

The Lobster's Lost Glasses



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Down where the water turned soft and blue, a lobster named Lionel lived in a cozy cave under the reef. He had a deep brick-red shell, long curved antennae, and a smart little blue bow tie. Every morning he read one page of his favorite book about ships. But this morning, Lionel patted the rock beside his bed and frowned. Where were his round reading glasses?



Lionel squinted with his big amber eyes. Without his glasses, the whole ocean looked blurry and wobbly. He felt along the cold rock, under his seaweed blanket, and inside his favorite cup. No glasses. "Oh dear," he muttered, tapping one large claw. "I am quite sure I put them somewhere." He straightened his blue bow tie and decided to start looking.



Lionel stepped out of his cave and peered left and right. The coral looked like fuzzy pink clouds. The kelp looked like wavy green ribbons. He could not see a single pair of round wire-rimmed glasses anywhere. "I will search the whole reef," he announced to nobody at all. So off he went, clicking his claws and swishing his fan-shaped tail.



First Lionel checked the sandy patch where he liked to nap. He wiggled his claws through the grains, but only shells and pebbles tickled him back. Next he looked around the tall kelp forest, where fish darted between the leaves like silver arrows. His long antennae swept the water, but there was no sign of his glasses. "Hmm," he said. "This may take a while."



Lionel visited the old coral arch where the water sparkled. He peeked under every ledge and behind every rock. A school of tiny silver fish giggled and zoomed away. "Have you seen my glasses?" Lionel asked. But the fish only blew little bubbles and flicked their tails. Lionel sighed a big bubbly sigh. His round glasses were still missing, and his eyes were getting tired.



He swam to the wide open sand, where the light came down in wiggly stripes. He looked near the waving sea grass. He looked beside a sleepy starfish. He looked around a pile of smooth stones. Nothing. "I am sure they were right here," Lionel said, scratching his head with one claw. But the sea kept its secret, and the glasses stayed hidden.



Lionel grew quieter and a little worried. His big claws drooped, and his antennae curled. "I cannot read my book," he said sadly. "I cannot even see my own bow tie." He sat on a flat rock and stared into the blurry blue. Searching alone was hard work, and he was not finding anything at all.



Just then, a calm voice drifted over the reef. It was Sheldon, the old sea turtle, gliding slowly with a gentle smile. His mossy shell looked like a little green garden. "You look troubled, friend," said Sheldon, adjusting the small spectacles that hung on a cord around his neck. "What are you hunting for in such a hurry?" Lionel explained about his lost glasses.



Sheldon nodded slowly. "A wise searcher does not swim alone," he said. "Ask your friends to help. Many eyes see more than two." Lionel felt a little shy. He was proud and liked doing things himself. But he was also tired of squinting. "All right," he said. "I will ask for help." Sheldon smiled and promised to take a slow look around the reef too.



So Lionel swam to the busy part of the reef, where everyone was out and about. He told the fish, the crabs, and the little sea snails about his lost round glasses. Everyone promised to keep their eyes open. Lionel felt lighter already. "Asking was not so hard," he thought. Then a tiny voice piped up from below. "I can help too!"



It was Pip, a little shrimp the size of a thumb. Pip wore a tiny green seaweed cap and had bright, curious bead eyes. "I am small," said Pip, "but I can look in small places." Lionel smiled at the cheerful little friend. "Thank you," he said. "I could use a small helper." Together they searched along the reef, with Pip zipping quick as a wink.



Pip darted into cracks and crannies where big claws could never fit. Then Pip spotted an old, empty seashell resting in the sand. It was curled and quiet and dusty. "Wait," said Pip, peeking inside. "What is this shiny thing?" Lionel leaned closer, squinting hard. "Is it... could it be..." Pip wiggled out, holding something round and wire-rimmed. "I found them!"



Lionel carefully took his glasses and put them on his nose. The whole ocean jumped into focus! The coral was pink again, the kelp was green, and Sheldon's mossy shell was as lovely as ever. "I can see!" Lionel cheered. "Thank you, Pip! You found them in that old seashell!" Pip twirled happily, and the little green seaweed cap bounced on top of its head.



All the friends gathered around to celebrate. Sheldon chuckled warmly. "You see?" he said. "Asking for help was not silly. It was wise." Lionel nodded, and his amber eyes were bright behind his round glasses. "I searched and searched alone," he said. "But the moment I asked, everything changed." He gave Pip a friendly little bow, and his blue bow tie bobbed.



That evening, Lionel sat in his cozy cave and read his book about ships. His glasses sat neatly on his nose. Pip came to visit, curled up on a soft sponge, and listened to the story. "You know," said Lionel, "I thought asking for help meant I could not do things. But it only made things better." Pip nodded and smiled a tiny shrimp smile.



So whenever Lionel could not find something, he remembered that old seashell and his clever little friend. He learned that nobody sees everything alone, and that asking for help is smart and kind. The reef glowed softly, the fish drifted home, and the lobster and the shrimp said good night. And Lionel's round glasses stayed safely on his nose. All the way until morning.