

## PEGGY THE QUADRAPUS

(P. Alsop & B. Harley)

**BILL:** Way down under the ocean, there lived an octopus whose name was Peggy. Peggy was different. Octopus means you have eight legs, but Peggy didn't have eight, she only had four. When she was a little octopus, she'd gotten too close to a giant clam shell and that clam had bitten three of her legs off and hurt another one, and that one got so infected that the doctor had to cut it off. You know, amputate it. And so she only had four left. She hated having four legs. It made her sad and miserable and hurt and confused.

Some of the other octopuses made fun of her.

"Hey, gimp! You look like a table! Hahahahahaha!"

"Hey look! It's Peggy! She can't be an octopus, she's only got four legs. She must be a quadrapus!"

That made Peggy mad. She'd squirt ink in their faces. They'd just laugh. It seemed like the madder she got, the more they made fun of her.

"I can't help it!" she'd scream at them.

There were a lot of things that she could do, just like other octopuses, but she hated being different. She hated looking in the mirror too, because it just reminded her she was different.

But Peggy did have one friend. His name was Gus. Gus was an octopus too, a little bit older than Peggy. He was her friend. He only had six legs. He'd been born that way. Gus spent most of his time in a huge abandoned shell. Peggy used to go visit him. He'd make her feel better.

"Hey, Peggy! Don't be sad,

"I love the way you laugh  
I love the way you smile  
I love the way y'act  
Y'got your own style!"

"That makes me feel better. Thanks a lot, Gus."

Gus spent all of his time in that huge abandoned shell. He wouldn't go out at all. He had when he was little, but he said he wouldn't any more. He'd just stay where people or octopuses wouldn't make fun of him. Peggy would go visit him and try to make him come out.

"Gus! C'mon out! It's really calm. There's a whole school of fish over by the reef."

"Nuh-uh. I'm not goin' out there. Nobody likes me. It's safer in here."

"Yeah, but, but I like you."

"I'm still not coming."

Peggy used to swim up close to the shore, far away from where the octopuses played. Sometimes she would stick her head out of the water and look around. She could see birds flying overhead. Sometimes she would see boats passing by. She saw strange creatures with only two legs.

"Look at them. They only have two legs. They're really weird."

And then one day, the octopuses in the school had been really mean to her.

"Hey, Peggy, we heard that song that Gus sings to ya. We made up our own song, listen!

"Let's face it! You're not like us  
Let's face it! You're just a quadrapus  
Let's face it! Ya only got four  
Let's face it! Y'don't have more!"