



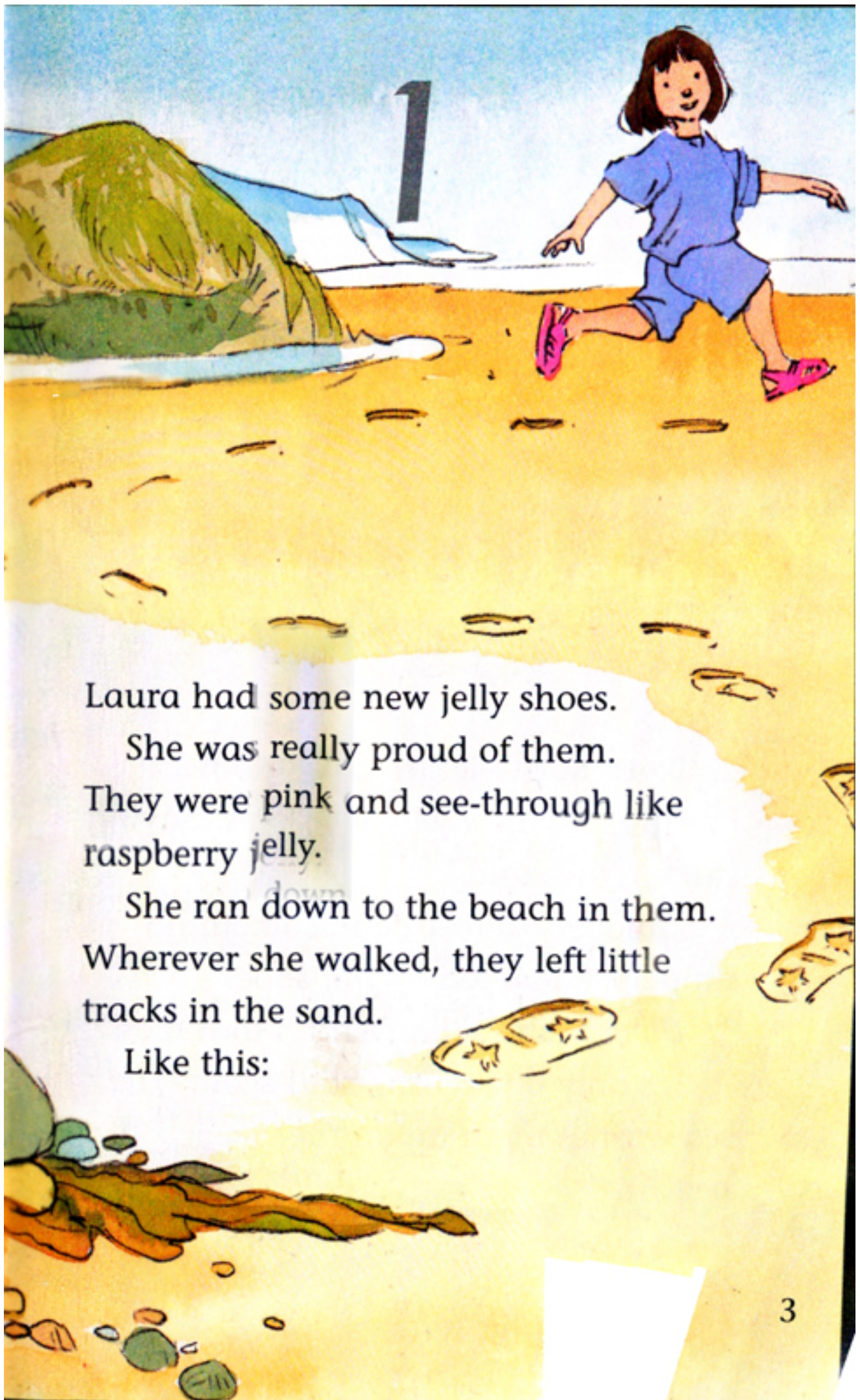
TreeTops
Fiction



Jellyfish Shoes

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Laura had some new jelly shoes.

She was really proud of them.
They were pink and see-through like
raspberry jelly.

She ran ^{down} to the beach in them.
Wherever she walked, they left little
tracks in the sand.

Like this:



'Look, Scott,' Laura called to her brother. 'My new jelly shoes are leaving stars in the sand.'

Squidge. Laura trod in something slippery. She lifted up her shoe.

'Ughhh!' she said. 'What's that mess?'

'It's only a jellyfish,' said Scott. 'The sea washes them up on the beach.'



'Well, I don't like it,' said Laura. 'It looks like a jelly cow-pat.'

Slosh. The sea washed up some more jellyfish. Pink ones this time. They spread out in pink puddles on the sand.

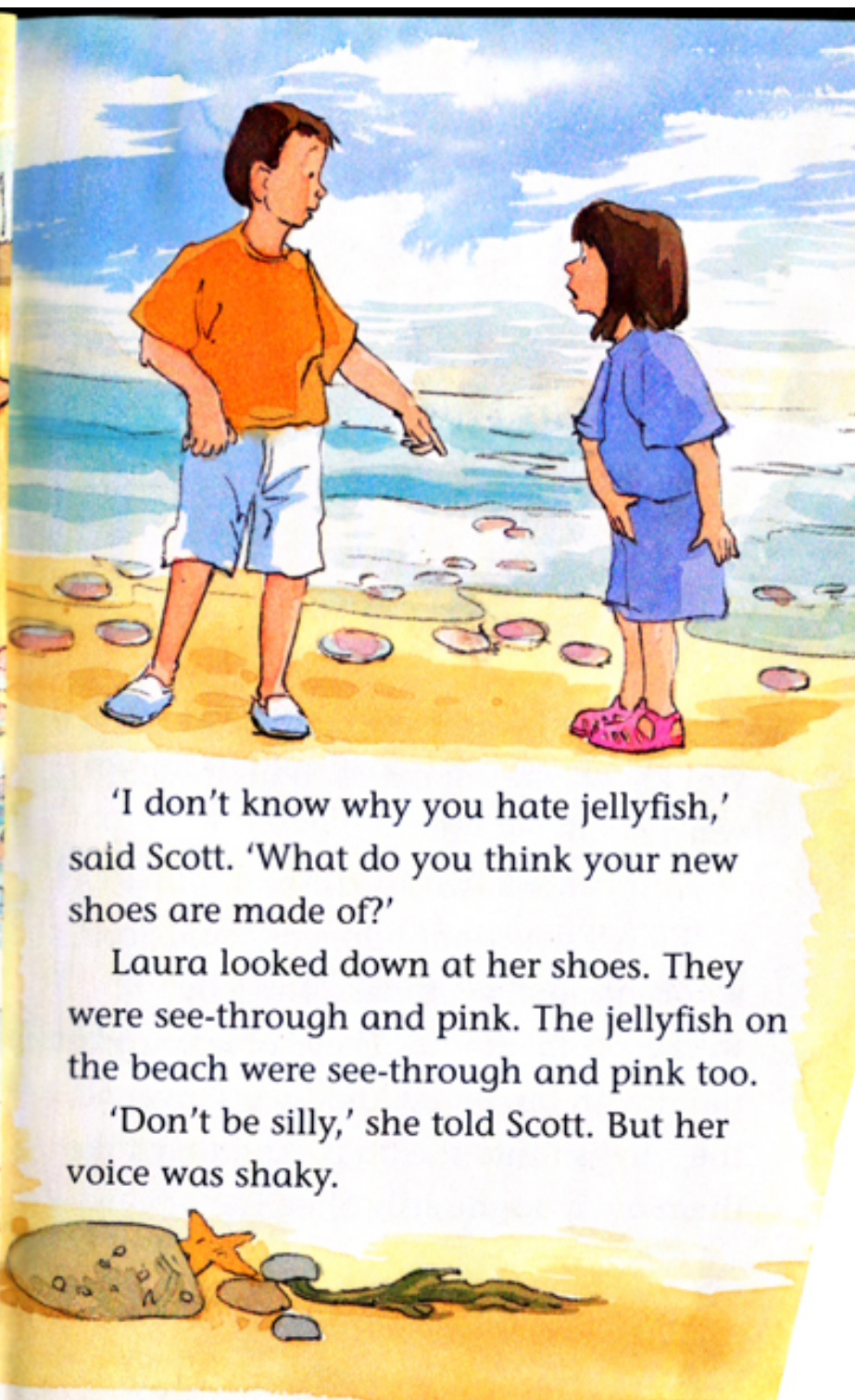
'Watch out,' said Scott. 'Jellyfish can give you a nasty sting.'





'Yuk!' cried Laura. 'There are loads of them! And, phew, what a pong! I hate them. They'll spoil my new jelly shoes!'

Scott looked at the jellyfish on the sand. He looked at Laura's new shoes. An idea popped into his head.



'I don't know why you hate jellyfish,' said Scott. 'What do you think your new shoes are made of?'

Laura looked down at her shoes. They were see-through and pink. The jellyfish on the beach were see-through and pink too.

'Don't be silly,' she told Scott. But her voice was shaky.





'I thought you knew,' said Scott. 'Don't you know what happens to all these washed-up jellyfish?'

Laura shook her head.

'I'll tell you what happens,' said Scott, who was good at stories. 'The jelly workers come round. They come round at night with bin bags. And they shovel all the jellyfish into the bags. And they take them away to the Jelly Shoe Factory.'



He went on, 'And they make them into shoes. Just like the ones you've got on. I thought everyone knew that!'

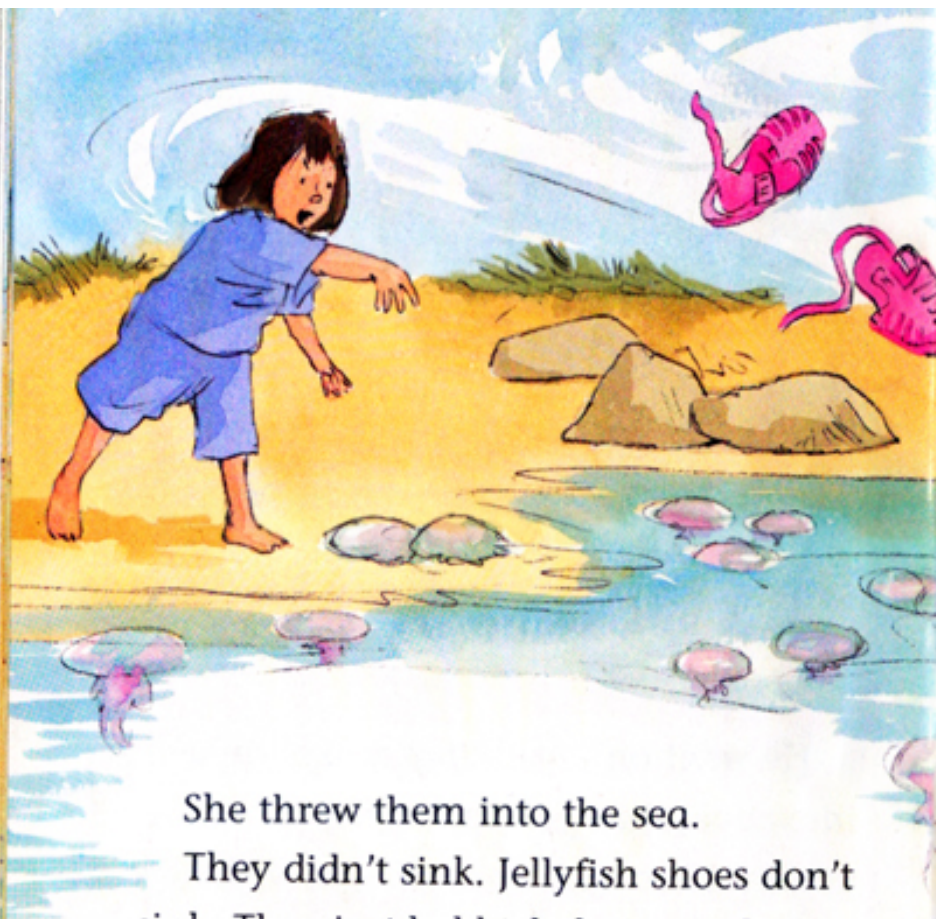
Laura looked down at her new shoes.

'I don't think I like my new shoes any more,' she said.

Then she tore them off.

'Yuk!' she said. 'I don't want pongy jellyfish shoes that sting me!'





She threw them into the sea.

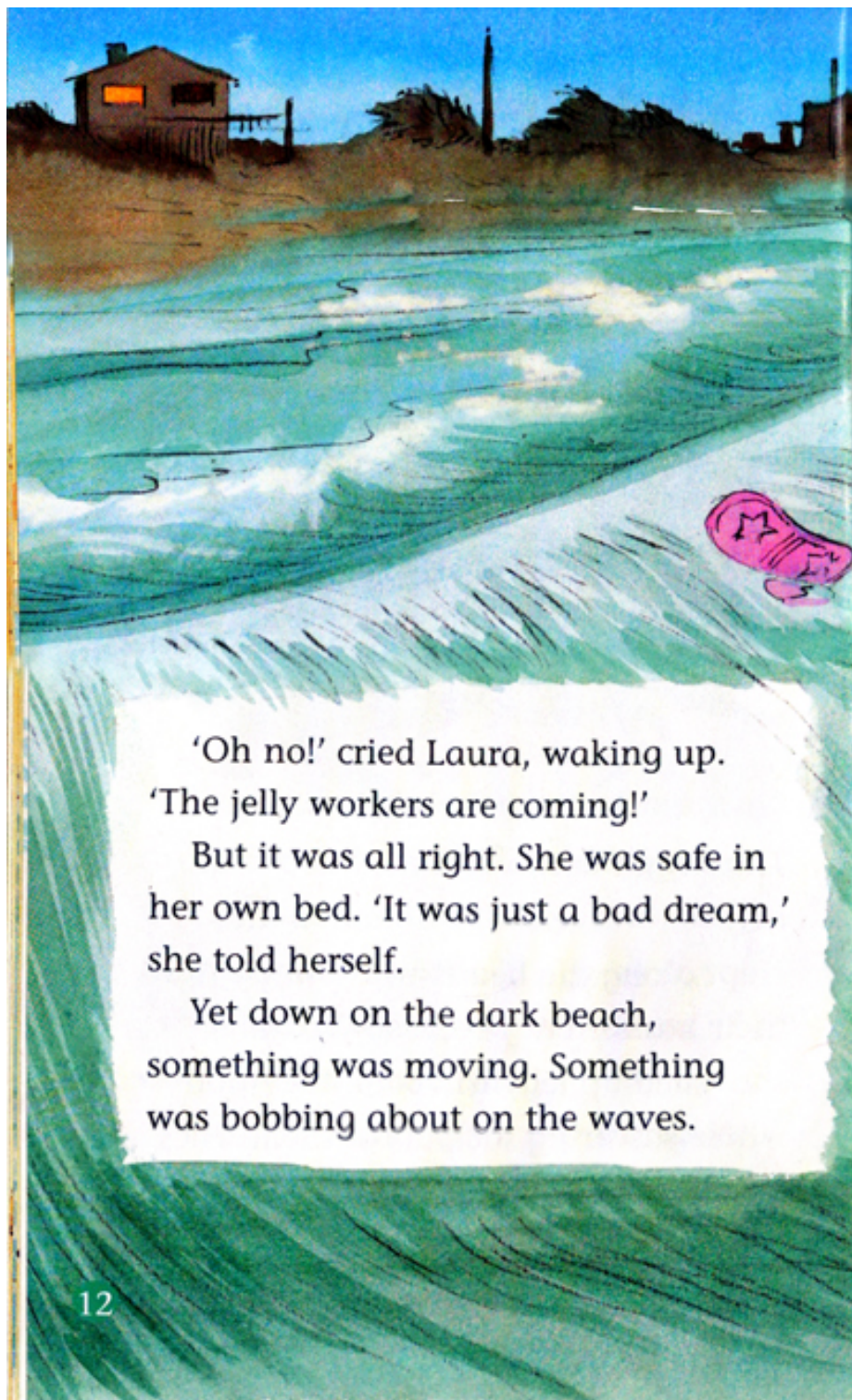
They didn't sink. Jellyfish shoes don't sink. They just bobbed about on the waves. And washed further and further away from the shore.

'Good riddance!' shouted Laura, waving them goodbye.

Then she tiptoed back to the house in her bare feet.



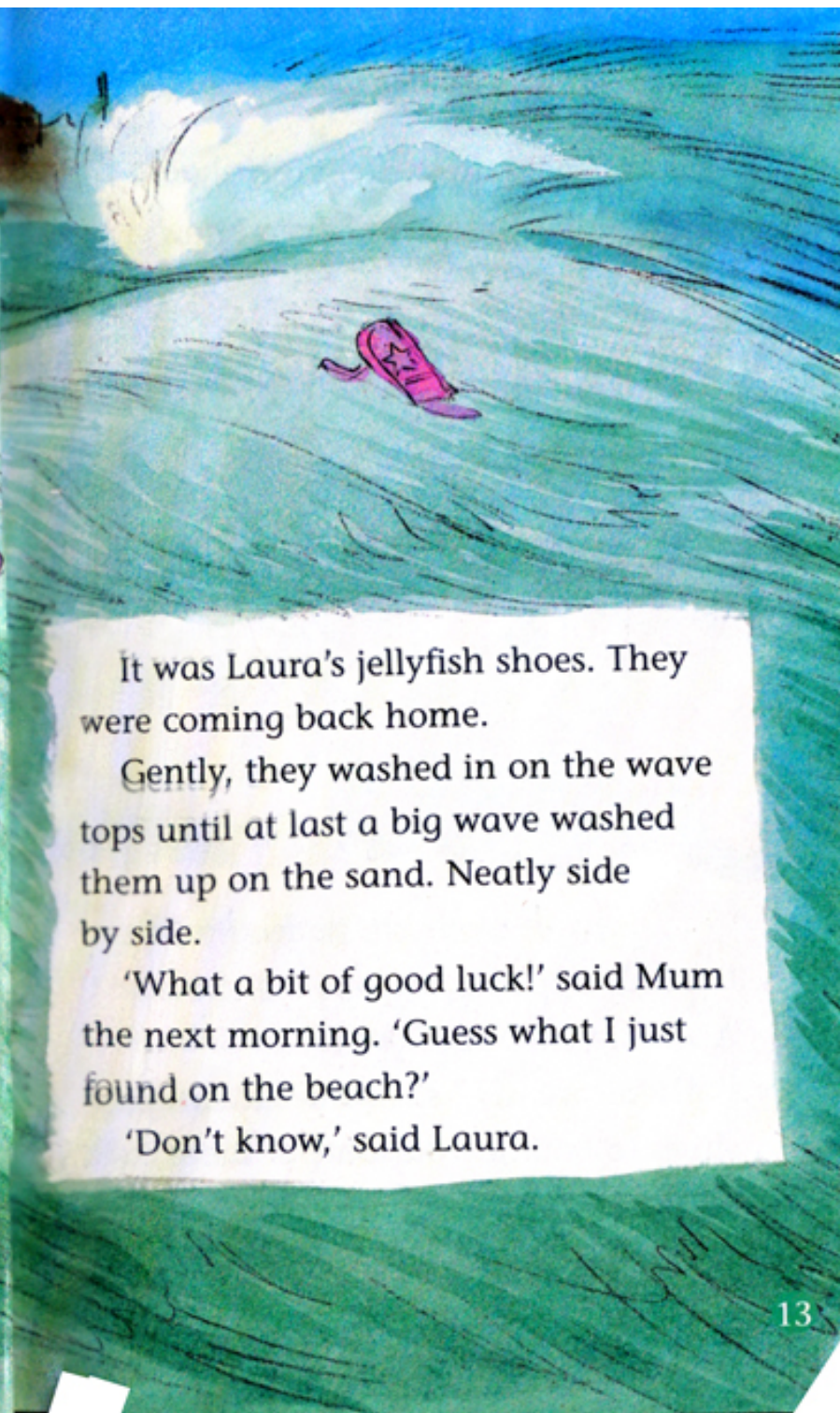
That night Laura dreamed about the jellyfish workers. She dreamed they crept along the beach with bin bags in their hands. They bent down and shovelled up jellyfish. Soon they had whole shivering sackfuls of them. Flies were buzzing all around them.



'Oh no!' cried Laura, waking up.
'The jelly workers are coming!'

But it was all right. She was safe in her own bed. 'It was just a bad dream,' she told herself.

Yet down on the dark beach, something was moving. Something was bobbing about on the waves.



It was Laura's jellyfish shoes. They were coming back home.

Gently, they washed in on the wave tops until at last a big wave washed them up on the sand. Neatly side by side.

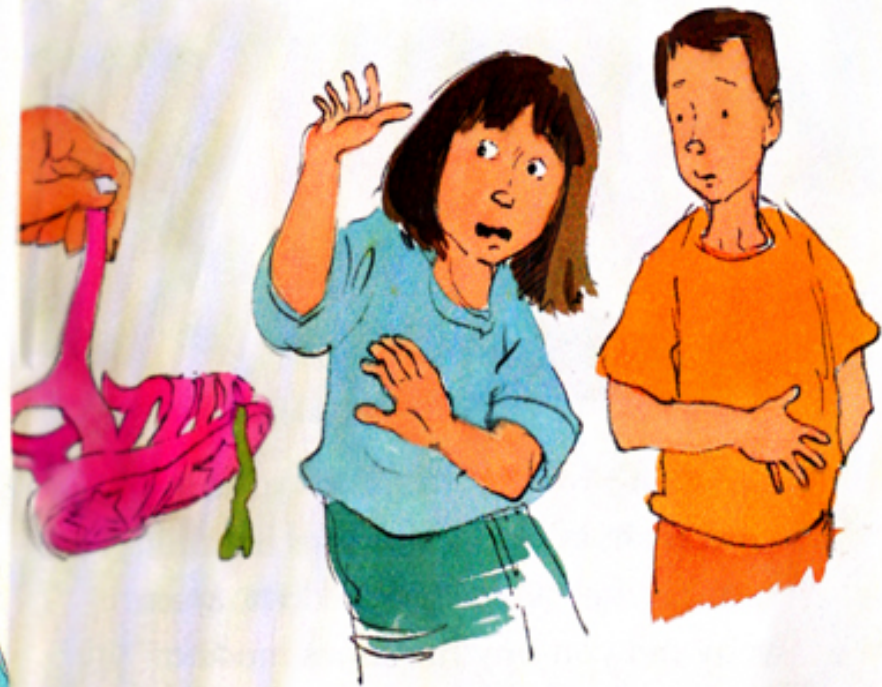
'What a bit of good luck!' said Mum the next morning. 'Guess what I just found on the beach?'

'Don't know,' said Laura.

Mum held up the jellyfish shoes.
'These! I bet you didn't even know
you'd lost them.'



Mum tipped up one of the shoes.
A winkle fell out of the toe.
'Here you are,' she said, handing the
shoes to Laura. 'You can put them back
on now.'



Laura pushed the shoes away:
'I won't put them back on!' she shouted.
'You can't make me!'

Mum stared at her. 'What on earth is
the matter? I thought you'd be pleased
to get them back.'



'I don't want them. I don't want smelly shoes that make flies buzz all around me! Why did you do it, Mum? Why did you buy me shoes made of jellyfish?'

And Laura rushed out of the door.

Mum shook her head, puzzled. 'Shoes made of jellyfish?' she said. 'What's she talking about? Do you know, Scott?'

'Don't ask me,' said Scott. But he looked a bit guilty.

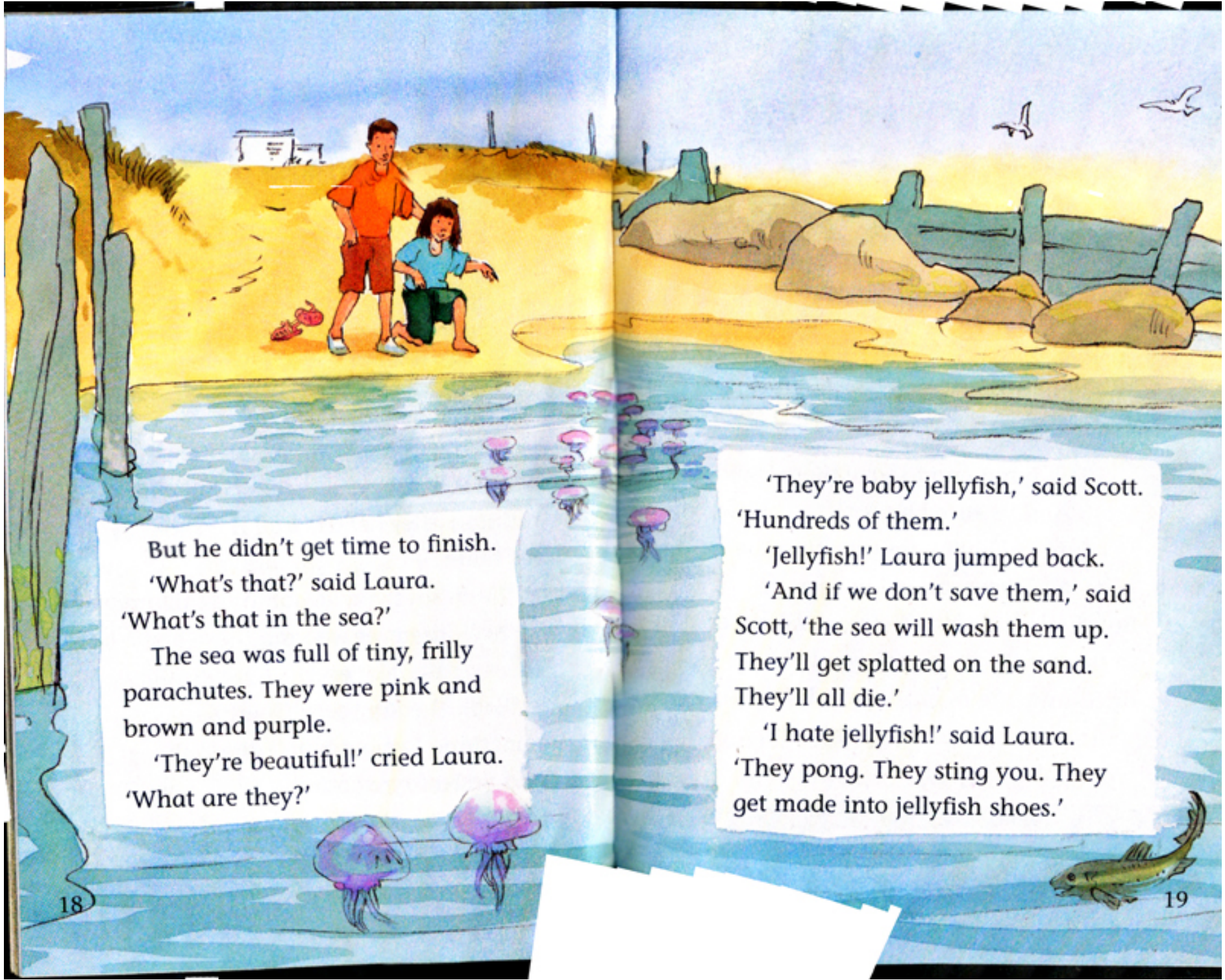


Laura rushed down to the beach without her jellyfish shoes. Scott came running after her. He had the shoes in his hand.

'Mum says you've got to put them on.'

'No! I'm never wearing those horrible shoes again! Not ever!'

'Look,' began Scott. 'There's something I've got to tell you. What I said yesterday, about the Jelly Shoe Factory -'

A two-page spread from a children's book. The left page (page 18) shows a boy in an orange shirt and a girl in a blue shirt and green pants standing on a sandy beach. They are looking at a group of small, pink and purple jellyfish in the shallow water. The right page (page 19) shows the same scene from a slightly different angle, with the jellyfish swimming away. The background features a wooden fence, some rocks, and a few birds flying in the sky.

But he didn't get time to finish.
'What's that?' said Laura.
'What's that in the sea?'

The sea was full of tiny, frilly
parachutes. They were pink and
brown and purple.

'They're beautiful!' cried Laura.
'What are they?'

'They're baby jellyfish,' said Scott.
'Hundreds of them.'

'Jellyfish!' Laura jumped back.

'And if we don't save them,' said
Scott, 'the sea will wash them up.
They'll get splatted on the sand.
They'll all die.'

'I hate jellyfish!' said Laura.
'They pong. They sting you. They
get made into jellyfish shoes.'



It came racing back to her suddenly.

'Well, I'm going to save them,' said Scott. And he raced back to the beach. Laura couldn't help watching the jellyfish. They sparkled like diamonds. But they were getting closer and closer to the beach. Soon they would be dried-up puddles on the sand.

And she couldn't help thinking, 'Poor babies.'



Just then, Scott came racing back with two buckets. And suddenly Laura changed her mind.

'I'll help you to save them,' said Laura. She grabbed a bucket.

'We'll tip them into that rock pool,'
said Scott. 'But we've got to hurry!'

'Don't touch them,' he warned.
'Even the babies sting.'

They scooped up the babies in
buckets. Then they ran to the rock
pool and tipped them in.

'Hurry!' cried Scott. 'The sea's
going out!'



Laura dashed to the rock pool. Slosh!
The babies poured out like rainbows.

She ran back again and again. Until
her legs wouldn't work any more.

'I - can't - run - another - step!' she
gasped, sitting down on the sand.



'It's all right,' said Scott. 'Look! The tide's coming in!'

Laura lifted her head. It was true! 'Hurray!' she yelled. 'We've saved them. We saved the jellyfish babies!'



Scott and Laura went to look in the rock pool.

'It's like jellyfish soup in there!' said Laura.

'But they're safe,' said Scott. 'And when the tide comes in, it'll take them out to the deep, deep sea - where they belong.'



'I like jellyfish now,' said Laura.
'They're beautiful, aren't they? I'm really glad we saved them. And now the jelly workers won't get them. They won't be taken to the Jelly Shoe Factory and made into jellyfish shoes.'

Scott looked very guilty.

'I was going to tell you about that,' he said. 'There isn't any Jelly Shoe Factory. There aren't any jelly workers. They don't make jelly shoes out of washed-up jellyfish.'

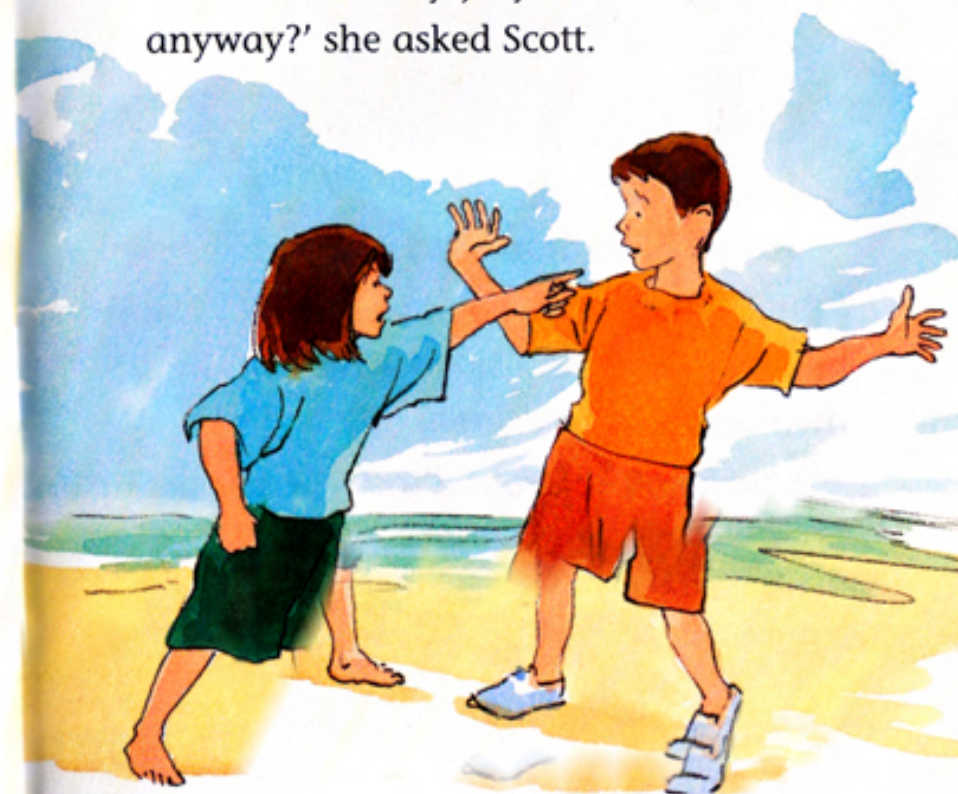
'How do you know?' said Laura.
'Because it's just a story. I made it all up!'

'No you didn't!' said Laura.

'I did, I did, honest!' said Scott.

But Laura didn't believe him.

'Where are my jellyfish shoes anyway?' she asked Scott.

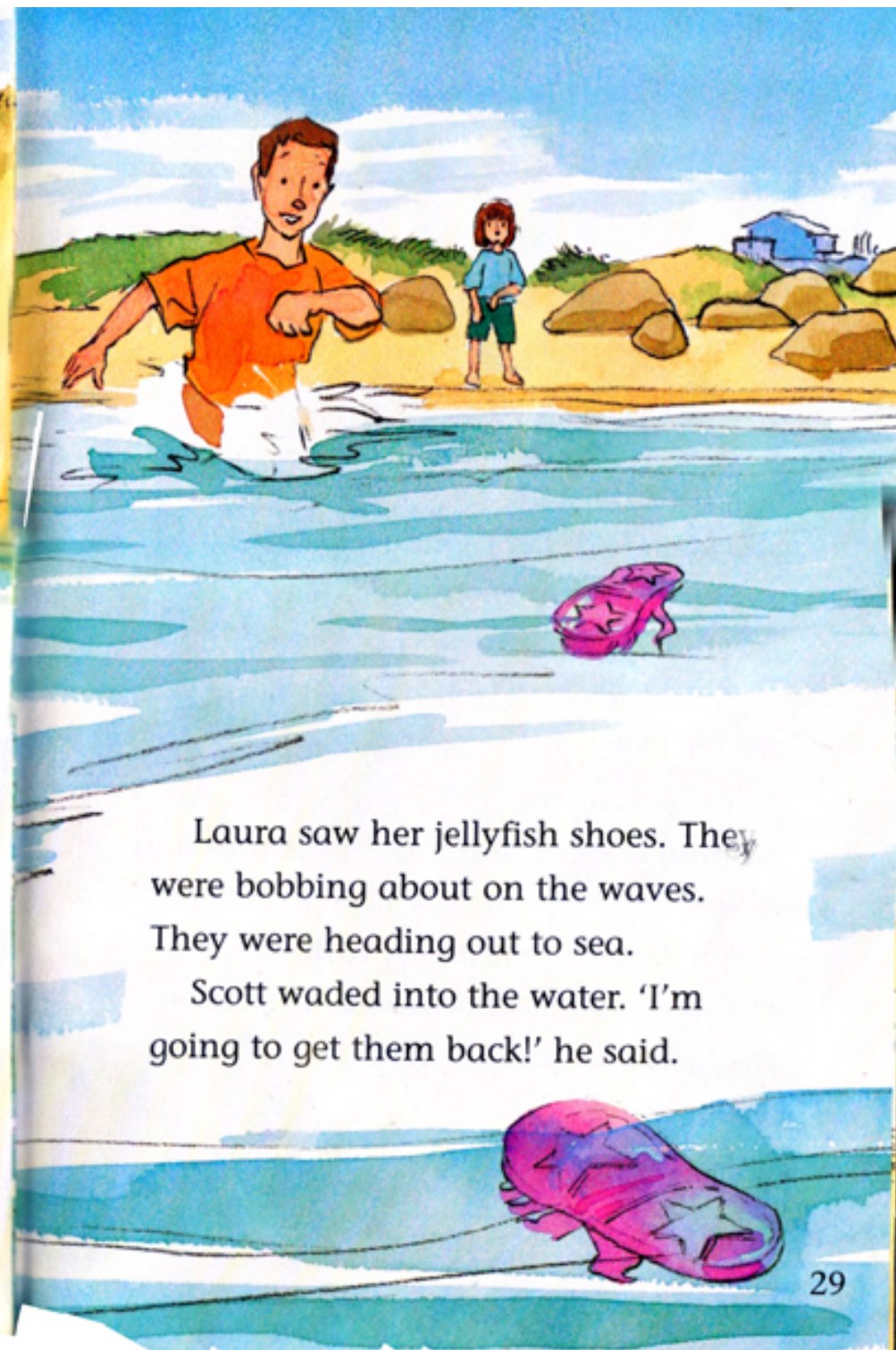




Scott looked around. 'I don't know. I put them down when I went to get the buckets. They can't have walked off by themselves...'

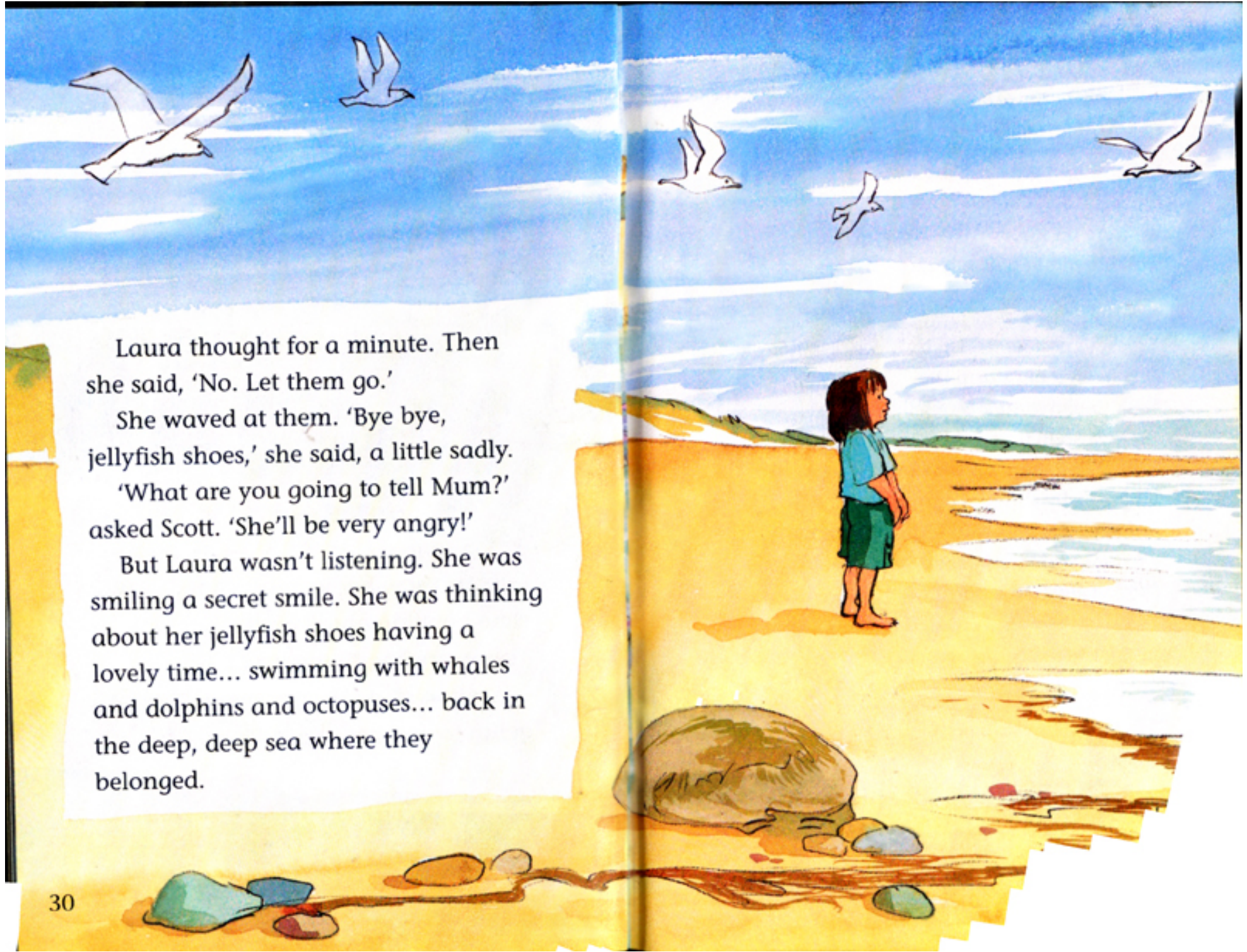
Laura looked around too. The beach was empty. Then she saw a line of stars, in the sand. They led right down to the sea.

'There they are!' Scott pointed.



Laura saw her jellyfish shoes. They were bobbing about on the waves. They were heading out to sea.

Scott waded into the water. 'I'm going to get them back!' he said.



Laura thought for a minute. Then she said, 'No. Let them go.'

She waved at them. 'Bye bye, jellyfish shoes,' she said, a little sadly.

'What are you going to tell Mum?' asked Scott. 'She'll be very angry!'

But Laura wasn't listening. She was smiling a secret smile. She was thinking about her jellyfish shoes having a lovely time... swimming with whales and dolphins and octopuses... back in the deep, deep sea where they belonged.