

The Dunehoppers Go Shopping in Kitty Hawk



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.

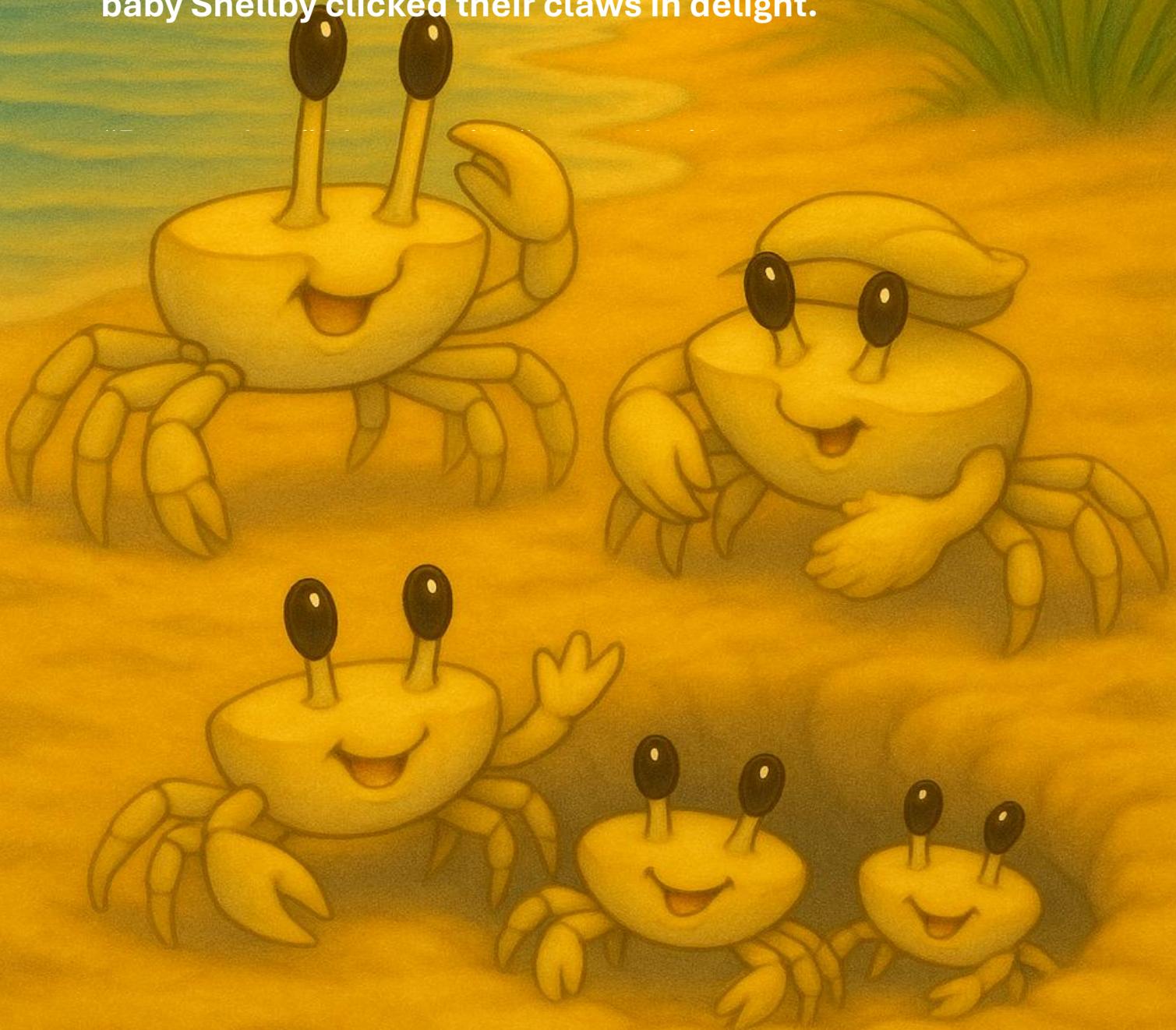
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On a bright, breezy morning in the Outer Banks, the Dunehopper Ghost Crab Family popped out of their burrow with excitement. Today wasn't just any day... They were going shopping at the Outlets in Kitty Hawk!

Mama Crab dusted off her sandy shell. Papa Crab straightened his tall eye stalks. And little Sandy, Scoot, and baby Shellby clicked their claws in delight.



The Great Sideways Walk

The family scurried across the beach, then hopped onto the dunes (carefully staying off the sea oats, of course).

They followed a tiny crab-sized path all the way to the outlets.

At the entrance, Sandy gasped.

“Look at all the stores! Shoes! Ice cream! Clothes for humans!”

“They make nothing in our size,” Papa said proudly, “so we’ll use our imaginations.”



FLIP FLOPS

Stop #1: The Flip-Flop Shop

Inside the flip-flop store, the crabs marveled at colorful sandals stacked higher than dunes.

Scoot held up a turquoise flip-flop larger than their whole family.

"It's a surfboard for me!" he declared.

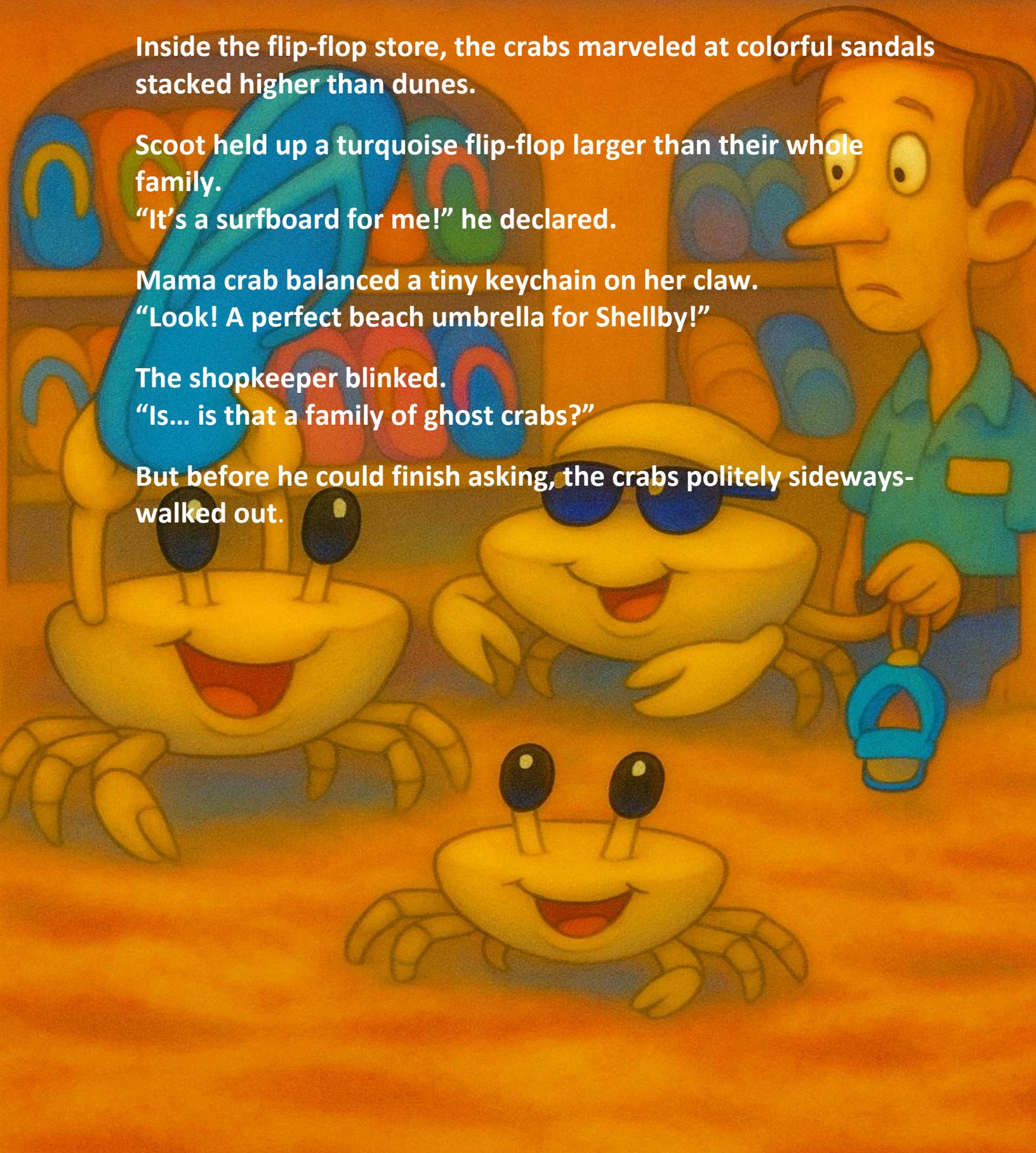
Mama crab balanced a tiny keychain on her claw.

"Look! A perfect beach umbrella for Shellby!"

The shopkeeper blinked.

"Is... is that a family of ghost crabs?"

But before he could finish asking, the crabs politely sideways-walked out.



Stop #2: The Beach Bag Boutique

Next, they scurried into a store with giant tote bags.

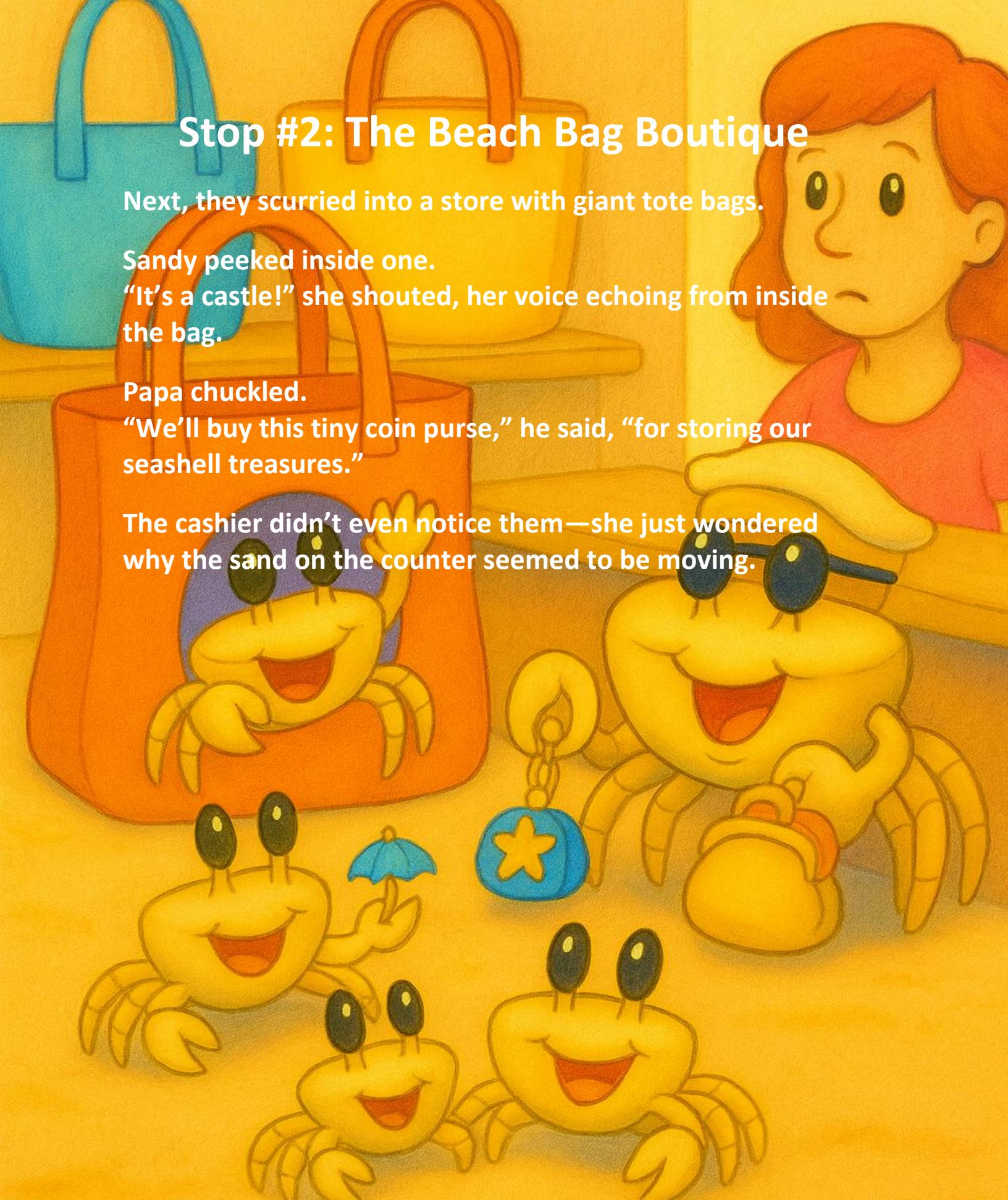
Sandy peeked inside one.

"It's a castle!" she shouted, her voice echoing from inside the bag.

Papa chuckled.

"We'll buy this tiny coin purse," he said, "for storing our seashell treasures."

The cashier didn't even notice them—she just wondered why the sand on the counter seemed to be moving.



ICE CREAM

Stop #3: The Ice Cream Shop

Finally, they reached the food court.

The smell drifted through the air...

Sweet... creamy... delicious...

"I want vanilla!" Sandy said.

"Chocolate!" said Scoot.

"Sand flavor!" Shellby squeaked (baby crabs were still learning).

Papa ordered a single vanilla cone, and the family took turns using their smallest claws to scoop tiny bites.



The Sunset Stroll Home

With a crab-sized coin purse and a keychain umbrella, the Sandspur Family headed back to the beach.

As the sun dipped low, their shadows stretched long across the sand.

Mama smiled.

"Shopping with you is my favorite adventure."

Sandy grabbed her siblings' claws.

"Next time," she said, "can we go to Duck for donuts?"

Papa laughed.

"Only if we wake up before the pelicans eat them all!"

And the little family scurried into their cozy burrow, happy, sandy, and full of ice cream dreams.

