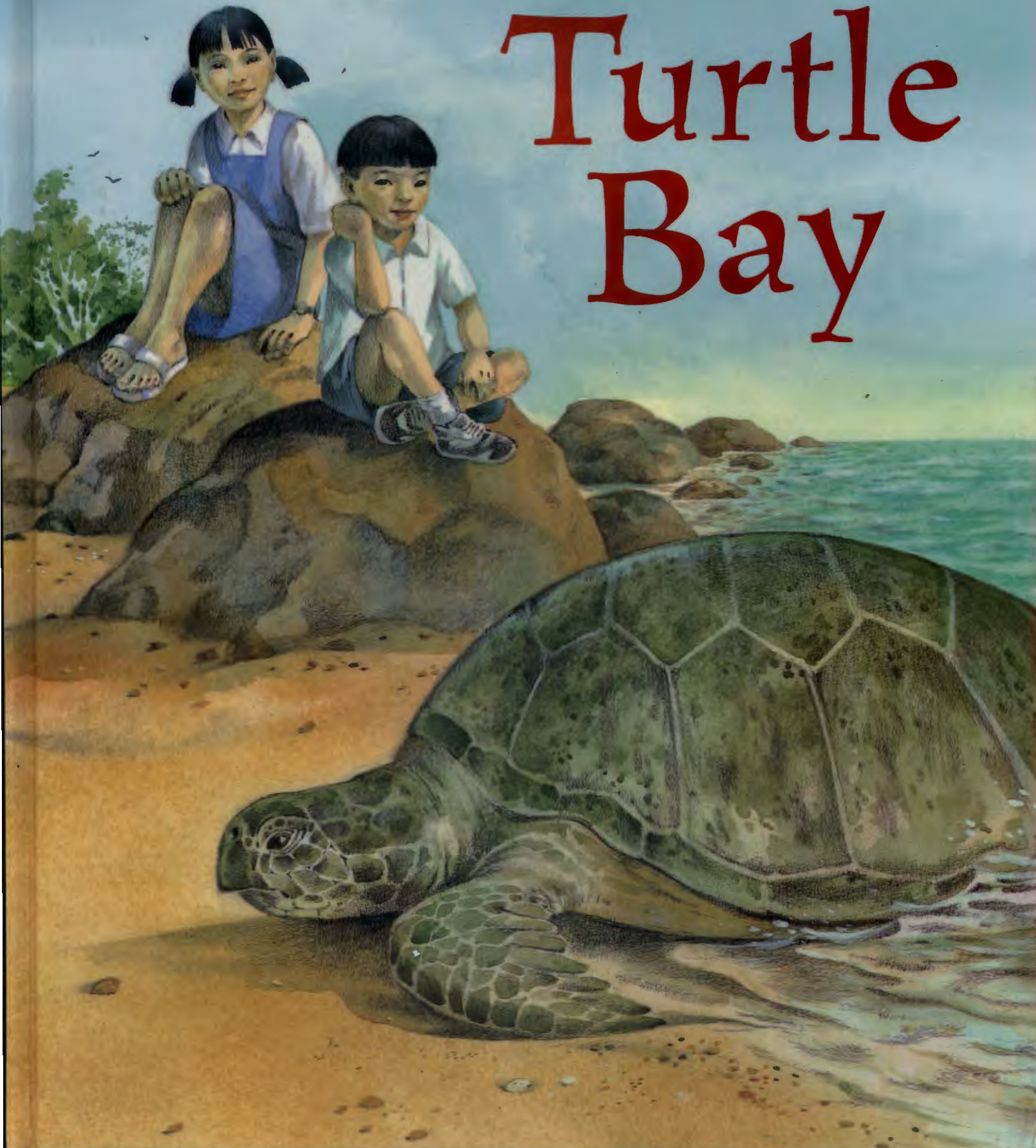


SAVIOUR PIROTTA • NILESH MISTRY

# Turtle Bay



STORY BASED ON AN ORIGINAL IDEA BY YUKKI YAURA

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Summary: Taro is fascinated by the strange actions of old Jiro-San,  
who sweeps the sand on the beach while waiting for the arrival of  
Japanese sea turtles ready to lay their eggs.

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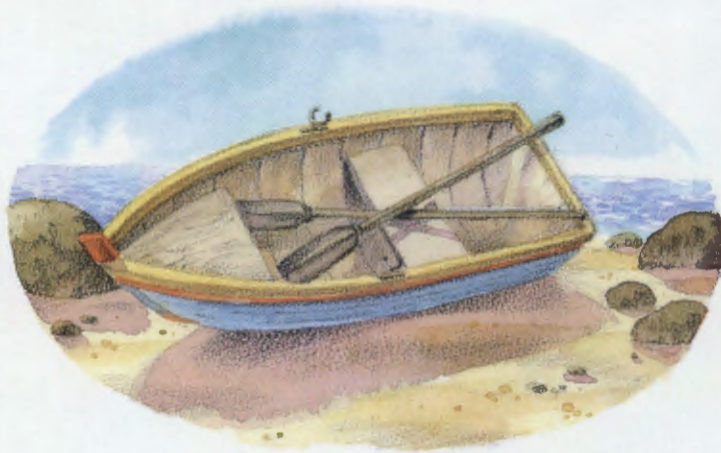
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# Turtle Bay



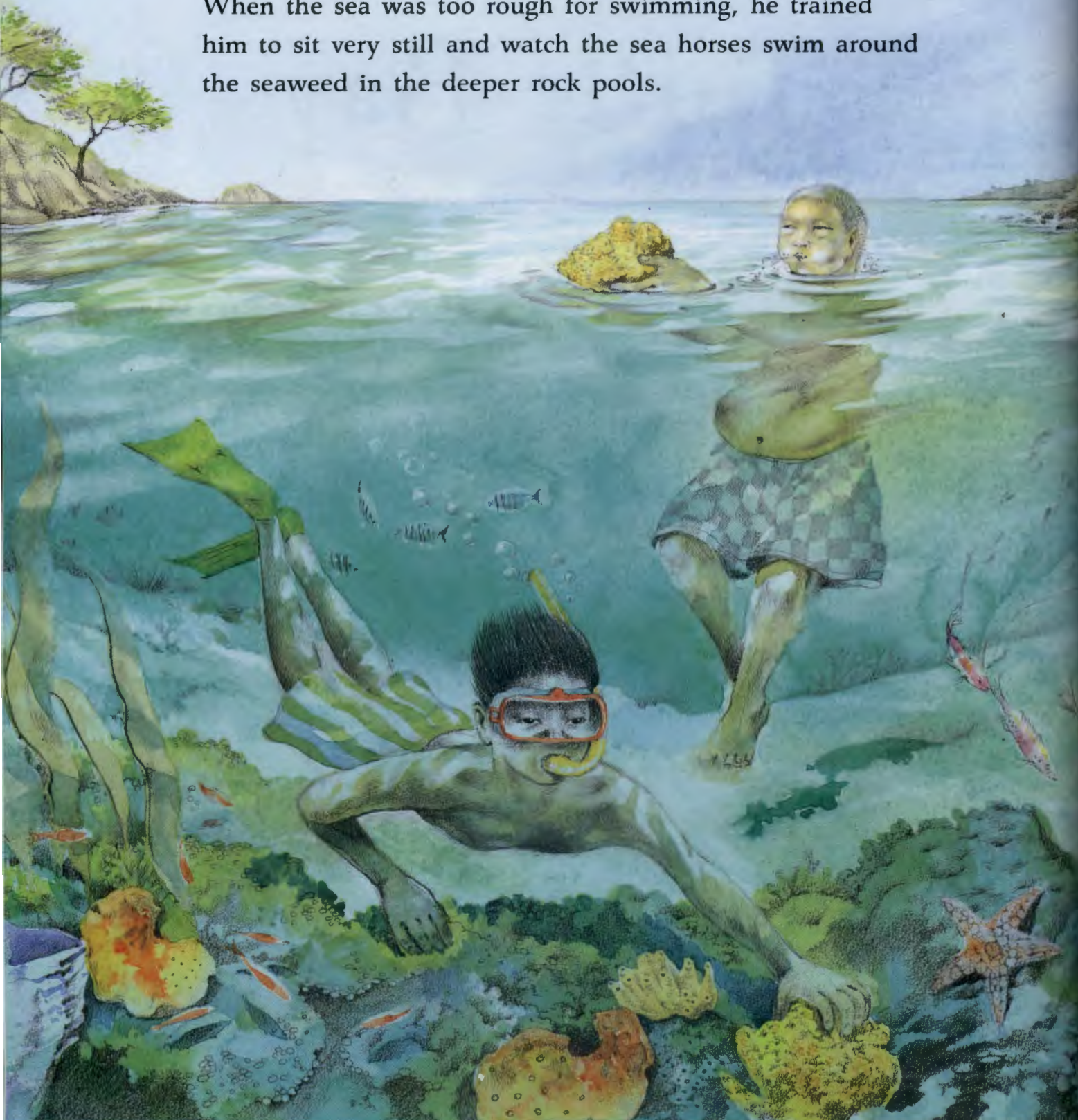
SAVIOUR PIROTTA

*Pictures by* NILESH MISTRY

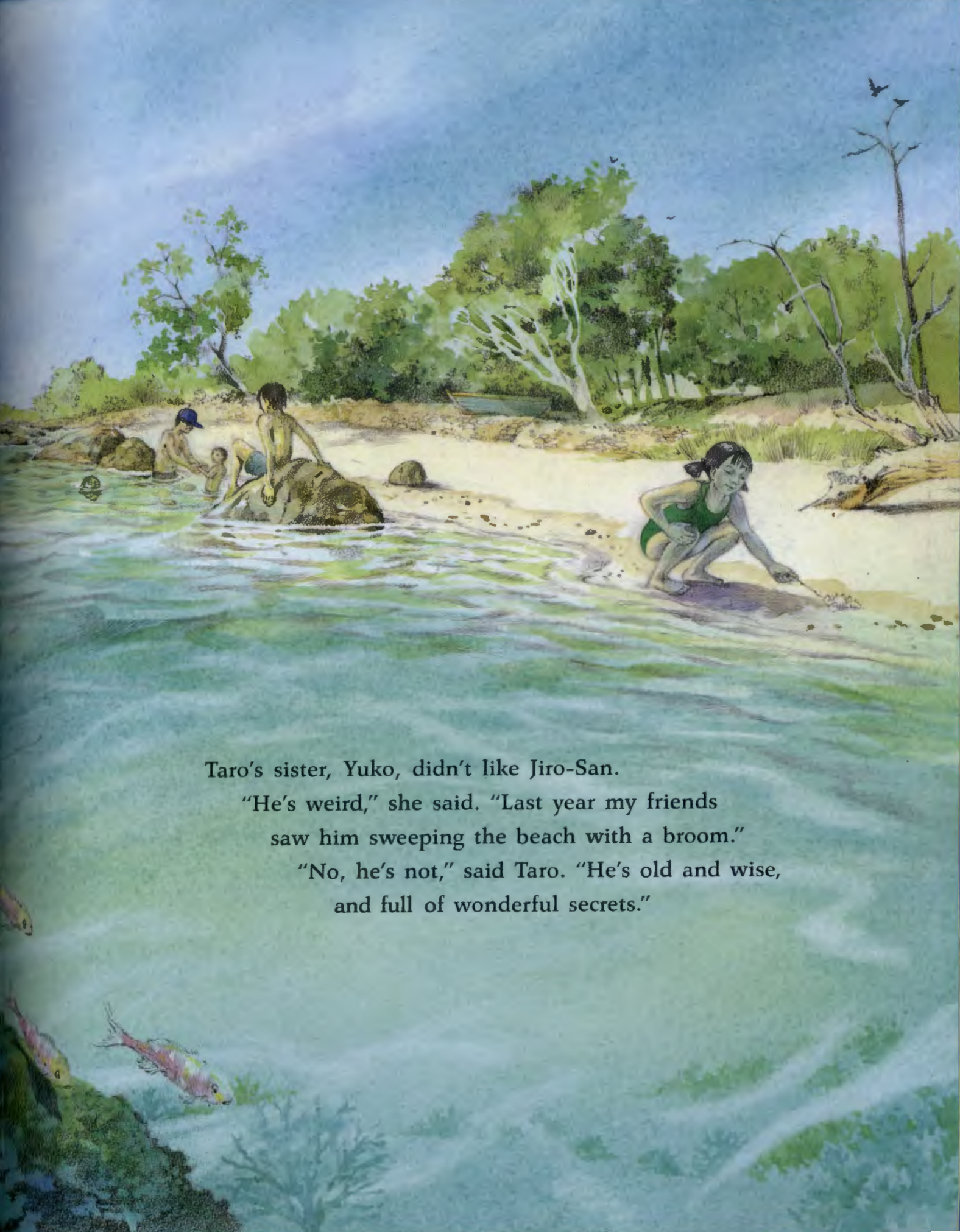
FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX NEW YORK

**T**ARO and Jiro-San were friends.

Jiro-San showed Taro how to feed crabs with pieces of rotten fish. He taught him to dive for sponges. When the sea was too rough for swimming, he trained him to sit very still and watch the sea horses swim around the seaweed in the deeper rock pools.







Taro's sister, Yuko, didn't like Jiro-San.

"He's weird," she said. "Last year my friends saw him sweeping the beach with a broom."

"No, he's not," said Taro. "He's old and wise, and full of wonderful secrets."







One day, Taro found Jiro-San sitting on a big rock.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"I am listening," said Jiro-San. "The wind is bringing me a message." Taro sat on the rock and listened. But all he could hear was the seagulls crying.

"Ah," said Jiro-San at last. "Now I understand... My old friends are coming!"

"Who are your old friends?" asked Taro.

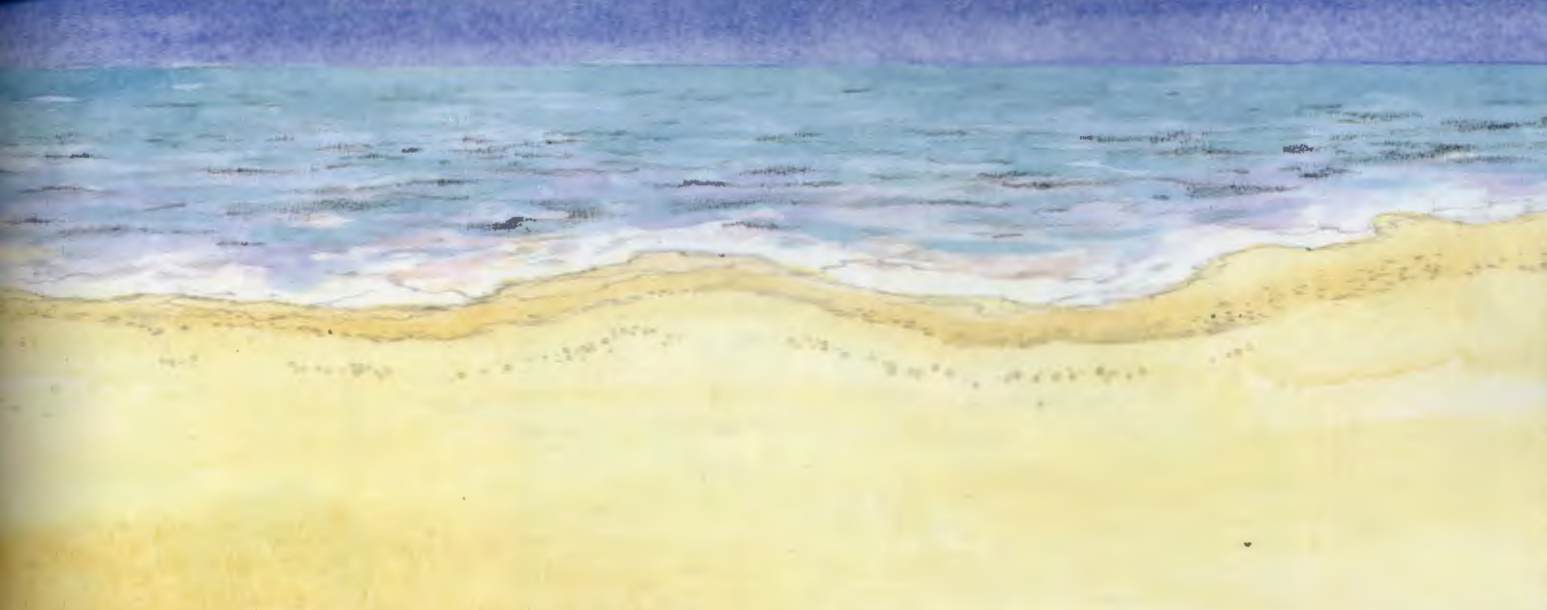
"You'll see," said Jiro-San.











**N**ext day, Jiro-San brought two brooms and handed one to Taro.  
“For sweeping the beach,” he said.

Taro’s heart sank. Yuko was right after all—Jiro-San was weird.  
“There’s a lot of rubbish and broken glass on the beach,”  
Jiro-San explained. “My friends won’t come if there is broken glass.  
They know they’ll get hurt.”

The boy and the old man swept the beach from one end to  
the other. They collected all the rubbish and put it in Jiro-San’s cart.  
Soon the beach was cleaner than it had been all summer.

Jiro-San looked pleased.

“Meet me by the big rock tonight,” he told Taro.







**T**aro ate his supper as fast as he could.  
"You seem in a big hurry," said his mother.  
"I am," said Taro. "Jiro-San's old friends are coming."  
"Who are they?" his mother wanted to know.





"It's a secret," said Taro.

"What kind of secret?" Yuko asked.

Taro didn't answer. He washed his hands and went out to find Jiro-San.



"Look," said the old man, pointing out to sea.  
Taro saw a school of dolphins riding the waves.

"Are they your old friends?" he asked.


"No," said Jiro-San. "Perhaps they will come  
tomorrow night."












Taro waited patiently all the next day. In the evening, he met Jiro-San again. This time, the old man had brought his boat out of the shed. Jiro-San picked up the oars, and they pushed out to sea.

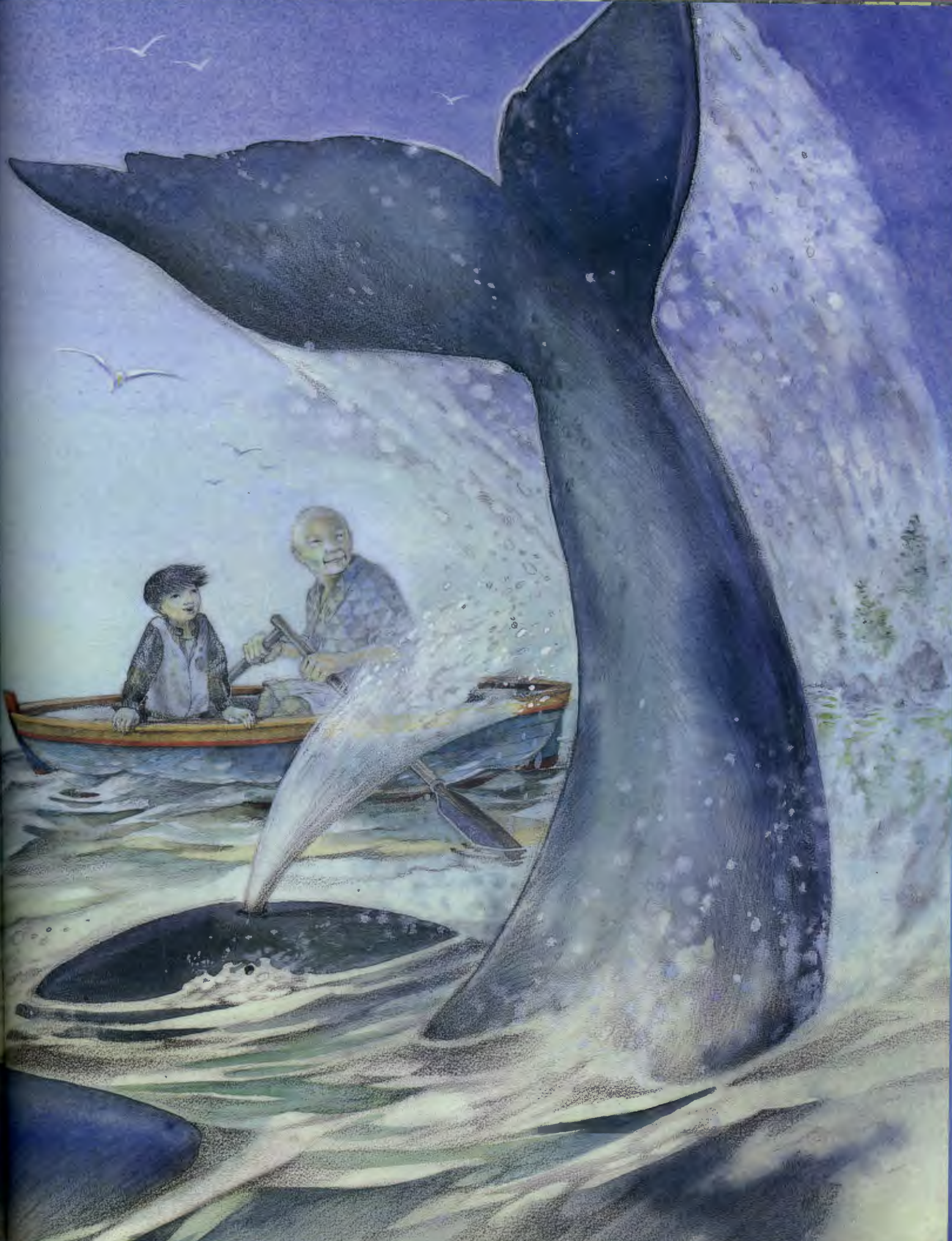
After a while, the old man said, "We've got company." Taro watched as a huge whale flicked her tail up out of the water. She had a calf swimming beside her.

"Are they your old friends?" Taro asked.

"They're friends," said Jiro-San, "but not the old friends I meant. Maybe they will come tomorrow."















The next evening, Jiro-San was in his boat again.

"Where are we going?" Taro wanted to know.

"Over there," said Jiro-San. He rowed out to a secret cove on a little island. There Taro saw three large fish with swords for snouts.

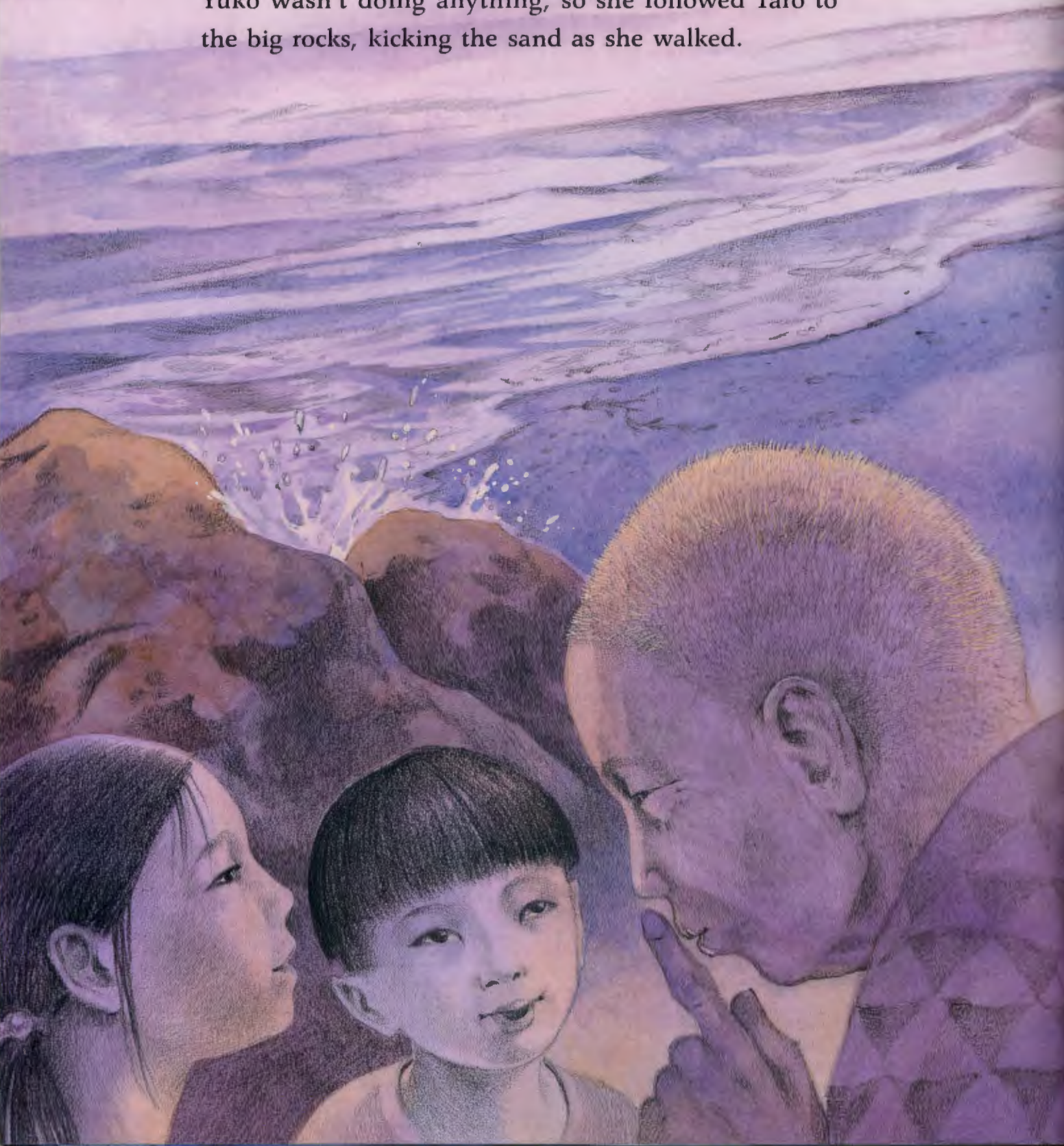
"Are they your old friends?" Taro asked.

"All fish are my friends," said Jiro-San. "But these aren't my old friends. They seem to be late this year. Perhaps they are not coming at all."

"Don't be sad," Taro said. "Perhaps they'll get here tomorrow."



**D**o you want to come and wait for Jiro-San's old friends?" Taro asked Yuko after supper the next day. Yuko wasn't doing anything, so she followed Taro to the big rocks, kicking the sand as she walked.







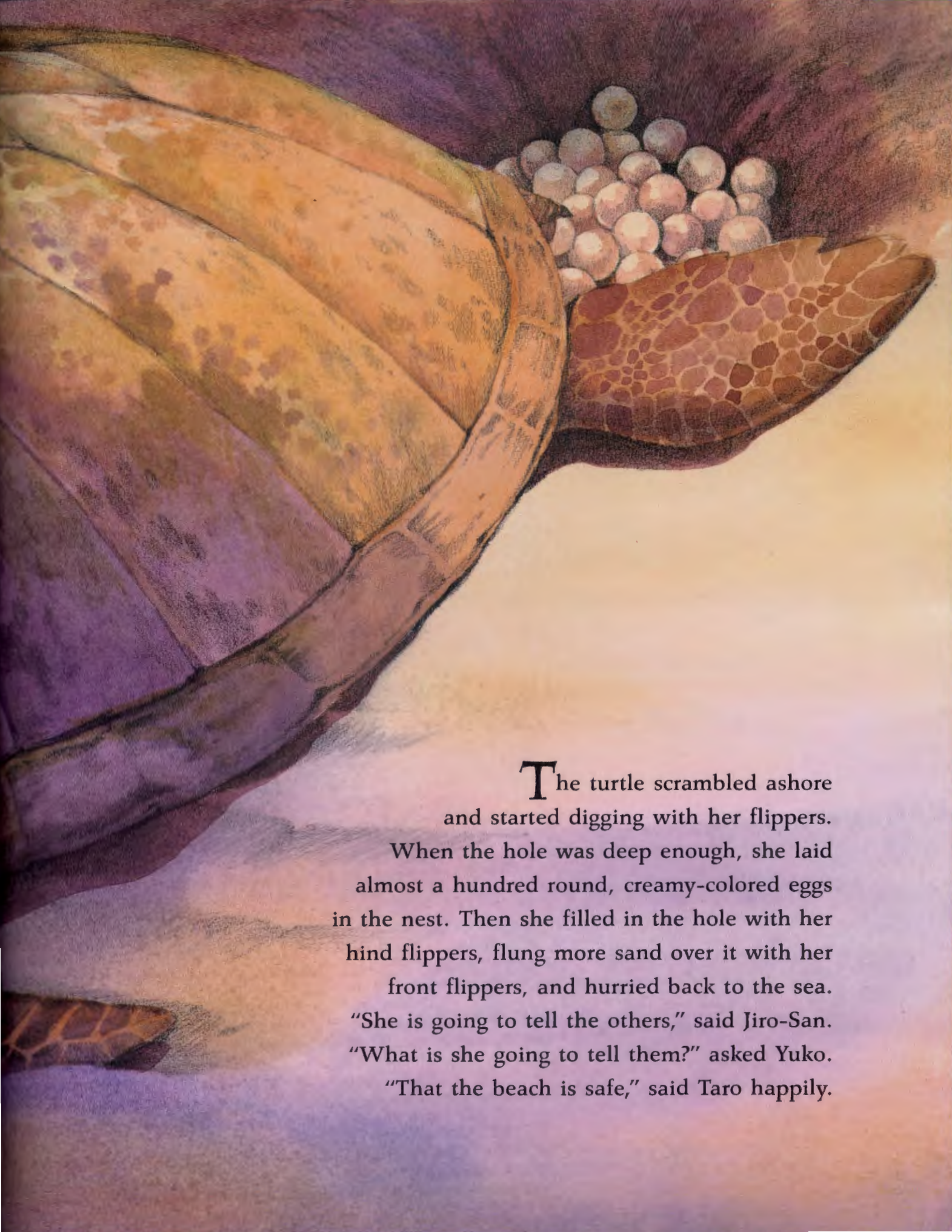
“Sssh,” said Jiro-San. “I think they’re here at last.”  
Yuko and Taro saw a dark shape moving toward the shore.  
It was huge and bobbed up and down on the water like an  
enormous cork.

At last, the children could see what it was—a turtle!  
“She’s coming to lay her eggs on our beach,”  
said Jiro-San proudly.



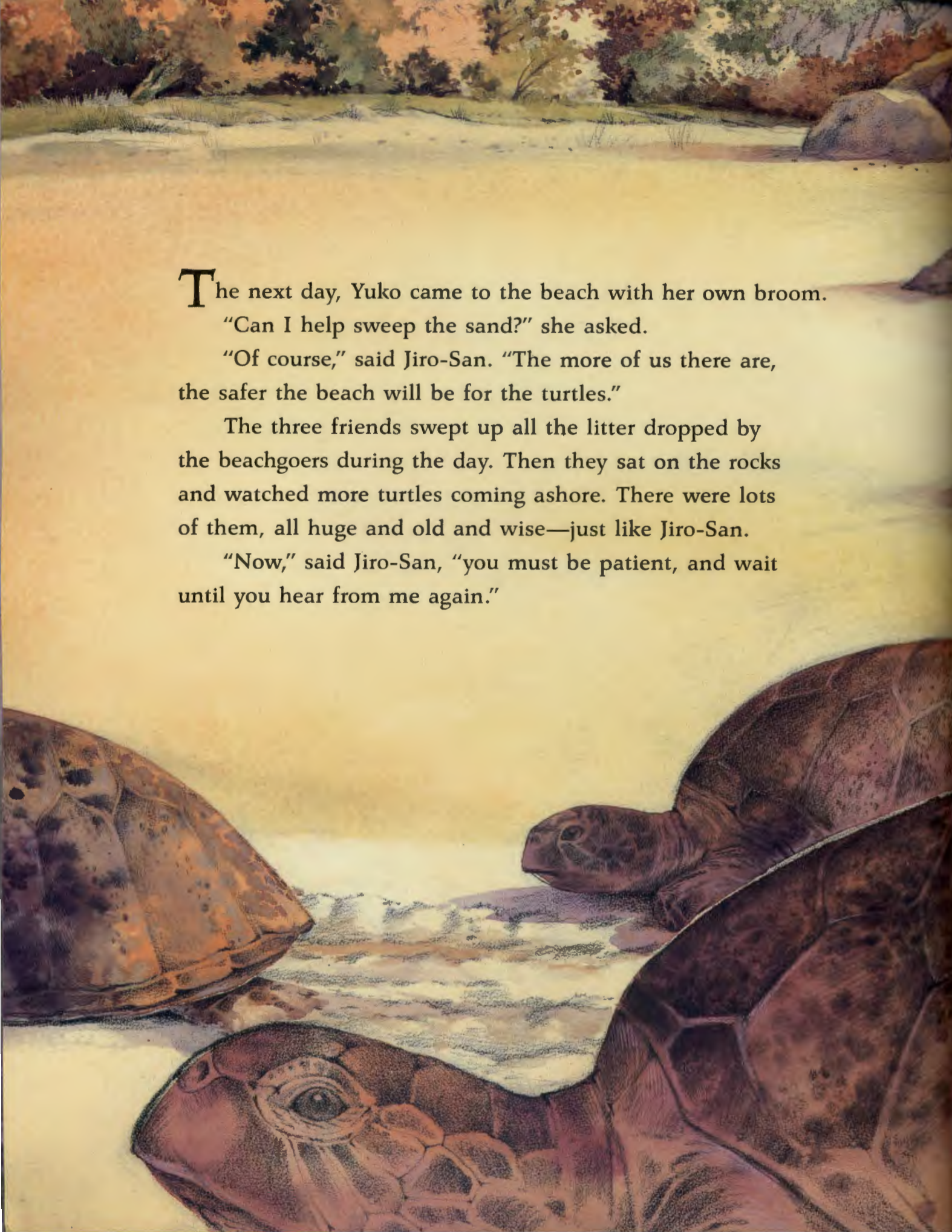






The turtle scrambled ashore and started digging with her flippers. When the hole was deep enough, she laid almost a hundred round, creamy-colored eggs in the nest. Then she filled in the hole with her hind flippers, flung more sand over it with her front flippers, and hurried back to the sea. "She is going to tell the others," said Jiro-San. "What is she going to tell them?" asked Yuko. "That the beach is safe," said Taro happily.






The next day, Yuko came to the beach with her own broom.

"Can I help sweep the sand?" she asked.

"Of course," said Jiro-San. "The more of us there are, the safer the beach will be for the turtles."

The three friends swept up all the litter dropped by the beachgoers during the day. Then they sat on the rocks and watched more turtles coming ashore. There were lots of them, all huge and old and wise—just like Jiro-San.

"Now," said Jiro-San, "you must be patient, and wait until you hear from me again."



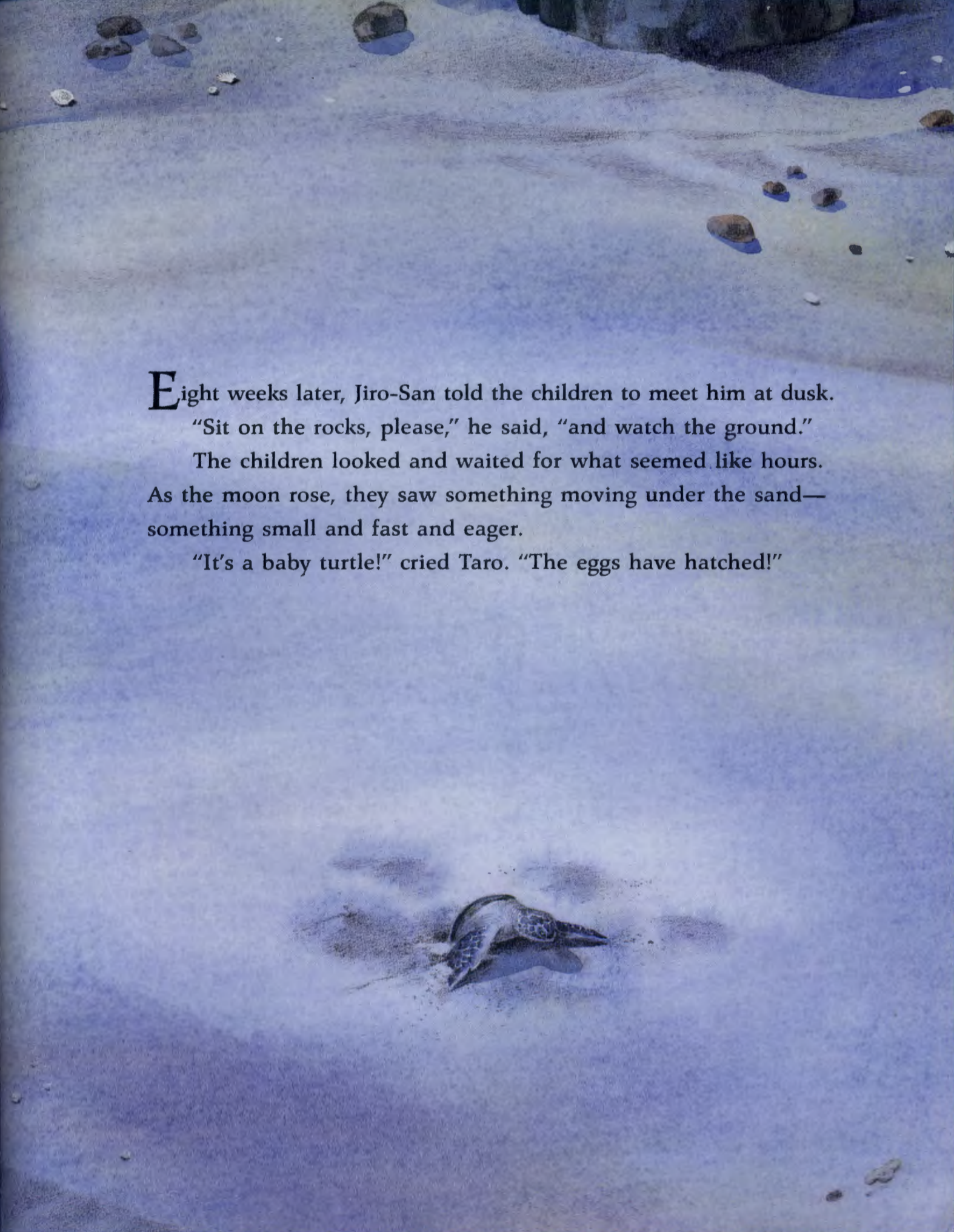











A photograph of a beach scene. The foreground is a wide expanse of light-colored sand. In the middle ground, there are several dark, smooth rocks scattered across the sand. A small stream of water flows from the top right towards the center. The background shows more rocks and a hint of a dark, possibly wooded area.

**E**ight weeks later, Jiro-San told the children to meet him at dusk.

"Sit on the rocks, please," he said, "and watch the ground."

The children looked and waited for what seemed like hours. As the moon rose, they saw something moving under the sand—something small and fast and eager.

"It's a baby turtle!" cried Taro. "The eggs have hatched!"

A close-up photograph of a small, dark-colored baby turtle resting on a sandy beach. The turtle is positioned in the lower center of the frame, facing towards the right. Its shell is dark with lighter, patterned markings. The sand around it is slightly disturbed, showing some tracks or indentations.





**S**oon the beach was full of baby turtles. There were hundreds of them, all scuttling down to the sea.

The children couldn't believe their eyes.





"Jiro-San is not crazy after all, is he?" Taro whispered to Yuko.  
"No," said Yuko. "He is old and wise ... and full of wonderful secrets."



## About Sea Turtles

Jiro-San's old friends are loggerhead turtles, one of seven different kinds of turtles living in the sea. Although turtles are born on dry land and breathe air, they spend most of their lives swimming in the warm oceans, feeding on sea grasses, crabs, shrimps, and shells. Like tortoises and terrapins, they have bodies that are protected by armor made of bone and horny shell. But sea turtles are very streamlined, so they can glide with ease through the water, powered by their paddle-like flippers.

When the weather is warm, loggerhead turtles migrate to shallow water to mate, and the females come ashore to lay their eggs on sandy beaches, on the same sites where turtles have laid eggs for centuries. Each female digs a bucket-sized pit with her flippers for her eggs. The eggs—a hundred or more—have leathery shells, so they will not break as they plop into the nest. She then covers her nest, or clutch, with sand to hide it from greedy creatures such as lizards.

The mother turtle cannot survive long on land, especially in the heat of day, so she goes back to the sea and takes no further care of her family. She may lay more eggs at two-week intervals—sometimes as many as six clutches over the summer months—but after that she will not return to land for another couple of years.

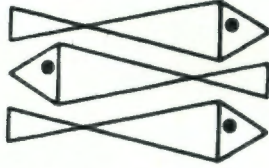
After two months the eggs hatch and the baby turtles scratch and dig their way up to the surface of the sand and scurry down to the water. They usually go by night, since the blazing sun of day can harm them, and seabirds and other enemies might catch them. Once in the sea, the baby turtles may be attacked by large fish. But if they escape, they can live for over fifty years.

Except for large sharks, adult sea turtles do not have many natural enemies, though there are people who like to eat turtle meat and who make things out of turtle shells. And turtles sometimes get caught in fishing nets. Also, some beaches where turtles like to lay their eggs have become popular with tourists, and in those places turtles have become very rare.

Conservationists are now trying to protect turtles and their breeding grounds, to prevent them from becoming extinct.







**FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX, INC. *Book Publishers***  
HILL & WANG

July 21, 1997

George Balazs  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
2570 Dole St.  
Honolulu, HI 96822-2396

Dear George,

I'm delighted to enclose a couple of copies of **Turtle Bay**. As you can see, we've put your quote smack dab where anybody looking the book over can't miss it. Many thanks for all your help with this project.

Sincerely,

Wesley Adams

encl.

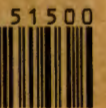


*Friendship, patience, and wisdom are finely woven in this timeless story linking the lives of sea turtles and the people who care for them. Ancient and gentle navigators, these ocean creatures are now endangered nearly everywhere. Excessive hunting and careless use of beaches are contributing factors. May every person reading this book, both young and old, become a Jiro-San, a Taro, or a Yuko!*

*—George H. Balazs Leader, Marine Turtle Research  
National Marine Fisheries Service*



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