

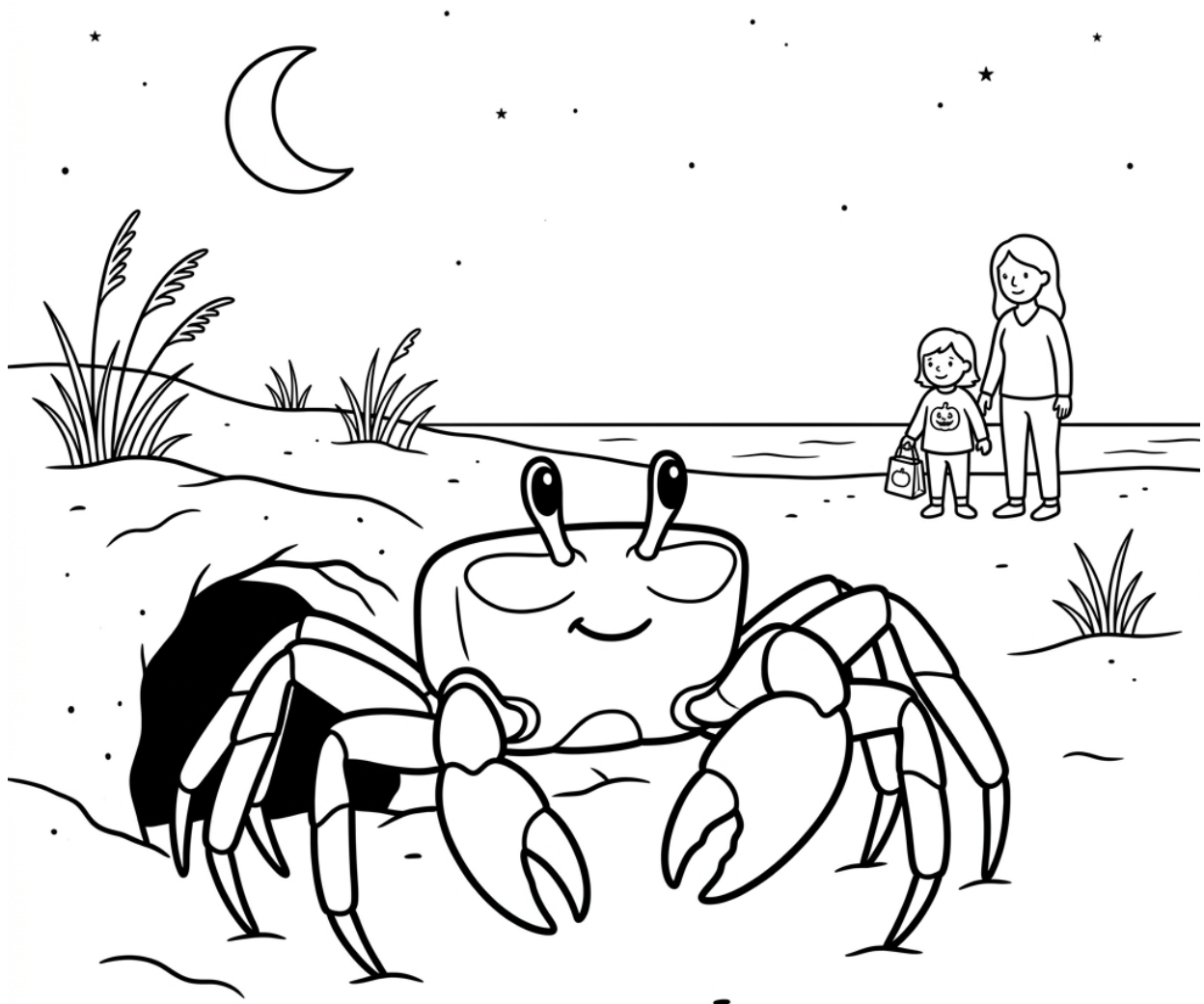
ONE STOP AMI

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Pip the Ghost Crab's Halloween

A gentle Anna Maria Island coloring story

Ages 4-9



This book belongs to: _____

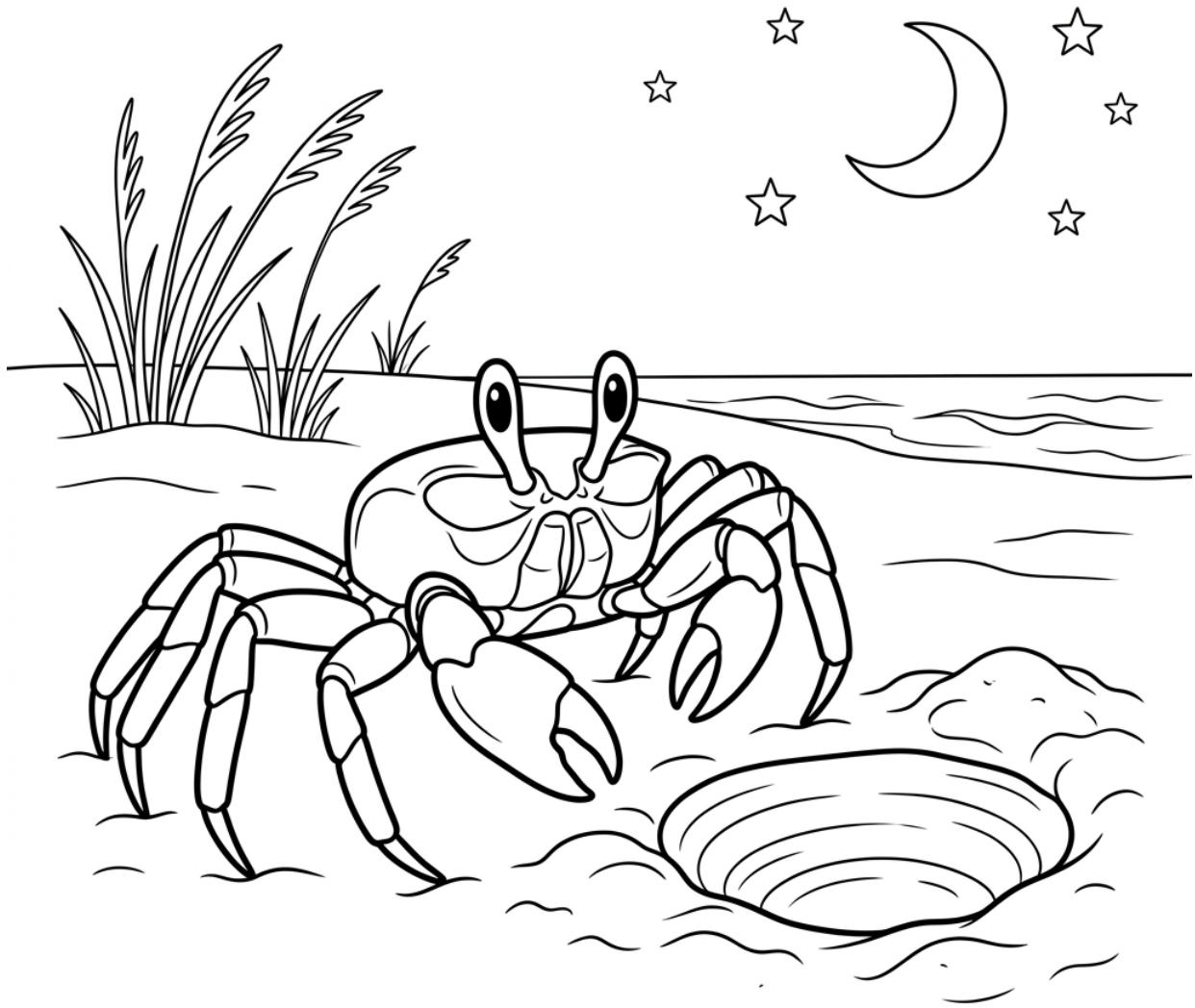
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A Halloween Rustle

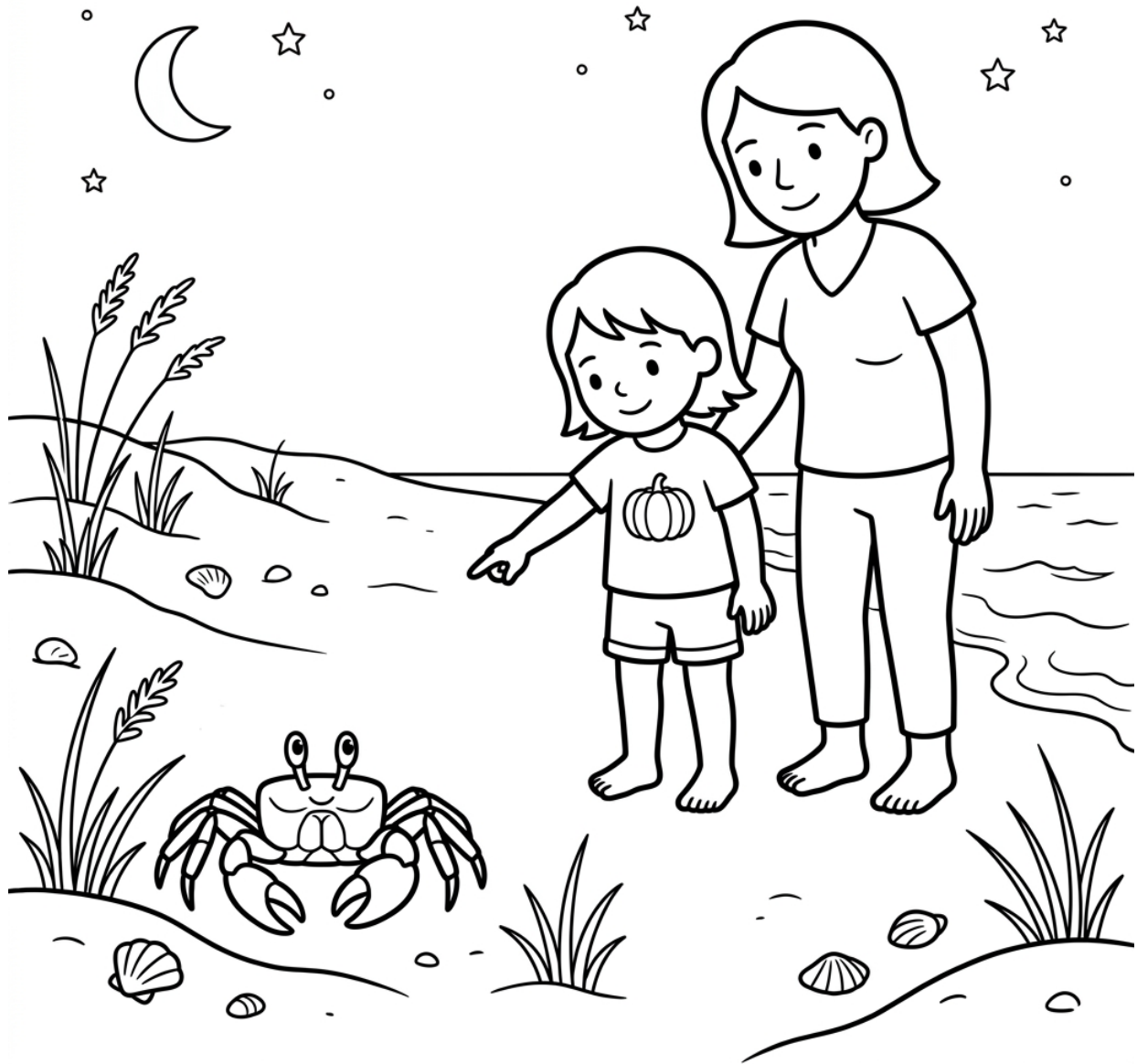
On Halloween evening, Maya and Mum paused on Anna Maria Island's beach. Maya's pumpkin shirt fluttered in the breeze. Rustle, rustle! Something pale slipped across the sand. "A tiny ghost?" whispered Maya. Two little eyes peeked above a sandy doorway.



BEACH LEARNING: Atlantic ghost crabs live on sandy beaches along Florida's Gulf coast, including Anna Maria Island. They are real animals, not ghosts.

Meet Pip

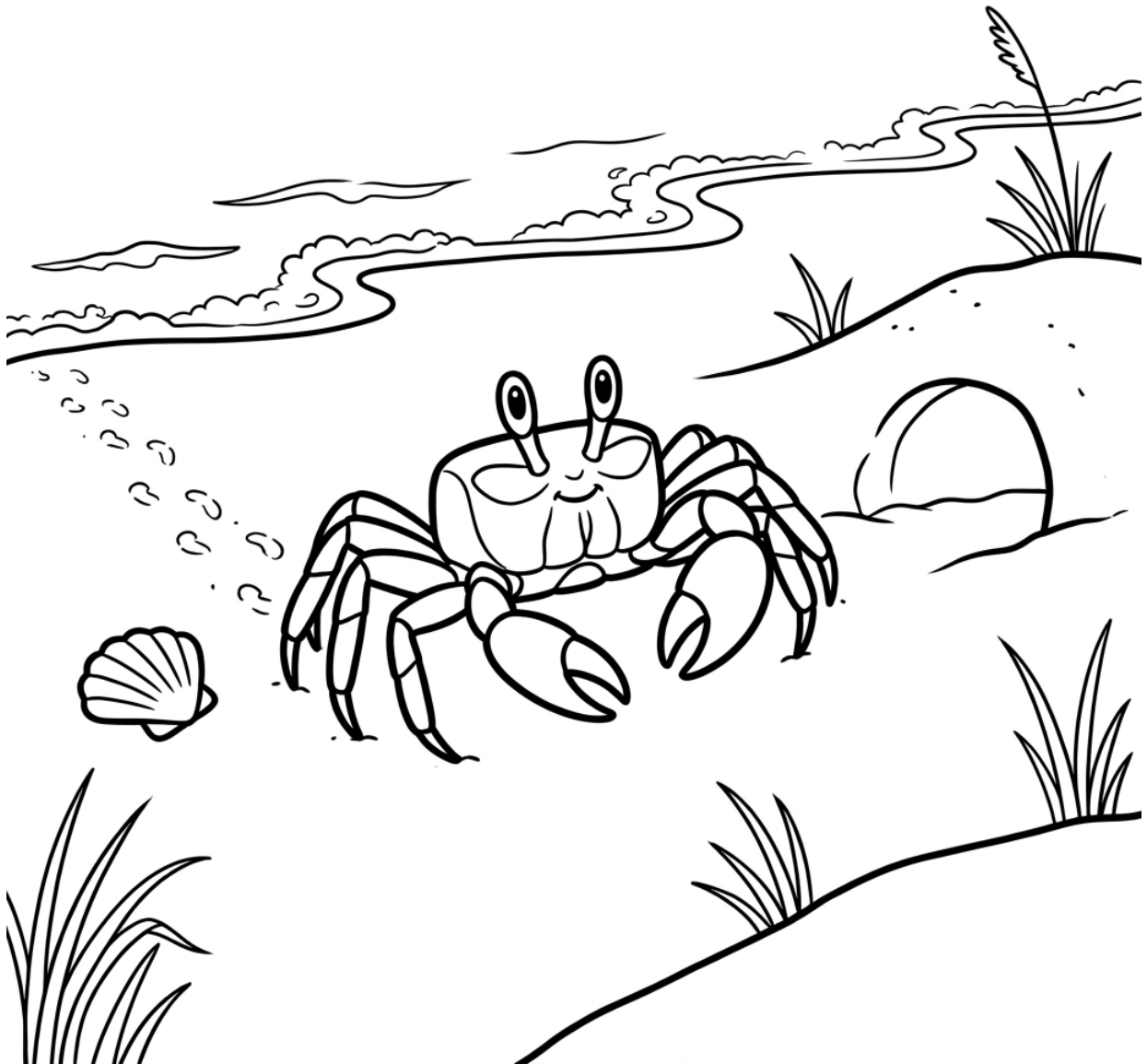
Mum smiled. "That is a ghost crab. Let's stay here and give it room." Maya called the little crab Pip in her imagination. Pip's pale shell blended with the sand. This Halloween mystery had claws, not a spooky sheet! Maya watched without moving closer.



BEACH LEARNING: A ghost crab's sandy coloring helps it blend into the beach. Its eyes sit on stalks, and one claw is usually larger than the other.

The Sideways Trail

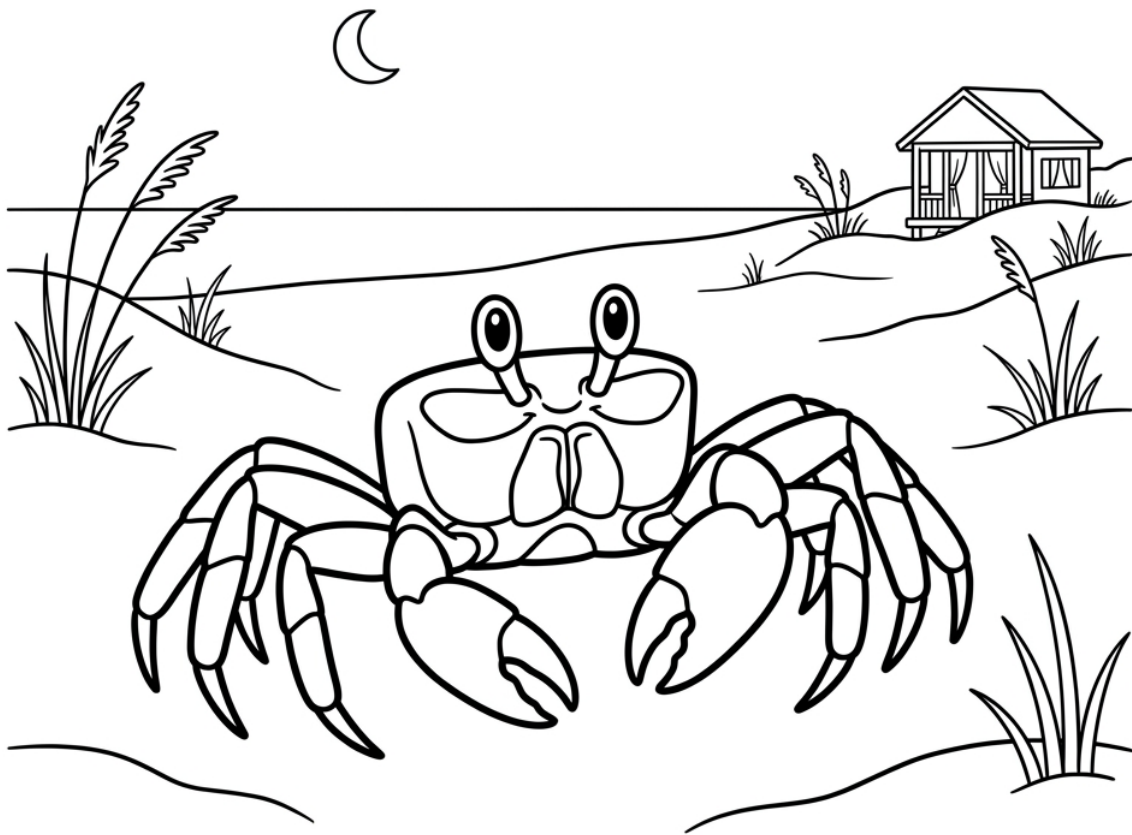
Pip darted sideways. Tiny marks dotted the sand like a secret trail. Then Pip stopped beside a round hole. Maya almost followed, but Mum shook her head gently. "That doorway is someone's home." They stayed back and let Pip choose where to go.



BEACH LEARNING: Ghost crabs dig burrows for shelter. Watch their tracks without chasing them, poking sticks into burrows, or blocking the openings.

A Beach for Moonlight

Behind them, a cottage's curtains were closed. No bright light spilled across the sand. "It's October 31," said Mum. "Tonight is the last official day of our sea turtle nesting season. We still keep the beach dark." Maya liked the quiet moonlit world. Pip did too—in Maya's story!



BEACH LEARNING: AMI's official sea turtle nesting season is May 1-October 31. Keep lights off the beach, close curtains, and never shine lights at wildlife. Nests remain protected after that date.

An Afternoon Promise

Maya remembered their afternoon on the beach. Before dusk, she and Mum had filled their own shallow play hole and flattened their sandcastle. They had left every crab burrow alone. "Our castle can become smooth sand again," Maya had said. "Pip's home should stay a home!"



BEACH LEARNING: Fill holes people dig and flatten sandcastles before leaving. These can obstruct wildlife. Do not fill animal burrows or disturb marked turtle nests.

No Tricks in the Sand

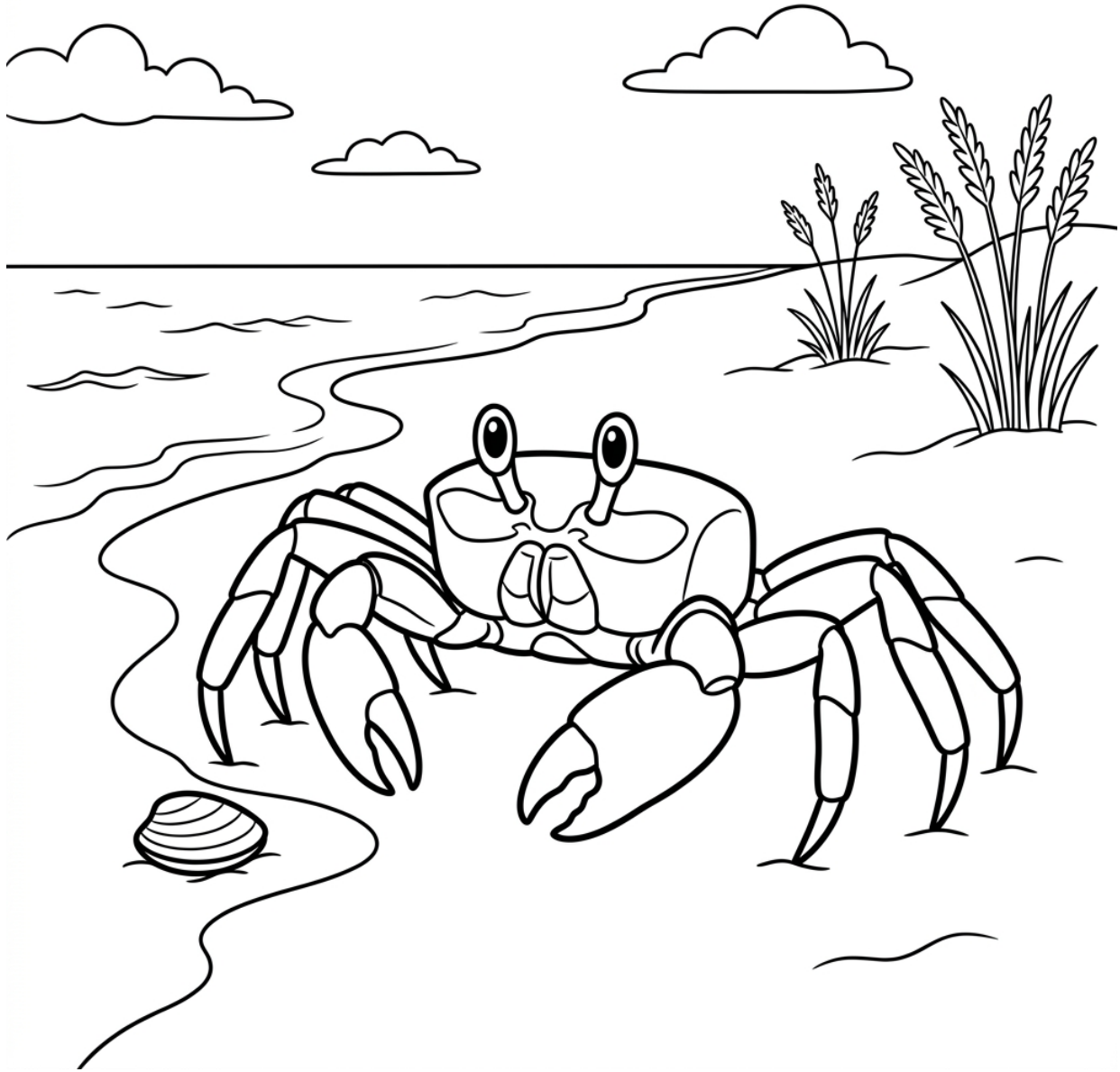
That afternoon, a candy wrapper had skittered beside their bag. Maya caught it before the wind did. Mum picked up a loose ribbon from Maya's costume. Into their bag went every wrapper and costume bit. "Halloween treats come home with us," Maya said. "Litter does not stay here!"



BEACH LEARNING: Take candy wrappers, ribbons, and all belongings home. Never leave food for wildlife. Ask an adult to handle sharp or unknown litter.

Pip's Wild Supper

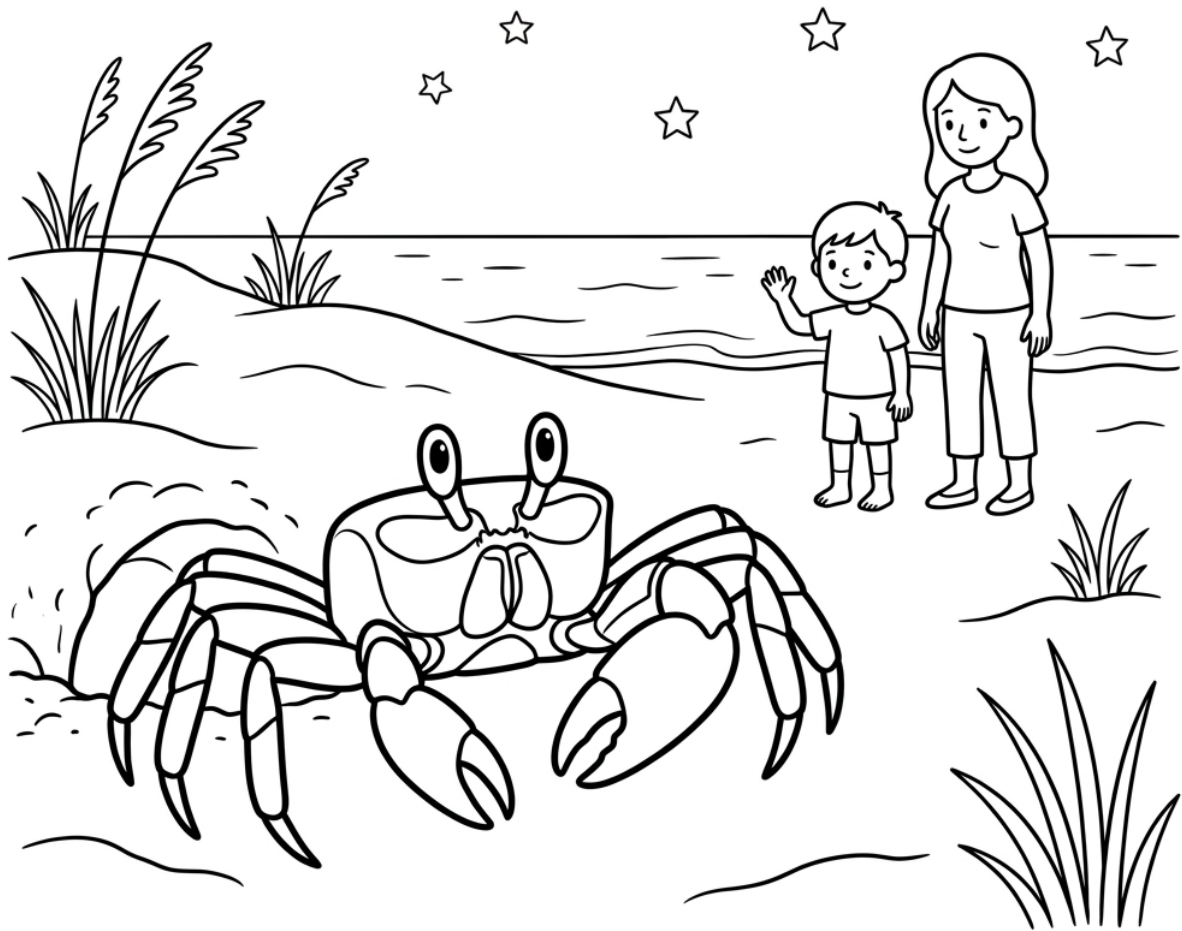
Now, in the evening quiet, Pip searched near a little clam shell. Maya held her candy bag closed. "Pip has a wild menu," Mum explained. "Our sweets are not on it." The breeze whispered across the shore. Maya's imaginary ghost was simply a crab looking for food.



BEACH LEARNING: Ghost crabs often search for food at night. They eat small beach animals, such as coquina clams and mole crabs, and scavenge animal remains.

The Best Halloween Treat

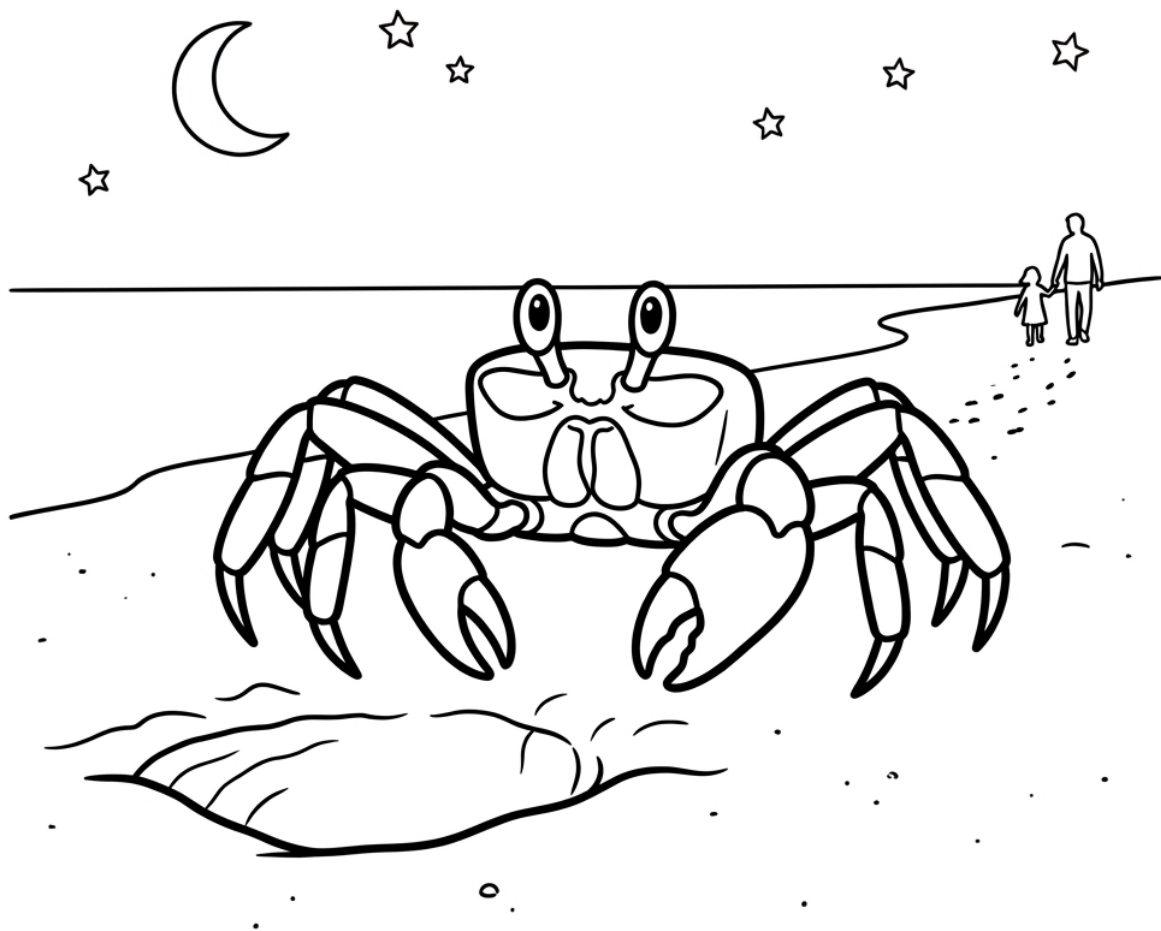
Pip paused, eyes raised. Maya kept her feet still and her hands to herself. No chase. No bucket. No close-up flash. "My Halloween treat for you is space," she whispered. Mum nodded. They could enjoy a wild animal without touching it or taking it home.



BEACH LEARNING: Observe wildlife quietly from a distance. Do not touch, feed, chase, or capture ghost crabs. Stay with an adult and keep off the dunes.

A Gentle Goodnight

Pip slipped into the sandy doorway. Mystery solved! Maya and Mum headed home with their bags and their happy Halloween memory. Behind them, the beach was dark, clean, and clear. "Goodnight, little ghost," Maya whispered. Pip was not a pet or a monster—just a wild neighbor with a home.



BEACH LEARNING: Protect beach wildlife all year. Keep the beach dark, carry out litter, and give animals space. Pip and Maya are fictional; the animal facts are real.

Pip's Real Ghost Crab Facts

Read together. Color a circle for each fact you learn.

- ☐ The Atlantic ghost crab's scientific name is *Ocypode quadrata*.
- ☐ Its pale, sandy color helps it blend into the beach.
- ☐ Its eyes sit on stalks above a roughly square shell.
- ☐ One front claw is usually larger than the other.
- ☐ Ghost crabs dig burrows that shelter them from weather and predators.
- ☐ They often come out at night to search for food.
- ☐ Their food includes small beach animals and animal remains—not candy.
- ☐ Their tracks and burrow openings are clues that they live nearby.

A real beach food web: ghost crabs are both hunters and scavengers. They can also eat turtle eggs or hatchlings. Do not interfere—protect habitat and let wildlife stay wild.

Pip's name and the story are invented. These facts describe real wildlife.

Maya's Halloween Beach Promise

☐ **KEEP IT DARK**

Keep lights off the sand and close beach-facing curtains. Never shine a flashlight or camera flash at an animal.

☐ **LEAVE IT SMOOTH**

Before dusk, fill your own play holes and flatten sandcastles. Leave crab burrows, dunes, and turtle nests alone.

☐ **PACK IT ALL OUT**

Take every candy wrapper, ribbon, costume bit, and beach item home. Do not feed wildlife.

☐ **GIVE WILDLIFE SPACE**

Watch quietly with an adult. Do not touch, chase, catch, or block an animal's path.

For grown-ups: facts and conservation guidance

National Park Service: Ghost Crab, Gulf Islands National Seashore

nps.gov/guis/learn/nature/ghostcrab.htm

National Park Service: Ghost Crab, Padre Island National Seashore

nps.gov/pais/learn/nature/ghost_crab.htm

Mote Marine Laboratory: sea turtle nesting and beach-light guidance

mote.org • Official local season: May 1–October 31

One Stop AMI is independent of these organizations.

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Pip's Halloween Quiz

Circle one answer. A grown-up can read with you.

1. What is Pip?

A real ghost / An Atlantic ghost crab

2. When do ghost crabs often search for food?

At night / Only at lunchtime

3. Which hole should Maya fill?

Her own play hole / Pip's burrow

4. Where do candy wrappers belong?

Under the sand / In a bag to take home

5. How should we watch a wild crab?

Quietly from a distance / By chasing it

6. When does AMI's official turtle nesting season end?

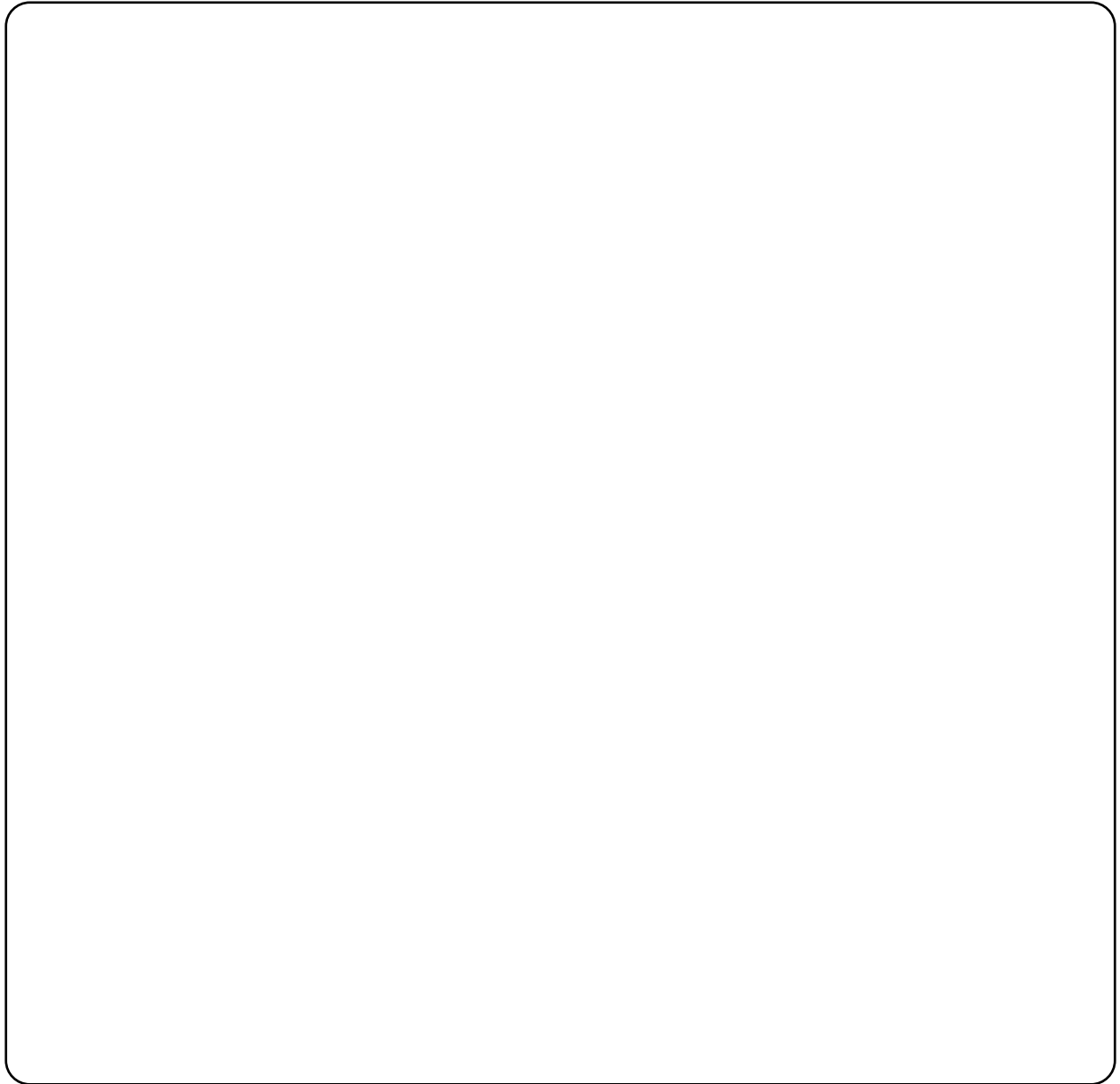
October 31 / October 1

Talk together: Why should we leave a crab's burrow alone, even when we are filling our own play holes?

Answers are on your certificate page.

Draw Pip's Safe Halloween Beach

Draw a moon, a crab beside its burrow, and a clean sandy shore.



Keep people far from Pip. No lights shining on the beach!

Tell your story:

Pip's Beach Friend Certificate

This certificate belongs to

Write your name above

**I will keep the beach dark, clean, and clear.
I will leave animal homes alone.
I will watch wildlife without touching or chasing it.**

A kind Halloween is a wild neighbor's treat!

Date: _____ Grown-up: _____

Quiz answers

1. Atlantic ghost crab
2. At night
3. Her own play hole
4. In a bag to take home
5. Quietly from a distance
6. October 31

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Ask a grown-up before visiting a website.