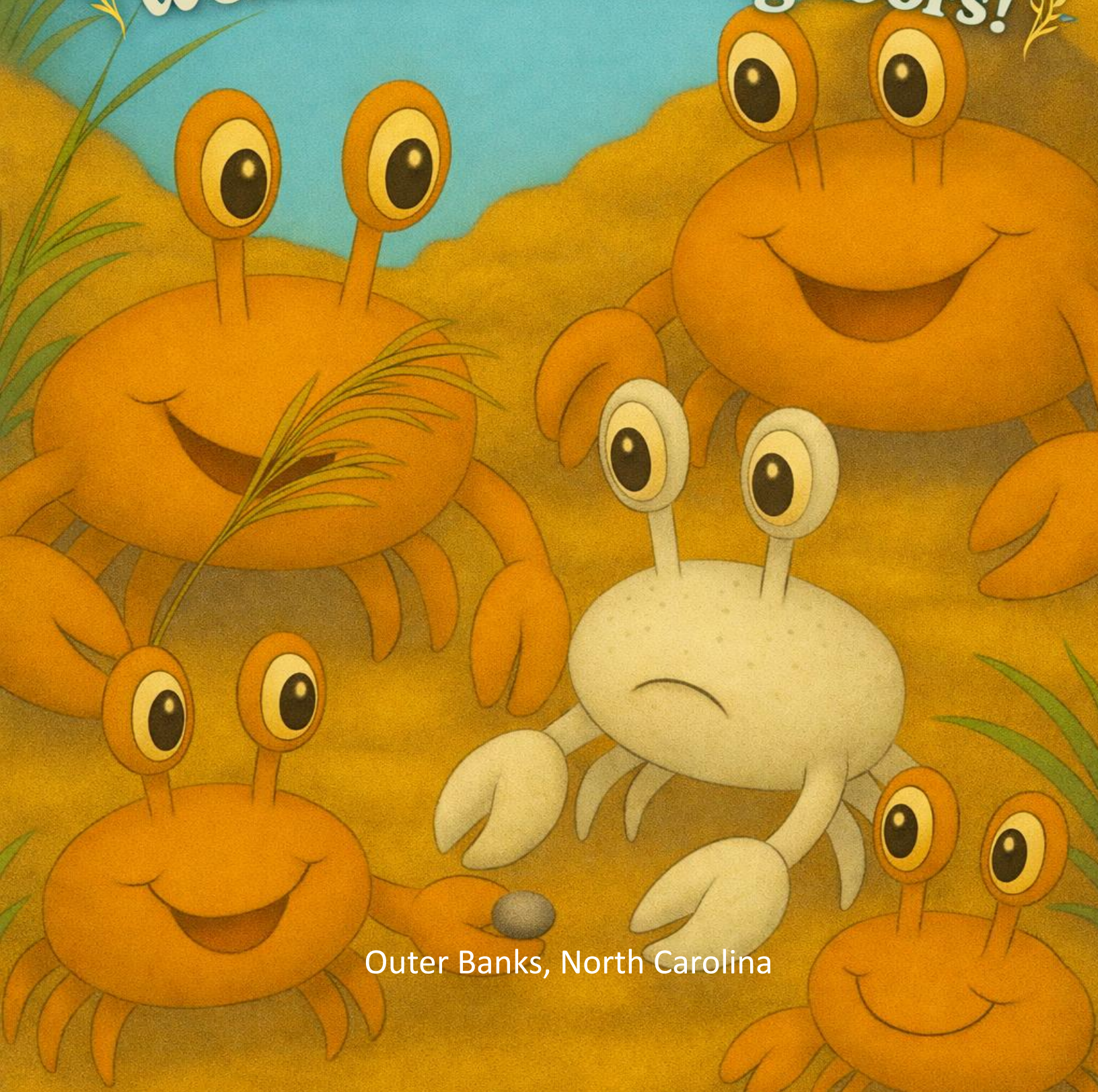


The Dunehoppers

Welcome New Neighbors!



Outer Banks, North Carolina

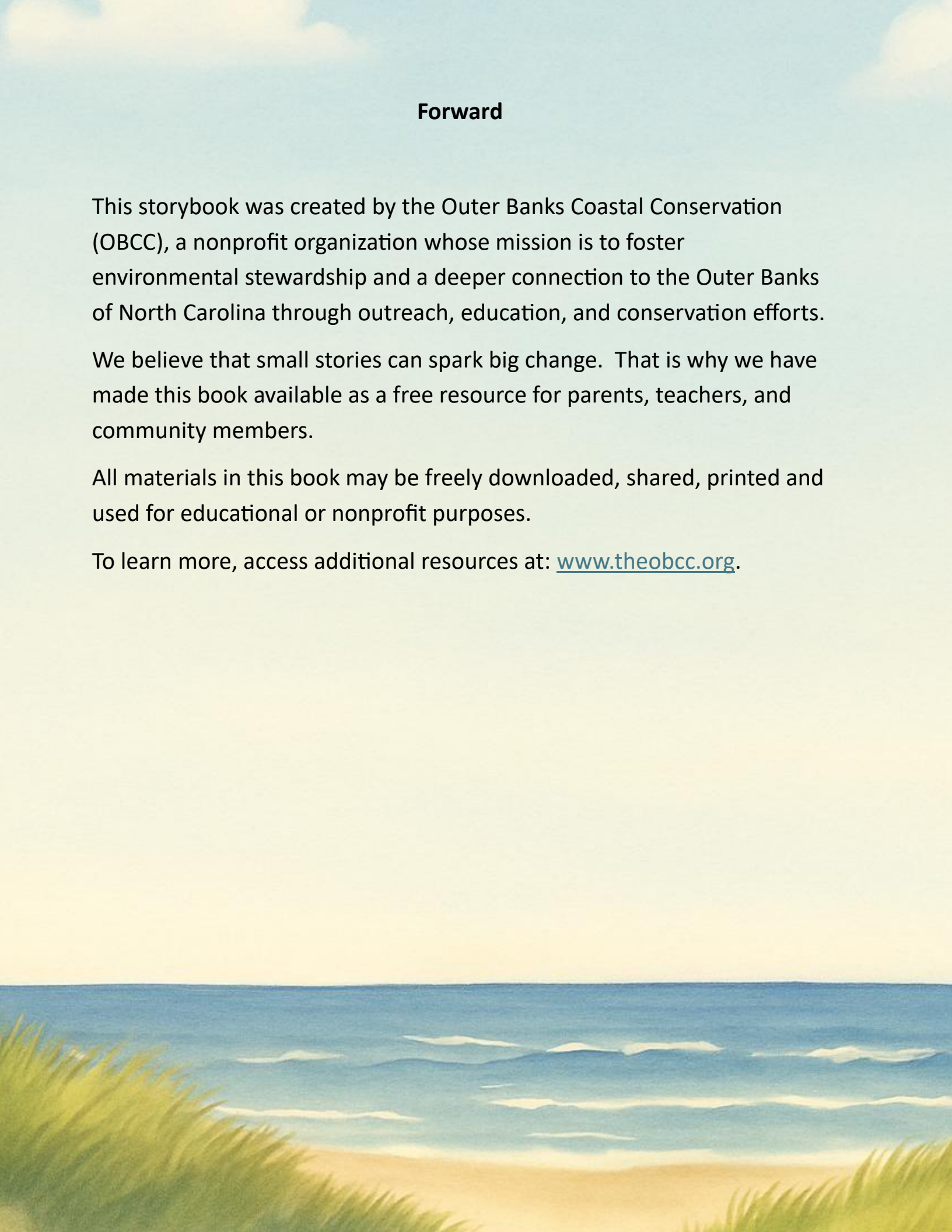
Forward

This storybook was created by the Outer Banks Coastal Conservation (OBCC), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster environmental stewardship and a deeper connection to the Outer Banks of North Carolina through outreach, education, and conservation efforts.

We believe that small stories can spark big change. That is why we have made this book available as a free resource for parents, teachers, and community members.

All materials in this book may be freely downloaded, shared, printed and used for educational or nonprofit purposes.

To learn more, access additional resources at: www.theobcc.org.



One bright morning on the Outer Banks, the Dunehopper children—Sandy, Scoot, and tiny Shellby—were playing outside their burrow, scooting patterns in the soft sand.

Mama Dunehopper peeked out. “Remember,” she said warmly, “kindness starts at home. Love one another, and the dunes will always feel cozy.”

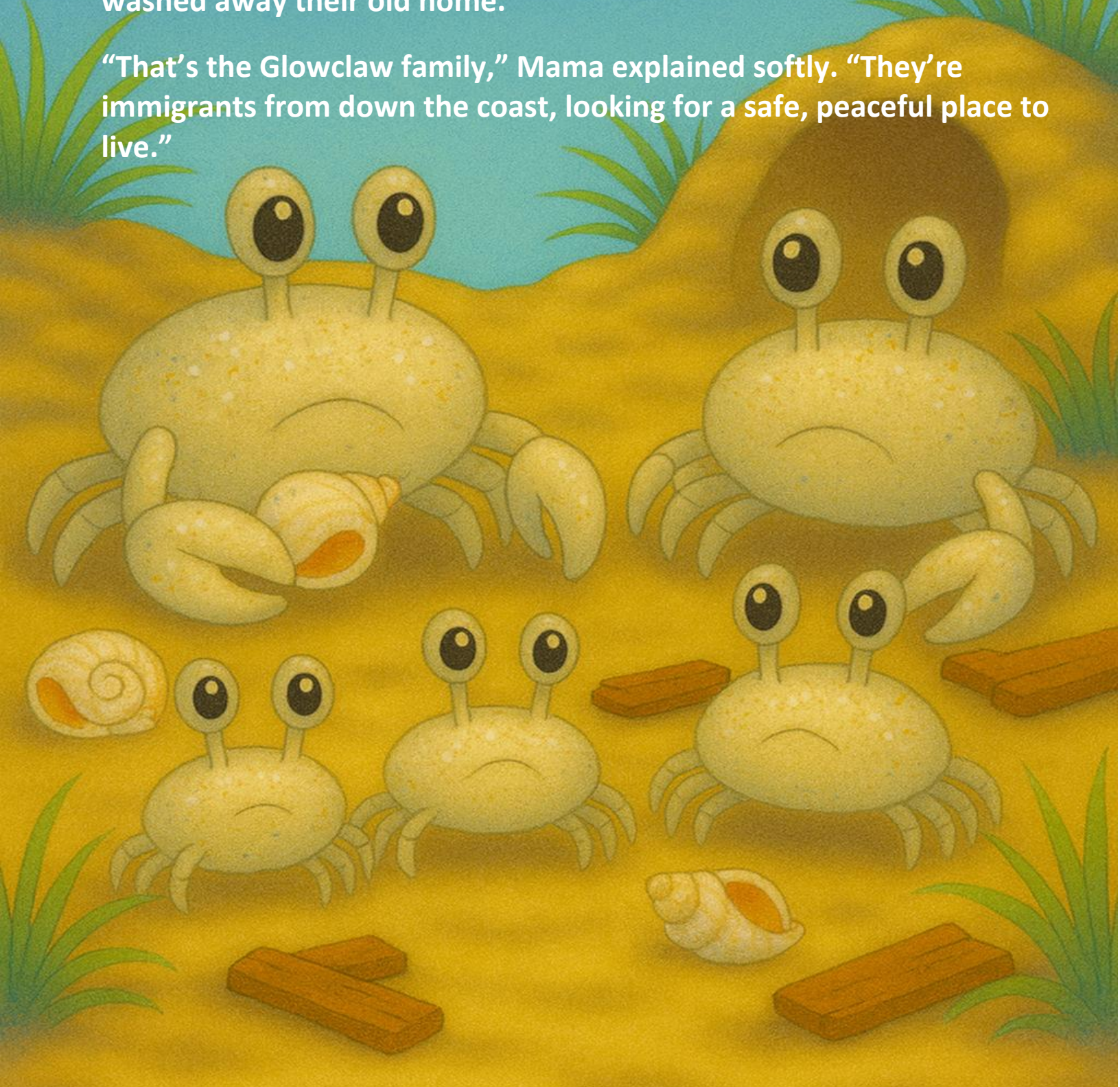
Papa nodded. “A family grows strong when it helps each other.”



Just then, Sandy noticed something unusual near the dune ridge. “Look!” she whispered. “A new family!”

A small group of ghost crabs—pale and shy—were slowly unpacking shells and driftwood furniture near a new little burrow. Their shells were dusted with bits of ocean foam, and their eye stalks wobbled nervously. They had traveled far across the beach after a storm washed away their old home.

“That’s the Glowclaw family,” Mama explained softly. “They’re immigrants from down the coast, looking for a safe, peaceful place to live.”



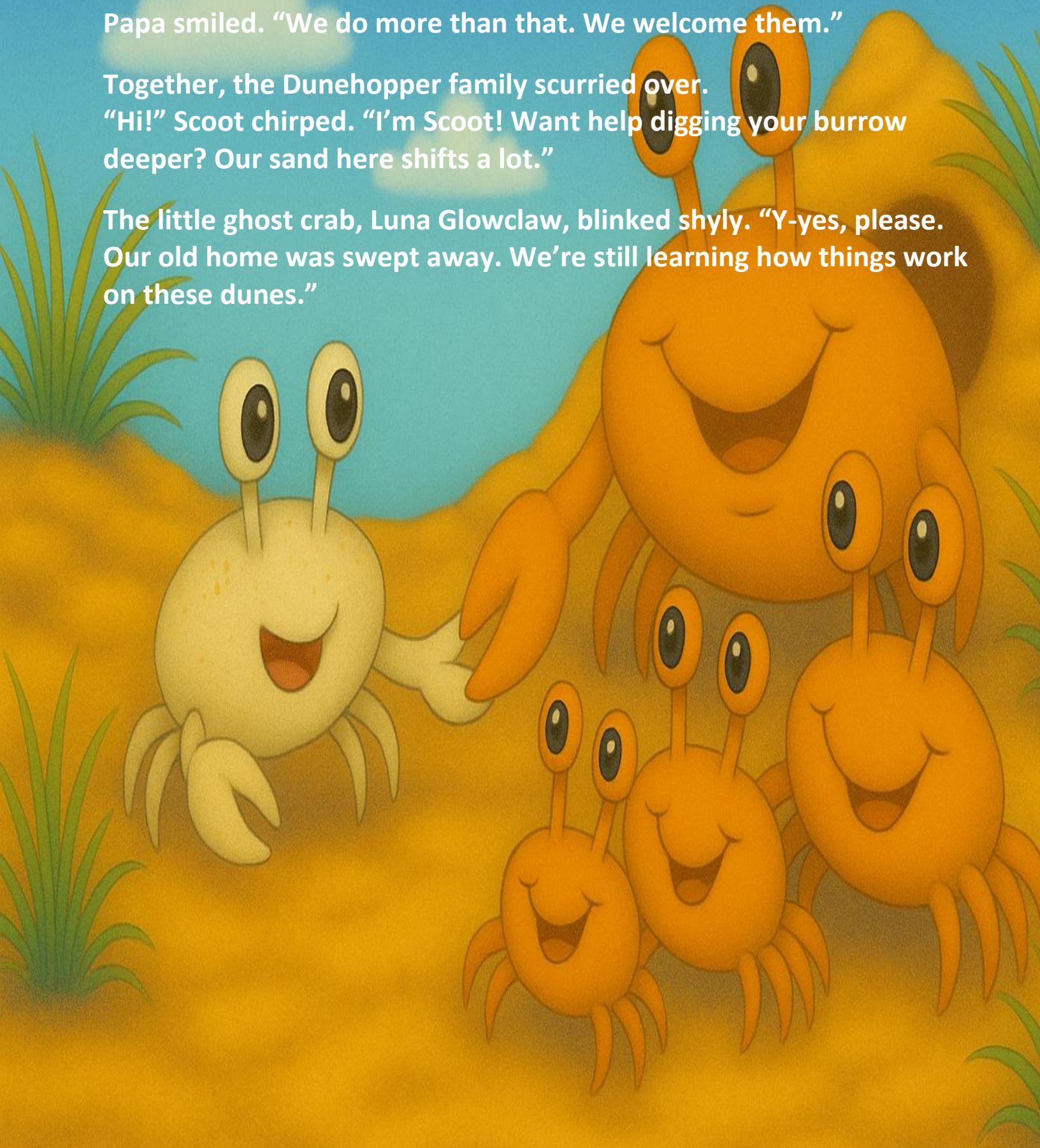
Sandy's eyes widened. "Do we say hello?"

Papa smiled. "We do more than that. We welcome them."

Together, the Dunehopper family scurried over.

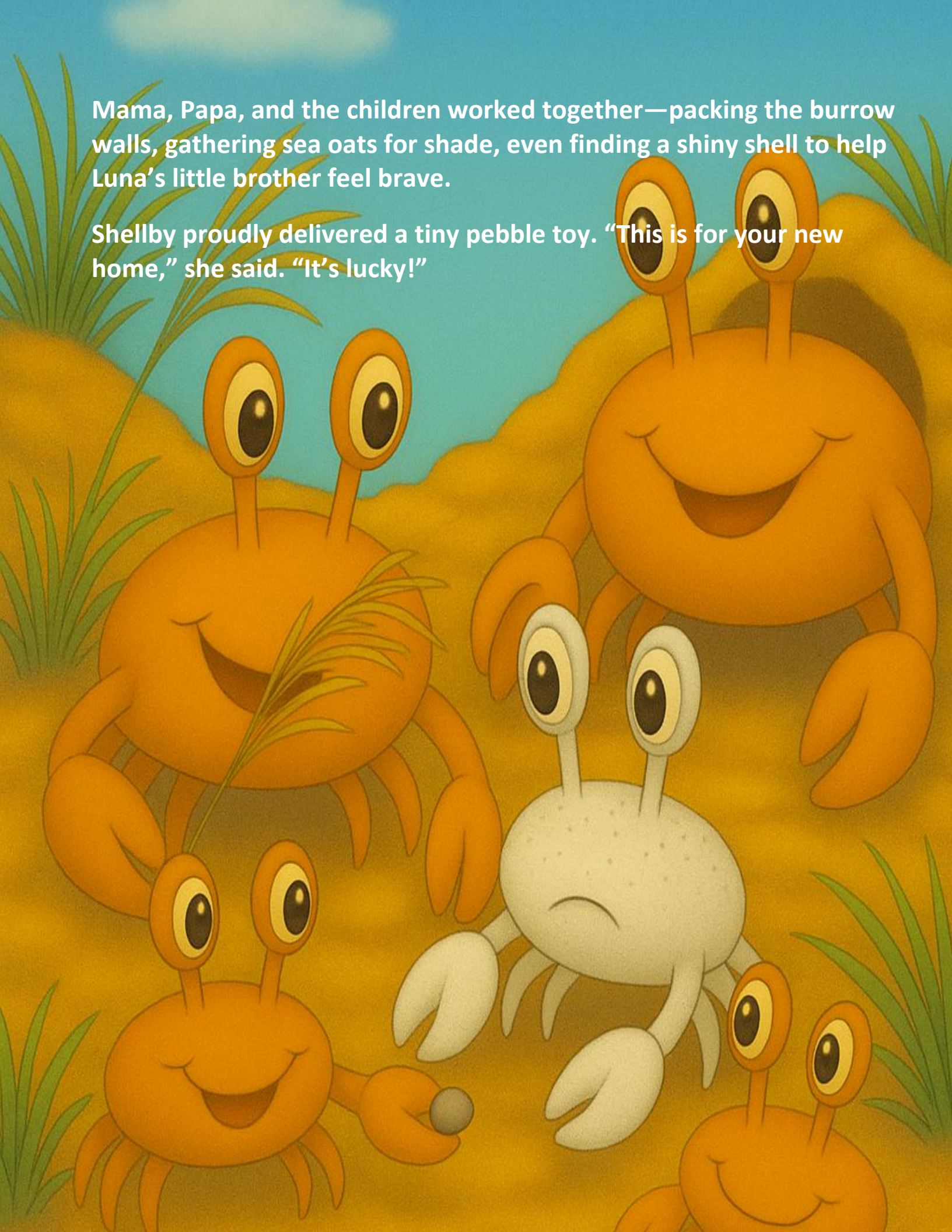
"Hi!" Scoot chirped. "I'm Scoot! Want help digging your burrow deeper? Our sand here shifts a lot."

The little ghost crab, Luna Glowclaw, blinked shyly. "Y-yes, please. Our old home was swept away. We're still learning how things work on these dunes."



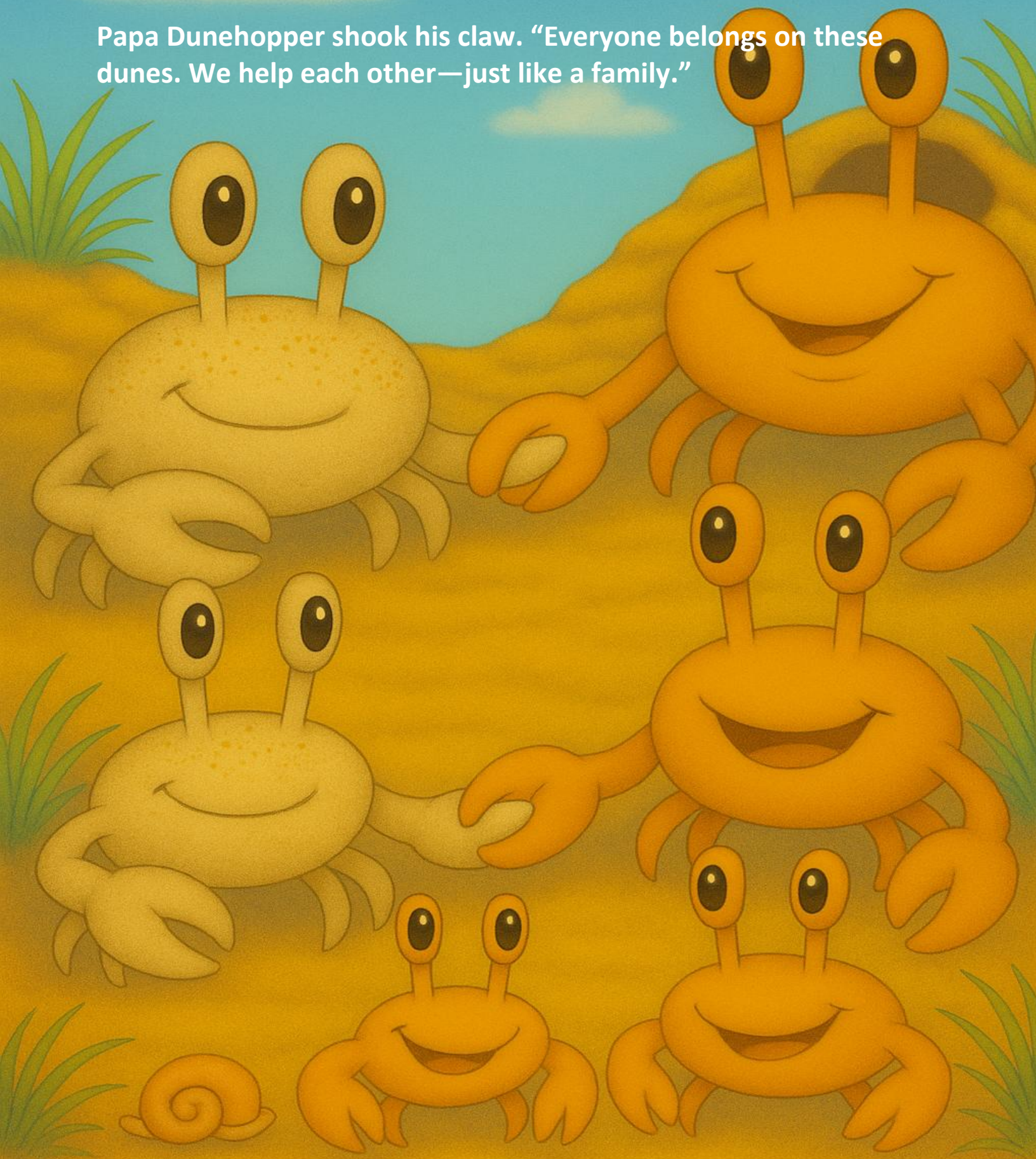
Mama, Papa, and the children worked together—packing the burrow walls, gathering sea oats for shade, even finding a shiny shell to help Luna's little brother feel brave.

Shellby proudly delivered a tiny pebble toy. "This is for your new home," she said. "It's lucky!"



The Glowclaw parents watched with gratitude in their glowing eyes. “Thank you,” Mr. Glowclaw said softly. “We were worried we wouldn’t fit in.”

Papa Dunehopper shook his claw. “Everyone belongs on these dunes. We help each other—just like a family.”

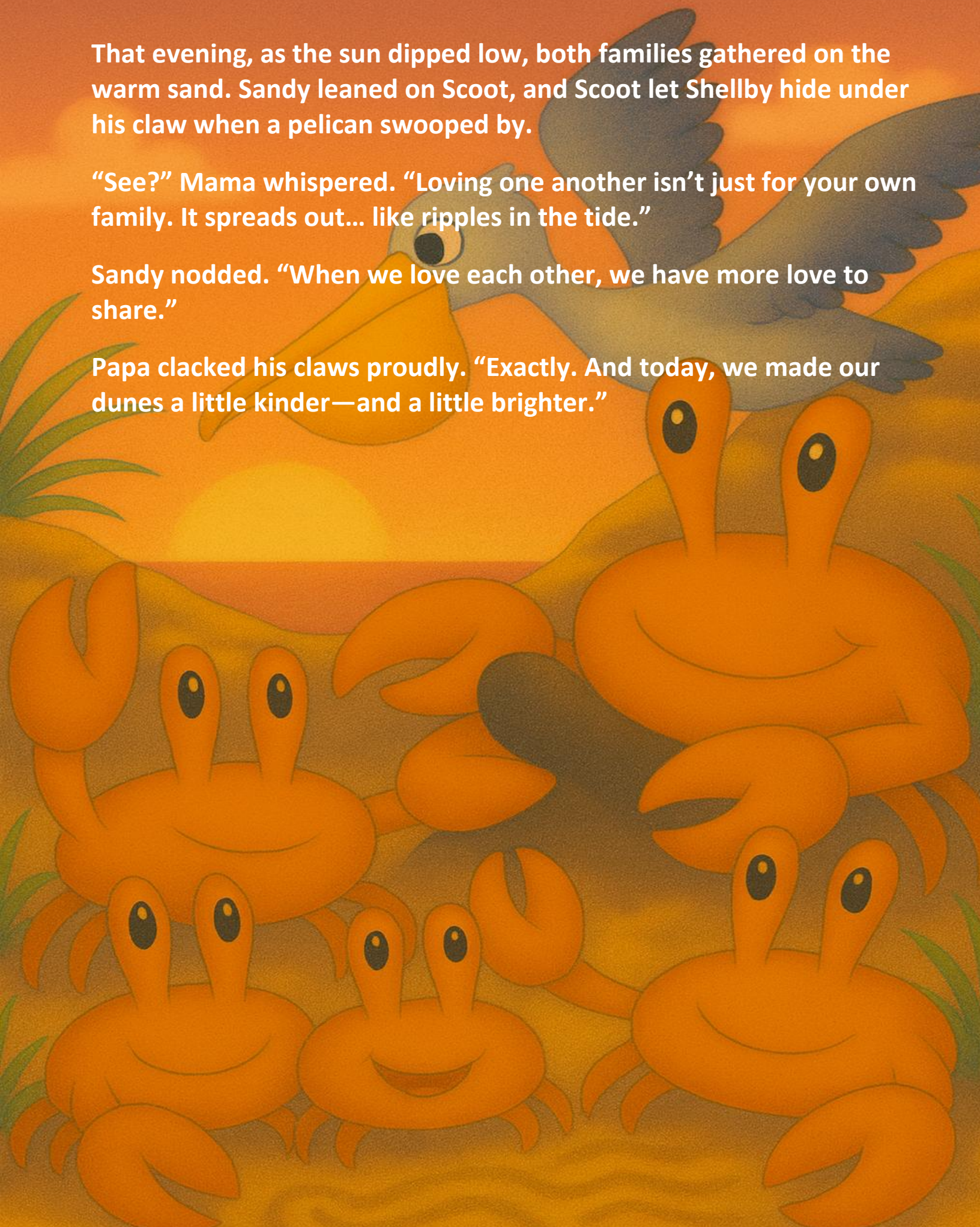


That evening, as the sun dipped low, both families gathered on the warm sand. Sandy leaned on Scoot, and Scoot let Shellby hide under his claw when a pelican swooped by.

“See?” Mama whispered. “Loving one another isn’t just for your own family. It spreads out... like ripples in the tide.”

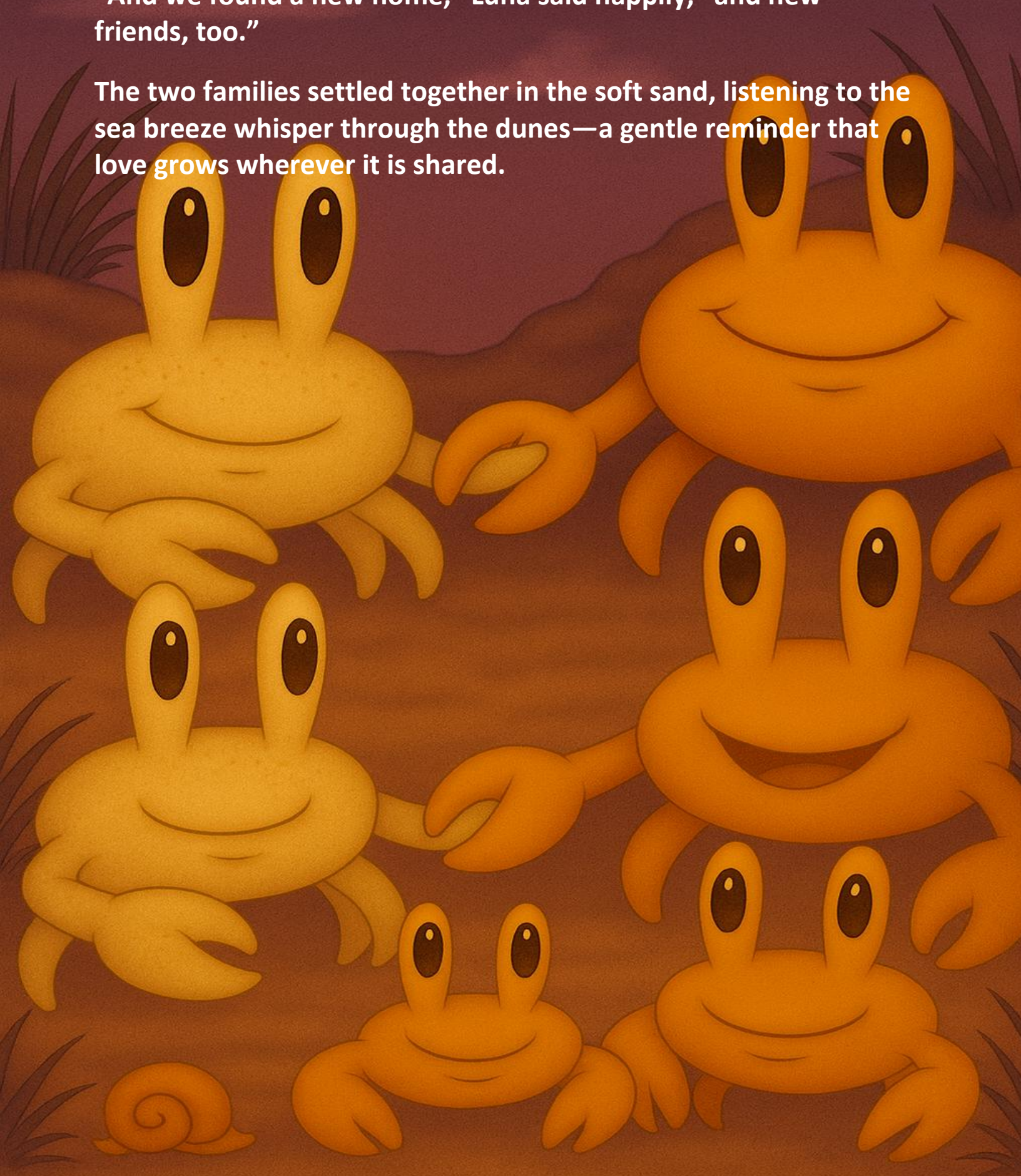
Sandy nodded. “When we love each other, we have more love to share.”

Papa clacked his claws proudly. “Exactly. And today, we made our dunes a little kinder—and a little brighter.”



The Glowclaws smiled, their shells shimmering faintly in the dusk.
“And we found a new home,” Luna said happily, “and new friends, too.”

The two families settled together in the soft sand, listening to the sea breeze whisper through the dunes—a gentle reminder that love grows wherever it is shared.



Did You Know?

Ghost crabs really do move to new homes! After big storms, waves can wash away their burrows, so ghost crabs must scurry along the beach to find safer sand—just like the Glowclaw family in this story. When animals (and people!) help one another during times of change, everyone has a better chance to feel safe and belong.

