

# 2025 Holiday Indie Children's Book Reading List

A COLLABORATIVE CELEBRATION OF  
STORIES, KINDNESS, AND IMAGINATION



Read • Share • Celebrate  
Stories That Shine.





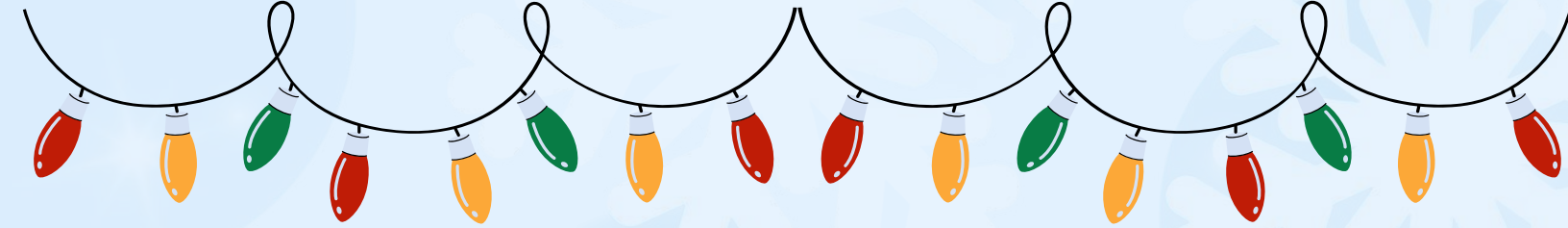
# A Season of Stories and Community

THE HOLIDAYS ARE THE PERFECT TIME TO  
SHARE STORIES THAT WARM HEARTS AND  
BRING FAMILIES TOGETHER.

THIS COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS  
INDEPENDENT CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHORS  
WHOSE CREATIVITY AND CARE REMIND US  
WHAT THE SEASON IS ALL ABOUT:  
IMAGINATION, KINDNESS, AND CONNECTION.



Compiled and designed by Bonnie Kostan,  
Quill Town Books



# Contents

- Holiday & Winter Magic
- Kindness & Heart
- Imagination & Creativity
- Adventure & Discovery
- Bedtime & Wonder







# Holiday & Seasonal Stories

**Stories that celebrate the magic, generosity, and warmth of the holidays.**

## **1. Merry Christmas, Missy Moo**

– Heidi Brooks

A cozy Christmas tale of kindness, friendship, and barnyard cheer.

## **2. The Candies' Last Stand**

– Rachael Tarfman-Perez & Sangi Parvin

Magical candies, teamwork, and chaos come together in a Kindergarten holiday adventure.

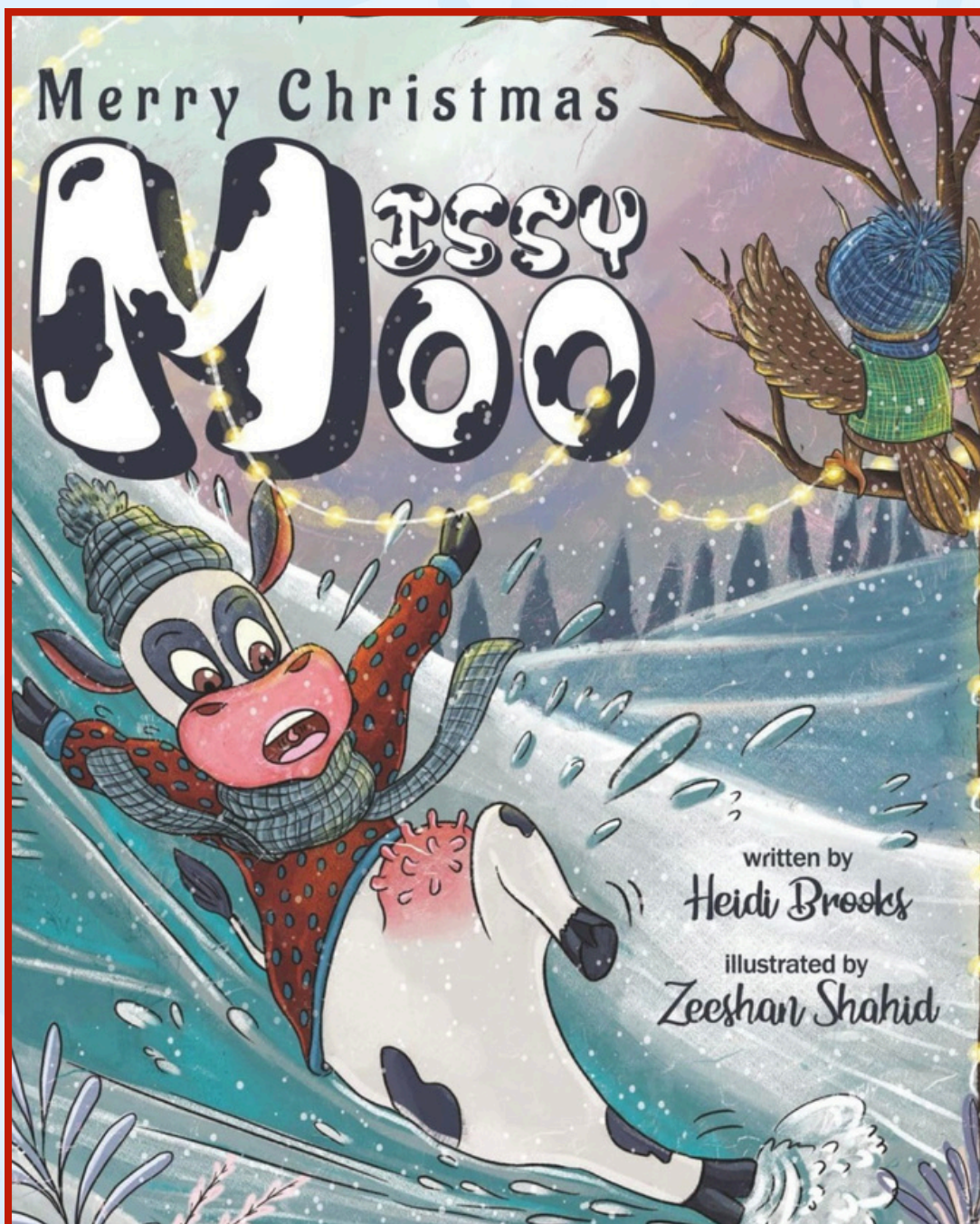




**Please support indie authors**

**This holiday season, if you purchase a book,  
Leave an honest book review on Amazon or Goodreads.  
Thank you!**









**Title: Merry Christmas, Missy Moo**

**Author: Heidi Brooks**

**Age range: 6-9**

**Genre: Picture Book (Holiday)**

**Part of the Missy Moo series**

**Brrr! It's almost Christmas, and Missy Moo's hooves are freezing!**

**Poor Missy Moo is chilly, stuck in the snow, and can't even wipe her nose — and to make things worse, she still has a bundle of presents to deliver to her barnyard friends. What's a dancing cow to do? Just when things seem hopeless, her faithful friend Mr. Cat hears her cries and rushes to the rescue. With the help of some woolly sheep and a sprinkle of Christmas magic, Missy Moo receives the coziest gift ever: a special pair of warm, wonderful mittens made just for her.**

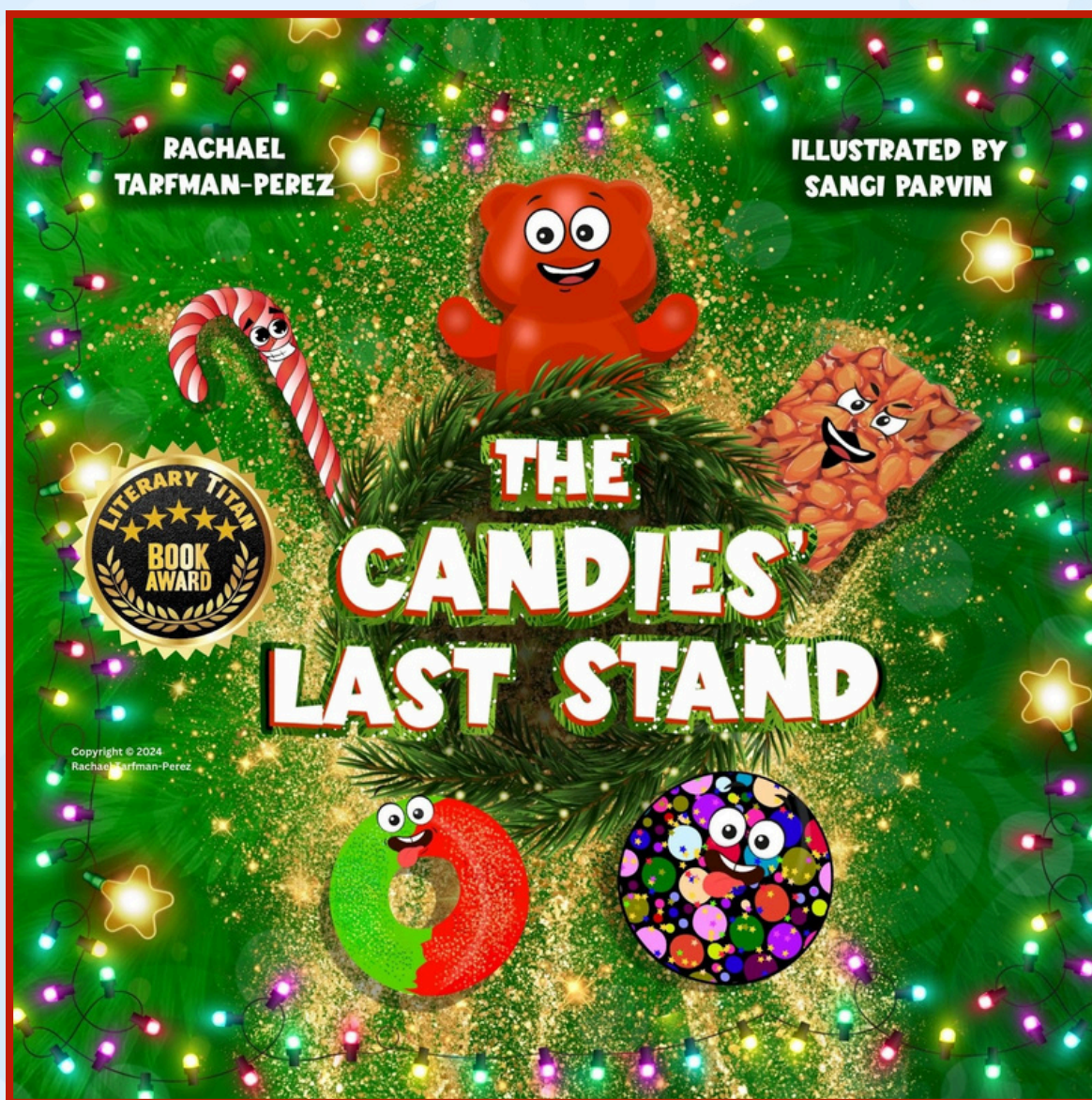
**Merry Christmas, Missy Moo! is a heartwarming holiday tale full of friendship, kindness, and the spirit of giving — perfect for snuggly bedtime reading or bringing a little extra cheer to your Christmas season.**

**[Author Heidi Brooks website](#)**

**Instagram: [@mrs\\_bs\\_books](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**







**Title: The Candies' Last Stand**

**Author: Rachael Tarfman-Perez**

**Illustrator: Sangi Parvin**

**Age range - 6-9**

**Genre - Picture book (Holiday)**

**Magical candies find themselves in a Kindergarten holiday and decide that they do not want to be dessert. They come up with a plan. This story is packed with teamwork, friendship, and a bit of chaos. Find out what happens when the kids come back from recess and get ready to have their snacks.**

**This book was also the recipient of the Literary Titan Award in February 2025.**

**[Author Rachael Tarfman-Perez Website](#)**

**Instagram - [@rachaeltarfmanperez](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**





# Kindness & Heart



**Books that help children navigate feelings, friendship, and empathy.**

**1. Here We Go Again! A Story About Bullying**

– Talya Bruck & Gail Sinitsky

A thoughtful story about courage, friendship, and finding your voice.

**2. Petunia the Perfectionist – Marissa Bader**

A gentle reminder that joy matters more than perfection.

**3. Pennygirl's Rescue – Judy McGee**

A rescue dog's touching journey about courage, kindness, and second chances.

**4. DOGFISH and the Gift of Inclusion – Rita Reed**

An uplifting story of friendship and belonging — everyone matters.

**5. Penelope and Positivity – Dr. Charnetta Williams**

An empowering story about turning self-doubt into self-belief using the magic of “yet.”





## **Join the Author's Newsletter or Website**

**Did you know most authors have newsletters that announce giveaways, sales, new book releases, or offer free printables?**

**Visit the author's website links and sign up today!**



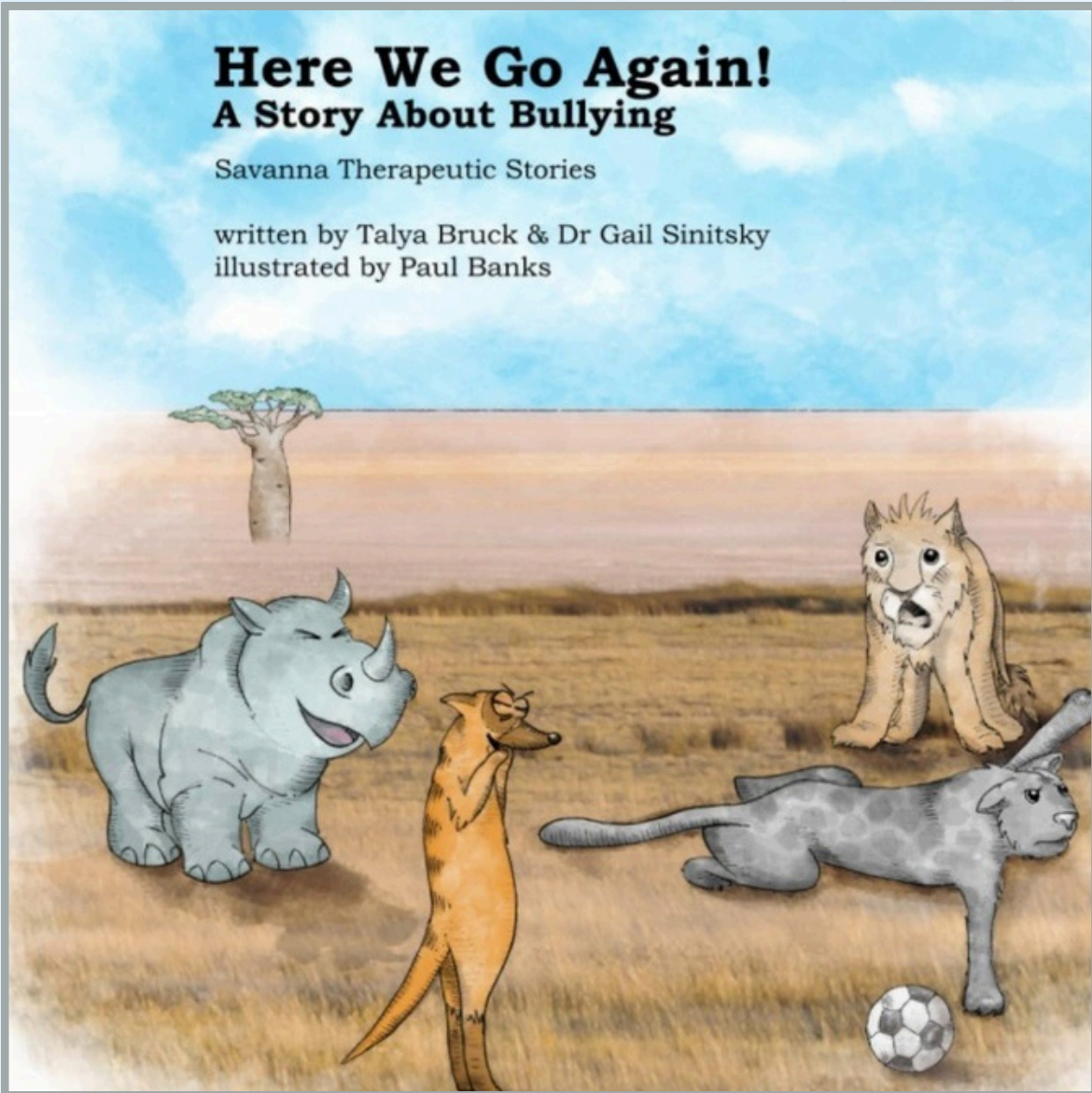


# Here We Go Again!

## A Story About Bullying

Savanna Therapeutic Stories

written by Talya Bruck & Dr Gail Sinitsky  
illustrated by Paul Banks





**Title: Here We Go Again!: A Story About Bullying**

**Written by: Talya Bruck and Gail Sinitsky Illustrated by Paul Banks**

**Age range - 4-10  
Genre - Picture book**

**Here We Go Again! A Story About Bullying is not only a story about bullying but about seeking help and the kindness and compassion of others. Bullying can be complicated and something many children struggle with; this story aims to help children find their voices. Peter the panther is being bullied by Robbie the meerkat; he finds it hard to share but his friend Hetty is there to encourage him to seek help. Find out how Peter finds his own voice. There are helpful questions at the back of the book to aid in developing a conversation with your child.**

**Savanna Therapeutic Stories**

**[Book Link Here](#)**



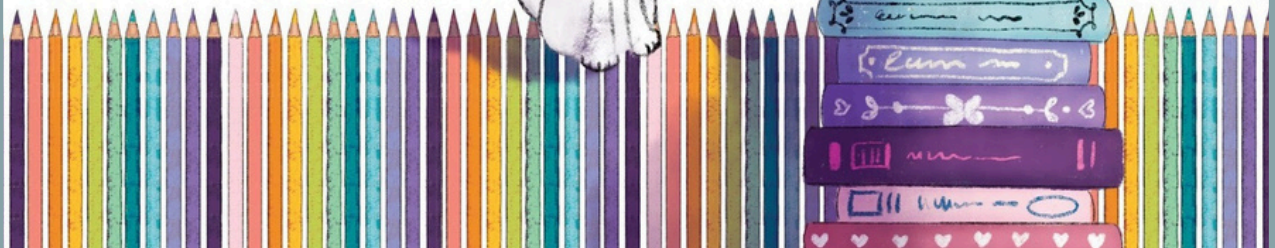




# PETUNIA THE PERFECTIONIST

Written by Marissa Bader

Illustrated by Ellie Beykzadeh





**Title: Petunia The Perfectionist**

**Written by: Marissa Bader**

**Illustrated by Ellie Beykzadeh**

**Age range - 5-8**

**Genre - Picture book**

**Petunia is a perfectionist to her core—her books are stacked just so, her crayons are perfectly sorted, and she practices guitar until her fingers ache, terrified of hitting a wrong note. She easily forgives her friends when they make mistakes, but struggles to extend the same kindness to herself. Then one day, the unthinkable happens: Petunia slips up. Will her world unravel, or will she learn that when she loosens her strings, she can create the most beautiful music of all: a life lived with joy, compassion, and a little bit of messiness? This book is a “perfect” gift for little ones who put too much pressure on themselves, or anyone who could use a reminder that joy matters more than perfection.**

**[Author Marissa Bader Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**





# Pennygirl's Rescue

Written by Judy McGee







**Title: Pennygirl's Rescue**

**Written by: Judy McGee**

**Age range - 3-9**

**Genre - Picture book**

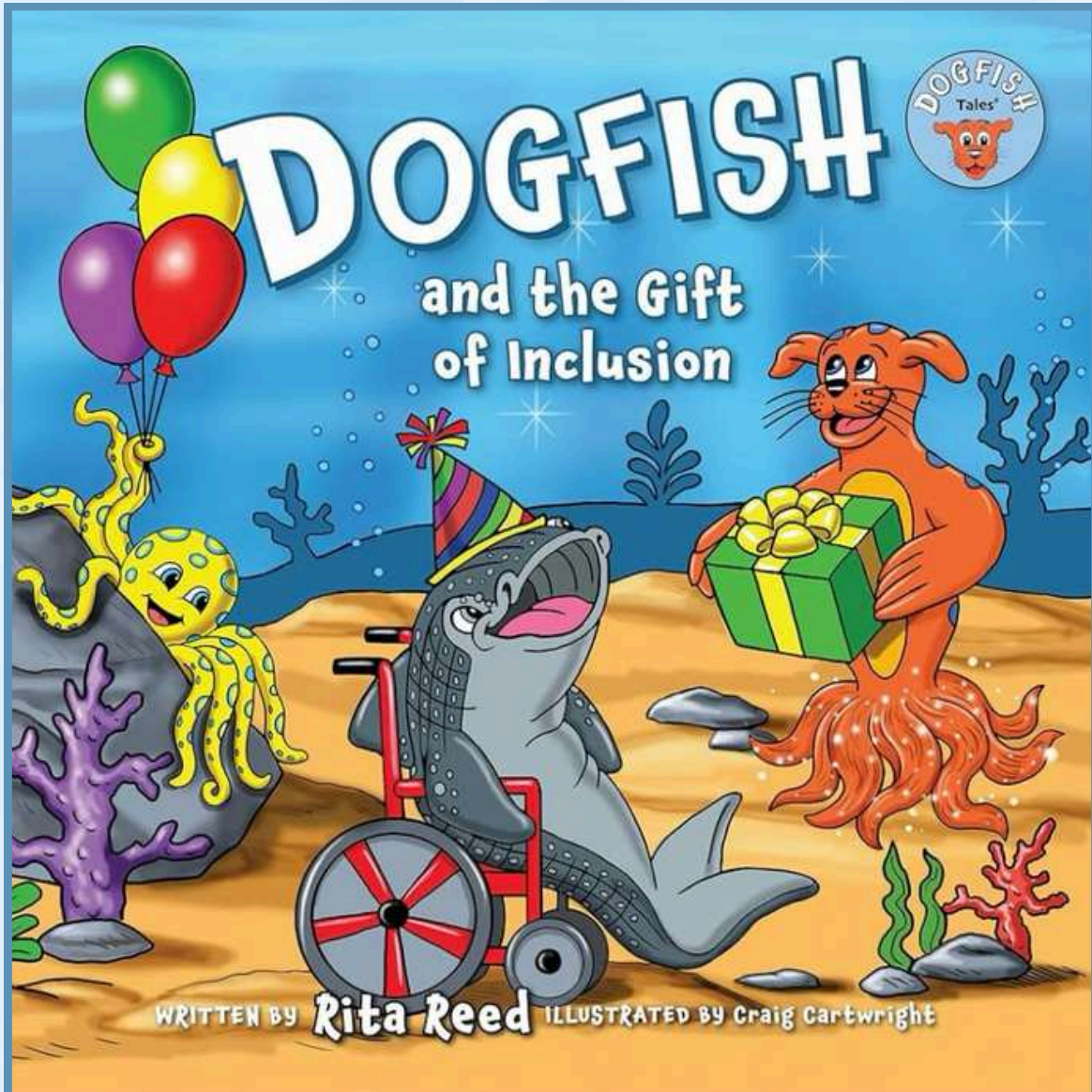


**Pennygirl's Rescue is a heartwarming adventure of a brave and curious rescue dog named Penny. The story is told from Penny's POV and is her emotional journey from living on a beautiful farm in Texas to suddenly finding herself in the city's dog shelter after her beloved owner, Grandma Adeline has a mishap and cannot return to her farm. Enjoy this inspiring story of courage and kindness, with a focus on animal advocacy. You will find yourself cheering along as Pennygirl finds the true meaning of love and friendship while hoping for a Forever Family. Perfect for SEL. This is Book 1 in The Pennygirl Series**

**[Author Judy McGee Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#) USA**

**[Buy Book Here](#) Canada**







**Title: DOGFISH and the Gift of Inclusion**

**Written by: Rita Reed**

**Illustrated by Craig Cartwright**

**Age range - 3-7**

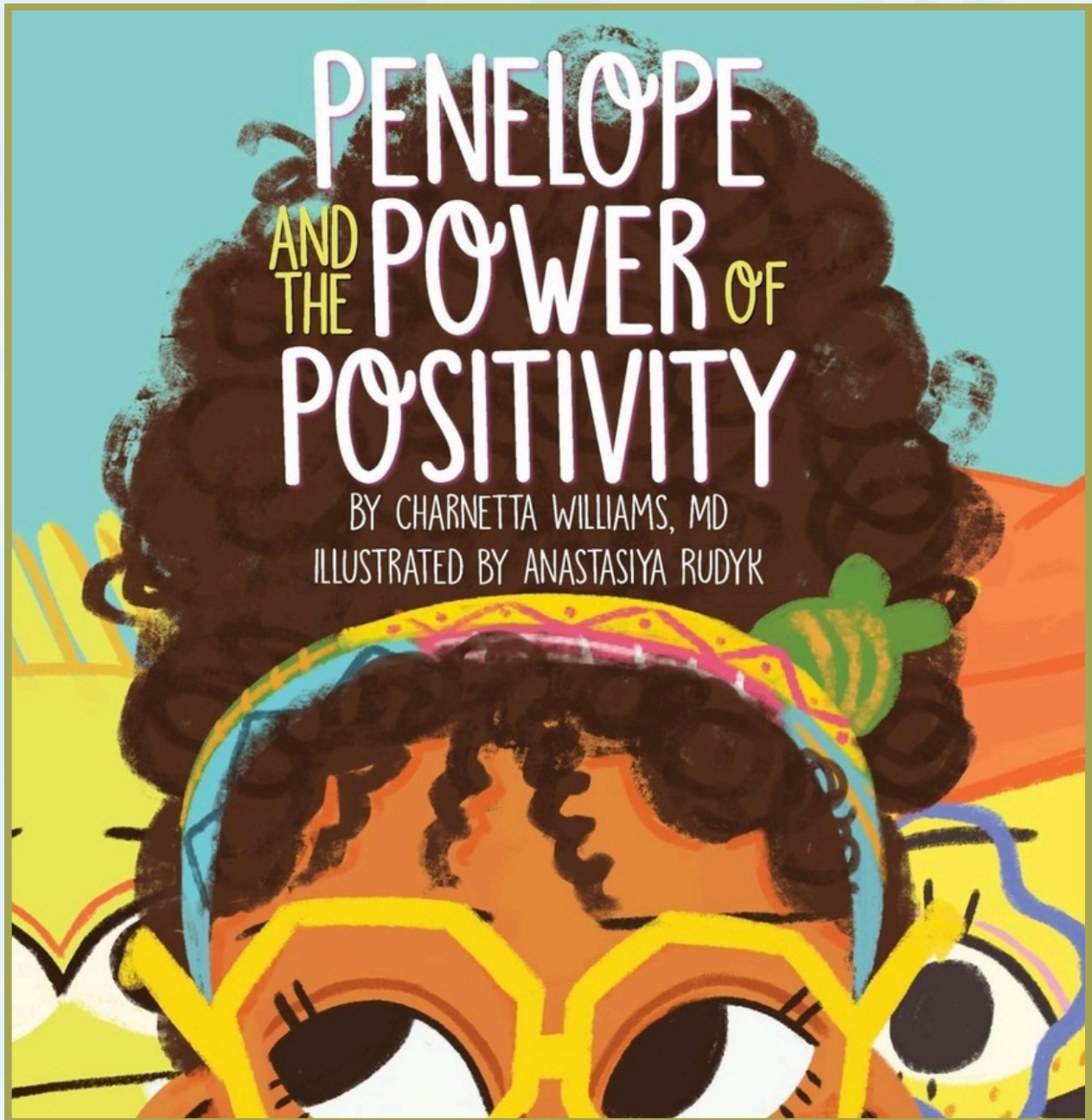
**Genre - Picture book**

**TOGETHER, we are a beautiful song, each note is important, we ALL BELONG! Dogfish and friends receive an invitation to celebrate Wally the Whale Shark's birthday in Mexico! But when Ollie goes missing, it's all fins and flippers on deck to find him, because the party can't start unless EVERYONE is included!**

**Author Rita Reed Website- DOGFISH Tales**

**Buy Book Here USA**

**Buy Book Here UK**







## **Title: Penelope and the Power of Positivity**

**Written by: Charnetta Williams, MD**

**Illustrated by: Anastasiya Rudyk**

**Age range - 4-8**

**Genre - Picture book -Hardcover**

**Penelope has big dreams and an even bigger imagination—but when things don't go as planned, she starts to feel discouraged. With a little help from a magical character named Positivity, Penelope learns how to turn self-doubt into self-belief using the power of her words, mindset, and the magic of the word “yet.”**

**This empowering picture book helps young readers build resilience, confidence, and a growth mindset—all while having fun.**

**[Author Charnetta Williams, MD website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**



# Imagination & Creativity

**Stories that spark imagination, creativity, and joy in everyday moments.**

**1. Are You Bored?** – Monika Marzec

Shows how imagination turns boredom into endless fun.

**2. Ready Steady...** – Becky Edwards

A bright, bubbly story about perseverance, imagination, and finding your own “go.”

**3. The Boy Who Wanted to Fly** – Farial English

A hopeful tale about creativity, dreams, and the courage to reach for the sky.

**4. Count to 20 with the Silly Dinosaurs** – Bonnie Kostan

Playful counting fun with rhymes, giggles, and hidden dinosaurs.





## **Share on Social Media**

**Snap a photo of your favorite page or your child reading.  
Tag the author or use their hashtag.**

**Post your reading moment and tag the author; your share  
could inspire another family to read!**





Monika Marzec

# Are You Bored?







**Title: Are You Bored?**

**Written & Illustrated by: Monika Marzec**

**Age range - 3-8**

**Genre - Picture book**

**Boredom can feel like the end of fun—but it's really just the beginning of creativity. In *Are You Bored?*, three children learn that reading and imagination can transform even the dulllest moments into adventures waiting to happen. With playful prompts and vibrant illustrations, this book invites young readers to see boredom not as a problem, but as the spark for their next story.**

**[Author Monika Marzec Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**



# Ready, Steady...



Becky  
Edwards





**Title: Ready Steady**

**Written by Becky Edwards**

**Age range - 2-5**

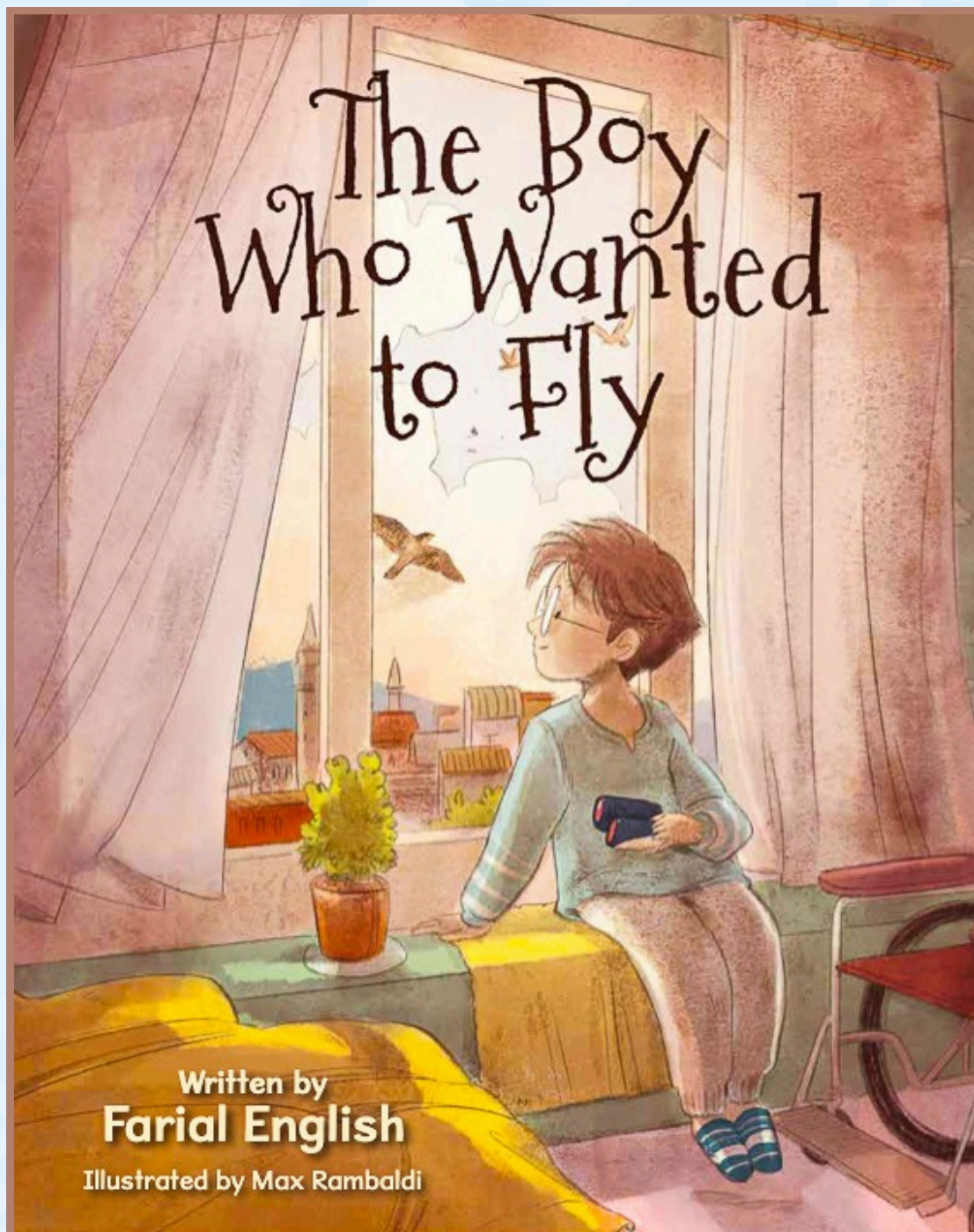
**Genre - Picture book**

**Get ready to skip, splash, twirl, and zoom with Lyra — a bright, bubbly little girl bursting with imagination. Tomorrow is Sports Day, and Lyra wants to practise her running. But when she gets to the starting line, her mind whirls with possibilities. Was it Ready, steady... blast off? Or maybe ready, steady... cook? With every try, Lyra dives into a playful new adventure... From roaring with lions to twirling like a ballerina, cooking up a storm, and even flying around the world! This joyful picture book celebrates imagination, perseverance, and the magic of finding GO!**

**[Author Becky Edwards Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here UK](#)**

**[Buy Book Here USA](#)**







**Title: The Boy Who Wanted to Fly**

**Written by Farial English**

**Age range - 4-8**

**Genre - Picture book**

**Every morning, Max watches birds soar past his window and dreams of flying. A trip to the beach sparks an idea, and Max, with his sister, Maya, sets out to build something that can touch the sky. In this uplifting story about creativity and perseverance, two siblings learn that the sky's the limit when you believe in yourself and stand together. The Boy Who Wanted to Fly soars with hope, heart, and the magic of turning dreams into reality.**

**[Author Farial English Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**



count to

20

with the

**SILLY  
DINOSAURS**



Written by Bonnie Koston

Illustrated by Jon Kalvin





**Title: Count to 20 With the Silly Dinosaurs**

**Written by Bonnie Kostan**

**Illustrated by Jon Calvin**

**Age range - 1-5**

**Genre - Picture book**

**Count to 20 with the Silly Dinosaurs makes counting fun as kids search for a hidden little bird dinosaur on each page. With playful rhymes and colorful dinos, this bedtime story helps preschoolers practice numbers as they giggle their way to sleep.**

**Author Website: Quill Town Books**

**Buy Book Here USA**

**Buy Book Here UK**



# Adventure & Discovery

**Books that take young readers on journeys full of discovery, bravery, and teamwork.**

## **1. Polar Post: An Erutuf National Park Novel**

– Kathy Arnold Cherry

A thrilling Arctic adventure filled with teamwork and courage.

## **2. A Courageous, Clever Crow Series: Go Gladiator!**

– Deborah Bradbury

Three time-traveling crows explore Ancient Rome in this funny, fact-filled tale.

## **3. How I Saved the Ants!**

– Jyothsna Raju

A magical forest adventure about empathy, curiosity, and teamwork.



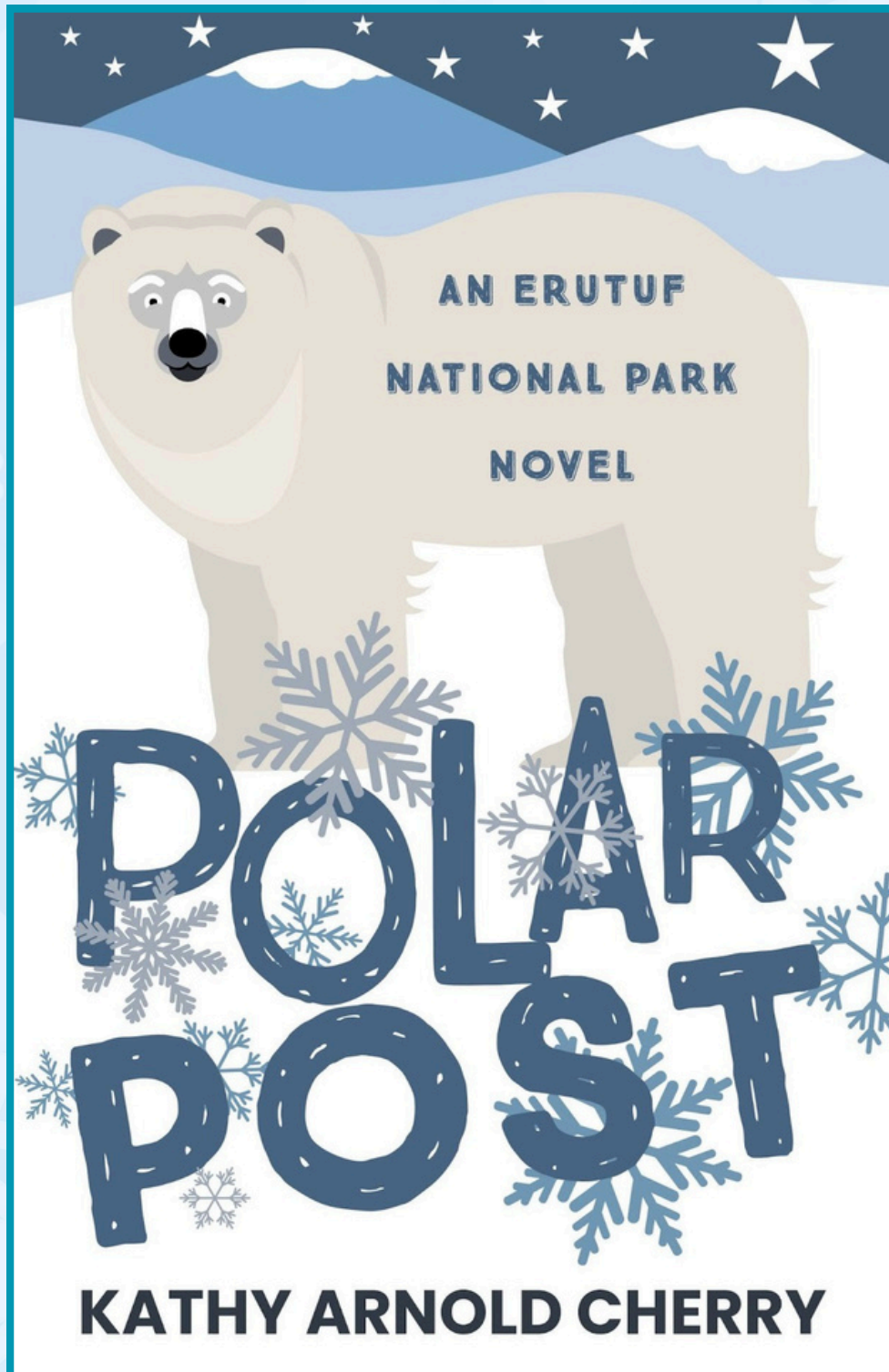


## **Request an indie book at Your Library or School**

**Ask your local library or your child's teacher to carry indie titles; it helps authors reach more young readers.**

**Tell your librarian or teacher about your favorite indie author!**









**Title: Polar Post: An Erutuf National Park Novel**

**Written by Kathy Arnold Cherry**

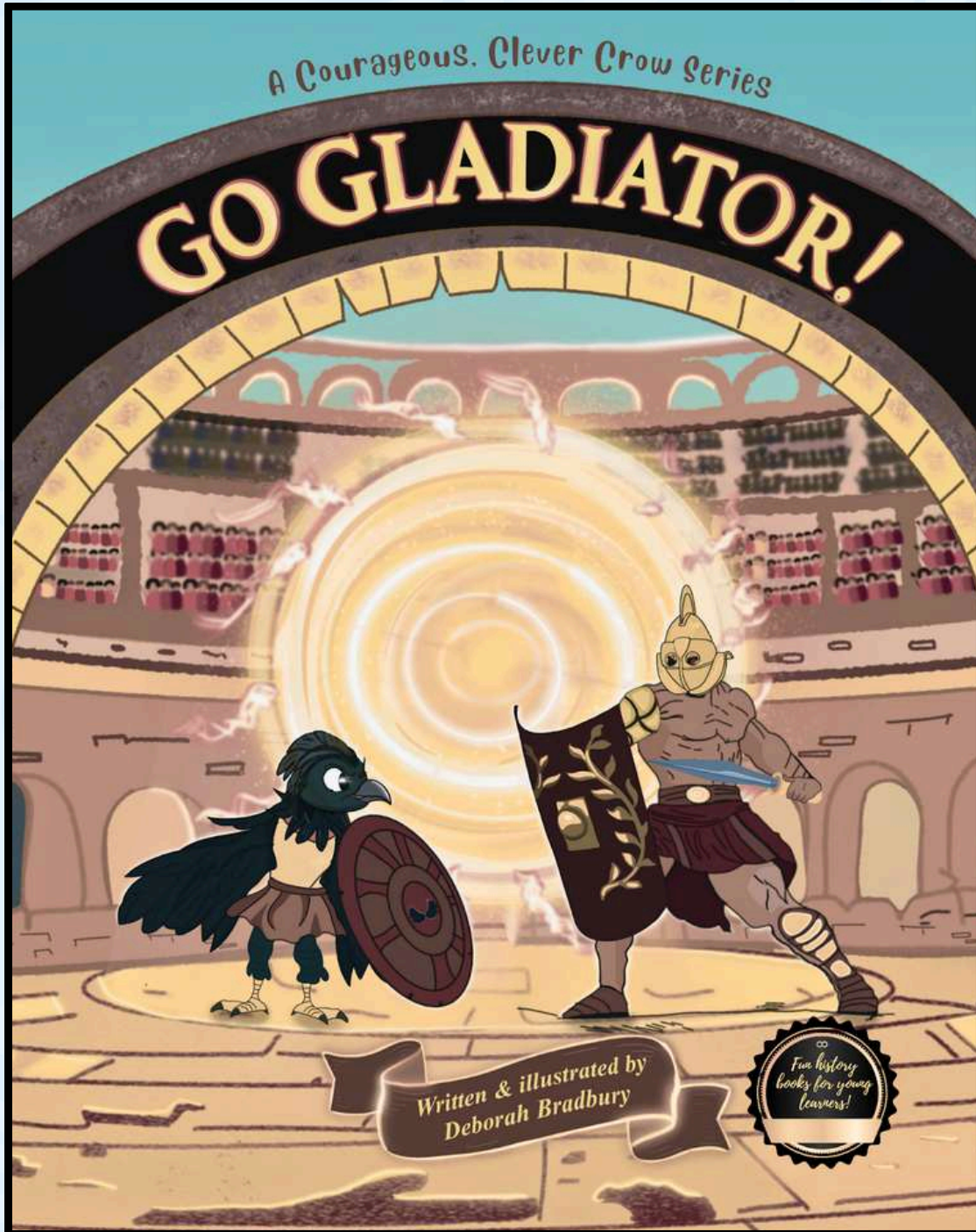
**Age range: 7-12**

**Genre- Middle Grade**

**When Reese and Dean return to the magical Erutuf National Park, they encounter their coldest challenge so far—in the park's Arctic. Can the siblings navigate this icy region and outsmart the cunning pirates? Find out in this thrilling third book in the series as Reese and Dean embark on a journey of bravery, teamwork, and exploration to protect this magical national park!**

**[Author Kathy Cherry Books-Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**







**Title: A Courageous, Clever Crow Series: Go Gladiator!**

**Written & Illustrated by Deborah Bradbury**

**Age range: 6-11**

**Genre-Children's Historical Fiction**

**Three adventurous crows time-travel to Ancient Rome, where they discover the thrill and danger of gladiator games, feasts, and life in the Roman Empire. A fast-paced, funny historical tale packed with facts, perfect for young readers who love history, ancient civilizations, and epic adventures all in one!**

**[Author Deborah Bradbury Website](#)**

**[Buy Here USA](#)**

**[Buy Here UK](#)**







**Title: How I Save the Ants!**

**Author : Jyothsna Raju**

**Illustrator : Vijitha Senadeera**

**Age : 3 - 8**

**Genre : Picture book**

**Meet Cheeku, a seven-year-old boy who lives in the enchanting forest of Cheekupur. One day on his quest to place the tiny objects as ordered by his granny, he falls into a vast tunnel and meets tiny ants. After observing how the ants treated him, their queen gets furious and gives him a blessing, which changes his life.**

**This beautifully illustrated children's book is for all the little boys and girls who loves to chase ants and go bug hunting.**

**[Author Jyothsna Raju Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**



# Bedtime and Wonder

**Stories perfect for quiet moments, reflection, and bedtime reading.**

## **1. When the Moon Sleeps, Do You Think He Dreams?**

– David Klochko

A dreamy bedtime story that brings the night sky and imagination to life.

## **2. Bo the Boat**

– Clare Short

A gentle, interactive sea adventure that supports early speech and learning.



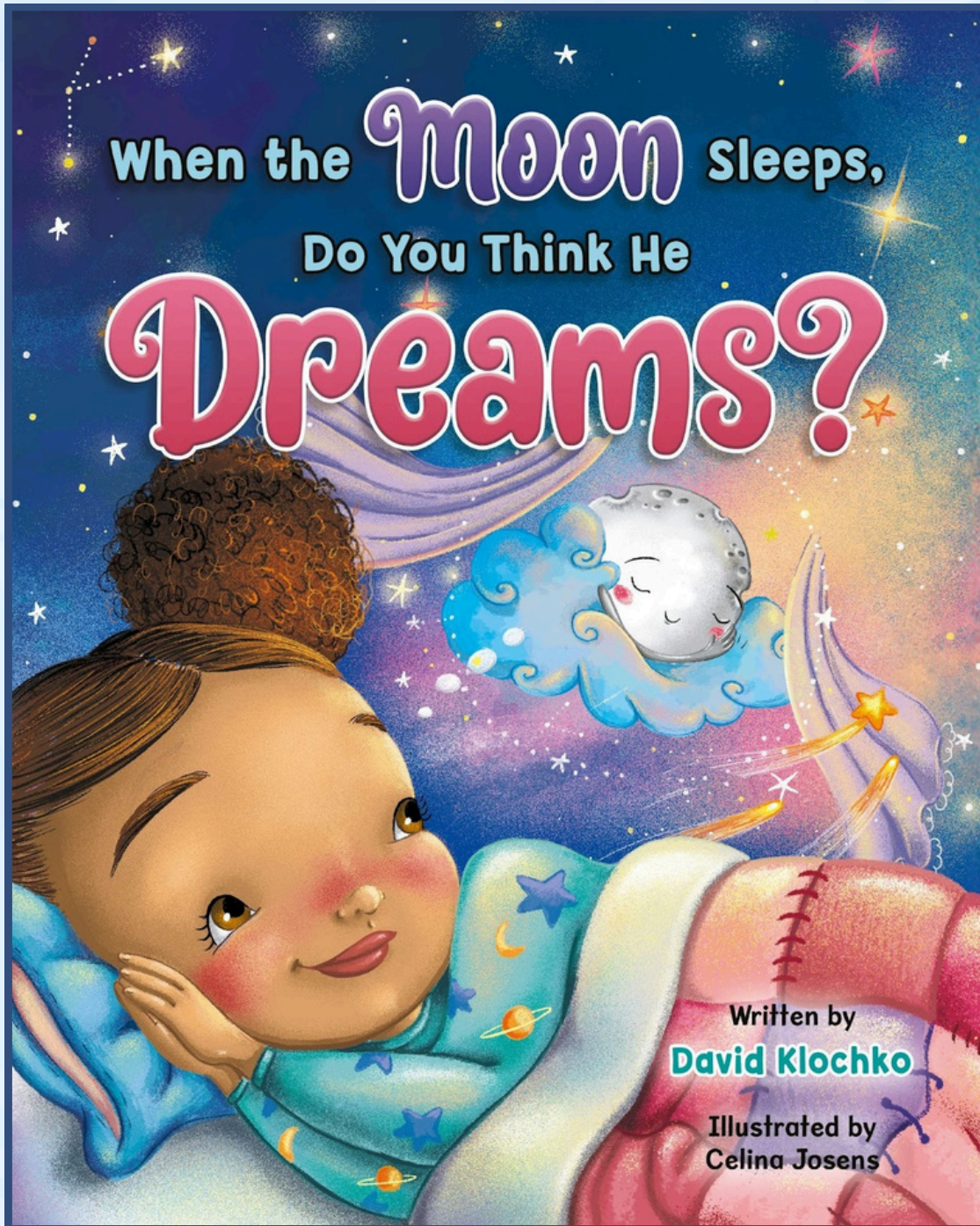


## **Gift a Book**

**Books make lasting gifts for classrooms, libraries, and friends. Indie titles are especially meaningful.**

**Add an indie children's book to your holiday gift list this year.**





When the **Moon** Sleeps,  
Do You Think He  
**Dreams?**

Written by  
**David Klochko**

Illustrated by  
Celina Josens





**Title: When the Moon Sleeps, Do You Think He Dreams?**

**Written by: David Klochko**

**Illustrated by: Celina Josens**

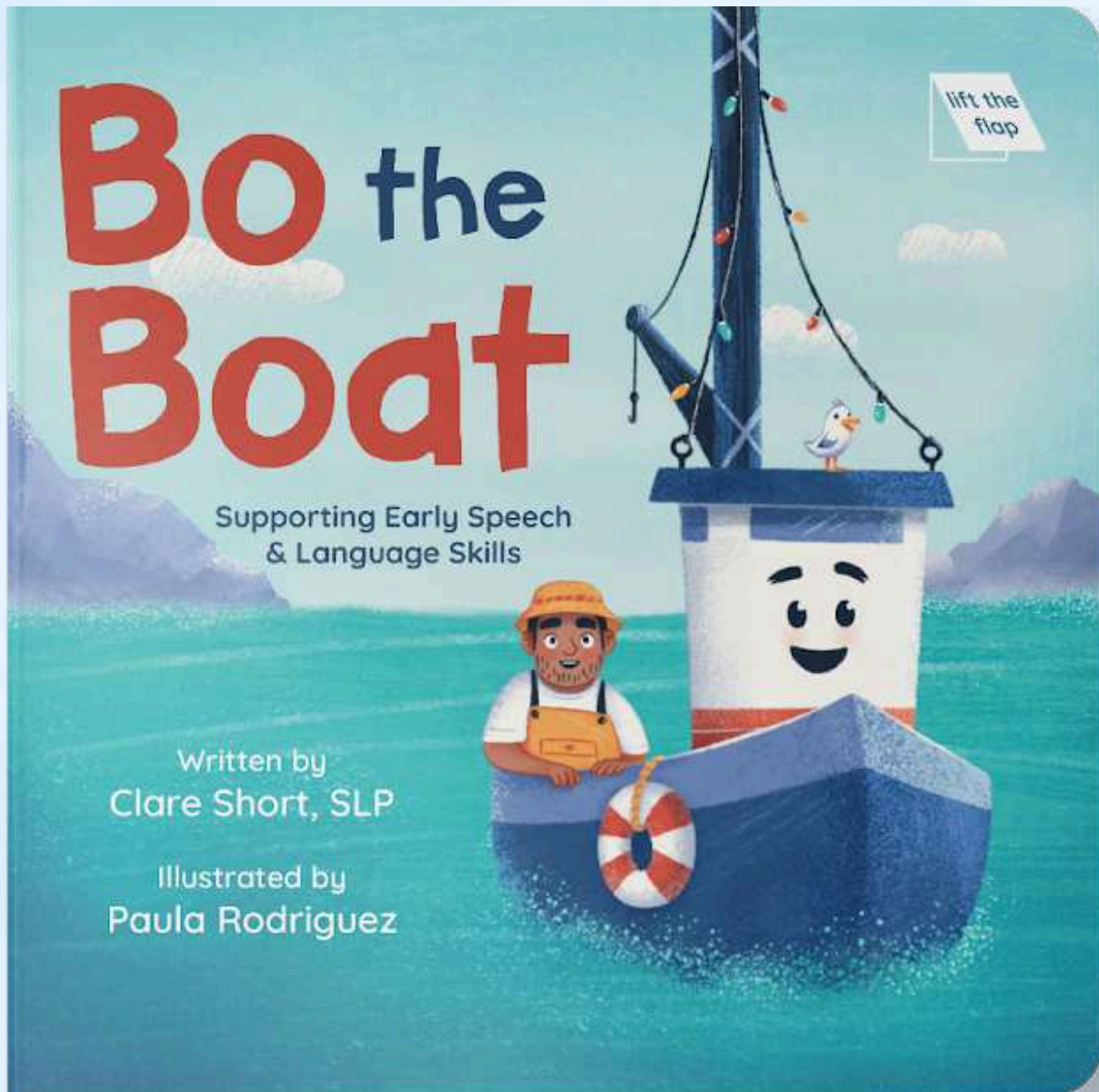
**Age range: 2-4**

**Genre: Picture book**

**When the Moon Sleeps, Do You Think He Dreams is an enchanting bedtime story that invites young readers on a magical journey through the stars. As the moon rests during the day, a curious girl wonders, when the moon sleeps, maybe he dreams too! Could he be dreaming of climbing the tallest mountains on Mars? Perhaps he prefers rollerblading around Saturn's famous rings? This beautifully illustrated tale sparks curiosity and brings our galaxy to life in a way children will love. It is a magical bedtime adventure that blends the wonder of the solar system with exciting learning opportunities for space lovers.**

**[Author David Klochko Books Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**







**Title: Bo the Boat**

**Written by Clare Short**

**Illustrated by Paula Rodriguez**

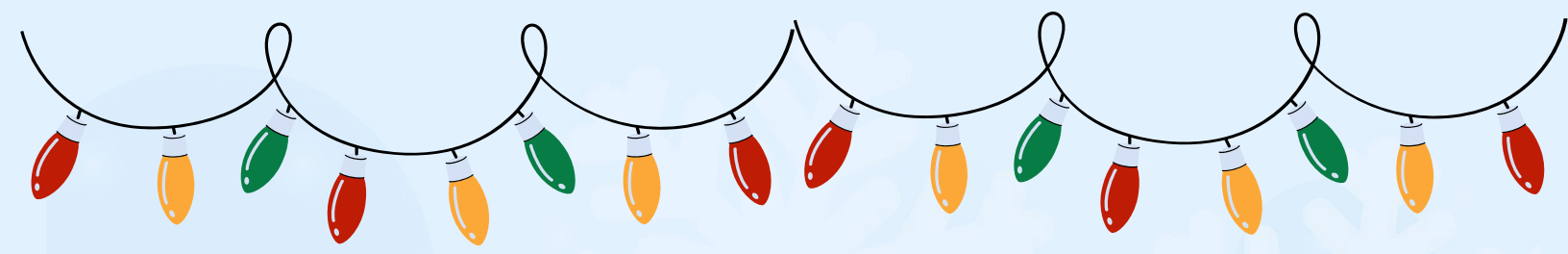
**Age range: 0-4**

**Genre: Picture- Lift-the-Flap Board Book**

**Join Bo and Mo on their adventure at sea!  
Written by a Speech-Language pathologist,  
this charming lift-the-flapbook supports  
early speech and language goals, while  
engaging children with lyrical rhymes,  
beautiful illustrations, and adorable  
characters.**

**[Author Clare Short Website](#)**

**[Buy Book Here](#)**



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time to browse through this list of  
delightful independently published  
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feedback is invaluable!