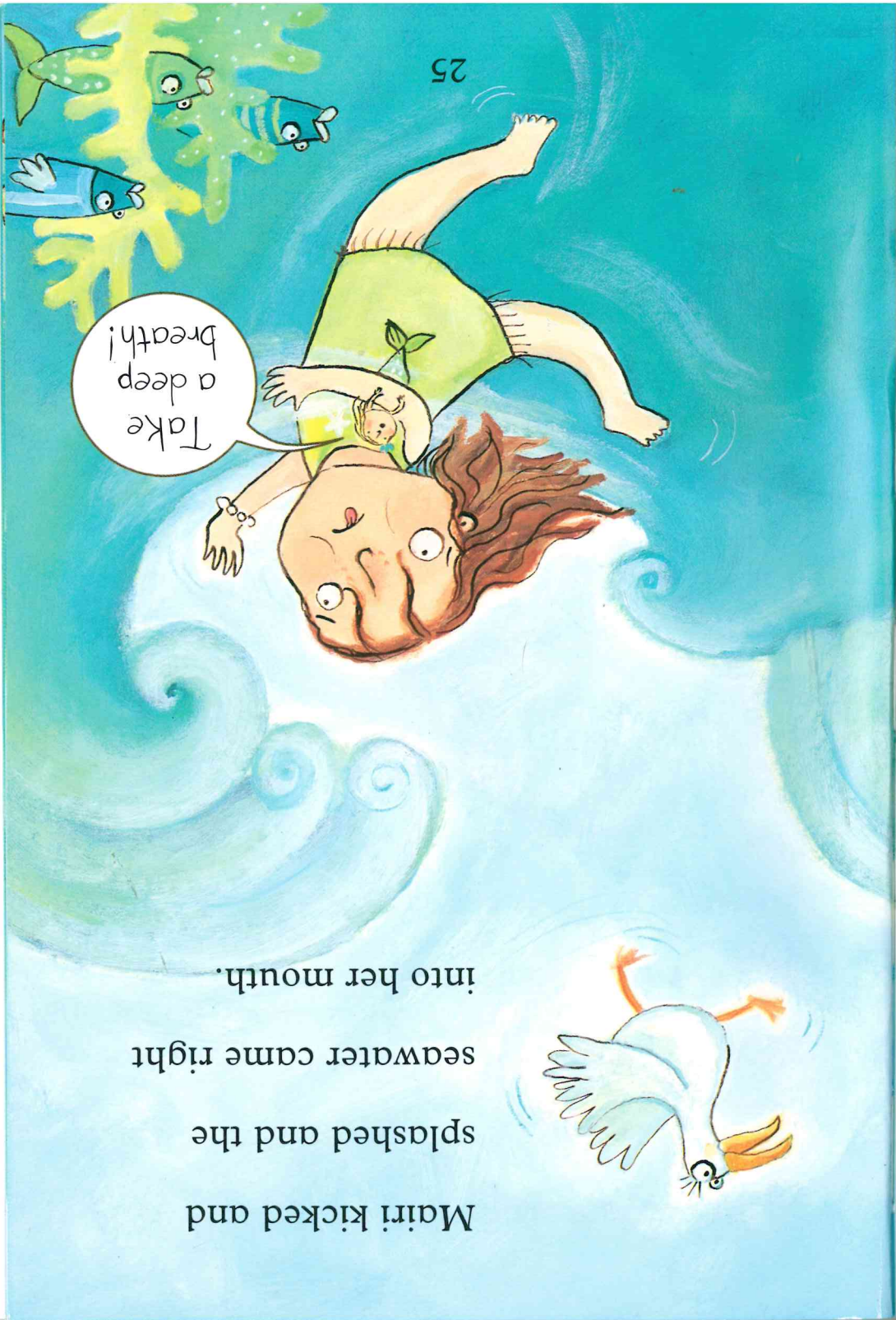


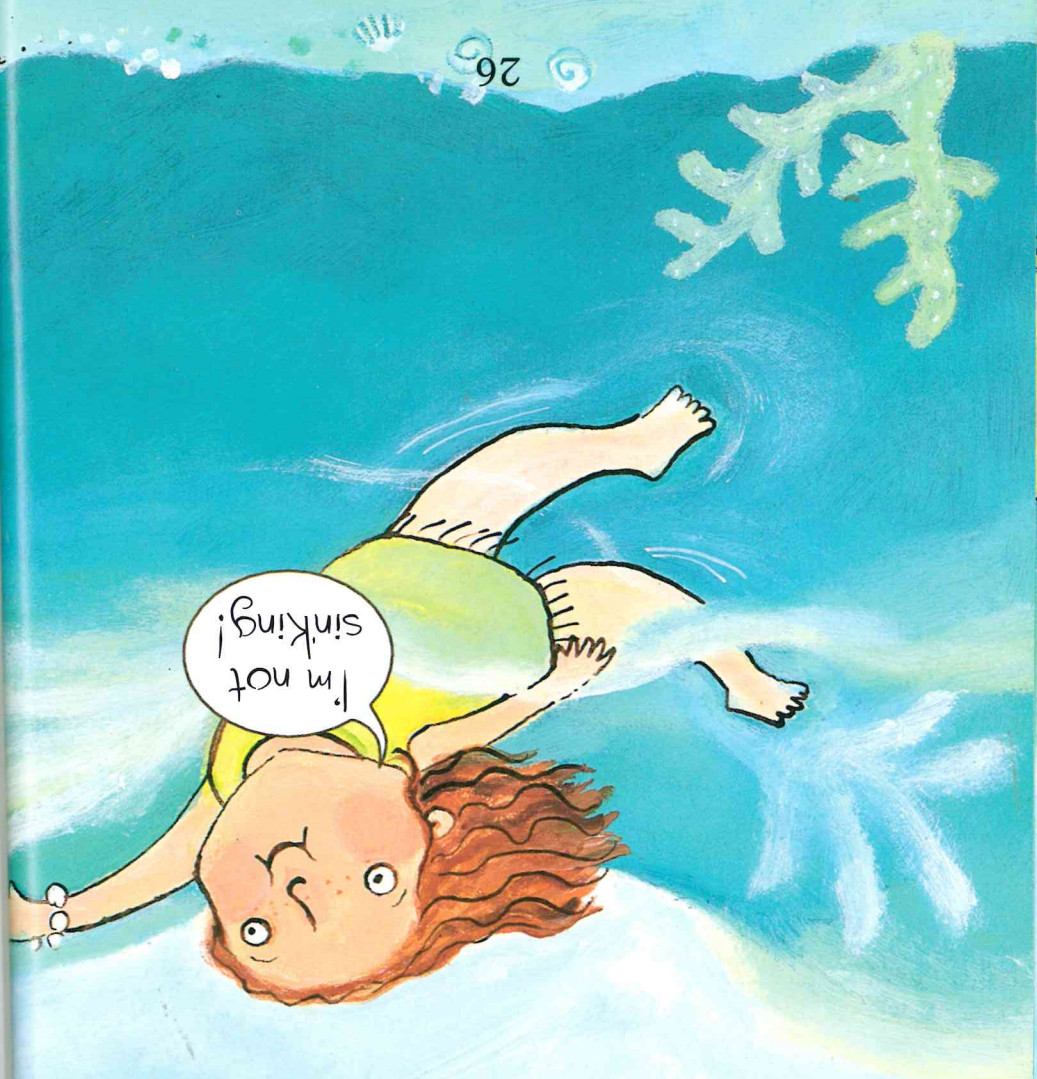
Suddenly a great wave came rolling in
and lifted her right off her feet and when
she came down there was no sandy
bottom under her feet, no bottom at all.

Hold on
Mairi!



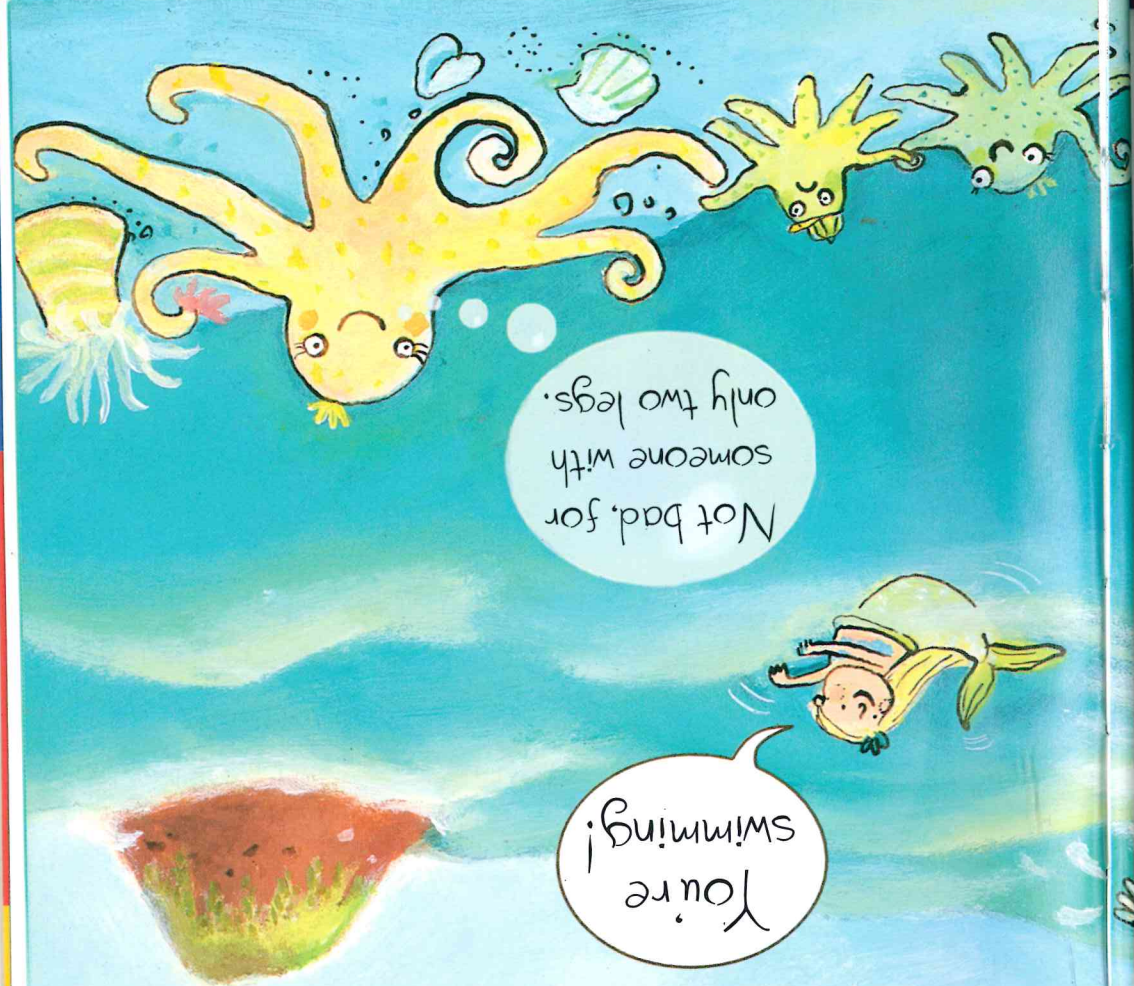
Mairi kicked and
splashed and the
seawater came right
into her mouth.





'It's all right,' said the little mermaid.
'You're swimming!'
And when Mairi kicked again, she did
not sink. She was swimming! She was!

She lifted her chin and paddled through
the sea, keeping her mouth tightly closed.
Together, Mairi and the little mermaid
swam to the rock.



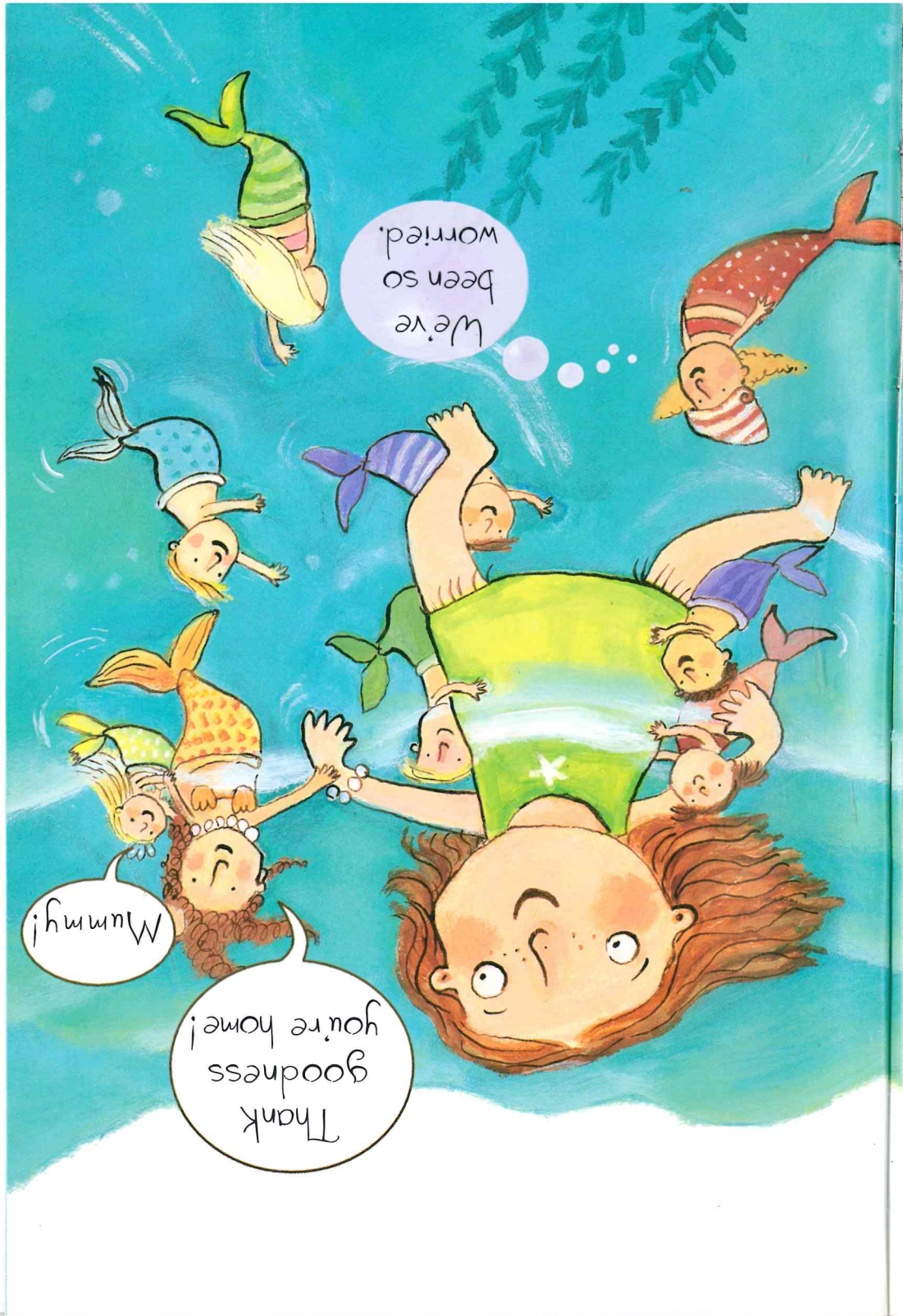


Who's that with her?

They were almost there when Mairi felt an arm around her waist, then another and another. The sea around her was suddenly full of mermaids. The little mermaid was clinging to her mother's hair.



Home safe and sound.



Then Mairi felt the rock beneath her feet

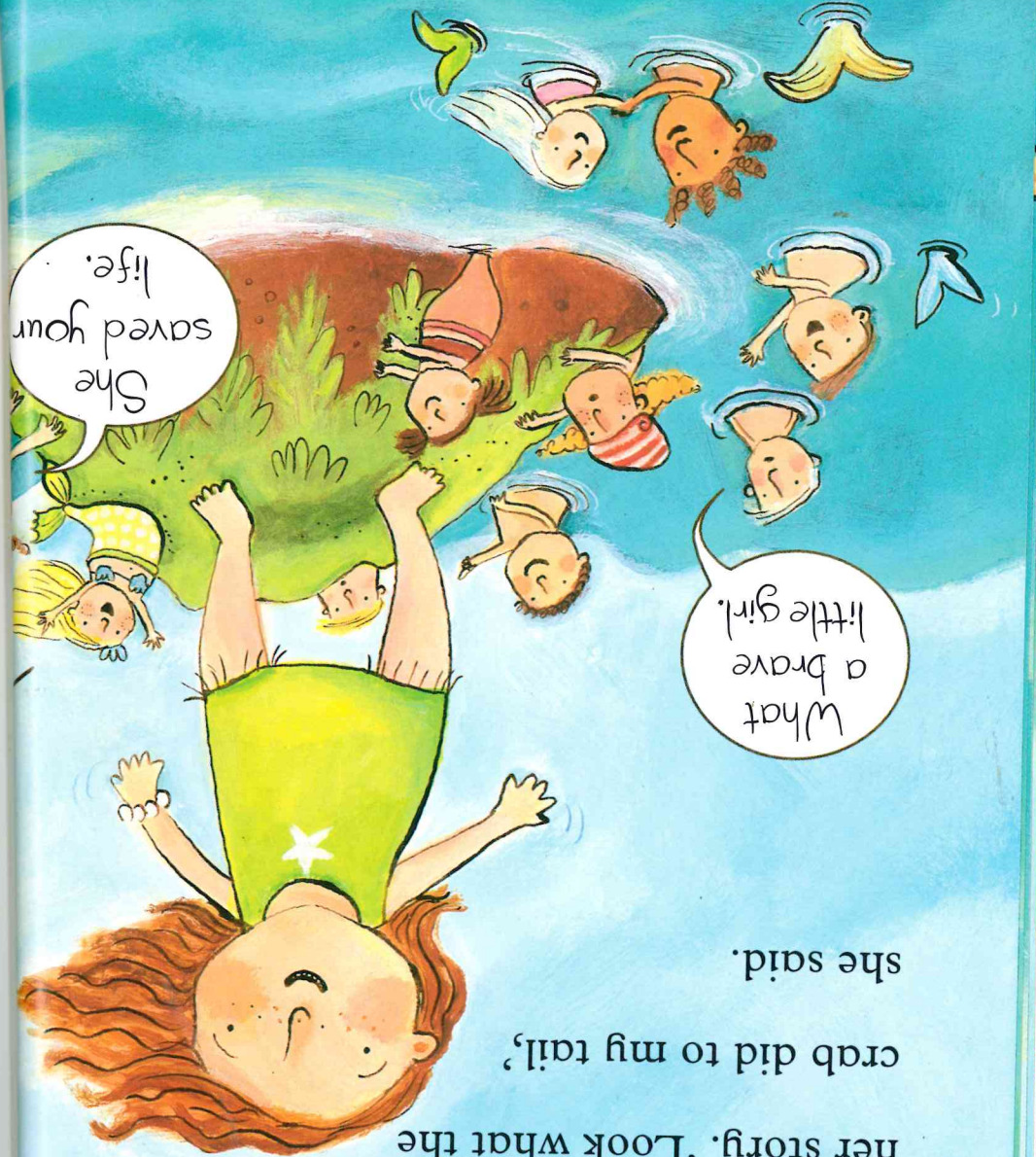
and she could stand.

The little mermaid was telling everyone

her story. 'Look what the

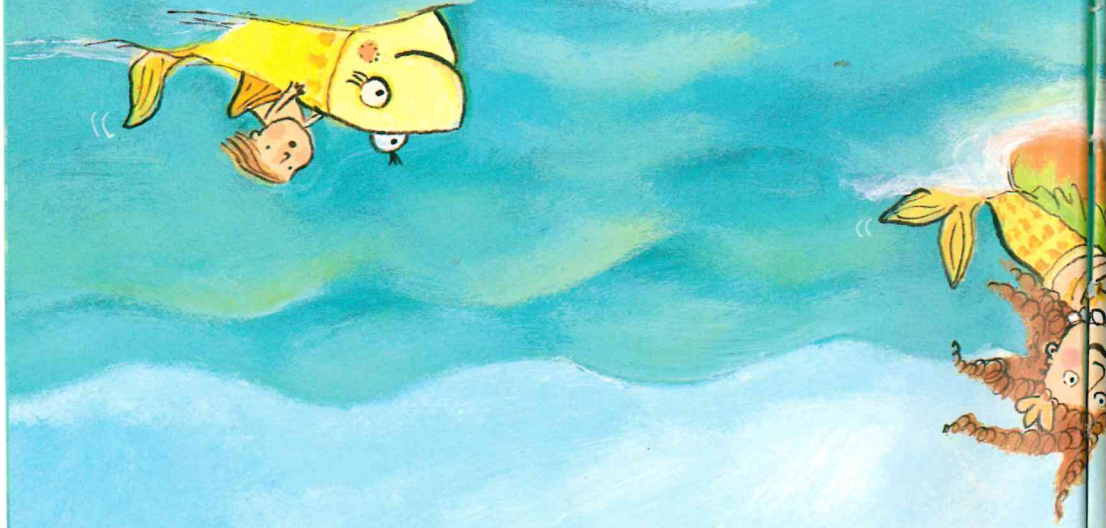
crab did to my tail,'

she said.



What
a brave
little girl.

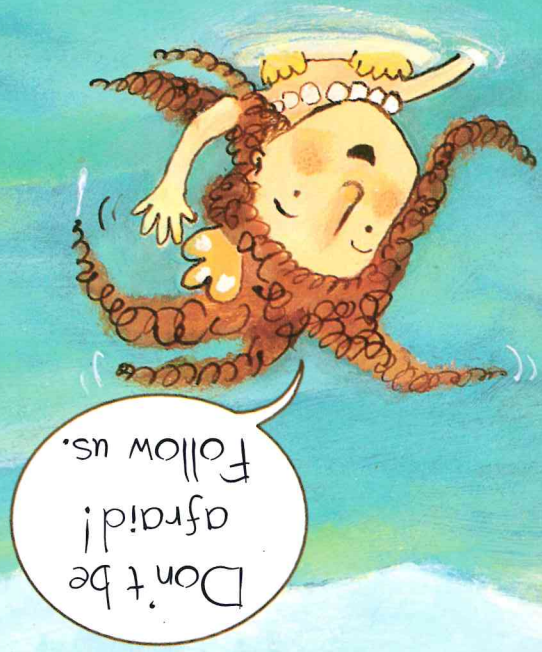
She
saved your
life.



Mairi!
shook the
crab!

'Maybe it'll teach you not to go off like
that,' said her mother. 'I've told you and
told you. If it hadn't have been for this
girl,' She smiled at Mairi. 'How can we
ever thank you?' she said.





And Mairi had a sudden idea.
 'You couldn't teach me how to swim,
 could you?' she asked. 'I mean, like you
 do, like mermaids do.'

First they taught her how to lie on the
water and float. Mairi could feel the
water holding her up!





then crawl . . .



breaststroke . . .

then



next . . .

paddle was

Doggy

butterfly . . .

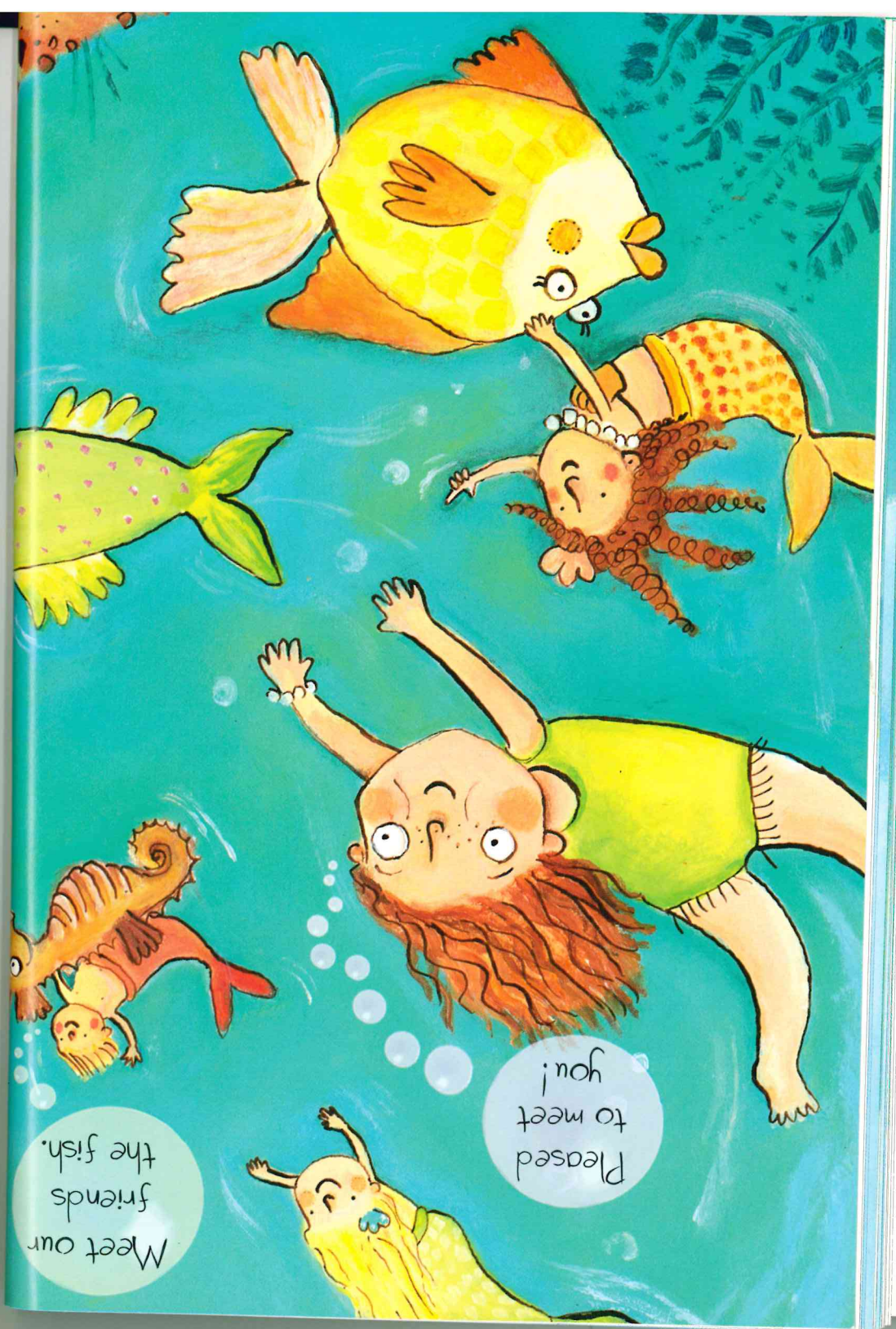


backstroke . . .



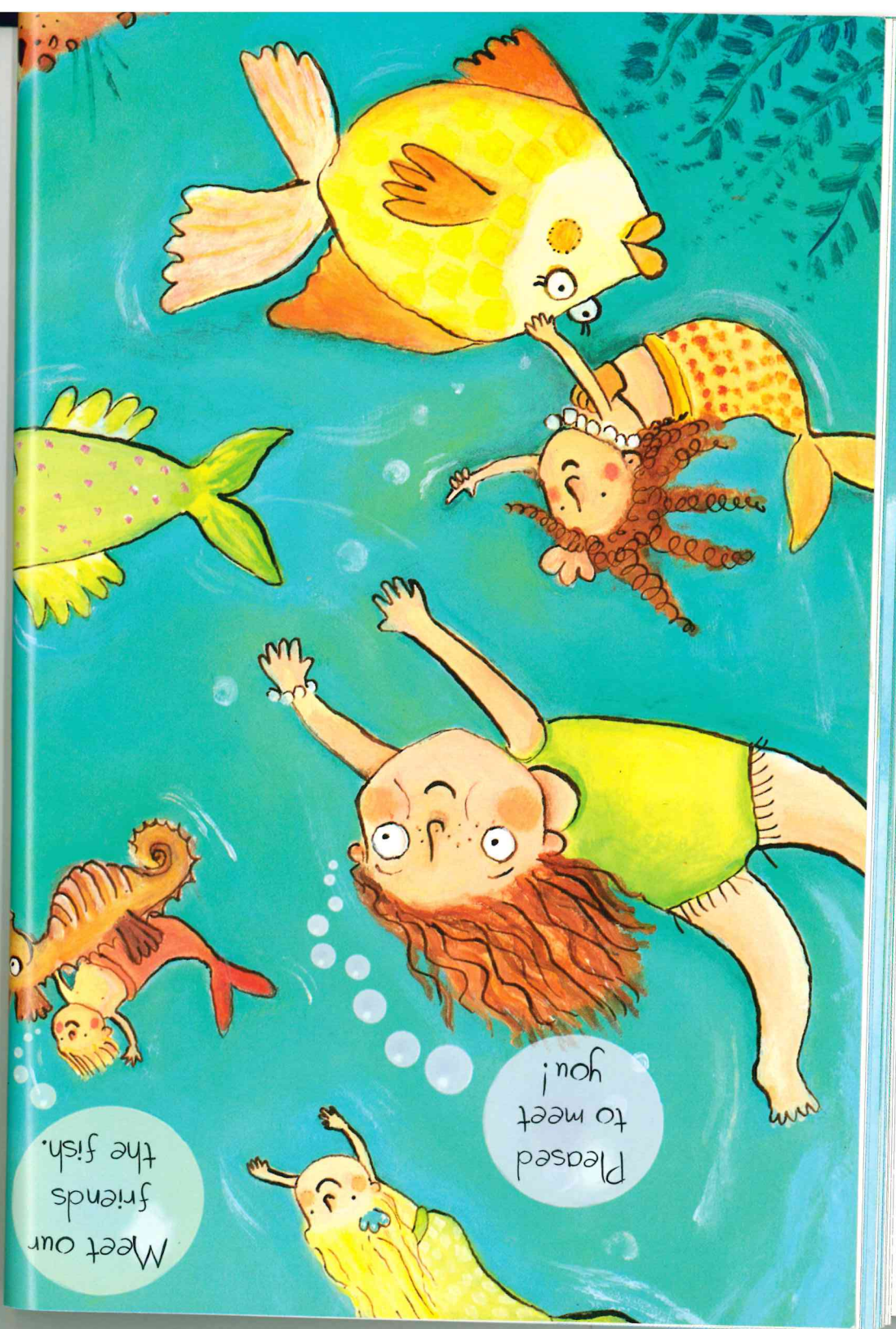


They even taught her to swim underwater!



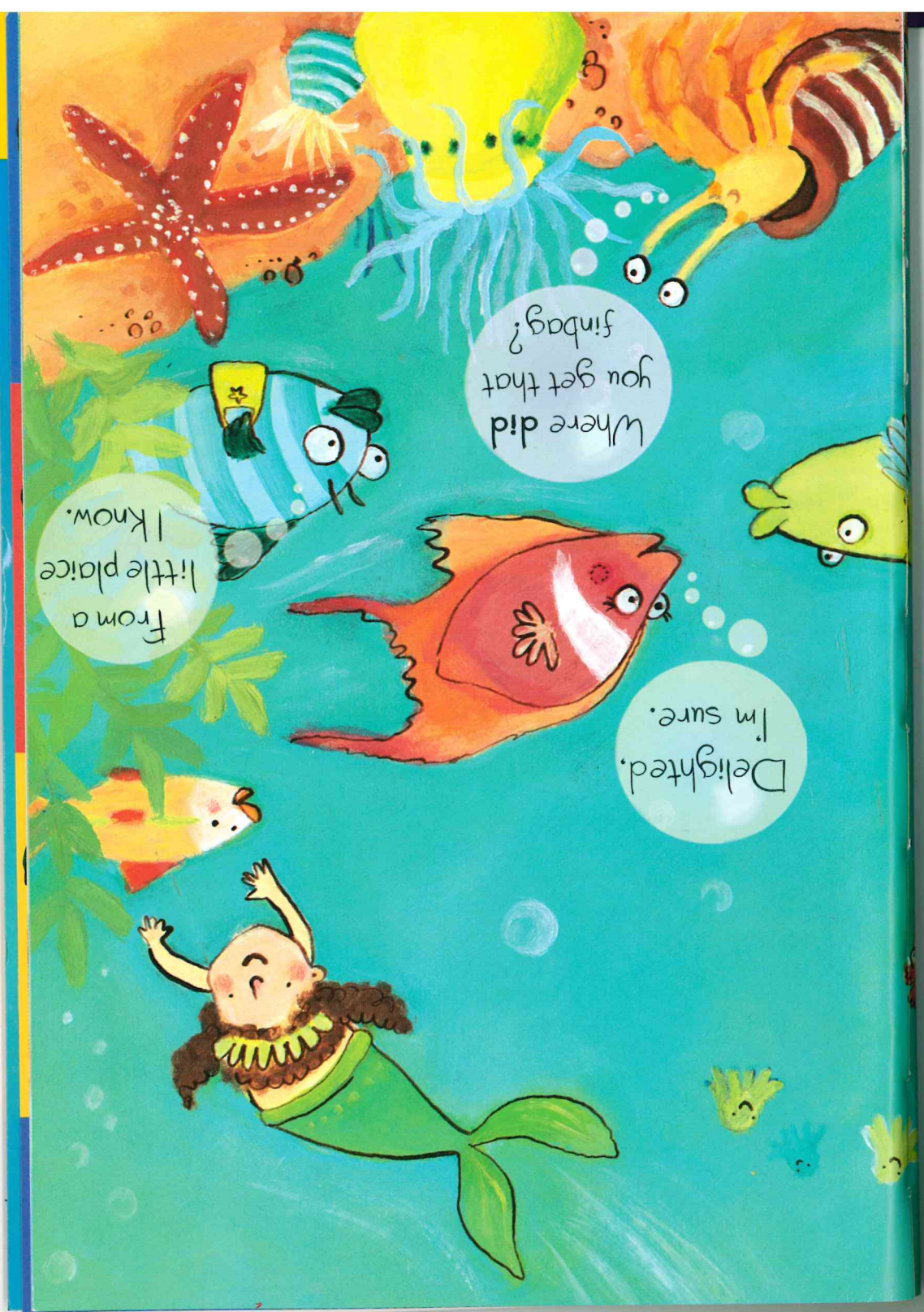
Meet our
friends
the fish.

Pleased
to meet
you!



Meet our
friends
the fish.

Pleased
to meet
you!

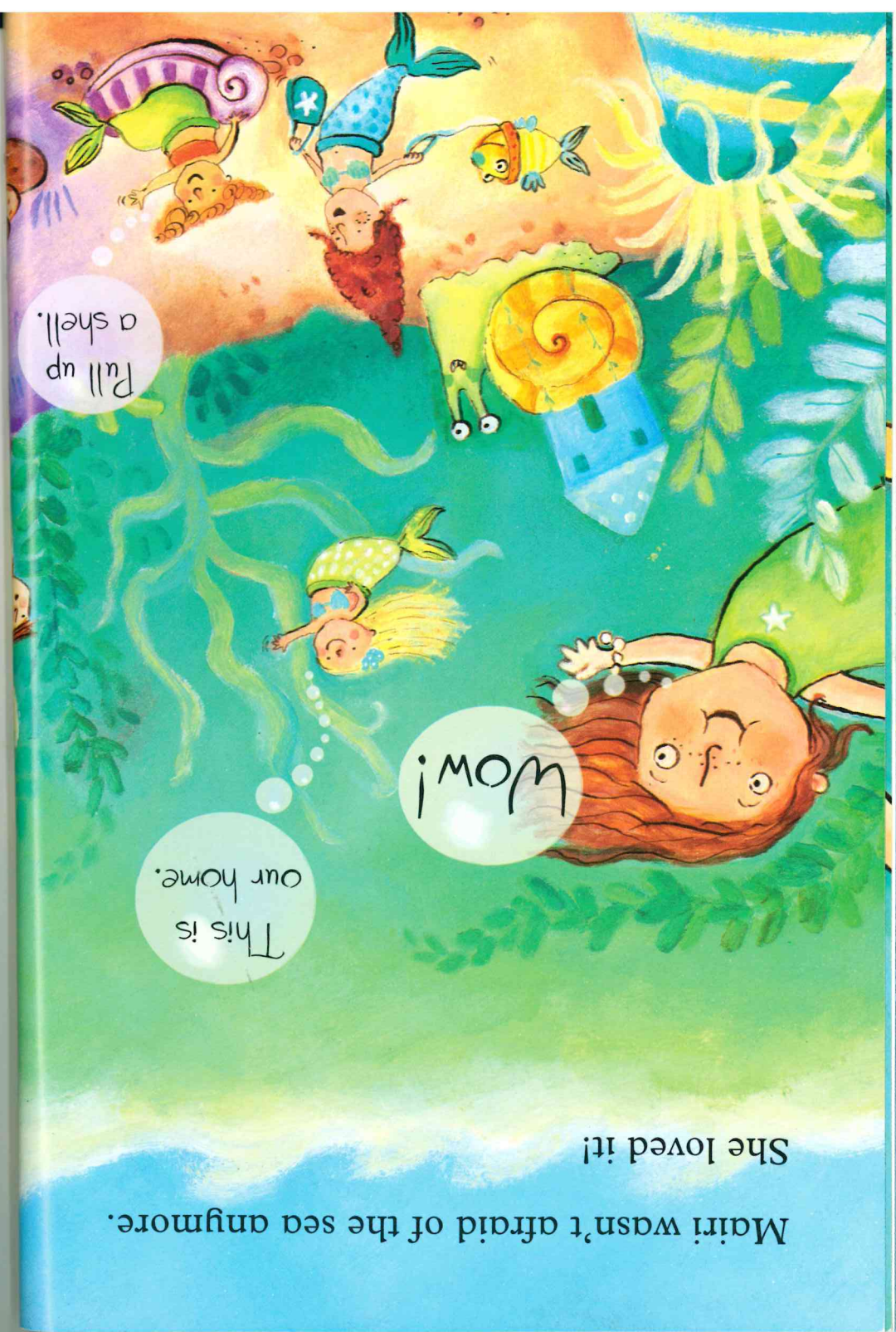


Where did
you get that
sindag?

From a
little place
I know.

I'm sure.
Delighted.

Mairi wasn't afraid of the sea anymore.
She loved it!



This is
our home.

Pull up
a shell.



Make yourself comfy.





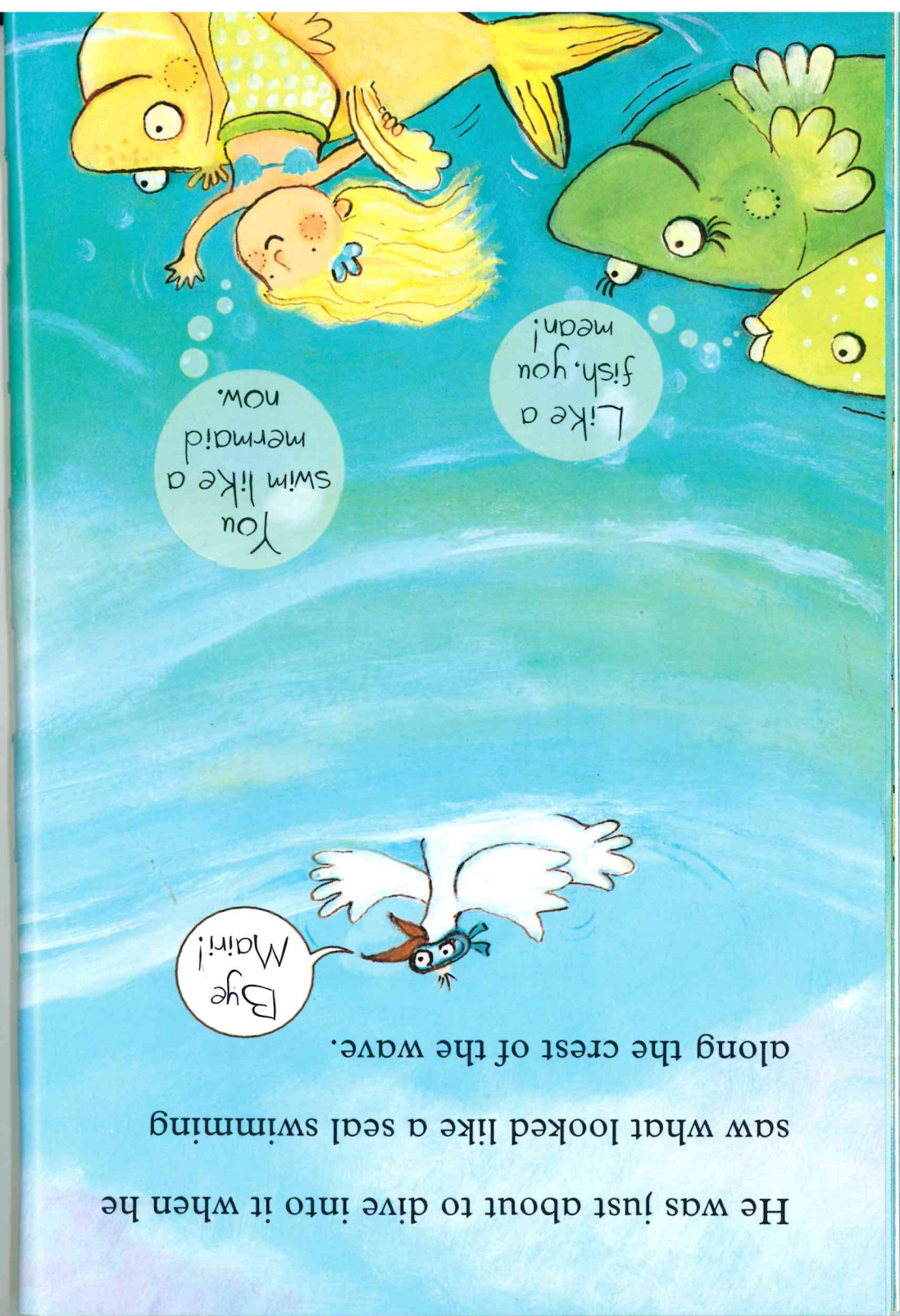
Some time later Robbie was waiting for
the next really big wave to come in,
waiting for just the right one to dive into.
'Look at this one!' he cried as a great
green wave came curling in.

He was just about to dive into it when he saw what looked like a seal swimming along the crest of the wave.



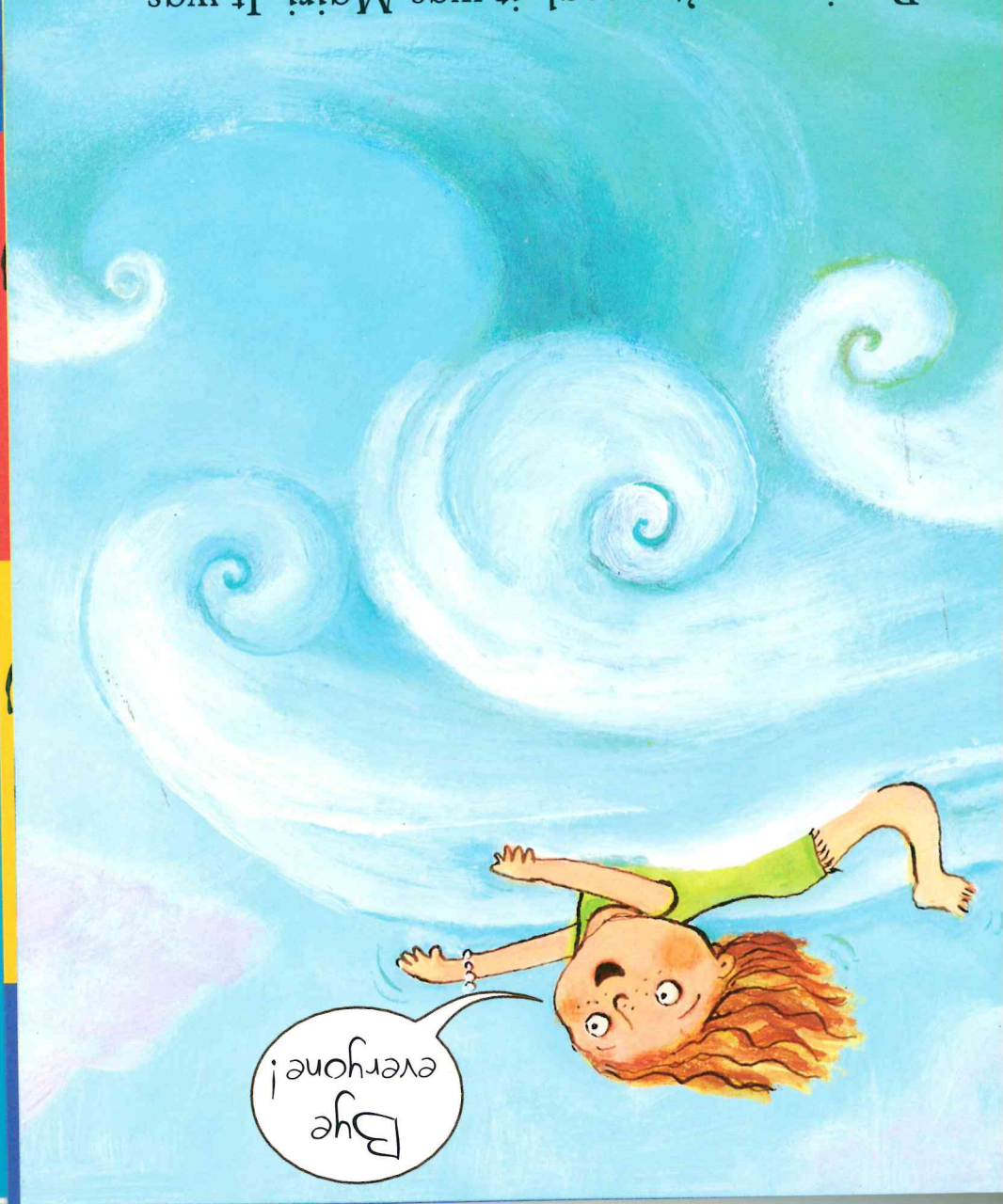
You swim like a mermaid now.

Like a fish, you mean!

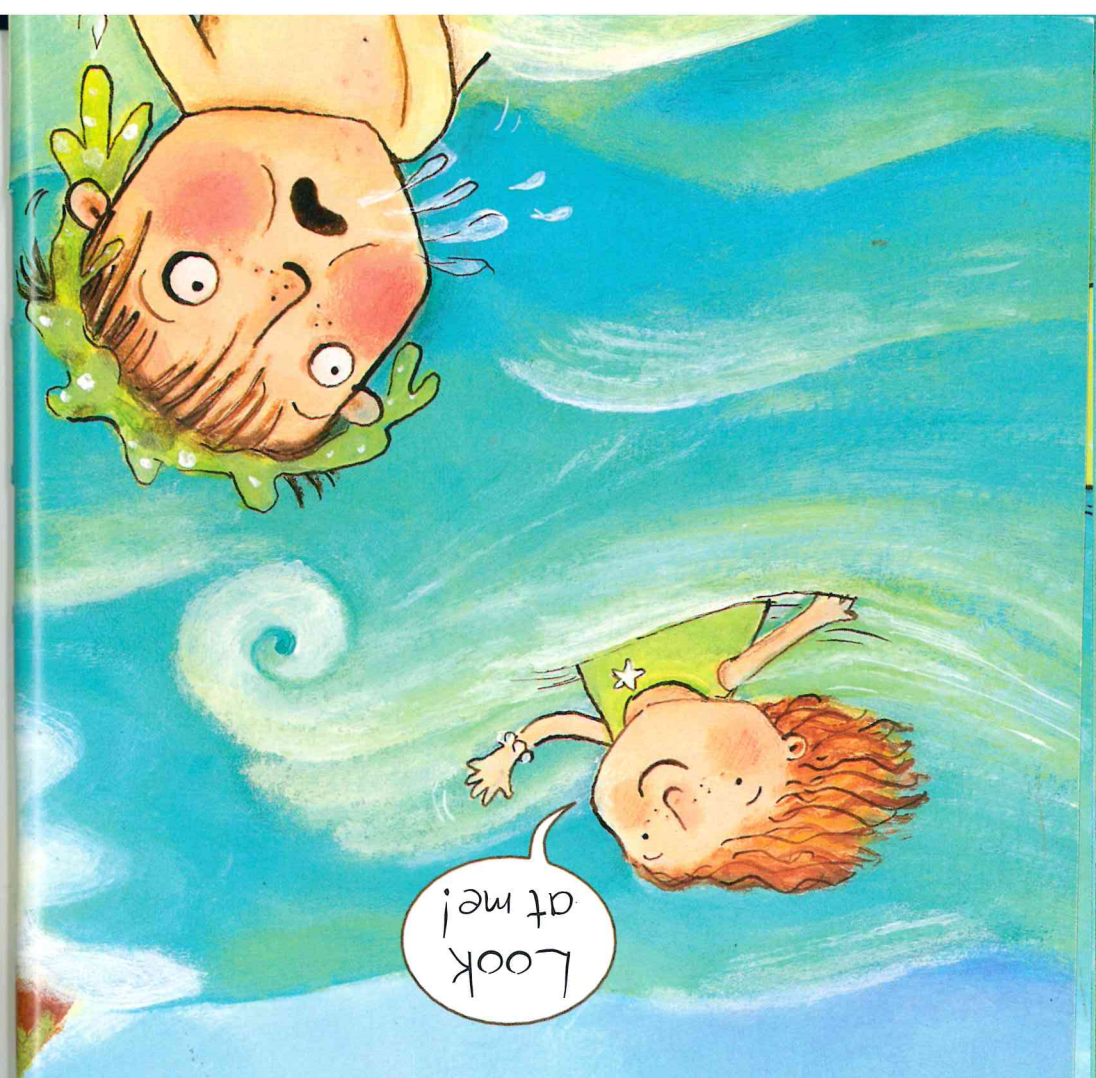


Mairi swimming!

But it wasn't a seal, it was Mairi. It was



Bye everyone!



As she swept past him, his mouth opened
in astonishment and the seawater swept in.
'You can swim!' he spluttered.
Mairi's mother and father came running
down to the water's edge.

'You can swim!' they cried.

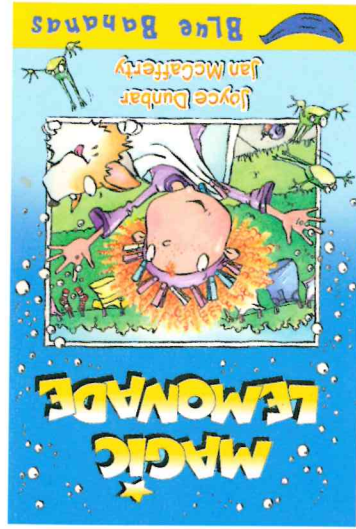
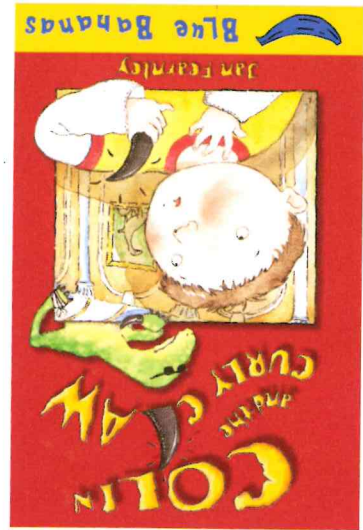
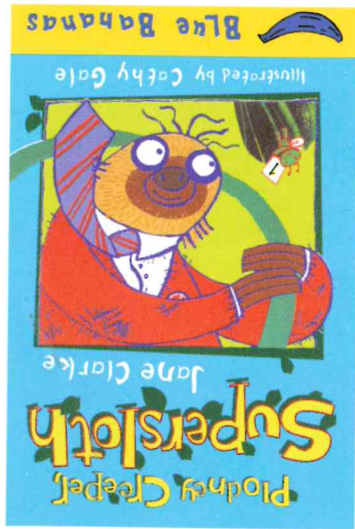
'Course I can,' she said. 'It's easy.

I just pretended I was a mermaid;

We
knew you'd
do it!



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

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Robbie says swimming is easy. You just have to pretend you're a mermaid. But that doesn't help Mairi. She isn't even sure that mermaids are real . . .

