



Hey there, I'm Dan.

I'm a pretty friendly kind of person – one of the team, really. I enjoy riding my skateboard, reading and I especially love swimming at the beach.

*Dan's
Tsunami
Story*

“Come on, Stan!” shouted Dan, as he wheeled his bike out of the gate. “Let’s head down to the beach for a swim.”

“Cool!” answered Stan, jumping up into the basket hanging on Dan’s handlebars.

When they reached the beach, they found it crowded with happy people lazing and playing on the sand and splashing about in the water.

“Race you in!” shouted Dan, peeling off his shirt and rushing towards the sea.

Stan leapt about happily beside him. They dashed into the water, and were soon jumping and splashing each other.

“I’ve never seen the sea as still as this. It’s like a millpond,” said Stan, shaking the water off his back in a spray of silvery droplets.

“You’re right. The waves aren’t trying to knock me over as normal, even though I’m in up to my stomach,” replied Dan.

“The sea isn’t up to your stomach,” Stan pointed out. “Look, it’s only reaching up to your knees.”

“That’s funny, it was up to my stomach a moment ago,” said Dan in a puzzled tone. “And look, the water’s going all weird.”



Sure enough, the sea was beginning to bubble like the froth on a can of fizzy drink.

Suddenly Dan gave out a yell, "Hey, we've got to get off this beach right now! I think there's going to be tsunami!"

"What?" cried Stan, looking round. "I can't see any big waves."

"No, we learned at school that before a tsunami hits, the sea often draws right back! I know there's going to be a tsunami, and we haven't got much time!"

"You're right," said Stan, "we've got to warn all these people."

Dan and Stan hurried out of the sea as fast as they could and ran up to the surf life-saver.

"There's going to be a tsunami. You've got to get everyone off the beach," pleaded Dan.

"How do you know?" asked the life-saver, standing up and looking out to sea.

"The water is falling back quickly and it's beginning to bubble and foam," explained Dan.

"Those are the classic signs of a tsunami, sure enough," responded the life-saver, looking over at where the sea-bottom was now coming into view.



He blew his whistle and began to run along the beach, shouting, "Everyone up onto that high hill over there! There's a tsunami coming!"



People turned around amazed, and then one by one, realising what the life-saver was saying, they began to call their children out of the water and run towards the nearby hill. Within a few moments, the beach was totally empty, and looking wider than ever as the sea drew further back.

Dan and Stan joined the people climbing the hill.

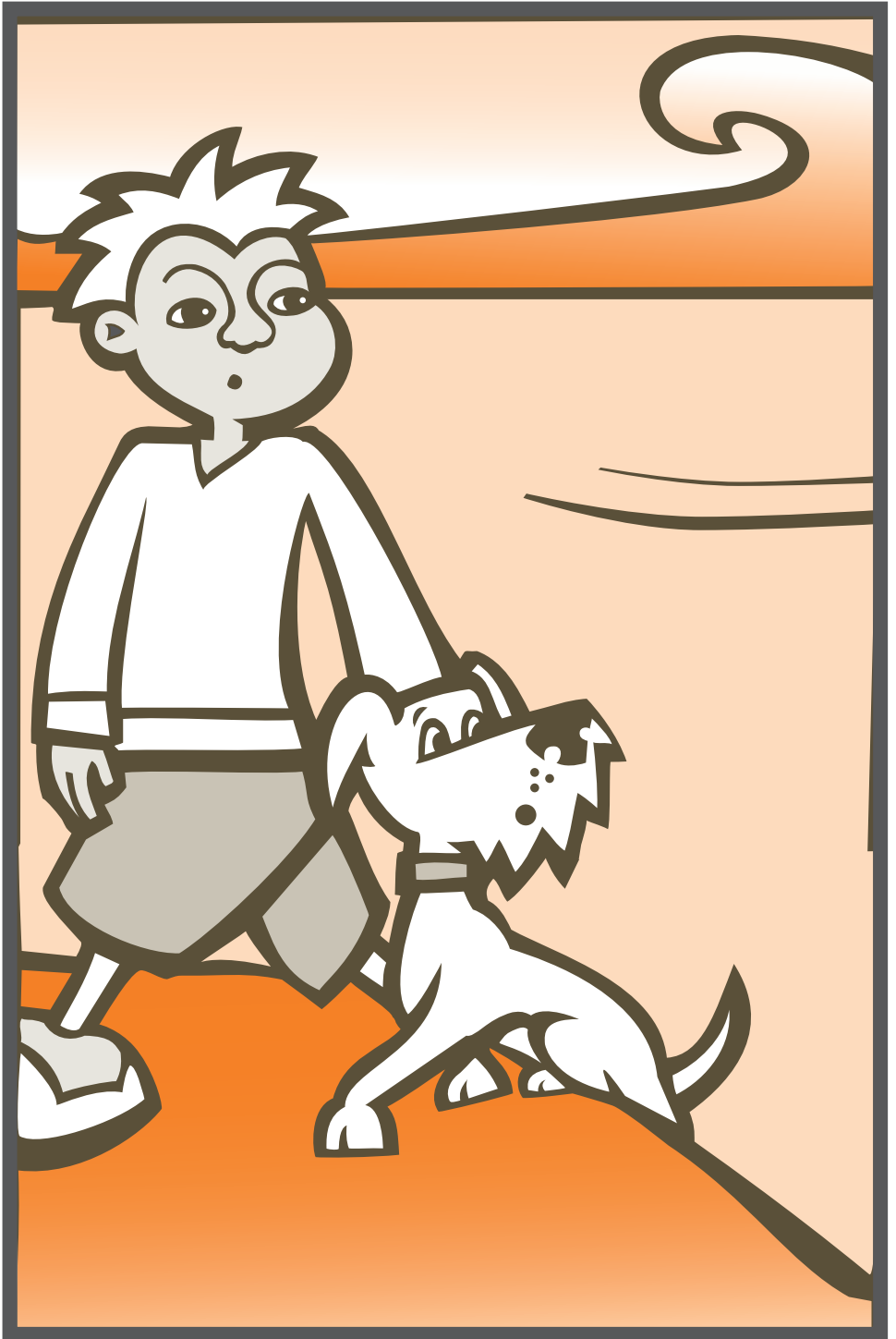
"We've got to go as far inland and as high up as we can," Dan panted.

At the top of the hill, everyone turned and watched the sea uneasily. For a moment Dan worried if he had been mistaken and had caused everyone to panic needlessly.

"There it is!" gasped one of the crowd.

The water was beginning to rise as the tsunami hit the shallower water. It soon turned into a high, fast-moving hump that swelled ashore with surprising force, picking up and twirling the abandoned deckchairs and picnic baskets. The raging water surged up over the beach, and on into the parking lot, swirling around the cars. On it swept, across the road, and only slowed when it had travelled quite a way inland.

People stared at each other in horror, not believing what they had just seen.



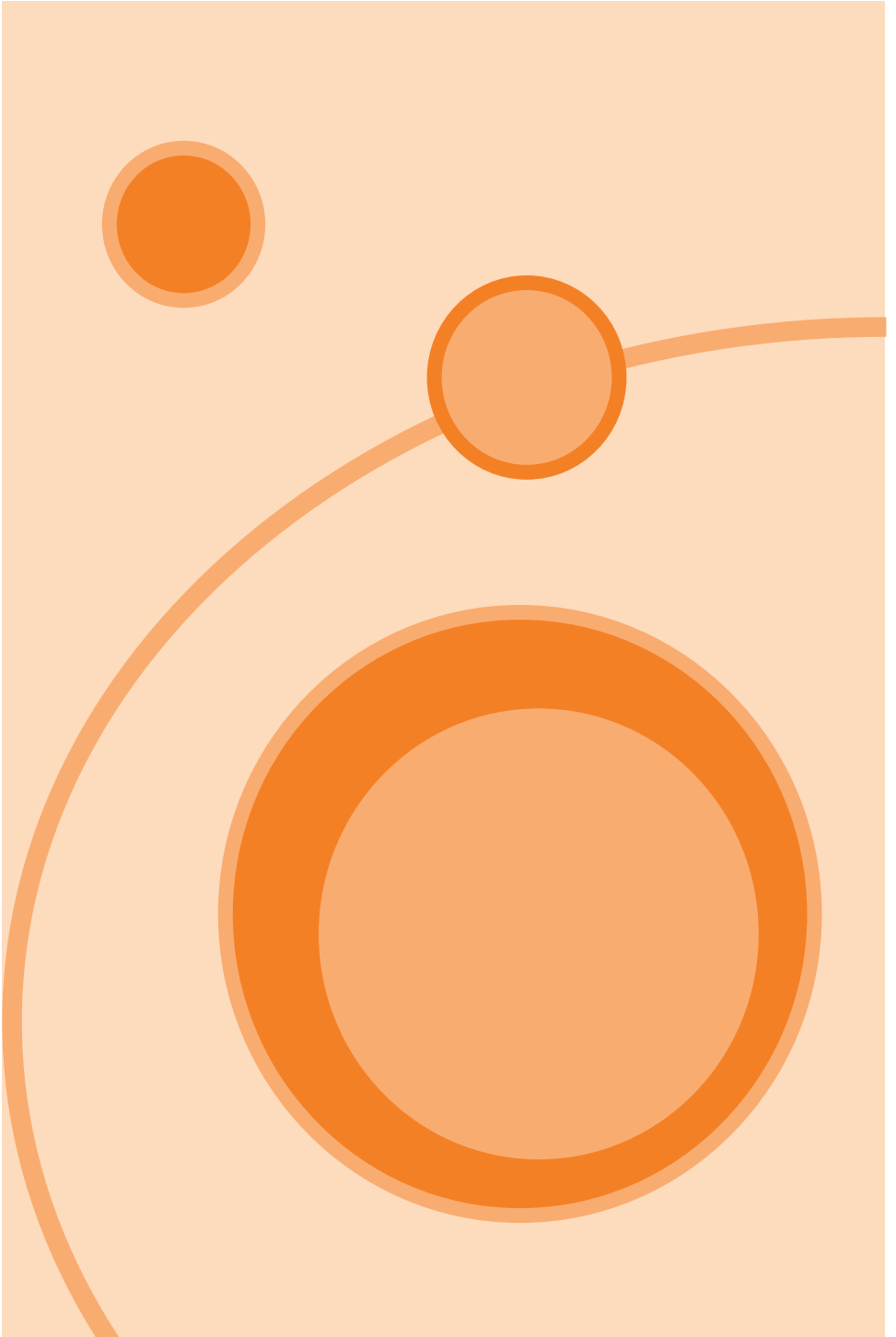
“Phew!” exclaimed the life-saver, turning to Stan and Dan. “If you hadn’t warned us, a lot of people would’ve been caught up in that.”

“We learned all about tsunami at school,” replied Dan. “I recognised the signs.”

“Well, I’m certainly glad you were paying attention in class,” declared the life-saver.



Note: This story is based on the true story of 10-year-old Tilly Smith during the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Tilly recognised the warning signs from what she had learned in a geography lesson two weeks before. She ended up saving the lives of about 100 tourists.



What to do in a tsunami



Before

- Know if your local area could be struck by a tsunami.
- Talk with your family and prepare an emergency plan.
- Identify safe places close to your home and school – as far inland and as high up as possible.

During

- Stay calm.
- Leave the area immediately if you are on the beach or near a river when a strong earthquake occurs. Move quickly but safely.
- Go as far inland and as high up as you can.
- Don't go to a river or beach to watch the waves come in if a warning has been issued.

After

- Listen to, and follow, instructions from adults or the radio.
- Do not go to the sea or river until you have been told it is safe to do so.
- Help others who may need it, if you can do so safely.