

The Adventures of Charlie Chameleon: New Beginnings, Chapter 1, Our New Home

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Charlie Chameleon sat up in bed. His tail was wrapped around his blanket. Charlie looked at his pet fish swimming in the aquarium. “Frankie, it’s time for breakfast.”

Frankie swam to the top of the tank. “Yummy.

Do I get Sugar Buggies?”

“I don’t know, Frankie. Sugar Buggies make you hyper.”

“Pleeeeeease, just a few?”

“Oh, okay. I guess it won’t hurt. Let’s go downstairs, Frankie.”

Frankie swam in circles, jumped into the air, and landed with a splash in his fishbowl, right next to his aquarium.

Charlie walked downstairs cradling Frankie, safe in the fishbowl, by his arm. Frankie went everywhere with Charlie.

Papa Chameleon sat at the kitchen table, drinking coffee as he read his newspaper. “Good morning, Charlie. Mama made us a wonderful breakfast.” Papa gave Mama a big smile.

“Charlie, put Frankie down and eat your waxworm cereal while it’s still warm,” said Mama.

Frankie blew bubbles out of his fishbowl. One bubble landed on Charlie’s breakfast. Another bubble popped on Charlie’s nose. “Yuck. Fish breath. Frankie, stop blowing bubbles. Here, have some Sugar Buggies.”



Papa got up from the table and gave Mama and Charlie a hug. He whistled to himself as he got ready to go to work. Papa had great news and wanted to tell his family, but he was not sure how Mama and Charlie would feel.

Just before dinner, Charlie sat at the kitchen table, coloring a spaceship in his new activity book.

Frankie poked his head out of the fish bowl. “Charlie, let me help you. There’s not enough color.” Frankie spat water on Charlie’s page. The book was soaked.

“Frankie, the water didn’t help. It just messed up my book. I should bring you upstairs, so you can’t wreck my stuff.”

Charlie stood up and was about to take Frankie upstairs when he heard Papa come in the front door.

“Mama, Charlie, I have good news! Come sit with me in the living room,” Papa called out to them. Mama sat down in her favorite chair, the pink one with large flowers on it. Charlie ran over to the couch and bounced up and down with Frankie’s fishbowl in his arms.

Frankie’s face turned green. “I’m getting seasick. S ... T ... O ... P.”

“Charlie, be careful! You’ll fall off and hurt yourself!” said Mama.

“Sorry, Mama,” said Charlie, wiggling on the couch. Charlie looked out the window, hoping to go outside and play with his friends. Tamika Turtle, Charlie’s best friend, was across the street playing with a soccer ball.



Papa walked back and forth in front of Mama and Charlie. “I have a new job. It will be in the same town where Grandma and Grandpa Chameleon live. Isn’t that great?”

Charlie’s head whipped away from the window. “Papa, when you take the new job, will you still have time to play soccer with me?” he asked. “I don’t know anyone in New Town.”

“You don’t have to worry about anything. We’ll move soon. You’ll have time to meet new friends before starting school, Charlie,” said Papa. “Here are some pictures of our new home. It comes with the job.”

“It’s beautiful! There are enough rooms to have friends stay with us. Oh, the kitchen is huge,” said Mama Chameleon, hugging Papa.

Charlie could see that his mom and dad were happy about this change. He wasn’t sure how he felt.

Charlie was very quiet. He looked out the window at his friend, Tamika, and rocked back and forth, hugging Frankie’s bowl. Tears formed in his eyes. Charlie looked down and saw Frankie crying in his fishbowl.

Charlie whispered, “Papa, I don’t want to move. My friends are here. My school is here. My soccer team is here.”

Papa sat down on the couch next to Charlie. “I know you feel sad about moving. Let’s talk about what we can do,” said Papa, putting his arm around Charlie.

“I promised my friend, Tamika, that we would try out for the same soccer team. Now I won’t be able to practice with her,” said Charlie still looking down. “I don’t want to leave my friends!”



Papa wiped away Charlie’s tears.

“I know you love to play soccer, Charlie. When we move we’ll live closer to my job, so I’ll have more time to practice with you. We can invite Tamika over so you can still play together. I hear there is a traveling soccer team that both of you can join.”

“Really?” sniffed Charlie looking at Papa. “We could still play together?”

“Yes, and your other friends can come, too! If you want to be on the traveling team it will take a lot of practice. What do you say, Charlie?” Papa asked.

Charlie grinned. “I say yes!” He put Frankie’s bowl on the coffee table. “Sorry, Frankie, I need to tell Tamika!” Charlie yelled, as he rushed outside to see his best friend.

Charlie crossed the street to Tamika Turtle’s house. She was practicing soccer in the Turtle family’s front yard. He couldn’t wait to tell her the news.

Tamika kicked her soccer ball into the net. “I shot and a score. WHOO-HOO, I am a soccer hero!” Tamika Turtle ran in a circle, arms up in the air.

“Tamika, nice shot. You’re good. Almost as good as I am!” said Charlie, laughing.

“Right, Charlie, but I can run faster than you.” Tamika kicked the ball back and forth with Charlie.



“Maybe, but I can kick the ball better.” Charlie moved the soccer ball away from Tamika and kicked the ball into the net. “I am the soccer king!” Charlie shouted loud enough for Tamika’s mom to hear from inside the house.

Charlie thought Mrs. Turtle was different. She wore a headband every day, and exercised all the time. She made lots of weird food she said was good for you, but it tasted funny. He liked the stuff his mom cooked better.

“Tamika, Charlie, come in. I just finished making some smoothies. I know you’ll love them!” said Mrs. Turtle. “You know, both of you are getting bigger every day.”



“Aww, Mom, you always say that,” said Tamika winking at Charlie. “Did you put berries in it this time? Last time you used snails and it made me pucker. Berries are better.”

“Yes, I did use berries. You are in luck. Enjoy your smoothies,” said Mrs. Turtle. “I have to do my exercises. Today, I’m doing Zumba with Ashley. Please clean up after yourselves.”

“Your Mom is so nice! It will be weird not walking across the street to visit you and having one of your Mom’s smoothies,” said Charlie, looking into his empty glass.

“What do you mean, not coming across the street? Charlie, what’s wrong?” Tamika put her hand on Charlie’s shoulder and tried to look him in the eye.

Charlie looked away. He didn’t want Tamika to see him sad. “Papa has a new job near Grandma and Grandpa. We’re moving. I’ll be at a different school.”

“What! No, you are my best friend, Charlie. You can’t move away. You can stay here with my mom and me. She’ll say it’s okay,” shouted Tamika.

“What is all that noise, children? I’m trying to exercise,” said Mrs. Turtle, walking into the room.

“Mom, Charlie’s Mama and Papa have to move. Charlie can live here with us, right?” asked Tamika.

Mrs. Turtle put her hand on Tamika’s back. With a heavy sigh, she said, “No honey, Charlie needs to live with his family. If he stayed here with us his Mama and Papa would be very sad. They would worry about him all the time.” Turning to Charlie, she said, “Charlie, we will miss you. Any time you want to visit, call, okay?”

“Thank you, Mrs. Turtle,” sniffed Charlie.

Mrs. Turtle hugged Charlie and Tamika then walked back to her room.

“I have to get back home, Tamika. Tell your Mom the smoothie was delicious.” Charlie handed Tamika a piece of paper with his new email address on it.

“What’s this for?” Tamika asked.

“It’s my email address. My mom says we can be pen pals,” said Charlie.

“Pen pals? What’s that?”

“Pen pals are friends that write letters to each other, except we’ll be email pals, no pens needed.”

“We’ll always be friends!” Tamika gave Charlie a quick hug.

“Right! We can write email in secret code.” Tamika and Charlie walked to her front door.

“My papa said there is a traveling soccer team. Maybe we can both play on it,” said Charlie. “Do you want to practice making goals tomorrow?”

“Sure, Charlie! See you tomorrow.” From her front door Tamika Turtle watched Charlie walk home.



Charlie felt better. He knew even though he was moving away, Tamika would still be his friend. He was excited about having an email pal, using secret code. He couldn't wait to tell Frankie all about his plans.

Mrs. Turtle's Berry Smoothie

(makes one serving)

Use one peeled banana, one cup fresh or frozen berries, and one-half cup water or milk. Blend with a blender. (Make sure the top is on!) Pour in a glass. Serve with a straw and enjoy!

