**Voice of the Sea**

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A: I am a turtle.

B: I am a turtle.

A: I live in the sea.

B: I live in the sea.

A: I love the sea.

B: I love the sea.

A: I enjoy swimming

B: I enjoy seeing the beautiful ocean.

A: I love sleeping under the sea.

B: I live together with the sea.

A: I have many friends.

B: Bob is a cool crab.

A: Stephanie is a beautiful jellyfish.

B: Jack is an old sea cucumber.

A: Mendel is a big whale.

B: I enjoy playing with them.

A: Singing.

B: Talking.

A: Laughing.

B: I love the sea.

A: But.

B: Now.

AB: I hate the sea.

A: I can’t enjoy swimming.

B: I can’t enjoy playing with my friends.

A: I can’t see the beautiful ocean.

B: I can’t sleep under the sea.

A: I only see a lot of garbage.

B: I only see garbage.

A: Plastic bottles.

B: Plastic bags.

A: Plastic forks.

B: Plastic spoons.

A: Plastic dishes.

B: Plastic cups.

A: Plastic containers.

B: Plastic wrapping paper.

A: Plastic straws.

B: Plastic straws.

AB: Straws got stuck in my nose.

A: My nose is killing me.

B: My nose is killing me.

A: I can’t pull out the straw.

B: I can’t pull out the straw.

A: Why me?

B: Why me?

AB: Why me?

A: Did I do a bad thing?

B; Do you hate me?

A: I don’t hate you.

B: I want to live with you.

AB: Lots of plastic waste in the sea.

A: Bob swallowed plastic bags.

B: Stephanie’s foot got tangled in a plastic fork.

A: Plastic spoons got stuck in Jack’s neck.

B: Mendel swallowed plastic wrapping paper.

AB: They’re also suffering.

A: I want to enjoy playing with them again.

B: I want to see the beautiful ocean.

A: I want to live in the sea.

B: I want to live in the sea.

C: “They are crying. They are crying under the sea.” Can you hear that? They are suffering. Well, why does this problem occur? There are two main reasons. First, the problem is due to poor waste treatment. Plastic products are very useful. They are cheap, light, durable and easy to produce. So, there are countless products made out of plastic. Out of 8,300 million tons of plastic products produced annually, more than 6,300 million tons are discarded without being treated properly. The overflow of plastic products pollutes and festers in the sea. The current capacity for treating the massive amount of the discarded plastics is absolutely insufficient. The second reason is that China has stopped importing the discarded plastics. Many countries had exported their discarded plastics to China, while China had imported used plastics at a low cost and produced new products by recycling them. But China found that recycling used plastics worsened their environment. This is why they have banned importing used plastics.

A: Waste plastics from many countries have lost their final destination. They end up as pollutants in the sea. What can you do for that? Now, none of you lead your lives without using plastic products. Eventually, you must dispose of these waste products. Therefore, we are also responsible for polluting the world’s oceans. You may think that this has no bearing on us because only fish and animals are affected by the scattered plastics. But this is wrong. Pollution does harm us indirectly.

B: Now, let’s think of how it influences our lives. What effect does this problem impose on ourselves? We regularly eat fish for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Thus, we eat a great amount of them throughout our lives. These fish could have swallowed plastics or additives. We cannot stop being cautious of that. Would you raise your children eating these fish? We wouldn’t. We can never take those risks. Although some researchers claim that the influence of such plastics are negligible, we have strong objections against these excessively optimistic standpoints. In our opinion, we should be cautious of our lack of scientific knowledge on such potential risks. Even imagining that we cannot eat fish makes us feel sad.

C: Not only plastics but also additives are risky. Many people may think that living their lives without eating fish is quite acceptable because if we don’t eat fish, we will not be afraid of toxic fish. However, we never want to live in such a boring world without enjoying sushi. We should never keep ourselves entrapped in that karma and must try to create a better world. What can we do for that? In fact, marine pollution is quite likely to be solved in the future if each of us are aware of it. One solution is to abolish plastics.

A: The most straightforward solution is to stop using plastics. That will reduce marine pollution. Starbucks Coffee and McDonalds have stopped using plastics. Paper packages can replace plastic. Paper is less harmful since it can be burnt to ash. Fish are safe. Then, we can continue to enjoy eating sushi in the future. To reduce, reuse or recycle works as the second choice. This is quite effective for environmental protection. Actually, recently the recycling movement has been growing in Japan. For example, textbooks, notebooks, and plastic bottles produced from recycled materials are found everywhere.

B: Each UNIQLO shop has installed collection boxes for used clothes. Now we are popularizing the reuse, -reduce- and- recycle movement in Japan. The most important action is to “reduce”, particularly in Japan. Let’s begin with what we can do in our everyday lives. For example, we can reduce the use of disposable plastic containers and bring our own eco-bags when we go shopping. That way we will not need to use the bags or containers supplied by the stores.

C: However, we cannot completely get rid of plastic in our lives. In some aspect, plastic is indispensable for maintaining our everyday well-being. Therefore, we should realize that we can respect the sea by not polluting it with the waste plastic. We must consider how to return the things we are using back to nature safely. Now we have reached the new edge of technology. We should use what we are studying at Kosen to help improve our lives and the lives of those around us, in our future endeavors.

ABC: Thank you for listening.