



The
Dunehoppers'
**Boo-tiful
Beach
Halloween**

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.





On a moonlit Halloween night on the Outer Banks, the dunes glowed silver and the waves whispered *shhhh... boo!*

Inside their cozy burrow, the Dunehopper family was buzzing with excitement.

“It’s time!” Scoot clacked his claws. “Best night of the year!”

Papa Dunehopper stepped forward proudly, wearing a tiny pirate hat perched between his eye stalks and an eye patch painted right onto his shell. A scrap of netting hung over one claw like a rugged pirate sleeve.

“Arrrr,” he said. “I’ll be Captain Sandbeard, terror of the tide pools.”

Mama laughed and adjusted her own costume—a flowing cloak of seaweed and shells. “And I am the Queen of the Tides,” she announced, swishing dramatically.

Sandy popped out next, wearing a pointy hat made from a broken waffle cone. “I’m a sand-witch,” she said. “I cast spells that turn snacks into MORE snacks.”

Shellby shyly peeked out, wrapped in glow-in-the-dark kelp strips. “I’m a jellyfish,” she whispered. “But... a very gentle one.”

Scoot finished last. He had taped two gull feathers to his shell and puffed himself up proudly.

“I’m a terrifying seagull.”

Everyone stared.

Papa squinted. “Ye look... suspiciously realistic.”

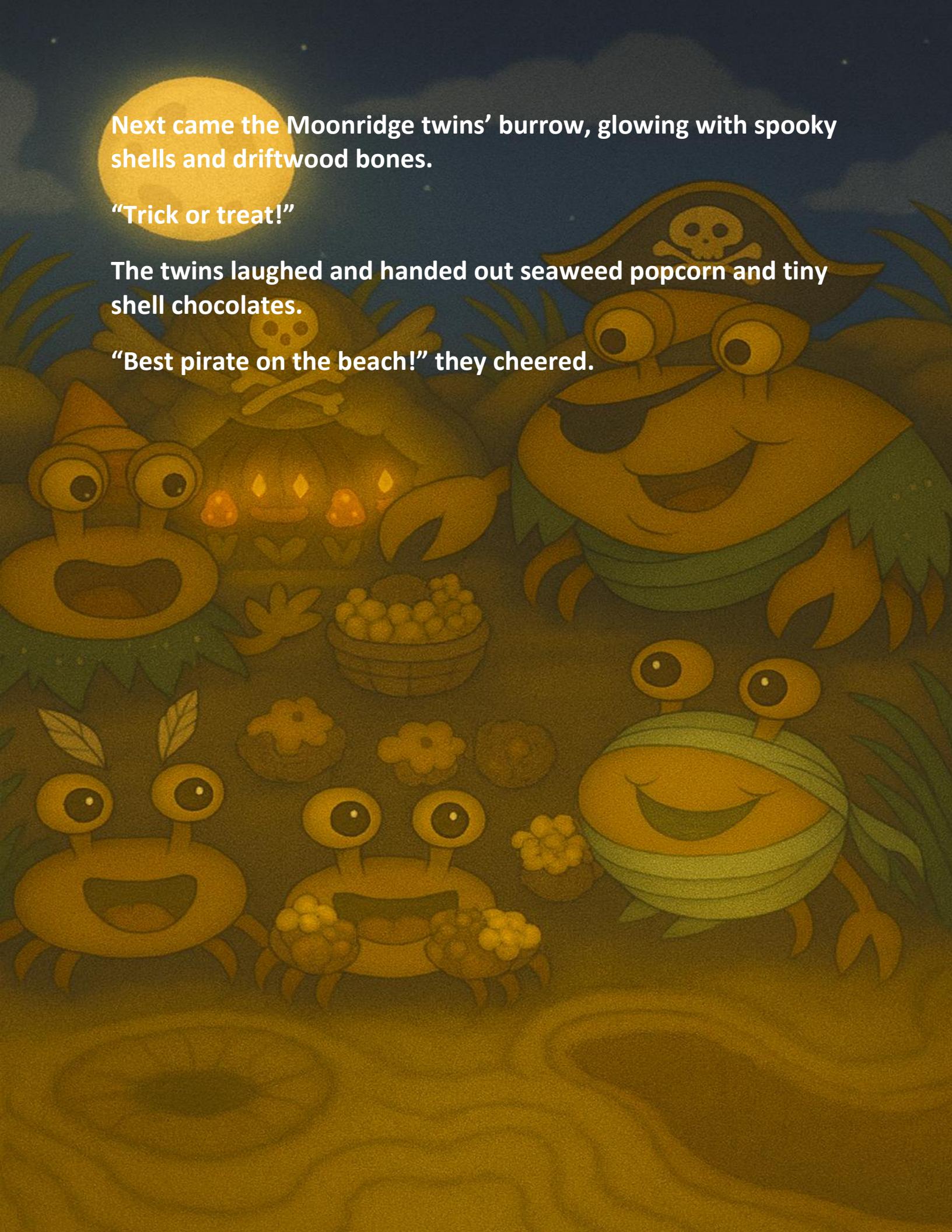


Next came the Moonridge twins' burrow, glowing with spooky shells and driftwood bones.

"Trick or treat!"

The twins laughed and handed out seaweed popcorn and tiny shell chocolates.

"Best pirate on the beach!" they cheered.



As the night went on, the Dunehoppers visited burrow after burrow—meeting ghost crab pirates, sea monsters, haunted sand dollars, and one clam dressed as a lighthouse (no one knew why).



Then suddenly—

SCREEECH!

A seagull swooped down, eyeing Scoot's basket.

"HEY!" Scoot yelled, chasing it down the beach. "ONLY PRETEND SEAGULLS ARE ALLOWED!"

Papa waved his claw dramatically. "Avast! Retreat, winged scallywag!"

The family laughed so hard they nearly spilled their treats.

When the moon climbed high, they returned home and poured out their treasure—berries, shells, seaweed snacks, and one mysterious glow-in-the-dark jelly candy.

Mama smiled. “The best part isn’t the treats.”

Sandy nodded. “It’s visiting everyone.”



Papa wrapped his claws around the family. "Aye. And sailing the sands together."

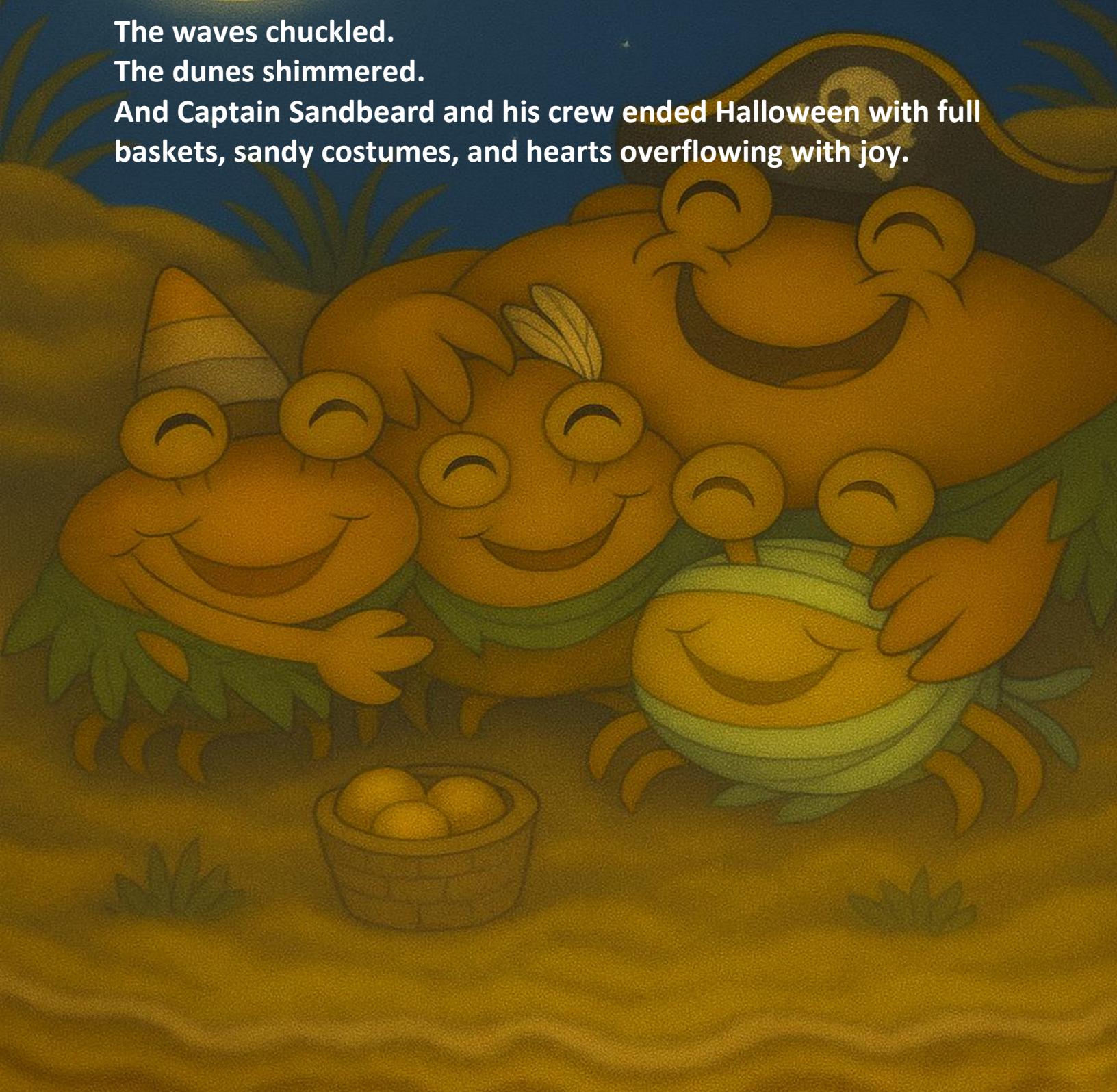
Scoot crunched happily. "Next year," he said, "I'm dressing as TWO seagulls."

Everyone groaned.

The waves chuckled.

The dunes shimmered.

And Captain Sandbeard and his crew ended Halloween with full baskets, sandy costumes, and hearts overflowing with joy.



Did You Know?

Did you know that ghost crabs aren't just pretending to be spooky?

On Halloween nights, they *really* come out after dark!

Ghost crabs glow pale in the moonlight and scurry across the sand like tiny beach phantoms. They hide in deep burrows by day and sneak out at night to look for snacks—just like trick-or-treaters!

That's why it's important to keep flashlights low, stay off the dunes, and never chase nighttime creatures. When we respect the beach after dark, the real “ghosts” of the dunes can safely roam and spook another night.

No tricks—just treats for the beach!