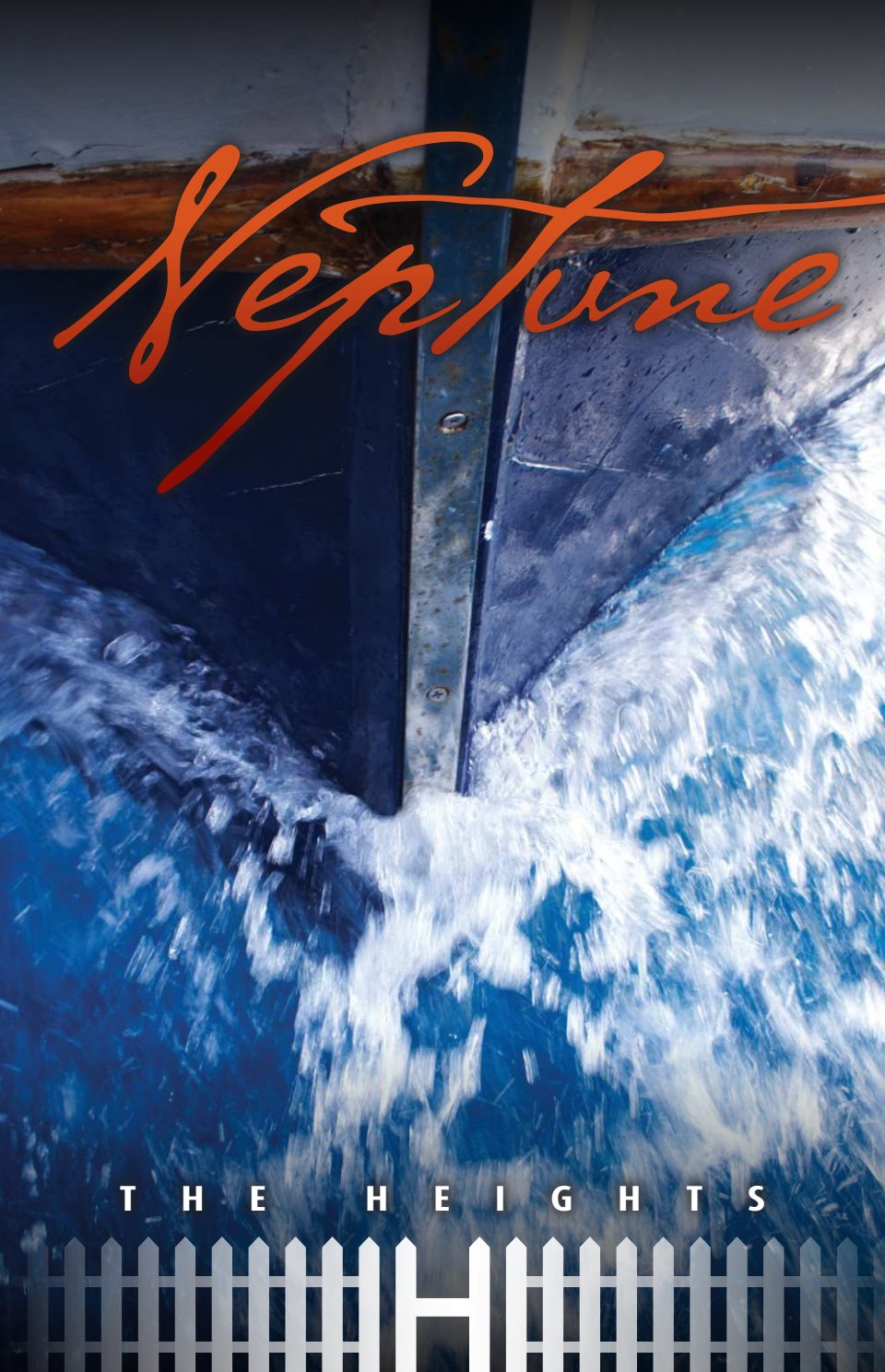
Neptune
THE HEIGHTS

Chapter 1

It was Saturday. Franco woke up. He smelled bacon. His dad was cooking. Rafael liked to cook. He cooked every weekend. The Silvas were having a family breakfast. They all ate breakfast together.

Franco looked at the clock. It was eight o'clock. He got dressed. Then he went downstairs. His brother and

sister were in the kitchen. They were laughing.

"Morning, Franco," said Rafael.

"Hey Dad! What's going on?" Franco asked.

"Dad has a surprise," said Antonio. "We're going fishing. Dad's taking us to Alaska."

"Wow! That's great!" said Franco. "Are all of us going?"

"Nope," Lilia said. "I hate fishing. Mom and I are going to *Tía* Julia's house. We're going to make *pan dulce*. *Abuela* is going to video call us. She's still in Mexico. Then we're going to shop. I would rather shop than fish! You can bring me back some salmon though."

"Don't worry, Lilia," Antonio said. "I'll catch you a ton of salmon! Save me some *pan dulce*. Yum!"

"We'll fly to Alaska. We'll meet my friend Andre Williams. He lives there," Rafael said. "He has a big fishing boat."

"Cool. I'm glad we're going with a pro," said Franco.

Rafael put the bacon on a plate. Then he put pancakes on the table.

"Okay, guys, dig in!" Rafael said.

"Don't forget the syrup," shouted Antonio.

"Or the butter," Lilia said.

Rafael smiled. He handed Antonio the syrup. He passed the butter to Lilia.

Ana Silva walked in the room.

"Thanks for cooking. It smells great," said Ana.

"Here. Have some pancakes," Lilia offered.

"Mom, you guys should come fishing! Alaska is great! Come with us!" cried Antonio.

"Lilia and I want to shop with *Tía* Julia. Your *abuela* is teaching Lilia how to make *pan dulce*. Plus, I love the Heights," said Ana. "I'll leave the adventures to you, Antonio." She smiled.

Chapter 2

Rafael, Franco, and Antonio left two days later. They flew to Juneau.

"Rafael! Rafael!" a voice yelled. It was Andre Williams. He was in baggage claim.

"Welcome to Alaska!" said Andre. "I don't have many guests. Alaska is far," Andre said.

"Hi, Andre," Rafael said. "These are my sons, Franco and Antonio."

"Nice to meet you," said Franco.

"Hello, Mr. Williams," Antonio said.

Andre looked at the boys. He smiled.

"Mr. Williams! Who's he? I am Andre. Don't call me Mr. Williams," Andre said. "Or I'll throw you in the ocean!"

Everyone laughed.

"Sure thing, Andre," Franco said. "That water is cold!"

"Yeah, it's freezing," Andre agreed. "You don't want to fall in. Okay. Let's get your bags. We have to get to the boat."

"Sounds good," said Rafael.

They got their bags. Then they headed to the docks. Andre stopped

the car. He stopped before getting to the docks. They were at the Mendenhall Glacier. Andre wanted the Silvas to see it.

"Hey! I read about Mendenhall Glacier," Franco said. "It's the most visited glacier in the world."

"You're right, Franco," said Andre. "It's close to Juneau. So a lot of tourists come. The ice is over 200 feet thick!"

"Wow!" Antonio yelled. "That's a ton of ice!"

"Yeah, it is," said Andre. "The glacier is moving. It's getting closer to the ocean. It's melting as it moves. Someday it will be gone!"

"That's crazy," Antonio said. "It's just going to disappear one day?"

"It's not going to disappear. Not

for a long time. It will take over 100 years," said Andre.

Andre looked at Rafael.

"The boat is stocked for six days. Is that good? Or should I stop to get more food?" asked Andre.

"No. Six days is fine," said Rafael. "We have to go home next week. Franco has football practice."

"Do you think we'll catch any fish?" asked Antonio.

"Oh, we will," Andre said with a grin.

"Cool! I want to catch a halibut. What are my chances?" Antonio asked.

Andre smiled. "You will catch halibut," he said. "But you may not catch a shooter."

Antonio and Franco looked at each other. They looked puzzled.

"A shooter? I've never heard of it," Franco said. "What kind of fish is a shooter?"

"A shooter is a halibut," replied Andre. "But it weighs over 100 pounds. They are hard to catch. It's too strong. You have to shoot it first. That way it can't get away."

Antonio and Franco were listening. They both wanted to catch a shooter. They couldn't wait to fish.

THE HEIGHTS

Neptune

The hijackers pushed them in the cabin. They locked the door. The *Neptune* headed out to sea again. She wasn't on a fishing trip this time!

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