

# The Sandcastle That Welcomed Everyone



Outer Banks, North Carolina

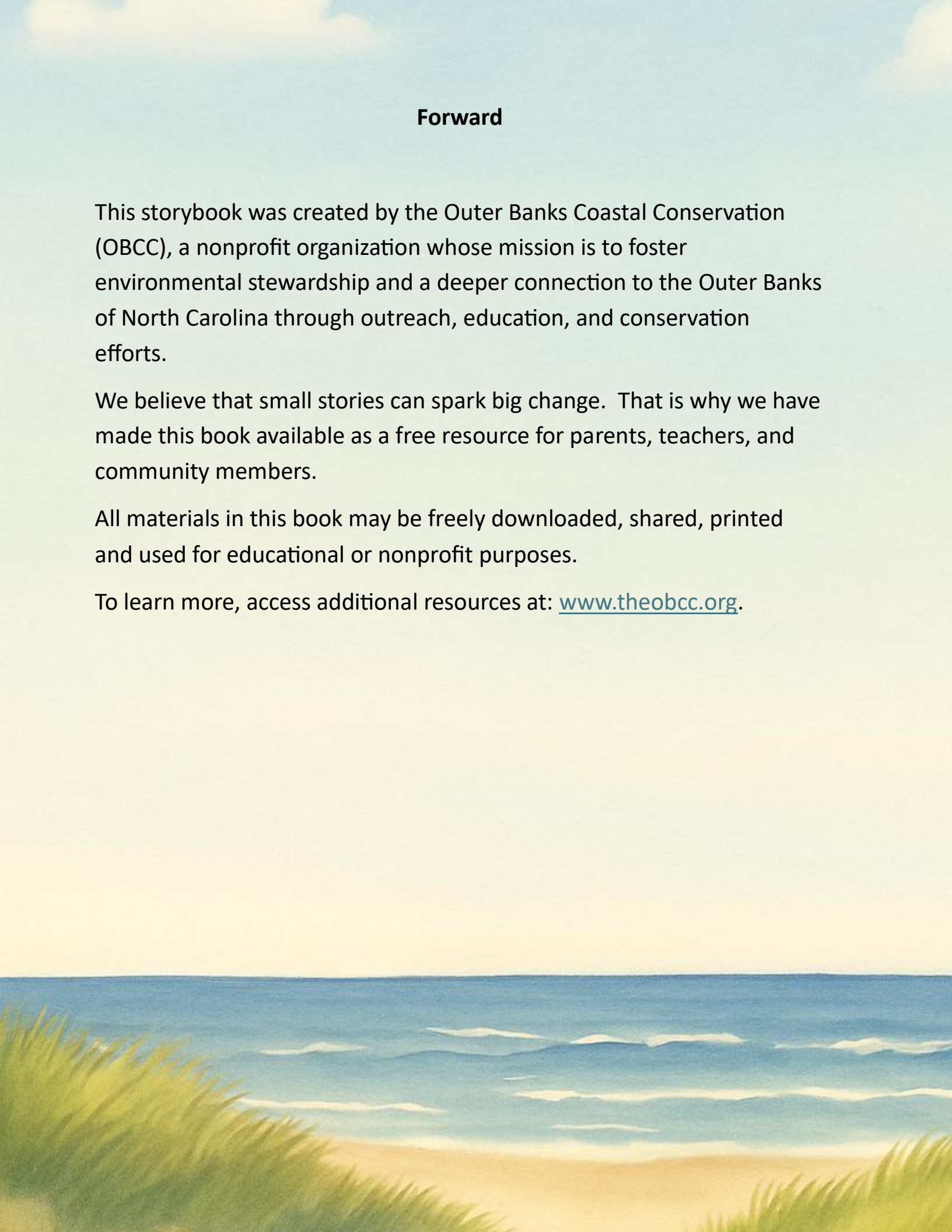
## Forward

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](http://www.theobcc.org).





The sun shone bright over the soft sands of Cape Hatteras Beach. Waves whispered against the shore, and gulls swooped and called above the dunes. A group of children—Emma, Jaden, Lily, and Noah—were busy building the biggest sandcastle the Outer Banks had ever seen.

“Let’s make a moat around it!” said Jaden, digging with his red plastic shovel. “And seashell towers!” added Lily, running to collect shiny shells and bits of driftwood. They laughed and worked together, the castle growing taller with each scoop of sand.





A little farther down the beach, another boy sat by himself. His name was Kai. He was new to the area and didn't know anyone yet. He had a small green bucket and a blue shovel, but every time he tried to stack sand, his towers crumbled into messy piles.

He sighed. "Why can't I get it right?"





Emma noticed him and whispered to her friends, “Look, that boy’s castle keeps falling.” Jaden smirked. “Maybe he doesn’t know how to build one!” Lily frowned. “That’s not nice, Jaden. Maybe he just needs help.”

Emma thought for a moment, watching Kai try again. The waves were creeping closer, and one rolled right over his half-built castle. Kai dropped his shovel and looked ready to cry.

Emma stood up. “I’m going to invite him to join us.”

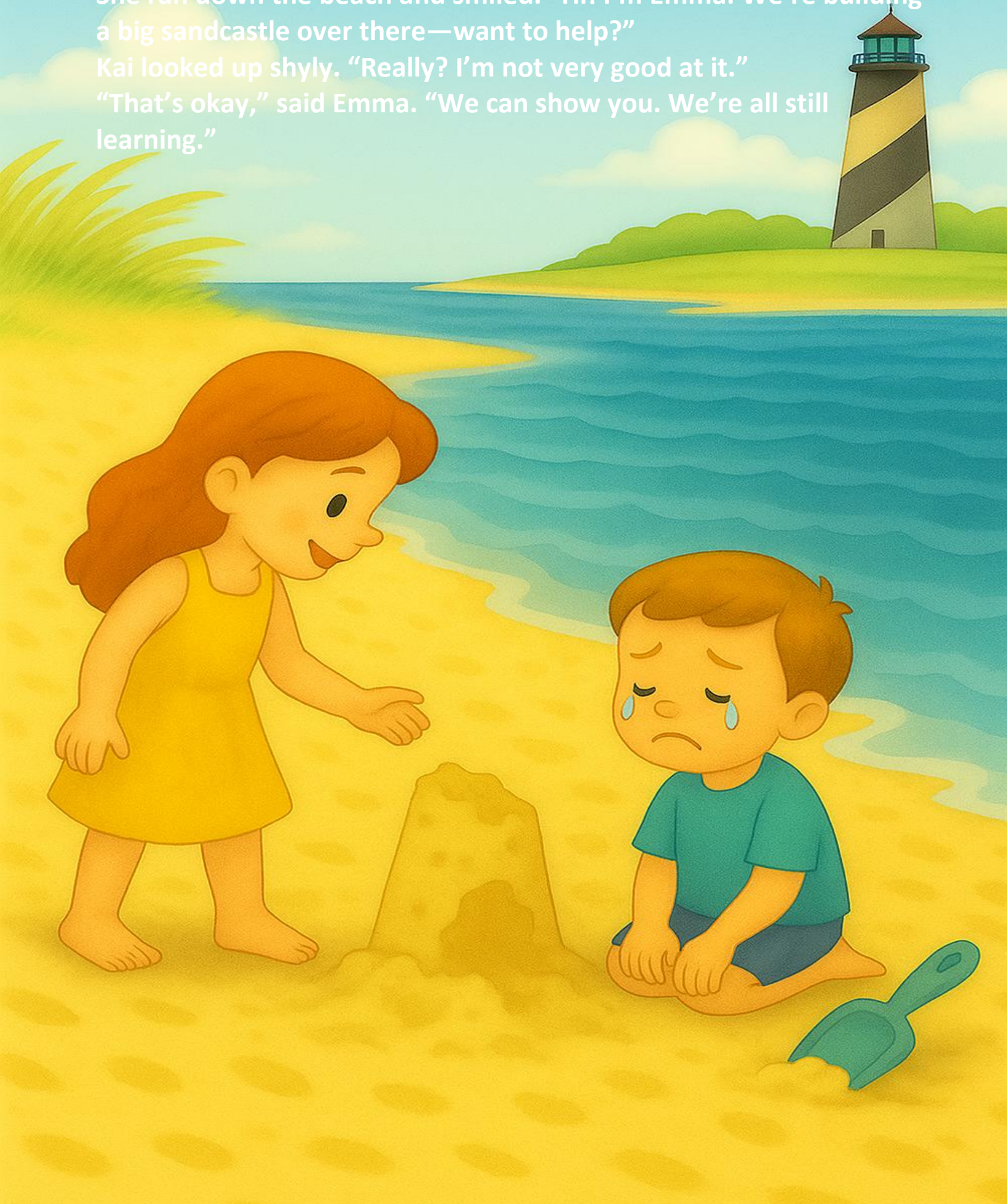




She ran down the beach and smiled. “Hi! I’m Emma. We’re building a big sandcastle over there—want to help?”

Kai looked up shyly. “Really? I’m not very good at it.”

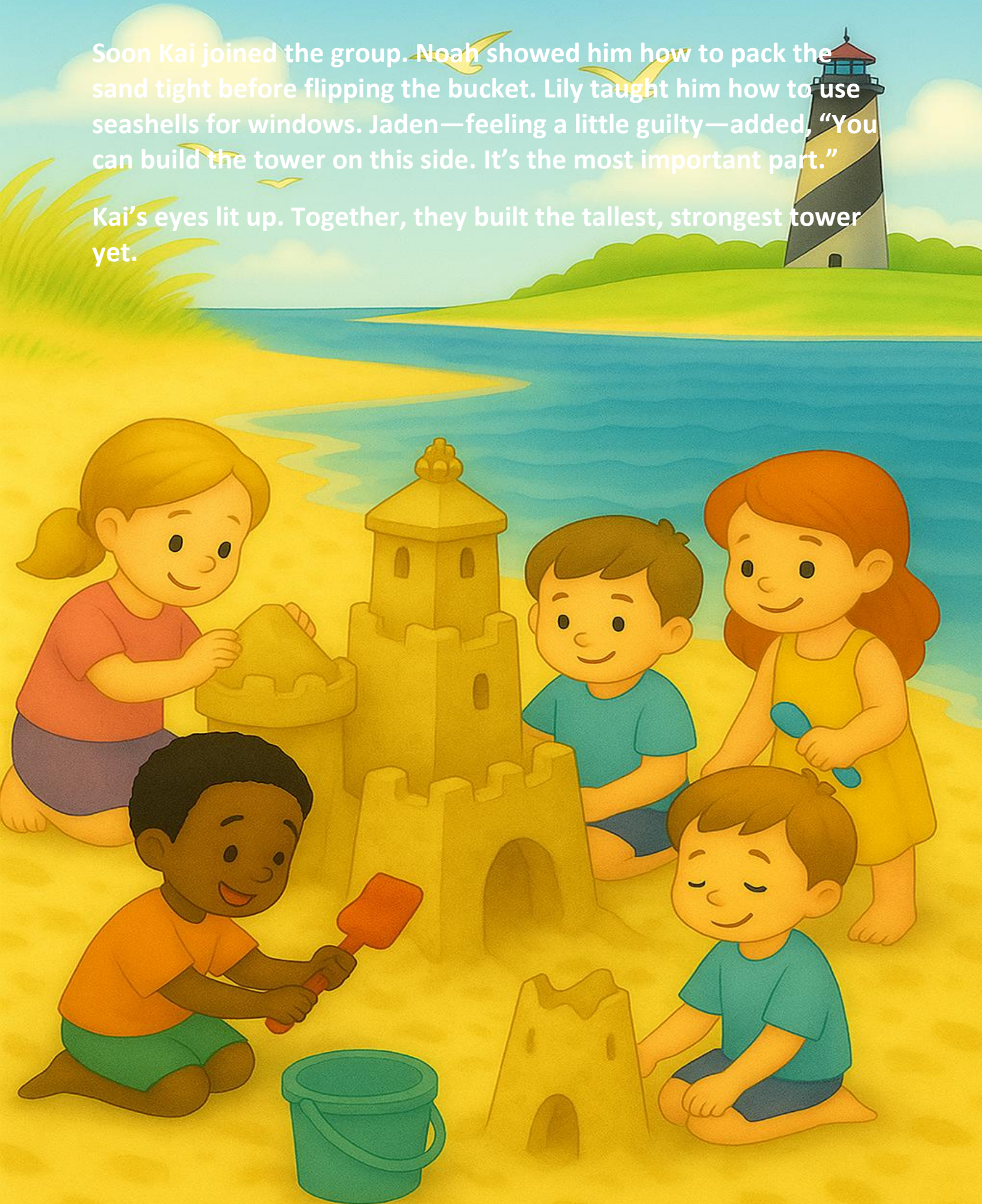
“That’s okay,” said Emma. “We can show you. We’re all still learning.”





Soon Kai joined the group. Noah showed him how to pack the sand tight before flipping the bucket. Lily taught him how to use seashells for windows. Jaden—feeling a little guilty—added, “You can build the tower on this side. It’s the most important part.”

Kai’s eyes lit up. Together, they built the tallest, strongest tower yet.





When the castle was finished, the children stood back to admire it. The afternoon sun sparkled on the shells, and a tiny crab peeked from the moat as if to say hello.

“This is the best castle ever!” shouted Lily.

“And we built it together,” said Kai, smiling wide.

Emma nodded. “See? Castles—and friends—are stronger when everyone is welcome.”

As the tide came in and the waves slowly began to wash the castle away, the children didn’t feel sad. They knew they could build another one tomorrow—together.





# Moral of the Story

True friendship means helping others, not teasing them. When we include everyone, we build something stronger—just like a sandcastle made with many hands.

## Did You Know?

- The Outer Banks of North Carolina are a chain of barrier islands — long, narrow strips of sand that shift and change with wind and waves.
- Building sandcastles helps children learn teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving!
- The grains of sand on Outer Banks beaches come from tiny bits of shells, coral, and minerals that have been shaped by the ocean for thousands of years.
- Crabs, clams, and tiny beach creatures often hide in wet sand near the waterline — so be gentle and share the beach with them!
- Just like sandcastles are stronger when everyone helps, friendships grow stronger when we include and encourage others.

