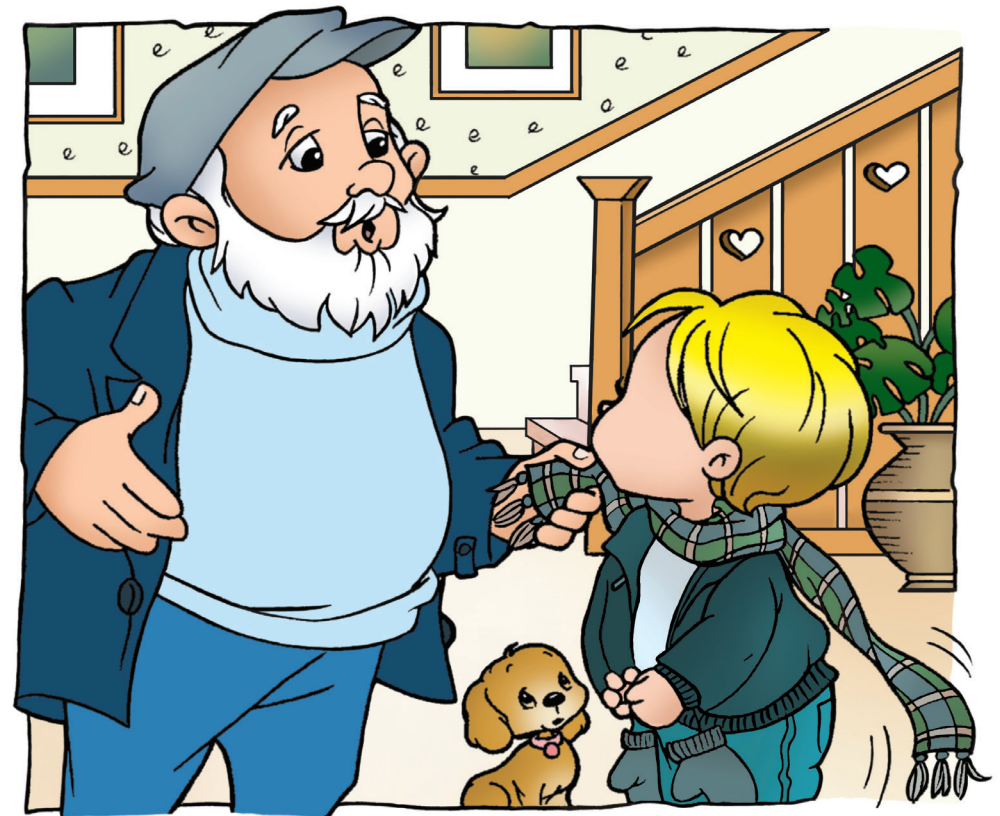


"Are you ready, Tristan?" Grandpa Jake called as he put on his hat and coat.

"Coming!" Tristan said, bounding down the stairs.

"It's important that we aren't late. Here, let me help you with your scarf and jacket."

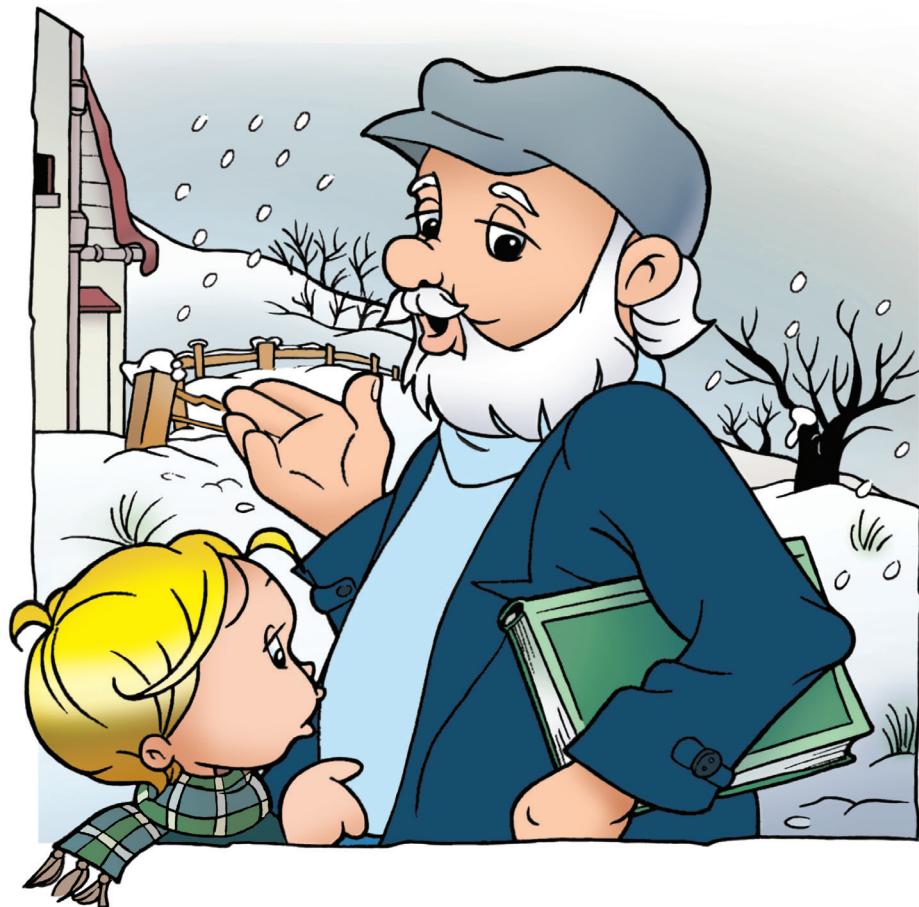
"Thank you, Grandpa."



Once a week, Grandpa Jake would take Tristan with him to the local library where he would read stories to a children's book club.

Grandpa enjoyed reading stories to the children there, and as they'd walk to the library, he whistled happily. Under his arm he tucked his special storybook.

"What story are you going to read today?" Tristan asked.



"Aha, that's *my* secret," answered Grandpa Jake with a chuckle.

"Grandpa Jake's here!" shouted Troy from inside the library.



The children sat down in their places and were quiet as Grandpa walked in.

"Hello, children!" exclaimed Grandpa.
"It's so quiet in here. What a pleasant surprise."

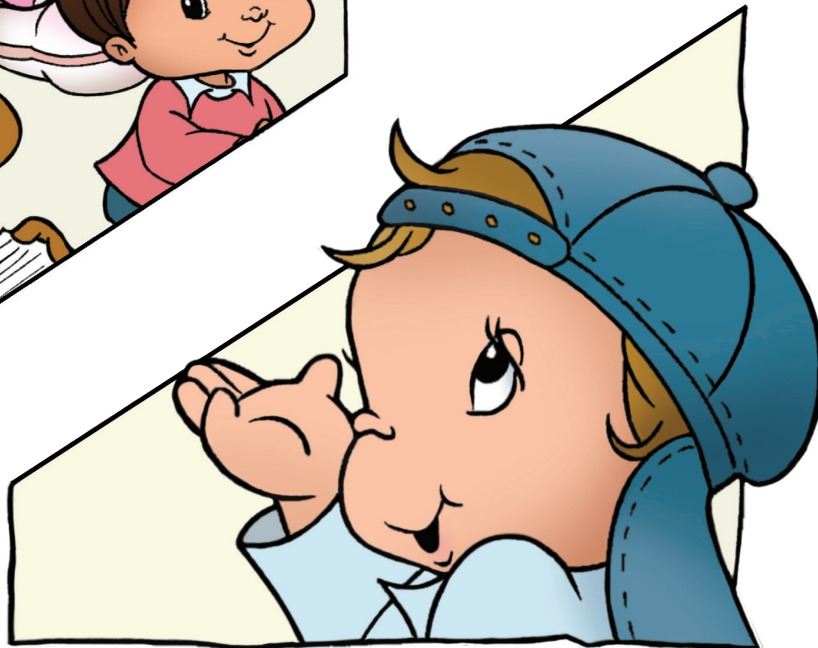
The children giggled.



"Good afternoon, Grandpa Jake!" they all chorused.

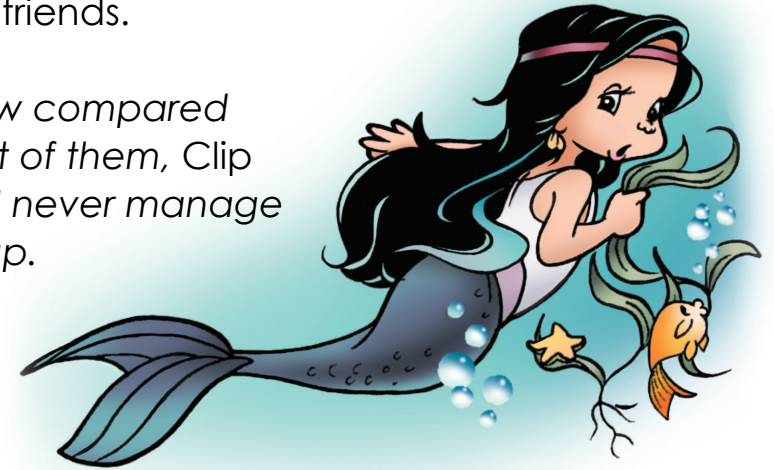
"And a good afternoon to you as well," Grandpa Jake said, as he hung up his hat and coat.

"Today's story is about a friendly crab named Clip," explained Grandpa. "Shall we begin?"



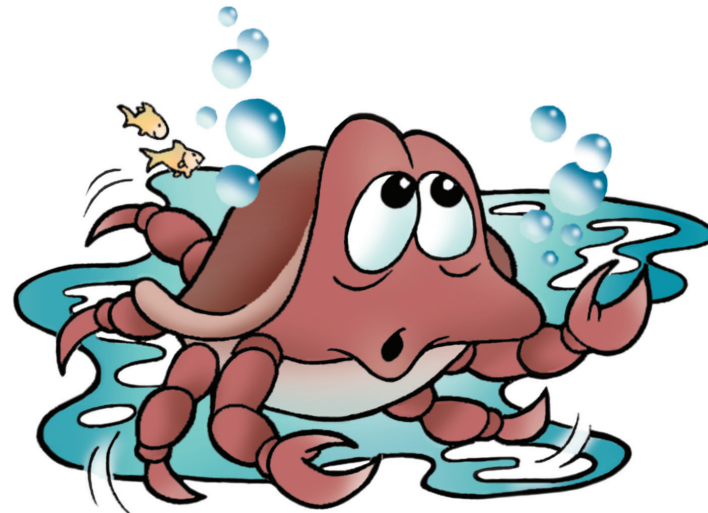
"Wait for me," Clip called out to his friends.

I'm so slow compared to the rest of them, Clip thought. I never manage to keep up.



"I'm sorry," Camille said, swimming back to Clip. "Let me give you a hand." She took one of Clip's pincers in her hand and helped him catch up to the others.

"Thanks," Clip said, but he felt a little sad. *My friends have to help me go faster so I can keep up. I probably bother them. What good am I as a friend anyway?*





Today was the Clown Fish Parade. Every year a school of clown fish would parade near the Kingdom of Shadda. Camille and her friends were headed to Orange Eye Reef—the best spot to watch the parade.

In the front of the parade were clown fish doing stunts. Next was a clown fish band. Following them was a troupe of water dancers. And finally in the back were clown fish pulling seaweed streamers,

twisting them through the water into flowing designs.

“Oh, it’s wonderful!” Camille exclaimed happily. “I wish I could join the parade.”

“I’d want to join the band,” said Old Budder.

“We could do stunts,” said Littleton.

Shallo tossed Littleton up over his shoulder; he did a flip, came down, and caught himself on Shallo’s tail.

“And I could learn to make designs with streamers,” Goby said, as he swirled a piece of seaweed around.

“We could make our own parade,” Camille said. “We could perform for our families.”

“Let’s go and practice!” said Littleton excitedly.

As everyone swam off to work on their parade act, Clip sat on the coral reef watching the last of the parade go by.

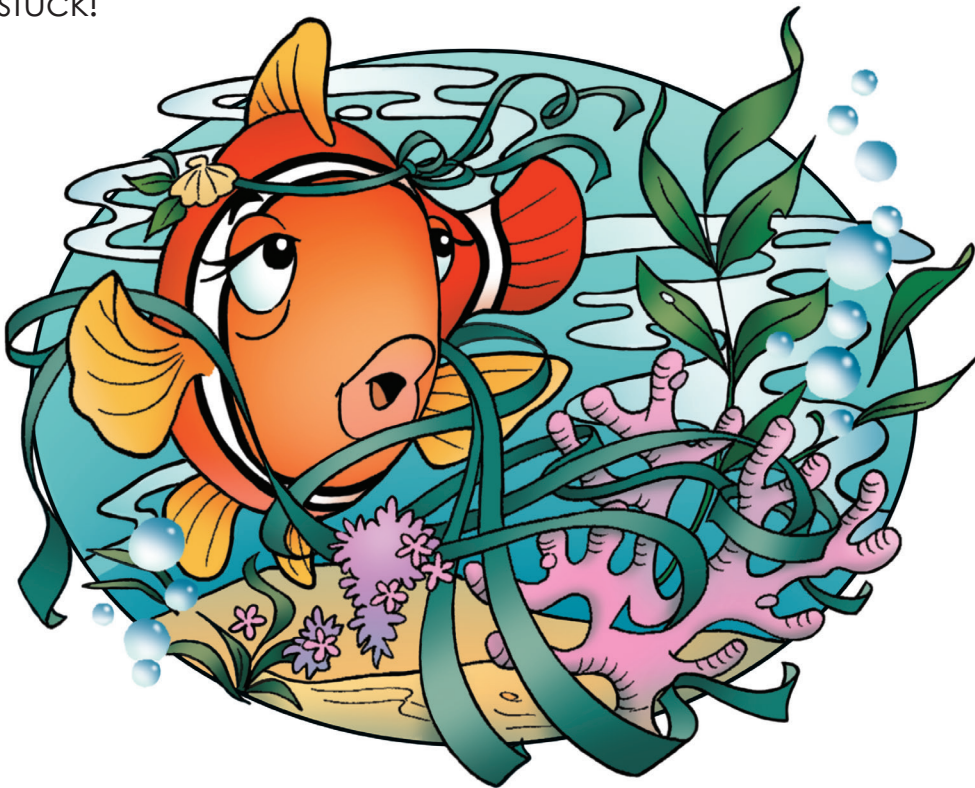


There's nothing I could do in a parade, he thought sadly.

Then he spotted a little clown fish with a seaweed streamer in her fin, trailing far behind the rest of the parade. She was all tangled up in her seaweed streamer. The streamer was even covering her eyes, so she couldn't see where she was going.

Just then the tangled clown fish collided with the coral and her streamer caught on a piece of the reef. She pulled and pulled, trying to get free, but couldn't.

"Help me!" she cried. "Please, somebody help me. I'm stuck!"



Clip heard her call and wanted to help her, but then he thought, *I probably can't help her anyway, so I shouldn't even try.*

But once again he heard the little clown fish call out for help.

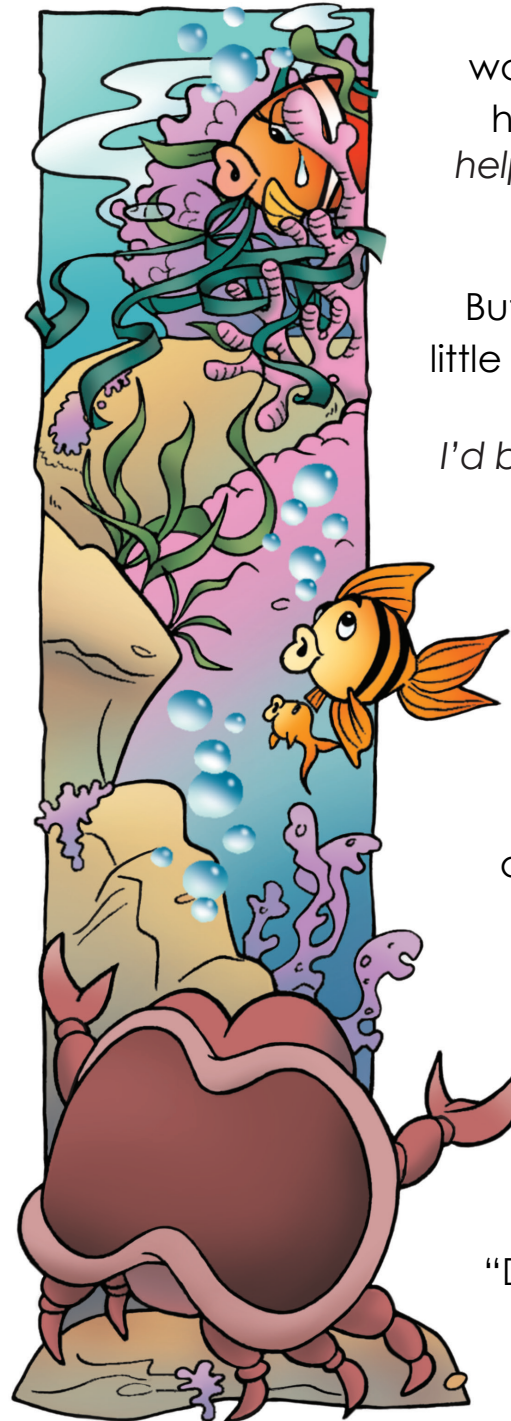
I'd better see what I can do, he thought.

The little clown fish heard Clip coming. "Can you help me?"

"I can try," Clip said, "but I probably won't be able to do much. Maybe I should get someone else to help you."

"Please, at least give it a try," the little fish said, and she started to cry.

"Don't cry," said Clip. "I'll try to help you, but I'm not sure I'm strong enough."



"What's your name?" Clip asked.

"Tinsel," replied the clown fish.

"Tinsel, I'm going to give this coral a good tug and see if I can get you out of here."

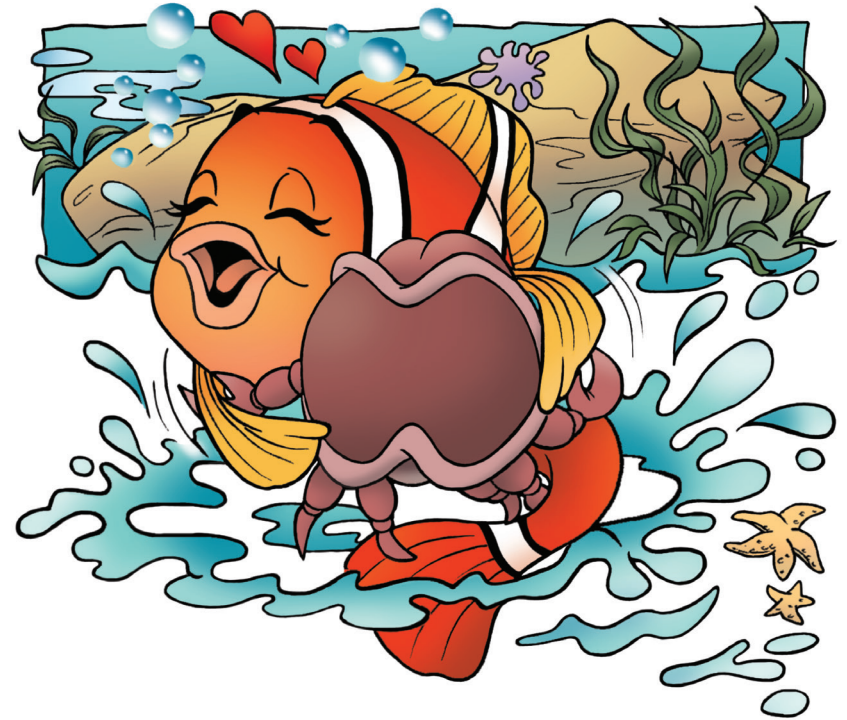
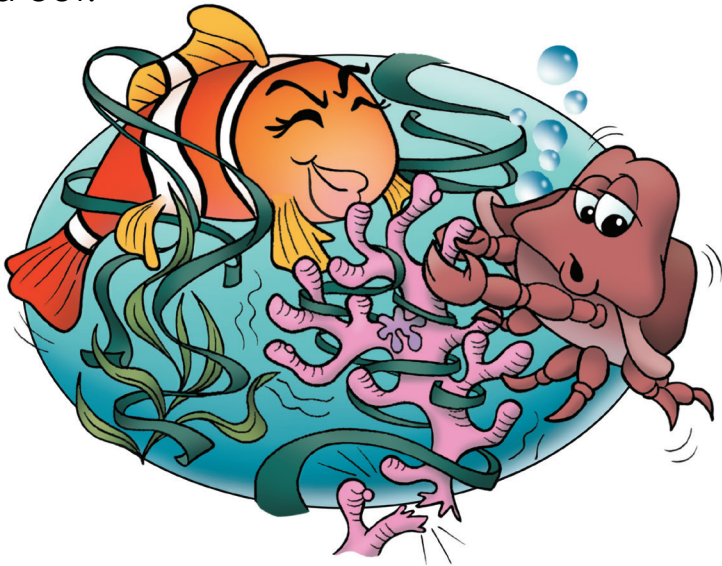
"Okay," Tinsel said. "Tell me when to pull."

Clip braced his clips around the coral. "I think I've got it. Okay, one, two, three ... pull!"

Clip and Tinsel pulled, and after a few tries the piece of coral came loose.

"I'm free! Thank you!" said Tinsel gratefully.

"Here, let me untangle you from that streamer." Clip held one piece of the seaweed streamer, while Tinsel wiggled out.



When she was free, Tinsel gave Clip a big hug. "You're my hero! You rescued me! What's your name?"

Clip looked down shyly. "I ... I ... I'm Clip," he stuttered. "I'm glad I was able to help."

"And what were you doing way out here?"

"I was watching the parade with some friends," Clip explained. "However, they swam off, but I was still here."

"Well, I'm happy you were," said Tinsel, "because you were able to save me. Thank you so much."



"You're welcome."

"I'd better go, I need to get home," Tinsel said.
"Thank you so much, Clip! Bye."

As Clip swam off to find his friends, he felt happier. Now he knew that even though he was small and perhaps couldn't do everything that his friends could do, he could still help others.



"Do you sometimes feel small and helpless like Clip did?" Grandpa Jake asked.

"Yes," chorused the children.

"Sometimes I wish I could be like my big brother," Derek explained. "He knows how to do so many things, but I'm little and don't think I can help."

"It takes time to learn things," explained Grandpa. "But there are many ways in which you can help your mommy and daddy. Can you think of a few?"

"I help my mom in the garden,"
said Tristan.

"Sometimes I wash the car
with my daddy," said Derek.

"My mommy lets me help her
cook," said Chantal.

"I can help by tidying up the house,"
added Troy.

"It doesn't matter if you're little or not
so good at something, you can still be
a help," said Grandpa Jake.

"Goodbye," called the children as
Grandpa Jake and Tristan headed
back home.

"You're the greatest grandpa
anyone could have," Tristan said.
"Thank you for all the stories you
tell us that we can learn from."

"You're very welcome,
Tristan," Grandpa said
with a smile. "And you
know, you're a wonderful
grandson."

