



Success is not final, failure is not fatal:
It is the courage to continue that counts.

—*Winston Churchill*

To Mom and Dad,
for teaching me perseverance,
in word and in deed.

—DF



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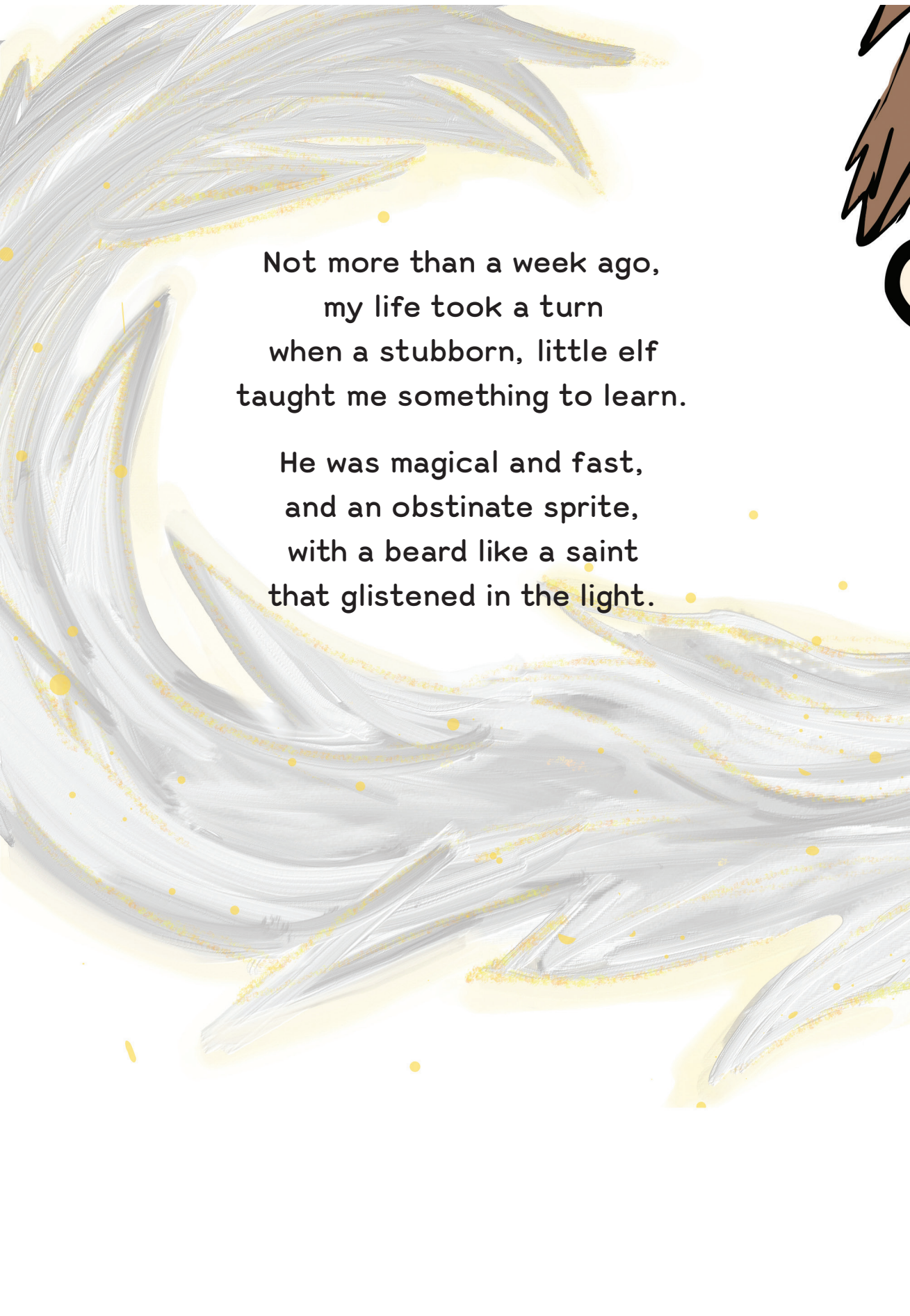
CAN'TS NEVER COULD

A Child's Guide to Perseverance

Written by David Farkas

Illustrated by Brittany Farkas





Not more than a week ago,
my life took a turn
when a stubborn, little elf
taught me something to learn.

He was magical and fast,
and an obstinate sprite,
with a beard like a saint
that glistened in the light.



If you think he came
to sing me a song,
that would have been nice,
but you would have been wrong.

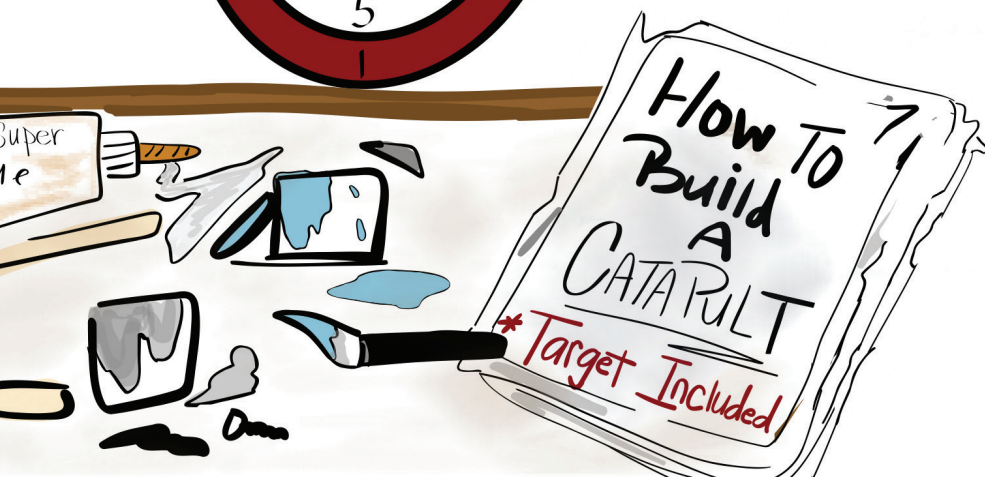
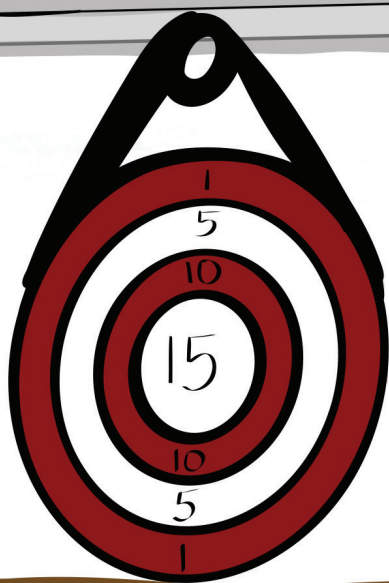
When I say,
"I CAN'T,"
or I start to quit,



He says,

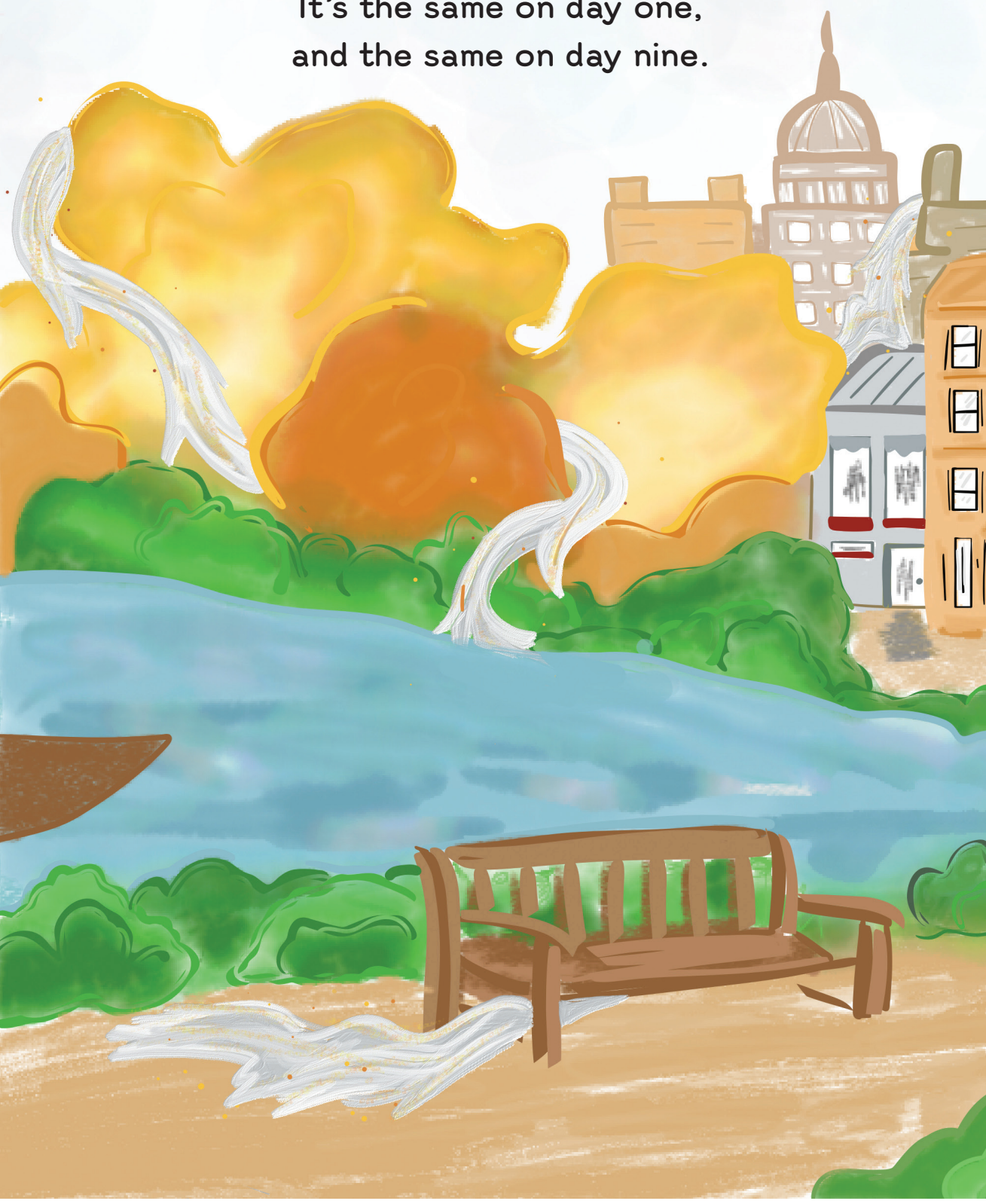
"CAN'TS NEVER
COULD,"

then he leaves
and that's it.



His advice never wavers—
it's always that line.

It's the same on day one,
and the same on day nine.



To never give up, and never back down.
He tells me this literally all over town.



As far as I know,
that's all he can say.

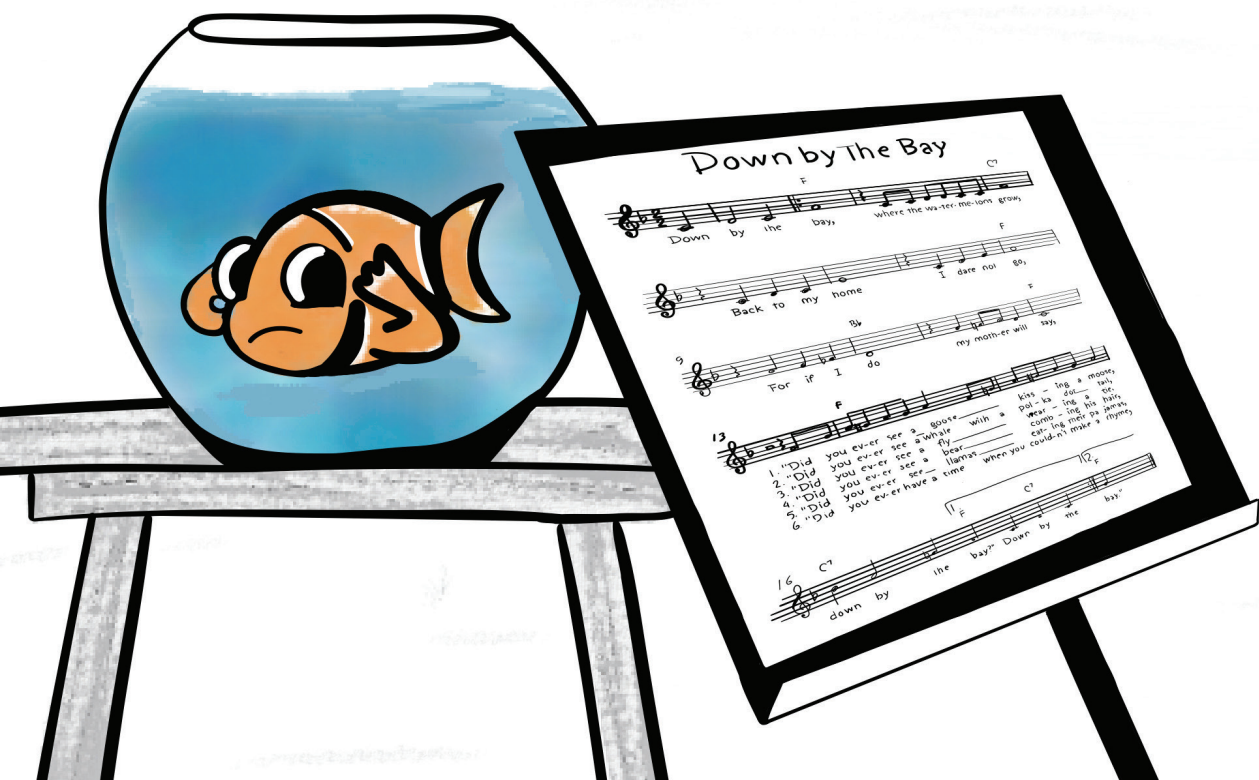
He keeps on repeating it,
every, single, day.



JANUARY

		1	2	3	4	
		X	X	X	X	X
6	7	8	9	10		X
X	X	X	X	X		
X	13	14	15	16	17	19
X	X	X	X	X		
20	21	22	23	24	25	
27	28	29	30	31		



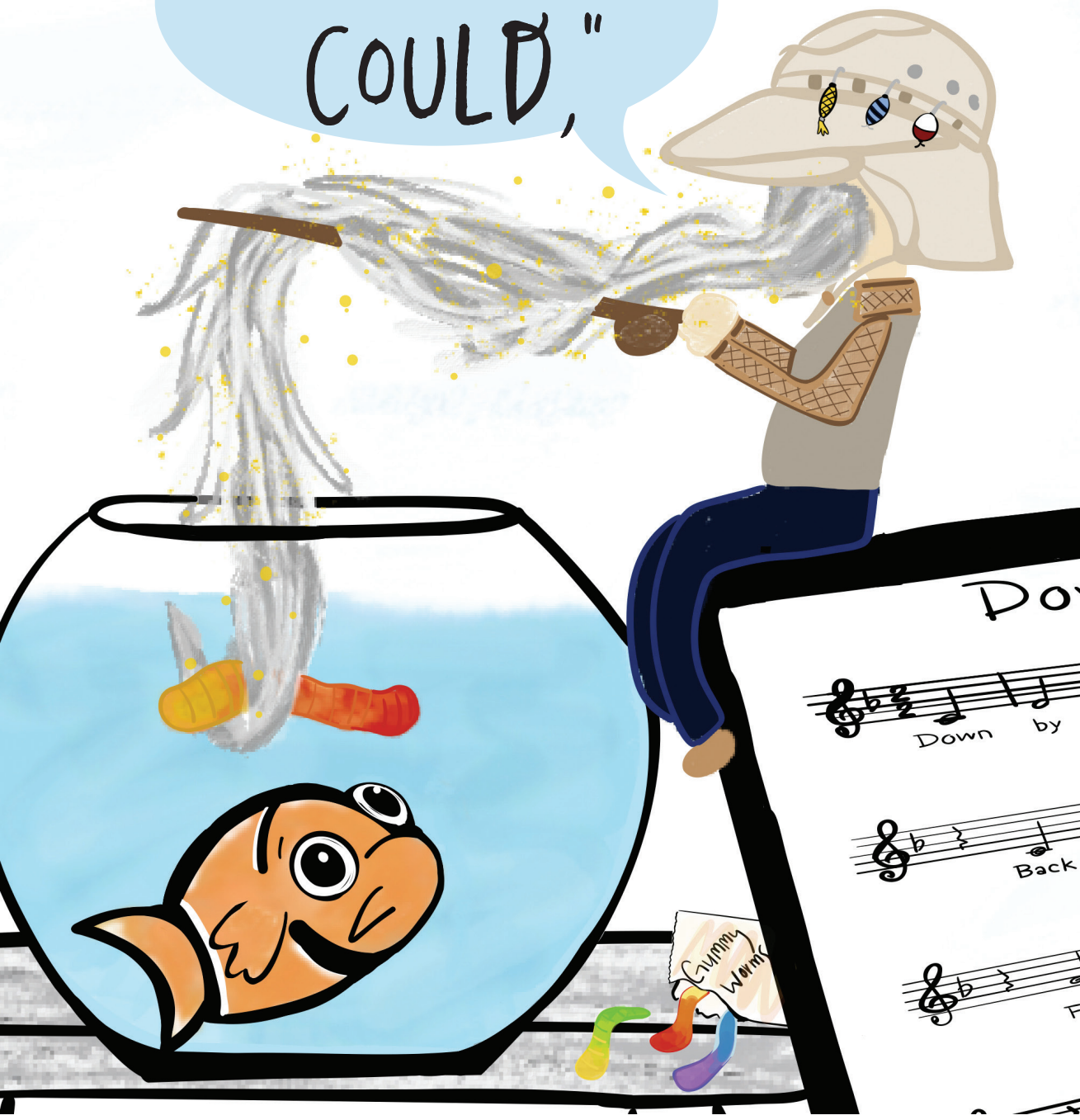


"I CAN'T PLAY
THIS SONG, I CAN'T,
IT'S TOO TOUGH."



Then, poof! From behind
my music he sprang out,
said:

"CAN'TS NEVER
COULD,"



Then left me to pout.

I didn't know what to do,
or to think, or to say.

All I knew was that this was
a very, very strange day.

Down by the Bay

F C⁷

the bay, where the wa-ter-me-lons grow,

F

to my home I dare not go,

B \flat

or if I do my moth-er will say,

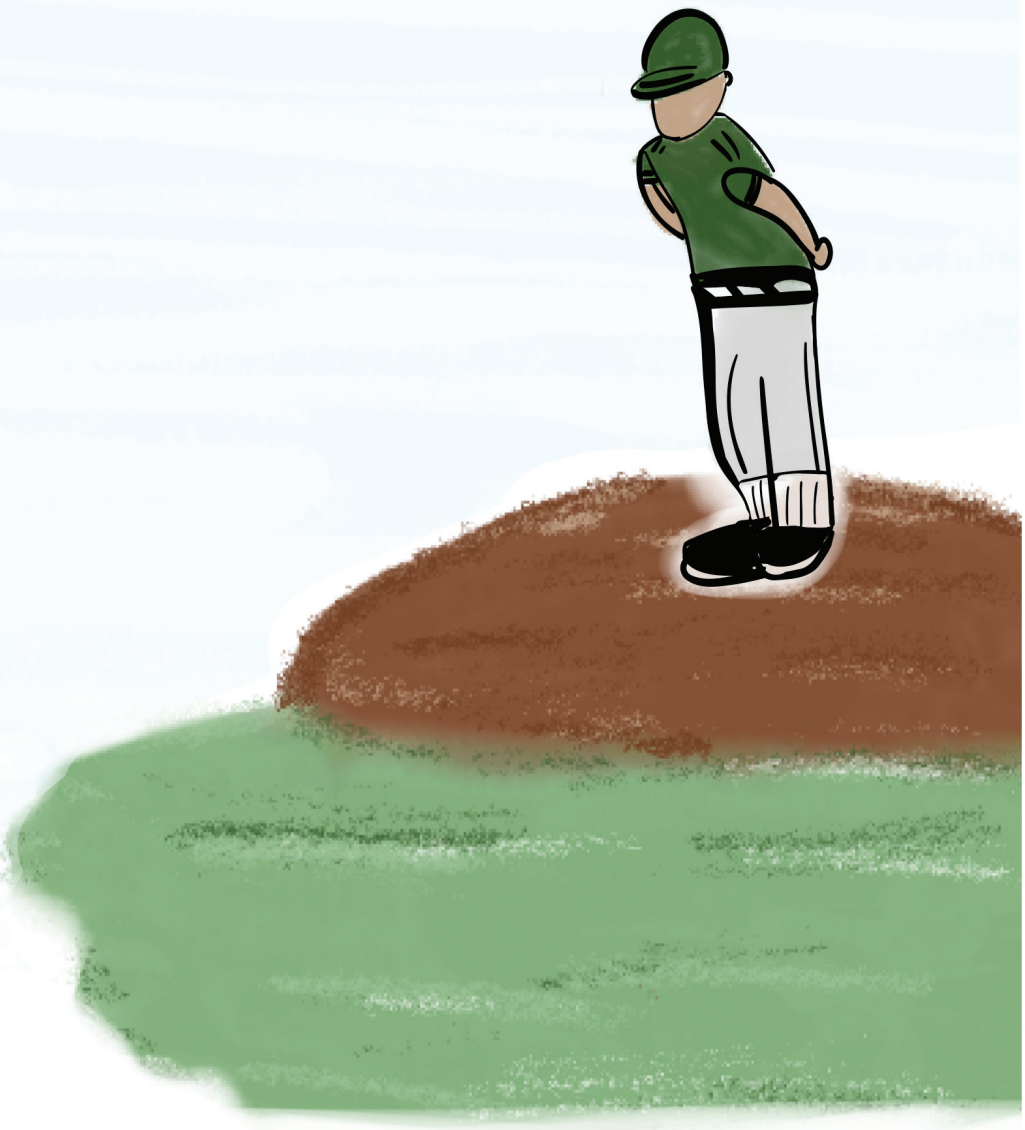
F

see a goose with a kiss - ing a moose,
a whale pol - ka dor - ing a tail,
wear - ing his hair, comb - ing his hair,
eat - ing their pa - jamas, eat - ing their pa - jamas,
id - n't make a rhyme, id - n't make a rhyme,

I thought perhaps, maybe,
I had dreamed the whole spat,

until again I said “can’t,”
when I was at bat.





Standing at home plate,
I was down in the count.

The pitcher looked down
from up high on his mount.

The third pitch came down—
right by me it passed.

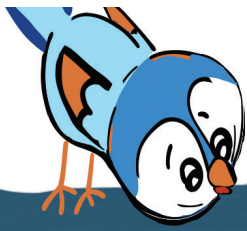
I swung, and I missed.
It happened so fast.





I shouldn't have said what I said...
but I did.

I shouldn't have said that I can't.
Then I hid.



From behind the pole
in the dugout I peered,
as the little old man
swung in on his beard.



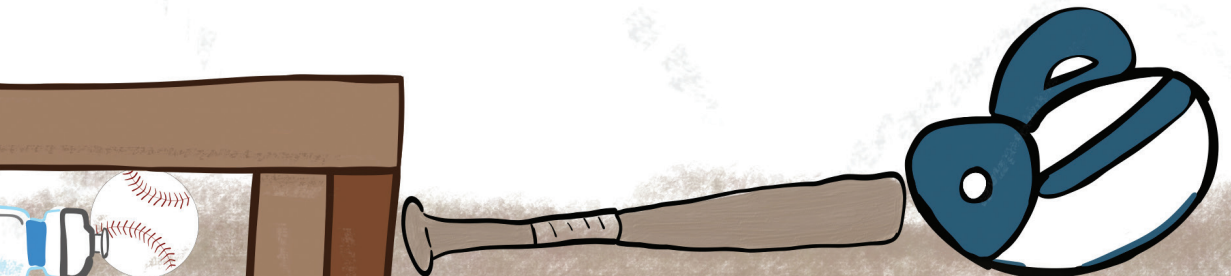


He said

"CAN'TS NEVER
COULD,"

as he flew from one side.

The old man, like a Jedi,
took his beard for a ride.



I was struggling with the meaning that day
as I went home on my path.

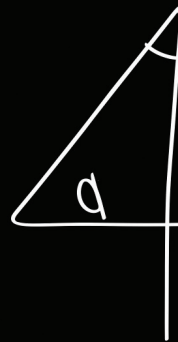
But later that night it came to me
as I was doing my math.

I was trying to solve word problems—uhhgg!
They were tough!

I was tempted to say those words,
but I'd had enough!

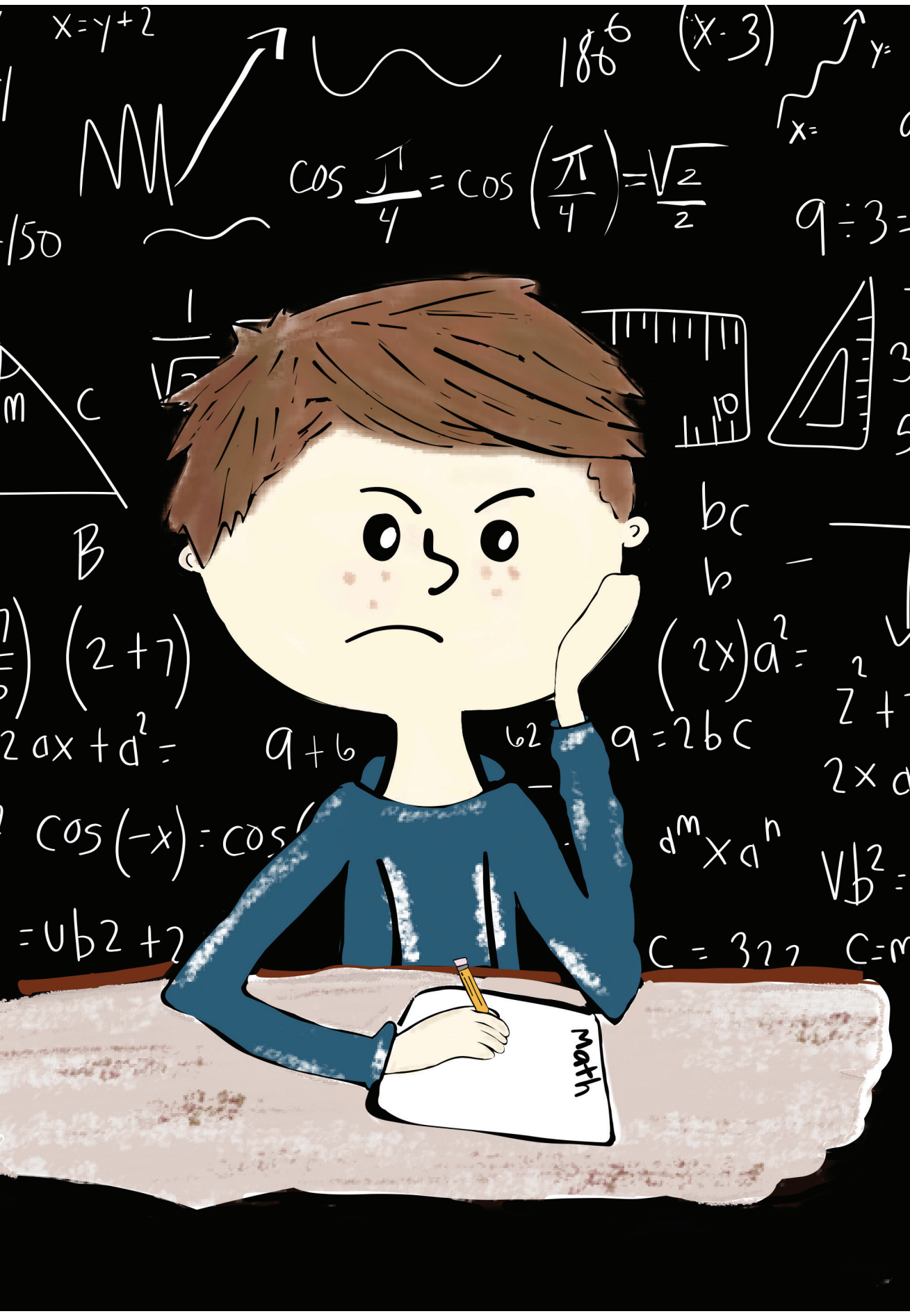
$$x \sqrt{\quad}$$

$$150 \times 3 = 450$$



$$\left(\frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{5}\right)$$
$$x^2 +$$

$$(x+a)^2$$
$$\sqrt{b^2}$$



$$x = y + 2$$

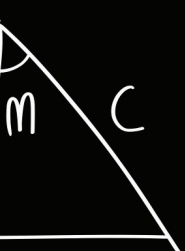
$$180^6$$

$$(x-3)$$

$$\sqrt{x} = y$$

$$\cos \frac{\pi}{4} = \cos \left(\frac{\pi}{4} \right) = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$$

$$9 \div 3 =$$



B

$$\left(\frac{7}{5} \right) (2+7)$$

$$2ax + d^2 =$$

$$a+b$$

$$b^2$$

$$a = 2bc$$

$$\cos(-x) = \cos(x)$$

$$d^m \times a^n$$

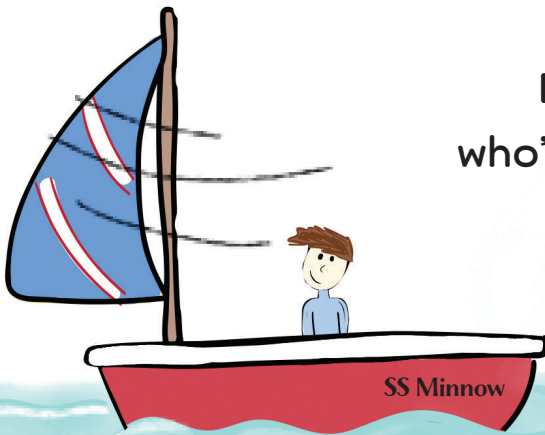
$$\sqrt{b^2} =$$

$$= ub^2 + 2$$

$$C = 322$$

$$C = m$$

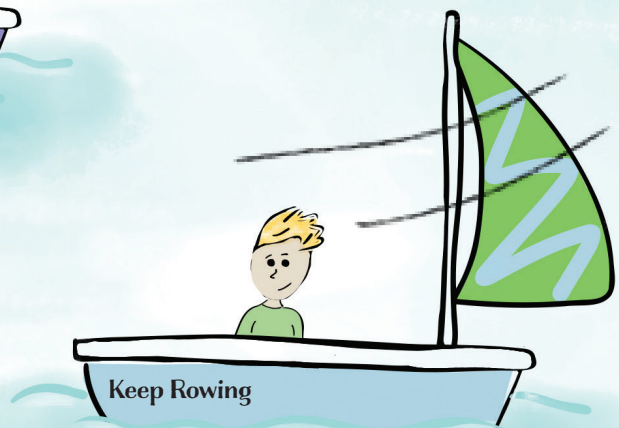
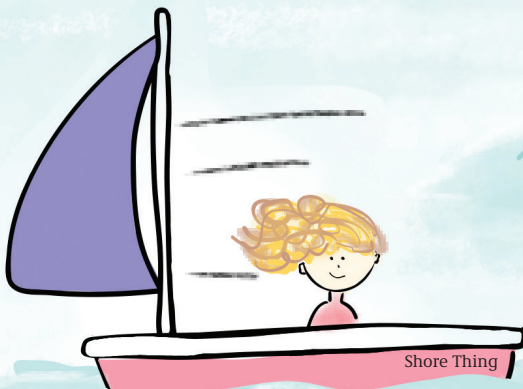
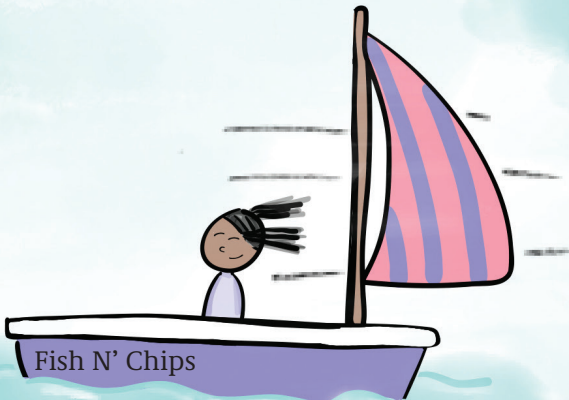
Enough of this guy
who's so happy and sunny.



So I thought before
I talked, and realized,



huh, he's right
on the money.





If I quit and I stop, I'm like a ship with no sail.
Drifting along, I will certainly fail.



I'll never accomplish my goals and get good
at any of my "can'ts,"
I must say that I could.

With clarity and purpose,
I now understand his plan.

"CAN'TS NEVER COULD,



"BECAUSE THEY QUIT
BEFORE THEY CAN."

And with my newfound understanding,
the little guy walked in.

Saying nothing this time,
just a wink and a grin.

He was proud that I learned
not to give up and quit.





Sometimes the most valuable things
come from grit.

And as he was leaving, I said to
that wise little man,

"THANK YOU,
KIND SIR,
I WON'T FORGET THAT
I CAN."







THE END