

While We Wait for Help

By Sheila Johnson

The yellow one swims around with sternness and confidence, demonstrating to the colorful aquatic species that she is in charge, and the others better not harm each other. Surely no predator would dare to enter into that protective space. I've named her Sheila.

My granddaughter, Angel, has assured me (with angst) that she wants to name the remainder of the five members of the fish clan, knowing what my answer would probably be. She chose the smallest of the family. He is blue. She named him Sky. She's been feeling like the least lately as she navigates her life through the many changes and challenges that a blended family brings. Blue is now her favorite color.

Lucy chose the black one who is speckled with silver. He is the only male in the bunch and is pretty much a basement dweller, mostly swimming at the bottom of the fabricated ocean. She named him Fudge. She, too, is fighting for her place in a blended family where she is curious and fascinated with the black woman who loves and is loved by her European, high-energy father.

Oliver, Lucy's brother, chose to name the silver fish Silvie – the only one who can give birth at this time. She is fast, illusive, likes to hang out with Fudge, and eats the most. She appears to be pregnant with a school of her own. Oliver is often harassed by his sister along with Angel, yet he holds on and continues with hope that his Dad's girlfriend will marry him (Ollie) too. He sees a mother in Silvie and likes the way she darts through the water.

There remain two who swim with no names yet. One is for Beau, my youngest grandson, who is, by the way, developing a vocabulary well beyond his young age of twenty-three months. I will ask him in a few months which one he favors and what he will name her. By then we should have more little silver or black fish in the aquatic neighborhood and he will have more to choose from.

The last one will be named through the spiritual eyes of Layton. She will be the most special one. I'm not sure of her anointing, but I am sure it will be the best of all. It's going to be a hallelujah day when the community and the village come together to receive all of our new names.

I'm missing my Buddy. Oh Lord, help me!