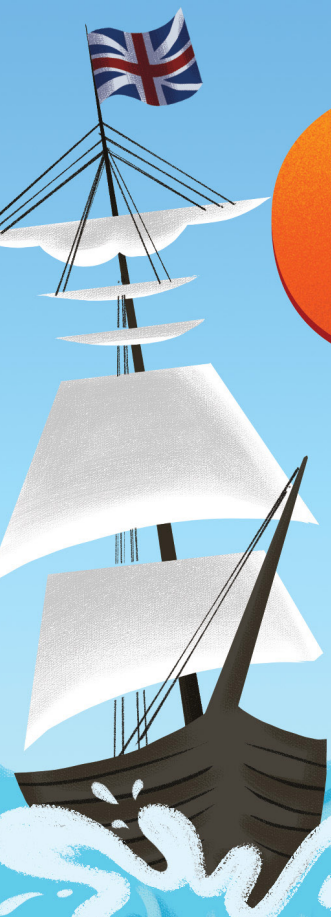


Otto's Tales



Let's Visit

PLYMOUTH ROCK

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Published by PragerU
15021 Ventura Boulevard #552
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

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Let's Visit

PLYMOUTH ROCK



“Ready?” Dennis waved a big, yummy bone above Otto’s head. The eager bulldog eyed it, ready to pounce.

Dennis wound his arm up and threw it with all his might. “Catch!”



“Ruff Ruff!” Otto leaped, chasing the bone as it sailed through the air...until it went flying over the fence.



He skidded to a stop. A familiar, fluffy white head popped up, balancing the bone between two perky ears.

“What do you think of my new bow?” Smidge batted her eyelashes.

“Looks delicious!” Otto smiled.
“Please toss it down.”



“Hmm, I’ll give it back after you help me fix my bike!”
Smidge snatched the bone from her head and pointed it at Otto. “You promised to help me.”

Otto huffed. “I was going to help with your bike, but you didn’t help me clean up the kitchen after you made cookies earlier this week. I had to do it all by myself!”

“I’ll help next time,” the kitten promised.
“My bike is *really* important.”



Dennis overheard. “When you promise to help a friend, you need to follow through,” he reminded them. “You don’t help just to get something in return.”

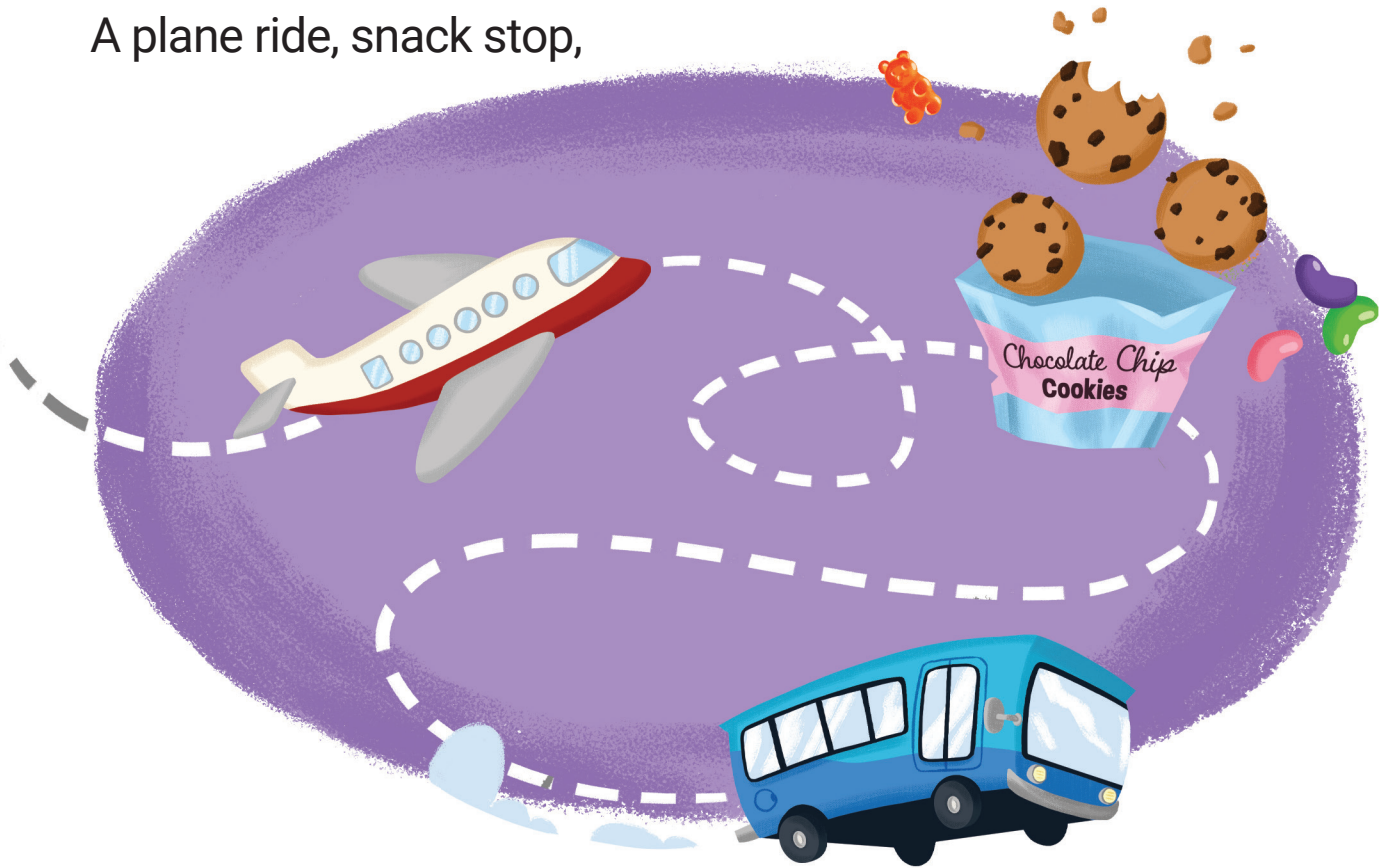
“But it’s not fair,” Otto protested.



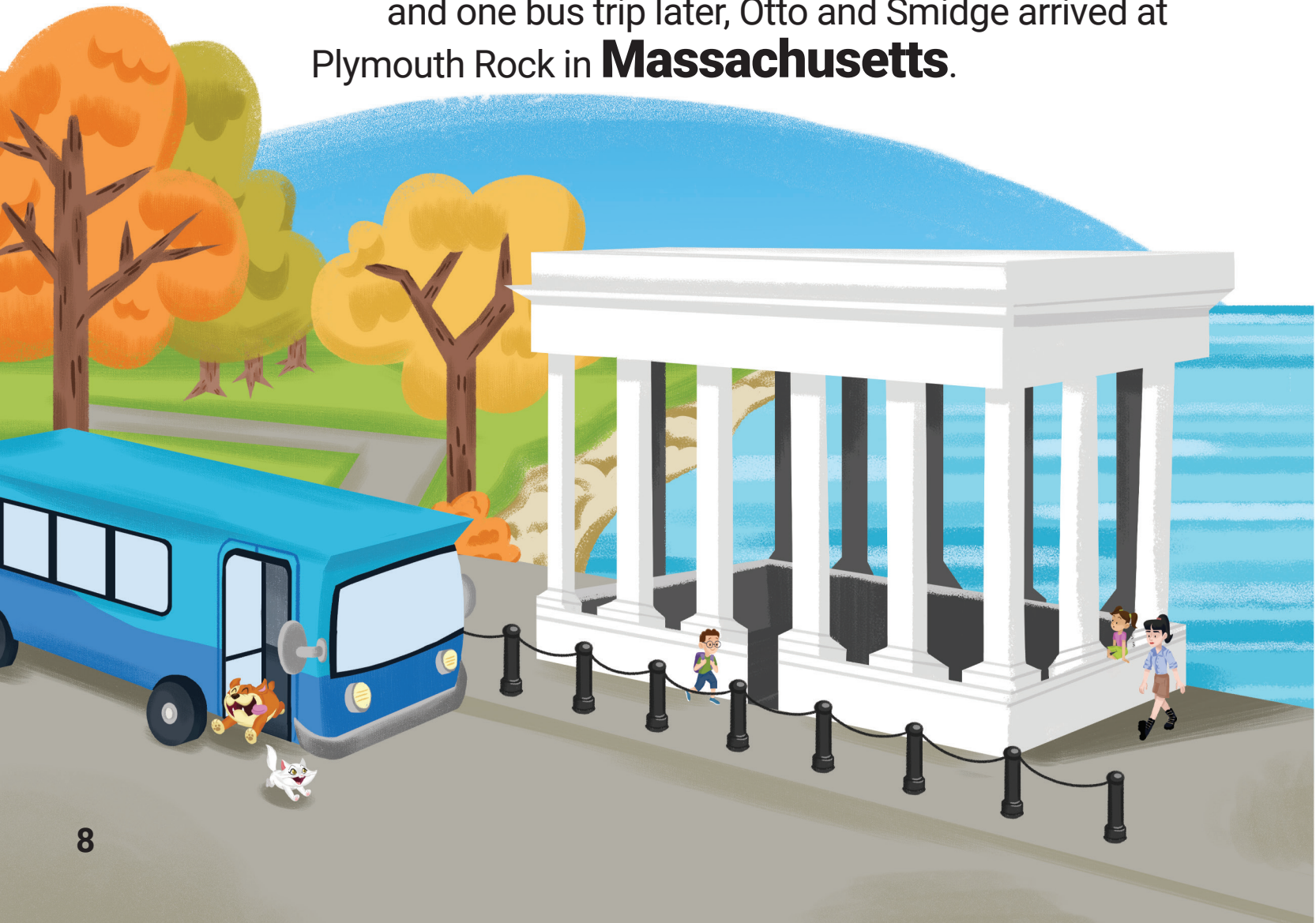
Dennis gave his pal a pat. “You know, when the **Pilgrims** first came to America, they had to work together with the **Native Americans**. It wasn’t easy, but they figured it out. You two should learn about them, and take a trip to where their friendship started—**Plymouth Rock!**”

Smidge grinned. “If there are snacks and souvenirs, I’m in!”

A plane ride, snack stop,



and one bus trip later, Otto and Smidge arrived at Plymouth Rock in **Massachusetts**.





The friends peered over the railing and looked down at the large rock in the landing below. Water from Plymouth Harbor lapped against the sand.

“That’s a big rock!” Otto exclaimed. “And something is written on it.”

“1620?” Smidge pointed.



“That must be the year the Pilgrims landed here.”

Otto climbed to the top of the railing to get a better view but wobbled as he struggled to balance.

“How do you do this, Smidge?”

The kitten leaped to Otto’s side and curtsied. “It’s an art, my friend.”

Otto’s paws suddenly slipped. “Help!”

Smidge reached quickly, but not fast enough. The trusty bulldog went **KERPLOP** into the sea below. Smidge giggled.

“It’s not funny.” Otto frowned.

“Help me up!”

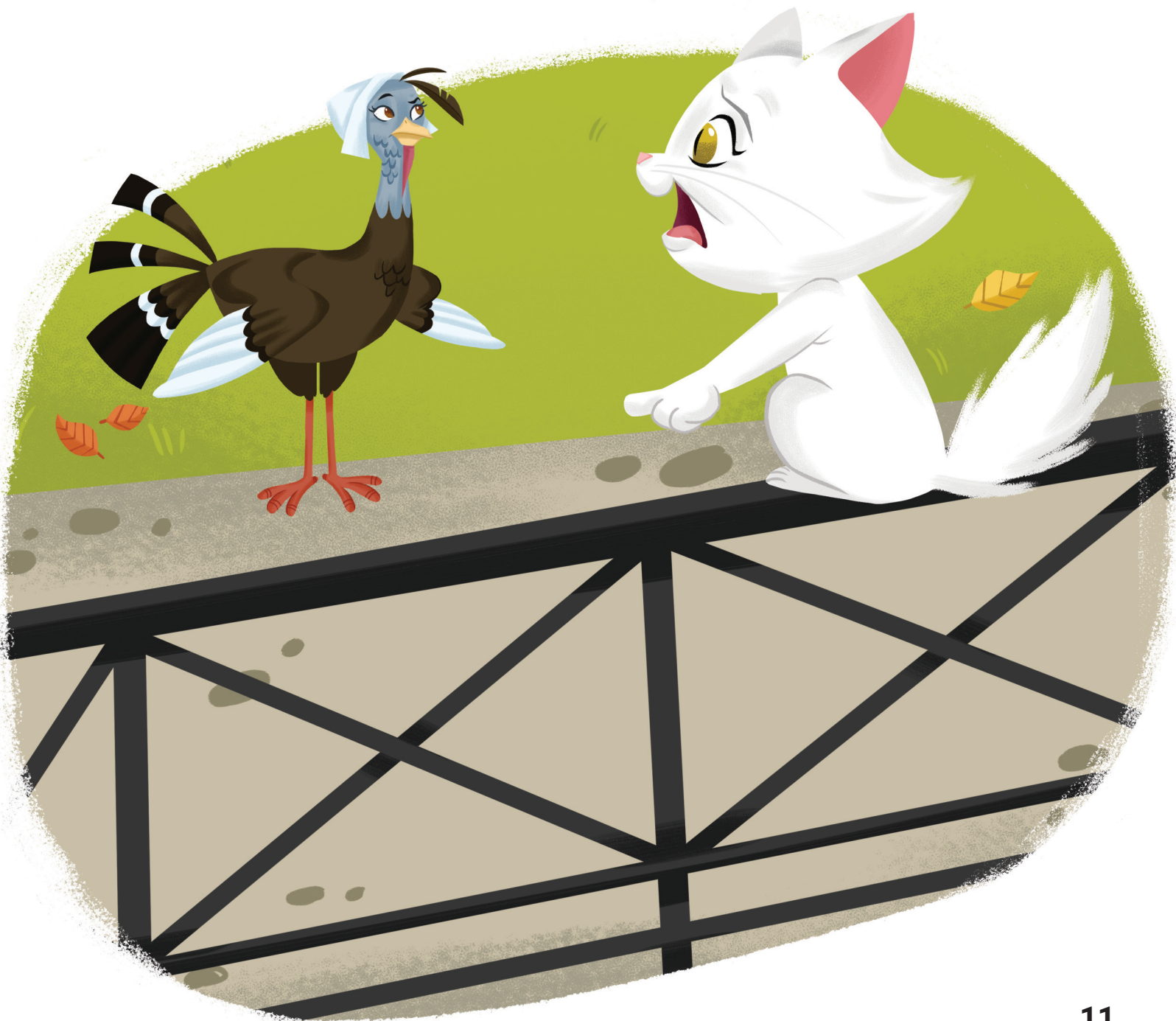


“Ok, swim over to the rocks,” Smidge instructed. She screamed for help as loud as she could.

Just before Smidge lost her voice entirely, a large turkey walked by and clucked, “Hey, what are you doing? What’s all the noise?”

“My friend fell in the water, and I need to get him out.” Smidge pointed down to Otto.

“Goodness gracious! We’d better get him out before he catches a cold.”



Smidge gratefully followed the turkey to the rocks. “It’s nice of you to help a stranger.”

“Always happy to assist someone in need,” the turkey replied. “By the way, I’m Miss May.”

“I’m Smidge, and my friend down there is Otto. Can you help me pull him out?”

Miss May stretched a feathered wing toward Otto. “Pleasure to meet you. Now, let me lift you out of there.”





As the perky turkey tugged on his paws, Otto's hind foot got stuck! The waves swelled. Smidge whimpered—she hated water—but jumped in and shimmied between the rocks to free her buddy.

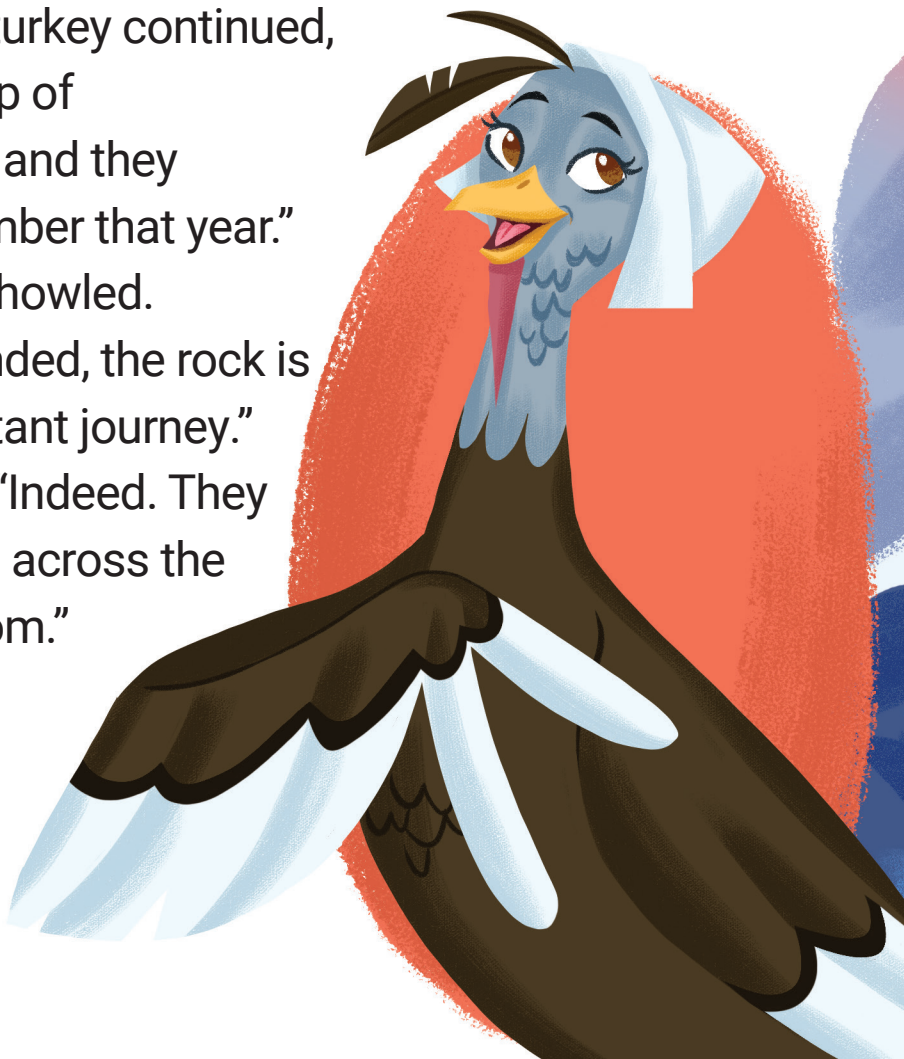
Otto shook himself dry. “Thank you, Miss May, and you too, Smidge. I should be more careful. This shore is rough! No wonder the Pilgrims marked their spot with a giant rock.”

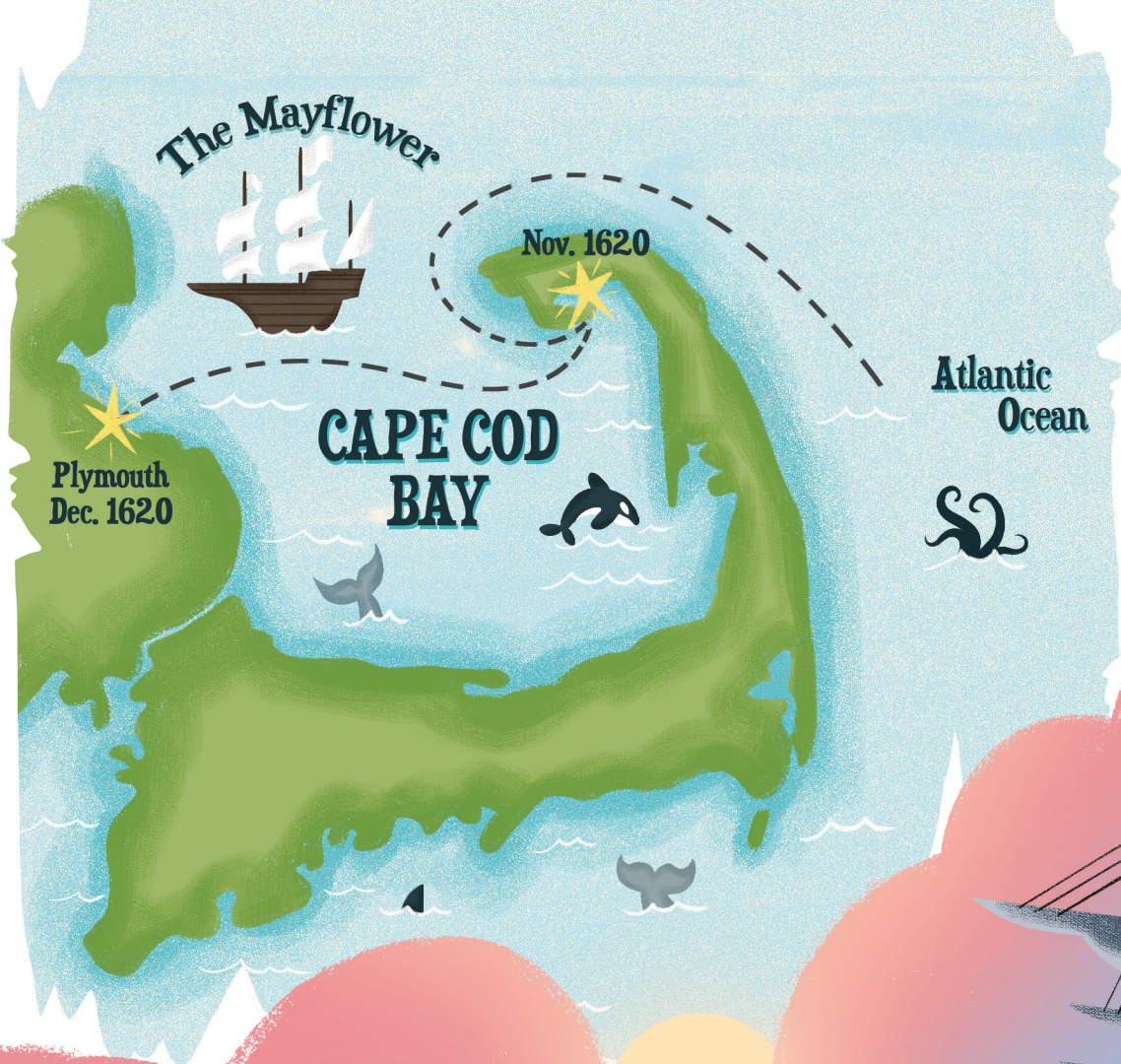


“Well,” Miss May offered, “it’s uncertain if Plymouth Rock was their actual landing site. There are many stories since the Pilgrims didn’t document it.” The turkey continued, “The Pilgrims first landed at the tip of **Cape Cod** in November 1620, and they landed here at Plymouth in December that year.”

“I love a good mystery,” Otto howled. “No matter where the Pilgrims landed, the rock is a great marker for such an important journey.”

Miss May’s feathers fluffed. “Indeed. They took a long, treacherous boat ride across the ocean to start a new life of freedom.”





“Can you imagine how excited they were when they saw this shore? You know, I am named May, after their magnificent ship—**the Mayflower**.”



“Plymouth Rock would make a great addition to my rock collection,” Smidge tapped her chin, thinking. “Miss May, may I take a souvenir with me?”

Smidge bounded back and hopped over the railing into the exhibit. She reached for the rock with her claws extended.

“Wait!” Miss May called. “Smidge, this is a special rock, and though you are not the first person to want a piece of it, we have to respect the exhibit. That way, this rock can be preserved for a long, long time.”

“Ok, I understand,” Smidge said, disappointed.

“But...” Miss May added, “you can find souvenir rocks in our museum!”

“Hear that, Smidge?” Otto encouraged. “I bet they’ll have snacks, too.”

Smidge perked up.



“You can also visit the replica village of **Plymouth Colony**,” Miss May said. “I have a friend who can show you around.”

“Great!” Otto barked. “Thanks for all your help, Miss May.”

“Of course. Anytime!” The turkey fluttered her wing in farewell.

Outside the gift shop, Otto lifted Smidge's backpack and groaned. "Smidge!! What's in here?"

"Rocks!" she declared. "And rock candy too!"

"Maybe we should have stopped here last," Otto sighed.



"Need some help?" A deep, bellowing voice offered. "I'm Wampanoag, but you can call me Wampo."

Surprised, Smidge and Otto stared up at a large wolf. "I'm Otto and this is Smidge," Otto greeted. "Are you here to show us the colony?"

"Yes, follow me," Wampo invited. "There's a lot of history here."



Otto and Smidge followed Wampo to a grassy area with old, wooden houses.



“This is what Plymouth Colony would have looked like,” Wampo explained. “The Pilgrims came here with little, so they learned to use resources around them to live. Their first winter here was hard, with unexpected illness and death, so they made friends with the Native Americans in the area—the **Wampanoag**. I’m proud to share a name with a great tribe of people. The Natives taught the Pilgrims how to survive, and the Pilgrims provided friendship and support in case of enemy threats.”



“It looks like they all needed each other.” Smidge noticed baskets and tools around the village.



“Exactly. They worked together and shared. You may know the famous celebration between these two groups of people.” Wampo smiled. He pointed to a large table set for a meal. **“Thanksgiving!”** Otto chimed in.





Wampo nodded.
“Correct. They gathered and feasted for three days to thank God for a successful harvest. Many years later, America’s leaders declared this event a national holiday.”

“We should have our own feast, right now!” Smidge grabbed her bag and unloaded her snacks onto the table.
“Wampo, please join us!”

“You’re very kind, but it’ll be dark soon. I need to head back home, and you two should do the same,” Wampo recommended.

“But there’s still so much left to see,” Smidge protested.
“We’ll stay a bit longer.”

“We’ll finish soon,” Otto agreed. “Thank you, Wampo.”

“Enjoy the rest of your time at Plymouth,” Wampo winked, waving goodbye.



Smidge and Otto wandered further into the village and discovered a beautiful trail. The sky glowed as the sun began to set.

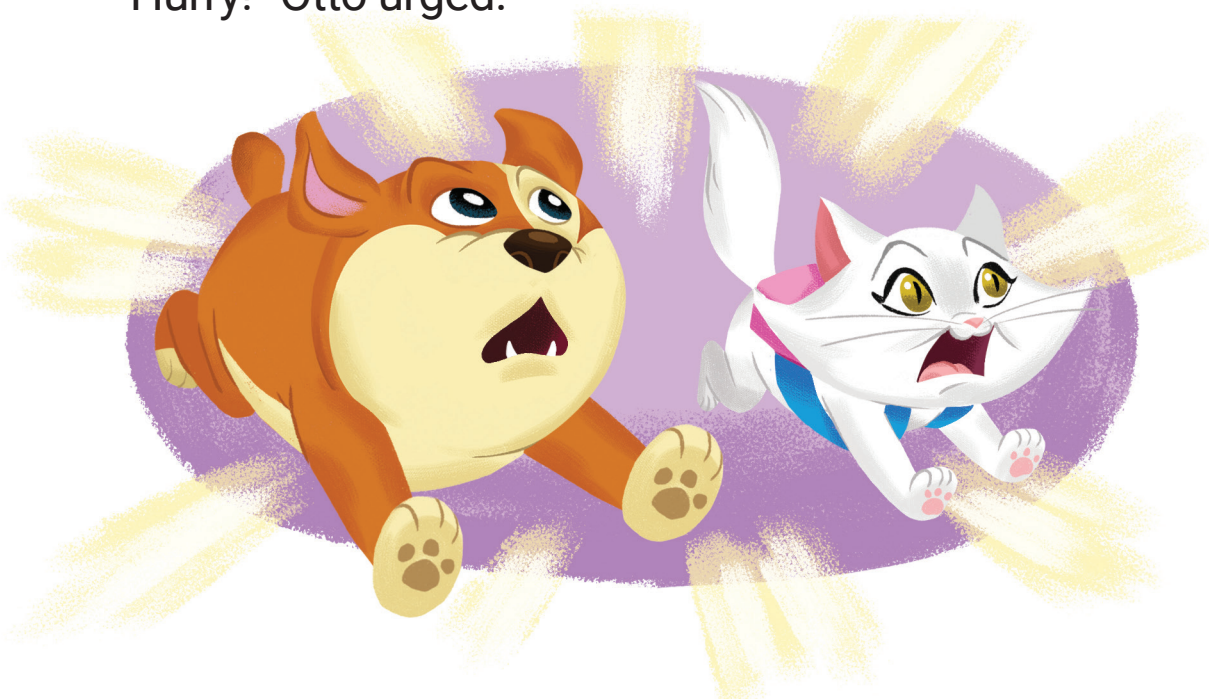


“Smidge,” Otto warned. “It might get dark soon...we should head back.”

“Time sure flies when you’re having fun!” the kitten agreed.

They started walking back but soon began running. The light was fading quickly.

“Hurry!” Otto urged.



Smidge picked up her pace, but then tripped over a branch! Her heavy backpack brought her **SMACK** down to the ground.



“Ouch! My leg!!” she wailed.

“Can you walk?” Otto tried to stay calm.

Smidge shook her head. It was nearly dark.



Otto looked around. There was no one in sight. He then remembered what his new friends told him that day about helping others.

“I’ve got you, Smidge.”
Otto lifted his tiny friend,
and her bag, onto his back.

Smidge clung to his neck.
“Thank you, Otto!”

“That’s what friends are for,”
the bulldog smiled.



By the time they made it back to the museum, it was completely dark.

Smidge winced in pain. "I won't be riding my bike anytime soon."

"Or playing catch," Otto added.

"What will we do?" Smidge wondered.

"I've got a few ideas," Otto reassured her. "But first, let's get back to Dennis."



Otto and Smidge returned home to Dennis reading in the backyard.

“Did you have a successful trip?” he asked.

“We did,” Otto replied. “Plymouth Colony is an amazing example of America’s values—bravery and hard work—and Smidge and I learned to help each other too. We need one another, just like the Pilgrims and Natives did.”



Smidge revealed her newfound treasures.

“We even brought you a souvenir!”

“Thanks!” Dennis’s eyes lit up.



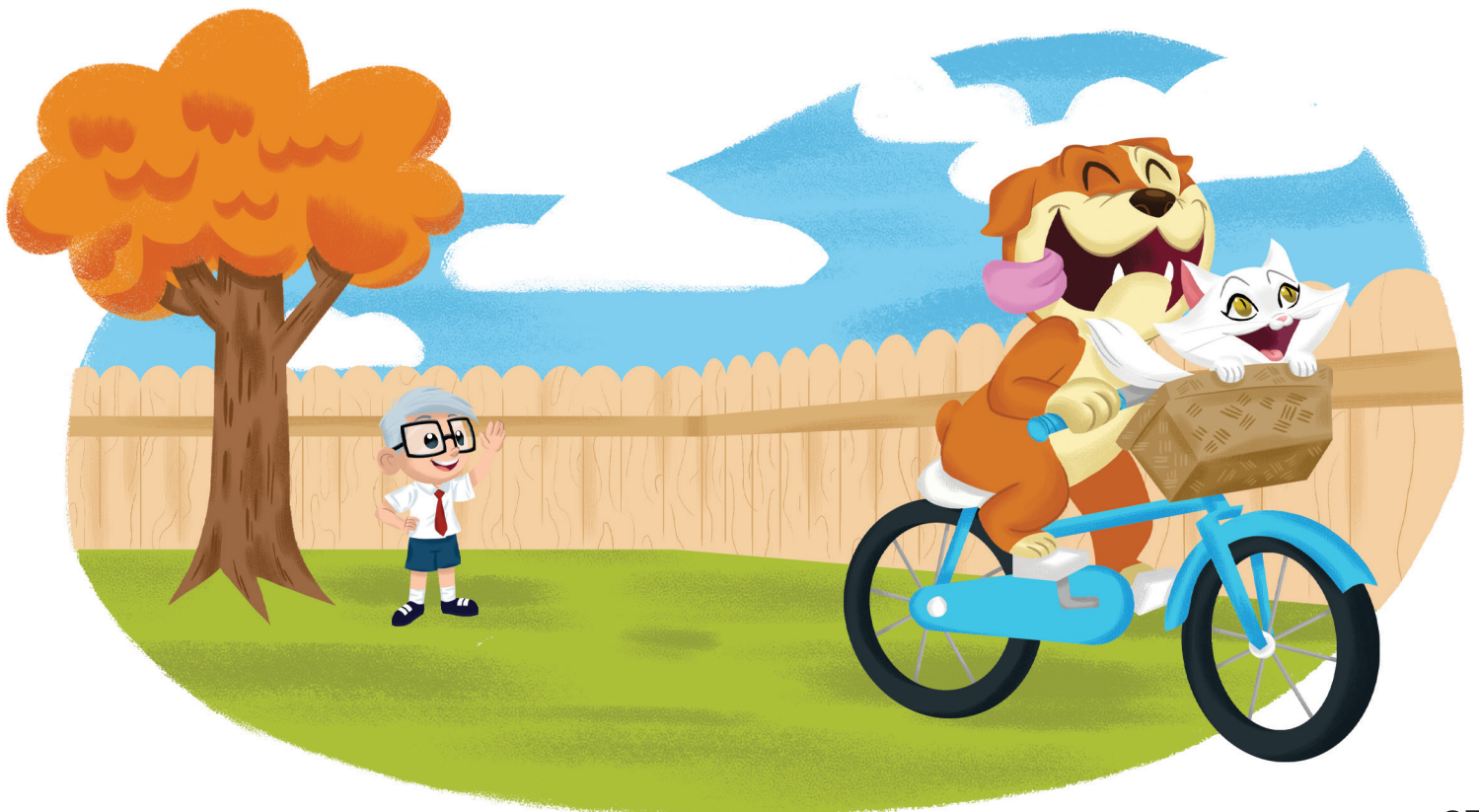
“Oh wait, those are my candy rocks.” Smidge quickly sorted her goods. “Here are the real rocks.”

“That was my favorite adventure yet,” Otto barked.

“You say that every time, Otto!”
Dennis laughed.

“**Ruff Ruff!**”

With the sunlight dimming, Otto fixed Smidge’s bike. He then scooped her into the basket and gave her a ride around the yard until Dennis called them in for dinner.





We Love Our History

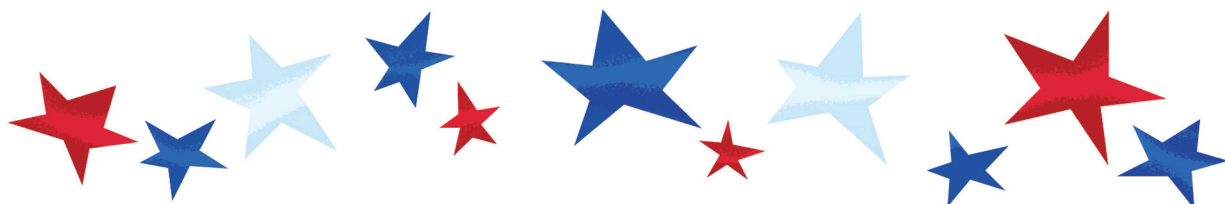
Pilgrims: A group of English Puritans who were persecuted in their own country. They traveled by boat to America on a ship called the *Mayflower* to find freedom. They created the first permanent European settlement in New England at Plymouth in 1620.

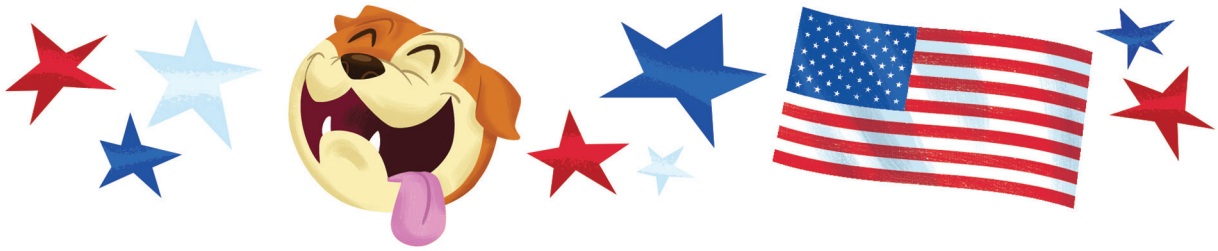
Native Americans: The first people to live in a land are called the indigenous people. The Native Americans, also known as American Indians, are the indigenous peoples of the North American continent, or what is today's United States, Mexico, and Canada.

Plymouth Rock: The traditional landing site of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims who founded Plymouth Colony in December 1620. The Pilgrims did not refer to Plymouth Rock in any of their writings; the first known written reference to the rock dates to 1715 when it was described in the town boundary records as "a great rock." The first documented claim that Plymouth Rock was the landing place of the Pilgrims was made by 94-year-old Thomas Faunce in 1741, 121 years after the Pilgrims arrived in Plymouth.

Massachusetts: A state in New England and one of the original 13 colonies. It is located on the Atlantic coast in the northeastern part of the United States.

Mayflower: The English ship that took the Pilgrims to America in 1620. After a grueling 10 weeks at sea, the *Mayflower*, with 102 passengers and a crew of about 30, reached America, dropping anchor near the tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, in November 1620.



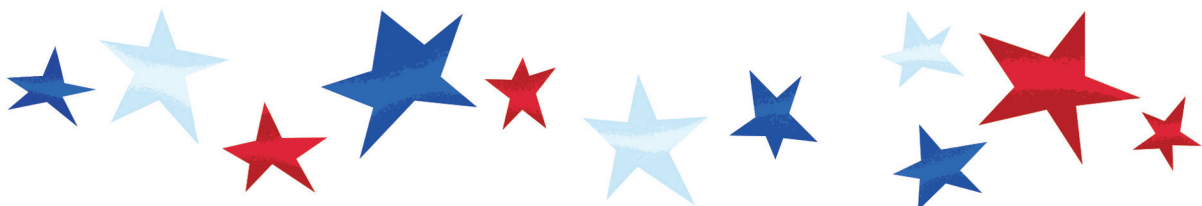


Cape Cod: A hook-shaped peninsula of the U.S. state of Massachusetts. It is a popular summertime destination, with quaint villages, seafood shacks, lighthouses, ponds, a bay, and ocean beaches.

Plymouth Colony: The first permanent settlement by Europeans in New England. *Mayflower* passengers settled here in the 17th century in what is now the state of Massachusetts.

Wampanoag: Wampanoag means “People of the First Light.” They were one of many indigenous Native American tribes. They occupied territory in present-day Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and they greeted the Pilgrims when they first arrived in 1620.

Thanksgiving: An annual national holiday in the United States marked by religious observances and a traditional meal, including turkey. The holiday was inspired by a harvest festival celebrated between the Pilgrims and Native Americans in 1621. It is held on the fourth Thursday in November.



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**See you in
our *next* adventure!**

- Dennis, Otto,
and Smidge

ABOUT

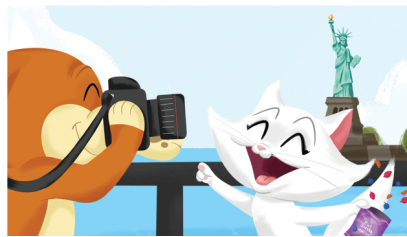
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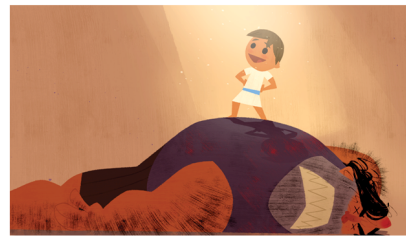
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