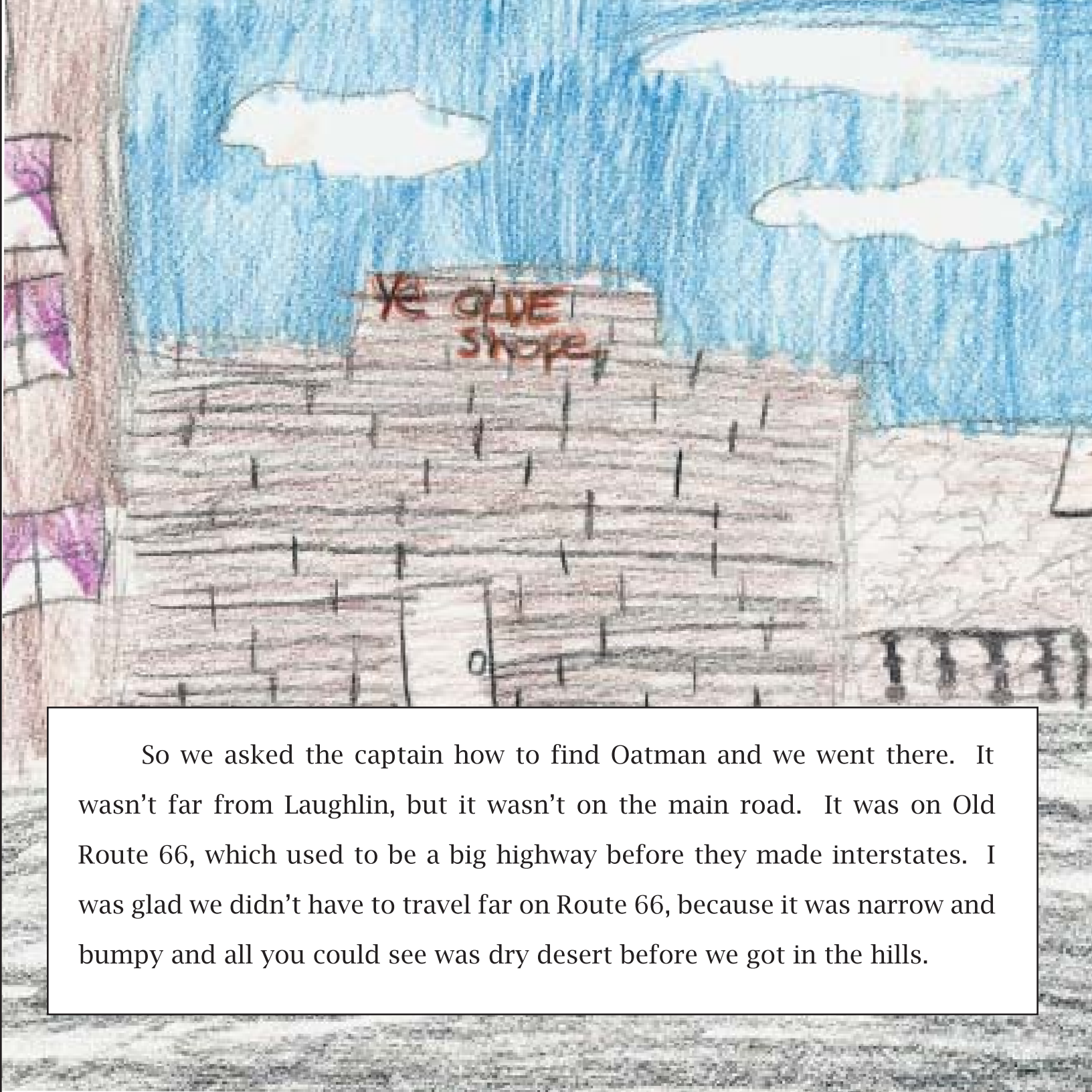


OATMAN, ARIZONA

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As you probably know from the title, I'm writing about a small town in Arizona. I first heard about Oatman when I was with my grandparents on vacation. We were on a riverboat cruise in the Colorado River last year by Laughlin, Nevada, and the captain told a story on the P.A. system. The story told how back in the old days when there were a lot of gold mines, the mines around Oatman ran out of gold. So the miners left, but they didn't take their burros and the people who lived there began to feed them. They're still there.

A child's drawing of a desert landscape. The sky is blue with three white clouds. In the foreground, there is a brown, textured ground. In the middle ground, there is a brown, textured structure that looks like a building or a sign. On the structure, there is a sign that says "THE OLIVE SHOP" in red letters. To the left of the structure, there is a purple and white striped object. To the right, there is a small, dark, rectangular object. The drawing is done with crayons and markers.

So we asked the captain how to find Oatman and we went there. It wasn't far from Laughlin, but it wasn't on the main road. It was on Old Route 66, which used to be a big highway before they made interstates. I was glad we didn't have to travel far on Route 66, because it was narrow and bumpy and all you could see was dry desert before we got in the hills.

We came to some little shacks and before we knew it, there was a sign that said OATMAN. We still didn't see any burros, but we parked the car and walked around the curve. There they were! Burros were everywhere, in the streets and even on the sidewalks. There must have been 100. There were more burros than people, but there were lots of people too. They were tourists like us. Most of the stores were souvenir shops and cafes. Some stores sold baggies full of carrots so you could feed the burros. We bought some carrots and began to feed them. They were so cute, especially the babies that were with their mothers! They told us not to feed the babies because they might get sick. When we walked away they would follow us, nibbling on our back pockets, thinking we had more carrots in them.





My sister and I wanted to take one home with us, but Grandpa said no. How would we get it home? We said we could tie it to the back of the car or ride it, but Grandpa said that wouldn't work. It would take us too long to get home. He bought us a stuffed burro instead.

You should have this experience too. I know you would like it.

