

When young Jesse poses a deep question, it results in a beach combing adventure neither he nor his grandfather will ever forget.

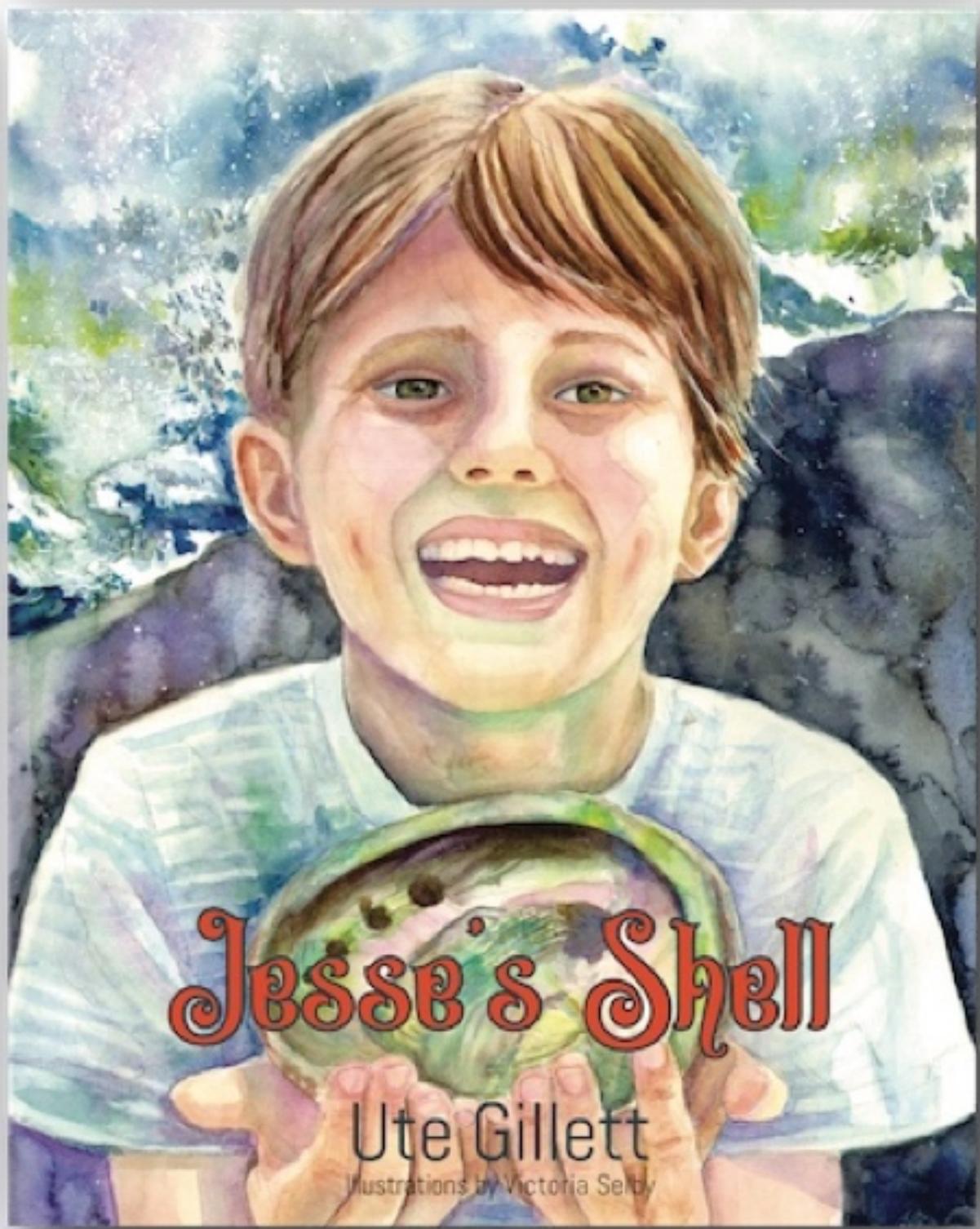
Jesse's Shell

by Ute Gillett
Illustrations by Victoria Selby

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Jessie's Shell

Ute Gillett

Illustrations by Victoria Selby

Jesse's Shell

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The gravel growled as the tires came to a halt. When the radio announcer had finished his sentence, Grandpa turned off the car.

“Why do some people not believe in global warming?” I asked.

Grandpa took a deep breath but remained silent. He looked out on the choppy ocean to our right and the billowing blue-grey clouds above it.

Then he turned to me.



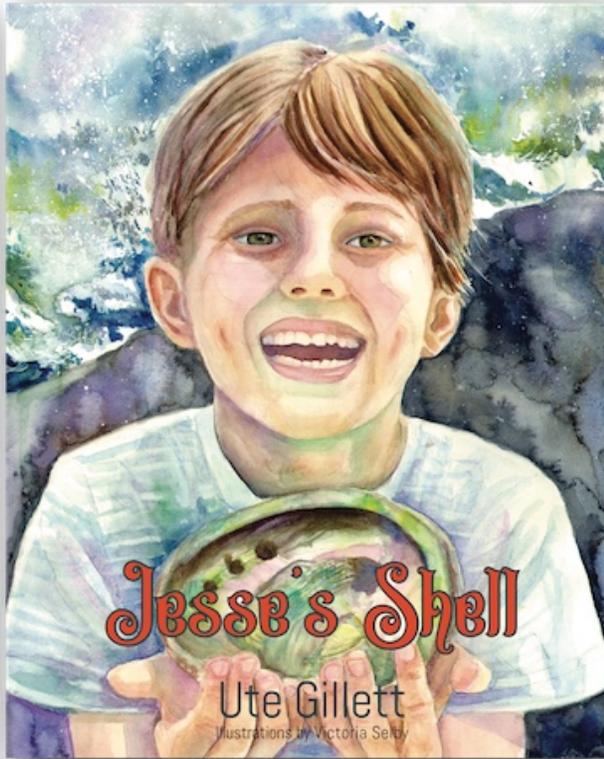
"Maybe, Jesse, some people just don't want to admit that there is significant warming of our earth's climate. Sometimes, telling the truth can make you feel unsettled. Maybe it's a little like the time you admitted to me that you really did not do your chores. Just admitting it didn't fix anything; it didn't get those chores done, right? The truth still left the problem to be fixed. I think that's part of the reason why sometimes people don't want to hear the truth."

"But that's bad! I mean the part about not wanting to hear the truth and kind of lying and leaving the problem still there."

"Yes, and it makes people ugly on the inside," Grandpa said matter-of-factly. Then a smile stole into his eyes and he pointed toward the rocky part of the beach. "Look, I think the tide is low enough to go south today."

I was on winter break and my parents had flown me all the way to California, so I could spend it with Grandpa while Mom and Dad were both working. My parents thought the trip out to California would, "do me good." They were right, of course. Being by the ocean was always a special treat for me. Being with my grandpa compared best with a big and heavy down comforter: warm and soft and strong, all at the same time.





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