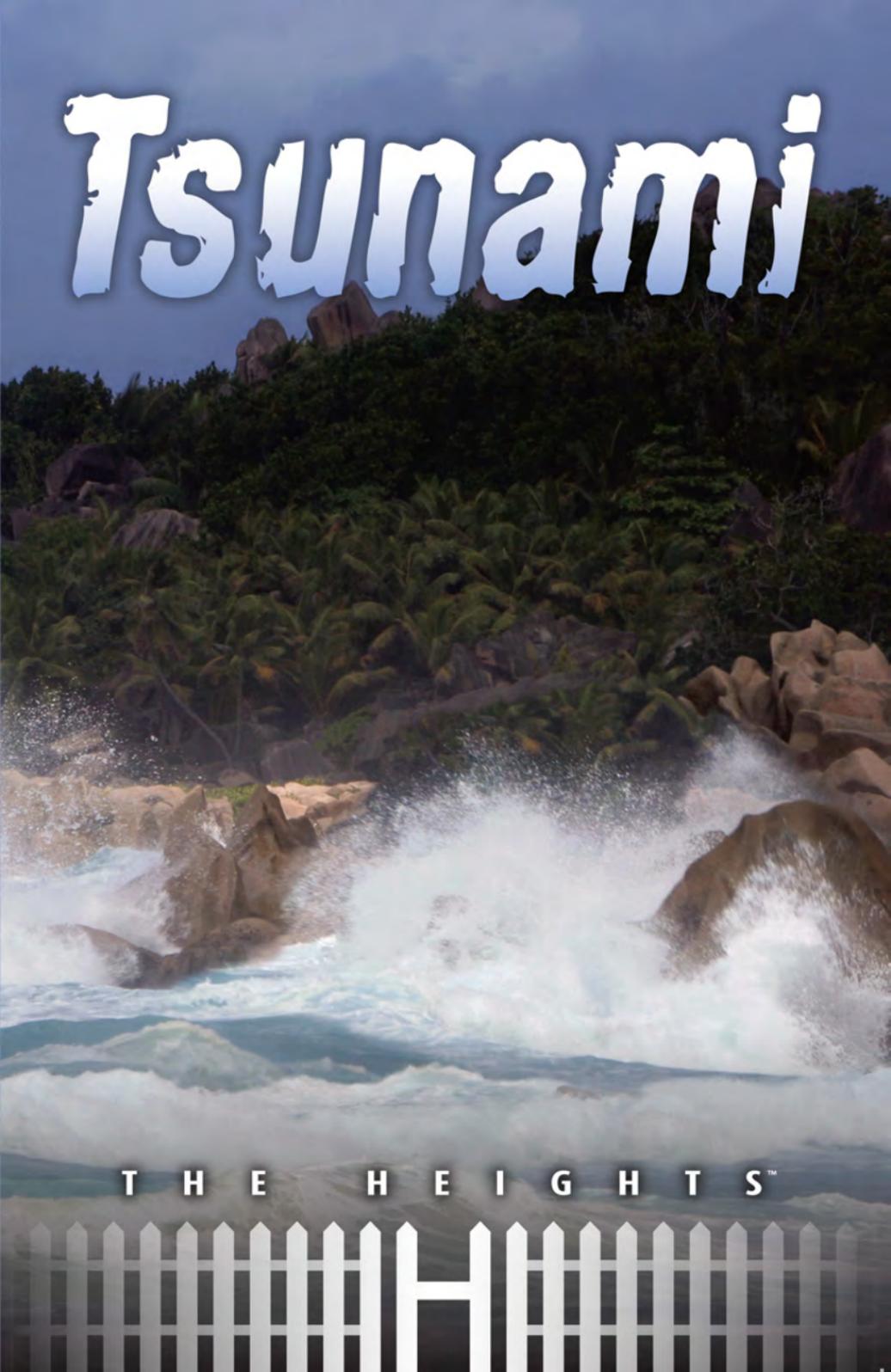


Tsunami

A tropical landscape featuring a large, powerful wave crashing against dark, jagged rocks. The background is a lush green hillside covered in dense vegetation, including many palm trees. The sky is a deep, dark blue, suggesting an overcast or stormy day. The overall scene is dynamic and dramatic, capturing the raw power of the ocean.

T H E H E I G H T S™

A white picket fence graphic that spans the width of the image at the bottom. The fence consists of vertical slats of varying heights, with a taller central section that forms a gate-like structure. The fence is set against a dark, semi-transparent background that blends into the overall scene.

Chapter 1



Lilia sat by the window watching the snow fall. School was closed because of the storm. Lilia and her brothers spent two hours shoveling the driveway. The Heights was a great place, but winter was sometimes too cold!

Antonio was upstairs on his computer. And Franco was home from college doing laundry. Lilia

went into the kitchen to talk to her parents.

“Hey, Lilia,” said her dad, Rafael. “Get your brothers. I have some news.”

When all five Silvas were in the kitchen, Rafael surprised them.

“Your mom and I just made vacation plans. I’m going to Australia tomorrow for work,” said Rafael. “You guys will meet me there when my project is finished. We’ll all fly to Vanuatu from there.”

The three Silva kids looked at each other.

“Vanna who?” Lilia asked.

“V-a-n-u-a-t-u,” Ana responded. “It’s a group of islands in the South Pacific. It’s a three-hour flight from Sydney, Australia.”

“They are islands in a part of the South Pacific called Oceania,” said Rafael. “Beautiful flowers and birds are everywhere. And there’s great scuba diving. We can even hike up a live volcano.”

“Awesome!” Antonio smiled. “I’ve always wanted to see a volcano. Sign me up.”

“You’re already signed up,” Rafael laughed. “You’ll be there in three weeks.”

“Hey, Dad,” said Franco. “Aren’t those islands part of the Ring of Fire?”

“Say what?” exclaimed Lilia.

“It’s a part of the world with a number of volcanos. And lots of earthquakes. But I wouldn’t worry about it,” said Rafael.

Chapter 2



The next day Rafael left for Sydney. Three weeks later, Ana and the kids landed in Sydney. Rafael was waiting for them.

“Hey, Dad!” Lilia shouted. Then she ran over to hug her father.

“How was your trip?” Rafael asked. “No, wait. Don’t tell me. It was long.”

Franco and Antonio rolled their eyes at their father.

“Sorry, but you’re not done flying yet,” Rafael said. “Tonight we’re staying in Sydney. But tomorrow we’re off to Port Vila. That’s the capital of Vanuatu. Then we’ll take another short flight to Tanna. That’s the island where we’re staying.”

“It’ll be worth it,” Franco said. “As soon as we hit the beach, we’ll forget about the planes.”

“That’s true,” said Antonio. “You won’t be able to get me out of the water.”

Early the next morning, the Silvas flew to Port Vila. There they took a very small plane to Tanna. John Maleki met them at the airport.

He was the owner of the Blue Sea Bungalows. The Silvas were staying there.

They drove past crystal blue waters and sandy beaches. Then they pulled up to the Blue Sea Bungalows. There were tropical plants and trees with colorful birds everywhere. The Silvas looked at the huts where they would be staying. It was paradise.

“Wow!” Franco exclaimed. “This place is awesome.”

“Tanna is one of those rare places that isn’t spoiled. For the next week we can just enjoy nature. There’s no TV, Internet, or fast food” said Rafael. “But there’s lots of fishing and diving. And this beautiful beach to enjoy.”

“Mr. Maleki said that Tanna is great for snorkeling,” Lilia said. “Dad, we’re going to unpack and change into our bathing suits. Is it okay if Antonio and I go for a swim?”

“Sure Lilia,” Rafael replied. “But stay together.”

Chapter 3



Lilia and Antonio put their towels, sunscreen, and snorkeling gear in a bag. Then they headed to the beach. The sand was soft and white. The water was very blue. No one else was there. There were huts sitting over the water. Small boats rested on the sand. They could see a mountain. It was the volcano that Rafael had talked about. They put

down their bag and ran into the water.

They swam out in the clear, warm water. And rode the waves to the shore.

Antonio got his snorkeling gear. Lilia was right behind him.

Out on the reef, they saw a lot of fish and sea creatures.

“Look at that smooth, dark rock,” Antonio said. “I think that’s lava. There must have been a big eruption here.”

After exploring for an hour, they swam back to shore.

Rafael and Franco were on the beach. “How’s the water?” Franco asked.