Eight Arms and One Small Shell

A curious customer visits the shell shop.



A short story for reading aloud

AGES 4-7 • Take your time. Enjoy the sounds.

Eight Arms and One Small Shell

Oona the octopus ran a shell shop beneath a wavy green sea.

With eight arms, she could polish, sort, dust and wave all at once.

Swish, swish, sparkle!

Her shells stood in perfect rows: tall shells, round shells, pink shells and shells with spots.

One day, a hermit crab shuffled inside.

“I need a new home,” he said.

Oona showed him a splendid striped shell.

“Too heavy.”

She showed him a curly purple shell.

“Too narrow.”

She showed him a shell as shiny as moonlight.

“Too slippery.”

Oona looked at her perfect rows. What else could she offer?

Eight Arms and One Small Shell

The crab pointed behind the counter.

“What about that little plain one?”

“That?” said Oona. “I use it to keep the door open.”

She lifted it carefully. The crab checked inside, then slipped into it.

He turned left. He turned right. He stretched out his legs.

“Just right!”

Oona clapped four pairs of hands.

Clap-clap-clap-clap!

But when the crab left, the shop door drifted shut.

Oona caught it with one arm. She searched with another. Beneath the counter lay a smooth, heavy stone.

The stone held the door beautifully.

Outside, the crab waved from his new home.

Inside, Oona moved her shells into a great curling spiral.

She rather liked trying things a different way.

THE END

Original MimoMango story. Story and illustration created with AI assistance. First edition, 2026.