

Island of the grumps







The next morning, Sam grumbled about his socks. He grumbled about breakfast. He grumbled about the weather again. Each time he complained, he felt a small tug near his feet, like invisible string pulling him downward. "Mom, my legs feel funny," he said. She looked down and gasped softly. His bottom had stretched an inch closer to the floor! "Sam," she warned, "please stop grumbling before it's too late." Sam just crossed his arms and grumped some more.







Sam landed with a soft thud on gray, bumpy sand. Gloomy clouds hung low overhead, and everything smelled like wet socks. Around him, children sat scowling on rocks, arms crossed just like his had been. A boy nearby grumbled, "Great, another grump." Sam looked around nervously. "Where are we?" he asked. "The Island of the Grumps," the boy answered flatly. "Once you're here, nobody smiles. Ever." Sam's tummy twisted with worry.



I do not like it here.





The moment Sam smiled, the ground beneath him shivered gently. He looked down—his feet felt lighter, less stuck in the gray sand. "What's happening?" he asked. The girl gasped. "You're rising!" she said. Other children turned to stare. Sam realized his kindness had loosened whatever held him down. Excited, he helped another child untangle a jump rope, and rose another inch, floating just above the ground like magic.



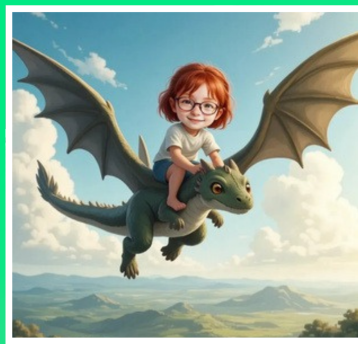




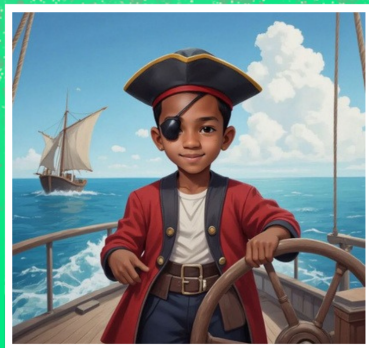


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