

the  
adventures  
of

# Skippy Fishback

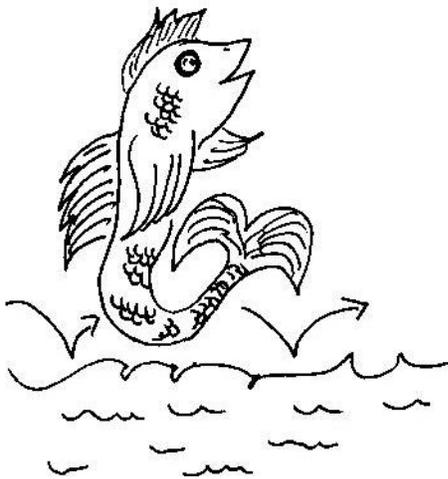
Tamara Kula

## The Adventures of Skippy Fishback, Chapter 2

By Tamara Kula

When the strange sight did reappear, Skippy called out, "Hey, you there! Can you teach me how to do that?"

The fish bounced over to Skippy, flashing in the light of the sun. "Well, sure!" said the fish. "It's not really so hard."



"I've never seen a bouncing fish before," said Skippy.

"I'm distantly related to the flying fish, but let me tell you, bouncing is much more fun," said Bouncer, for that was name. And he told Skippy the secret to bouncing on the water – how to pop out of the water and come down at just the right angle with a flat, smooth part of the body. Skippy's turtle shell turned out to be the perfect thing for bouncing, and the first time Skippy tried, he bounced for three hours and couldn't stop! But he loved every minute of it.

"How can I repay you?" Skippy asked.

"Actually, there is something I want ..." said Bouncer, looking at Skippy hopefully. "You see, I have a collection of fish hooks, and I've always wanted to find a golden fish hook to make my collection complete."

"I'll try my best!" said Skippy and the two said goodbye and parted, bouncing away in opposite directions.

By the time Skippy was five years old, he could bounce on the water 20 feet high. He had a blast until one day he bounced right on top of a sting ray. He immediately started to apologize.

However, the sting ray didn't seem to be listening. It stretched out its long tail toward Skippy's neck and ...

"Hee! Hee! Hoo! Hoo!" Skippy chuckled and squirmed until he gasped for breath. "Stop! Please stop!" he pleaded.

"Okay, I think you've learned your lesson," said the sting ray. "My name's Raymond."

"Nice to meet you," panted Skippy, trying to catch his breath. "I'm Skippy. I must confess that I thought you were going to sting me!"

Raymond laughed. "I'm not really a sting ray," said Raymond. "I'm a tickle ray. I can't sting - I can only tickle."

"Really?" asked Skippy in surprise. "You're the first tickle ray I've ever met! Can you show me how you do that?"

"No problem," said Raymond. "It's a piece of cake. All you have to do is think of something funny. Concentrate on that thought, and then start tickling! Give it a try on me for practice."

Skippy thought for a moment. What was funny? "I know," he thought suddenly. "I'll think of silly Sally the Sea Turtle swimming around without her shell!" And he reached out to tickle Raymond.

"Ah! Ooh! Ok, that's enough! Enough!" giggled Raymond, and Skippy stopped. "You're right, that's not hard at all!" cried Skippy. "Thanks for teaching me. What can I do for you in return?"

"You would do something for me?" asked Raymond. "Come to think of it, I would really love to have a pirate flag. Could you possibly get one for me?"

"I'll do my best!" said Skippy with a nod, and he waved goodbye to the tickle ray.

Skippy's days were fun and carefree, filled with all the things he loved best - swimming, floating, bouncing, and tickling. Then one day when Skippy turned seven, something amazing happened. Most people would consider it quite frightening, but for little Skippy Fishback, who wasn't afraid of anything, it was simply amazing.

The day was gloomy, windy, and rainy. The sun was buried behind dark, angry clouds, and the ocean water was restless. Skippy was bouncing along on the waves - being blown crazily about in the process - when he saw a small boat. The rough waves were tossing the boat around like a cat playing with a mouse before the kill. And that wasn't all.

