7
The Phasieland Fairy Tales

Underwater Adventures and the Battle with Sea Monsters

(Recommended for Bedtime Reading)

By Michael Raduga
Translated by Peter Orange
Illustrated by Andrey Goodkov

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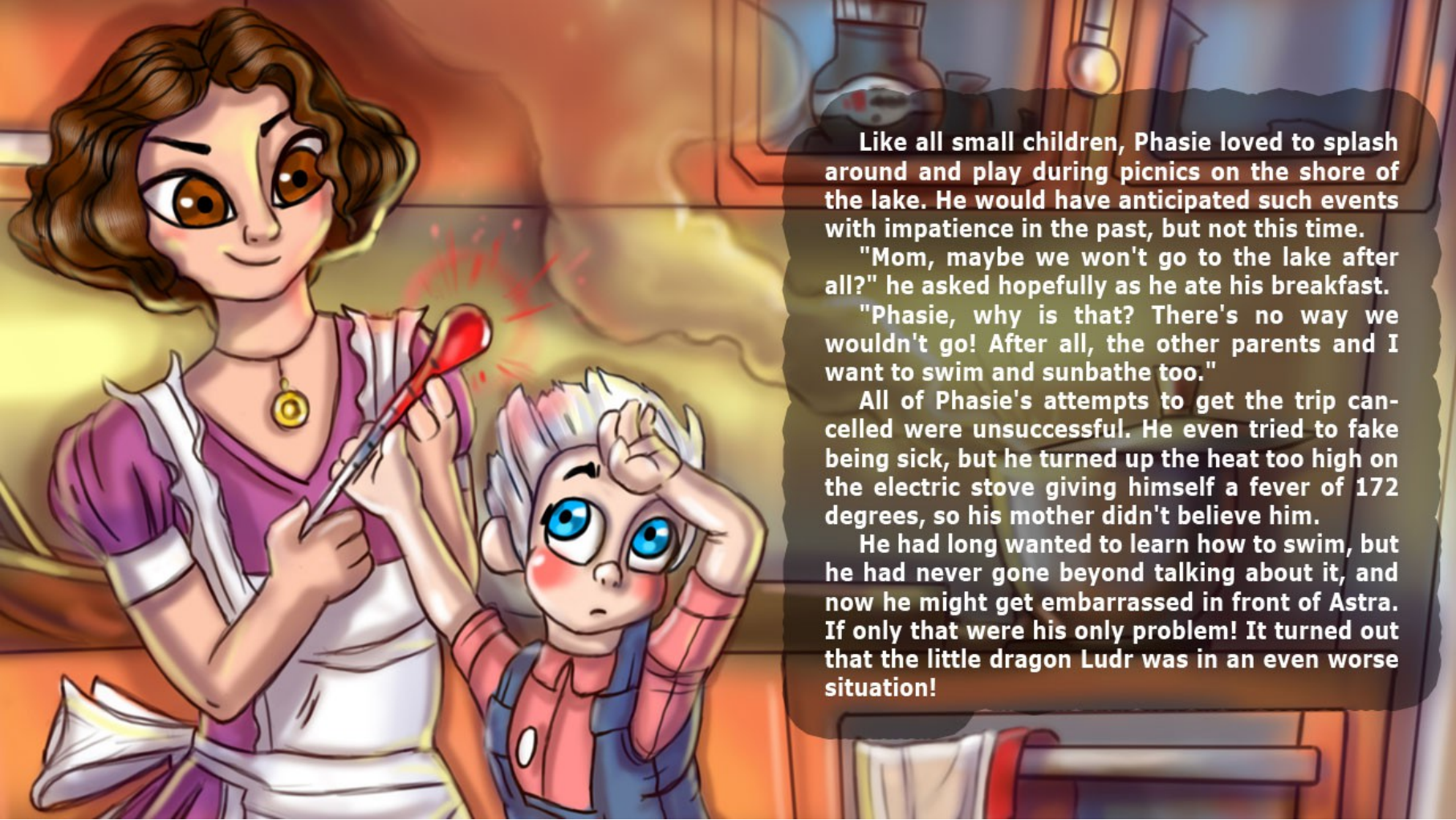


Like all small children, Phasie loved to splash around and play during picnics on the shore of the lake. He would have anticipated such events with impatience in the past, but not this time.

"Mom, maybe we won't go to the lake after all?" he asked hopefully as he ate his breakfast.

"Phasie, why is that? There's no way we wouldn't go! After all, the other parents and I want to swim and sunbathe too."

All of Phasie's attempts to get the trip cancelled were unsuccessful. He even tried to fake being sick, but he turned up the heat too high on the electric stove giving himself a fever of 172 degrees, so his mother didn't believe him.

He had long wanted to learn how to swim, but he had never gone beyond talking about it, and now he might get embarrassed in front of Astra. If only that were his only problem! It turned out that the little dragon Ludr was in an even worse situation!

When the friends met at the seaside in Phasieland, it turned out that the evil dragon Faw had set all the mountains on fire. Their snowy tops began to melt, and Ludr now had nowhere to hide from Faw's fury.

"Maybe I should ask the whales to put out all the fires using water from their blowholes?" offered Phasie.

"But they swim out so far and so deep underwater," sighed Ludr.

It turned out that Ludr, like all little dragons, was also unable to swim. He clearly knew how to help Phasie, but couldn't come right out and say it because of Faw.

"You could easily learn how to swim!" hinted Ludr, but Phasie couldn't understand him at all.

Since the two friends didn't know how to solve their problems right then, they started playing with dolphins on the sea shore. The dolphins beckoned them into the sea, but the friends were afraid of drowning.

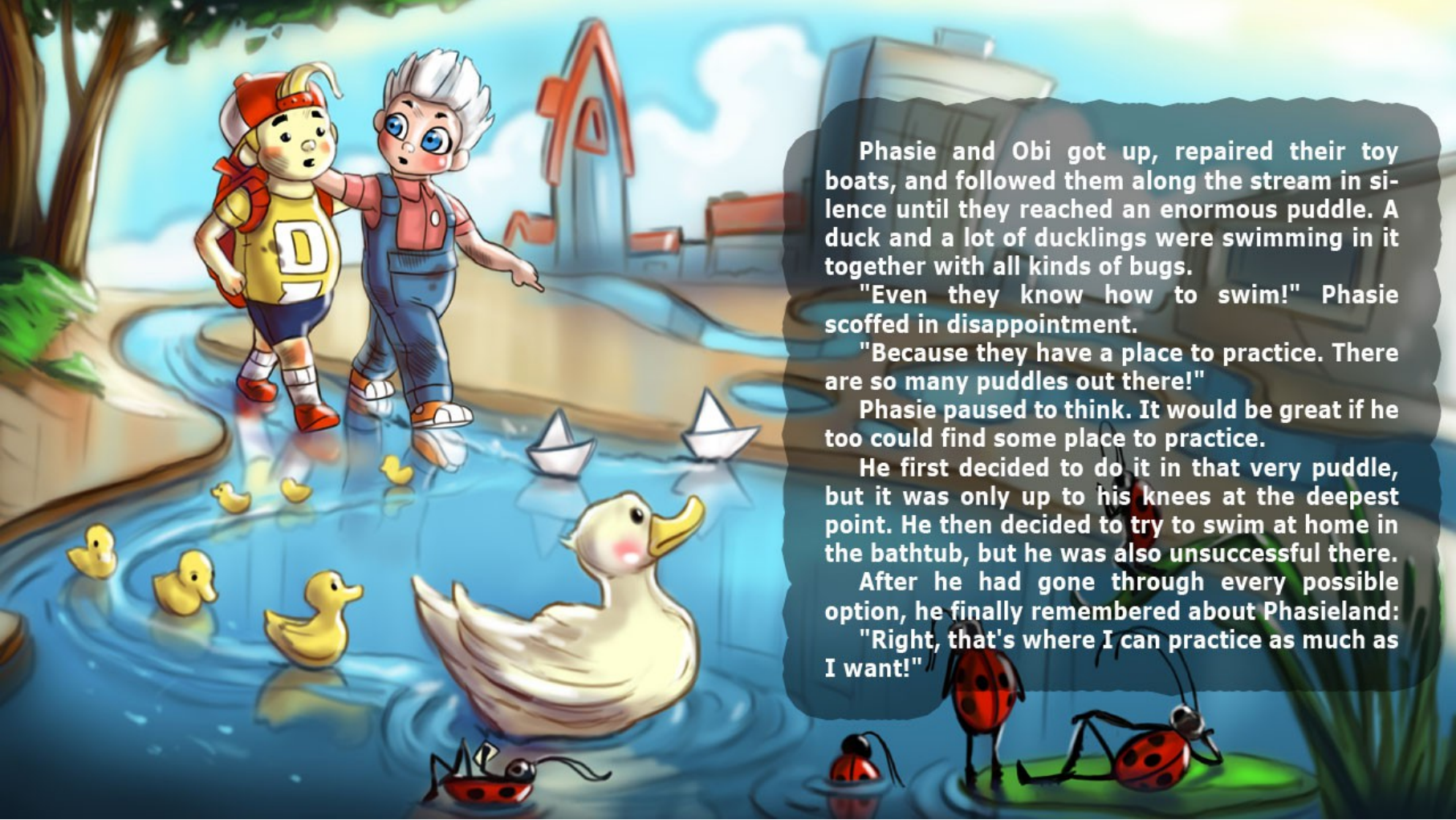
It rained hard that night. That's why Phasie and Obi started racing toy boats in the stream early the next morning. It came up in their conversation that Obi still didn't know how to swim. It didn't seem to bother him, however.

"So what? I'm going to play by the shore, like I always do. I don't fall for every fickle girl."

"You've fallen for her yourself!" said Phasie as his face reddened. "We're just friends."

"And soon you'll start kissing. Ewww!"

Phasie couldn't restrain himself, and he kicked over Obi's boat. The latter responded in kind, and they two began to tussle. It turned into a fight, and the friends fell into the stream. That's when the fight ended; now they were going to be in for it with their parents for having wet and dirty clothes.



Phasie and Obi got up, repaired their toy boats, and followed them along the stream in silence until they reached an enormous puddle. A duck and a lot of ducklings were swimming in it together with all kinds of bugs.

"Even they know how to swim!" Phasie scoffed in disappointment.

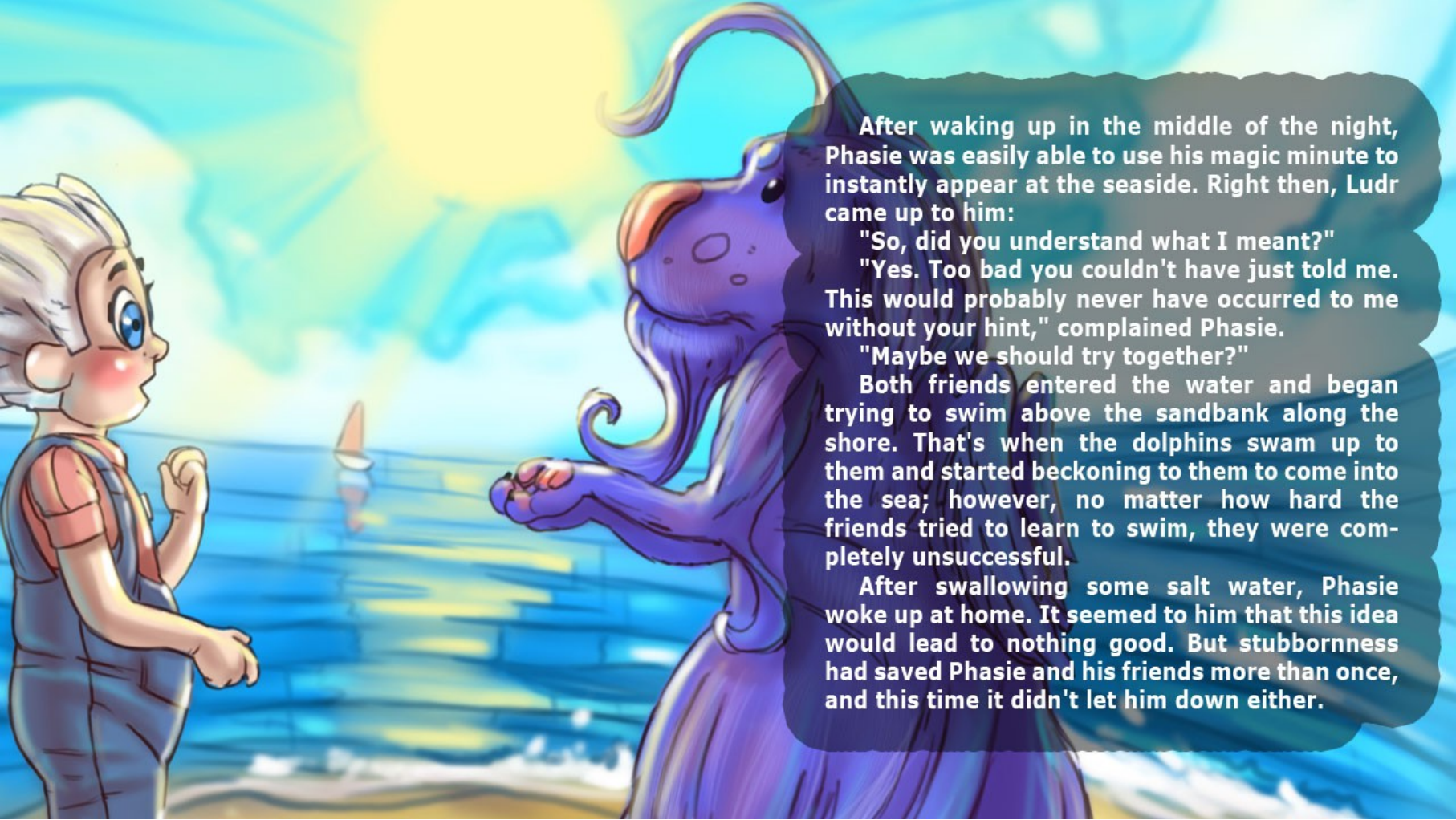
"Because they have a place to practice. There are so many puddles out there!"

Phasie paused to think. It would be great if he too could find some place to practice.

He first decided to do it in that very puddle, but it was only up to his knees at the deepest point. He then decided to try to swim at home in the bathtub, but he was also unsuccessful there.

After he had gone through every possible option, he finally remembered about Phasieland:

"Right, that's where I can practice as much as I want!"



After waking up in the middle of the night, Phasie was easily able to use his magic minute to instantly appear at the seaside. Right then, Ludr came up to him:

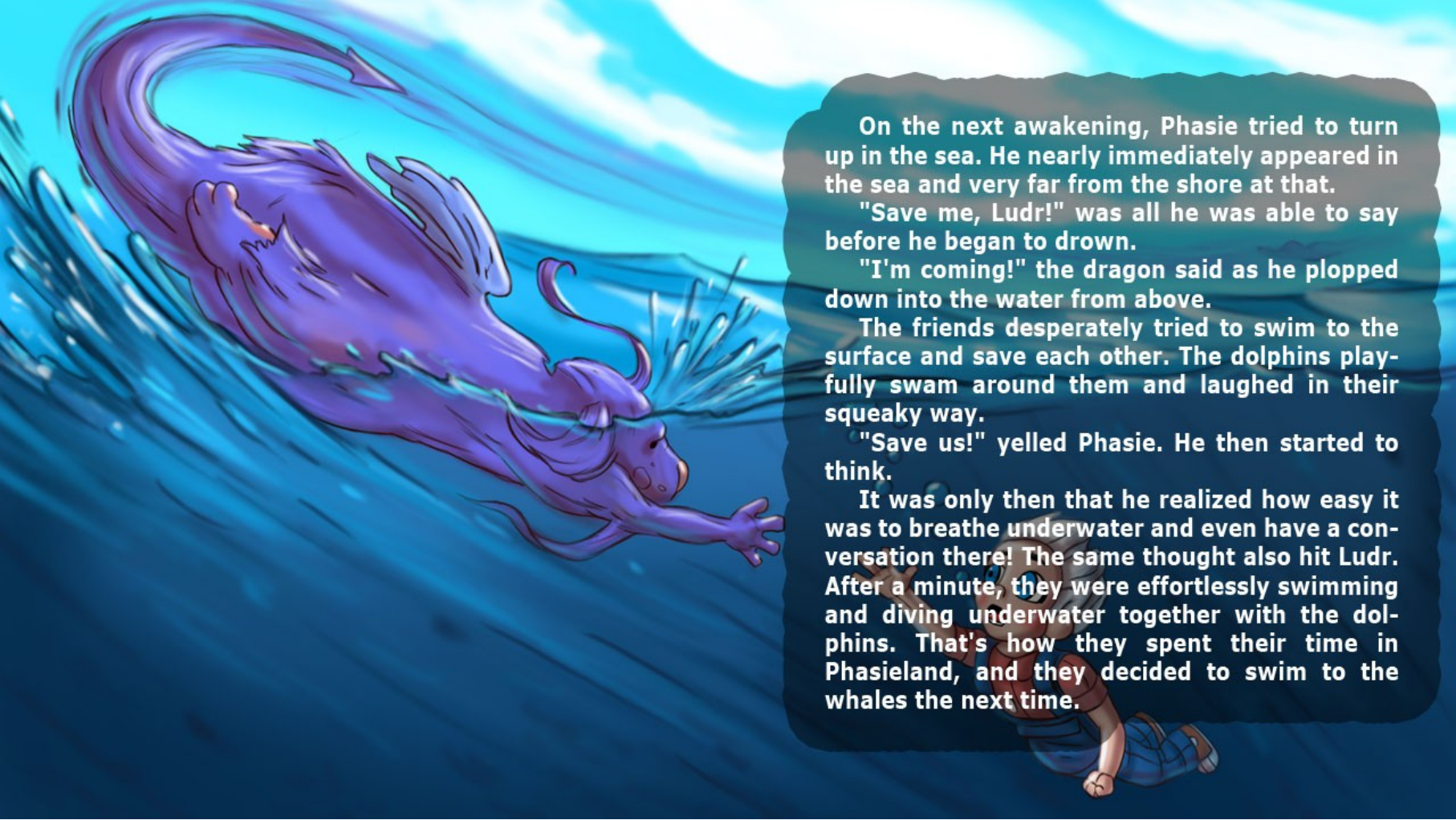
"So, did you understand what I meant?"

"Yes. Too bad you couldn't have just told me. This would probably never have occurred to me without your hint," complained Phasie.

"Maybe we should try together?"

Both friends entered the water and began trying to swim above the sandbank along the shore. That's when the dolphins swam up to them and started beckoning to them to come into the sea; however, no matter how hard the friends tried to learn to swim, they were completely unsuccessful.

After swallowing some salt water, Phasie woke up at home. It seemed to him that this idea would lead to nothing good. But stubbornness had saved Phasie and his friends more than once, and this time it didn't let him down either.



On the next awakening, Phasie tried to turn up in the sea. He nearly immediately appeared in the sea and very far from the shore at that.

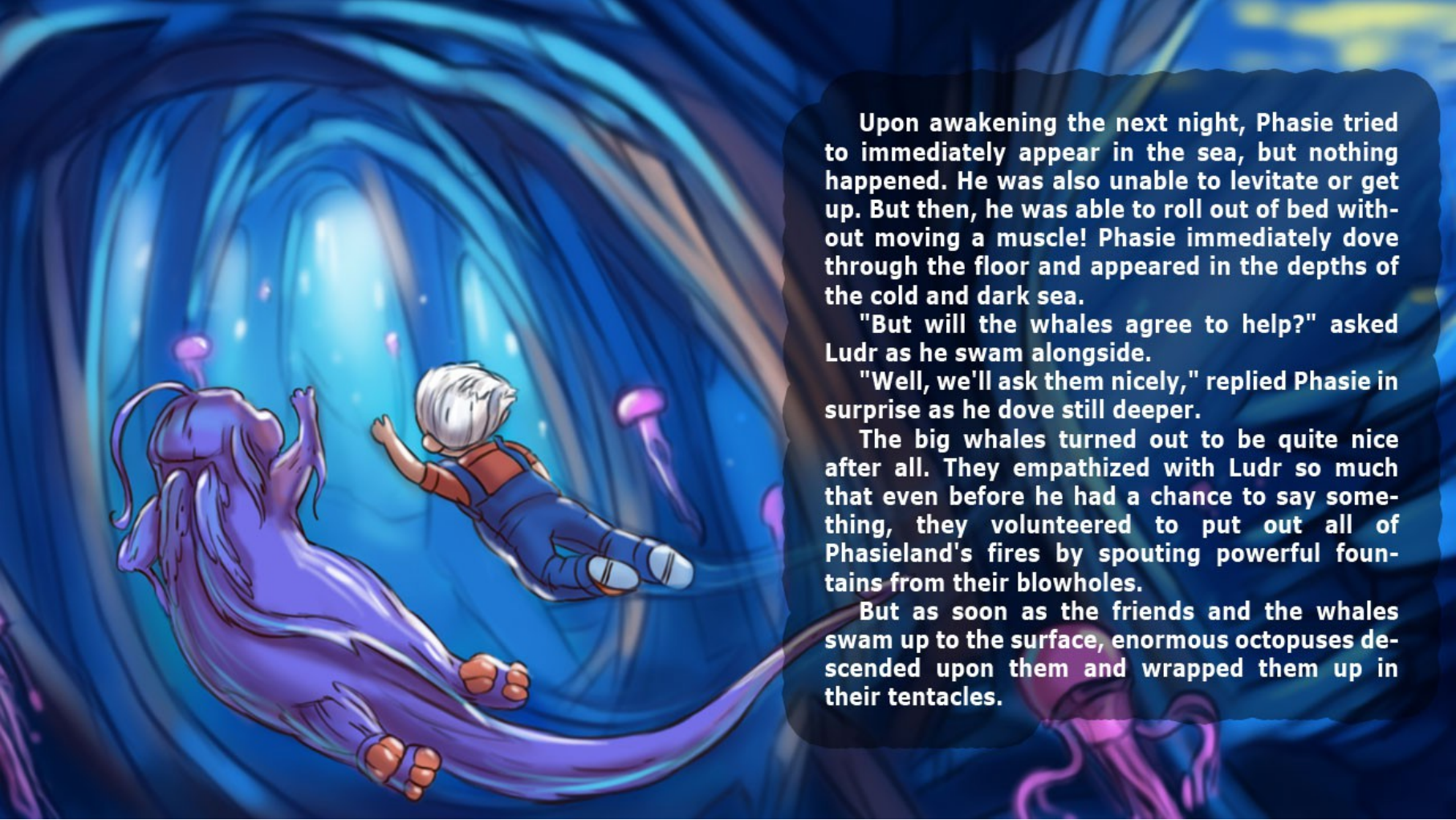
"Save me, Ludr!" was all he was able to say before he began to drown.

"I'm coming!" the dragon said as he plopped down into the water from above.

The friends desperately tried to swim to the surface and save each other. The dolphins playfully swam around them and laughed in their squeaky way.

"Save us!" yelled Phasie. He then started to think.

It was only then that he realized how easy it was to breathe underwater and even have a conversation there! The same thought also hit Ludr. After a minute, they were effortlessly swimming and diving underwater together with the dolphins. That's how they spent their time in Phasieland, and they decided to swim to the whales the next time.



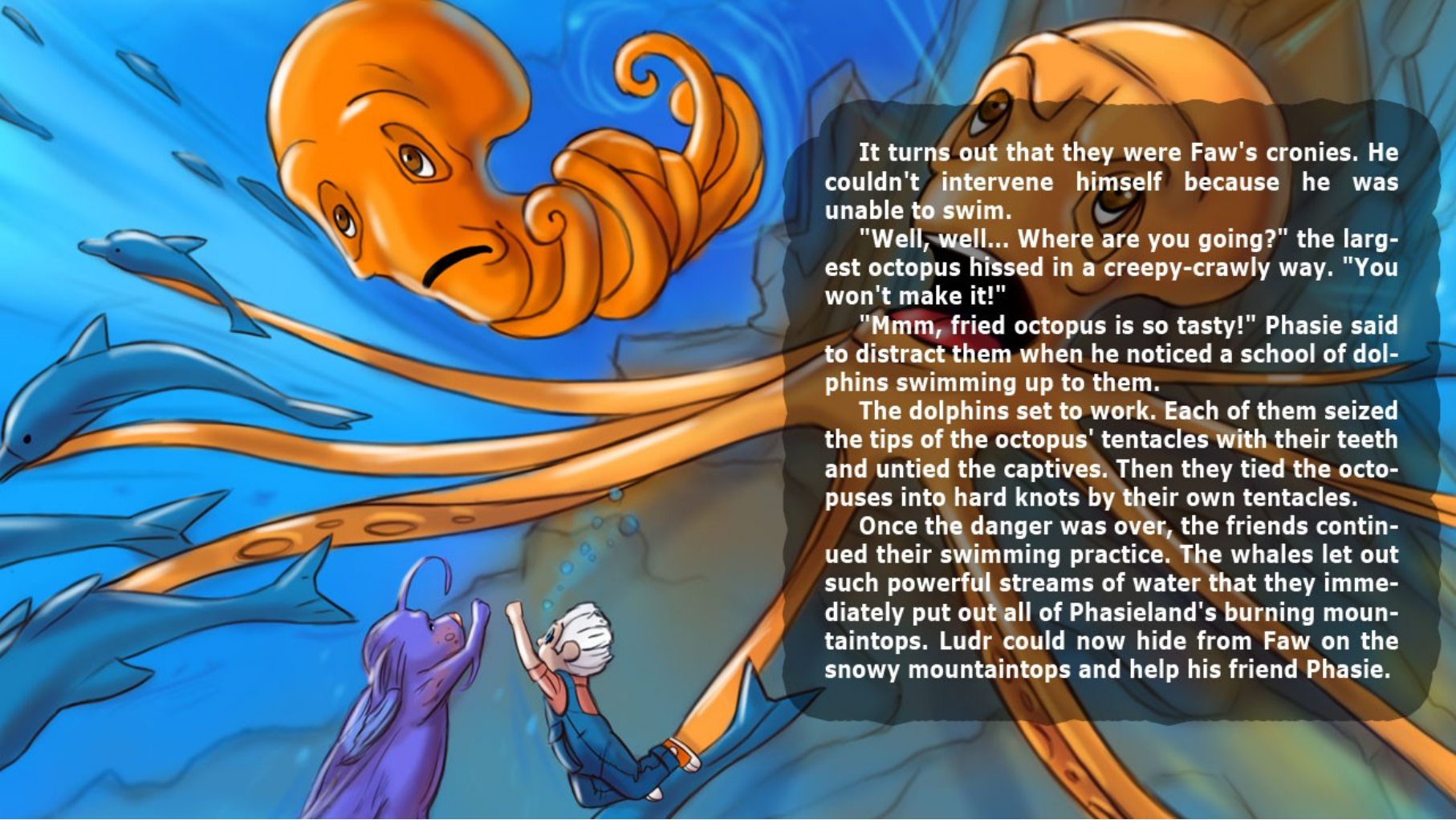
Upon awakening the next night, Phasie tried to immediately appear in the sea, but nothing happened. He was also unable to levitate or get up. But then, he was able to roll out of bed without moving a muscle! Phasie immediately dove through the floor and appeared in the depths of the cold and dark sea.

"But will the whales agree to help?" asked Ludr as he swam alongside.

"Well, we'll ask them nicely," replied Phasie in surprise as he dove still deeper.

The big whales turned out to be quite nice after all. They empathized with Ludr so much that even before he had a chance to say something, they volunteered to put out all of Phasieland's fires by spouting powerful fountains from their blowholes.

But as soon as the friends and the whales swam up to the surface, enormous octopuses descended upon them and wrapped them up in their tentacles.



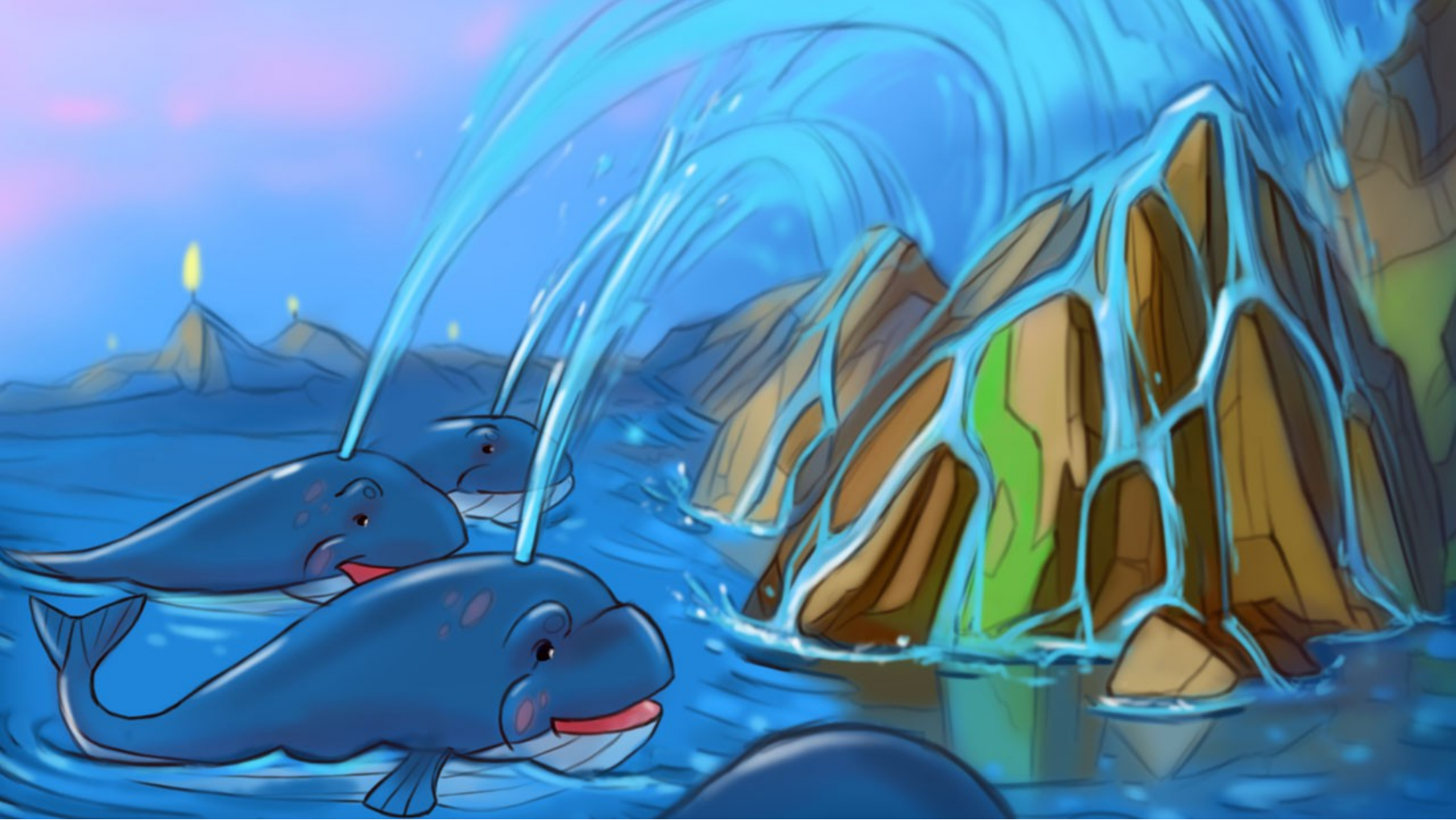
It turns out that they were Faw's cronies. He couldn't intervene himself because he was unable to swim.

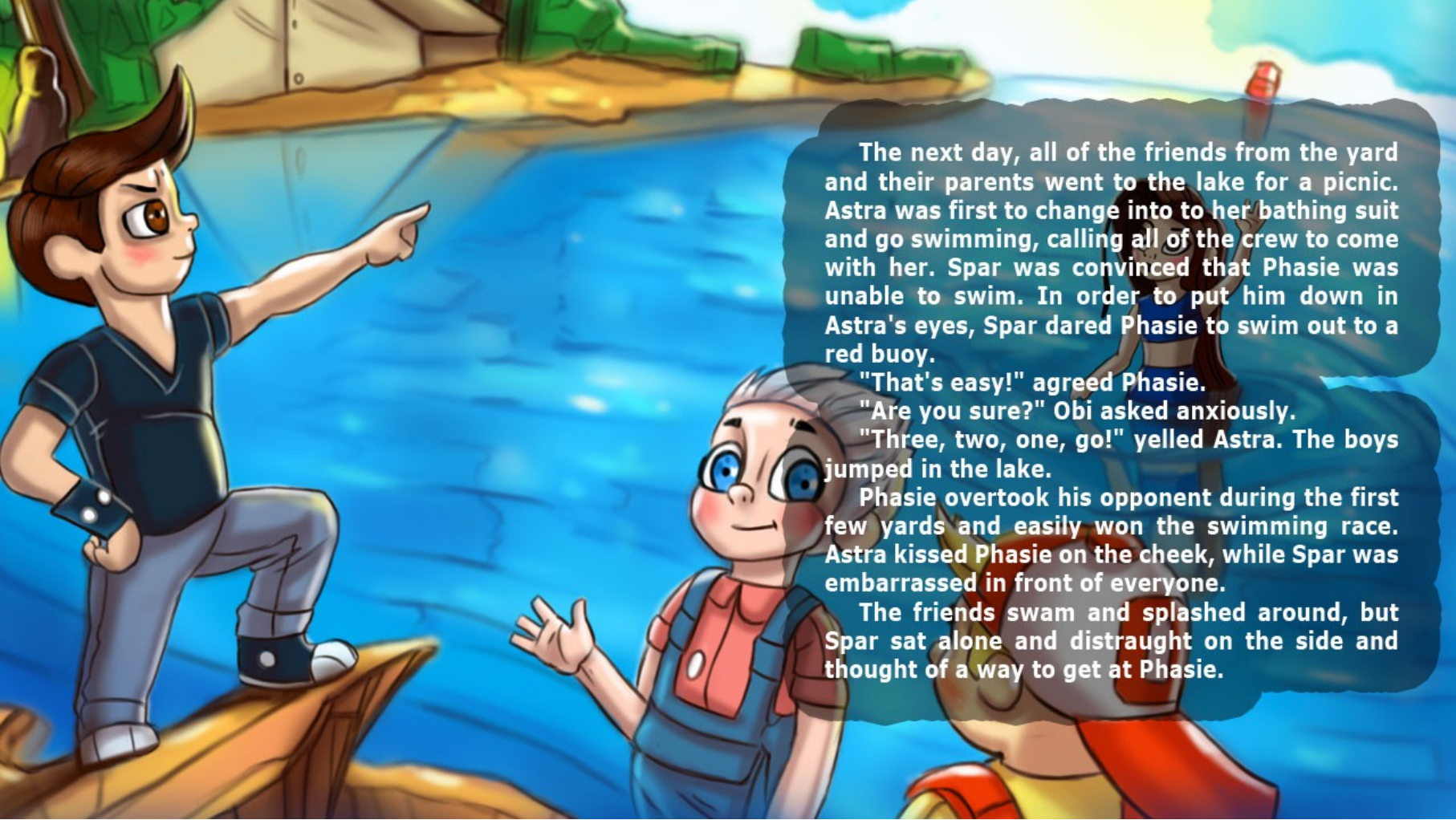
"Well, well... Where are you going?" the largest octopus hissed in a creepy-crawly way. "You won't make it!"

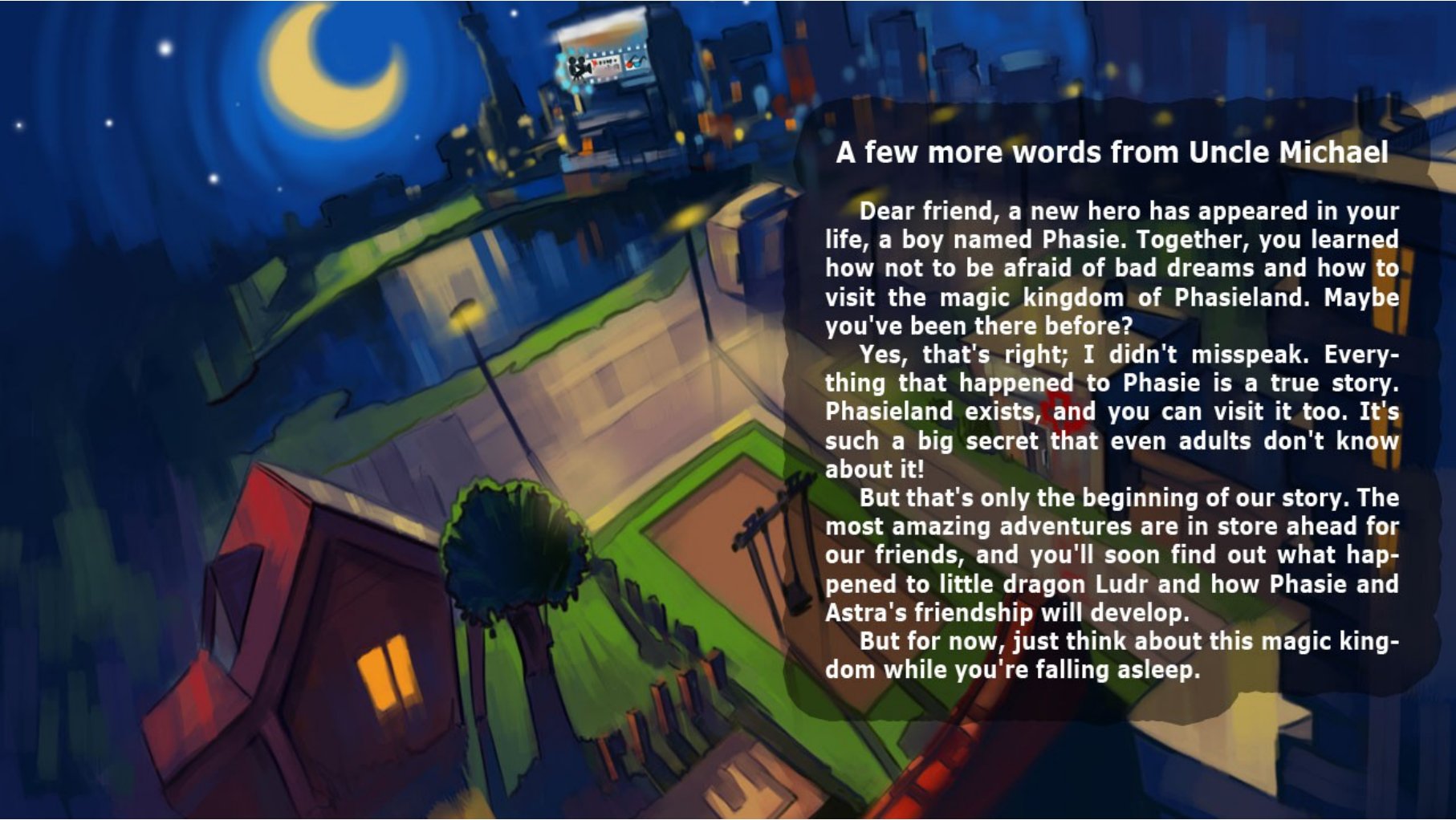
"Mmm, fried octopus is so tasty!" Phasie said to distract them when he noticed a school of dolphins swimming up to them.

The dolphins set to work. Each of them seized the tips of the octopus' tentacles with their teeth and untied the captives. Then they tied the octopuses into hard knots by their own tentacles.

Once the danger was over, the friends continued their swimming practice. The whales let out such powerful streams of water that they immediately put out all of Phasieland's burning mountaintops. Ludr could now hide from Faw on the snowy mountaintops and help his friend Phasie.




The next day, all of the friends from the yard and their parents went to the lake for a picnic. Astra was first to change into to her bathing suit and go swimming, calling all of the crew to come with her. Spar was convinced that Phasie was unable to swim. In order to put him down in Astra's eyes, Spar dared Phasie to swim out to a red buoy.
"That's easy!" agreed Phasie.
"Are you sure?" Obi asked anxiously.
"Three, two, one, go!" yelled Astra. The boys jumped in the lake.
Phasie overtook his opponent during the first few yards and easily won the swimming race. Astra kissed Phasie on the cheek, while Spar was embarrassed in front of everyone.
The friends swam and splashed around, but Spar sat alone and distraught on the side and thought of a way to get at Phasie.



A few more words from Uncle Michael

Dear friend, a new hero has appeared in your life, a boy named Phasie. Together, you learned how not to be afraid of bad dreams and how to visit the magic kingdom of Phasieland. Maybe you've been there before?

Yes, that's right; I didn't misspeak. Everything that happened to Phasie is a true story. Phasieland exists, and you can visit it too. It's such a big secret that even adults don't know about it!

But that's only the beginning of our story. The most amazing adventures are in store ahead for our friends, and you'll soon find out what happened to little dragon Ludr and how Phasie and Astra's friendship will develop.

But for now, just think about this magic kingdom while you're falling asleep.

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