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Opening extract from

Sea Urchins and Sand Pigs

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For Lucan

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This book has dyslexia friendly features

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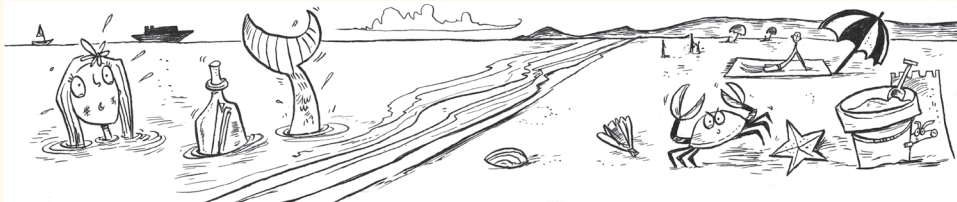
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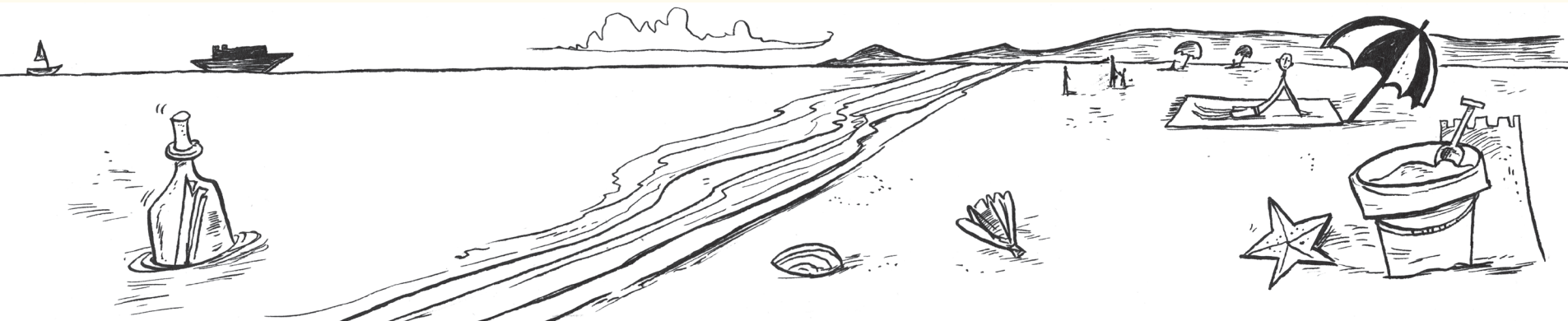


Mia and the Message in a Bottle



The tenth day of the holidays started off the same as all the others.

After breakfast, Mia's family drove down to the beach. Dad found a shady place to read his paper. Mum and Mia's big sister Nora rubbed on sun cream until their skin was all shiny, and then they lay down in the sun.



Mia found this boring, so she started to play “Salt and Pepper”. In this game, Mia sprinkled sand on Nora’s sticky belly till Nora got mad and chased her around the beach.

It was good fun. But Nora wasn’t in the mood today. She just wiped the sand off. “Buzz off, squirt,” she said. “Go and build a sandcastle or something.”

Mia didn’t want to build a silly, babyish sandcastle and there was no space for a proper big sandcastle in between all the sunbathers. So Mia sat down, dug her toes into the sand and stared out to sea.

Dad had promised that he would take her for an ice cream at 1 p.m. It was a long time until then.



The sea licked Mia's toes. An empty sun-cream tub floated past in the sea, and then a lolly stick, a sandal and a green bottle. Mia could see something in the bottle. It looked like a rolled up piece of paper ...

It was a message in a bottle!



Mia looked around. No one else seemed to have spotted the bottle. Mia ran into the water and fished it out. Then she sat down again in the sand and peeked through the glass. Yes, there was a rolled up piece of paper in there, and there was something written on it.

Mia tried to pull the cork out with her fingers. Then she tried with her teeth. At last, it came out.

The paper was a bit wet. Mia unrolled it with her sandy fingers. It said –

Solve this clue to win the treasure. Follow the five black stones to the blue dots.