# 1. Winter 1

On Christmas Eve day, Uncle Jahan and Aunt Lorena take her over to Half Moon Bay. They have lunch at some famous clam chowder place, and then they walk the bluffs overlooking the ocean. It's there that she sees them and almost can't believe it. A spout of water, then a huge tail lazily arcs out of the surf and slaps down.

"Humpback whales," says Uncle Jahan.

Gulls and pelicans wheel around the boiling surf, and a mouth as big as a car thrusts up, water cascading from the sides.



"That's lunge feeding," Aunt Lorena says. "There's a ball of krill or anchovies just below the surface."

Quince scrambles to pull out the camera that she'd slung across her back, twists on the zoom lens and clicks away. The photos aren't great, but she captures a bit of their

majesty. They watch until the backs of the whales slip further out into the Bay.

"That was amazing," Zee says from the back seat of their car on their way home. "Thank you for taking me there. I didn't think I'd ever see anything like that."

She notices that Uncle Jahan and Aunt Lorena exchange a look.

"I'm glad you enjoyed it," he says, and his voice isn't as stiff as it's been. "I hope you're having a good visit with us."