



Dance of the Starfish

One beautiful morning, a man was walking on the beach when he observed a person some distance away dancing in a strange manner. As he drew closer it became obvious that the individual was not dancing but rather moving around the beach, picking up objects and throwing them into the ocean. Closer examination showed that the objects were starfish.

Moving cautiously forward, the man finally caught the "dancer's" attention. He engaged the dancer in conversation ultimately mustering the courage to broach the topic of the dance.

"Please don't think me bold, but what are you doing?"

The dancer, who by this time had again returned to his dance, answered,

"I am throwing these starfish back into the ocean."

"Why?" queried the man, cocking his head to the side. Slowly straightening up, the dancer turned to the intruder and explained.

"These beautiful starfish were washed ashore at high tide. Many were left on the shore as the tide rolled out leaving them on the beach high and dry. With the heat of the sun, the starfish ultimately will dry up and die."

The man now looked at the dancer once again engaged in moving and jumping around the beach. He interrupted the activity by saying,

"Don't you realize that there are thousands of miles of beaches and probably millions of starfish? Don't you realize that you can't possibly make a difference?"

At this, the dancer slowly lowered the hand which had been preparing to return a starfish to its life giving environment. Examining it, he cradled the fish in both hands. The dancer's eyes moved from the man to the fish and back to the man. A quick shrug of the shoulders and a pirouette sent the starfish soaring to the safety of the waves. The dancer then turned to the man saying,

"It makes a difference to that one."

Anonymous