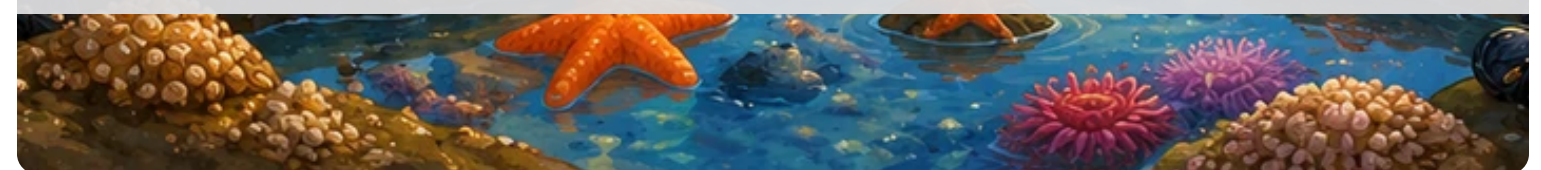




# Toby and the Giant Space Magnet

Lauren Hindle





Toby loves visiting his favorite sunny Australian beach with his bright red bucket and little fishing rod. He loves the salty breeze and the squishy sand between his toes. Every time he visits, the beach looks a little bit different.



Sometimes the ocean water reaches all the way up to the soft, dry sand near the dunes. Toby's dad explains that this big, deep water is called high tide. At high tide, they can cast their fishing lines straight into the rolling blue waves.



But on other days, the water retreats far away, leaving behind a massive playground of wet mud and reef. This is called low tide, and it makes the ocean look like it is hiding. Toby frowns and wonders where all the ocean water goes.



Dad points up at the daytime sky to show Toby a pale, round shape floating above the clouds. It is the Moon! Dad tells Toby a secret that the Moon is actually the boss of the ocean.



The Moon acts just like a giant, invisible space magnet hovering over the Earth. Even though it is super far away, it has a special power called gravity that pulls the water towards it. The ocean loves the Moon so much that it tries to reach up and give it a hug.



When the Moon is pulling the water right over Toby's beach, the ocean piles up nice and deep. That is what creates the splashy high tide! It is the perfect time for Toby to safely splash in the shallows and look out for swimming fish.



But the Earth is always spinning around like a slow, sleepy spinning top. As Toby's beach turns away from the Moon's magnetic pull, the ocean water gently slides back out into the sea. This turning is what slowly drains the water away to create low tide.



Low tide is Toby's absolute favorite time for exploring the rocky shore. With the deep water gone, secret little rock pools are left behind. Toby uses his bucket to carefully look at tiny green crabs, striped sea snails, and colorful shells.



Toby finally understands how the amazing beach works! When the giant space magnet pulls the water in, he grabs his fishing rod to catch the hungry fish swimming near the shore. When the water goes out, he gets his bucket ready for rock pool adventures.



That night, Toby stands on his tiptoes and looks out his bedroom window at the glowing night sky. He waves happily at the bright, round Moon shining over the dark ocean. He whispers a little thank you to the sky for making the wonderful tides every single day.