

Ocean Treasures:
Old Budder's Bummer

Ding, dong!

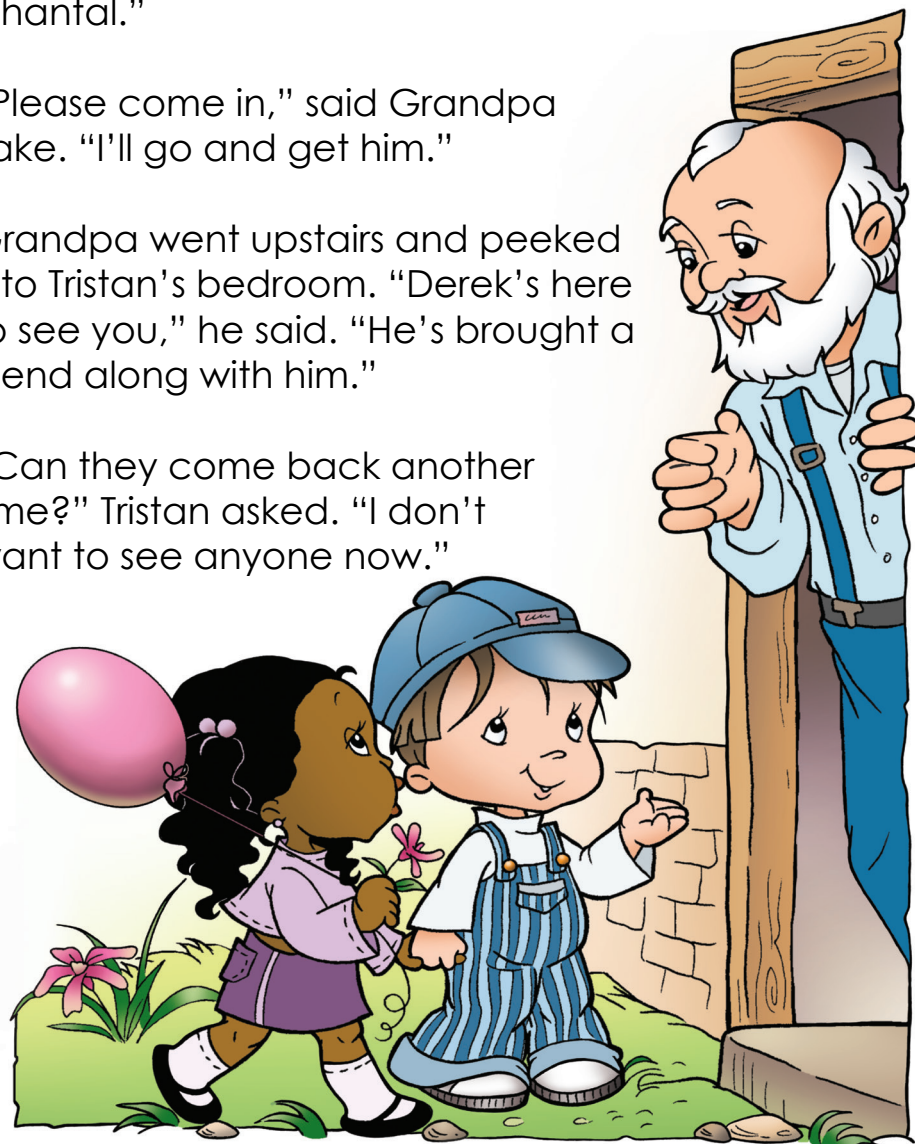
"Hello, Derek," Grandpa Jake said as he opened the front door. "Are you here to see Tristan?"

"Yes, I wanted him to meet my friend, Chantal."

"Please come in," said Grandpa Jake. "I'll go and get him."

Grandpa went upstairs and peeked into Tristan's bedroom. "Derek's here to see you," he said. "He's brought a friend along with him."

"Can they come back another time?" Tristan asked. "I don't want to see anyone now."



Grandpa Jake stepped inside the room, shut the door, and sat down on the bed. "Did something happen that you'd like to talk about?"

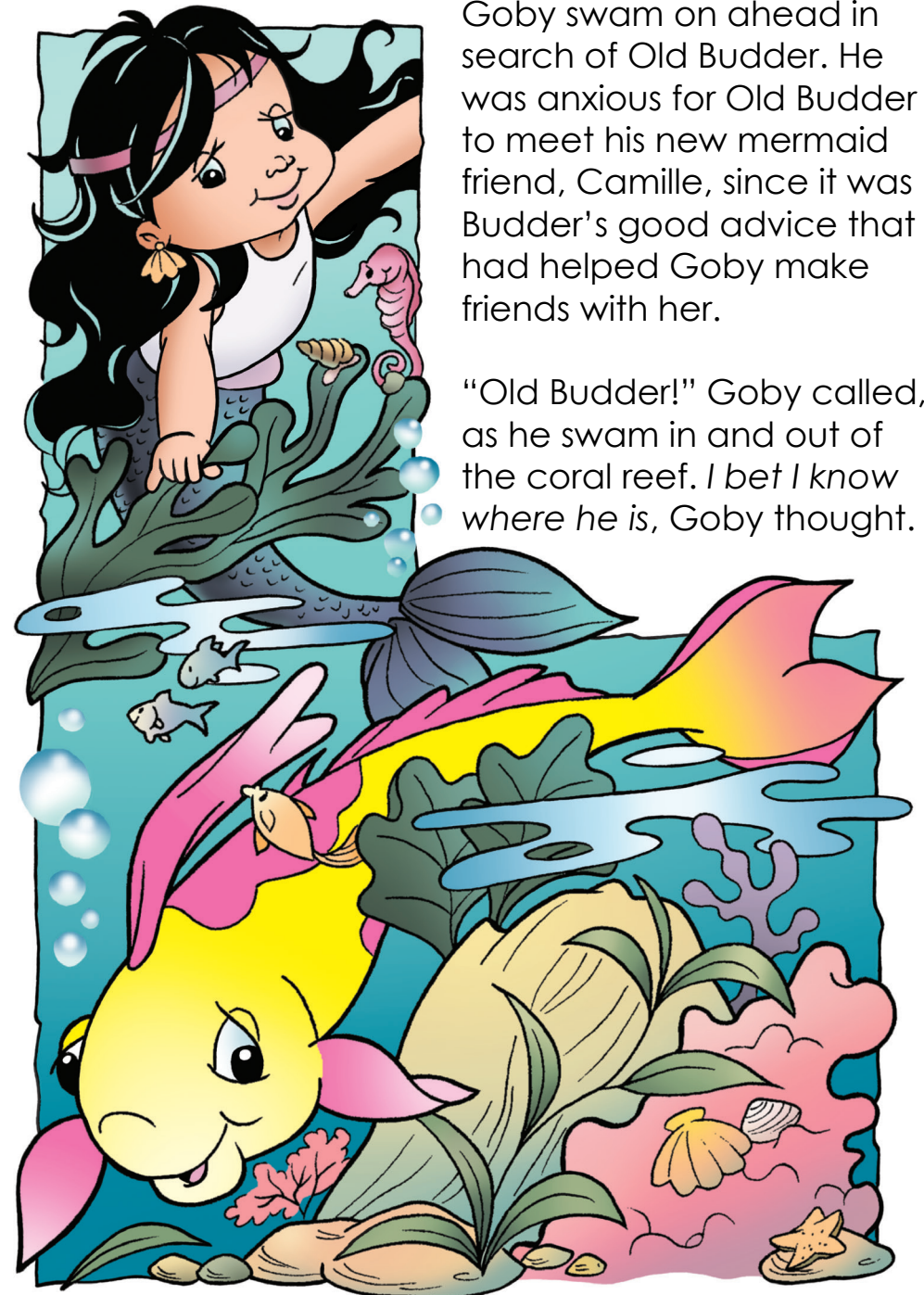
"No," Tristan answered, "but I don't want to meet new friends right now."

"That reminds me of a story about Old Budder. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, please."

"Let's invite Derek and Chantal to come and listen to the story as well," Grandpa Jake said.

"Okay," replied Tristan.



Goby swam on ahead in search of Old Budder. He was anxious for Old Budder to meet his new mermaid friend, Camille, since it was Budder's good advice that had helped Goby make friends with her.

"Old Budder!" Goby called, as he swam in and out of the coral reef. *I bet I know where he is,* Goby thought.

Sure enough, in a secluded gap in the coral sat Old Budder, looking rather glum.

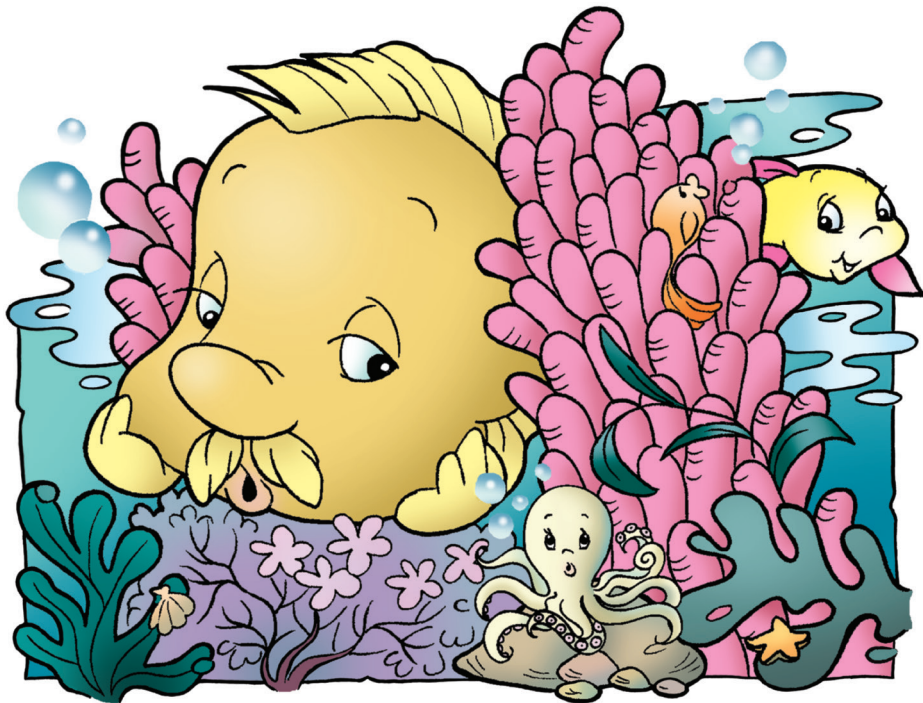
"There you are!" Goby exclaimed. "I've been looking for you."

"And why would you be looking for me?" Budder asked grumpily.

"I wanted you to meet Camille," answered Goby. "Remember that mermaid I met?"

"I'd prefer not to be disturbed," said Old Budder.

"Is something wrong?" Goby asked.



"No!"
answered
Old Budder.
"Like I said..."

"Goby! Goby!" Camille
called. "Where are
you?"

Old Budder let out a sigh.

Just then two eyes peeked
through the coral where
Budder sat. "Well, hello!"
Camille exclaimed cheerfully.
"Are you trying to hide?"



Budder scowled. "Now why did you have to bring her here?" he said to Goby in an annoyed whisper.

"I'm sorry," Goby said. "She was behind me."

Camille came and sat near Old Budder. "So you're Old Budder?" Camille said with a smile.

"I am," Budder muttered.

"Well, it's very nice to meet you!" said Camille in a friendly tone. "Would you like this pretty shell that I found?"

Old Budder Blowfish remained silent.

"Maybe we can come back another time," Goby said. "Budder said that he'd like to be alone right now."

"Oh, I'm sorry," Camille said, turning again to Budder. "Did something happen that made you sad?"

"Now why does everyone think something has to be wrong with me?" Budder asked angrily. "I just want to be left alone!"

With a huff, Old Budder went silent.

Goby looked at Camille and she shrugged her shoulders. Because they felt bad that Old Budder wasn't happy, they wanted to do something to cheer him up. What could they do?

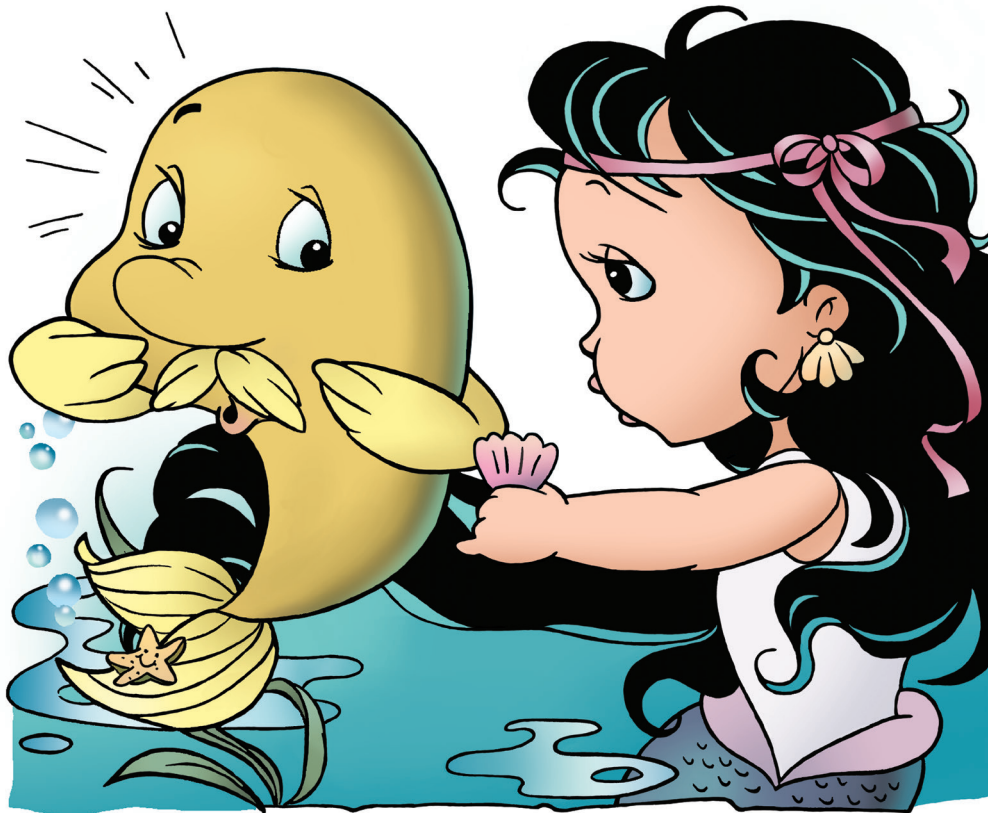
Old Budder squirmed a little. "I'm sorry," he said.
"I don't mean to be rude. The truth is that I'm not
having such a great day. I'm feeling quite grumpy."

"That happens to me sometimes, too," Camille said.

"What do you do to feel better?" Budder asked.

"My father once taught me a little rhyme. He told me
to quote it every time I was having a difficult day, and
that it would help me to be happy."

Camille recited:



"At times when
I am feeling low,
I'll think of all
the love I know;
I will count up all of
life's good,
And be happy,
like I should!"





"That's a nice rhyme," Goby said.

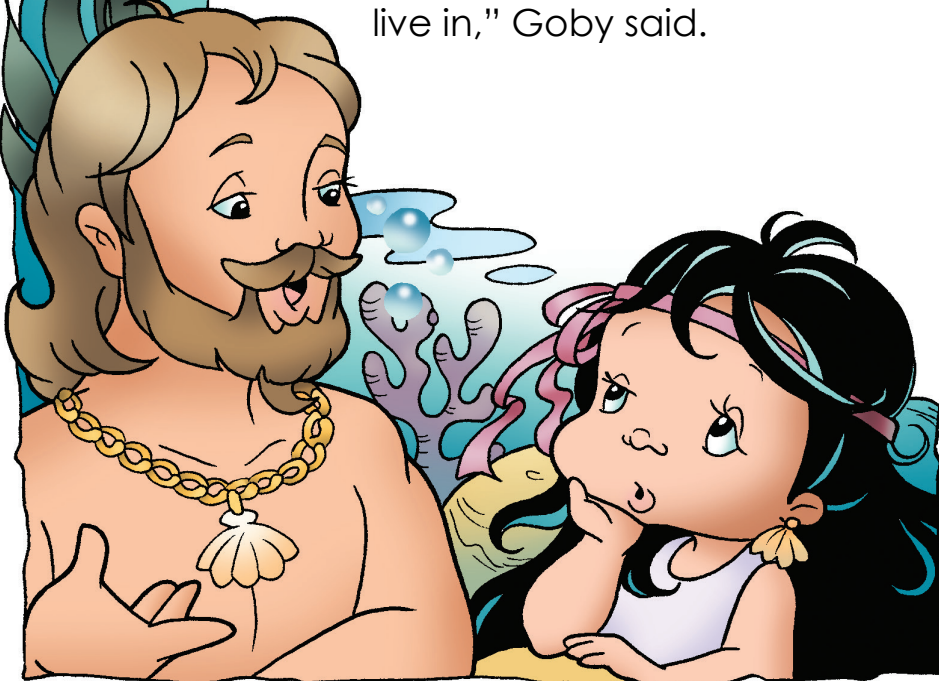
"Does it work?" Old Budder asked.

"Yes. The idea is to think of the good things that you have or experience," Camille explained. "Why don't we try it?"

"Okay. How do we start?"

"I'll begin. I'm so happy for the refreshing water in the ocean," said Camille. "Now it's your turn, Goby."

"I am happy for a beautiful reef to live in," Goby said.



"Ummm ... let's see," began Old Budder. "I'm glad for my favorite spot, hidden in the coral."

It was Camille's turn again. "It makes me so happy when I think of the people who love me."

"And I'm glad for friends who have a way of making things so much better," Goby added.

"I'm glad for a chance to make new friends," Old Budder said shyly. Then he added, "Thank you for helping to cheer me up. My day has been pretty miserable, but after thinking on some of the good things that I have, I do feel better."

"I do, too," said Goby.



Camille smiled.

"I'm so glad I could help to cheer you up. I like making others happy!"

"I have an idea," said Old Budder. "There's an old sunken ship not too far away. Would you like to check it out?"

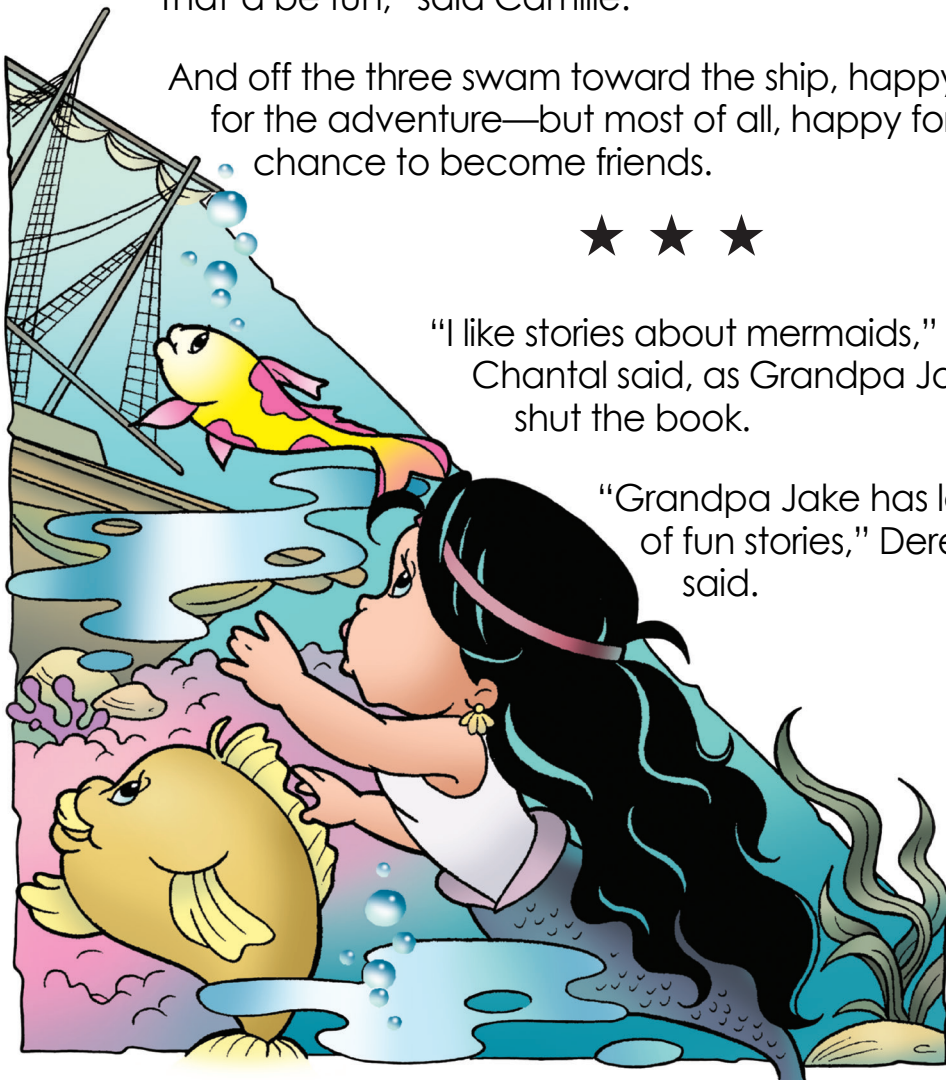
"That'd be fun," said Camille.

And off the three swam toward the ship, happy for the adventure—but most of all, happy for a chance to become friends.



"I like stories about mermaids," Chantal said, as Grandpa Jake shut the book.

"Grandpa Jake has lots of fun stories," Derek said.



"My mommy says that they're special stories," Tristan added.

"And do you know why they're special?" Grandpa Jake asked.

The three kids shook their heads. "No!"

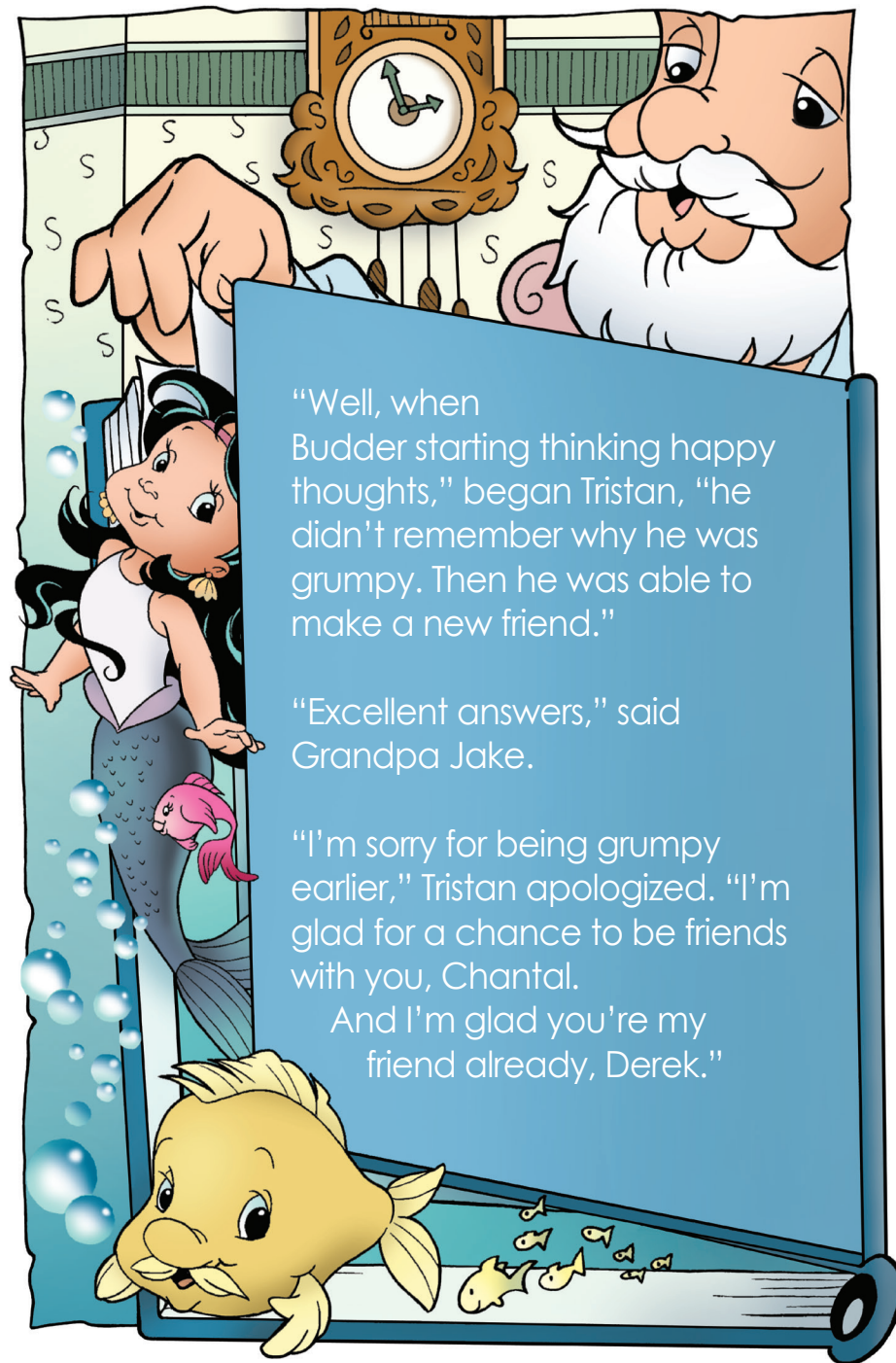
"It's because they help teach you important lessons. What did Old Budder learn in this story?"

"I think it was for him to be more happy and cheerful," Chantal said.

"What about you, Derek? What do you think Old Budder learned?" Grandpa Jake asked.

"That he shouldn't be so grumpy," Derek answered.

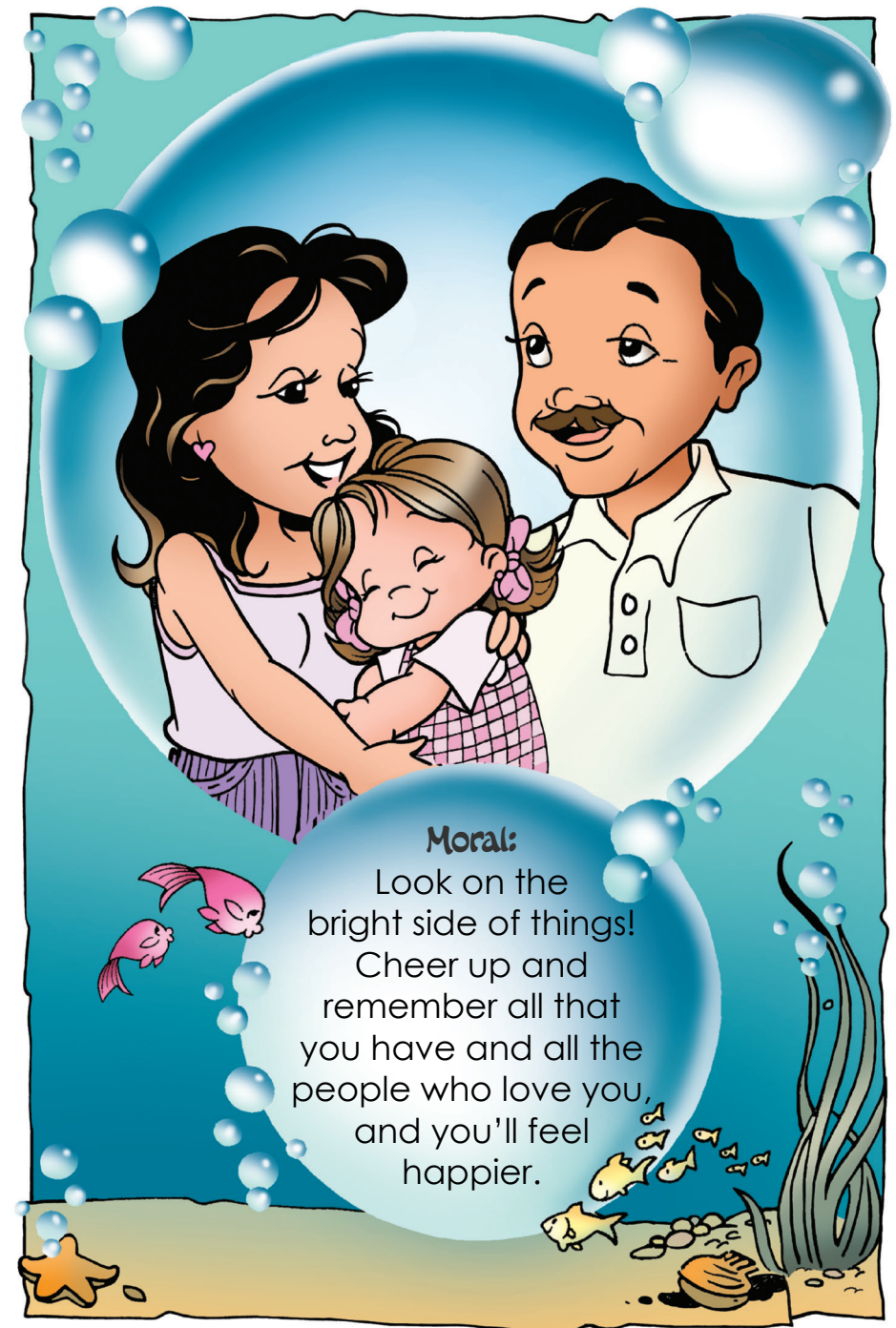




"Well, when Budder starting thinking happy thoughts," began Tristan, "he didn't remember why he was grumpy. Then he was able to make a new friend."

"Excellent answers," said Grandpa Jake.

"I'm sorry for being grumpy earlier," Tristan apologized. "I'm glad for a chance to be friends with you, Chantal. And I'm glad you're my friend already, Derek."



Moral:

Look on the bright side of things! Cheer up and remember all that you have and all the people who love you, and you'll feel happier.