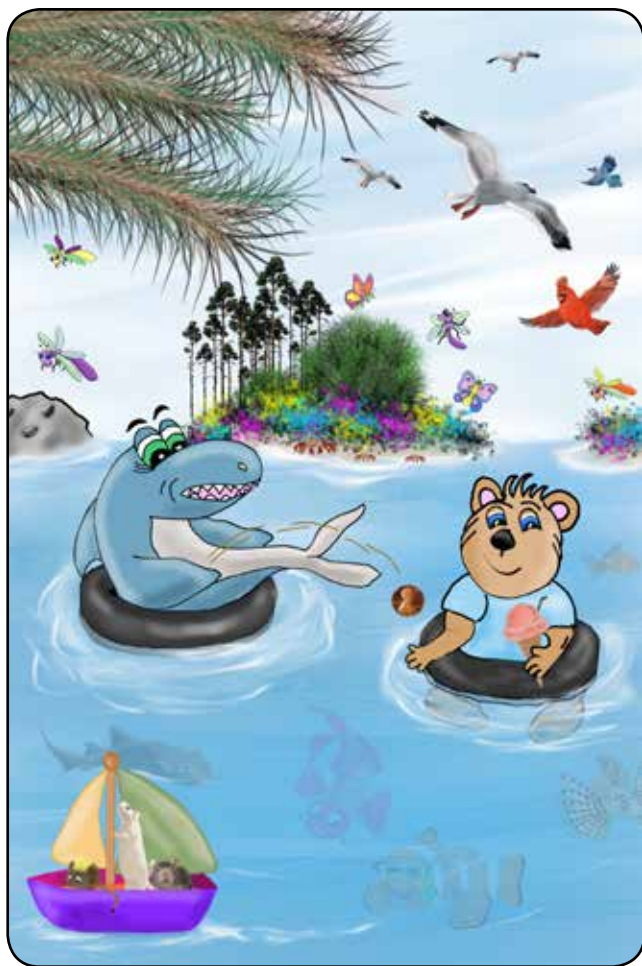


Thank you for becoming a friend
of Dew Bear and all the strange
and wonderful creatures of
Memory Forest and beyond.
We can't wait for you to
join us on this adventure.



Dew Bear

A Day in the Life of Dew



A Penny for Your Thoughts

Book 4

This book is a work of fiction. Any reference to historical events, real people, or real places are used fictitiously. Other names, characters, places, and events are products of the author's imagination. Though many character names and/or personalities are based on the author's family and friends, they are used with creative license and are meant to ensure the Deel Family Legacy.

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For permission or comments, please e-mail the author,
Deborah Deel Clayton, at dewbear@mindspring.com

Dew Bear strongly believes in giving back to the community. A portion of the net proceeds from the sale of every Dew Bear book will be donated annually to a specific charity.

The donation for Book 4 will go to the Audubon Society.

Exact donation amounts will vary depending on associated costs to produce, publish, and sell the books.

A Day in the Life of Dew



A Penny for Your Thoughts

Book 4

Written and illustrated by Deborah Deel Clayton
Published by Dew Bear Enterprises, Inc.
www.dewbear.com
email at dewbear@mindspring.com

A special thanks to Pete and Peggy for putting up with me for all these years. I love you two as if you were my own mom and dad.

And especially to Pete—for without your love of the penny, this story would not have been inspired.



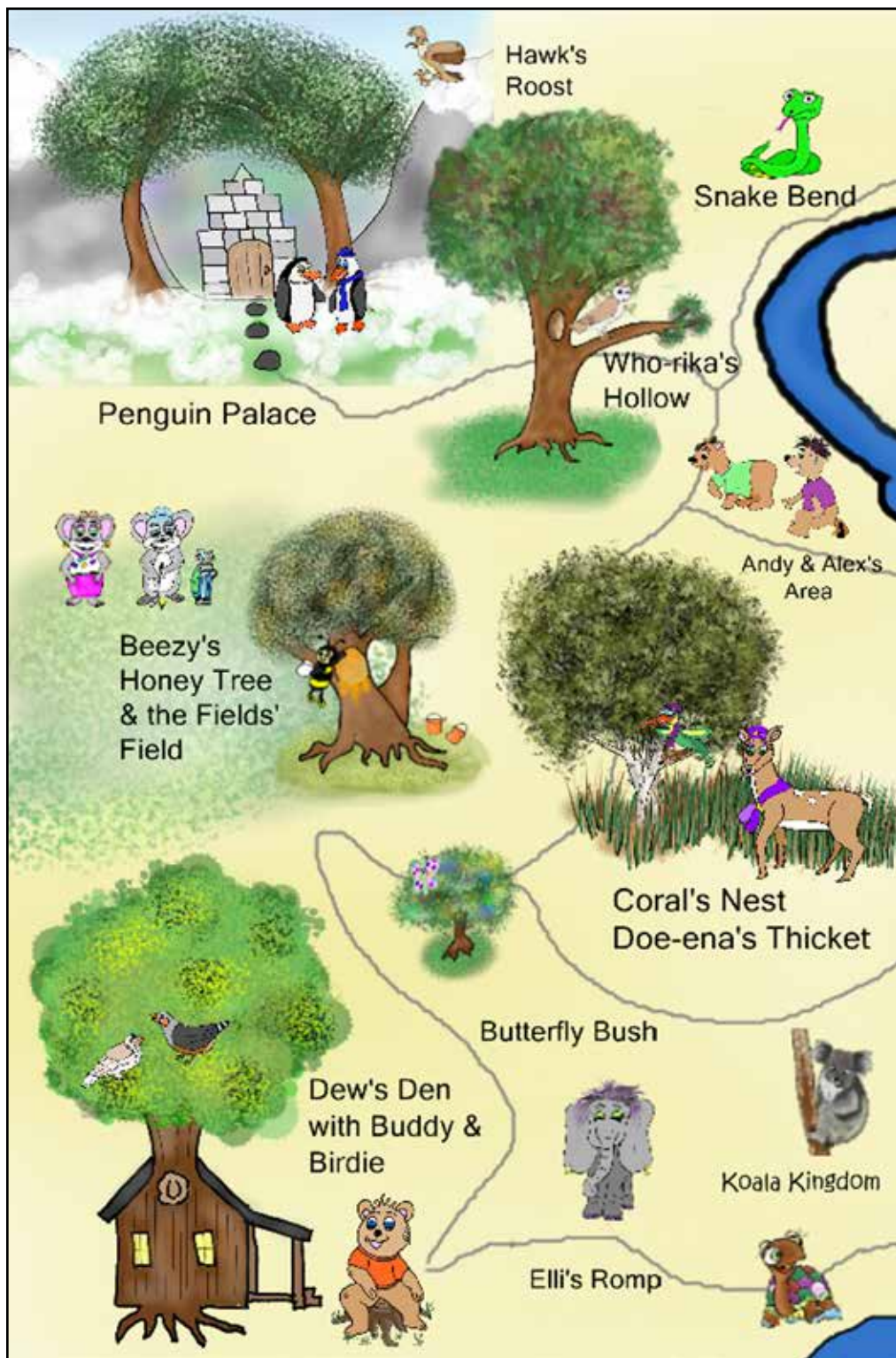
Life is a journey ...
make it an adventure!

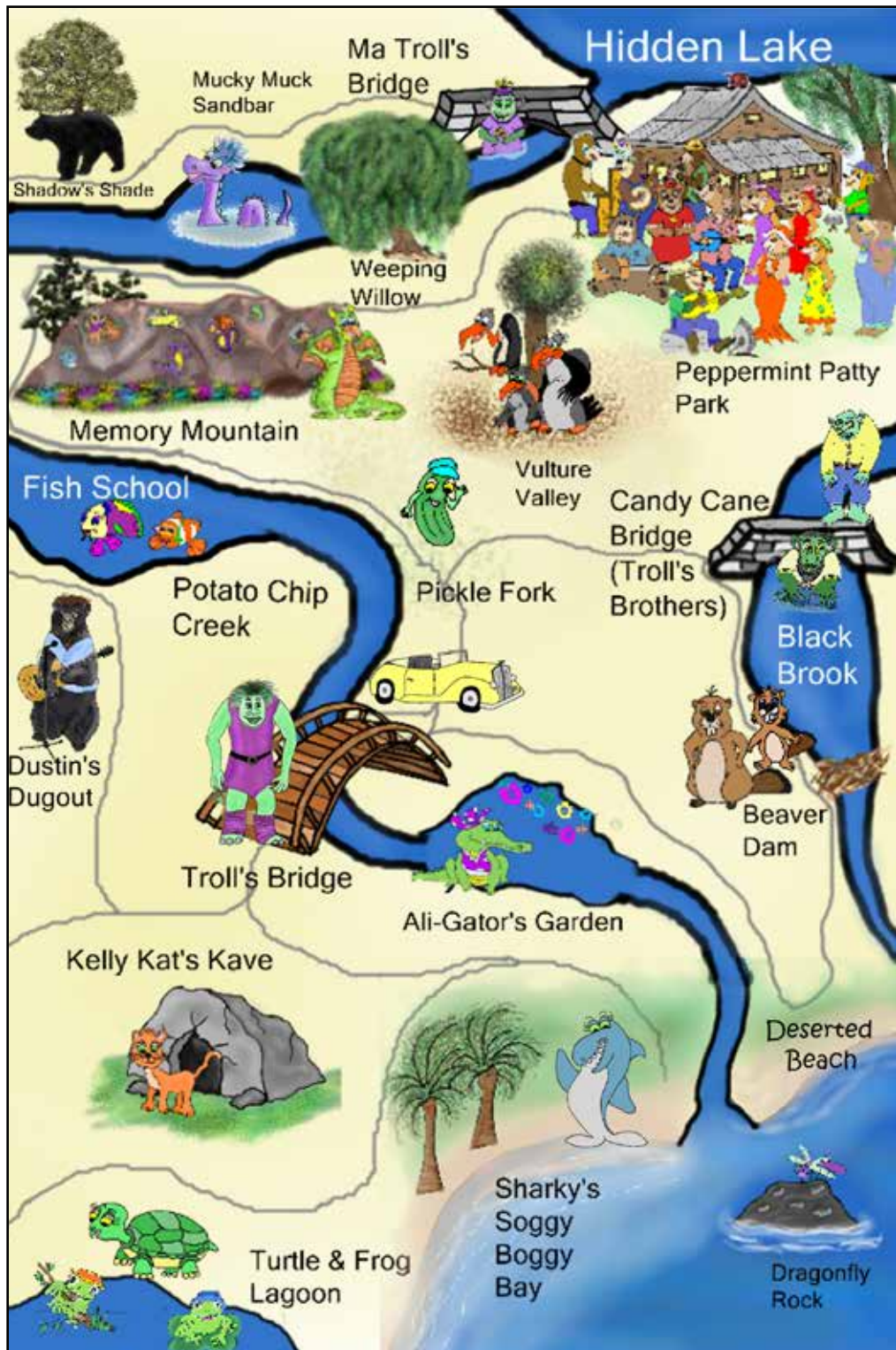
Dedicated to

Pete Clayton

A man who appreciates
the value of a penny!







Hidden Lake

Shadow's Shade

Mucky Muck Sandbar

Ma Troll's Bridge

Weeping Willow

Peppermint Patty Park

Memory Mountain

Fish School

Vulture Valley

Candy Cane Bridge (Troll's Brothers)

Black Brook

Potato Chip Creek

Pickle Fork

Dustin's Dugout

Troll's Bridge

Ali-Gator's Garden

Beaver Dam

Kelly Kat's Kave

Deserted Beach

Sharky's Soggy Boggy Bay

Turtle & Frog Lagoon

Dragonfly Rock

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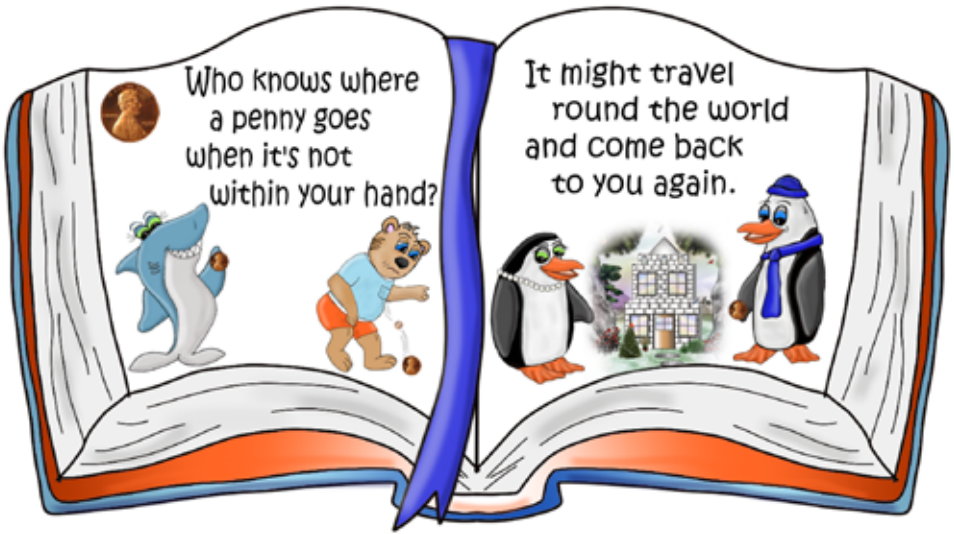
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A Day in the Life of **Pete**

A story within a story

South Pole Adventure

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Prelude: The Life of Dew

Dew Bear was born
on a crisp autumn morn,
when dew on the grass was real thick.

Ma and Pa Bear
chose his name with great care,
'cause they knew
it was a name that would stick.

As Dew Bear grew,
everyone knew
they could count on him through and through;
For Dew Bear could do,
WHATEVER he put his mind to.



Sometimes his mind
will wander.
Sometimes it just
goes straight.
And sometimes when
his eyes are closed,
a journey it will take.



Chapter 1 - The Thought

One hot summer day in the first week of September, Dew Bear went to visit his best friend, Sharky, at Soggy Boggy Bay. When Dew arrived, he saw that Sharky had set up two beach chairs under a palm tree near the water's edge. A fresh jar of lemonade and two cups sat on a small table. Dew climbed over an old inner tube, startling a crab who was scurrying around in the middle of it. "How'd you get in there little fella?" Dew asked.

Dew noticed the beach ball, the pinwheel, and the two beach towels ... but there was no Sharky in sight. "Shaaaarrrrrkkkkkkkyyyy," Dew hollered, stepping into the warm blue-green water.

“Commmmming!” he heard as the edge of an old gray inner tube wobbled out from behind Dragonfly Rock.

“How’s the water?” Dew called out when Sharky came into view.

“The deeper you go, the cooler it gets. Grab the other tube and come on out,” Sharky said, skimming the top of the water with her fin and splashing it towards shore.



Dew carefully lifted the tube, trying not to drop it on the little crab. The crab raised his tiny blue claws in defense. “Just gonna borrow this for a while,”

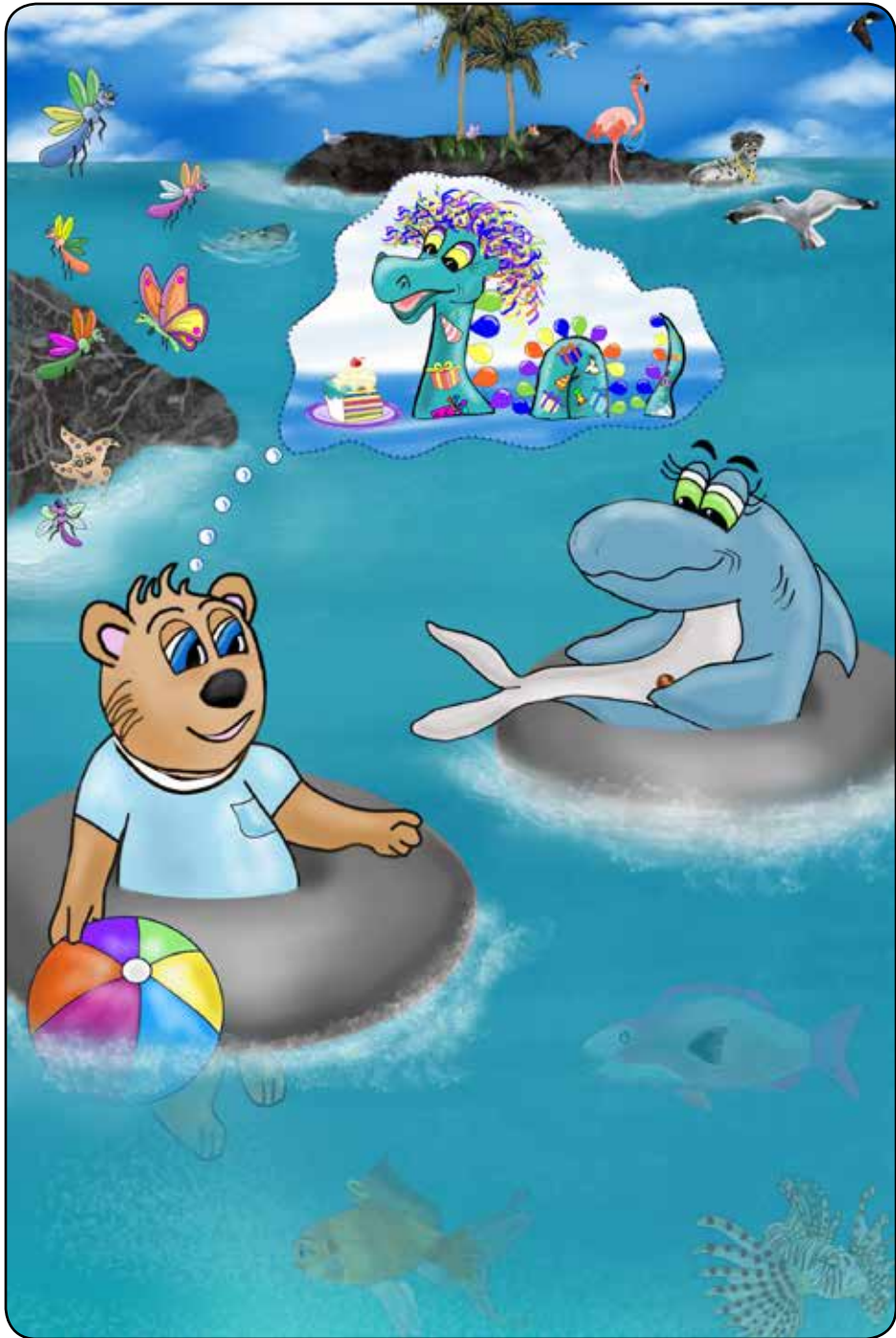
Dew said as the young crab scurried back to his family who was hiding under one of the beach chairs.



Dew kicked the beach ball into the water. He plopped the inner tube in the shallows and stepped into the center hole. As he walked further out, the tube floated up until it was resting under his armpits. When Dew couldn't touch bottom anymore, he kicked his feet and paddled his arms to reach the spot where Sharky was reclining in the sun. “Took you long enough,” she said.

“It sure is hot today,” Dew said, bumping into Sharky's tube.

Sharky splashed Dew. “Yeah, I can't believe summer's almost over.”



“Can you believe Tessa’s birthday party was over a month ago?” Dew asked.

“That was a great party,” Sharky said.

“Be honest, have you tried to change your appearance like Tessa can do?” Dew asked, remembering Tessa’s party and when she covered herself in birthday presents, made her spines look like balloons, and added streamers for hair. It was quite impressive.

“Nah,” Sharky said. “I think I look good just the way I am.”

“You are a good color, but aren’t you curious about being able to change? I think we can change more than just the way we look on the outside,” Dew said.

“What do you mean?” Sharky asked.

“Well, I think we can change on the inside too,” Dew said.

“That sounds kind of gross,” Sharky said, wrinkling up her nose. “I don’t think I want to see your insides!”

“Not like that,” Dew said. “Let’s say a ferocious fire-breathing dragon comes to Memory Forest. When he sees how nice everyone here is, don’t you think he would want to change to be nice too?” Dew asked.

“Yeah, instead of burning down the forest, he could use his fire-breathing talent to start our wood stoves in the winter,” Sharky laughed.



Dew heard faint giggling behind him. He swirled his tube around to see Holly, Ross, and Ryan sailing by in a small purple boat with green and yellow sails.



“Look, Dew,” Holly, the small gray mouse hollered. “I can ride in the boat now that you taught me to swim.”

“That’s awesome, Holly,” Dew said. Holly waved but quickly grabbed the railing when a tiny ripple made the boat bob up and down.

Ryan turned the sail into a slight breeze, almost knocking Ross out of the boat. “See ya later,” he called out as they circled Dragonfly Rock and headed for shore.



“So what were we talking about?”

Sharky asked, following Dew around the rock.

“Dragons,” Dew said.

“Speaking of dragons, did you hear that Pete and Peggy spotted two dragons flying over Penguin Palace last night? Pete thought they might be Fig’s parents,” Sharky said.



“Did Fig see them?” Dew asked.

“No. He spent the night in Grundgy Meadow with Lissard and Groberjeff,” Sharky said.



“But, Pete flagged Fig down this morning as he was flying back to Memory Mountain. Fig picked up their scent and took off after them,” Sharky added.

“I sure hope he finds them soon,” Dew said. He started thinking about Penguin Palace, which was the coolest place in Memory Forest—especially on a hot day like today.

After a few moments of silence, Sharky said, “A penny for your thoughts, Dew.”

“Do you have a penny?” Dew asked.

“Yep, I found one in the sand on Deserted Beach just before you got here,” Sharky said, holding up the shiny copper penny.



“Well, in that case,” Dew said, eager to earn a penny, “I was just thinking about Penguin Palace and how good some of Pete’s homemade ice cream would taste right now.”



“Mmmmm, that does sound good,” Sharky said. “If you’re thinking about visiting Pete and Peggy Penguin, I’ll be happy to tag along.”

Dew held out his paw. “What?” Sharky asked.

“Hand over the penny,” Dew said.

Sharky frowned and flipped her penny to Dew. The movement caused a ripple that rocked Dew’s tube, causing him to miss the catch. Luckily, the penny bounced several times on the edge of the tube, and Dew caught it just before it hit the water.



“That was close,” Dew said, slipping the penny into his shirt pocket.

“Good catch! I don’t think pennies float. But, I do know that Pete makes the best homemade ice cream,” Sharky said. “Think he’d share some with us?”

“Won’t know unless we ask,” Dew said, imagining how good an ice cream cone would taste. “I hope he has chocolate chip.”

“I’d like some vanilla with hot fudge, whipped cream, nuts, and a cherry on top,” Sharky said.

“Race you back,” Dew said, paddling quickly as he could towards shore.

“You’re no competition,” Sharky said, slipping out of the inner tube and pushing it from behind. She was long gone before Dew could paddle just a few feet.



In the time it took Dew to reach the shore, Sharky had already put away the chairs, table, and her tube. “Bout time you get here,” Sharky said, taking Dew’s tube. She handed him a towel, a cup of lemonade, and a peach.

Downing the lemonade in one gulp, Dew said, “I’m ready. Let’s go get some ice cream.”

He patted the penny in his pocket, making sure it was still there. “I’ve got to be careful. I’ve got a small hole in my pocket. I don’t want to lose the penny.”

“You can give it back to me,” Sharky said, grinning ear to ear.

“No way,” Dew said. “It was fair payment for my thoughts.”

“I hope so,” Shaky said, heading down the path that leads to Penguin Palace.



Chapter 2 - The Journey

As they walked along, Dew said to Sharky, “You gave me a penny for my thoughts, but have you ever given thought to a penny?”

“What do you mean?” Sharky asked a bit confused.

“Well,” Dew said, and then he recited a little poem he was thinking ...

*“A penny passes hand to hand
or maybe falls upon the sand,
but it can travel far and wide
as it touches many, many lives.”*

“I never thought about a penny like that,” Sharky said.

“Perhaps it was dropped by a bird flying overhead,” Sharky said, imagining a hummingbird like their friend Coral carrying a penny in her claws. “A penny could be heavy for a small bird.”



“Or perhaps the penny was used at last year’s carnival,” Dew said. “Maybe my mom and sisters played a game of chance, and it fell off the counter.”

“There were carnival games set up on Deserted Beach last year,” Sharky agreed.



“Or, it could have washed up on shore from somewhere far away,” Dew said.

“Maybe there’s a sunken treasure chest in Soggy Boggy Bay. One like your Pa mentions in the song he sings. I think I’ll go exploring tomorrow,” Sharky said, excited at the possibilities.

“No matter where the penny has been, it’s now on a journey with us,” Dew said.



“Where ya going?” Ali-Gator called out as Dew and Sharky approached her water garden. She was pulling weeds from among her water lilies.

“Hello, Ali,” Dew said, climbing over the fence and stepping into the shallows.

Ali plucked a clump of weeds from the water, chewed them up, and swallowed. “Kind of hot weather for taking a walk,” she said between bites.



“We’re on our way to Penguin Palace to see if Pete and Peggy have any homemade ice cream today,” Sharky said. “Do you want to join us?”

“Wish I could, but the weeds are taking over my garden. I really want to get this cleaned up today,” Ali said, chomping another bunch of weeds.

“Perhaps another time,” Sharky said.

“You probably wouldn’t have room for ice cream anyway if you have to eat all those weeds,” Dew said.

“You’re right about that. I’m having weeds for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dessert today!” Ali laughed.



Dew leaned over to pat Ali on her head. “Keep up the good work.” As he turned to leave, the penny slipped out of his pocket and sunk deep in the water. Ali quickly scooped it up with her snout and gave it back to Dew.



“Thanks, Ali,” Dew said. “I was just telling Sharky that I need to be careful with this penny. As you can see, I have a small hole in my pocket.”

“Where did you get a penny?” Ali asked.

“Sharky found it on the sand. Then she paid it to me to tell her what I was thinking,” Dew said.

“I get it,” Ali said. “A penny for your thoughts—and let me guess ... you thought of ice cream,” she giggled.

“Sure you can’t come with us?” Sharky asked.

“I would love to, but I have a job to do. It won’t get done if I don’t stick to it,” Ali said, pulling out a clump of tall weeds.

“Okay, we promise to take you with us next time. Maybe you won’t be so busy,” Dew said as he and Sharky waved goodbye to Ali-Gator and started off again on the path that leads to Penguin Palace.



Chapter 3– A Day for Repairs

As they approached Troll’s bridge, Dew said to Sharky, “Maybe Troll will give us a ride to Penguin Palace in the Troll-ey car.”

“Not sure that’s a possibility. Look,” Sharky said, pointing to Troll’s boots sticking out from under the yellow car on the other side of Potato Chip Creek.

They crossed Troll’s bridge. “Hey Troll, what are you working on?” Dew asked, bending down and peering under the car.

“The engine’s making a thumping sound,” Troll said sliding out from under the car. “I can’t seem to find where it’s coming from. Where are you two headed?”

“To Penguin Palace for ice cream. Would you like to join us?” Sharky asked.

“Sorry,” Troll said. “Ice cream would be nice, but I have to fix the car. I need to drive over to Candy Cane Bridge in the morning to pick up my brothers, Krank and Mot. Then we’re going to my mom’s to help her clean her bridge.”

“No problem,” Dew said.



“We’ll eat an extra bowl for you,” Sharky said, rubbing her tummy and grinning widely, showing her bright, white teeth.



“We better get going,” Dew said, heading around the car to the bridge.

“Thanks for thinking of me,” Troll said. As he pulled the tool box closer so he could grab a wrench, something shiny caught his attention. He picked it up and turned it over and over. “Hmmm ... I didn’t see this penny here before. Did one of you drop it?”



“Oh, yes!” Dew said. “It fell out of the hole in my pocket.”

Troll handed the penny back to Dew. “It’s a fine looking penny,” Troll said. “You might want to fix that hole in your pocket.”

“I’ll sew it up as soon as I get home tonight,” Dew said.

“I hope you don’t lose the penny before then,” Sharky giggled.

“If I do,” Dew said, “then I guess it’s meant to be.”



Just after Troll’s bridge, Dew and Sharky met up with Chelly and Kelly Kat. Chelly is a turtle who spells her name with a C instead of an S. She’s good friends with Kelly Kat because Kelly spells Kat with a K instead of a C.



“Are you busy?” Dew asked Kelly and Chelly. He was finding out that everyone seemed to be busy today.

“Why do you ask?” Kelly Kat asked.

“Because if you’re not busy, then we’ll invite you to join us for ice cream at Penguin Palace,” Sharky said.

“Kelly Kat was going to help me dig a new den at Turtle and Frog Lagoon. The walls have started caving in on my old one. But, if she wants to join you, I can try to fix it myself,” Chelly said.

“I promised to help,” Kelly Kat said, “and I never go back on my promises. Besides, I just finished sharpening my claws. I can claw through dirt in no time now, and we can always go for ice cream later.”

Dew Bear bent down to playfully tap Chelly’s shell, and the penny, once again, slipped from his pocket. It rolled on the ground and came to rest in front of Kelly Kat.



“What’s that?” Kelly Kat asked, flipping the object over and over with her paw.

Dew nudged Kelly’s paw off the penny and picked it up. “It’s a penny.”

“It’s beautiful. Can I keep it?” Kelly asked.

“Perhaps one day I’ll let you have it,”

Dew said. “But right now, I want to hang on to it for a while longer.”



Sharky giggled. “That’s *IF* you can hang onto it! You’ve lost it at every place we’ve stopped so far.”

“I think I’ll go ask Coral if she has a needle and thread,” Dew said. He clenched the penny in his paw and took off quickly towards Coral’s nest which was just around the bend.

Sharky winked at Kelly Kat and Chelly and ran to catch up to Dew.

I hope you have enjoyed the 1st three chapters of Book 4 - A Penny for Your Thoughts.

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Debbie Clayton