

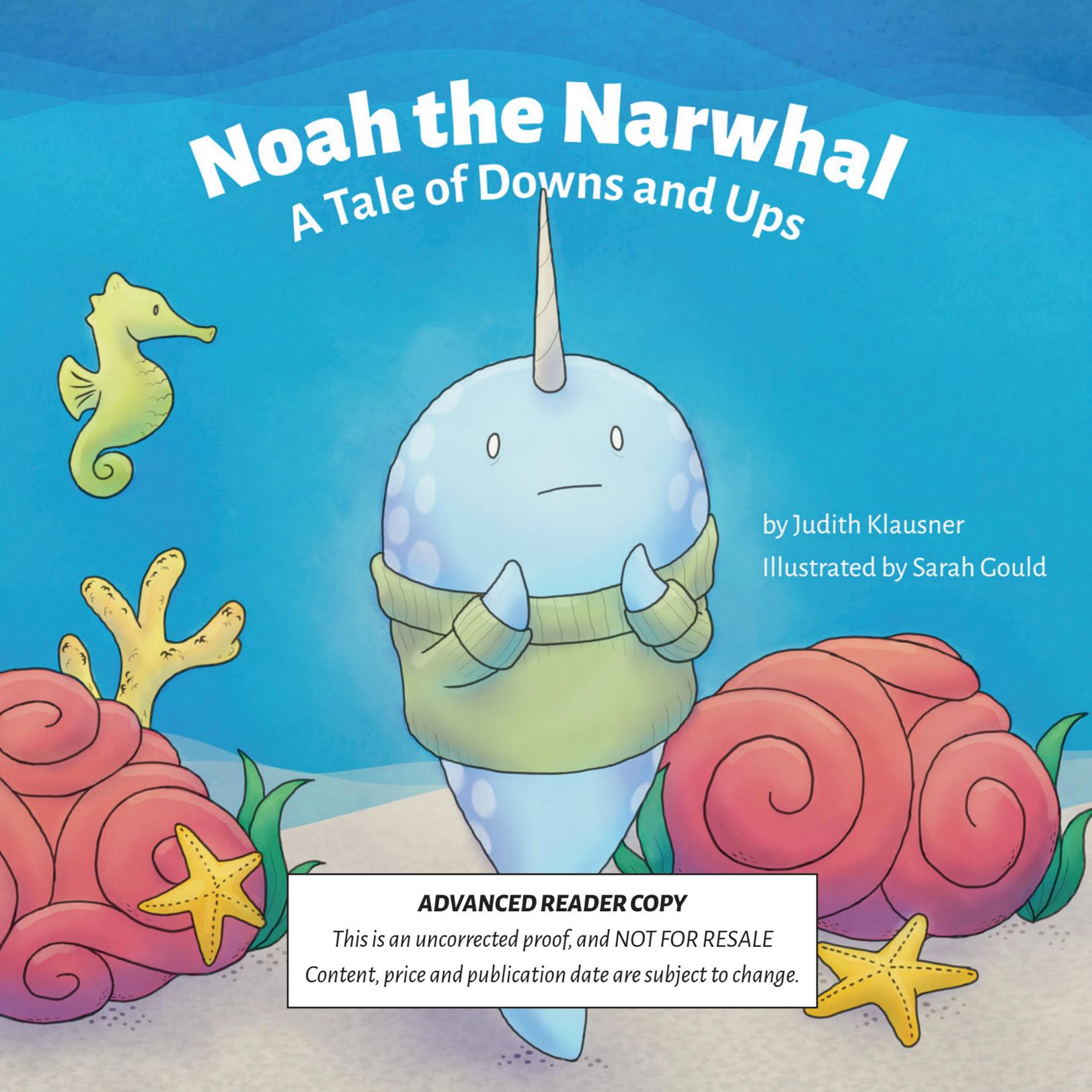
Noah the Narwhal

A Tale of Downs and Ups

by Judith Klausner
Illustrated by Sarah Gould

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A Tale of Downs and Ups



by Judith Klausner

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For my mom and dad, for...everything...over the last three decades (and the next many, on speculation). —J. K.

For my grandmother, Queen of the Sharks, for her support and gumption. Never give up. —S.G.

With grateful thanks to Caroline Jalfin—the godmother of Noah the Narwhal—for her passionate commitment to helping to make this book a reality.



Noah the Narwhal: A Tale of Downs and Ups

Dancing Mantis Press

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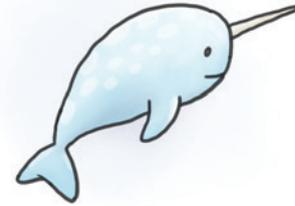
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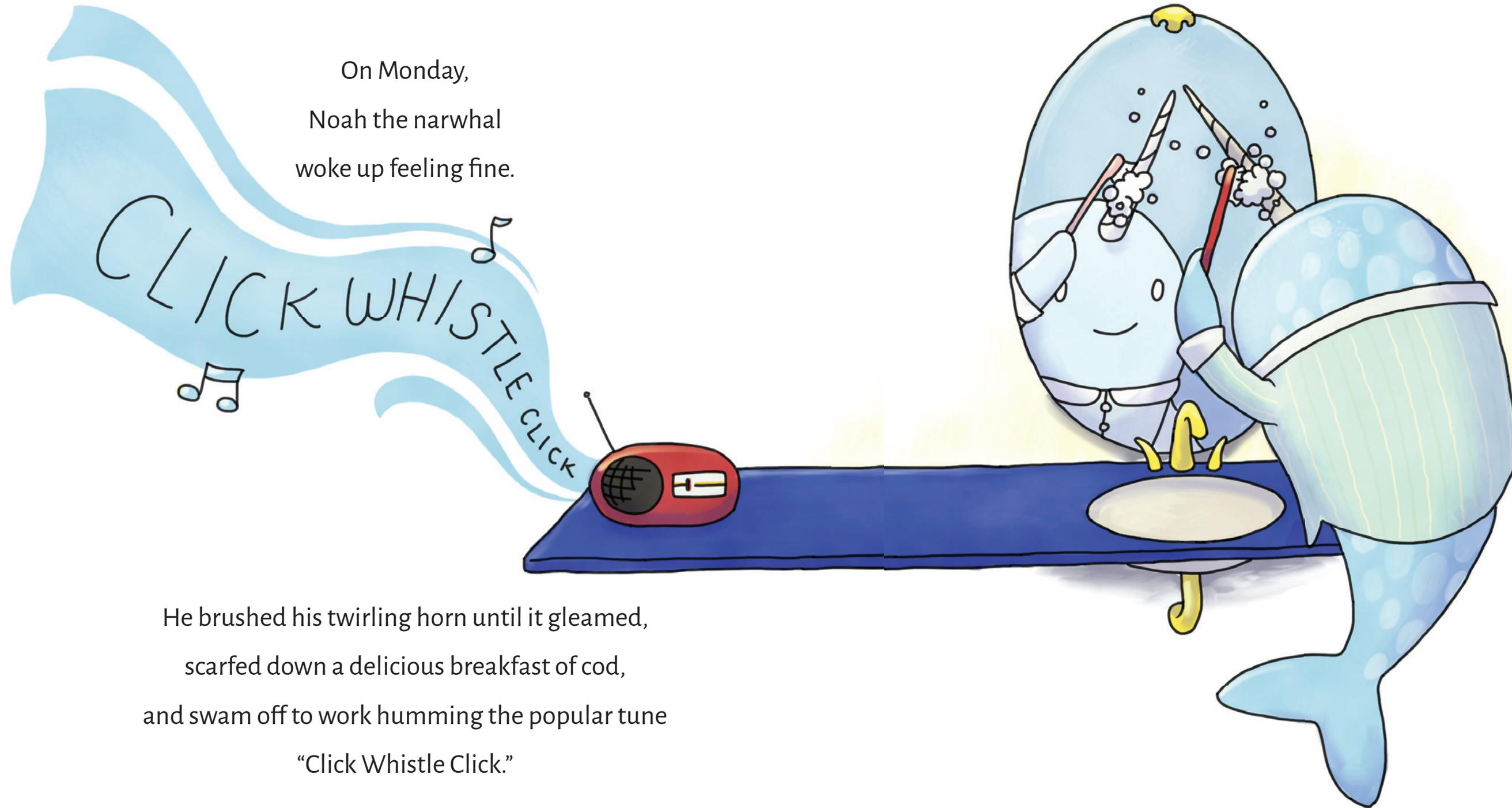
Narwhals

Narwhals are small Arctic whales. They are probably most well known for their unicorn-like “horn” or tusk, which is found on all male narwhals and 15% of female narwhals. All of the narwhals in this story have tusks because we think it's more fun that way.

Narwhals use many different sounds to navigate, communicate, and find food. These include clicks, whistles, knocks, trumpeting, and even a noise like a squeaking door!



On Monday,
Noah the narwhal
woke up feeling fine.



He brushed his twirling horn until it gleamed,
scarfed down a delicious breakfast of cod,
and swam off to work humming the popular tune
"Click Whistle Click."

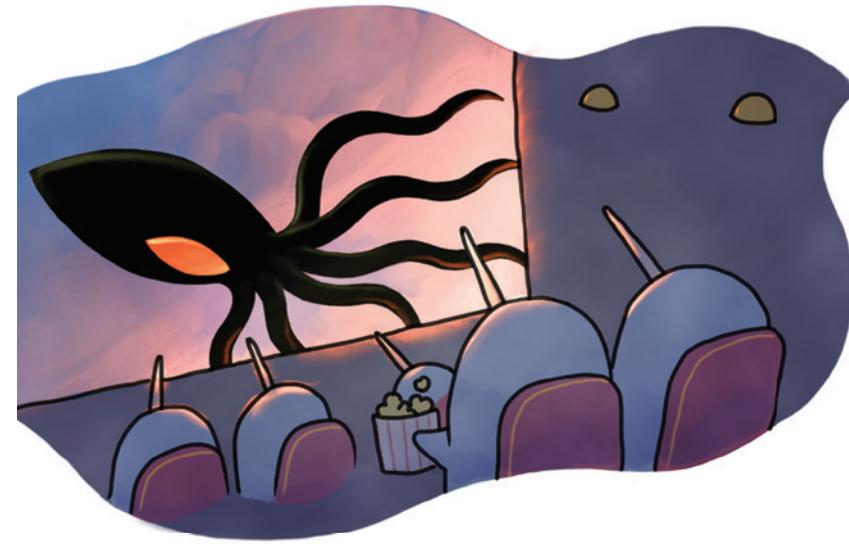


At lunch, Noah's friend Nikki asked if he'd like to see a movie.

"Revenge of the Squid is showing tomorrow," she said.

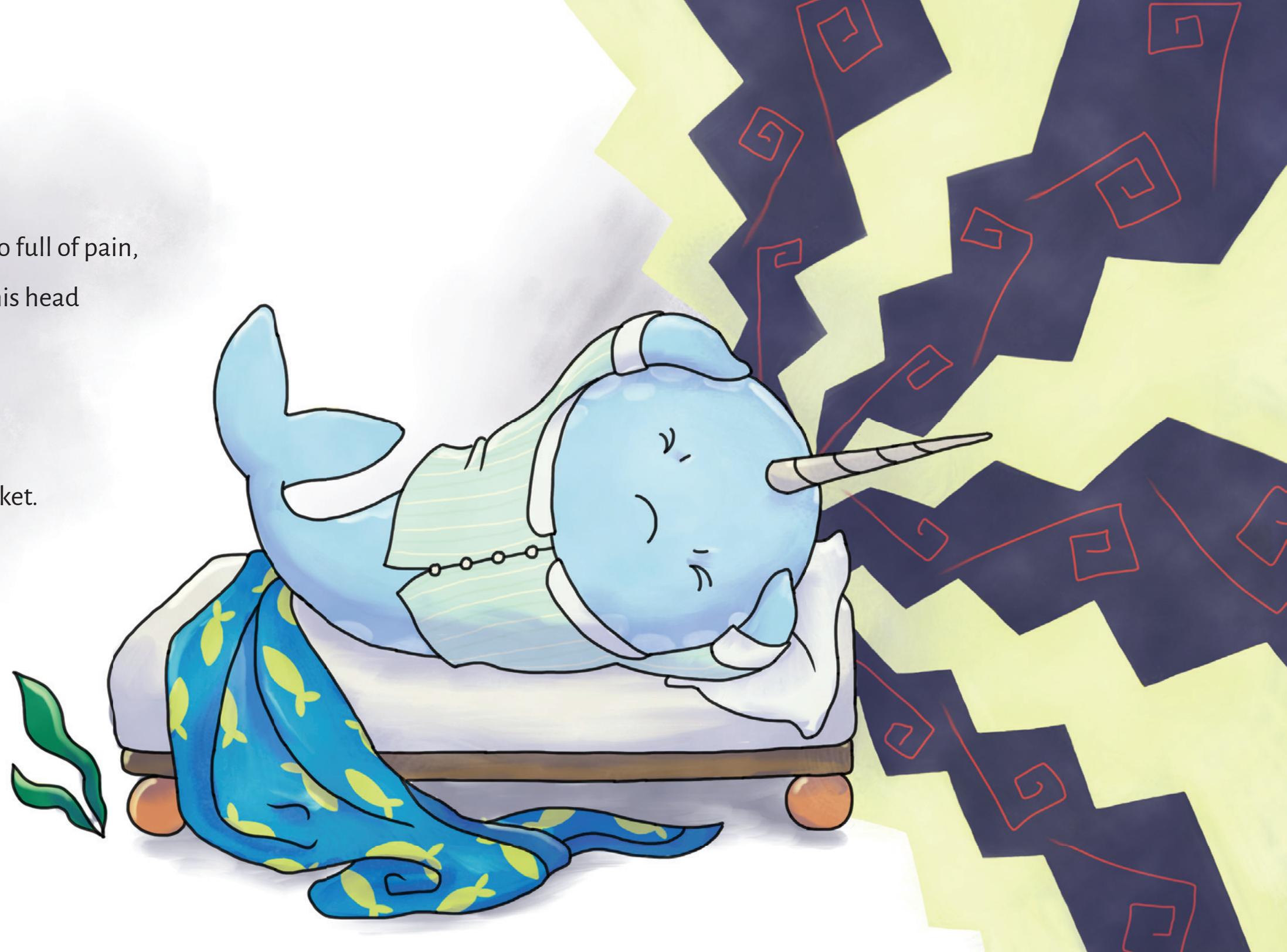
"I'll come by and pick you up at six o'clock!"

Noah ate a tasty dinner of shrimp
and went to sleep excited about the next day.



On Tuesday, Noah woke up with his head so full of pain,
it felt like his horn was growing into his head
instead of out of it.

“Not again,” moaned Noah
as he hid his head under the blanket.



Noah called his boss Norbert
to say he couldn't make it in to work.
“You were feeling fine yesterday,” said Norbert.

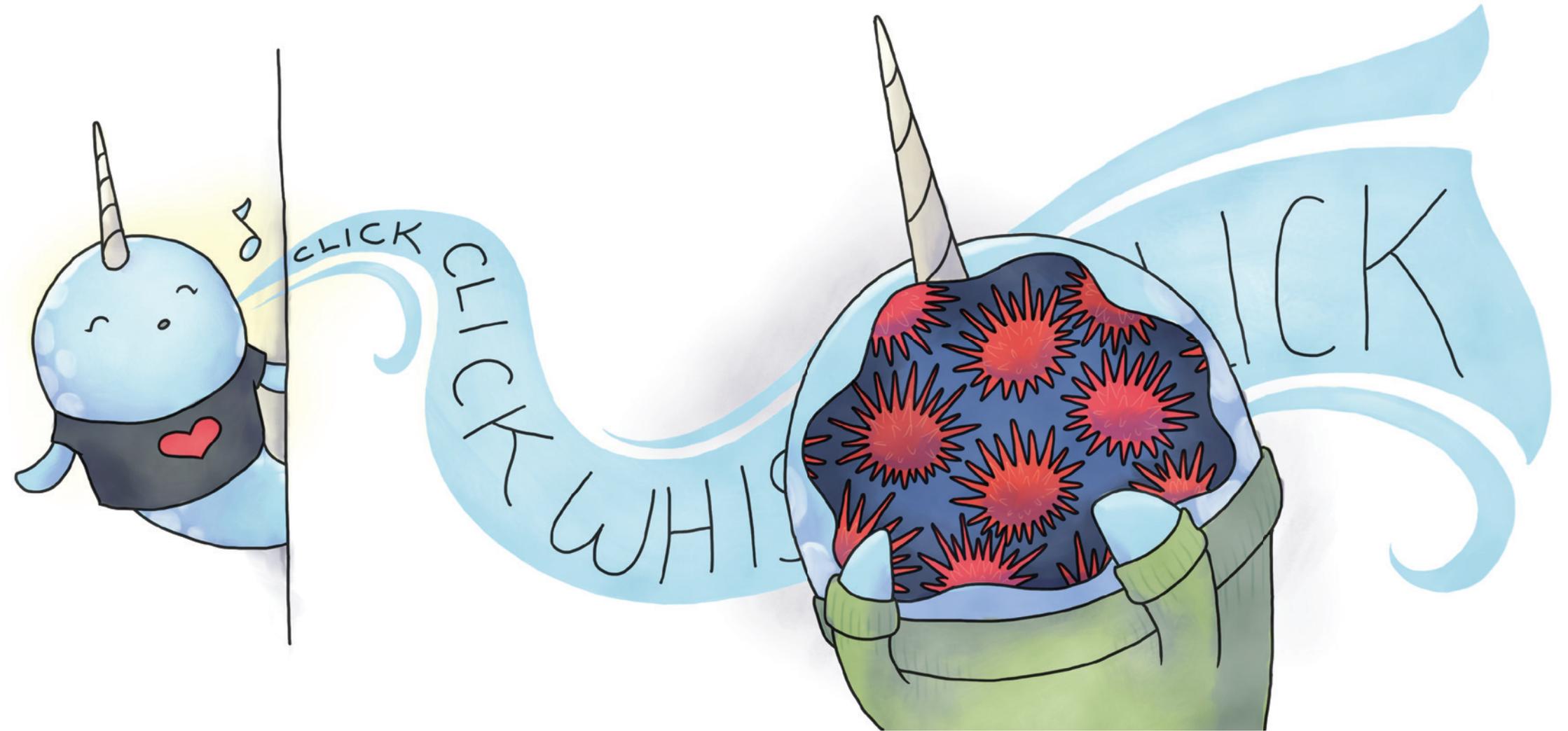


“Today is not yesterday,” said Noah,
and he went back to sleep.

“Click click whistle click!”
said his friend Nikki
as she arrived at the door.

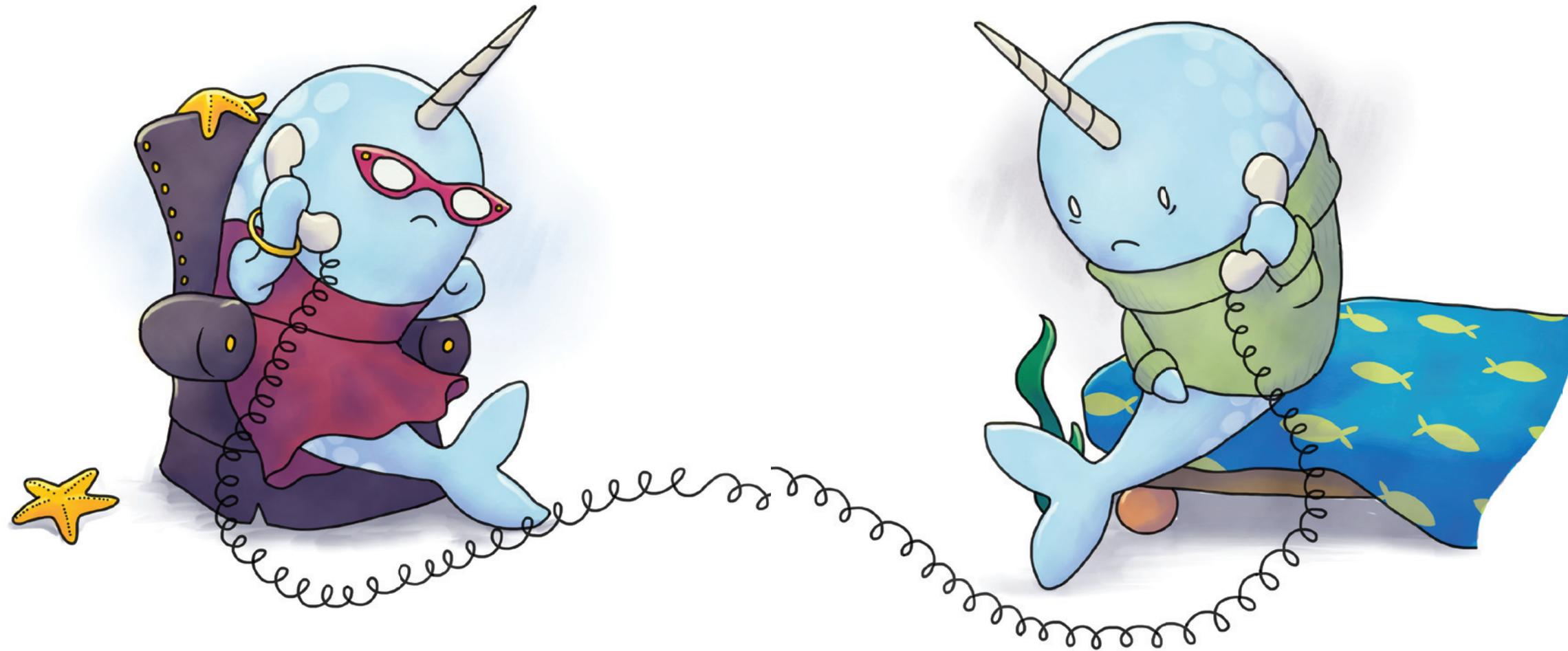
Noah winced.

“Not so much ‘whistle’ today, please,” he begged.
“My head feels like it's full of sea urchins.”



“You don't look any different than yesterday,” said Nikki.

“Today is not yesterday,” said Noah,
and went back to sleep, feeling sad.



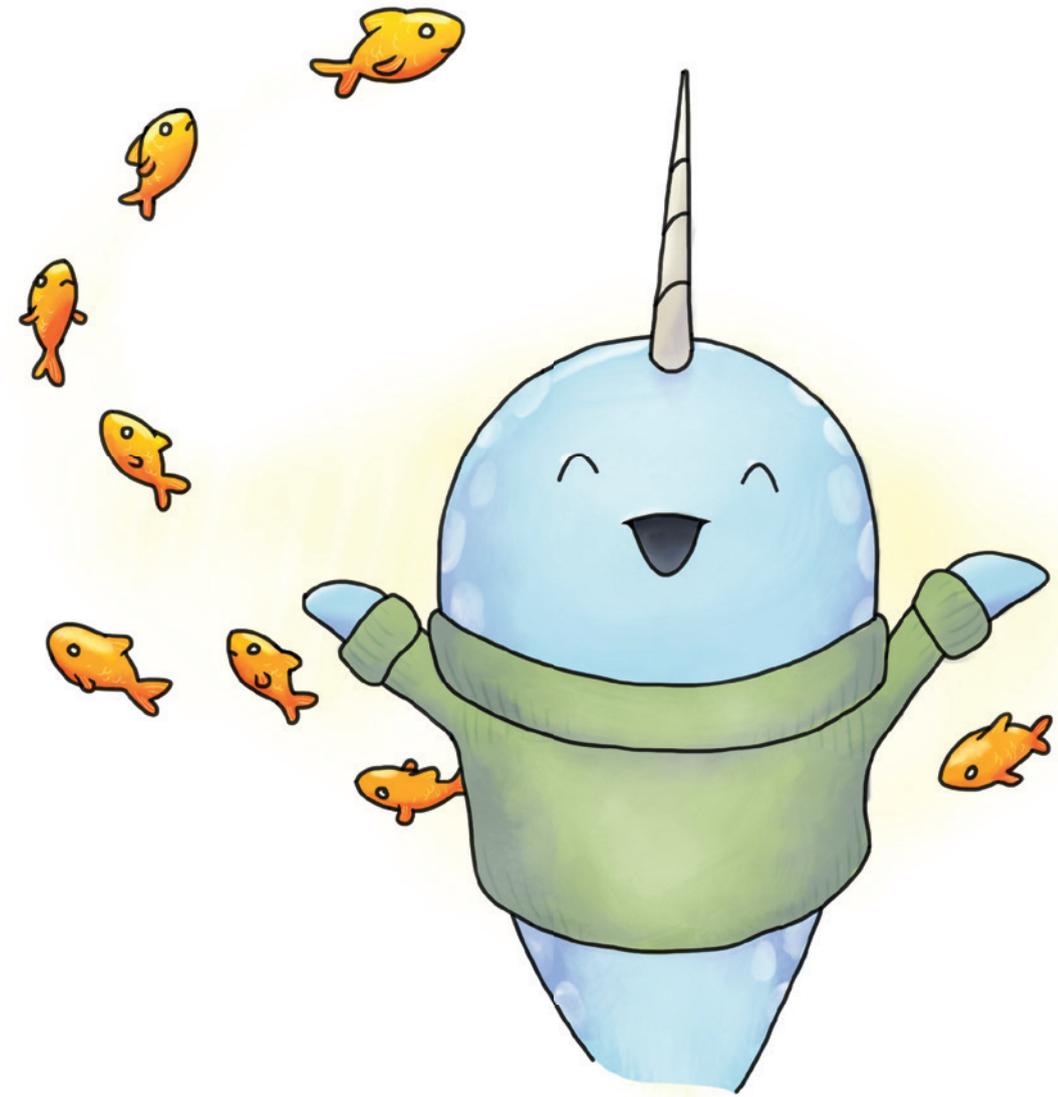
That night, Noah was woken up again
by a phone call from his sister, Nina.

“I’m sorry, Nina,” said Noah, “I can’t talk right now.”

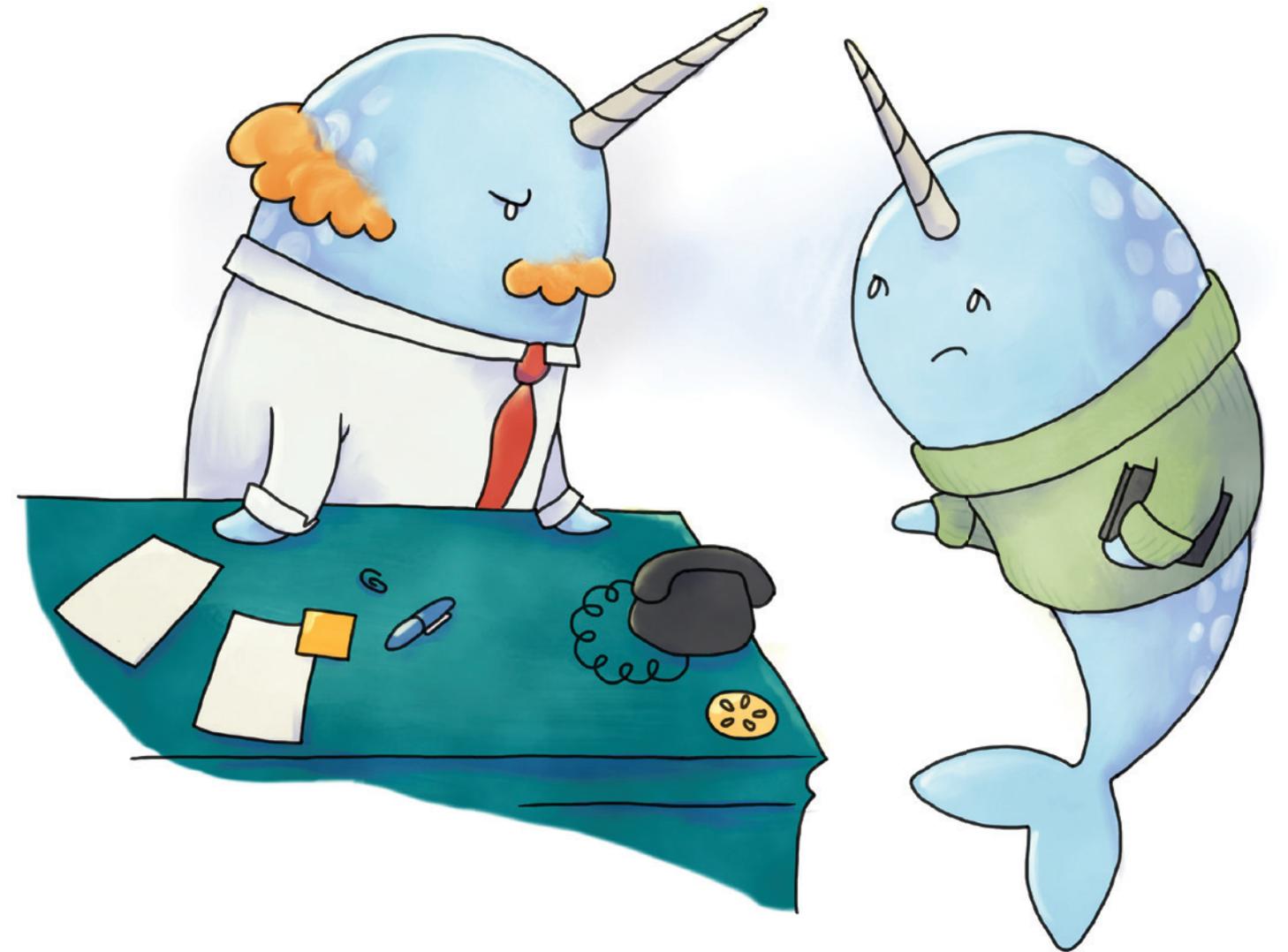
“But when I called yesterday, you said to call back today,”
she said, sounding upset.

“Today is not yesterday,” said Noah, and he tried not to cry.

On Wednesday, Noah woke up feeling much better.



“Hello!” he greeted his boss Norbert.
“Harrumph,” said Norbert, narrowing his eyes.
“You look just fine to me.”

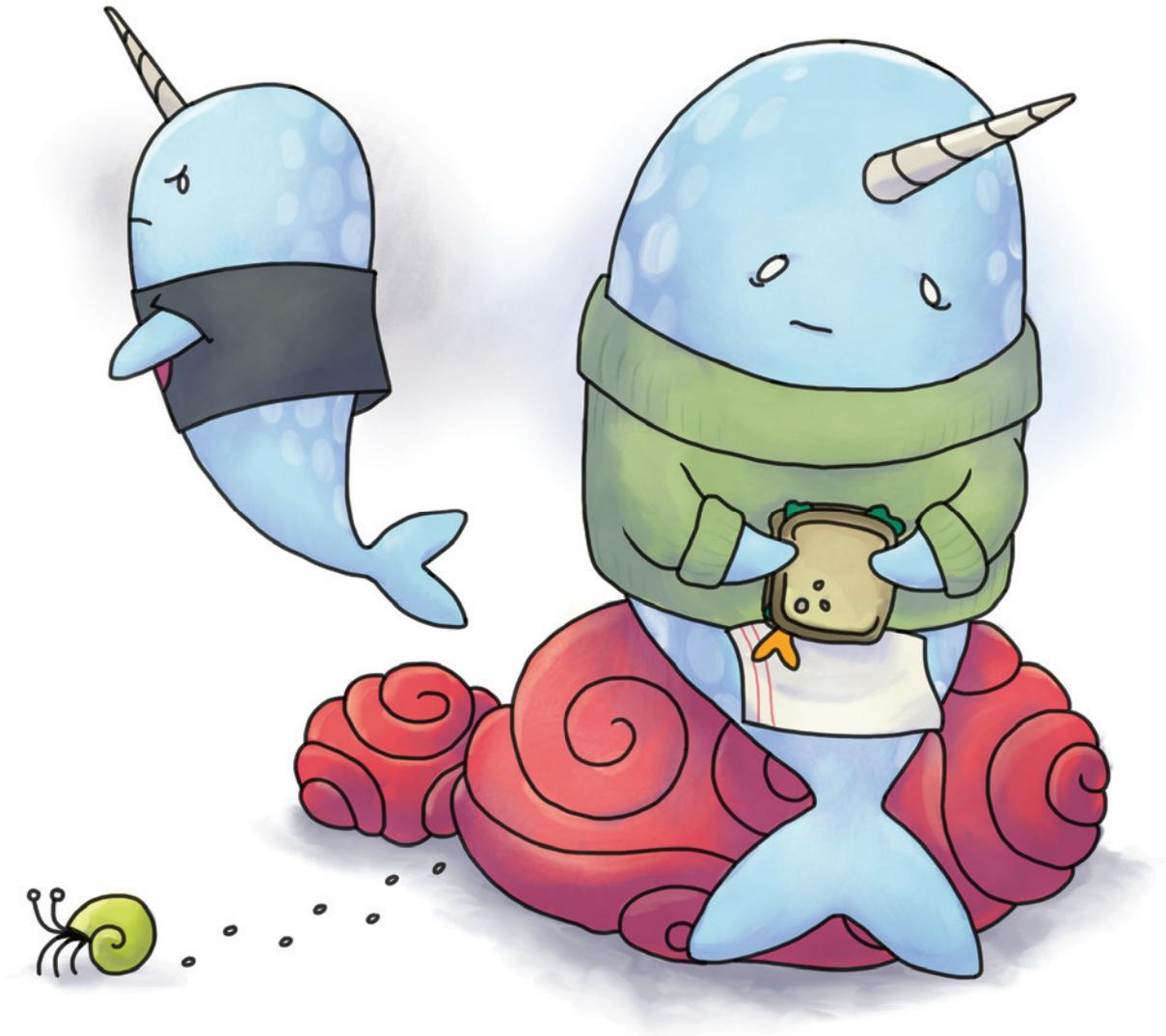


“Today is not yesterday,” said Noah meekly.

“How was the movie?” Noah asked Nikki at lunchtime.

“You’d know if you came,” said Nikki.

“Anyway, you look the same as yesterday.”



“Today is not yesterday,” said Noah,
but Nikki had already swum away.

On his way home, Noah called his sister.

“Hello, Nina!” he said.

“I can't just talk whenever you feel like it,” said Nina crossly.

“And what was that all about yesterday?”

You sound just fine to me.”



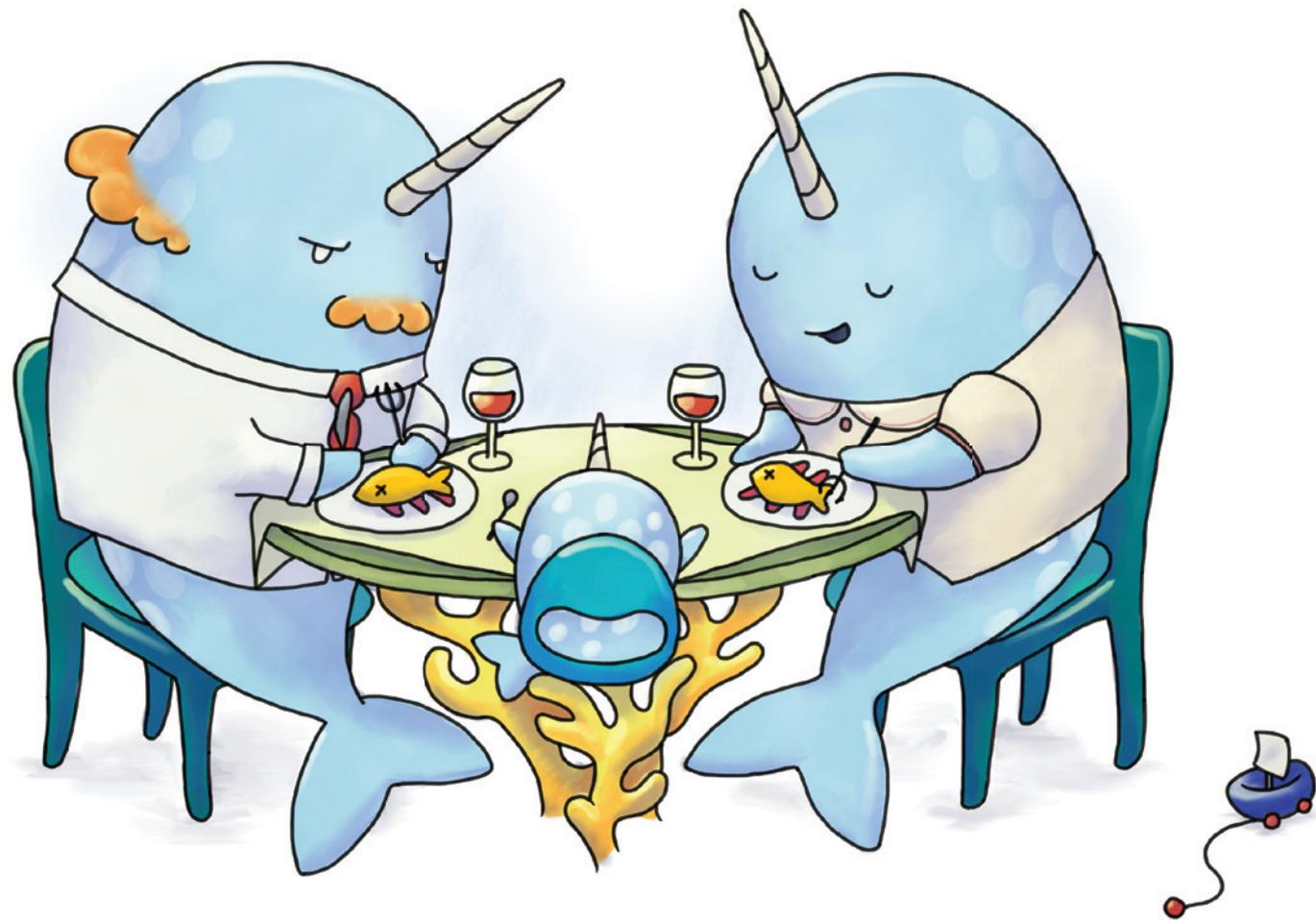
“Today is not yesterday,” said Noah,
starting to sniff.

That night Noah picked at his dinner for a while
before going to bed feeling lonely.



“That Noah!” grumbled Norbert to his wife Nancy over dinner.

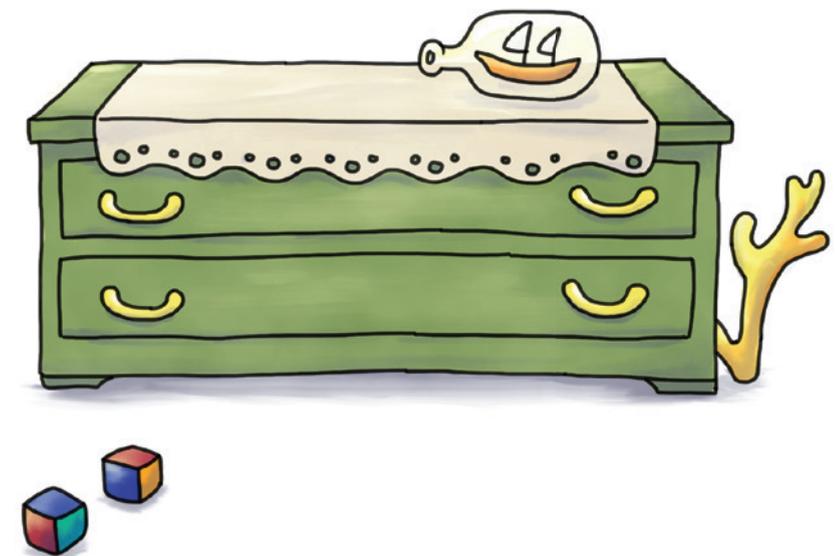
“Trying to get out of work!”



“Wasn't Noah the one who worked late all last month to finish the big electric eel project?”

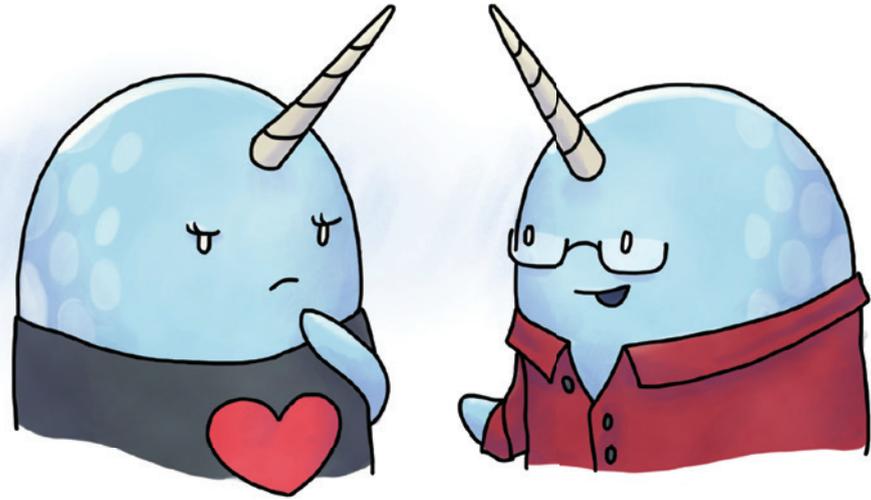
Nancy reminded him.

“Harrumph,” said Norbert, but he stopped scowling as he remembered how well the project had turned out.



“That Noah,” said Nikki to her friend Ned.

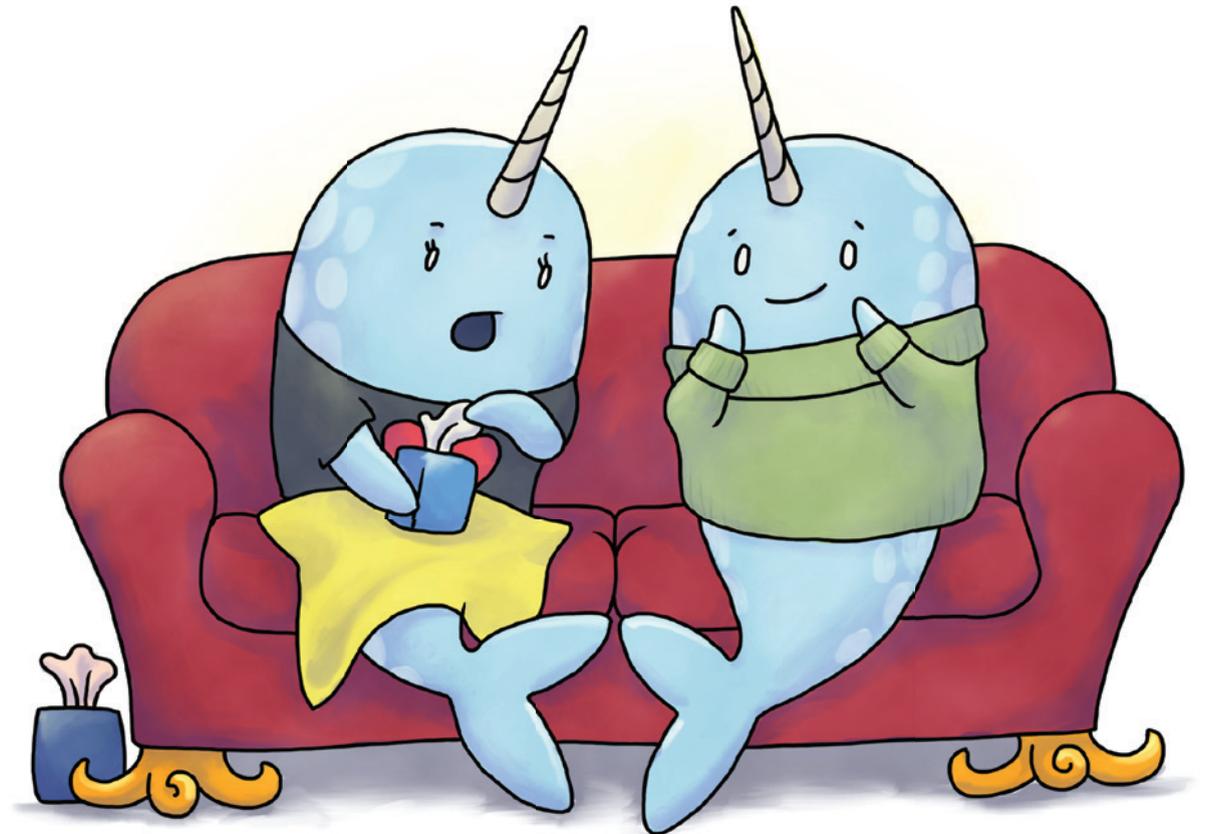
“You can never rely on him.”



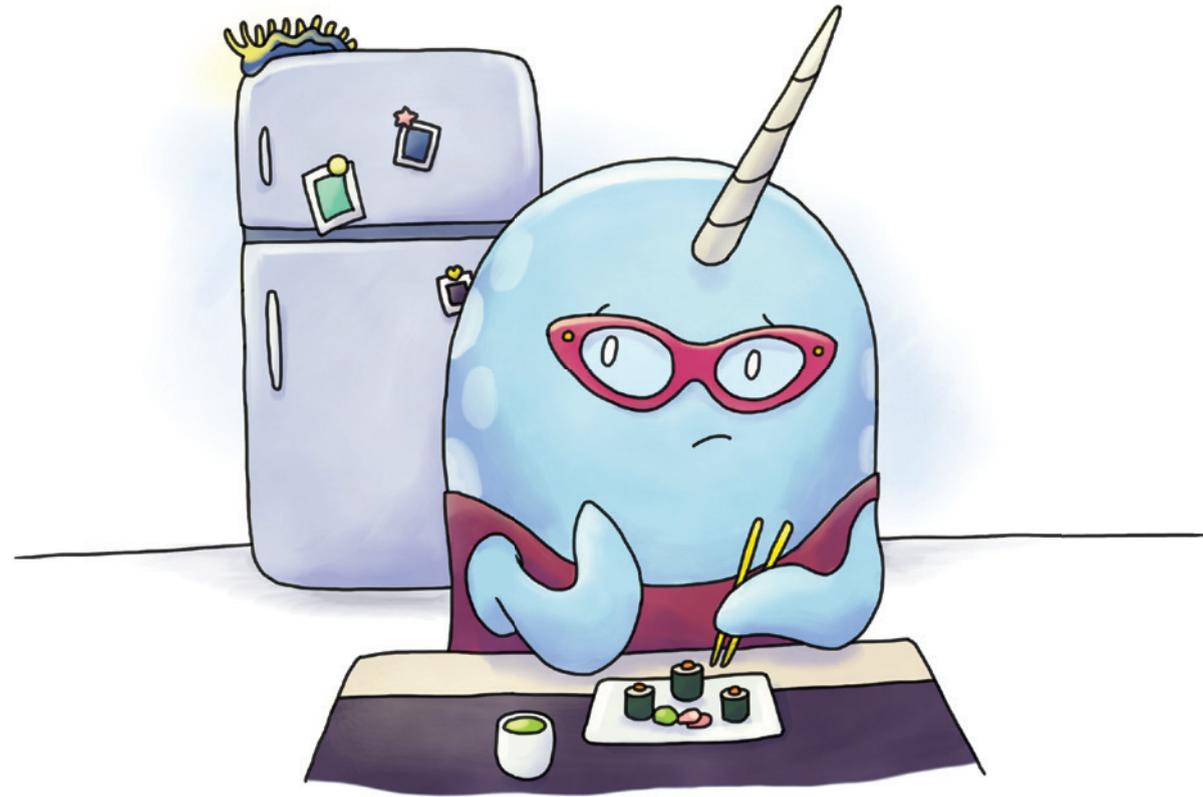
“Wasn't Noah the one who brought over a movie when you were sick on your birthday?” said Ned.



Nikki smiled, remembering how they laughed together
over *Penguin Bloopers 2*.



“That brother of mine,” Nina thought to herself,
“so self-centered!”

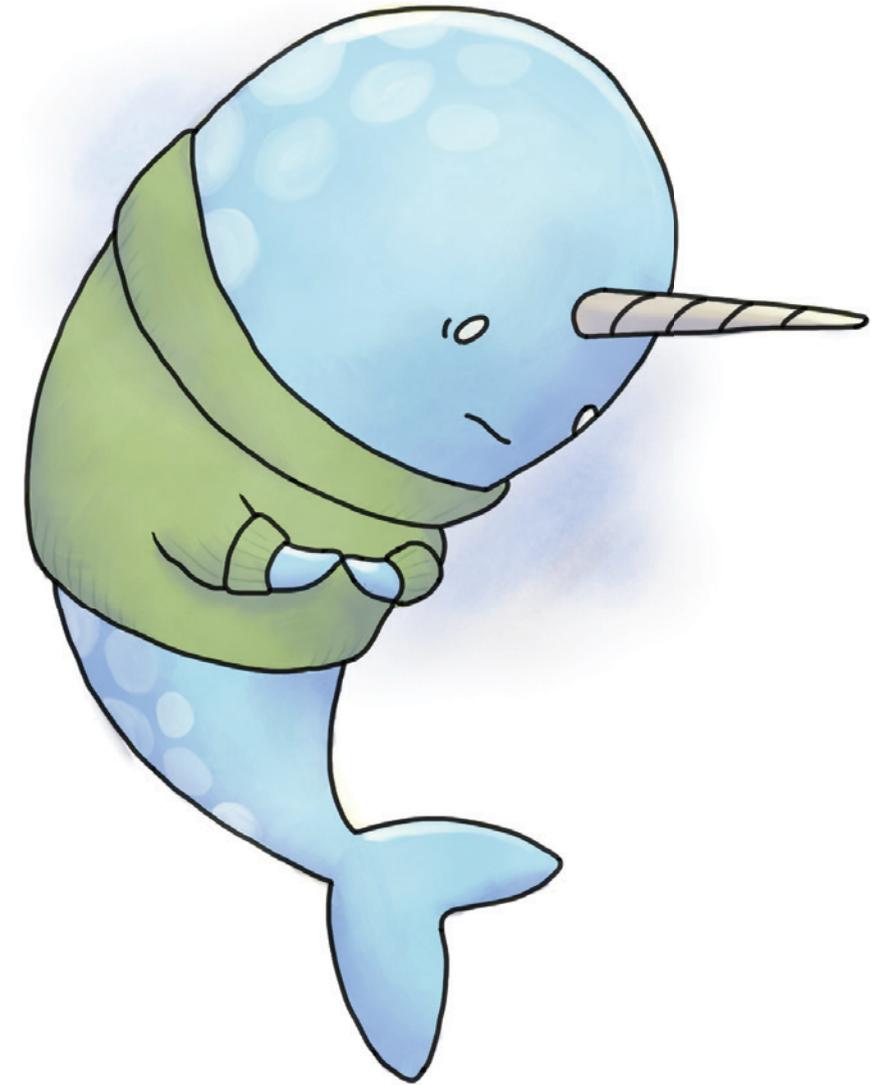


Just then she caught sight of the photos on her refrigerator.

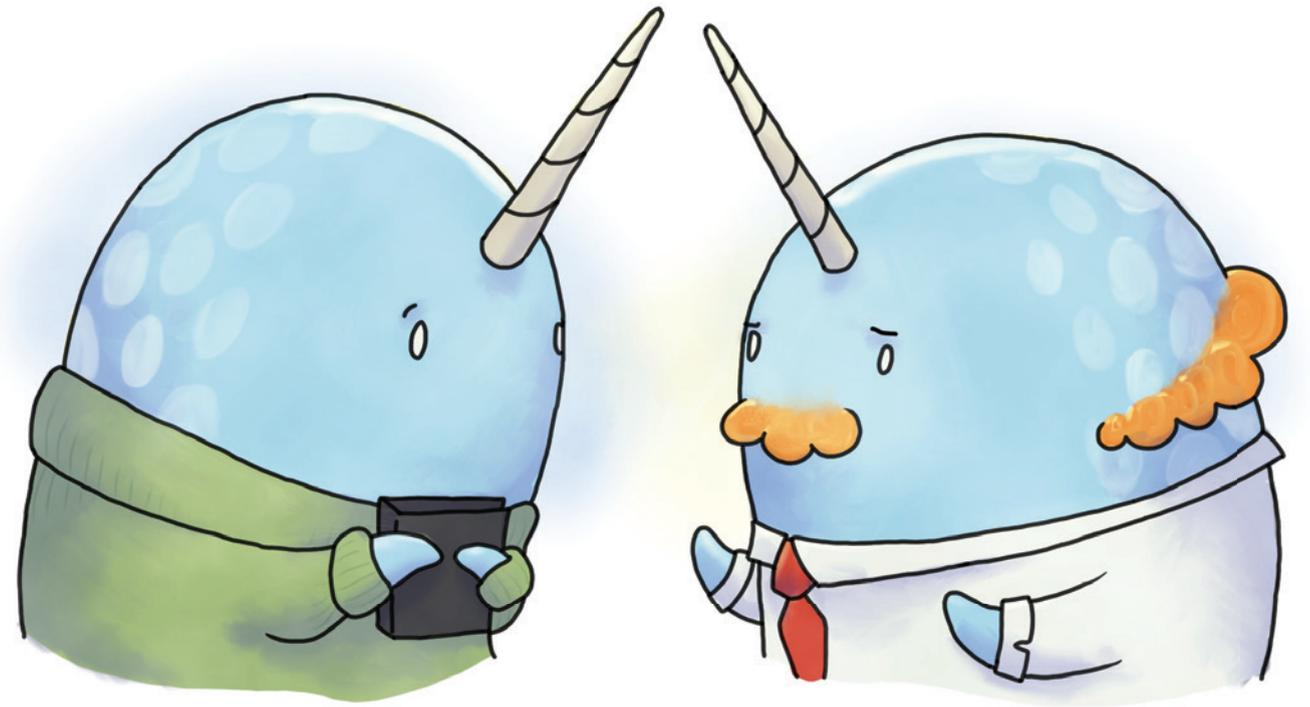
Right in the center was a picture of Noah,
teaching her two little sons to dance.



On Thursday, Noah woke up feeling anxious.



When Noah got to work,
his boss Norbert greeted him with a smile.
“But yesterday you were disappointed with me,” said Noah.



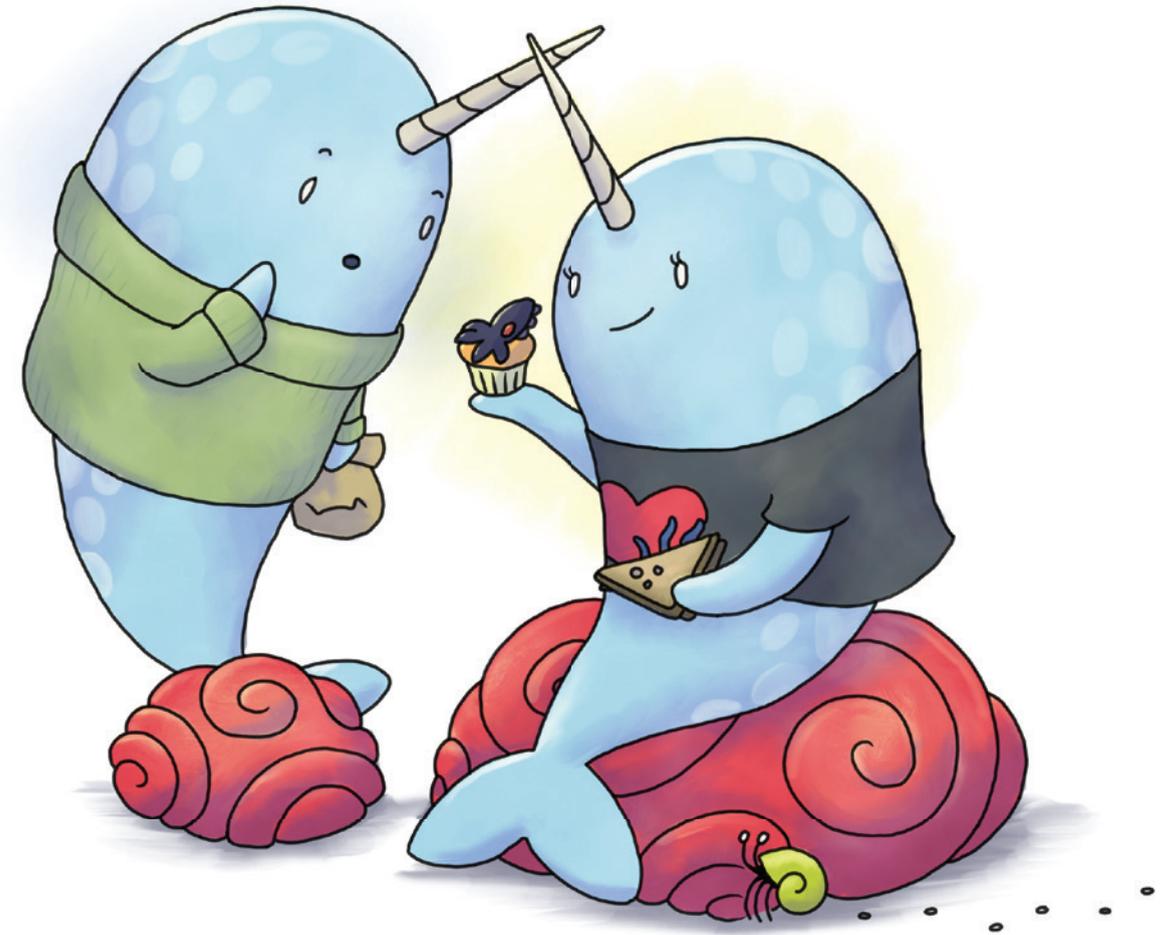
“Today is not yesterday,” said Norbert, looking embarrassed.

He patted Noah on the back.

“I value your work.

That shouldn't change when you don't feel well.”

At lunch,
Nikki waved to him to come and sit next to her.
“But yesterday you were upset with me,” said Noah.



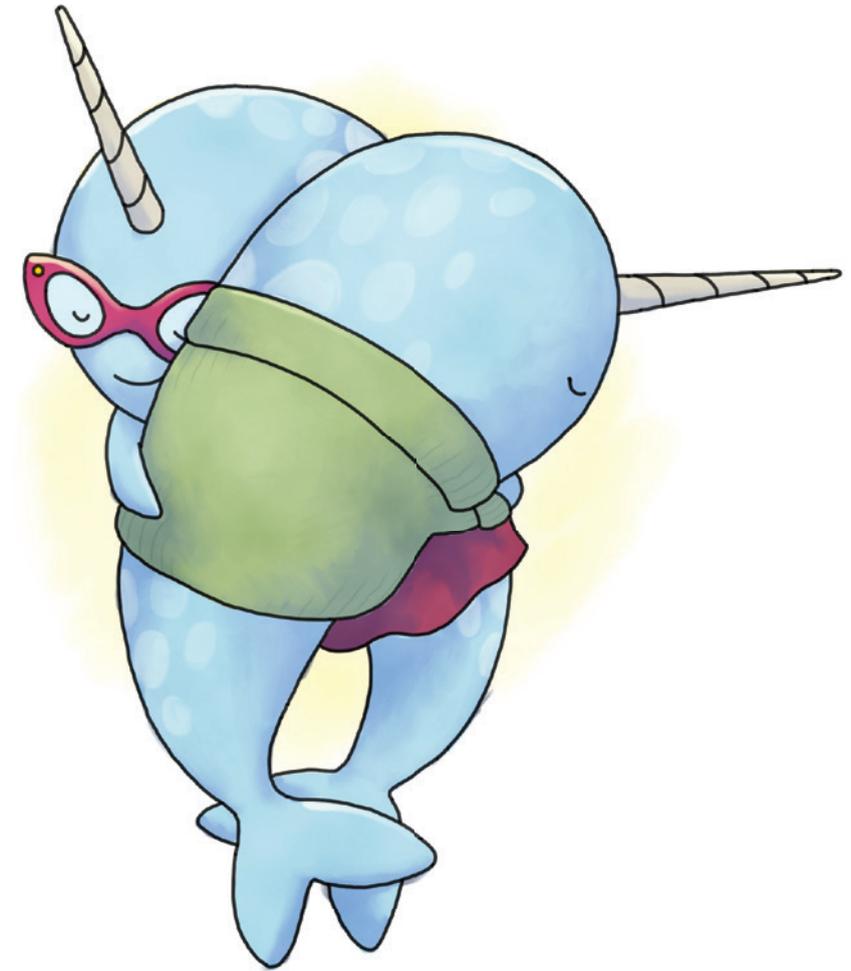
“Today is not yesterday,” said Nikki, looking ashamed.

“I value our friendship.

That shouldn't change when you don't feel well.

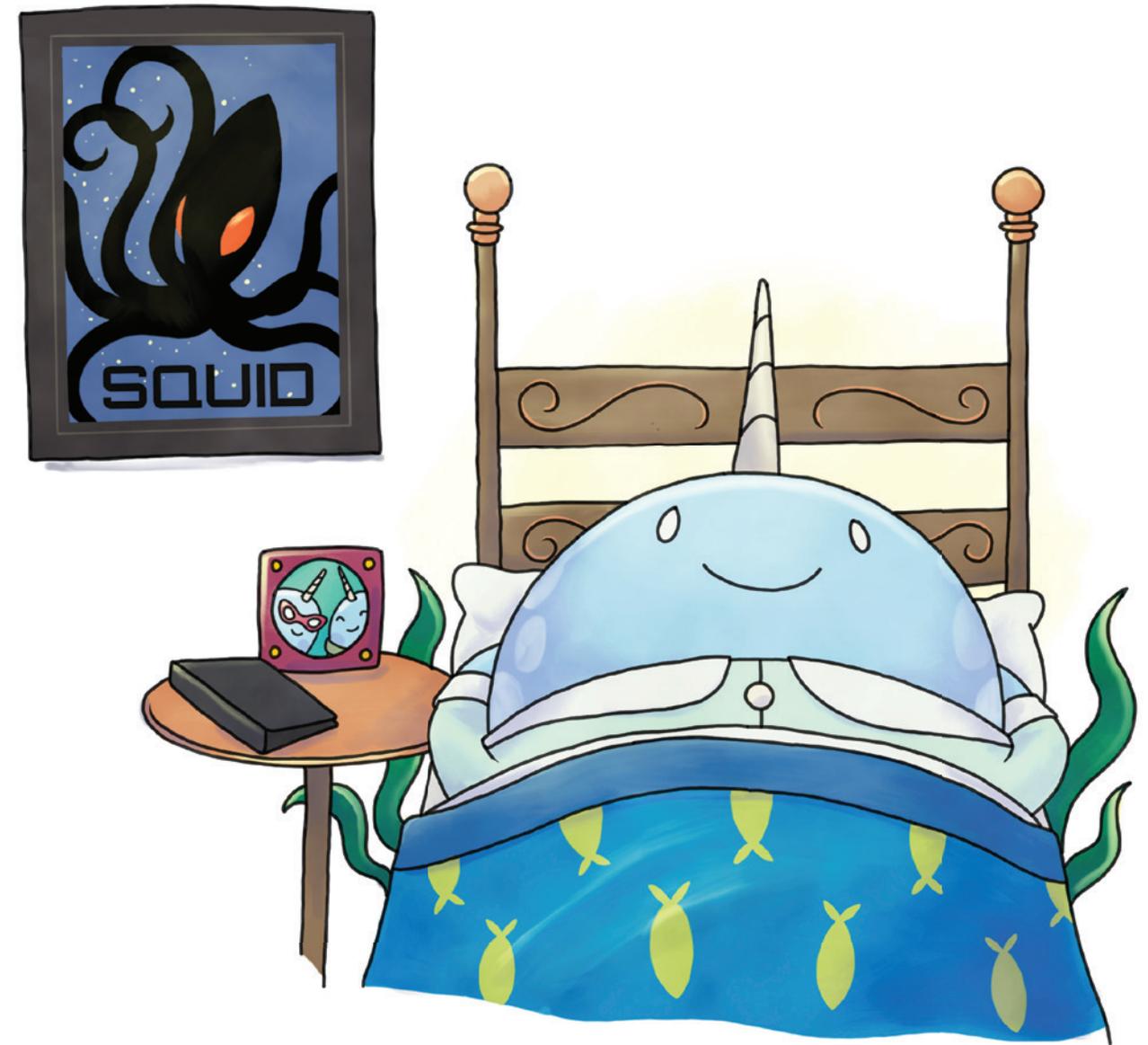
Here, I brought you this!” Nikki handed him a squid cupcake.

That evening,
Nina brought Noah his favorite fish casserole for dinner.
“But yesterday you were annoyed with me,” said Noah.



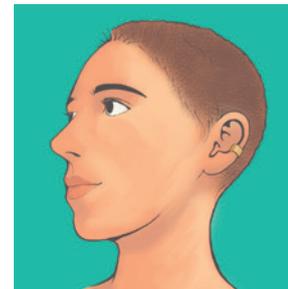
“Today is not yesterday!” Nina declared.
“You are my family.
That doesn't change when you don't feel well.”
And she gave her brother a big hug.

That night, Noah lay in bed thinking.
He didn't know how he would feel when he woke up on Friday,
but he did know that no matter what, he had his friends.



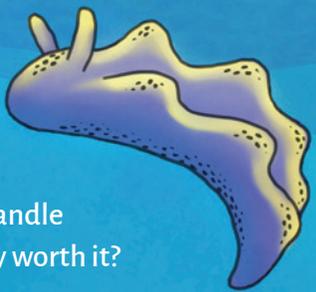


Judith Klausner is a migrainey land mammal from Somerville, Massachusetts. She channels her experience of invisible disability (and everything else) into her creative endeavors. She often makes art using unusual materials from her surroundings and plays with her food both recreationally and professionally. When not creating works of art, she likes to throw fancy dress tea parties. Seeing a lack of characters like herself in picture books, Judith set to work contributing to filling this void, and she hopes that Noah will help other disabled folks of all ages feel less isolated.



Sarah Gould is a designer of many things, including games, landscapes, stories, and art. She has grand ambitions to make the world a better place by creating occasionally useful things, but she mostly spends her time noodling, doodling, and trying to understand the full weirdness of human beings. When she's not at work, she can be found tending her blueberry patch at her little house (that she designed!) in a quiet corner of Seattle, WA, or doing some urban hiking on the way to ice cream.





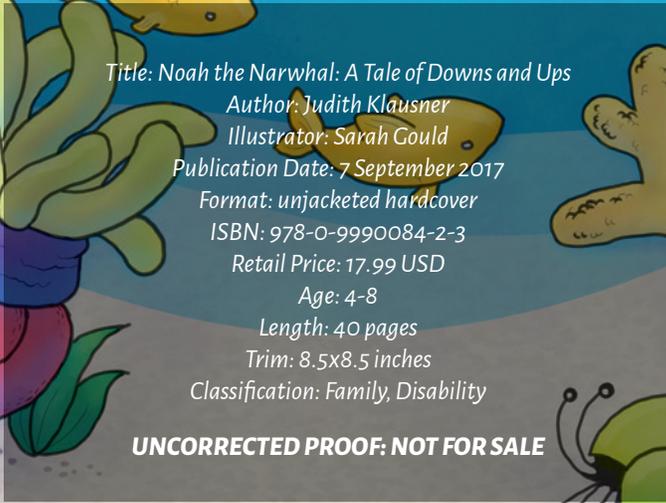
Noah the Narwhal has good days, when he is productive and social, and pain days, when he needs to rest. His friends and family can find it difficult to handle the unpredictability. Can they come to see that having him in their lives is absolutely worth it?

“Noah the Narwhal offers children a gentle lesson in compassion and understanding in relationships with others.”

— Mark Alan Stamaty, author of *Who Needs Donuts?*

“Noah's story of finding acceptance for chronic but invisible illness (here, migraines) goes beyond the canon of ‘useful books,’ and lands firmly in the category of warm stories about friendship.”

— Brian Lies, author of the New York Times bestselling bat series, including *Bats at the Library*



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