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The Clam Who Wanted to be Famous (792 words)

by

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We were walking along
in the sand by the sea,
Josh and Chantelle
and my Daddy and me,

Looking for sea shells
and starfish and stuff
when we suddenly heard
a voice kind of rough

say, "Pick me up, pick me out,
listen to me!"
But no one was there
on the beach we could see.

Then Josh said, "Hey Rachael,"
and nodded his head,
and they all looked right at
my shell-bag (which was red).

There was something inside
of that bag we could see;
it was popping like popcorn
and the voice said, "It's me!"

I gulped and I slowly
loosened the string,
and they all gathered 'round
to look at the thing.

And a clam shell came out
with a leap and a fall,
and said, "I'm not empty,
not empty at all.

"I'm Jimmy the Clam
and from here to afar
everyone knows me
to be quite a star.

"'There's Jimmy,' they say;
'That's Jimmy, you know,'
and they ask me to sign things
wherever I go.

"So I'm sure you have heard
of me," said the clam;
"Everyone has
wherever I am."

Well we looked at each other
and then looked at Dad;
he knew everything but . . .
he looked kind of sad.

He rubbed on his whiskers
and scratched on his head;
he wrinkled his lip
and turned kind of red.

"My dear clam," Daddy said
as he scrunched up his eye,
"I'm afraid I don't know you,"
he said with a sigh.

"I knew it," said Jimmy
in voice low and sad;
"I knew you had not
but I wished that you had.

"I want to be famous,
that's what I wish,
but everyone knows
that I'm just a shellfish."

We wanted to cheer up
the clam, that's for sure,
but we'd never learned how
to cheer up clams before.

So Chantelle said, "Please, Jimmy,
let me ask if I may:
what kind of clam games
do clams like to play?"

Then Jimmy perked up,
did a spin and a kick,
and said, "You might like
to see a clam trick."

Then he reached in his clamshell
and dug all around;
he squished and he squashed
with a rubbery sound.

Then he spun 'round once,
took a hop and a skip,
and pulled from his clamshell
a real clipper ship.

Well we couldn't believe
what he'd pulled from that shell;
we thought it was maybe
a magical spell.

But Jimmy said, "Up,
up onto the boat;
let's take her out
to see if she'll float."

We sailed out on our ship
through the waves and the breeze,
laughing like sailors
upon the high seas.

Then we heard a "Haloo"
and a "Hrumph" and a "Zip;"
pirates were closing in
fast on our ship.

They came right on up
and gave us a look,
Josh took my hand
and both of us shook.

"Now hear our request,"
said the scariest one,
"We wish to come over
and join in the fun."

"Granted," said Jimmy
in a captain-like tone,
"if your ships are not fun
then come onto our own."

Well they leaped on our ship
with their parrots and cats
and their swords and eye-patches
and three-cornered hats.

They swiggered and swaggered
and swooped through the air
and flying behind
was their long, scraggly hair.

We laughed and halooed
with those pirates that day
till Jimmy said, "Pirates,
now pirates, I say:

"My maties you've given
a good show today,
but the sun's going down
and you must go away.

"Now get on your ships
and don't make a fuss;
these people have got
to get back to the bus."

They leaped to their ships
and sailed out of reach
while Jimmy took us
straight back to the beach.

"Well, friends," he said,
"The day is now done,
but no one can say
that we didn't have fun."

Then he leaped to the beach
with a wave of his hand,
and he looked just like any
old shell in the sand.

We walked to the bus stop
away from the sea,
Josh and Chantelle
and my Daddy and me.

As we were waiting,
I looked at my Dad;
his face was a mixture
of happy and sad.

We all had had fun
and Jimmy had too,
but his wish to be famous--
would it ever come true?

"Don't worry, Daddy,"
I started to say.
"Jimmy's dream wasn't lost
on the seashore today."

He looked at me puzzled
with hope and with doubt,
so I told my Daddy
what I'd figured out.

"It's come true," I said
as we got on the bus;
"Jimmy the Clam
is now famous TO US."

[Overleaf: Child's bedroom with Jimmy the Clam pennants, dolls, hats, paraphernalia. Caption:
"RACHAEL'S ROOM".]