



Jonah's Riddle

written by Marcia Trimble • Illustrated by George Ulrich

Kids meet great characters in books.

I like Once-Upon-a-Time and Happily-Ever-After stories.

They never go out of style.

Listen to Paloma. She reminds me of me. (Paloma voice: "Papa, tell me the story of Jonah's Riddle...please, just the way you always tell it.") Sound familiar? And Papa begins, just as always.

(Papa voice) Once upon a time...a cowboy was listening to the wind whispering on the prairie...and as his mare Calliope trotted along, he sang with the wind.

♪ Cowboy Song #1 ♪

Papa/cowboy voice

I have a horse to ride, a bunk for lyin' on my side...
spurs to keep Calliope ridin' far 'n wide...
a hat to shade my eyes from the prairie sun...
and stars to guide me home when day is done.

And Papa tells Paloma about the cowboy's adventure with a sailor named Sid, and with the islander named Jonah who teaches them what to do with stories that are locked in their heads.

How do stories get locked in their heads?

Well, they both listen to a seashell and hear the song of the sea. And they imagine! Jonah says their song sleeps in their imaginations.

Jonah says, (Jonah voice) *Your song is destined to a fate, such as befalls a tree toppled in a deserted forest.*

What happens to the tree?

They don't figure out the riddle at first. So Jonah makes a flowery speech.

(Jonah voice) *Ah! A storyteller who sings like a bird can soothe a listener with every word. Sing your song of the sea. Save it from the silence that can befall a tree.*

I'd be the storyteller.

I'd be the listener.

I bet their stories come alive. I bet it's a Happily-Ever-After story.

Time for the story: Please read the book OR listen and read along on the CD.

You know, stories are alive...just about everywhere.

Stories stay alive in our imagination.

Papa and Paloma stay alive in MY imagination.

(Papa, cowboy voice) Can you believe that I abandoned my horse for a sailboat? It was extraordinary meeting Jonah, the Riddleman. But I sure was happy to see my horse, Calliope, again.

(Paloma voice) I can't believe that Calliope came to the dock to meet you.

I'd like to meet the Islander with his riddles and flowery speeches.

It COULD happen...IN YOUR IMAGINATION.

On the way home, the cowboy is still thinking about the riddleman. Clippity cloppin' along, he smiles and sings with the wind.

Cowboy Song #2

(Sung to the tune of The Muffin Man) cowboy voice

Oh, I have met a riddleman, a riddleman, a riddleman.

Oh, I have met a riddleman who lives far out to sea.

Oh yes, I know the riddleman, the riddleman, the riddleman.

Oh, yes, I know the riddleman...in his riddle of the tree.

Readers' Theater: Script available in Stories on Stage booklet of scripts.

Song of the Sea

(The mermaid and the prince/song bird)

Characters: Dialogue A character. Dialogue B character. Seashell. Prince.



Seashell: Sing my song. Sing my song.
Sing my song of the sea.

A. What is the song of the sea?

B. The song of the sea is whatever
you imagine it to be. It could be
a story about the creatures
of the deep. Do you agree?

A. I don't know. Where does YOUR
imagination take you?

B. I'll listen to the sea shell. Sea shell,
sea shell, what's the song I hear
when I press you close to my ear?

Seashell: Hush! It's my song
of the sea. Listen...carefully.

(SEASHELL echo-y voice and
choreographed sound effects)

Once upon a time...a songbird sang to
a beautiful princess and then
flitted off to the sea. The beautiful
princess, lured by the song,
followed the songbird to the sea
and swam far into the deep
where she met the Prince
of the Water Kingdom who sang
like a bird and soothed
the princess with every word.

Prince: Princess, princess,
the waves above lap a lullaby and
a song rolls below. Catch the call,
high or low and hear the roll fast
or slow. The rhythm of the sea rolls
at your feet. The song rolls loud
or soft 'n sweet.

Seashell: On the waves above,
sparkles danced by the light of
the moon and in the Water Kingdom
below, the Prince trilled his tune.

The Prince of the Water Kingdom
sang until the princess fell asleep
in a coral cave.

The princess slept until sunlight
danced on the sand of the cave
where she awoke as a beautiful
mermaid...and the beautiful
mermaid-princess lived happily
ever after in the Water Kingdom
with the handsome prince.

B. Ah, the mermaid and the songbird.
A song of the sea.

Seashell: Sing my song. Sing my song.
(echo) Sing my song of the sea.
Sing my song. Sing my song. (echo)

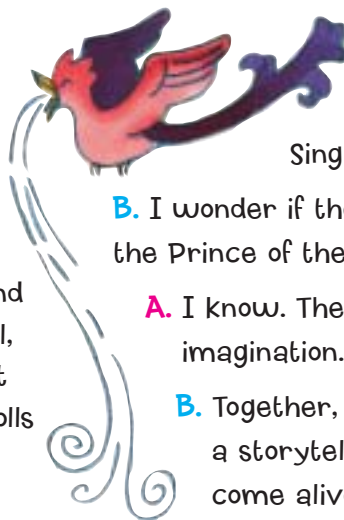
B. Seashell, seashell, I'll sing your
song of the sea.

Seashell:
Sing my song.
Sing my song. (echo)

B. I wonder if the songbird was
the Prince of the Water Kingdom.

A. I know. The answer is in your
imagination. Do you agree?

B. Together, a listener and
a storyteller make the story
come alive. That's the key.



Song of the Sea

lyrics by Marcia Trimble



CHORUS Seashells sing stories.
Seashell, oh, seashell...
Please sing your song of the sea.
Please sing your stor-y to me.



The story I hear...with my
imaginative ear...
that is the song of the sea.



It's a creation
My 'magination.
ONCE UPON A TIME...
(chimes...background instrumental)
"BEGIN!" (spoken)
There's a story...in the wind.



My favorite place...is the
magical space...where the
song of the sea snuggles in.



I hear my story.
It's a sen-sa-tion.
I'm the new mermaid-to-be.
A prince of the deep sings to me.



We'll live hap-pi-ly...if you
listen to me...telling
the song of the sea.
EVERYBODY NOW! (spoken)



CHORUS Seashells sing stories.
Seashell, oh, seashell...
Please sing your song of the sea.
Please sing your stor-y to me.



It's a sensation...in my
imagination...and that
is the song of the sea.
Oh, yes, the song of the sea
is a story, you see.

