

## THE MARK OF THE MOON JELLY

(synopsis)

The scene opens in the busy Nudibranch Craberet where Sophia Stickleback is serving various patrons of her establishment. Many jokes ensue. Soon Dangerous Dan Dungeoness, leader of the Marines and Navy Seals, and Sophia's true love, comes in with his men for a break. So does Marlin the Moray Eel, proprietor of the Oily Eel Cafe, chief competitor with Sophia's Craberet.

Dan and his men have had a very bad day. Something is wrong in the ocean and he doesn't know what. As he tells Sophia his troubles, Marlin brings his nasty Shark Sisters gang and Flower the Sunstar - nastiest predator in all the ocean, with him as his support staff and begin to rough up the locals. After dealing with Marlin and the gang, Dan notices a host of migrating sea creatures beginning to pass the Craberet. As Dan investigates he gains clues to what is happening but not enough information to totally grasp the problem. The Orcas are very afraid of the Dead Zone they have skirted around ... it is massive and nothing lives in it. It becomes apparent that the soldiers will, at much personal cost and possible death, have to investigate the source of the problem to see if they can fix it. Dan makes sure that the locals understand how serious the problem appears to be and warns them to leave NOW for the Shimmering Shoals - a place that many of the creatures have heard of; a utopia for invertebrate life and fishes.

As the soldiers head off into the darkness to investigate the Dead Zone they have been warned of, Sophia and the patrons of the Craberet, gather up their possessions and shut down the Craberet for ever. Marlin is not a lot of assistance and causes Sophia some turmoil. The scene ends with a mass migration of all the Sea Anemones, Sea Stars, Periwinkle Snails and a couple of dolphins following Sophia as she leads the migration to the Shimmering Shoals.

Scene two opens in the pitch dark. Dan and his company have been traveling through the deep dark ocean and have reached the source of the trouble. The soldiers stare in wonder at the sight that presents itself. Millions upon millions of jellyfish, Moon Jellies, vibrate in the water in front of them. The leader of the jellies, Luna, speaks to Dan and gives him the information that he has come to find. As she delivers the bad news, the soldiers begin to succumb to the lack of oxygen in the water around them. Dan and his right and left hand man try to save them but it is impossible. Only Dan his two men escape the asphyxiation. They somehow are able to drag each other to safety - into water that has enough oxygen in it that they can breathe ... and they collapse, too broken to go on. But they support each other and eventually somehow find the strength to seek out their friends at the shimmering Shoals.

The final scene is a happy one with all sea anemones, periwinkles, sea stars, and a couple dolphins enjoying their time in their new home, the Shimmering Shoals. The Craberet has reopened in its new locale and having traveled through the ABYSSmal together, Marlin's gang finds they are now quite friendly with Sophia and her patrons. All are very excited to see Dan and his men returning, but then very unhappy to find that

only three of them made it back. The sad tale of Luna and the Dead Zone comes out and the creatures are very worried. They come up with several things that we can start to do but the tale ends on a cautionary note.