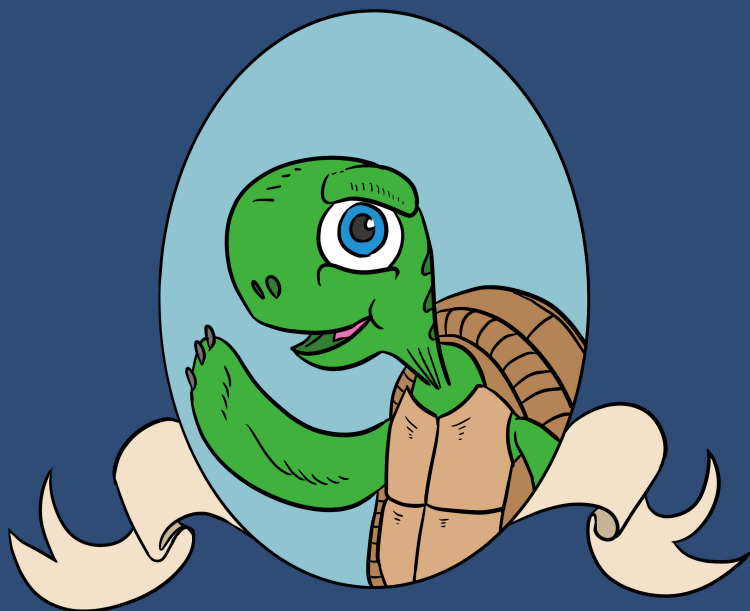


Once Upon
a Turtle*



Once Upon A Turtle

There once was a sad, lonely turtle named Shelly who had no friends to *see* and invent silly **phrases** with. He decided to lead his own *story* and set out through the forest in search of other **characters**. On his journey, he ended up *seeing* many **species of turtles**! His heart felt like a **monster** from a *story* pounding inside his shirt **pocket**, but it **evolved** into courage.



As Shelly set off on his adventure of wonder, he first came across a melancholy turtle, who wasn't really a turtle but used to go to school in the 0°C sea, 158 years ago where he was taught by the turtle, Tortoise ("Tortoise because he taught us", he mused).

Shelly knew sadness very well. He felt it wasn't right. Not even for 135 microseconds. He decided to help immediately. He walked forward 60 paces. Right there was a creature! 45 inches ahead of him. He had a blue body. And also a black shell. With a few round indentations. He loved water and rock. They went back 50 paces. Shelly introduced his two friends. And they became best friends. Just imagine all the joy!



Shelly continued his journey and found himself in a section of the forest that felt like he had traveled backward in time 60 years; it was here he saw a cowardly sort to go to, with black glasses and a brown hat, who would never steal so much as 70 cents from the rich to give to the poor.

Suddenly, he smelled something burning. What was to his left!? Shelly's temperature rose 90 degrees. The creature was reddish brown. Smoke emanated from her nostrils. Her shell glowed red warmth. Her eyes didn't seem open. But she started to circle. Shelly couldn't move from fear. 30 seconds passed, then 180. Then the creature smiled playfully. And held out some S'mores! She exclaimed, "Thank me later!"



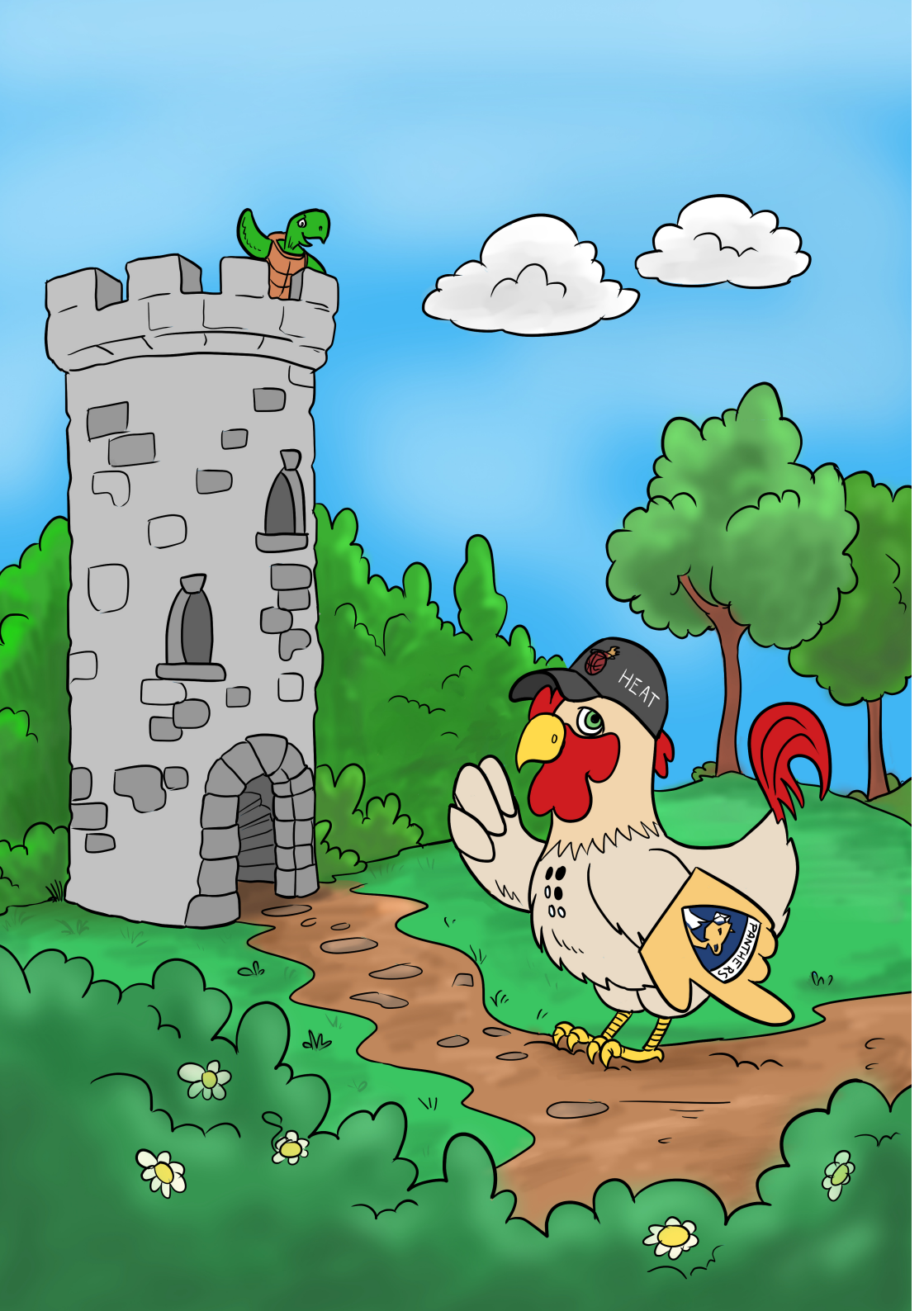
Next, Shelly went for a swim and bumped right into a huge turtle, at least 180 centimeters longer than he was. His size contrasted dramatically with his relaxed, surfer-dude personality. He offered Shelly a ride and told him the story of the time he helped find a lost fish as they swam all around in a circle for what felt like 100 years, but in reality was only 150 minutes.

Shelly returned to land feeling refreshed. On the shore was another creature. He was light green in hue. His large yellow shell was interesting. It extended out from his forehead. Growing from it were two bushes. The bushes bore small red berries. Shelly eyed a circle of them. The creature saw and offered some. He loved how delicious they tasted. He could've eaten 60 of them! But his new friend ran off. He yelled for Shelly to follow. And off they went to explore.



Together they continued deep into the forest. They talked for hours and hours about so many fun things. While discussing fame and the acting business, they ran into a car driver from Queens, who offered them a lift. Shelly felt like they were forming their very own entourage! They must have gone forward through the forest another 50 miles, talking and laughing along the way. Shelly could have continued until they were left with no gas, but alas, after 90 minutes, it was time to part ways. He said goodbye to his two friends and continued on his way.

It was hard to say goodbye. But Shelly was truly feeling glad. As he wandered, he heard something. There was the sound of whimpering. Initially, Shelly only saw a rock. But no, the rock was alive! The creature laid there, clearly injured. Her skin was a dull green. She had big star shaped shells. On both her back and head. Together, way more than 50 kilograms. They were fire red and yellow. And had black spikes protruding out. She definitely lived among the volcanoes. But she was far away now. Shelly needed to go to help. He'd travel 50 days if necessary. And 50 sleepless nights as well! "I'll get you home, I promise!"



He ran to a nerdy-looking, nervous turtle nearby, but he was absolutely no help - all he did was run in a circle 38 times screaming for his wallaby friend with contemporary habits.

Thankfully, there was another creature nearby. Shelly quickly ran right to her. She was even larger in person. She was at least 180 pounds. Her body was a beautiful blue. But mostly hidden by her shell. It was large, brown, and white. It also had extendable water cannons. They looked more powerful than anything. Shelly would've been frightened, but wasn't. There was something about her eyes. Each was a small brown circle. Filled with 50 years of wisdom. And kindness - she would definitely help. Shelly explained about the injured creature. Luckily, he was correct about her! She jumped to action straight away. Shelly climbed on her large shell. They got there in no time. The hero comforted his injured friend. She picked her up very gently. "I will save her, I swear!" With that, she took her away.



With so much excitement, Shelly thought it was time to go to his house. By his calculations, he had about 75 miles west and 150 miles north to travel. On his way back, he bumped into an aggressive, 100% sarcastic character who liked red and carried around a pair of weapons. He might have been rough around the edges, but he made Shelly feel less like a mutant. They made each other laugh and loved talking to each other. They went the entire journey together before finally parting ways in front of his house.

Shelly stood outside awhile. He saw his neighbor. His head was boxy. Yellow orbs for cheeks. His shell was rock. The carapace was brown. With yellow around it. Which matched his horn. The plastron, pale yellow. He looked pretty intimidating. So they'd never spoken. But Shelly wasn't shy. At least, not anymore. He went straight over. And just started talking. Thrillingly, he talked back! Soon, neither could stop. "I do like you. We'll be friends forever!"

Back inside, Shelly couldn't believe the **number of turtle** friends he'd made. He'd forever have a companion to share more **sentences in a paragraph** than he could **count** with. He knew he **couldn't see** them all every day, but he could **feel** them. There was no **number of words in any single sentence** that could express his gratitude.

