some **seagulls** and other birds arrived, and they started eating some of the little turtles. She kept looking everywhere to see whether Daddy Turtle would turn up to give those birds a good hiding. But he never came.

Amanda was watching all this with **tears** in her eyes, and when the first group of baby turtles finally reached the water and were safe from the birds, she gave out a little cry of happiness.

Even with the birds eating quite a few little turtles, in the end many more reached the sea, and Amanda was very pleased that they had managed to do so.

On their way home, her father, who had noticed the tears in Amanda's eyes, explained to her that turtles were born that way. Mother Turtle lays many eggs, hides them in the sand, and off she goes. When the baby turtles hatch out, they have to try to reach the sea on their own. That's why so many are born, because lots of them get eaten by other animals, and not only on the sand, also in the water. He explained to her that the few turtles who manage to become adults live for many, many years.

Amanda was really glad to have learned so much about the turtles that night, but as they continued home all she could think of was how happy she was to have a family; happy that her parents and her brothers and sisters had helped her and cared for her so much right from the day she was born.

THE END

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**Post-Reading Task**

**1. Vocabulary**

For each bolded word from in the story, write down its Part of Speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction) and its meaning in the following table. Some examples are shown.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Part of Speech** | **Definition / Meaning** |
| **hatch** | verb | To (cause an egg to) break in order to allow a young animal to come out. |
| **torch** | noun | (also sometime called a **flashlight**) Something you hold in your hand that can shine light. |
| **promise** |  |  |
| **respect** |  |  |
| **meter** |  |  |
| **edge** |  |  |
| **scuttle** |  |  |
| **crouch** |  |  |
| **dim** |  |  |
| **appearance** |  |  |
| **clumsily** | adverb | To do something with difficulty. |
| **terrible** |  |  |
| **seagull** |  |  |
| **tear** |  |  |

**2. Questions about the story**

1) What do the baby turtles do after they hatch?

2) Where does Mother Turtle hide the baby turtles?

3) Do all the hatched turtles make it to the sea? What happens to some of them?

4) Why did Amanda have tears in her eyes?

5) Do you know of any other animals that hatch? Which ones?