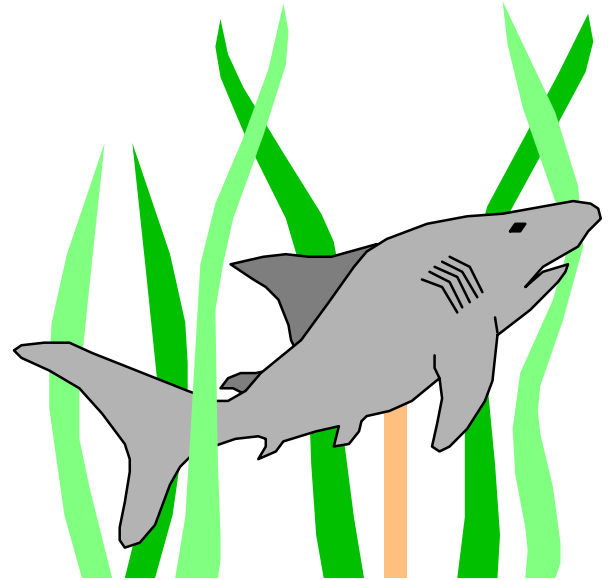


# The Great Shark God

*Folktale from the Fiji Islands*

## Characters

- Dakuwaqa - great shark god
- Masilaca - less powerful, mischief making shark god
- Tui Vesi - great guardian of the vesi tree
- Octopus - giant guardian of Kadavu Island
- Narrator - introduces characters and scenes



## Scene 1

*The curtain opens on the Pacific Ocean near the Fiji Islands in a age long ago when each island was protected by a guardian. Dakuwaqa the great shark god is swimming about.*

**Dakuwaqa:** *(to himself)* All seems quiet today. After my victorious fight with the monster guardian of Lomaiviti Island, no one will dare challenge me!

**Masilaca:** *(swims in from offstage)* Greetings, old friend. It is a fine day we are having. I just heard about your victory. Please tell me about it.

**Dakuwaqa:** *(boastfully)* Masilaca, as you know, there is a fine and monstrous creature that guards Lomaiviti Island. He refused to pay a tribute to me and had the arrogance to challenge me to a fight. Can you imagine! I made quick work of him.

**Masilaca:** I'm sure he has learned his lesson and will bow to you always. *(pauses to think)* Dakuwaqa, why is it that you never swim near Kadavu Island? You are brave and strong, and you never shy away from a fight. Everyone knows your record of no defeats. I know! It is not that your are afraid. It is that you think it is wise to avoid a conflict you risk losing.

**Dakuwaqa:** *(angry)* There is no one and nothing that strikes fear in my heart! I have never visited Kadavu Island because it is an insignificant place. Tell me what is so great about it!

**Masilaca:** *(carefully so as not to anger his friend further)* I have been told there is a great monster that guards the land and another fearful creature that guards the reef. They say it is impossible to defeat the guardian of the reef. Everyone is afraid. They even say that not even you are brave enough to face this creature.

**Dakuwaqa:** *(bellows in anger and thrashes about in the water)* How dare they say I am afraid!

*(Curtain drops on scene 1 as Dakuwaqa heads out in a rage towards Kadavu Island.)*

## Scene 2

*The curtain opens on Kadavu Island and the ocean near it.*

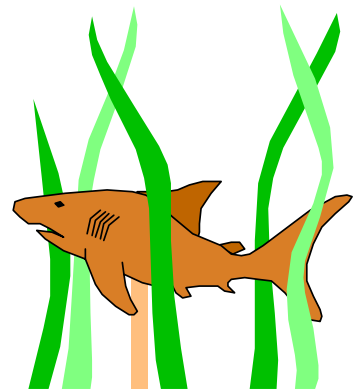
**Tui Vesi:** *(in a deep, menacing voice)* Who dares come to this island?

**Dakuwaqa:** *(disturbed, to himself)* I've never heard a voice like that before, but what's on land can't hurt what's in the sea.

**Tui Vesi:** *(a rumbling voice)* Do not challenge the guardians of this island lightly. We will protect it with all our strength. If it is a fight you want, then a fight you will get.

**Dakuwaqa:** I'm ready to show you that no one can defeat Dakuwaqa.

**Tui Vesi:** Alas... I, Tui Vesi, am the guardian of the vesi tree. I can not leave the land to fight you in the ocean. Go to the opening in the reef. There you will meet a monster that guards the reef of this island. He will show you the errors in your ways.



*(Curtain drops on scene 2 as Dakuwaqa heads towards the reef opening.)*

### Scene 3

*The curtain opens on the reef near Kadavu Island. As Dakuwaqa approaches the reef, an arm reaches and grabs him.*

**Dakuwaqa:** (*surprised*) What is this? It holds me so tight I cannot move or even bite.

**Octopus:** (*squeezing tightly*) I am guardian of this island. How dare you challenge me! Will you pay me tribute?

**Dakuwaqa:** (*barely able to talk*) Yes!

**Octopus:** (*squeezing tighter*) How dare you challenge my master Tui Vesi? Will you pay him tribute?

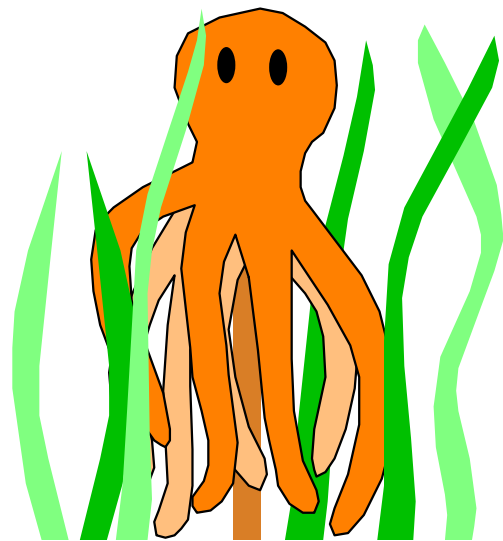
**Dakuwaqa:** (*in pain*) Yes!

**Octopus:** (*even tighter*) Will you leave the fisherman of this island alone for all time?

**Dakuwaqa:** (*fearful for his life*) Yes!

**Octopus:** (*releasing the shark*) You may go free, never to return here.

**Dakuwaqa:** (*weakly*) Great guardian of Kadavu Island tell your master that I, the god shark Dakuwaqa, will keep my promise.



*(To this day the fishermen of Kadavu Island are protected by the Great God Shark Dakuwaqa.)*

*(Curtain drops. The End.)*

#### About the Play - The Great Shark God

<http://AuntAnnie.com/Puppets/StickPuppets>

In this tale there are two sharks with very different personalities. One is proud and strong. The other shark is a mischief maker.

This story, as you might guess, comes from Kadavu Island in the southwest part of the Fiji Islands. Why would the people of Kadavu Island have a folktale about sharks? What do the children on this island learn from this story?

#### Puppets

Make shark and octopus puppets from the Stick Puppets project at AuntAnnie.com. Use the shark pattern for both Dakuwaqa and Masilaca, but make Masilaca a bit smaller and a different color. Use *Page Scaling: Tile all pages* in the Print setup and select 80% to 90% to print a smaller shark pattern.

#### Sets

You will need ocean and Kadavu Island backdrops. For the ocean backdrop start with a large light blue sheet of construction paper and decorate it with water plants. For Kadavu Island, use a sheet of construction paper and draw an island to one side and waves for the ocean on the other side. Vesi trees grow to 160 feet tall and have huge trunks, so all you need to represent Tui Vesi is a huge tree trunk on the island.

#### Props

No props are needed for this play; however, you can make other fish puppets to add interest to your sea. You will need other puppeteers to operate them quietly in the background.

#### Staging Tips

- This play can be performed by one puppeteer. Each scene uses at most two puppets -- one for each hand.
- Each puppet and Tui Vesi require distinctive voices. You might want to talk through a rolled up paper cone to make a louder voice. Or you may want to have an adult to do the deep voice of Tui Vesi.