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**FINDING
NEMO**



Nemo and the
**Surprise
Party**





Nemo and the Surprise Party



One day, Nemo, a little clown fish, was telling his dad, Marlin, about something their good friend Dory had done.

“You know,” said Marlin, “Dory’s birthday is coming up. She mentioned it a while ago. But you know her—she’s probably forgotten all about it.”

Nemo decided he wanted to do something special for Dory. After all, she was like family. I know, he thought, I’ll throw her a surprise birthday party!

At recess the next day, Nemo asked his friends, Pearl the octopus, Tad the butterfly fish, and Sheldon the sea horse to help plan Dory’s party.

“Count me in,” said Pearl.

“Me, too,” Sheldon agreed.

“I love parties!” Tad exclaimed.

“Then let’s meet right after school and start planning,” Nemo suggested.





That afternoon, the friends met near the sponge beds. Soon they were having a contest to see who could bounce the highest. After they declared Pearl the winner, they got down to work.

“What kind of food should we have at Dory’s party?” asked Nemo.

“Kelp cake and algae ice cream,” Sheldon replied.

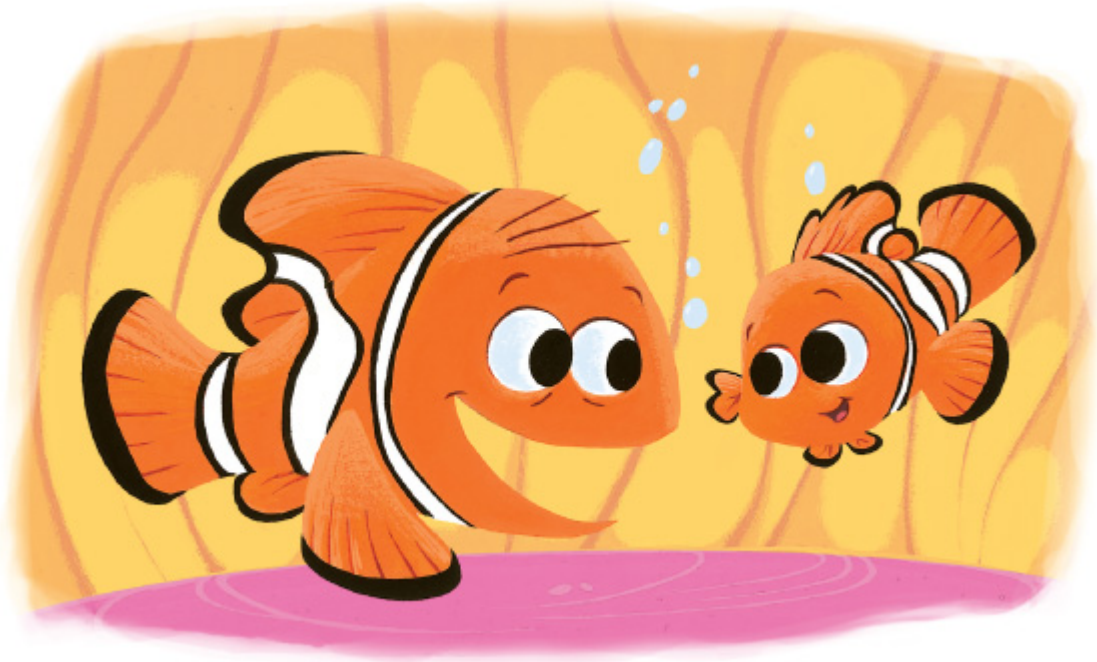
“What about sea-plant pizza?” asked Tad. “And salty seawater punch?”

“I’m getting hungry already,” said Nemo. “Now what should we do about music? I wish we knew a band.”

“*We* could be the band,” said Pearl. “I’m great on the sand-dollar tambourines.”

“Yeah, and I play the clamshell drums,” said Sheldon.

“Great!” cried Nemo. “And Tad could strum some kelp while I play the conch shell. Let’s meet here tomorrow after school to practice.”



Back at their anemone home that evening, Nemo told Marlin about the party.

Marlin looked a little worried for a moment. Then he reminded himself how resourceful Nemo was. He smiled at his son. “That’s a big project,” he said. “But if you put your mind to it, I’m sure you can do it.”

“I can, Dad!” Nemo said confidently. “Dory’s surprise party is going to be the best ever. Just wait and see.”

The next day, Nemo and his friends were swimming toward the sponge beds with their musical instruments when they bumped into Dory.

“Hi Mimo! Hi kids!” Dory exclaimed. She had trouble remembering anything, especially Nemo’s name. “What are you up to?”

“Er . . . umm,” Nemo stammered.

“Music-class homework,” Tad piped up.

“Well, have fun,” said Dory, swimming off in the other direction.

The friends smiled at each other and began to practice. At first, they didn’t sound very good. But after a while, they began to hit their groove.

After school, the next afternoon, Nemo and his friends talked about who to invite to the party.

“What about Crush and Squirt?” Sheldon suggested. “Sea turtles sure know how to have a good time.”



“Everyone from school, including Mr. Ray,” said Tad.

“And I’ll invite Bruce, Anchor, and Chum,” Nemo said.

“Those sharks will make everyone nervous,” said Pearl. “But, if they’re friends of Dory’s, I suppose we should invite them.”

“Let’s give them a job so they stay out of trouble,” said Nemo. “Like serving the punch. Okay, I think we’re all set.”

Tad, Pearl, Sheldon, and Nemo swam off to invite the guests.

Finally, it was the day of the party! Nemo and his friends woke up early and started decorating. Pearl

talked some starfish into making a pretty pattern on a large piece of coral. Tad and Sheldon strung seaweed streamers everywhere. Then Nemo suggested they practice singing “Happy Birthday.”

The four friends began to sing. Just as they finished the line “Happy Birthday, dear Dory,” they heard another voice join in. It was Dory!

“I love singing!” she exclaimed. “How did you know it was my birthday?”

“You told me,” said Nemo.

“Really, Pluto?” asked Dory, “I don’t remember that.”





“Now the surprise is ruined,” said Nemo, sadly.

“What?” said Dory. “Someone ruined your surprise? Just tell me who did it. I’ll fix things.”

“You mean you’ve forgotten already?” asked Nemo.

“Forgotten what?” Dory replied.

“Nothing,” said Nemo, cracking a smile. It sure was helpful that Dory’s memory wasn’t very good.

“See you later,” said Dory, swimming away. “Who was that birthday fish anyway?” she muttered to herself. “I think it was someone really nice, someone I really liked. . . .”

“Another close call,” said Nemo to his friends. “But I think we’re all set. Why don’t we go home and get ready? I’ll meet you guys back here with Dory.”

“Nemo, I don’t know if I can come to the party,” said Sheldon. “My dad wants me to watch the babies.”

“Bring them along,” said Nemo. “The more, the merrier.”

A few hours later, the guests arrived. They all hid and waited to surprise Dory. When Dory and Nemo swam in, everyone popped out of their hiding places and shouted, “Surprise!”

“Look, Pluto, it’s a party for you!” Dory cried.

“No, Dory, it’s for you,” Nemo said. “It’s your birthday.”

“It is?” asked Dory. “Oh, yeah. Cool, a party for me!”

The guests cheered. Dory smiled and blushed.

Nemo led everyone in singing “Happy Birthday.” Dory joined in and sang the loudest.

“You’re the best friends a fish could have,” said Dory. Later, she swam over to Marlin and Nemo. “I sure am glad your dad and I found you, Nemo. This is the best birthday I’ve ever had.”

“Hey, Dory,” said Nemo. “You remembered my name.”

“What’s that, Flipper?” asked Dory.

“Oh, nothing,” Nemo said with a sigh. “Let’s get some food.”



“Salty seawater punch!” exclaimed Dory. “My favorite.”

“Allow me to pour you some,” said Bruce, the great white shark, as he flashed Dory a giant toothy grin.

“Why, thank you, sir,” replied Dory.

“Happy birthday, Dory,” said Chum. “You sure have a lot of food—I mean friends—here today.”

“Fish are friends, not food,” Anchor reminded the other two sharks.

“That’s right, guys,” said Dory. “Don’t forget it. Hey, how about we all get some birthday cake?” They swam away.



The minute the sharks left, the other sea creatures swam over to get some punch.

Right about then, Nemo and his friends played their first song, which got everyone dancing. Even Marlin swayed a little to the melody. Later, Crush and his son Squirt whirled around to the music until they were so dizzy they had to take a break.



Crush saw Marlin and swam over to say hello. “Hey, good to see you. That son of yours is awesome, dude. This is a super party—and I’ve been to

quite a few.”



Dory couldn't remember any dance moves, so she just made them up as she went along. The sharks even shook a fin or two. Then Mr. Ray led everyone in a line dance. Nemo and the band took a break to join in.

Everyone had a lot of fun, but after a few hours it was time to go home. Nemo thanked Pearl, Tad, and Sheldon as they were leaving. “I couldn’t have done it without you guys,” he said.

“Boy,” said Dory, “that birthday fish is lucky to have so many good friends.”

“That lucky fish is you, Dory,” Nemo reminded her.

“Oh, right, Mimo,” Dory replied. “My memory just isn’t very good. I think it’s getting worse as I get older—or is it getting better? I can’t remember. Anyway, let me thank you before I forget. This is the best birthday I’ve ever had.” Then Dory swam on her way. “Happy birthday to me,” she sang.

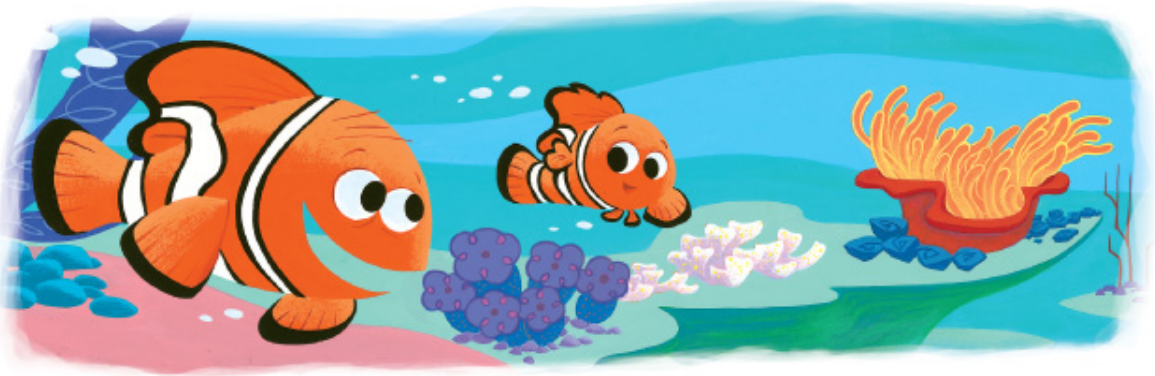
“You did a great job with Dory’s surprise birthday party,” Marlin told Nemo. “I’m proud of you.”

“Thanks, Dad,” said Nemo. “I was thinking we should start planning my birthday party. It’s only nine months away. Have you worked on the guest list yet?”

“I hadn’t really . . .” Marlin started.

“Could we have a seaweed cake? It’s the best kind. What do you think, Dad?” asked Nemo.

“Son,” said Marlin. “If you’re planning it, I’m sure your birthday party will be the best one ever.”



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ISBN: 978-1-4231-4588-2

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