

BANDIT

and the

WINDY DAY

A COASTAL
CLEAN-UP STORY
FROM THE
OUTER BANKS

Outer Banks, North Carolina

Bandit and the Windy Day: A Coastal Clean-Up Story from the Outer Banks

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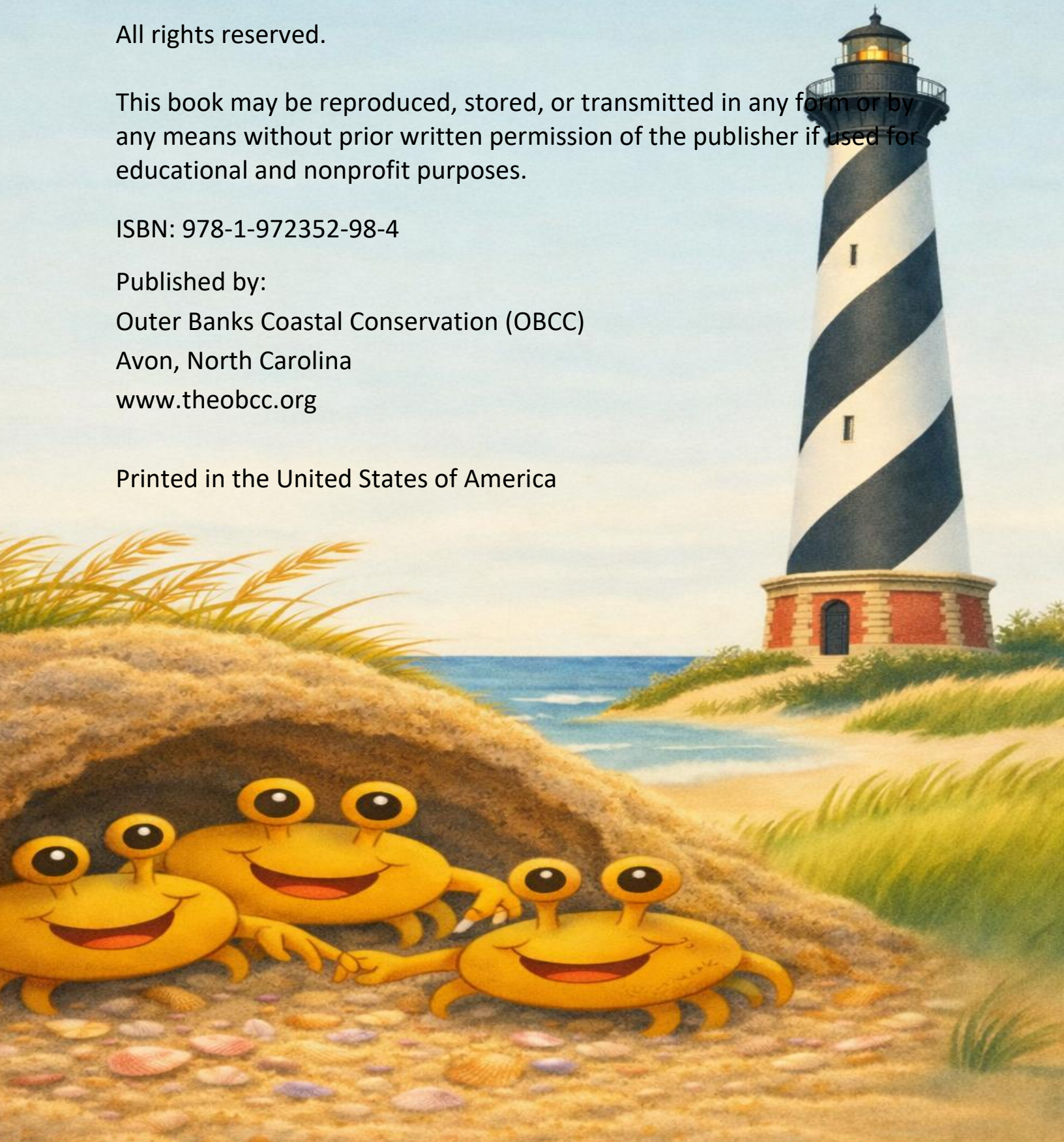
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About This Book

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.



On a breezy morning in the Outer Banks, a curious raccoon named Bandit poked his head out from behind a sand dune. The wind ruffled his fur and made the sea oats sway like dancers.



As he walked down the street, he spotted trouble.

“Oh no,” Bandit said. “These bins are *bursting!*”

Lids were missing, bags were left beside the cans, and bits of trash were already fluttering into the wind. A plastic cup bounced down the road. A crumpled chip bag spiraled like a kite.



“This isn’t good,” said a voice from above. It was Shells, a wise old gull. “On a windy day like today, trash doesn’t stay put—it travels.”

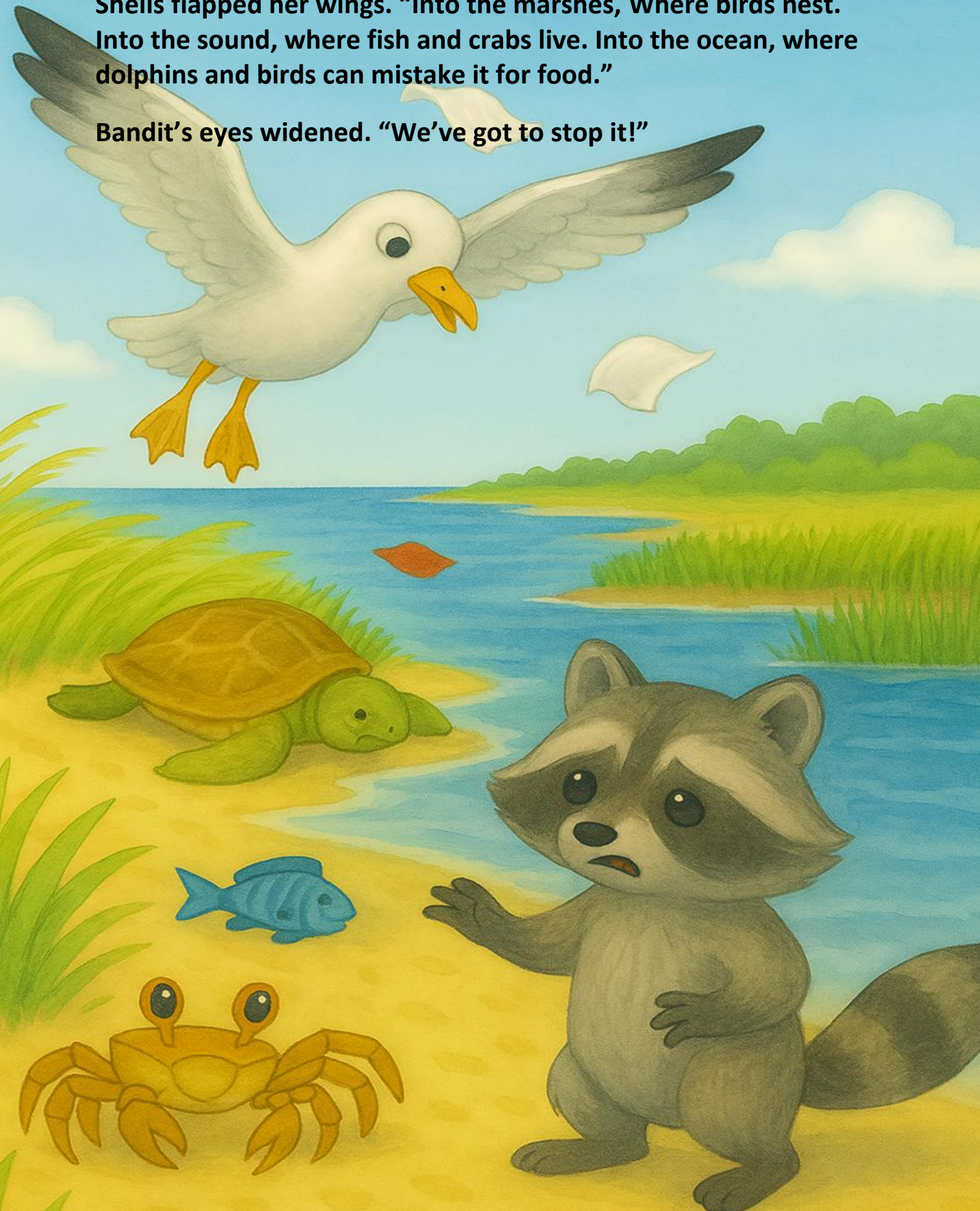
Bandit watched as a paper plate flew over the dunes and into the marsh. A plastic bag sailed straight into the sound. Bits of wrappers scattered toward the ocean.

“Where does it all go?” Bandit asked.



Shells flapped her wings. "Into the marshes, Where birds nest.
Into the sound, where fish and crabs live. Into the ocean, where
dolphins and birds can mistake it for food."

Bandit's eyes widened. "We've got to stop it!"



Together, Bandit and Shells gathered their friends: Sandy the crab, Gabby the goose, and Midge the marsh mouse.

They worked as a team—tugging lids back onto cans, tucking trash bags inside, and reminding the humans with little signs:

“Secure your trash! Lids on tight!”

“Don’t overflow—close the can!”

“No loose bags—tie them up and toss them inside!”



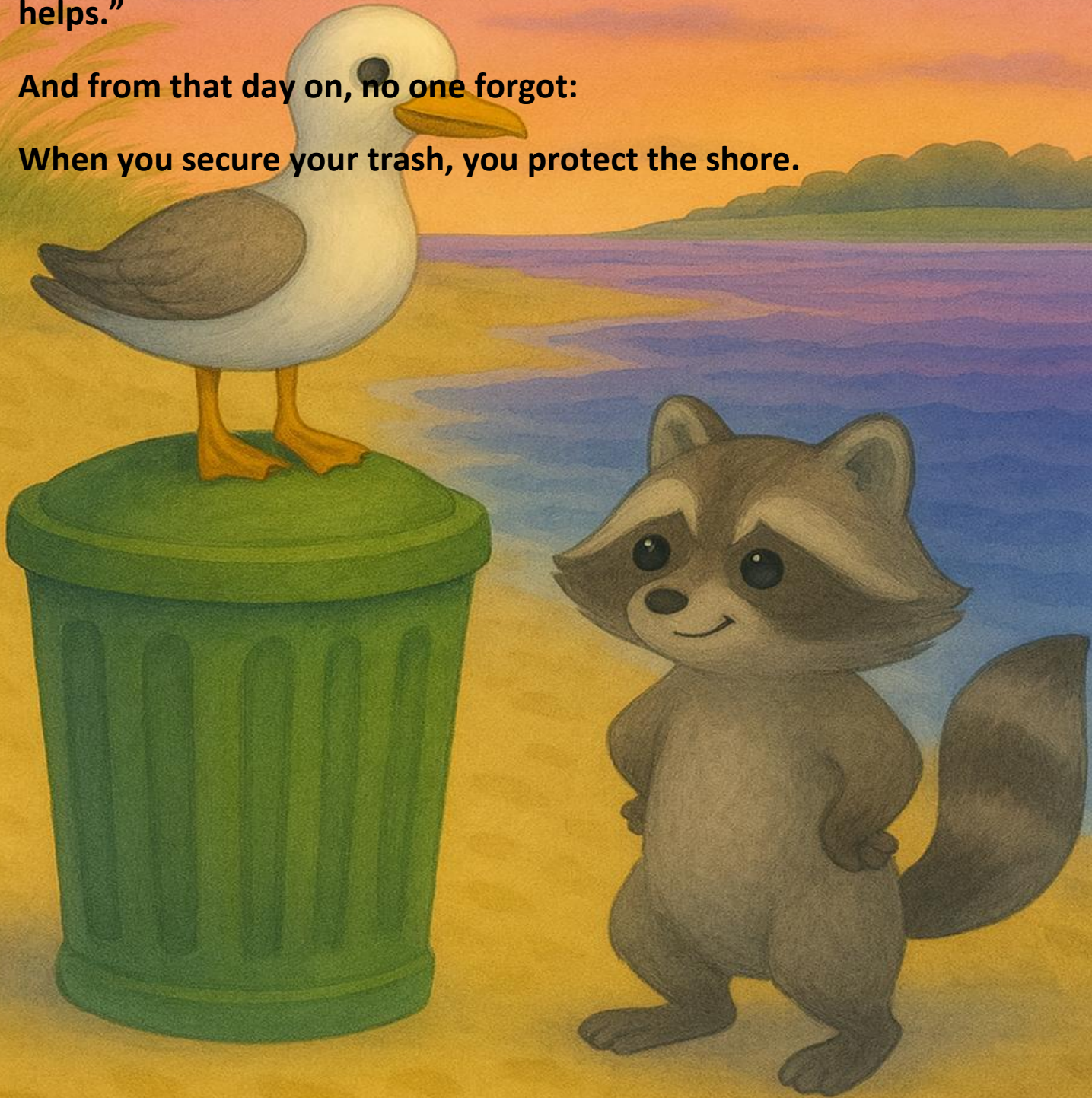
The wind still howled, but the streets stayed clean. No bags flew. No cups tumbled. No wrappers reached the sea.

That evening, Bandit stood proudly by a sealed trash can. "Turns out," he grinned, "being tidy protects more than just streets. It protects our whole home."

Shells nodded. "From the dunes to the ocean, every bit of care helps."

And from that day on, no one forgot:

When you secure your trash, you protect the shore.



Did You Know?

In the Outer Banks, the wind is super strong—sometimes strong enough to blow trash right out of the can!

When lids aren't closed, the wind can:

- Blow a paper cup down the street
- Carry a chip bag over the dunes
- Send a plastic bag into the ocean

Even a small breeze can make trash travel far—and that trash can hurt turtles, birds, and crabs who might think it is food.

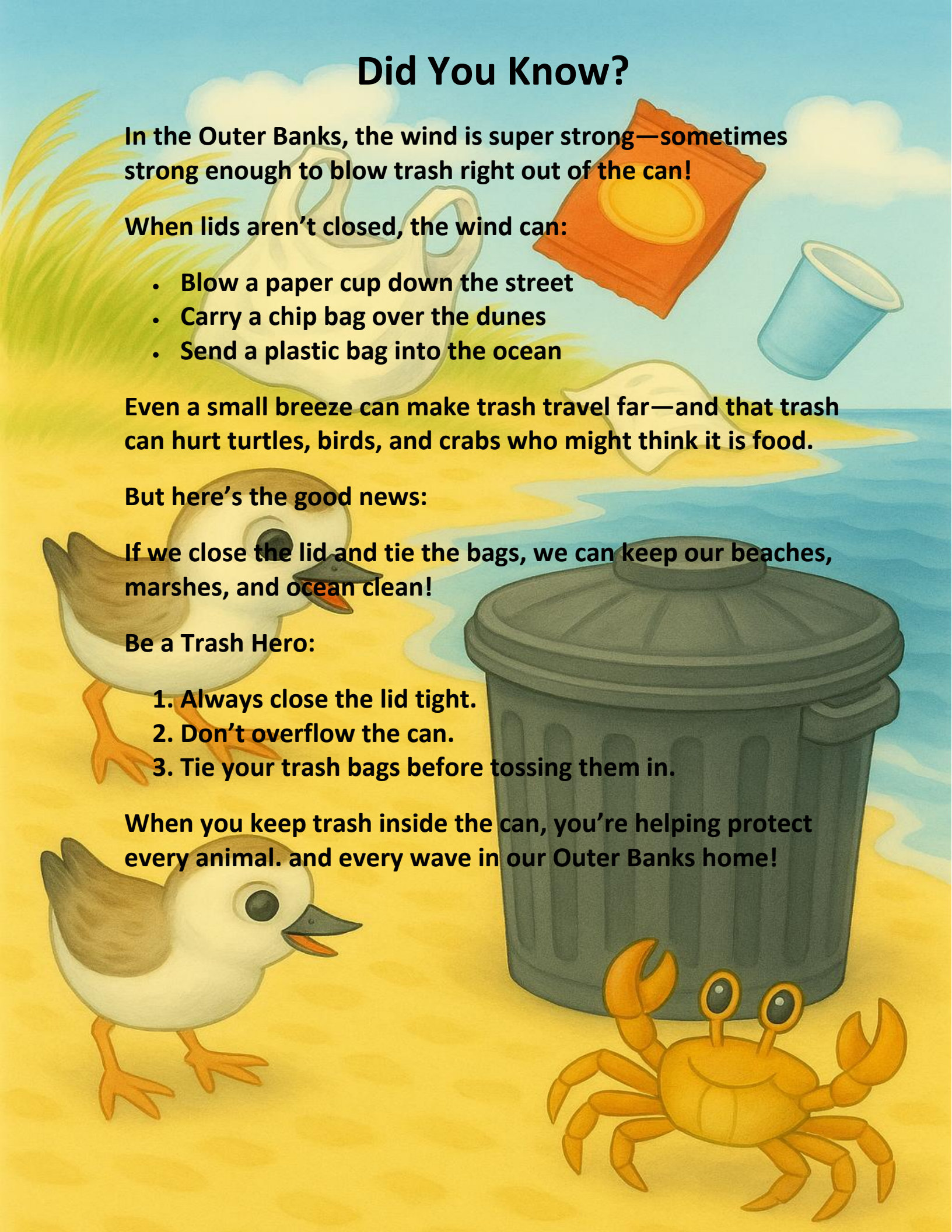
But here's the good news:

If we close the lid and tie the bags, we can keep our beaches, marshes, and ocean clean!

Be a Trash Hero:

1. Always close the lid tight.
2. Don't overflow the can.
3. Tie your trash bags before tossing them in.

When you keep trash inside the can, you're helping protect every animal. and every wave in our Outer Banks home!



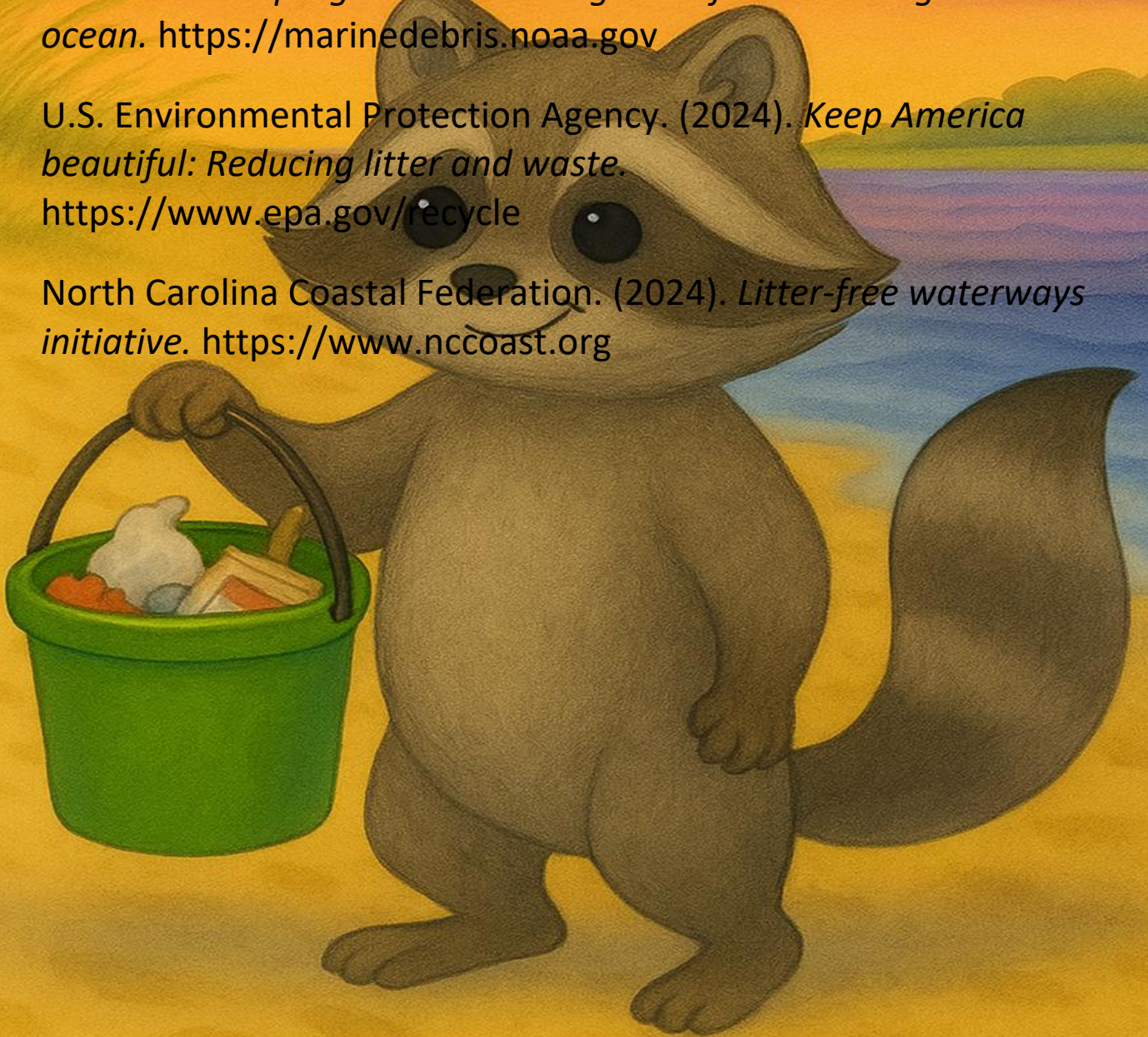
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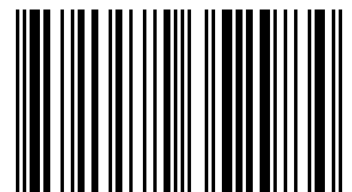
Bandit and the Windy Day: A Coastal Clean-Up Story from the Outer Banks

Bandit, a curious raccoon, discovers overflowing trash cans on a windy day in the Outer Banks. With help from Shells the gull and other animal friends, he secures lids, tucks trash inside, and posts friendly reminders to humans about keeping cans closed and bags tied. Their teamwork stops trash from blowing into marshes, the sound, and the ocean—protecting wildlife and keeping the coast clean. The story ends with a “Did You Know?” section explaining how wind carries litter and offering simple “Trash Hero” tips to keep the shore safe.

About the Publisher

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