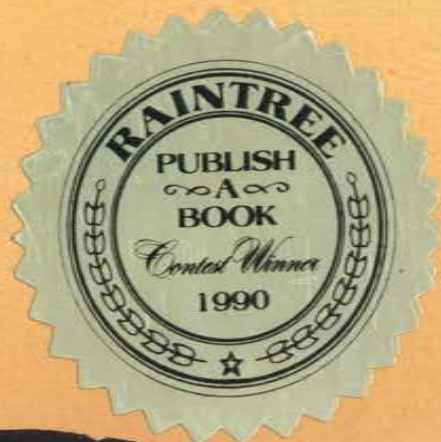


How Honu The Turtle Got His Shell

Story by Casey A. McGuire-Turcotte
Illustrations by Dick Sakahara



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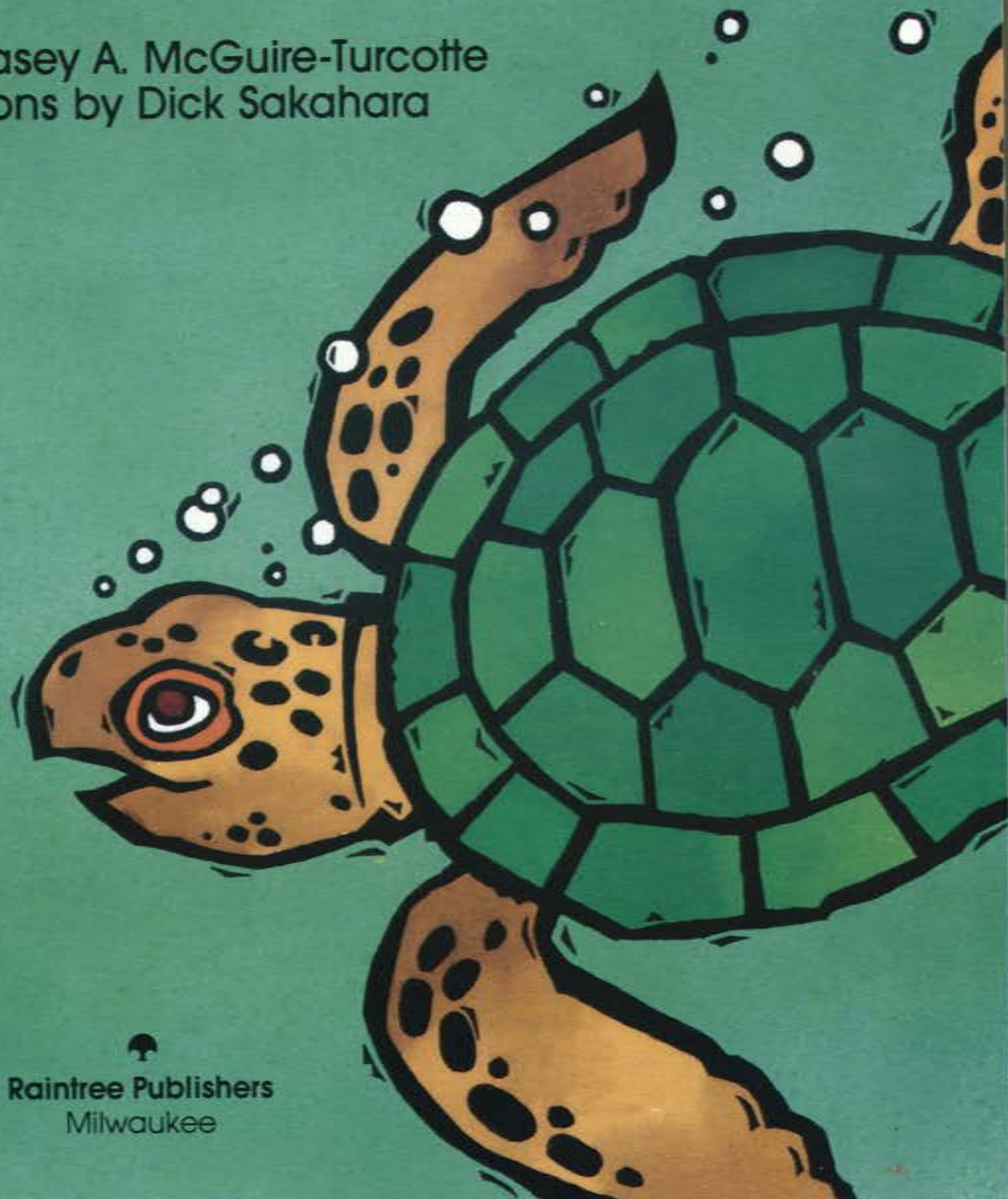
Much Aloha

Mr. Balana

Casey McGuire - Juco

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Raintree Publishers
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To my brother, Kai, and the honu (turtles)
at Punalu'u with hope for the future security of
their clean and beautiful environment. —C.M.-T.

To my parents, Toshiko and Henry,
for their support and encouragement,
and to Garrett. —D.S.

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Long ago, near the beautiful shores of the island of Hawaii, there lived a young turtle named Honu. Honu was a real daredevil. Out of all the turtles, the daring Honu would always swim closest to the shore. This was where the waves crashed on the rocks, and the humans swam and fished.





Honu told his friends Mahi-Mahi, the dolphin fish, and 'Iwa, the frigate bird, that close to shore was the place where the best limu, or seaweed, grew.





One sunny morning, Honu announced to Mahi-Mahi, "Today, I am going to go closer to the rocks than I have ever dared before, so I can taste the fresh limu there."

Knowing the danger, Mahi-Mahi warned, "Oh, Honu, I wouldn't do that if I were you. What if the humans catch you? What if you get scraped up on the rocks?"



Don't worry. I'll be just fine," replied Honu with confidence.

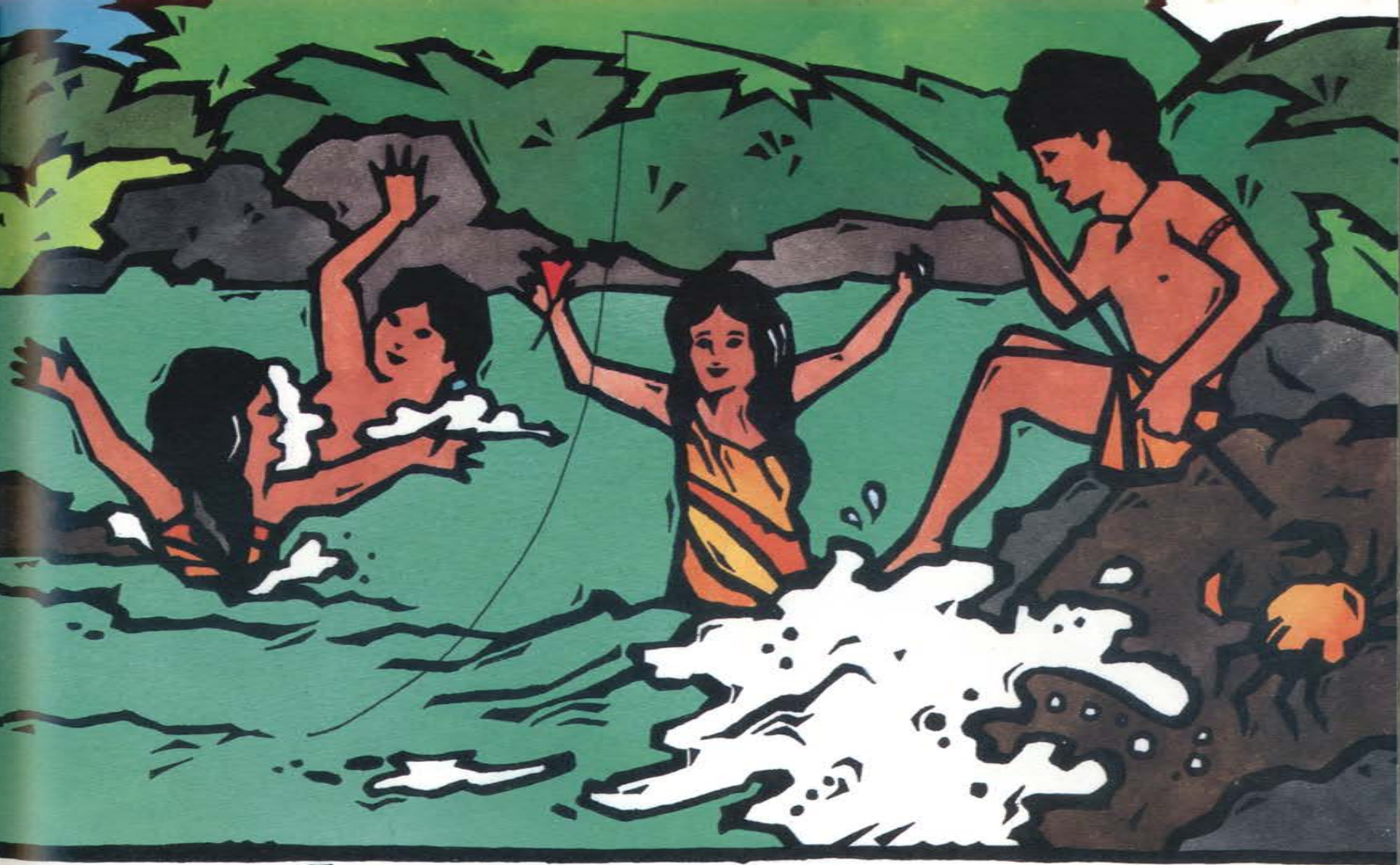
"Well, just look out for those rocks and big waves," warned Mahi-Mahi again.

(You see, back in those days, turtles didn't have shells to protect them from the rough surf and the rocky shoreline. They had to be very careful of their delicate bodies.)





Honu swam to where the water was very shallow. He began to eat his fill of the delicious limu there.



As he ate, Honu heard the human children laughing near the shore.





Honu saw the children playing with the most beautiful seashell he had ever seen. It was green in color, with interesting shapes all over it. Just as Honu was admiring its pattern, some children threw the shell across the water. It came toward Honu.





Startled, Honu ducked under the water. He tried to hide himself in the surf. Unfortunately, however, the shell landed right smack on Honu's back!





Honu wiggled and squirmed, trying to get free of the shell. It wouldn't budge! Frantically, he swam to the deep water to find Mahi-Mahi.

In tears, he told his friend, "Oh, Mahi-Mahi, I should have listened to you. Just look at the mess I'm in now! How am I going to get this thing off my back?"

Mahi-Mahi tried to pry the shell off with his head, but with no success.







Just then, 'Iwa flew by. She was very surprised to see the daring young Honu looking so upset. She was also surprised to see the seashell stuck on Honu.

"Well, well, what happened to you?" 'Iwa asked. Honu told her the whole story.

"Maybe I can loosen the shell with my beak," 'Iwa said. 'Iwa pecked and pecked at Honu's shell. After a while, she realized the plan wouldn't work. "I'm sorry, Honu, but this thing is stuck on tight. I'm afraid it is with you for life," 'Iwa said.

Honu looked up at 'Iwa sadly. Then he swam away with his head hanging down.



As the day went by, Honu once again became hungry. He swam back toward the shallows to get some more of the especially good limu.



As Honu was about to take a bite, he saw a gigantic wave coming. He panicked. He could not survive such a mighty wave! He swam this way and that way, trying to dodge the wave. But there was no way out.



Just as the wave crashed down on him, Honu tucked his head and legs into the shell on his back. When he did this, he found that he could drift with the current and not get scraped on the rocks.









Later on, in calmer waters, Honu experimented with the shell. Although he was scared at first, Honu got up enough courage to tuck himself in and out of the shell a few more times. Finally, he was satisfied with it. What an exciting discovery!



Flapping his flippers with joy, Honu rushed to where Mahi-Mahi and 'Iwa were talking. When 'Iwa saw Honu, she said, with hope in her voice, "Honu, maybe I can ask A'u, the swordfish, if he could see the shell from your back."



“Oh, ‘Iwa!” exclaimed Honu. “There is no need to do that now. I’ve just had an experience with this shell that has changed my mind completely.”



Honu told Mahi-Mahi and 'Iwa about his encounter with the gigantic wave and how the shell had saved his life. Honu's friends were so happy that Honu had been protected!

Soon Honu, the first turtle to have a shell, began to feel very comfortable in his new and beautiful home.





So, the next time you see a turtle feeding especially close to shore, flapping his flippers with joy, know in your heart that the turtle is descended from Honu!





Casey A. McGuire-Turcotte was schooled at home until the age of ten. Home is near the small town of Waiohinu on the Big Island of Hawaii. Close to home is the black sand beach at Punalu'u, where big green sea turtles (called *honu* in Hawaiian) live.

Casey has been watching these endangered turtles since she was very young and was inspired to write **How Honu the Turtle Got His Shell** in their honor.

Casey is the second of four children in the family and the only girl. Her older brother is Eric, and her

younger brothers are Robin and Kai. Casey's parents are Margaret McGuire and Russell Turcotte.

Casey wrote her prize-winning story when she was in the fifth grade. She attends Naalehu Elementary School, the southernmost school in the United States. Her sponsoring teacher was Mary Aranguena. Besides writing, Casey also spends time reading, running, dancing hula, swimming, and taking part in environmental action. She also loves spending time with her three cats. In addition to having real cats, she collects cat posters and photographs, ceramic cats, and stuffed cats. Casey would like to be an actress when she grows up.

The twenty honorable-mention winners in the **1990 Raintree Publish-A-Book Contest** were: Della Armstrong of Moyie Springs, Idaho; Alane Benson of McKeesport, Pennsylvania; Jonathan Caton of Flossmoor, Illinois; Gabriel Chrisman of Bainbridge Island, Washington; Christy Druml of Waukesha, Wisconsin; Rebecca L. Emmel of Sandpoint, Idaho; Nicole Estvanik of Enfield, Connecticut; Amanda M. Frank of Slinger, Wisconsin; Lara Garraghty of Goode, Virginia; Andrea Jauregui of Syosset, New York; Aynsley Kenner of Mesa, Arizona; Dharma C. Lawrence of Spring, Texas; Jackie Lyn Leavitt of Idaho Falls, Idaho; Darren Ruthenbeck of Carmichael, California; Tim Schlosser of Durand, Wisconsin; Blake Smisson of Fort Valley, Georgia; Tori Smith of Walkerton, Indiana; Pia Suparak of San Dimas, California; Christy Williams of Mt. Dora, Florida; and Stephanie York of Edmonton, Kentucky.



Artist Dick Sakahara grew up in Pasadena, California, and graduated from the University of California-Los Angeles with a degree in design. He now lives in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, with his wife, Arleen, a junior-high-school teacher. Dick and his wife enjoy traveling and observing wildlife. They also collect folk art. This is the second book Dick has illustrated for Raintree Publishers. He hopes to do a book of animal drawings one day.



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