The Dolphin Caller

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Illustrated by Meredith Thomas



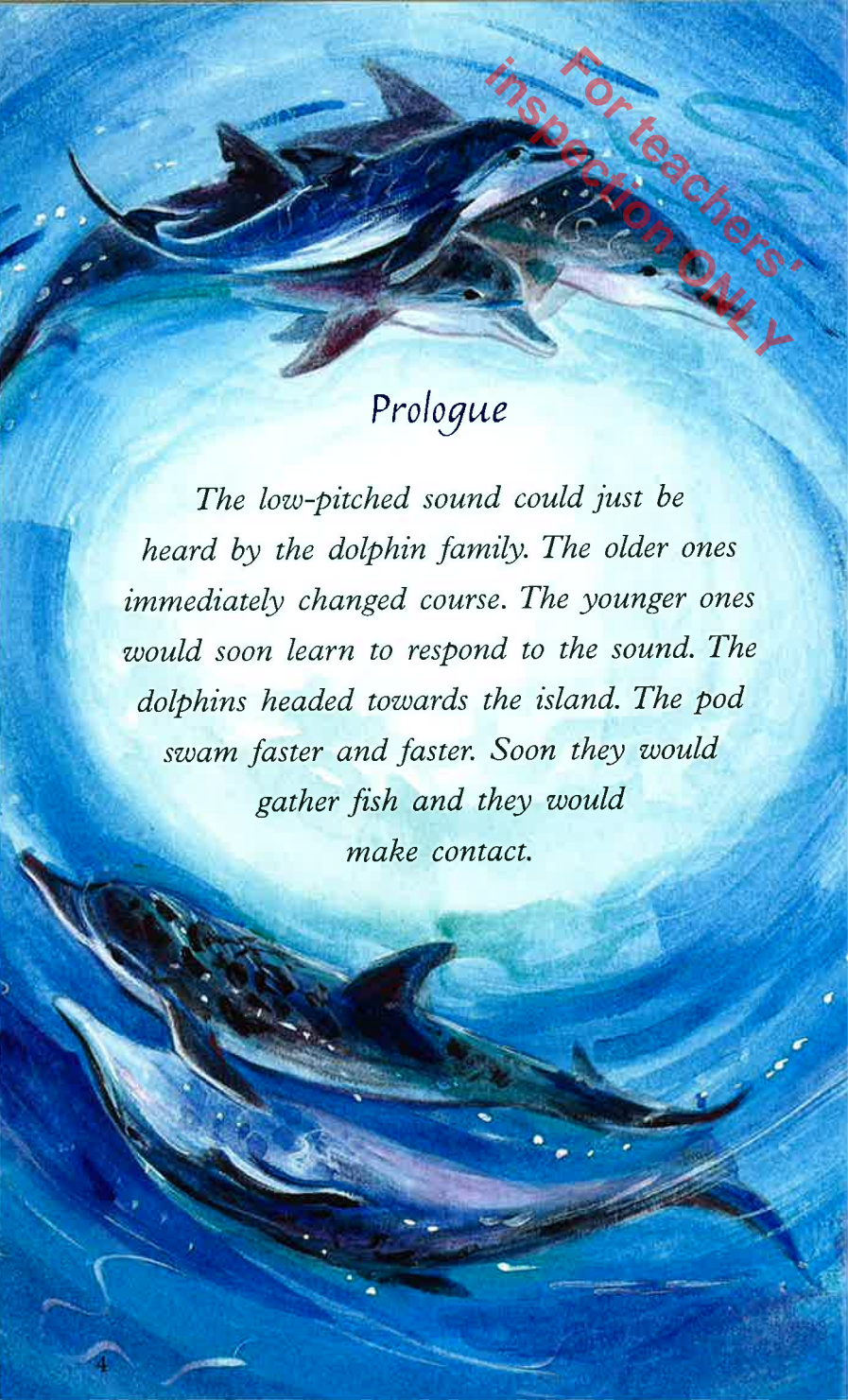
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Prologue

The low-pitched sound could just be heard by the dolphin family. The older ones immediately changed course. The younger ones would soon learn to respond to the sound. The dolphins headed towards the island. The pod swam faster and faster. Soon they would gather fish and they would make contact.

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Chapter One



I guess we all have to die. Particularly old people. But I never thought of Poppy as old. Poppy is my grandfather. But he's more a friend than a grandfather. We've done everything together, ever since I was little. We go fishing a lot. Poppy taught me how to fish. But the best thing about Poppy is his stories. He tells the neatest stories.

Right now, I'm sitting in the waiting room at the hospital. Dad is across from me, staring at the wall. At least I've stopped crying. I just keep thinking that it's my fault. If only we didn't go on that fishing trip...



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You see, yesterday, Poppy, my friend Joey and I motored across to Pelican Island. We were about halfway across when Poppy said, "Do either of you boys want to steer the boat while I get the anchor ready?"

Well, both Joey and I jumped up at the same time. We started to fight over the wheel.

"I was here first!" Joey yelled.

"You can't steer. Anyway it's my Poppy's boat!" I replied.

Joey wouldn't give in. Neither would I. The boat wobbled all over the place.

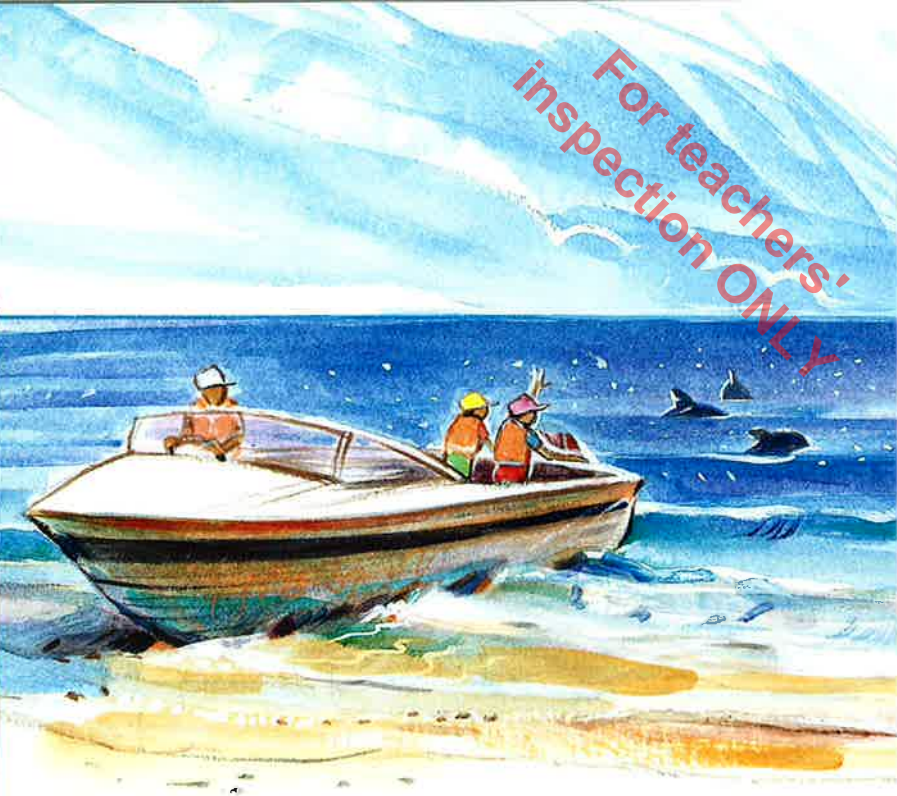
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"Sit down, both of you!" ordered Poppy, as he grabbed the wheel. "I'll fix the anchor as I steer."

We sat quietly for the rest of the trip. I gave Joey a cross look. Joey practically lives at our house. Sometimes he's a real pest. Yet we hang around together all the time. But I don't like sharing Poppy with Joey sometimes.

As we motored in towards the beach, a family of dolphins swam close to the boat. We all started to talk at once.





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"Look how close they are!" shouted Joey.

"A sure sign of good luck," Poppy said.

"Hey, that big one has lost a bit of its dorsal fin," I added. There was a notch missing in the middle of its fin. Poppy cut the engine as we glided onto the shore. The dolphins headed back towards deeper water.

"See ya, Notch!" I shouted, thinking I would never see the dolphin again.