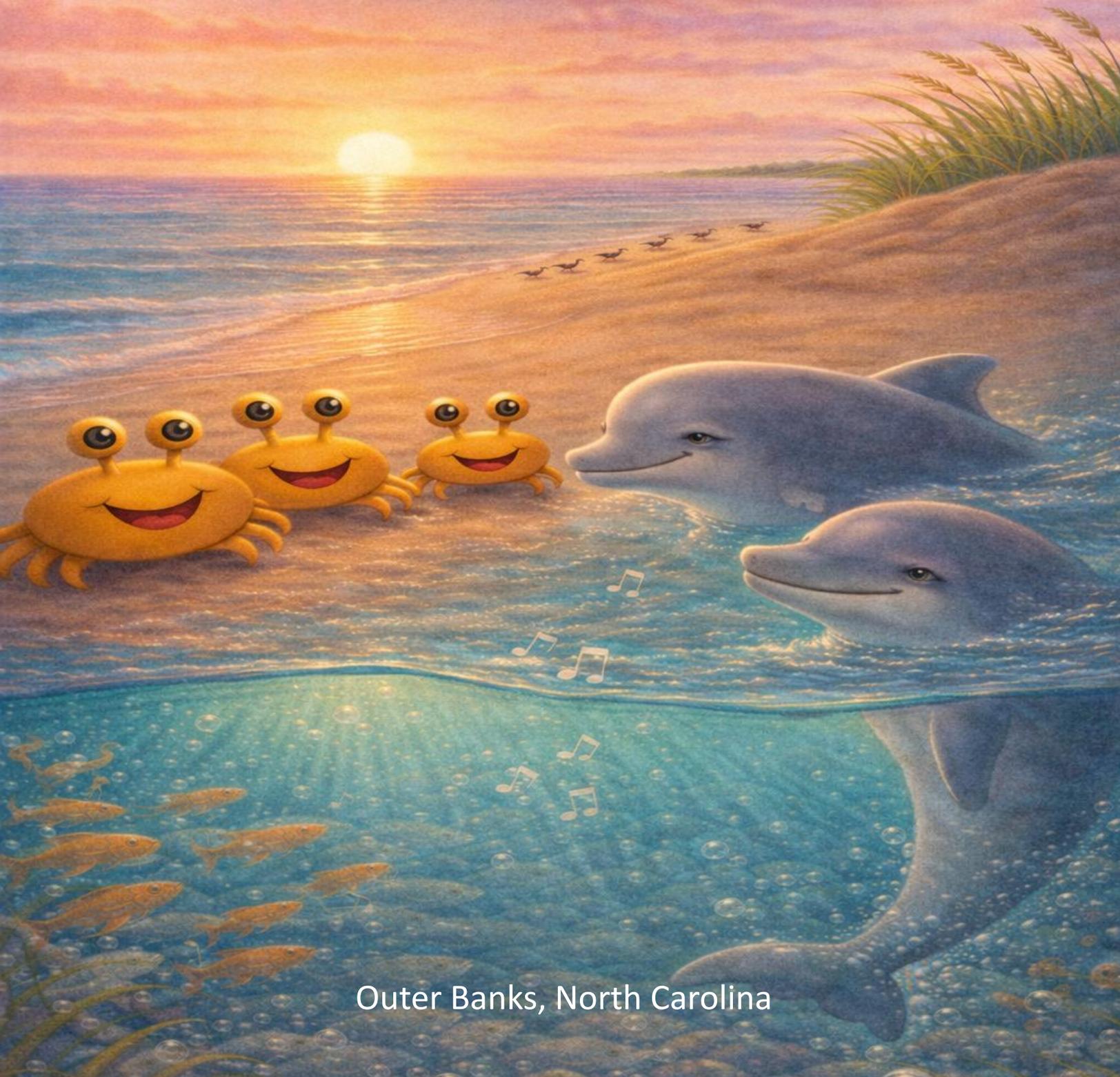


# The *Song of the Sound*

WHEN THE SEA SPEAKS SOFTLY



Outer Banks, North Carolina

## Forward

This storybook was created by the Outer Banks Coastal Conservation (OBCC), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster environmental stewardship and a deeper connection to the Outer Banks of North Carolina through outreach, education, and conservation efforts.

We believe that small stories can spark big change. That is why we have made this book available as a free resource for parents, teachers, and community members.

All materials in this book may be freely downloaded, shared, printed and used for educational or nonprofit purposes.

To learn more, access additional resources at: [www.theobcc.org](http://www.theobcc.org).

# Chapter 1: Echo and the Ocean Choir

In the wide, glittering waters of the Outer Banks, a young dolphin named Echo loved to sing. Each morning, he twirled through the waves, chirping and whistling to his friends. The ocean was alive with music — snapping shrimp, croaking fish, and the deep songs of whales echoing across the Sound.



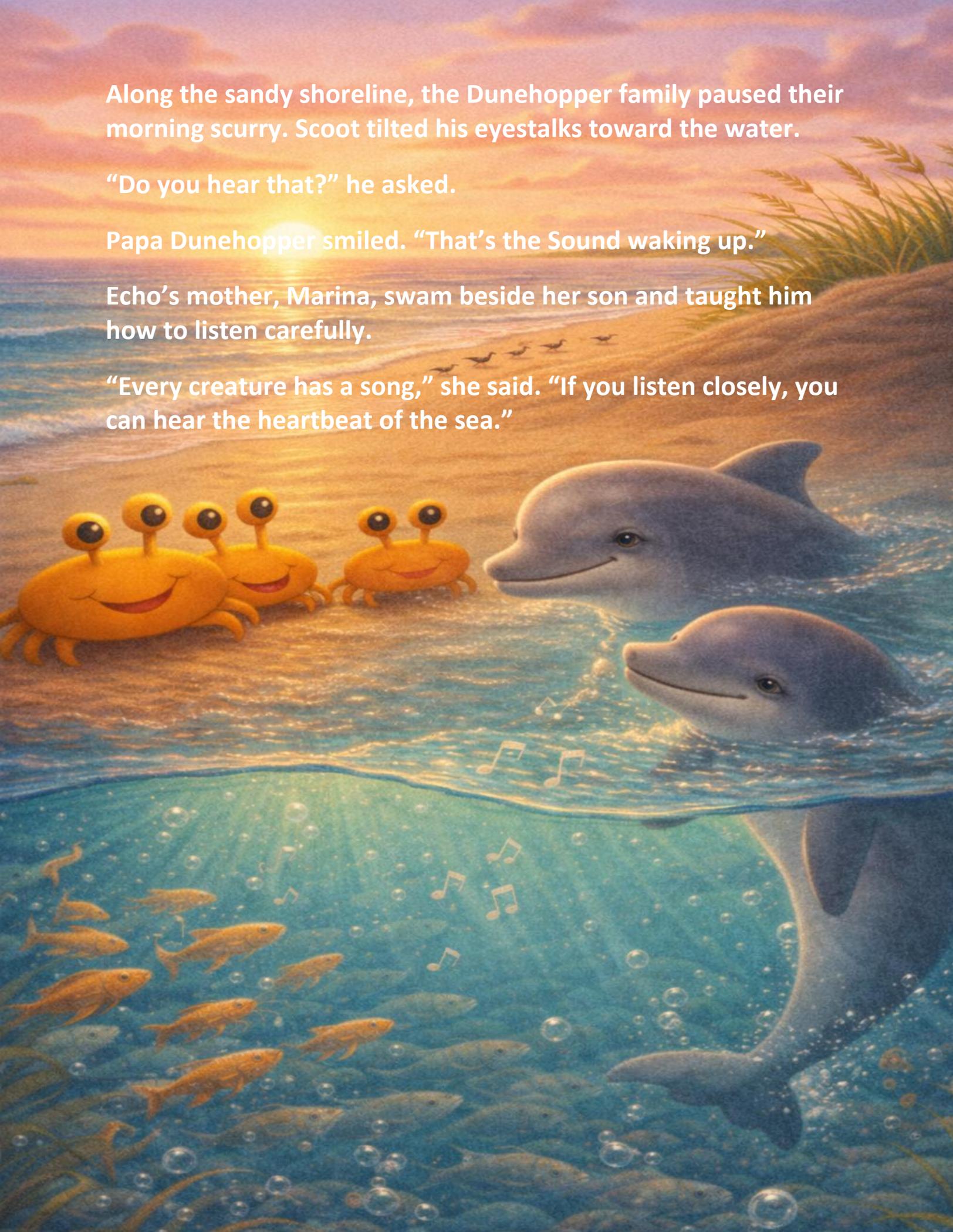
Along the sandy shoreline, the Dunehopper family paused their morning scurry. Scoot tilted his eyestalks toward the water.

“Do you hear that?” he asked.

Papa Dunehopper smiled. “That’s the Sound waking up.”

Echo’s mother, Marina, swam beside her son and taught him how to listen carefully.

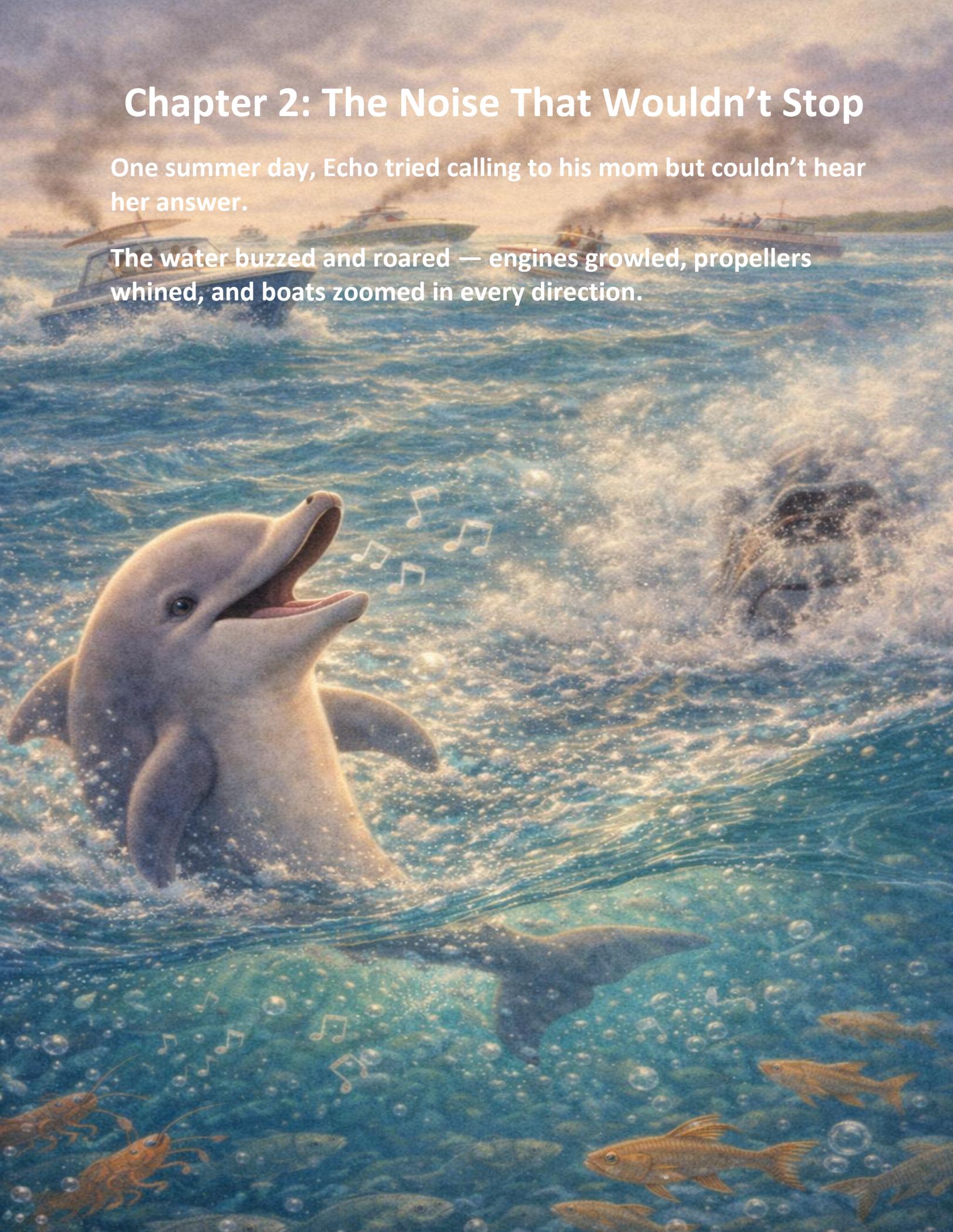
“Every creature has a song,” she said. “If you listen closely, you can hear the heartbeat of the sea.”

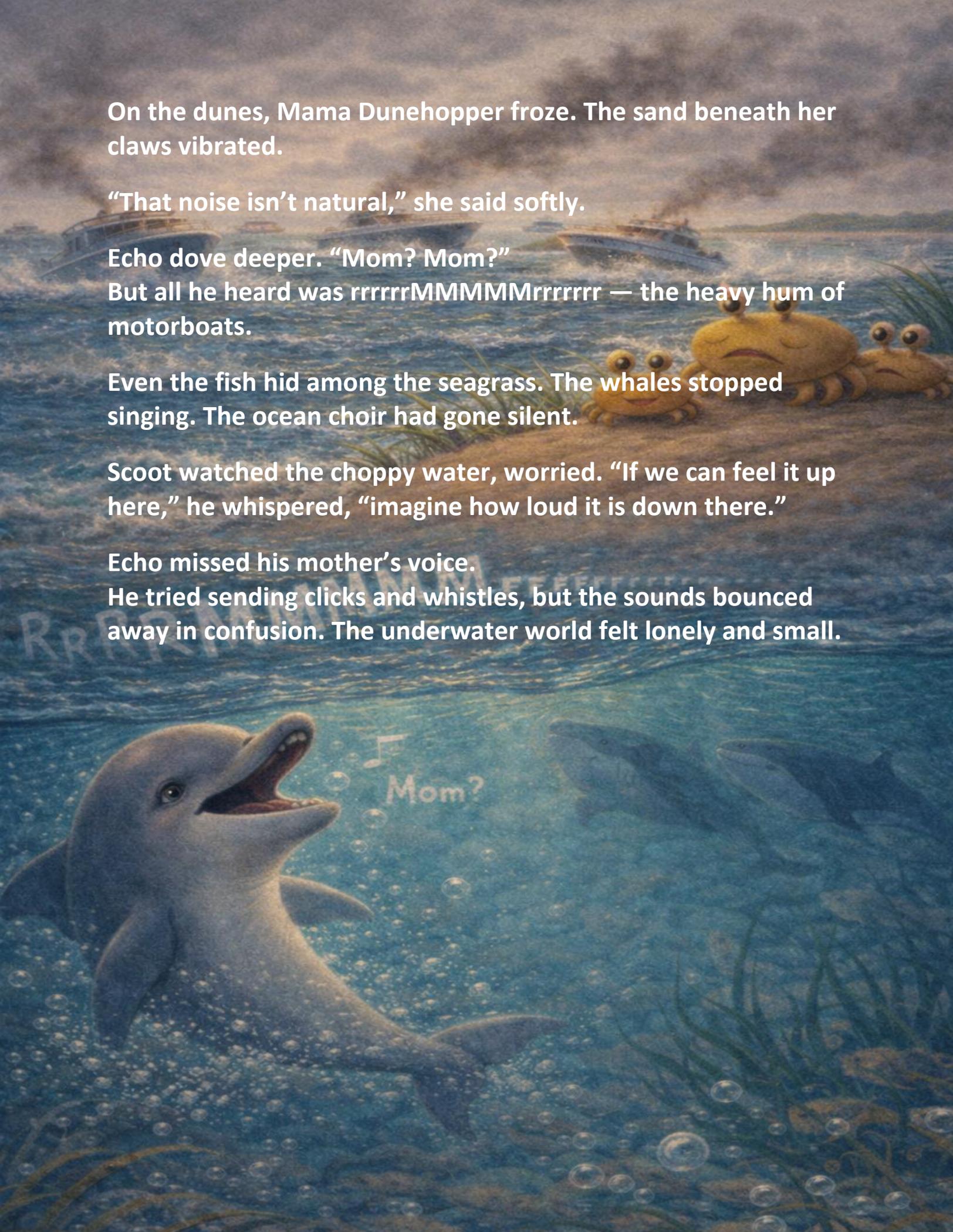


## Chapter 2: The Noise That Wouldn't Stop

One summer day, Echo tried calling to his mom but couldn't hear her answer.

The water buzzed and roared — engines growled, propellers whined, and boats zoomed in every direction.





On the dunes, Mama Dunehopper froze. The sand beneath her claws vibrated.

“That noise isn’t natural,” she said softly.

Echo dove deeper. “Mom? Mom?”

But all he heard was rrrrrrMMMMrrrrrrr — the heavy hum of motorboats.

Even the fish hid among the seagrass. The whales stopped singing. The ocean choir had gone silent.

Scout watched the choppy water, worried. “If we can feel it up here,” he whispered, “imagine how loud it is down there.”

Echo missed his mother’s voice.

He tried sending clicks and whistles, but the sounds bounced away in confusion. The underwater world felt lonely and small.

## Chapter 3: The Lost Song

Near the shoreline, Sandy Dunehopper noticed something was wrong. Pelicans stood quiet. Fish stopped jumping.

“Something’s missing,” she said. “The Sound feels... empty.”

Then one calm afternoon, Marina found Echo close to shore.

“Oh, my sweet Echo,” she said gently. “We must find a way to bring back our songs.”

The Dunehoppers listened from the dunes as dolphins surfaced nearby. Papa Dunehopper nodded.

“If the Sound is hurting,” he said, “then we should help.”



## Chapter 4: The Quiet Zones

Together, the sea animals and shoreline creatures gathered near the human harbor. Dolphins clicked. Pelicans circled. The Dunehoppers scurried along the sand, leaving tiny tracks near docks and signs.

Kind scientists and fishers noticed.

“They’re trying to tell us something,” one human said.

Soon, new signs appeared:

Quiet Zone – Protect the Sound

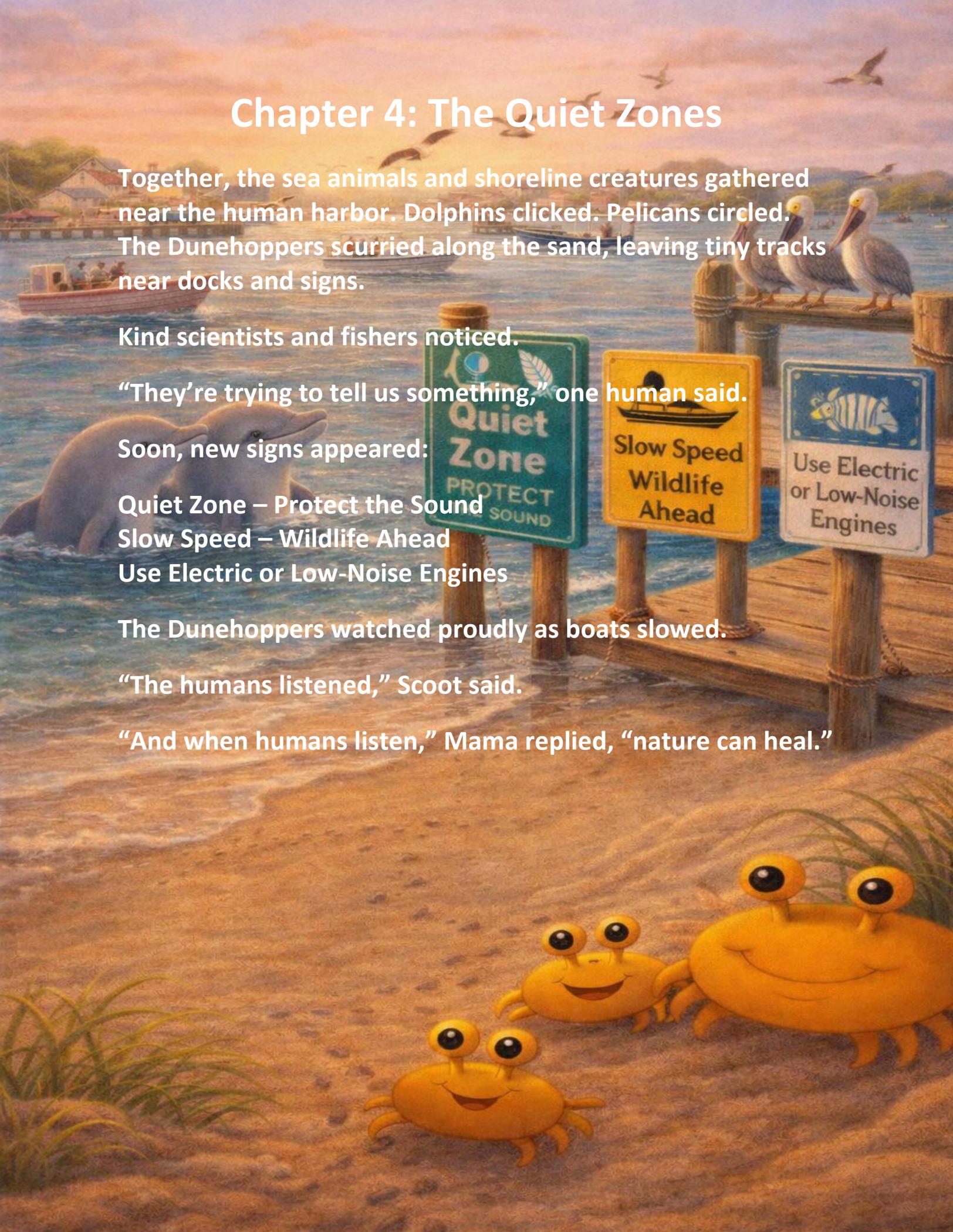
Slow Speed – Wildlife Ahead

Use Electric or Low-Noise Engines

The Dunehoppers watched proudly as boats slowed.

“The humans listened,” Scoot said.

“And when humans listen,” Mama replied, “nature can heal.”



## Chapter 5: The Song Returns

Bit by bit, the Sound changed.

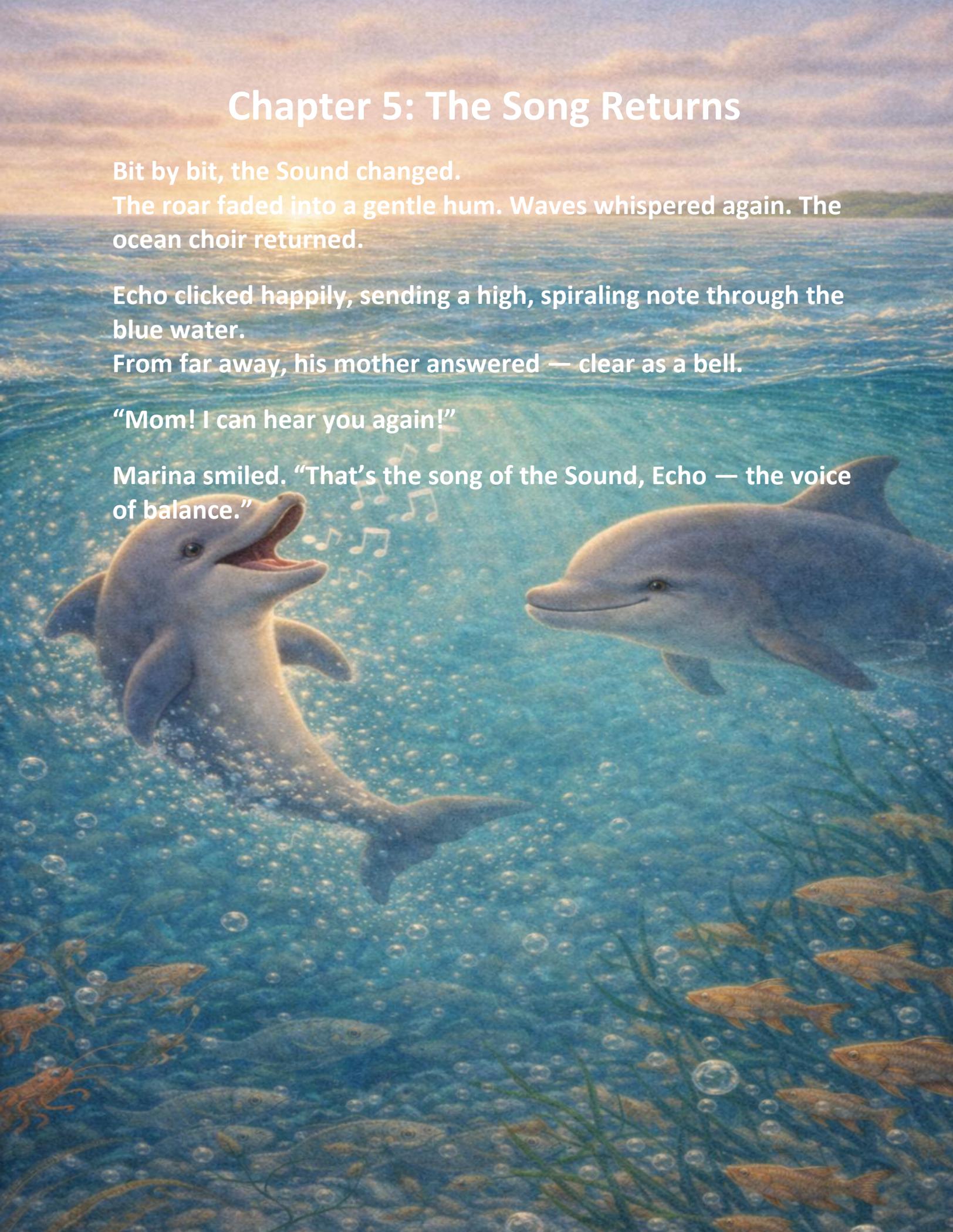
The roar faded into a gentle hum. Waves whispered again. The ocean choir returned.

Echo clicked happily, sending a high, spiraling note through the blue water.

From far away, his mother answered — clear as a bell.

“Mom! I can hear you again!”

Marina smiled. “That’s the song of the Sound, Echo — the voice of balance.”

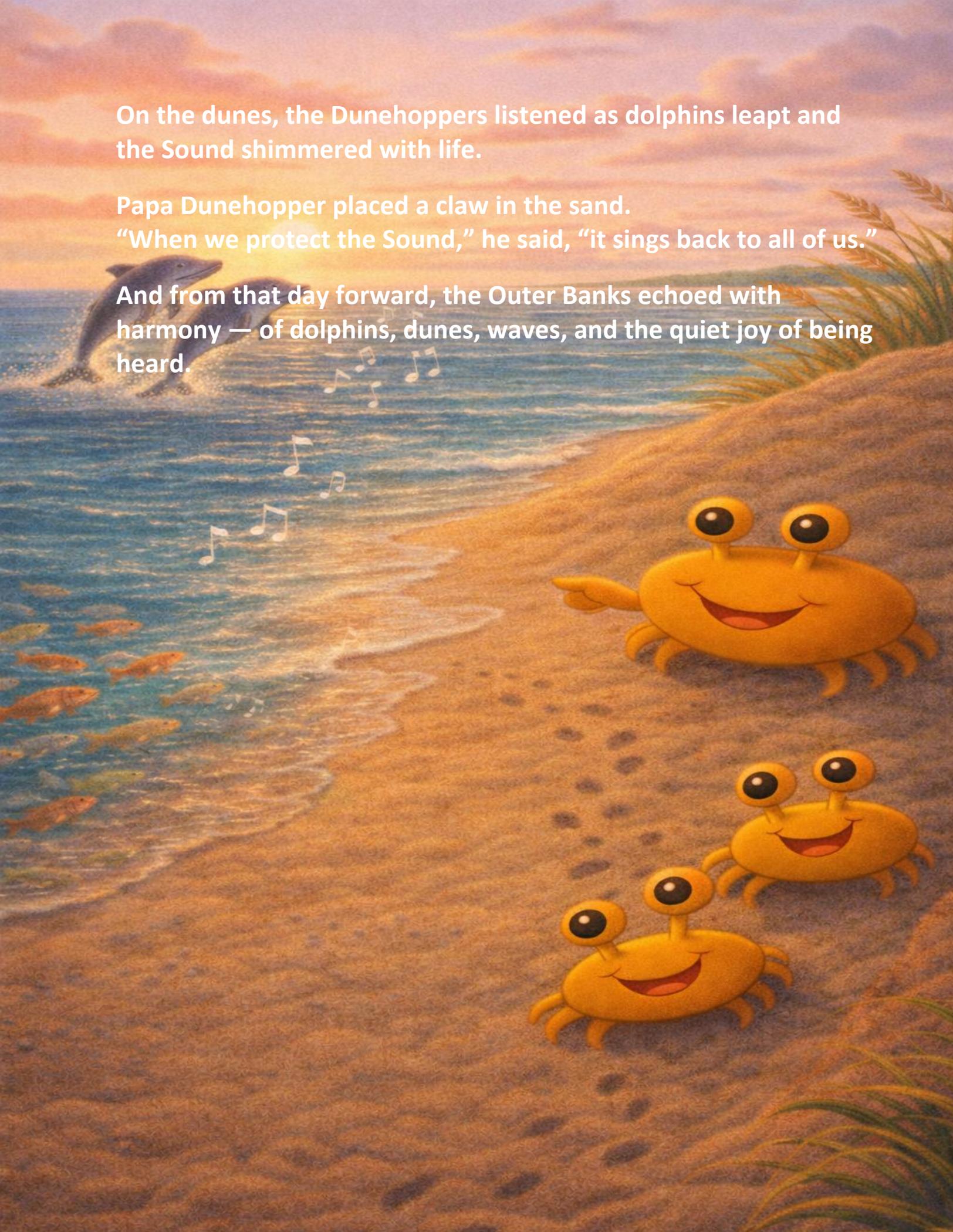


On the dunes, the Dunehoppers listened as dolphins leapt and the Sound shimmered with life.

Papa Dunehopper placed a claw in the sand.

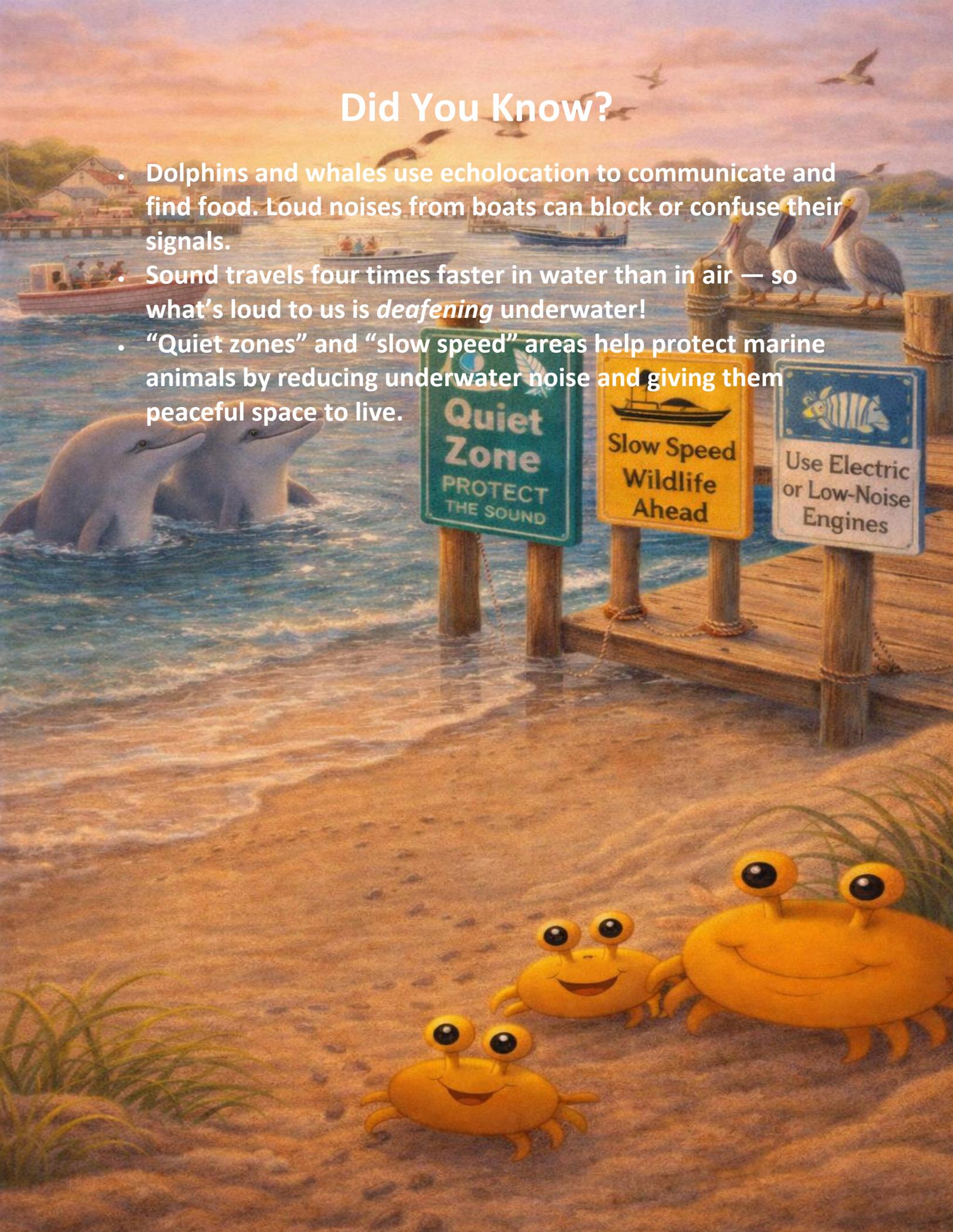
“When we protect the Sound,” he said, “it sings back to all of us.”

And from that day forward, the Outer Banks echoed with harmony — of dolphins, dunes, waves, and the quiet joy of being heard.



# Did You Know?

- Dolphins and whales use echolocation to communicate and find food. Loud noises from boats can block or confuse their signals.
- Sound travels four times faster in water than in air — so what's loud to us is *deafening* underwater!
- “Quiet zones” and “slow speed” areas help protect marine animals by reducing underwater noise and giving them peaceful space to live.



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