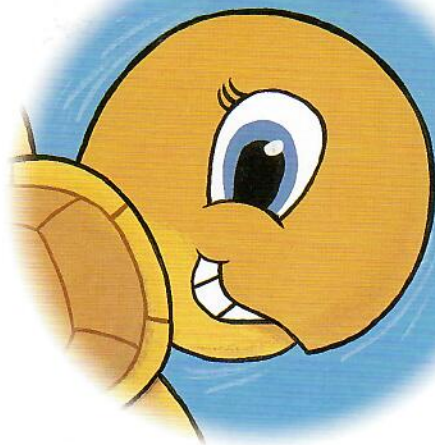


# Tia's journey



by  
Samantha  
Collins

# Tia's journey



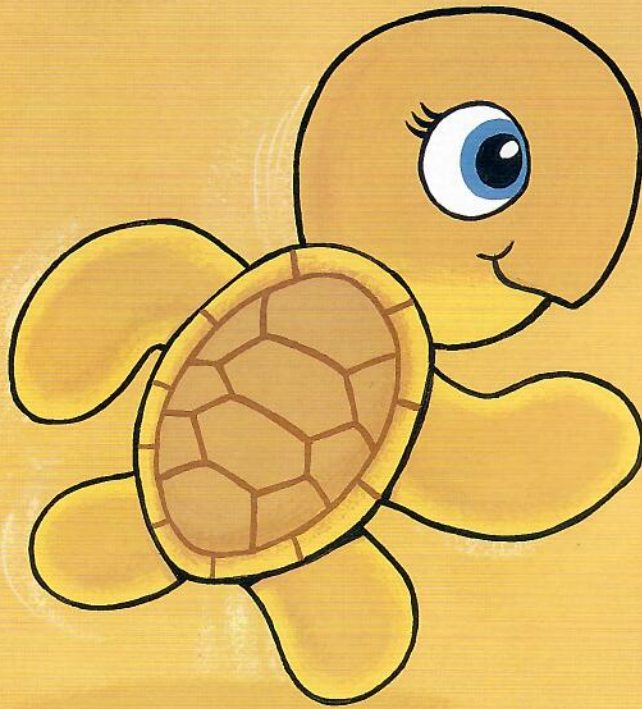
**by Samantha Collins**

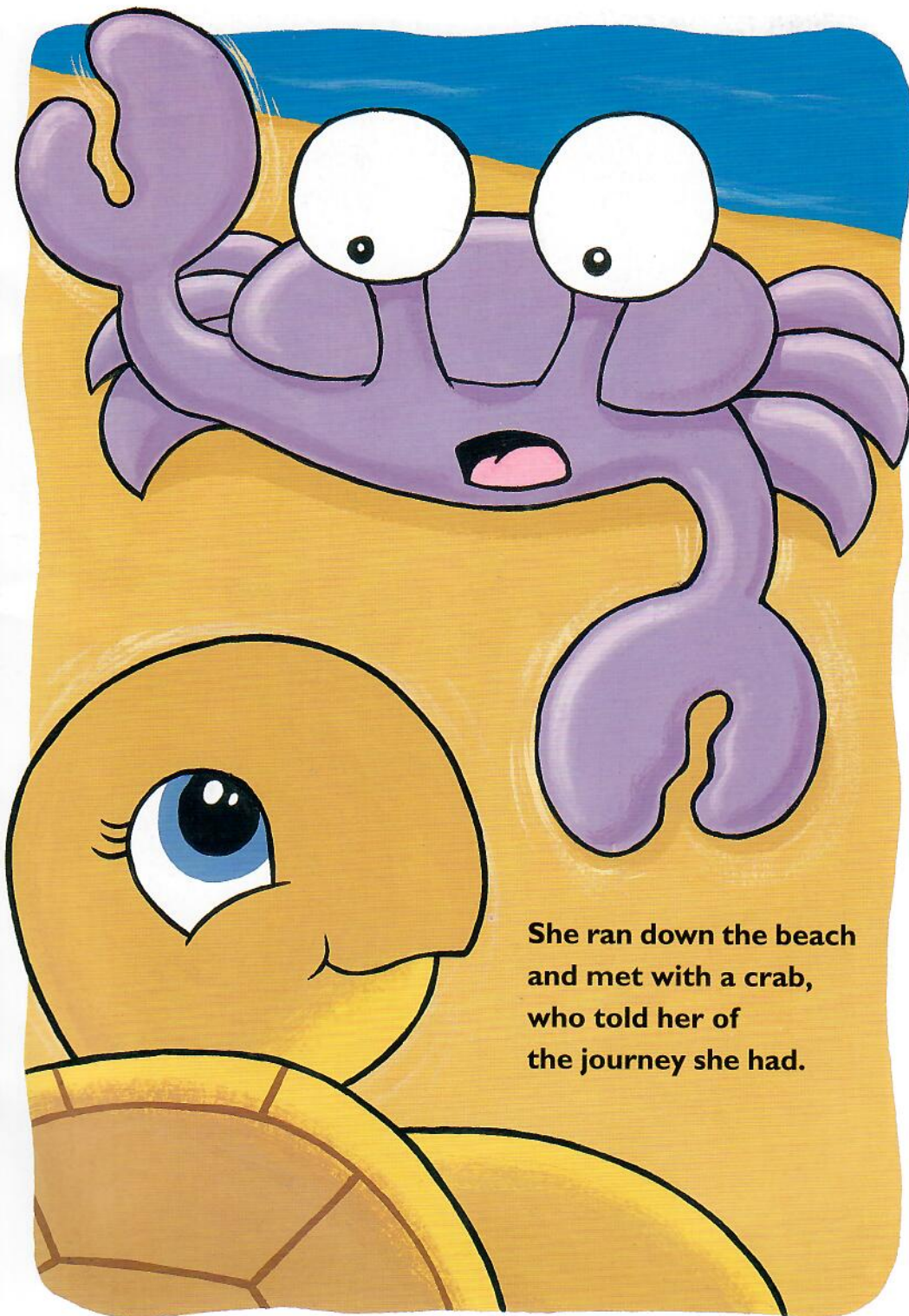
*To my little nephews and nieces, and all who love turtles.*



**Department  
of Environment**

Eight long weeks,  
just after the sun,  
Tia hatched and  
went for a run.

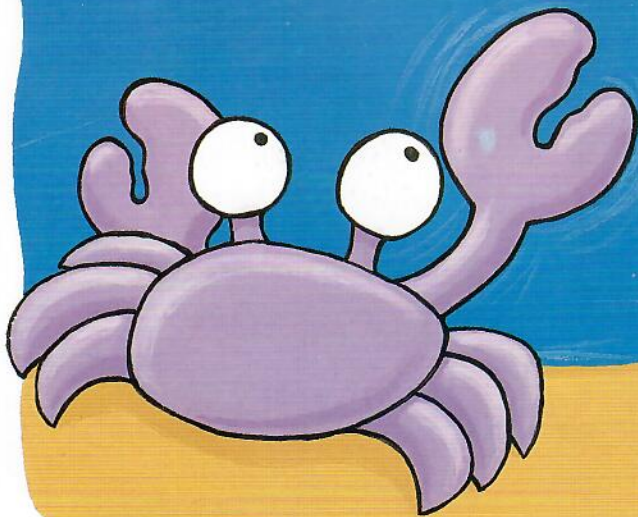




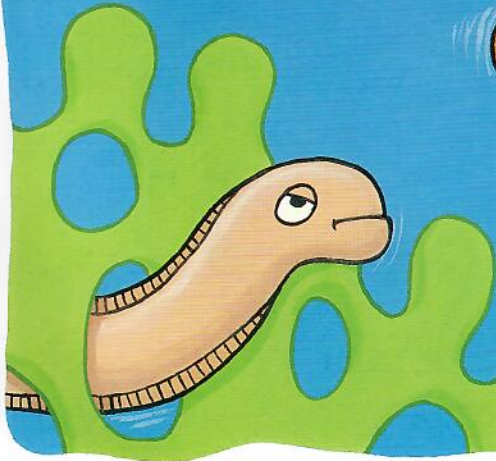
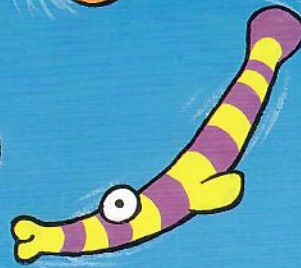
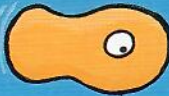
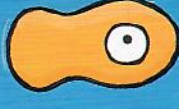
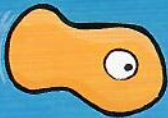
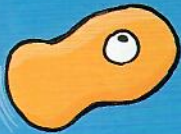
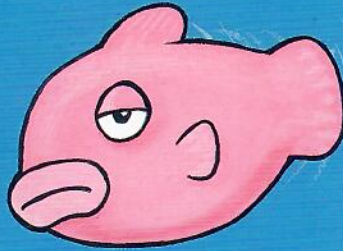
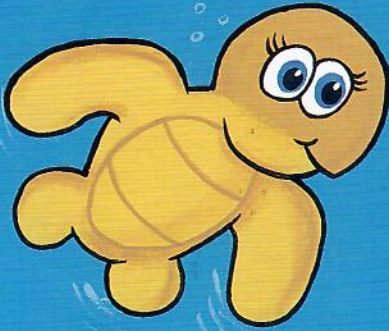
**She ran down the beach  
and met with a crab,  
who told her of  
the journey she had.**

For in the ocean,  
Tia must grow,  
until she returned  
to Mon Repos.

So off she went,  
in the ocean wide,  
she swam away  
on the evening tide.

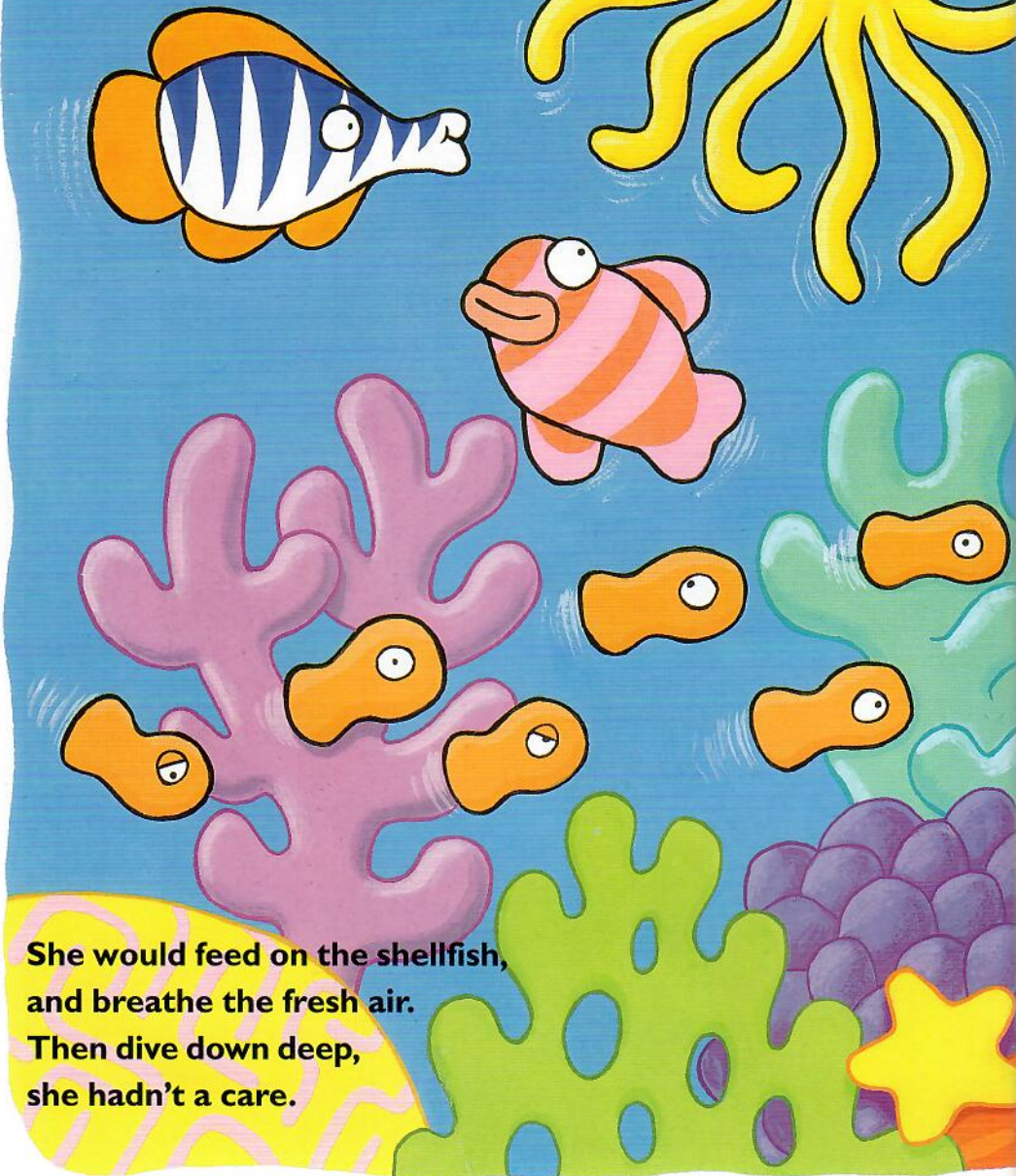


The living reef,  
was Tia's home.  
As the waves broke,  
they turned to foam.

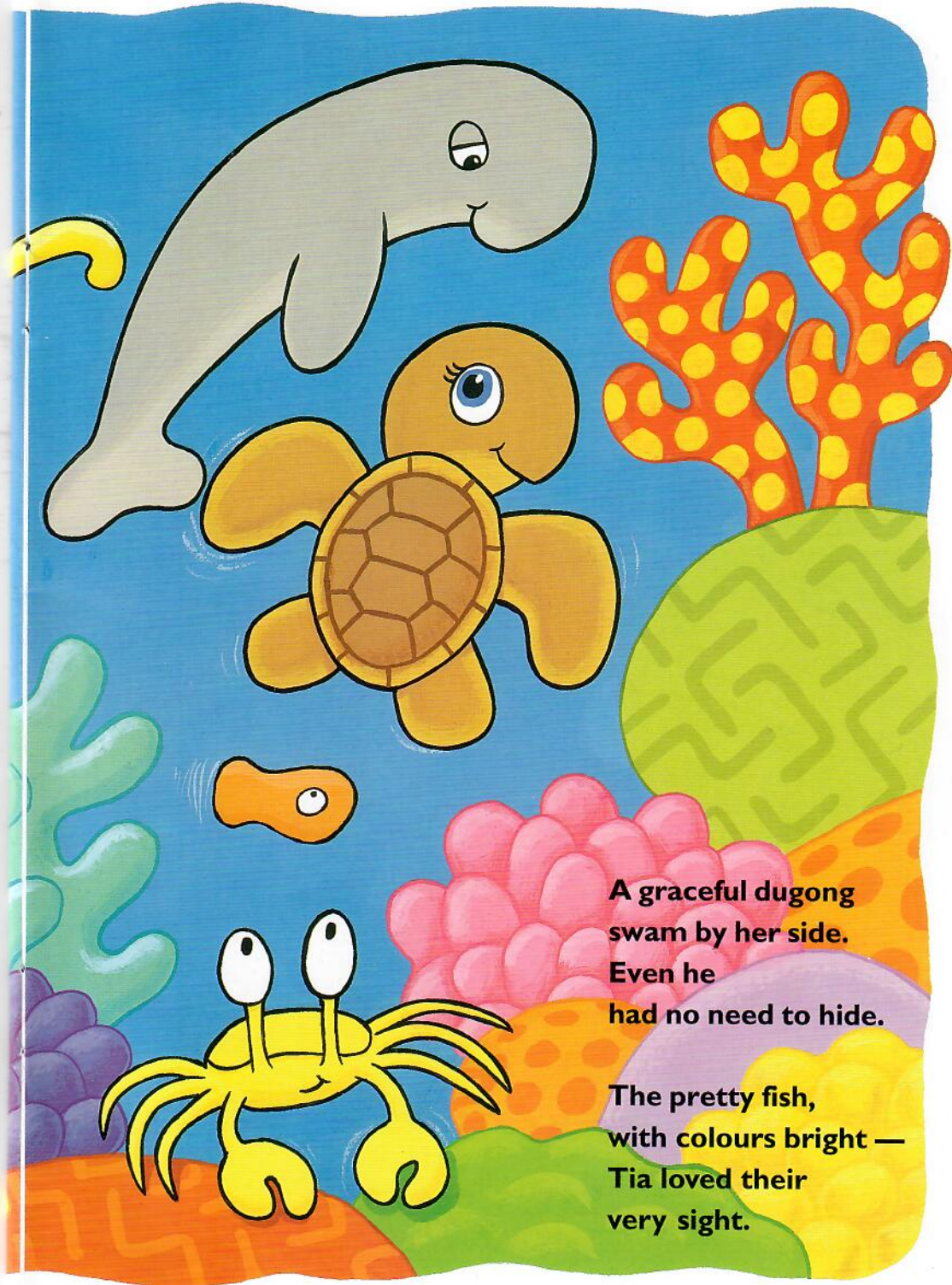


She spent her days,  
without a care.  
Marvelling at the creatures  
that lived out there.

Each day she would swim,  
under the waves,  
and chase all the fish  
in the coral caves.



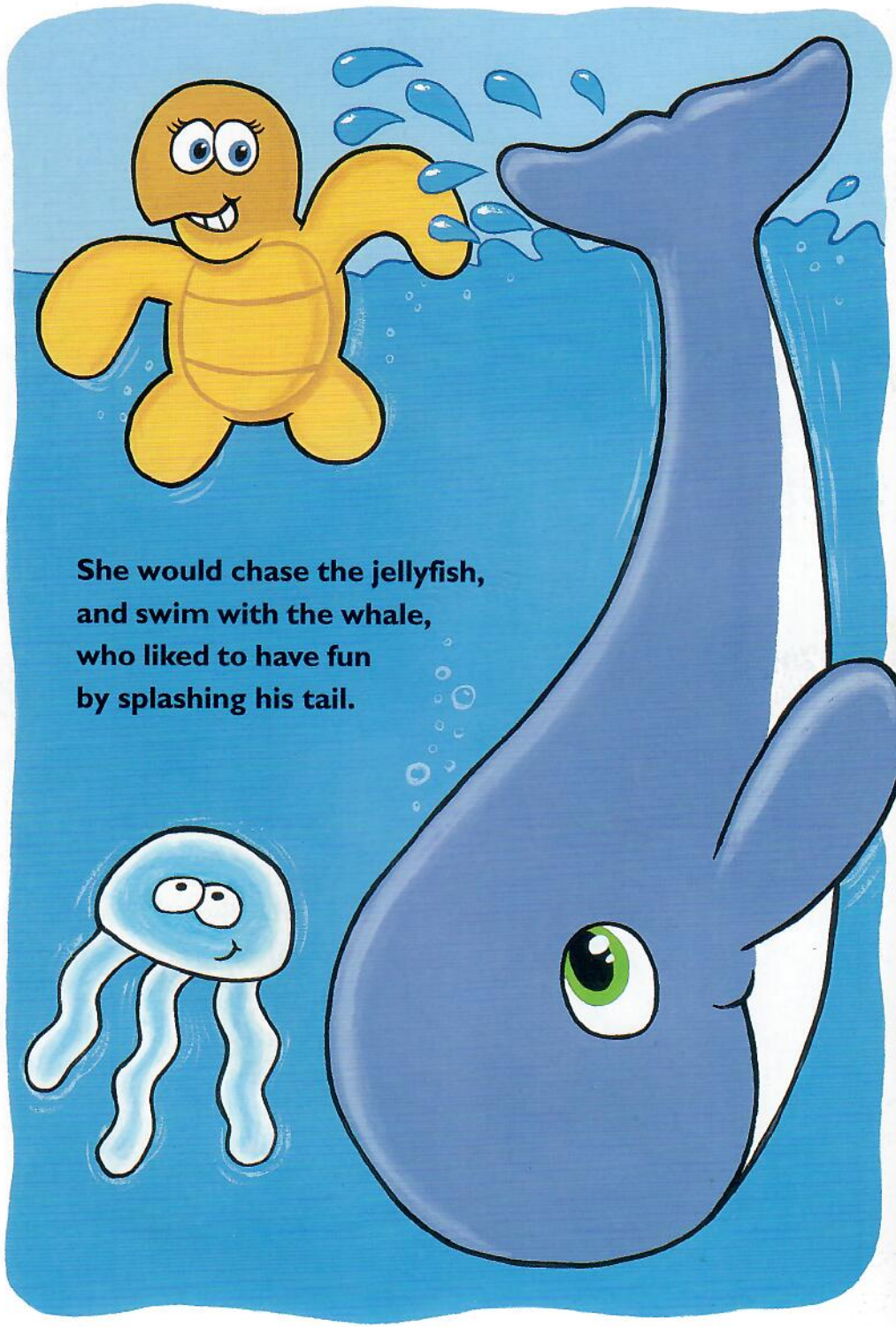
She would feed on the shellfish,  
and breathe the fresh air.  
Then dive down deep,  
she hadn't a care.



A graceful dugong  
swam by her side.  
Even he  
had no need to hide.

The pretty fish,  
with colours bright —  
Tia loved their  
very sight.

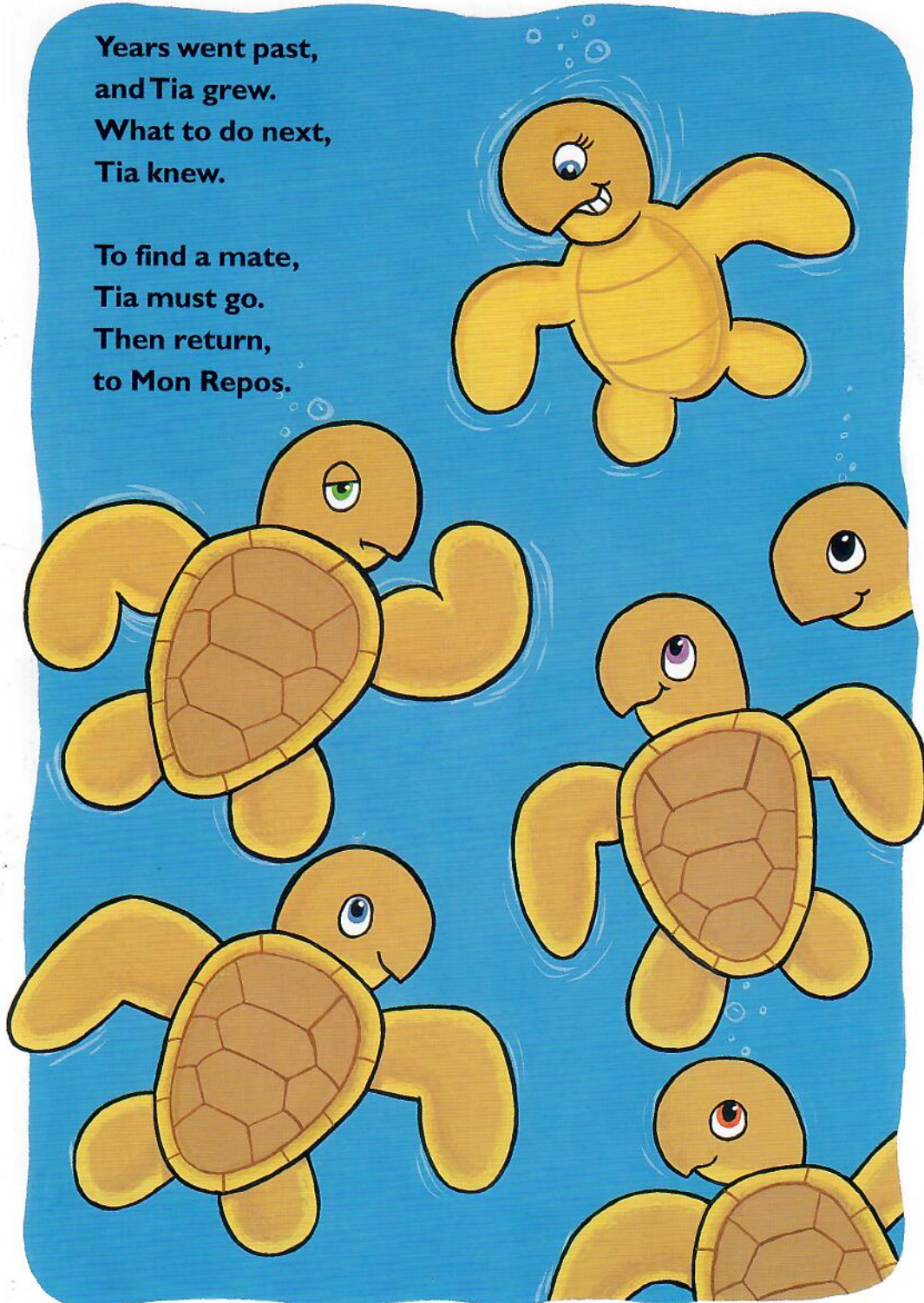


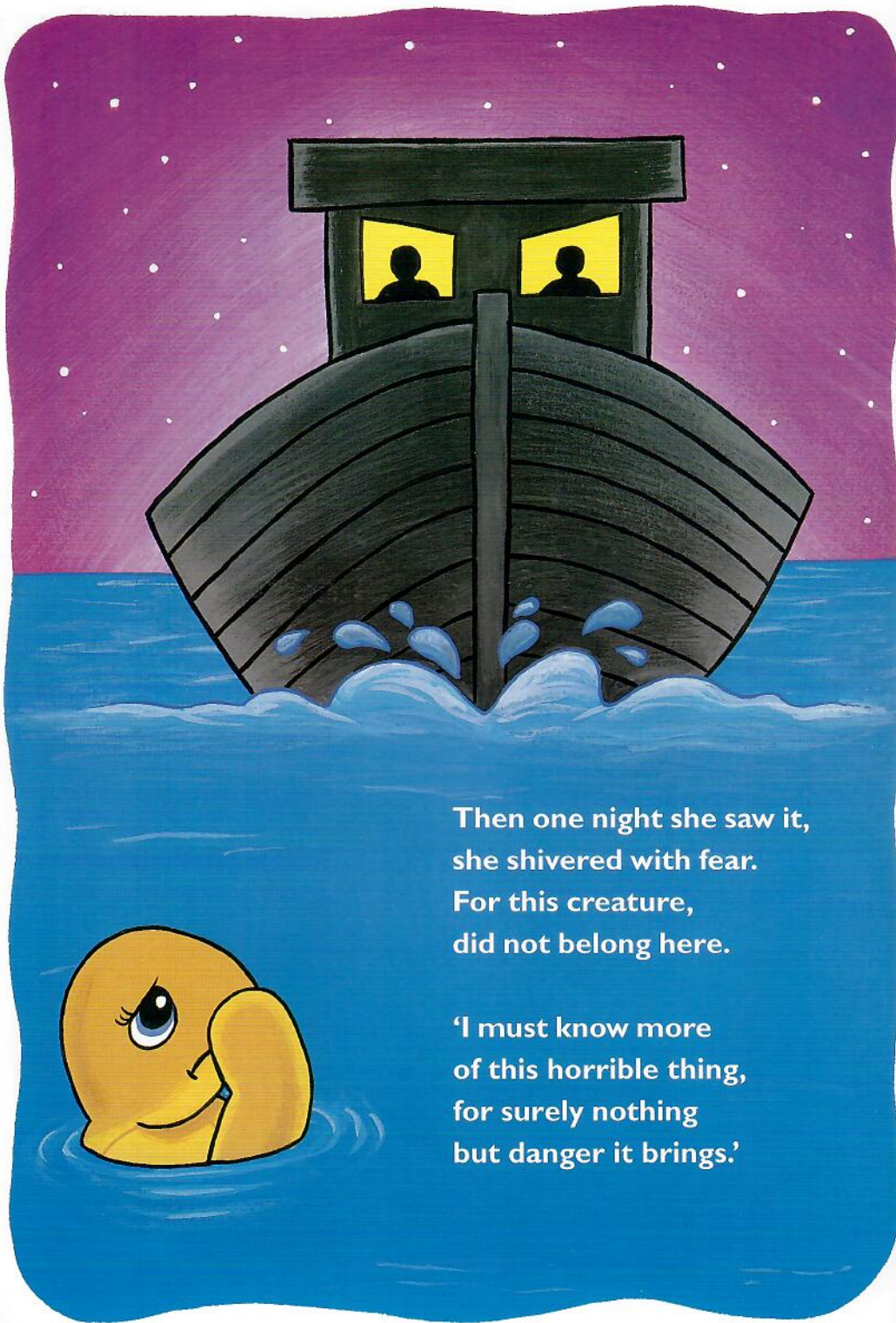


**She would chase the jellyfish,  
and swim with the whale,  
who liked to have fun  
by splashing his tail.**

Years went past,  
and Tia grew.  
What to do next,  
Tia knew.

To find a mate,  
Tia must go.  
Then return,  
to Mon Repos.



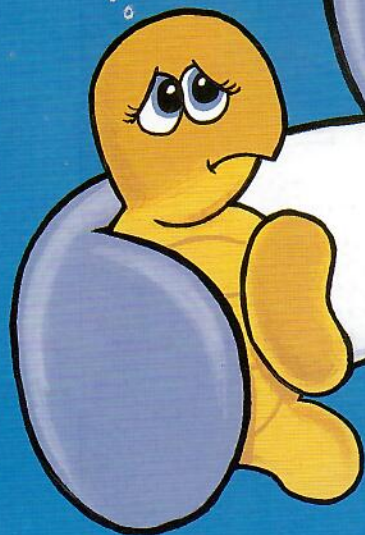


Then one night she saw it,  
she shivered with fear.  
For this creature,  
did not belong here.

'I must know more  
of this horrible thing,  
for surely nothing  
but danger it brings.'

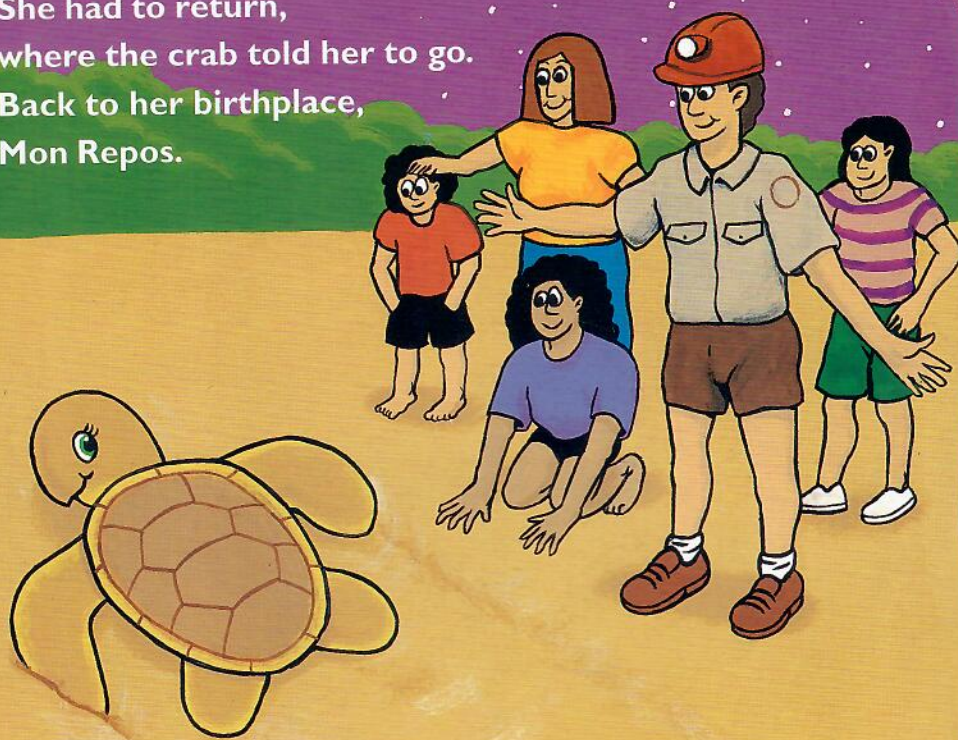
She found the whale,  
the one who had played,  
and asked if he knew,  
of the creature that came.

He looked at his friend,  
'Humans' he replied.  
'They came with nets,  
many creatures died.'

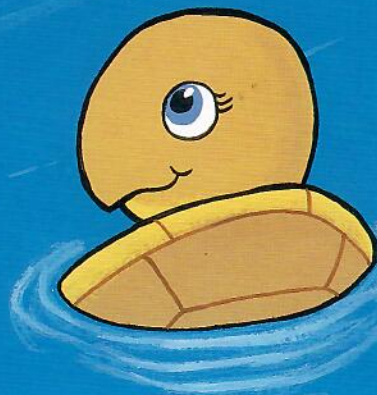


She turned away,  
pain in her heart.  
But she had to journey,  
and make a new start.

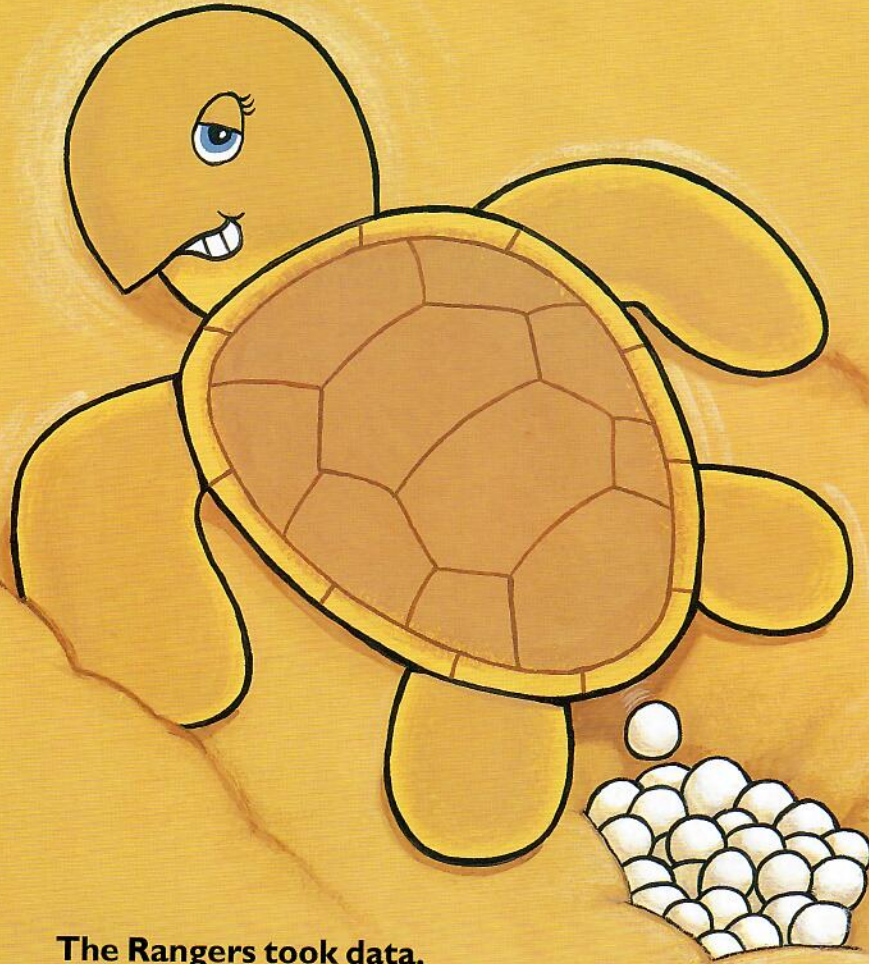
She had to return,  
where the crab told her to go.  
Back to her birthplace,  
Mon Repos.



She swam down the coast,  
and there she did find,  
humans were helping,  
save her own kind.



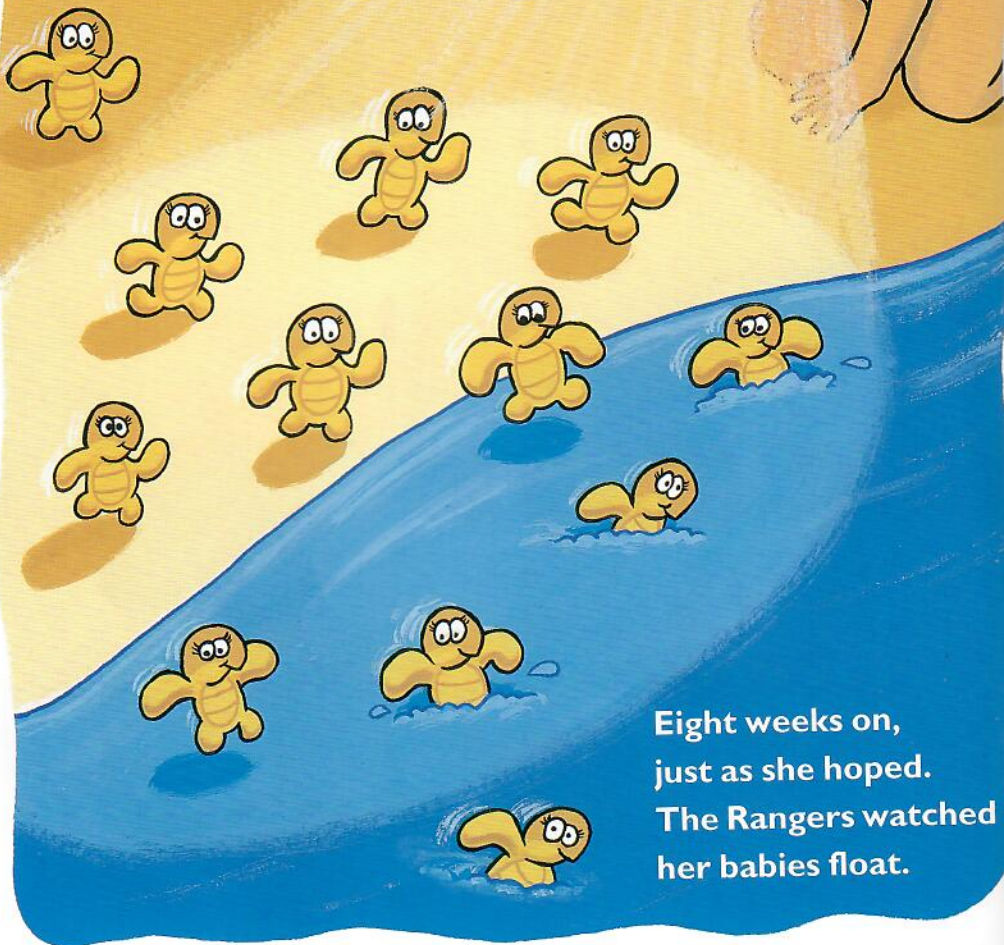
**She crawled up the beach,  
then started to lay.  
People came around her,  
to remember this day.**



**The Rangers took data,  
of Tia that night,  
She crawled to the sea,  
then was out of sight.**

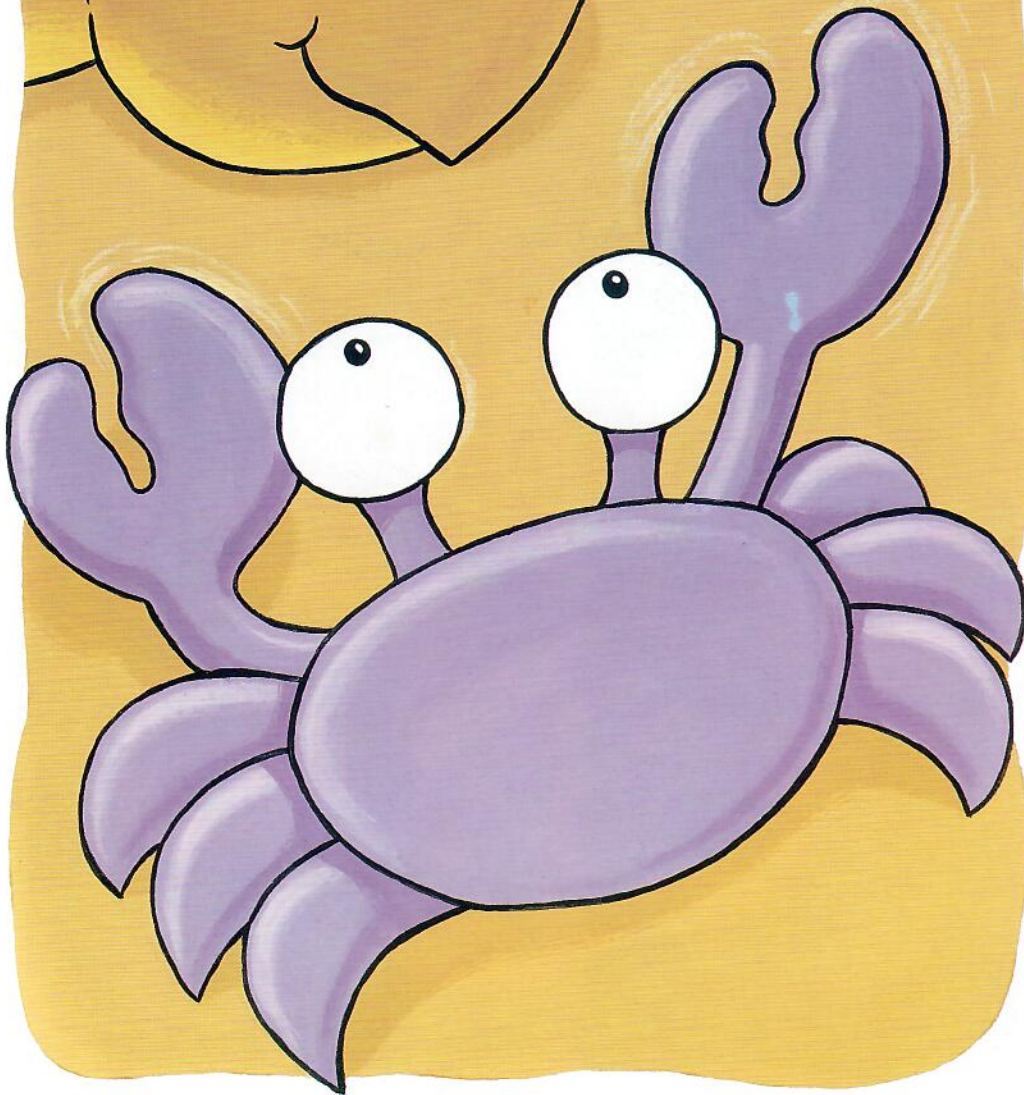
Four more trips,  
to the beach she made.  
Until all of her eggs  
in the sand she laid.

She was sure the Rangers  
at Mon Repos,  
would look after her babies,  
when ready to go.

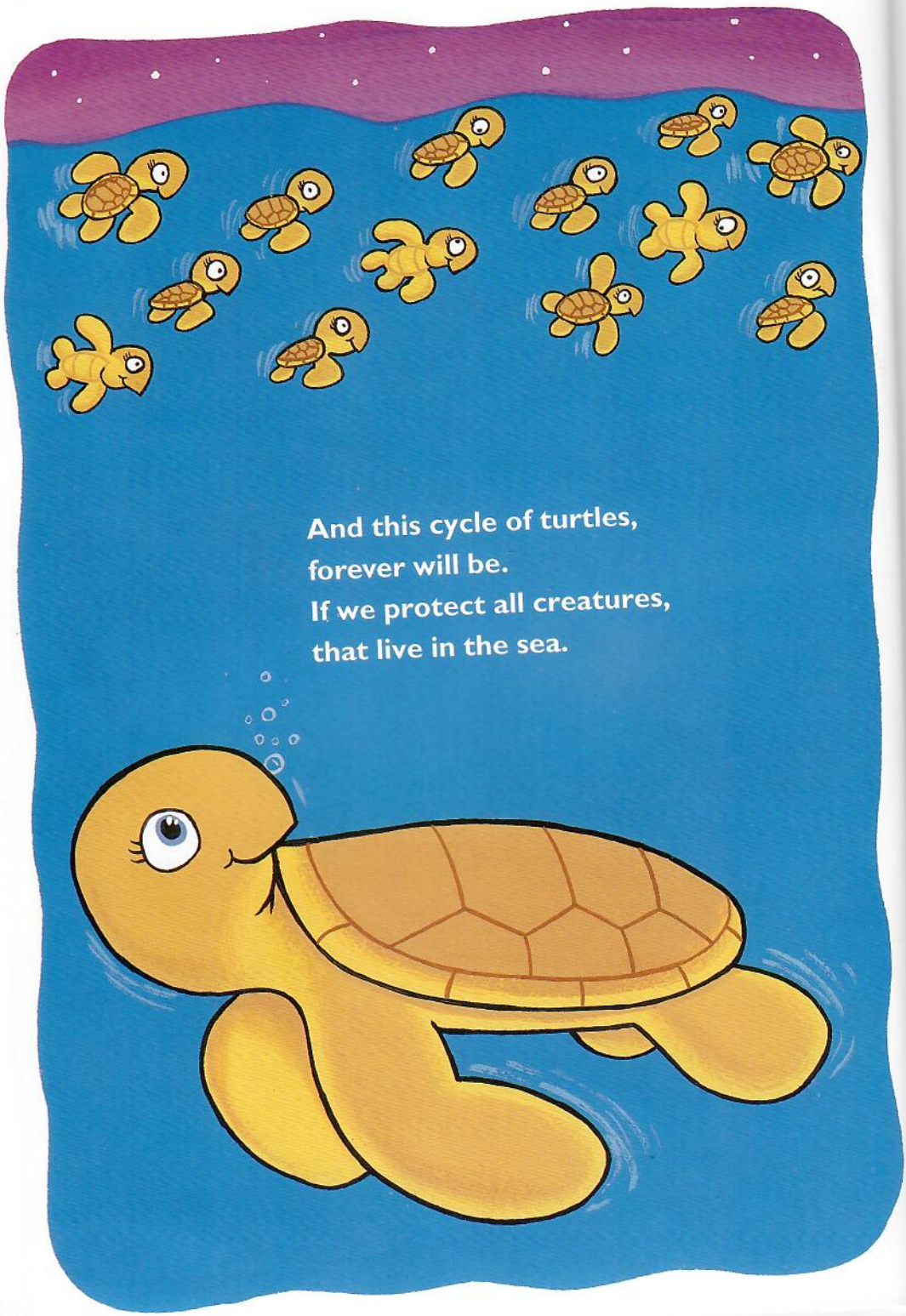


Eight weeks on,  
just as she hoped.  
The Rangers watched  
her babies float.

But one little hatchling  
met with a crab,  
who told her of,  
the journey she had.







And this cycle of turtles,  
forever will be.  
If we protect all creatures,  
that live in the sea.

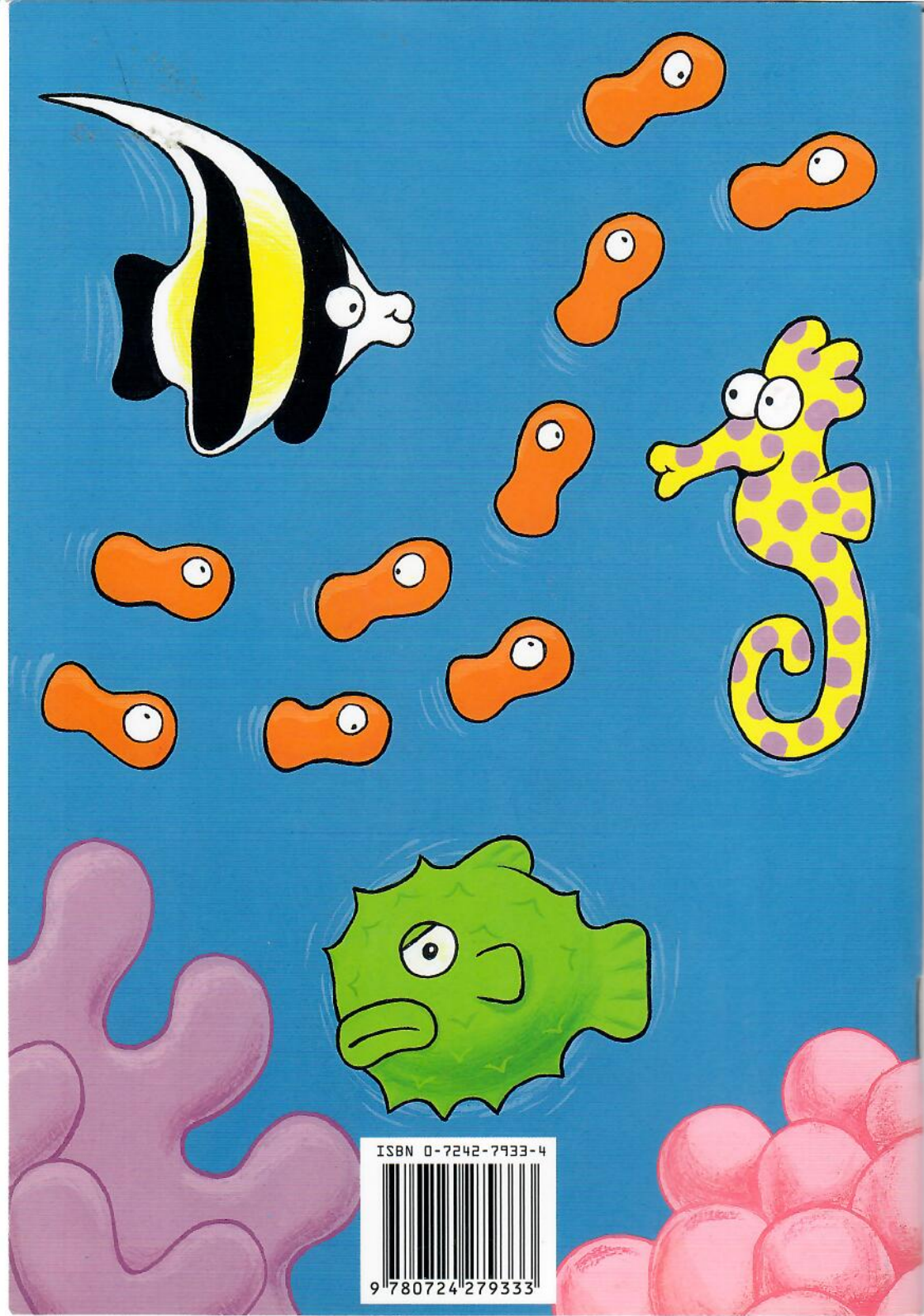


Toowoomba schoolgirl Samantha Collins fell in love with turtles when she was just 11 years old. Visiting the turtle rookery at Mon Repos Conservation Park near Bundaberg, she was entranced by her close encounter with these gentle marine giants.

Returning each year to Mon Repos, (Queensland's most important turtle rookery), Sam became increasingly passionate about the turtles and their fate. At 14, she published the anthology *Magic of the Night*, inspired by her turtle-watching experiences. *Tia's journey* is one of 15 poems in the anthology.

Sam's great love for turtles and the environment shines through in her poetry. Her verses capture the magic of the Mon Repos experience: from the moment when imposing females lumber up the sand to lay their eggs, to that time, months later, when tiny hatchlings make their way down to the sea and begin the battle for survival. Her poems express not only her love for the great turtles of Mon Repos, but the urgent need to take action to ensure they survive. She hopes *Tia's journey* encourages all children to care for the environment and its creatures.

Today, Sam is an honorary turtle researcher at Mon Repos. Now approaching the end of high school, she hopes to continue her writing in the future. In the meantime, Sam and her family will continue to visit Mon Repos, travelling twice a year from their home in Toowoomba to see Queensland's very own ancient mariners.



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