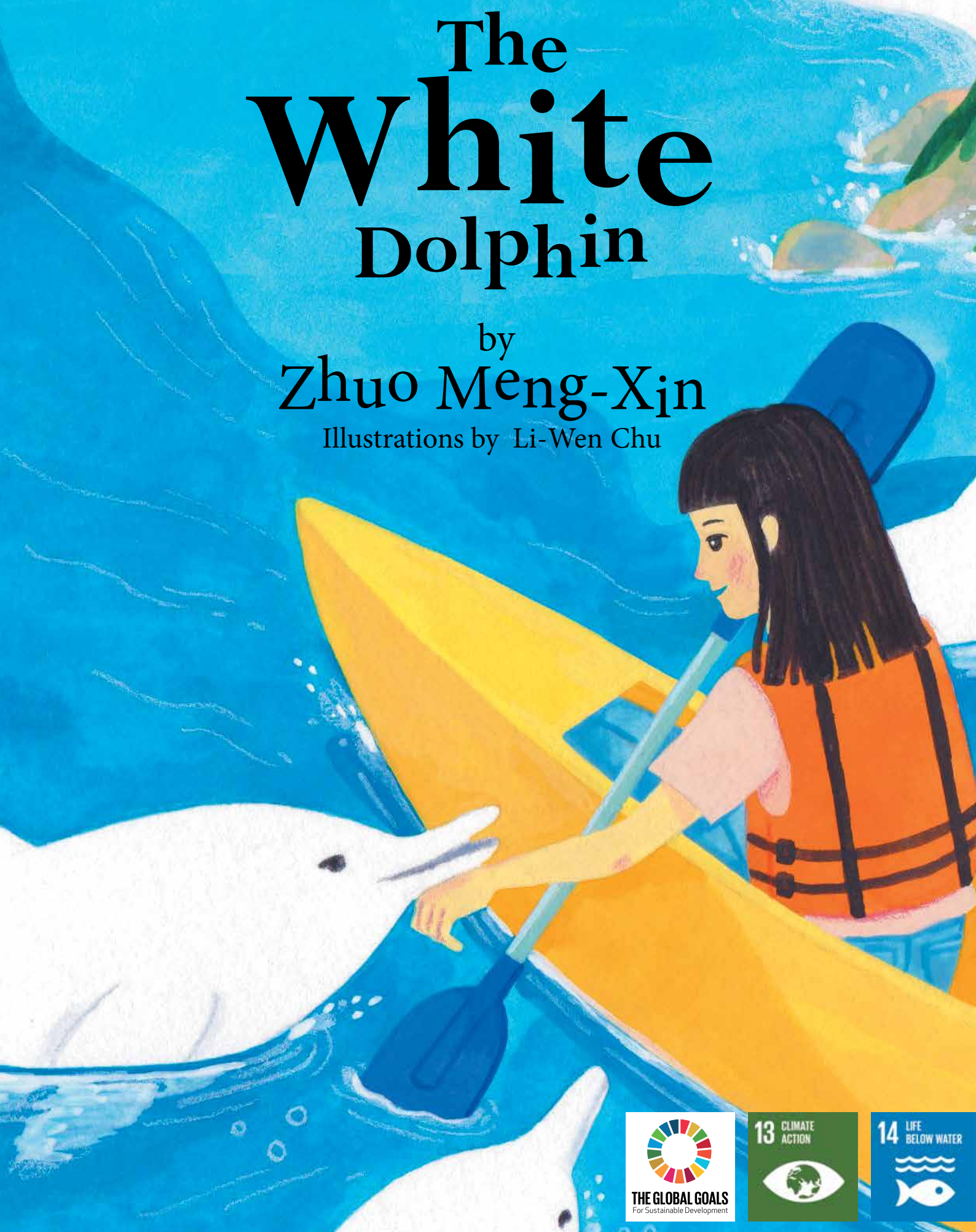


The White Dolphin

by
Zhuo Meng-Xin

Illustrations by Li-Wen Chu



The
White
Dolphin

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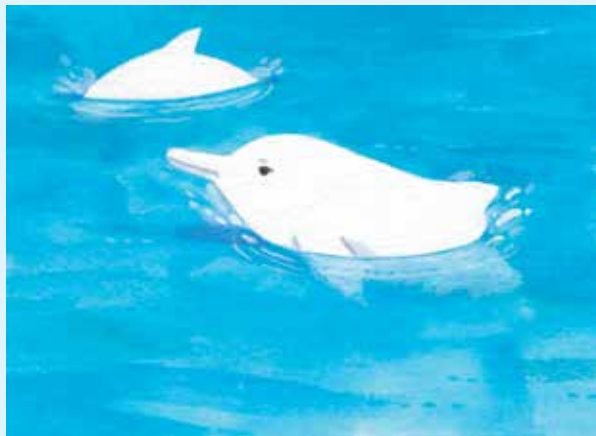
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foreword



The author, Zhuo Meng-Xin, lives in Waipu District, Taichung. Waipu is located near the sea. Adjacent to its neighbouring Dachia and Da-an District is the Taiwan Strait. Along the east side of the Strait on the West Coast of Taiwan Island, somewhere between Miaoli County and Tainan City, the Taiwanese Humpback Dolphin's main habitat is located in the merely 5 km-wide shallow waters along the seashore. According to a recent study, the population of the Taiwanese Humpback Dolphin is estimated at about 70 to 80 dolphins. Hence, the dolphins have been declared as a critically endangered species by the

International Union for Conservation of Nature. They are designated as an animal in urgent need of protection.

Both of Meng-Xin's parents are elementary school teachers. They are nature lovers just like their daughter, and they support the protection of wildlife. Before Meng-Xin went to kindergarten, she was already a frequent traveller. She visited many places in Taiwan with her two-year-old brother and parents, including gorges in the mountain, creeks and ponds in the forest and wetlands along the seashore. As time went on, and her knowledge of environmental protection expanded, Meng-Xin built up a friendly attitude towards nature.

A high-profile incident regarding white dolphins that occurred few years ago had stirred up Meng-Xin's young mind. Ecology-related news broadcasted on TV reported that stranded dolphins were being rescued by humans. This event had enlightened Meng-Xin, and the vivid images were deeply engraved in her memory. Subconsciously, Meng-Xin was eager to live in a word with the white dolphin. She had thoughts of the day, and dreams of the night about meeting the dolphins one day. Fragments of her ideas weaved together into a story, which is a fusion of reality and imagination. The story sometimes fixes closely on depicting the main character, and sometimes focuses on the interaction between the girl, the dolphins and the environment. This excellent book reflects the pure mind of a child, and readers of all ages should enjoy it.

— Lin Shen-Bao
Author's Grandfather, Biology Teacher

preface



Every day we face challenges all around us. We deal with and fix problems, and make changes in our lives. However, the grownups in modern society always get stuck in the fast pace of working life. The connection between us and nature is getting weaker and weaker.

This is a wonderful story that awakens people to the need to care for nature. Through the perspective of the main character, Hsin Ming, I start paying attention to the dilemma of the white

dolphins. In the lines that Meng-Xin wrote, I could feel the little white dolphin's great sorrow and loss. It was as if I stood right between Hsin Ming and little white dolphin, listening to their conversation and feeling their deep emotions. Meanwhile, I wonder if my actions have ever had any impact on other animals and animal rights.

This is a great story that urges people to help protect animals and nature. In this story, the little white dolphin kept calling in Hsin Ming's dream, and that made Hsin Ming ask her father to help her rescue the white dolphin. They met people who also cared about the issue of animal rights and they took action to rescue the little white dolphin. With effort from Hsin Ming, her father and the crowd of spectators, the little white dolphin survived. Just like the anxious calling from Hsin Ming, current environmental issues are urgent and can't be postponed. We certainly need to do something to improve and protect our environment.

Through Meng-Xin's acute mind and graceful literary writing, we embark on a real but also dreamy journey with little white dolphin. This meeting reconnected me with nature. Perhaps, people with pure and kind hearts like Hsin Ming can raise awareness by encouraging others to care for nature and take responsibility for environmental conservation. I hope we can build a dream world. Let's take action together.

— Kuo-Mei-Hsiu, Elementary School Teacher
Lecturer of Caterpillar Philosophy for Children Foundation

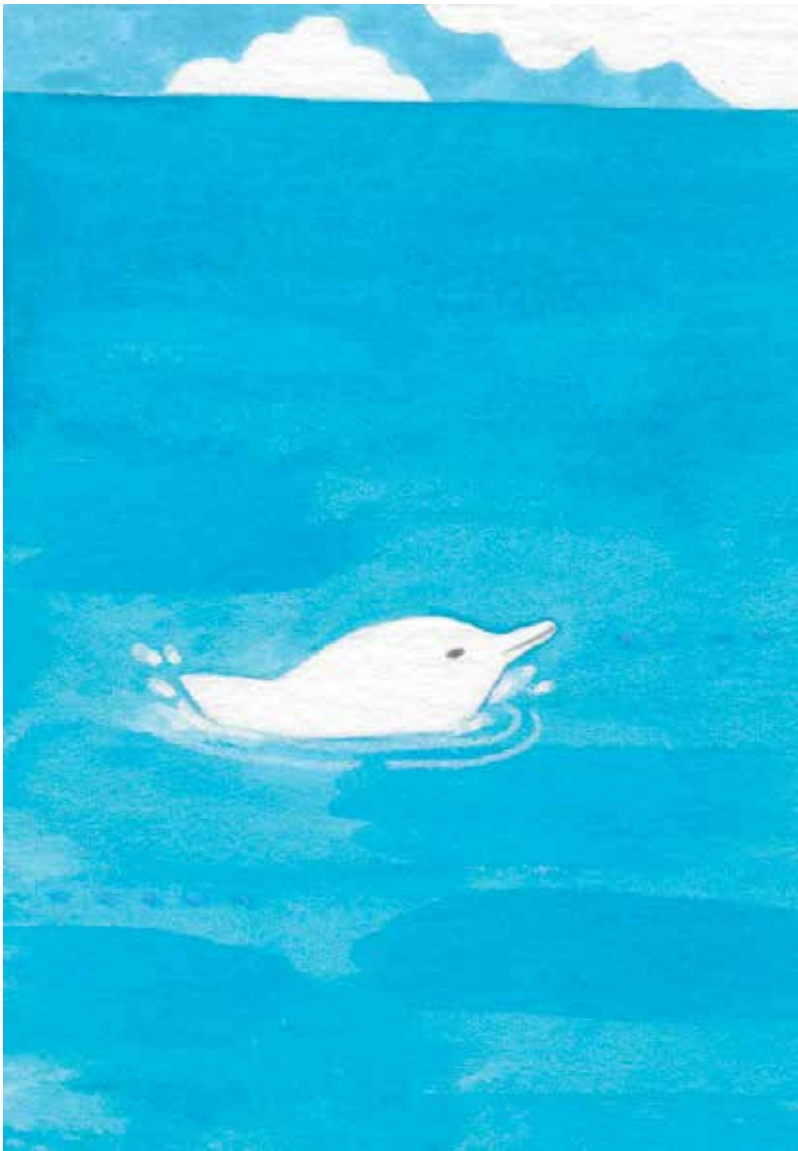


Hsin Ming was a girl who loved to observe animals.

Creatures on the land, in the air, and near the sea were all friends of Hsin Ming.

One day, Hsin Ming arrived at a beautiful beach with her family. They took a walk along the beach and enjoyed the cool sea breeze.





Hsin Ming saw a lovely white dolphin in a distance. The dolphin was jumping out of the water and started to spin around as if performing for Hsin Ming. Hsin Ming and her family waved at the white dolphin and cheered for its dance at the top of their lungs.

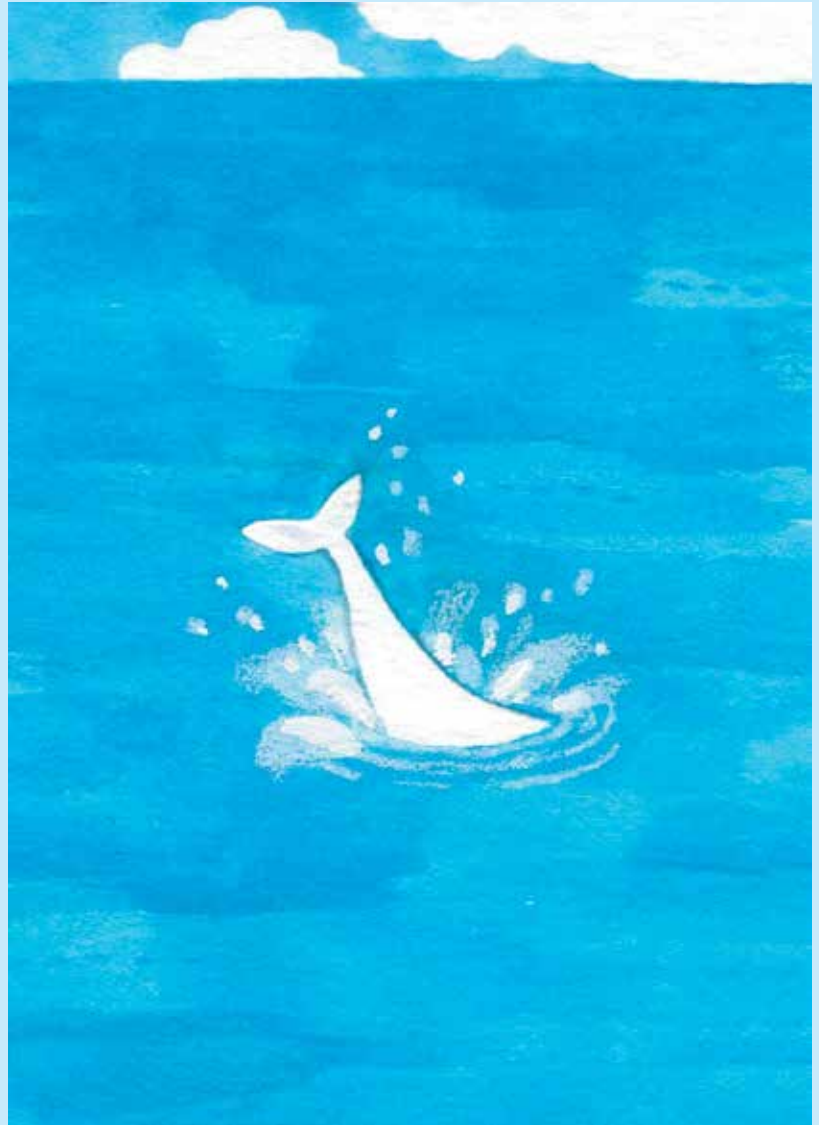
The sea breeze continued for a long time. Hsin Ming looked out at the white dolphin as it jumped to and fro on the surface of the ocean. It seemed unwilling to swim closer towards her. Nonetheless, Hsin Ming felt as if the white dolphin were trying to tell her something. She listened carefully... And she was right! She started to understand what the white dolphin was saying.



Hsin Ming greeted the white dolphin: “Hello! You can call me Hsin Ming or Hsin Hsin. Why are you here? I rarely see white dolphins in this area!”

Slowly, the white dolphin approached her and started to speak: “Hello Hsin Hsin! We don’t usually come here. It’s too close to the shore, and we may accidentally become stranded. I wouldn’t be here if it were not for my sister.”





Hsin Ming was surprised. She looked into the eyes of the white dolphin and asked: “Your sister?”

The white dolphin said with a hint of sadness:
“Our family lives in an area deeper into the ocean where it is comfortable and free. I like to play hide and seek with my older brother and sister. They teach me a lot of useful knowledge because they are older than I am.



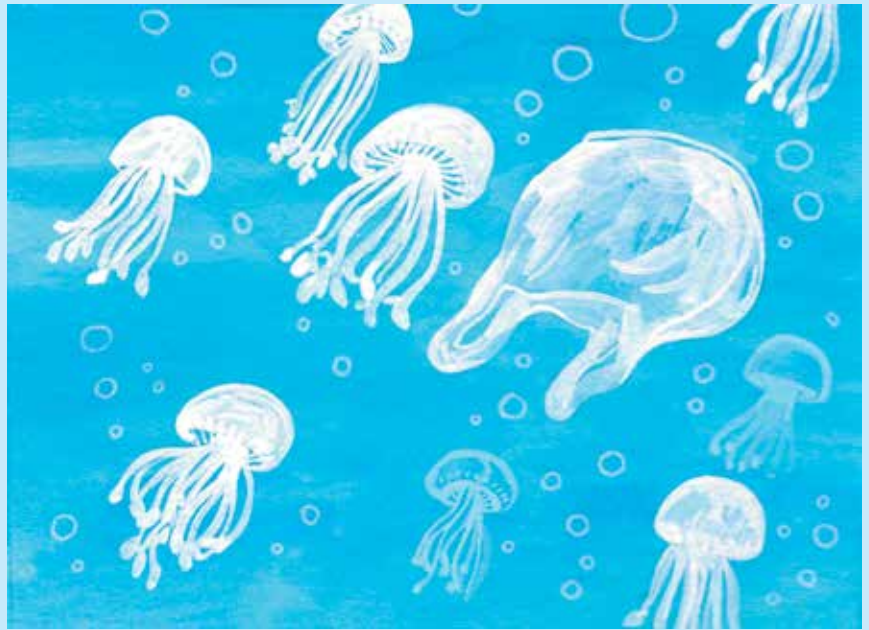


Unfortunately, the amount of food near our home has rapidly decreased. We don't know why. The fishes have disappeared, and we don't know where they have gone. Only large fishes that I have never seen before remain in our area – their bodies are several times larger than my own, and they travel very quickly swimming back and forth. My dad called them boats and he said that they belong to humans. My dad also said that the boats are here to share food with us. My dad is a kind white dolphin. He said that if the humans need food, we will generously share ours with them. We can swim further away to look for food of our own. But one day after my dad had left our home, he was injured by a fast approaching steamship. Now he is unable to help us search for food.”

Hsin Ming sensed deep sorrow in the white dolphin's voice as it continued on with its story.

“One day, my eldest brother went looking for food. When he returned home, he said that he ate several huge jellyfishes. They were large, transparent creatures floating in the water. That night, he had a great pain in his stomach. The doctor said he did not eat jellyfishes, but plastic bags made by humans. My eldest brother is still recovering from the illness that was caused by these plastic bags.





By this time, we realised that our home was no longer the same as before.

My mother announced that we could no longer live in that area, and that she would set off to look for a new home. She promised to come back for the rest of our family once the new home was ready. We have been waiting for so long, but still our mother has not returned. Our neighbours warned us that our mother might have swam too far into the deep territorial waters, where it is very difficult to swim against the strong tide. We are still hoping that she will find her way back someday soon.



Despite our mother's absence, our neighbours advised us to leave our home as well, as they believed that more humans would appear in our area. Not only would the humans rob us of food, they warned, but they would also catch our companions with large nets. I have never seen these so-called nets before, but I became afraid of the increasing number of dangers facing our home.



Our neighbours left in a hurry after talking with us. Only my sister and I are fit to go out and hunt for food, as my father and brother are still healing from their injuries caused by human action. We dare not leave our home, fearing that if we did, our mother would not find us if she came back.





Yesterday, my sister and I were very hungry. My sister told me to stay home while she went out to look for food. Just after she left, our home was seized by a huge black monster. The monster was so big that I couldn't see its eyes. I fled through a large hole in the monster's side. I thought that perhaps this was one of the large nets that my neighbours had warned us about. After my narrow escape, I realised that I had become separated from my family. I decided that I should look for my sister and together we could go for help and possibly figure out a solution. At the very least, it would be better than being alone."

Tears fell down the white dolphin's face. It went on to say: "Hsin Hsin, are you a companion of the humans? Can you tell the humans that we do not disturb anybody, and that we are happy to share our food? Can they stop harming us? Can they give our home back to us? Please?"

Hsin Ming listened closely to the faint voice of the white dolphin. Suddenly, she woke up. She was in her dad's car. She knew that her conversation with the white dolphin was not a dream, and that it was out there, jumping out of the surface of the sea and asking for help. Hsin Ming did not want to wait a single moment longer before helping the white dolphin, as the waters were only becoming more and more dangerous for marine life. "What can be done? What can I do?" Hsin Ming asked herself.

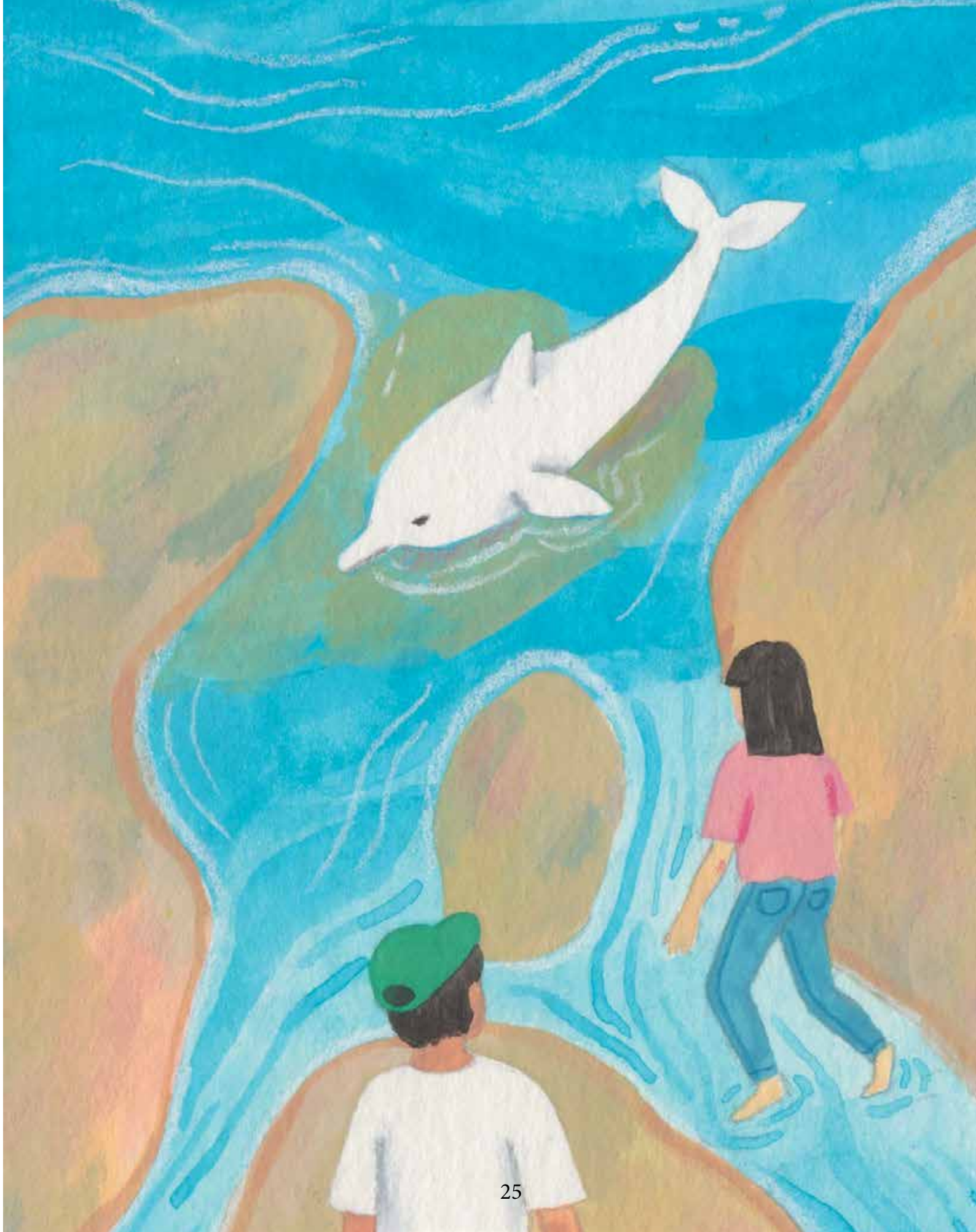




The car sped along the coastal drive as the waves splashed onto the shore again and again. Hsin Ming could almost hear the calls of the white dolphin. She rubbed her eyes and looked out to sea. Suddenly, she cried: “Dad! Let’s hurry and save the white dolphin together!” Hsin Ming looked out the window and begged for her dad to return to the seaside where they had taken a walk earlier. She closed her eyes and pleaded for the white dolphin to wait for her until she could find a way to help. Hearing Hsin Ming’s cries, her dad agreed to return to the beach. Before long, the car was speeding down the road toward the estuary, passing a large harbour and a bridge that straddled the river.

At the estuary, Hsin Ming saw a white dolphin in the shallow water by the shore. “Isn’t it dangerous for dolphins to swim this close to the water’s edge?” she wondered. As Hsin Ming approached the shore, she saw that it was larger than the white dolphin she had spoken with earlier. Suddenly she realised that this was the white dolphin’s sister, and that it was in danger!





Hsin Ming called out to the sister dolphin: “My name is Hsin Ming and I am here to help you! I met your sibling earlier today and I will make sure that you are reunited with your family very soon!” The sister dolphin looked scared as she splashed around in the shallow water, but she seemed to be calmed by Hsin Ming’s reassuring words. “Thank you so much, Hsin Ming,” she replied, “because of everything my family has been through, I have grown scared of humans... but I hope that you can help me and that we can be friends.”





Hsin Ming was touched by the sister dolphin's willingness to befriend her, even after all the hardships she had experienced. At that moment, Hsin Ming vowed to find a solution so that marine life and humans could share the waters in harmony.

However, Hsin Ming's first task was to save the sister dolphin and return her to her family in the sea. She ran back to her dad and asked him to contact the police and tell them that there was a dolphin in trouble. Soon, the police arrived with a marine mammal rescue team. Some people were wearing life vests and others came from the water driving boats. Dozens of small boats gathered at the far end of the estuary, while a group of people approached the white dolphin from the water's edge to try to guide the lost dolphin back to the sea.



Hsin Ming and her family watched from afar, careful not to interrupt the work of the people. The sister dolphin was clearly distressed by the fury of people and equipment that gathered around her. Hsin Ming called out quietly as the marine mammal rescue team worked to set her free: “Don’t worry, just try and relax. These people are here to help you so that you can return to the sea safe and sound!” The sister dolphin was comforted by her words. A member of the rescue team noticed that the sister dolphin seemed to respond to Hsin Ming’s encouragement, and he asked Hsin Ming to come closer and continue to coax the dolphin back into the water.

They worked hard for a long time and seemed to have hope of succeeding. The sister dolphin did a few triple jumps, creating some white waves in the shallow water. The sister dolphin then submerged into deeper water, revealed a large part of her body and back, shook her tail, and started to swim back to the sea.





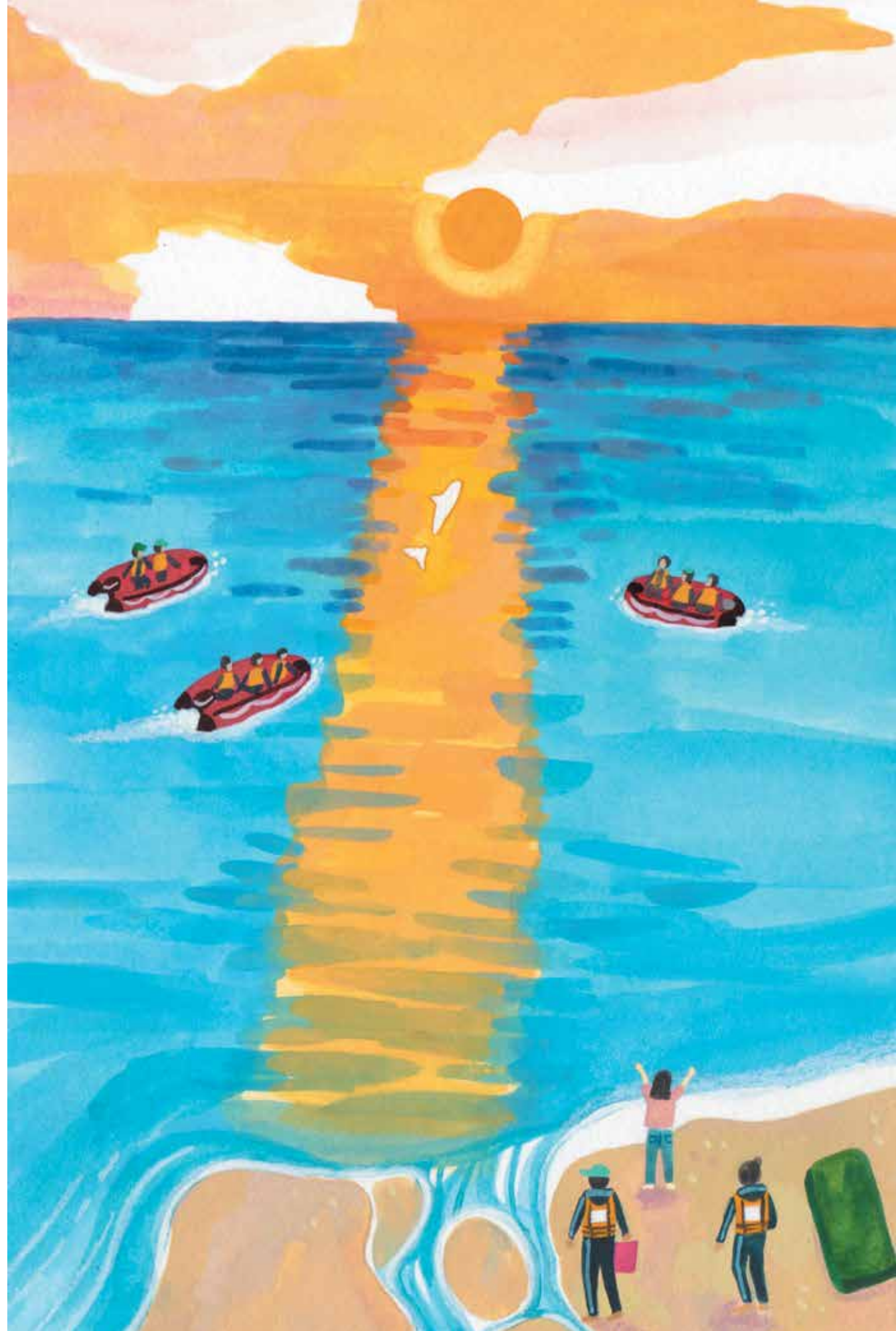


Hsin Ming silently wished for the white dolphin's sister to swim back to the ocean and reunite with the white dolphin. Hsin Ming cried out: "Just a bit longer, white dolphin! Your sister is on her way back to you! You can return to the ocean together and not be alone anymore!"

The marine mammal rescue team member who had asked for Hsin Ming's help called her over. "Are you the girl who called us in to the rescue?" he asked. "Yes," Hsin Ming replied, "and I want to continue to work with your rescue team to improve the lives of the white dolphins and ensure that humans do not endanger their homes and threaten their species!" The rescue team member looked at Hsin Ming with admiration. "You seem to have a lot of passion for marine species," he said.

“I recommend that you do some more research on the challenges the white dolphins face, and think about how we could collaborate to help. Meet me at our headquarters next week and we can talk about forming a more permanent solution. How does that sound?” Hsin Ming was overjoyed. She felt optimistic about the future and promised to begin her research right away.





The sun was about to set, and it transformed the surface of the sea into a lovely red colour. On their way back home, Hsin Ming looked quietly to the distant sea waters. “Hey! It’s the white dolphin and its sister!” Hsin Ming cried as she stretched her neck and looked out the window with her eyes wide open. She looked closely and saw a third set of ripples in the water – the mother dolphin had been reunited with her children!



The white dolphin and its family were jumping together in the sea, making tall waves in the water. They cried out to Hsin Ming: “Thank you Hsin Hsin! Your wish for humans to cooperate to save our habitat will be granted, and we will definitely meet again! We will never forget you!”





Hsin Ming quietly vowed to dedicate her free time to saving the habitat of the white dolphins. She wanted to educate people about how enchanting white dolphins are, and about the dangers they face because of human action. In her research, Hsin Ming discovered the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. She was delighted to discover Goal 14: to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. Hsin Ming was inspired by the UN's global effort to manage oceans carefully, in order to ensure a sustainable future for both human and marine life.



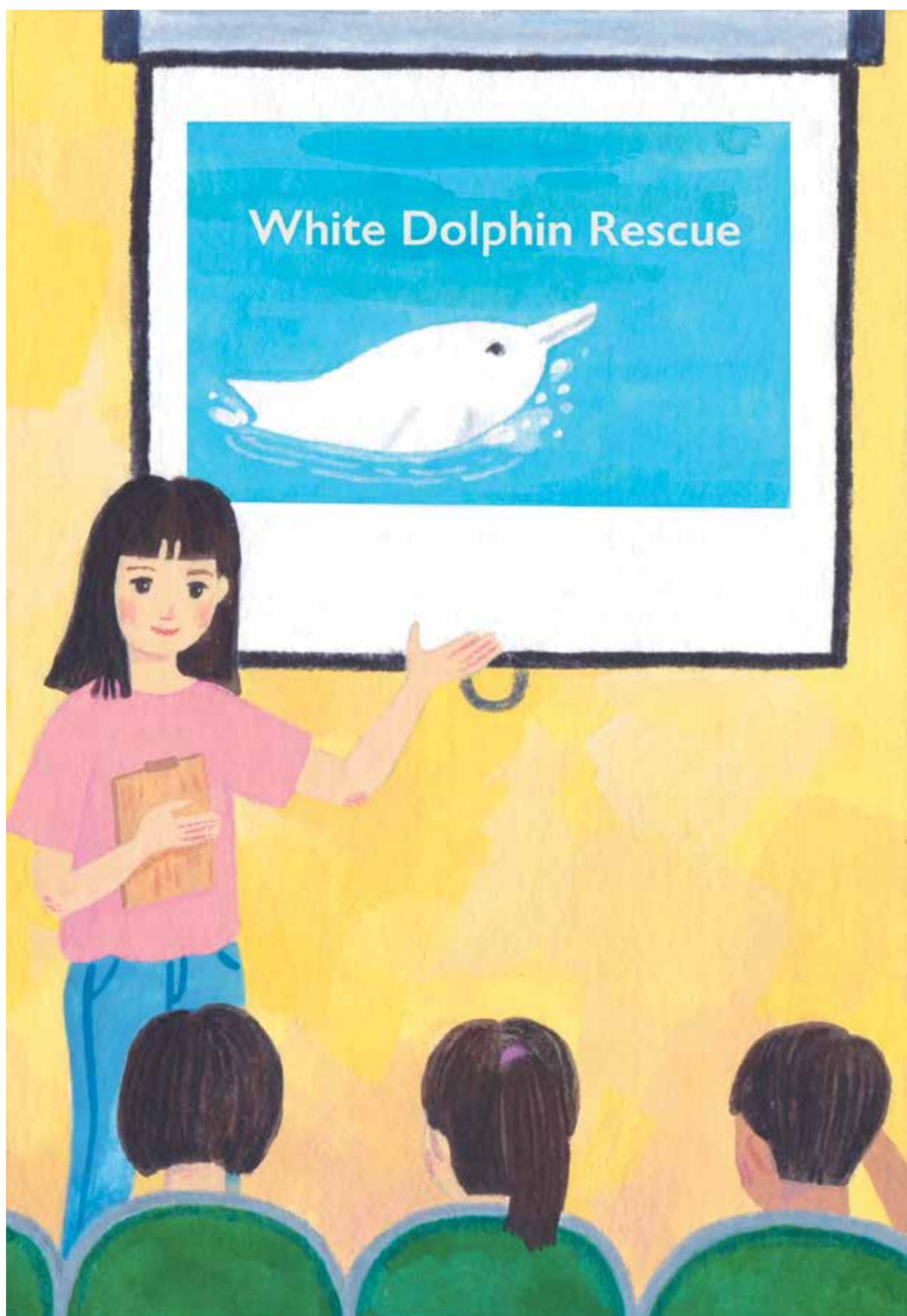
The following week, Hsin Ming met with the marine mammal rescue team and presented the idea of creating a Youth Eco-Coastguard to serve the needs of marine mammals in their area. The Youth Eco-Coastguard members would be responsible for educating the community on the dangers that white dolphins and other sea mammals face as a result of human action. The marine mammal rescue team were thrilled at the idea of having a team of young ambassadors to help them with their mission, and asked Hsin Ming to quickly start to work on making her plan a reality.

Hsin Ming's initiative was very popular among local school children, and she and her new teammates sought help from teachers, classmates, local politicians, and biological experts, in order to solve the problem of the white dolphins as a community. The goal of the Youth Eco-Coastguard was to protect the habitat of the white dolphins, so that all the white dolphins around the world could continue to exist in harmony with humans and other species. They advocated for better policies to protect the white dolphin's habitat, and raised the awareness of the local community to encourage them to join in the effort to protect life below the water.



Hsin Ming's work to help marine mammal life still continues today, and her wish for her community to become eternal friends of the white dolphin became a reality. Every so often, Hsin Ming reflects back to the beginning of her journey. She pictures that fateful evening when the family of white dolphins was reunited. When Hsin Ming visits the seaside today, she can observe large families of white dolphins, jumping freely together with beautiful moves, making silver splashes that turn into the colour of rubies, glittering with warm and magnificent light from the setting sun.

















about the author



Zhuo, Meng-Xin is an eleven-year-old girl who is fond of reading, sporting and mountain-climbing. She also loves to ponder life and appreciate the beauty of nature while enjoying a quality stroll outdoors.

Meng-Xin wrote the *The White Dolphin* at the young age of nine and later worked on tales about various wild animals. She realizes that caring for wildlife means not interfering with their lives but offering them the most natural habitat. Therefore, Meng-Xin, being an animal lover, insists on not raising any puppies at home. She would rather bump into animals in the wild by chance than see them confined in the zoo. As for rarely-seen precious species, she can still find ways to meet with them, in a vivid wild-life documentary film.

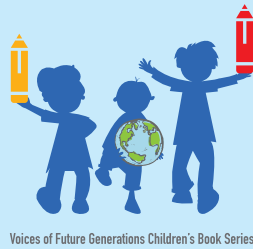
Meng-Xin enjoys reading. By becoming engrossed in the work of others, she gets deeply caught into fantasy worlds and follows the ups and downs that the main characters go through. “That’s the fascination of reading,” she says. Meng-Xin is delighted to learn that people fancy her first story about the white dolphin. Thanks to her work, readers will now notice the struggles of the streamline sea mammals and pass the message on to their community. She hopes that as a result, more and more people will come forward to express their concern about sea creatures.

“It’s such a relief to know that I’ve done a good deed to help the white dolphin and their natural habitat.” Meng-Xin.

about the illustrator



Li-Wen Chu was born in a beautiful mountain village of East Taiwan in 1989. Ever since Li-Wen can remember, she has been traveling with her family throughout Taiwan, visiting remote mountains, beautiful valleys, and the stunning coastline. As a child, she spent most of her time exploring this wonderful world. Li-Wen's dad is an amateur calligrapher and seal-cutting artist. He was also her first mentor in both drawing and writing. After graduating with a BA in fashion design, Li-Wen decided to leave her sweet, cozy hometown for an adventure and decided to study illustration at the University of the Arts in London. She completed a MA at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge School of Arts, where she devoted herself to children's book illustration. Li-Wen loves to draw harmonious landscapes, botanical patterns, and happy characters, as well as write stories for picture books. Outside of illustrating, she can be found reading, travelling, and dancing to music.



Voices of Future Generations Children's Book Series



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The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

All children are holders of important human rights. Twenty-five years ago in 1989, over a hundred countries agreed on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the most important human rights treaty in history, they promised to protect and promote all children's equal rights, which are connected and equally important.

In the 54 Articles of the Convention, countries make solemn promises to defend children's needs and dreams. They recognize the role of children in realizing their rights, which requires that children be heard and involved in decision-making. In particular, Article 24 and Article 27 defend children's rights to safe drinking water, good food, a clean and safe environment, health, and quality of life. Article 29 recognizes children's rights to education that develops personality, talents and potential, respecting human rights and the natural environment.

— *Dr. Alexandra Wandel*
World Future Council



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The UN Sustainable Development Goals

At the United Nations Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, governments and people came together to find pathways for a safer, more fair, and greener world for all. Everyone agreed to take new action to end poverty, stop environmental problems, and build bridges to a more just future. In 283 paragraphs of *The Future We Want* Declaration, countries committed to defend human rights, steward resources, fight climate change and pollution, protect animals, plants and biodiversity, and look after oceans, mountains, wetlands and other special places.

In the United Nations, countries are committing to 17 new Sustainable Development Goals for the whole world, with targets for real actions on the ground. Clubs, governments, firms, schools and children have started over a thousand partnerships, and mobilized billions, to deliver. The future we want exists in the hearts and minds of our generation, and in the hands of us all.

— Vuyelwa Kuuya

Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL)



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Thanks and Inspiring Resources

'Voices of Future Generations' International Commission

Warmest thanks to the International Commission, launched in 2014 by His Excellency Judge CG Weeramantry, UNESCO Peace Education Research Award Laureate, which supports, guides and profiles this new series of Children's Books Series, including: Ms Alexandra Wandel (WFC), Professor Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger (CISDL), Dr Kristiann Allen (New Zealand), Ms Irina Bokova (UNESCO), Ms Emma Hopkin / Ms Hannah Rolls (UK), Dr Ying-Shih Hsieh (EQPF), Ms Melinda Manuel (PNG), Ms Julia Marton-Lefevre (IUCN), Dr James Moody (Australia), Professor Kirsten Sandberg (UN CRC Chair), Ms Patricia Chaves (UN DSD), Judge Marcel Szabo (Hungary), Dr Christina Voigt (Norway), Ms Gabrielle Sacconaghi-Bacon (Moore Foundation), Dr Alexandra Harrington (CISDL), Professor Carey Newman (First Nations of Canada), Ms Monique Gray Smith (First Nations of Canada), Sheikh Hissa Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum (ELF).

The World Future Council consists of 50 eminent global changemakers from across the globe. Together, they work to pass on a healthy planet and just societies to our children and grandchildren. (www.worldfuturecouncil.org)

United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) which celebrates its 70th Anniversary throughout 2015, strives to build networks among nations that enable humanity's moral and intellectual solidarity by mobilizing for education, building intercultural understanding, pursuing scientific cooperation, and protecting freedom of expression. (en.unesco.org)

The **United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** is the body of 18 independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and its three Optional Protocols, by its State parties. (www.ohchr.org)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. (www.unep.org)

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) envisions a just world that values and conserves nature, working to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. (www.iucn.org)

Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL) supports understanding, development and implementation of law for sustainable development by leading legal research through scholarship and dialogue, and facilitating legal education through teaching and capacity-building. (www.cisdl.org)

Trust for Sustainable Living and its Living Rainforest Centre exist to further the understanding of sustainable living in the United Kingdom and abroad through high-quality education. (www.livingrainforest.org)

Environmental Quality Protection Foundation (EQPF) established in 1984 is the premier ENGO in Taiwan. Implementing environmental education, tree plantation, and international participation through coordinating transdisciplinary resources to push forward environmental and sustainable development in our time.



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About the 'Voices of Future Generations' Series

To celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Voices of Future Generations Children's Book Series, led by the United Nations and a consortium of educational charities including the World Future Council (WFC), the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL), the Environmental Quality Protection Foundation (EQPF), the Fundacion Ecos and the Trust for Sustainable Living (TSL) among others, also the Future Generations Commissioners of several countries, and international leaders from the UN Division for Sustainable Development, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the UN Education, Science and Culture Organisation (UNESCO), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and other international organizations, has launched the new Voices of Future Generations Series of Children's Books.

Every year we feature stories from our selected group of child authors, inspired by the outcomes of the Earth Summit, the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) and the world's Sustainable Development Goals, and by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) itself. Our junior authors, ages 8-12, are concerned about future justice, poverty, the global environment, education and children's rights. Accompanied by illustrations, each book profiles creative, interesting and adventurous ideas for creating a just and greener future, in the context of children's interests and lives.

We aim to publish the books internationally in ten languages, raising the voices of future generations and spread their messages for a fair and sustainable tomorrow among their peers and adults, worldwide. We welcome you to join us in support of this inspiring partnership, at www.vofg.org.

This is not just a charming story about marine ecology. Through a child's innocent eyes and genuine words, it gradually reveals the mentality of economic dominance in the adult world.

Childlike language has a greater effect upon society than harsh criticism. The dialogue in the book is filled with compassion and understanding to make readers ponder over and over again. As islanders living in a place surrounded by the sea, we should care more about all the marine lives and sincerely treat them well. Let the critically endangered white dolphins leap freely once more and create the most beautiful waves in the ocean.

• This is not merely a wish for the young, but for all.

Wu, Guo-Yuan

Elementary School Teacher, Waipu

When we focus only on ourselves, there's little possibility for us to understand others – even if we speak the same language. When we perceive and respect things around us with open hearts, connections happen. The good and the beautiful happen. The voice of the little white dolphin gently knocks on the doors of people's hearts, calling to every reader. Like the sea breeze that whispers softly, like the silver splashes tenderly touching the beach, the voice in the story is echoing faintly, but ceaselessly and persistently

Charlotte Lin

Student of M.A. Program, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, National Chung Hsing University

“What did the white dolphin say?” “What happened to the dolphin family?” “Who were the bad people who cast the net and hurt white dolphins?”...My students with special needs took great interest in the story and kept asking questions as I read it aloud. All of them were impressed by Meng-Xin's passion for marine life, and her willingness and courage to help white dolphins. At the end of story, I was so touched to hear my students asking, “What can we do?” The story is not only absorbing but educational.

I, as a teacher of special education school, love to enlighten mentally disabled or physically handicapped students by reading them stories. Usually, my students nod their heads and do not interrupt me with questions while listening to stories. To my surprise, each child was so keen to know what happened to the white dolphins, and finally felt relieved upon learning that all the dolphins were safe and sound. Two days after listening to the story, my students asked me, “Are there other stories?”

I said, “Well, I've got to ask the author.”

They told me, “Please tell Meng-Xin: we can't wait to listen to more stories from you!”

Ruby Lin

Teacher of Kaohsiung Municipal Cheng-Gong Special Education School

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