



# TIPPI



# AND THE WHALE

A SALTWATER TALE

by Gregory Strom

## TIPPI AND THE WHALE

A SALTWATER TALE

On August 9, 2022, a home video went viral and made international news when Tippi, a golden retriever, bound into the water to enjoy a swim with two gray whales that ventured close to the shoreline on Whidbey Island, Washington.

This story is inspired by this remarkable event.

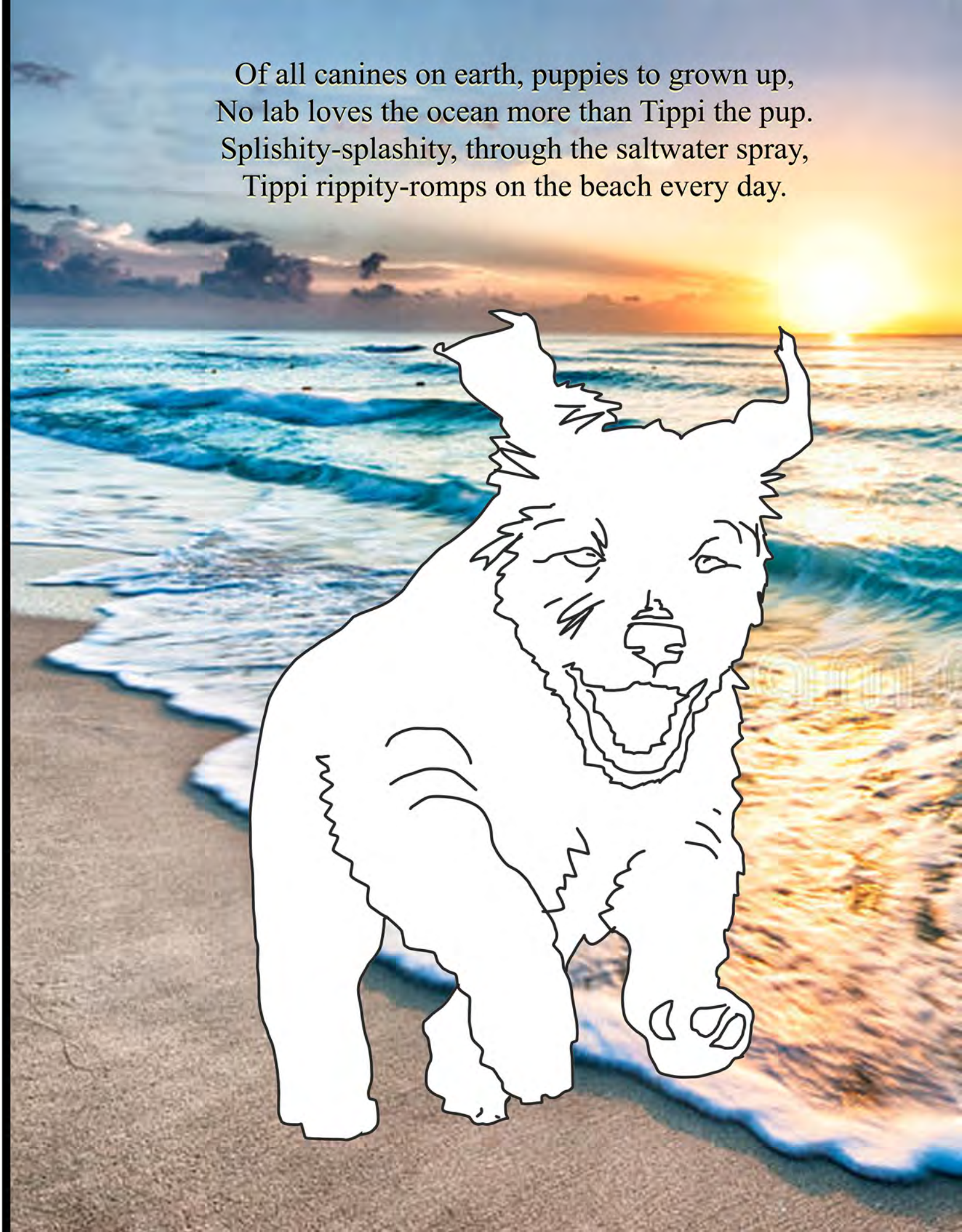




Of all canines on earth, puppies to grown up,  
No lab loves the ocean more than Tippi the pup.  
Splishity-splashity, through the saltwater spray,  
Tippi rippity-romps on the beach every day.

*To Tippi and Donatello.  
Best friends.*

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Video/photo credit: John Deriega





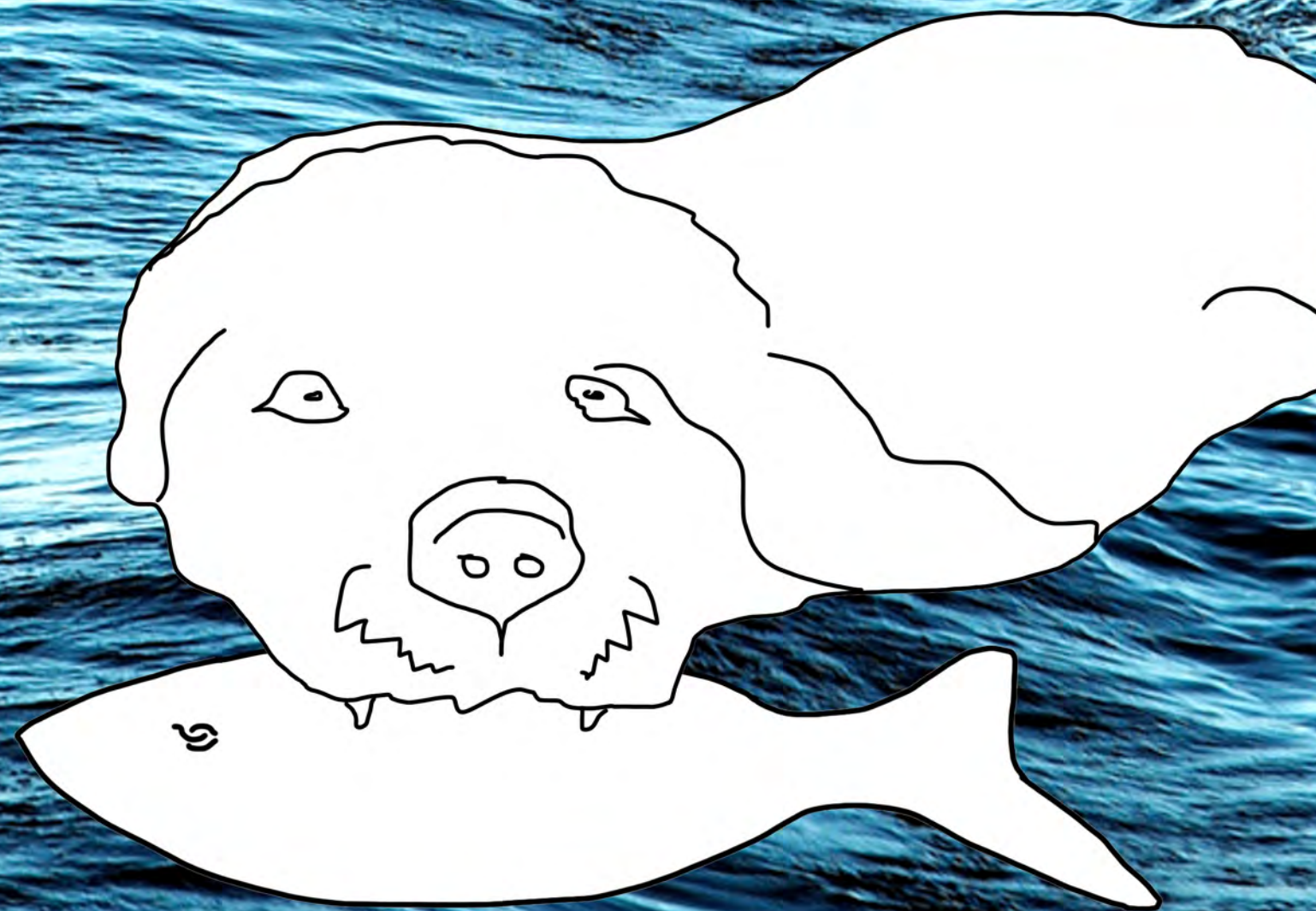
She squiggles and wiggles in the sunny warm sand,  
Dust swirling and twirling in a dust wonderland.  
On her back, then sides, her legs every which way,  
It's a dirt-perfect start to Tippi's best-ever day!



She plays tug-of-war with her friend, Belle de Shell,  
A feisty crustacean mademoiselle.  
They frolic and rollick and pull at the prize  
The crab is incredibly strong for her size!

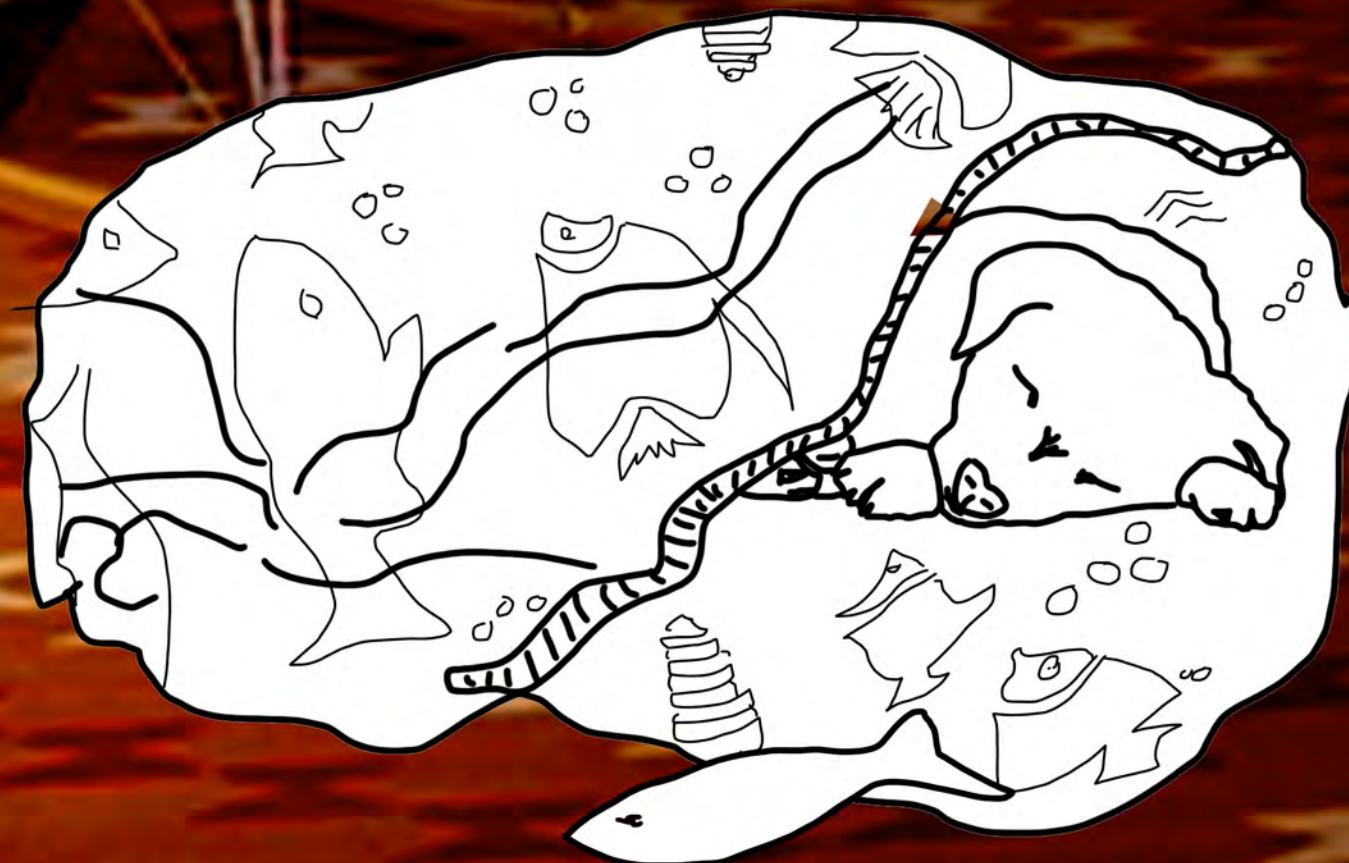






She bobs in the waves and floats with the tide,  
The water is c-c-cold but she's warm-toasty inside.  
She swims with her favorite, most-fun fetch stick,  
Clenched in her teeth like a driftwood drumstick.

After a heyday of hard play Tippi's ready to sleep,  
On her thick comfy bed she curls into a heap.  
She snuggles and cuddles, bathed in moonbeams  
Covered by sea creatures that whisper "sweet dreams."

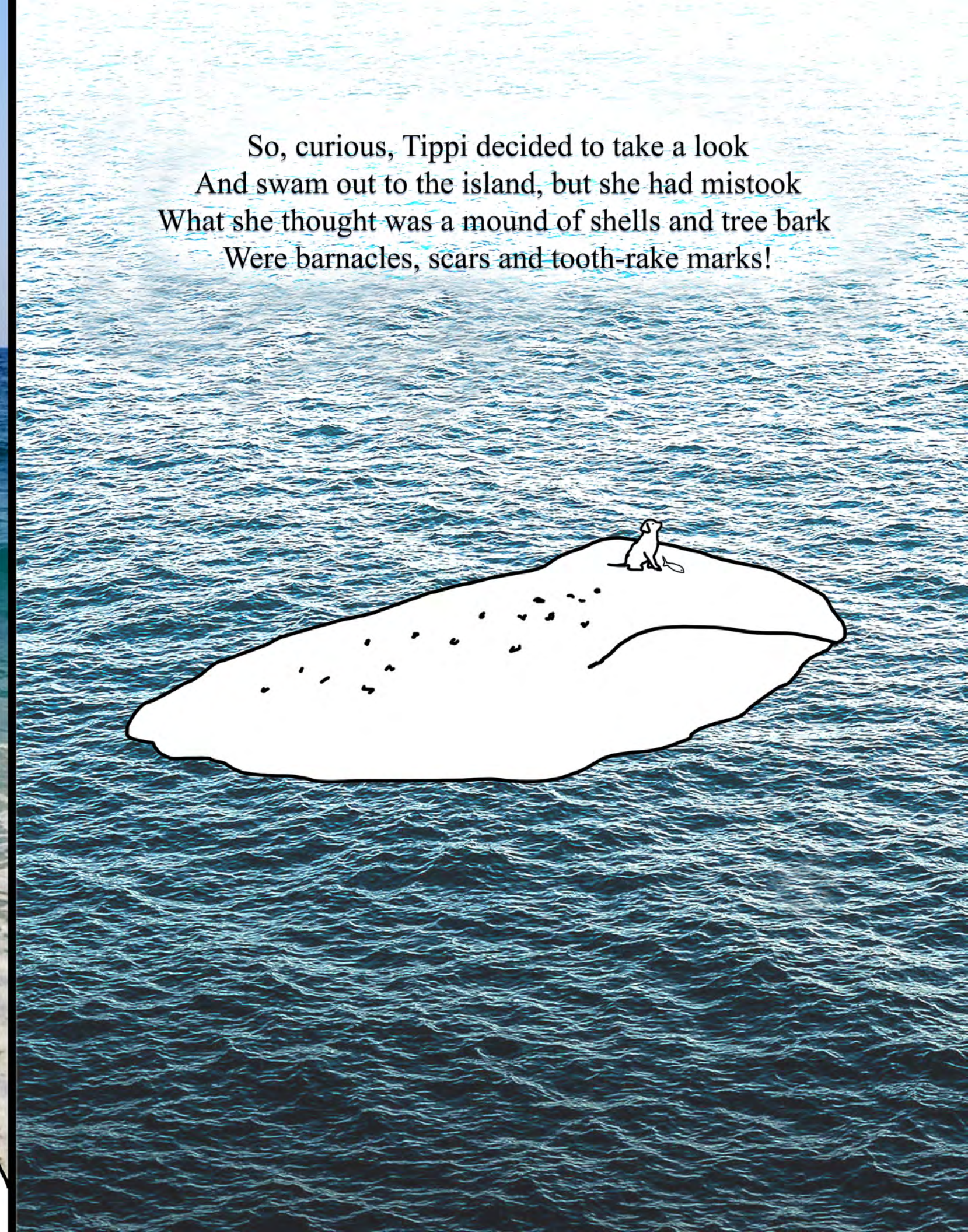




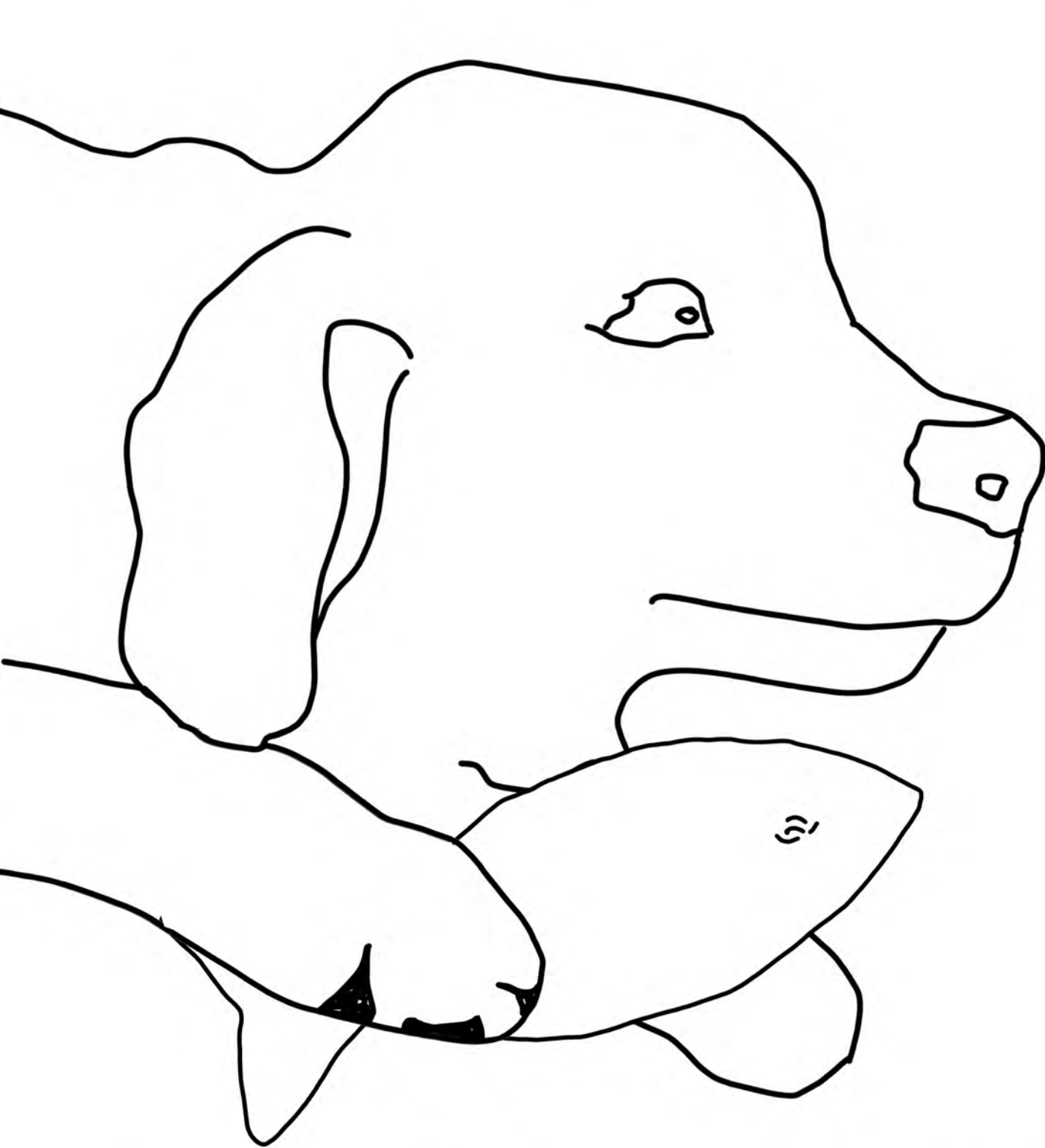
One day, while playing near the maritime foam  
A gray and white island with a cresting dome  
Floated her way slowly, toward the shore.  
Tippi had never seen such a playground before!



So, curious, Tippi decided to take a look  
And swam out to the island, but she had mistook  
What she thought was a mound of shells and tree bark  
Were barnacles, scars and tooth-rake marks!







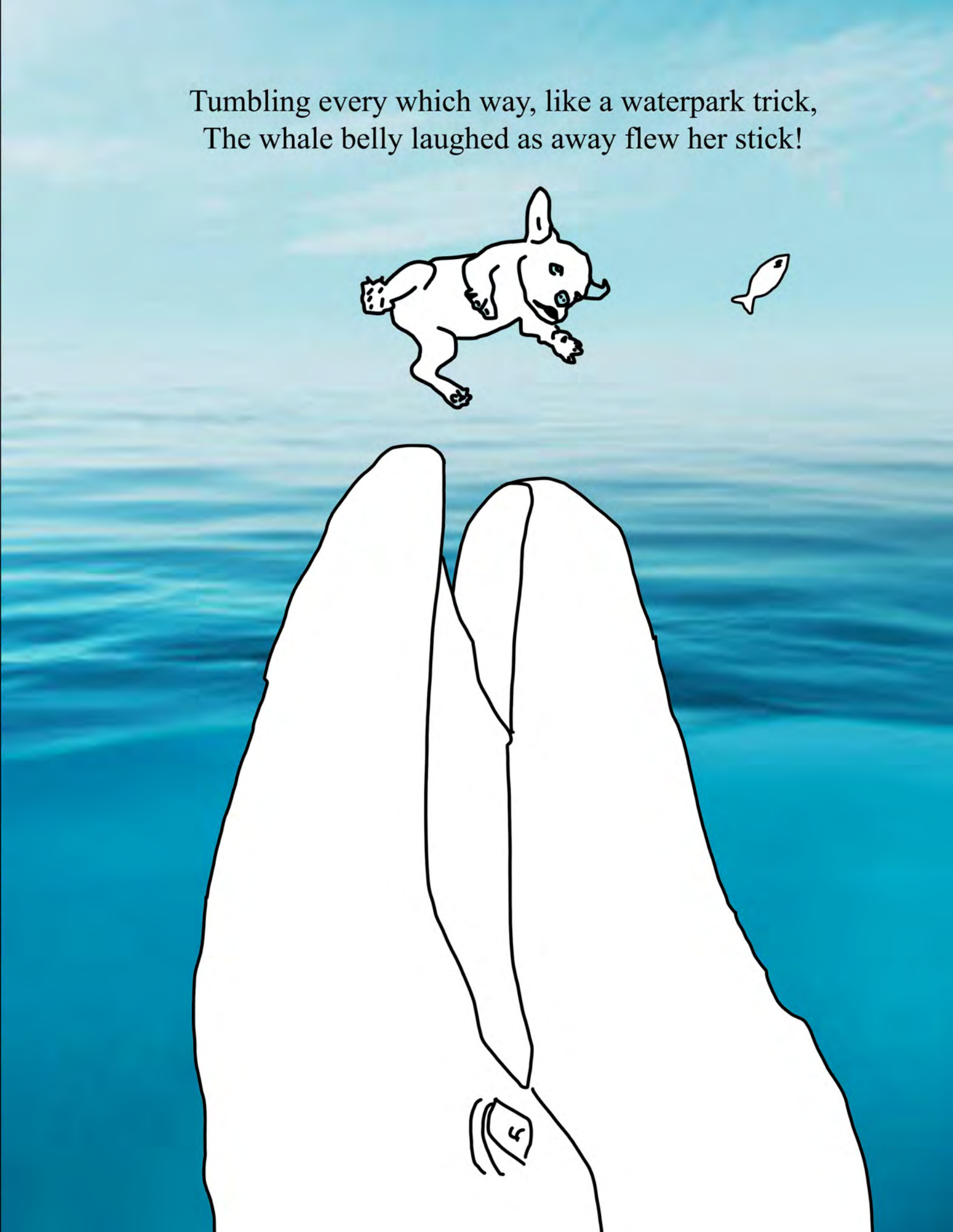
It moved and swayed slowly, what could this be,  
This enormous mystery on top of the sea?  
Then an eye opened slowly of colossal scale,  
Tippi sat on top of a massive gray whale!





Suddenly, with the sound of a thunderous sigh,  
A blast from below sent Tippi sky high!

Tumbling every which way, like a waterpark trick,  
The whale belly laughed as away flew her stick!

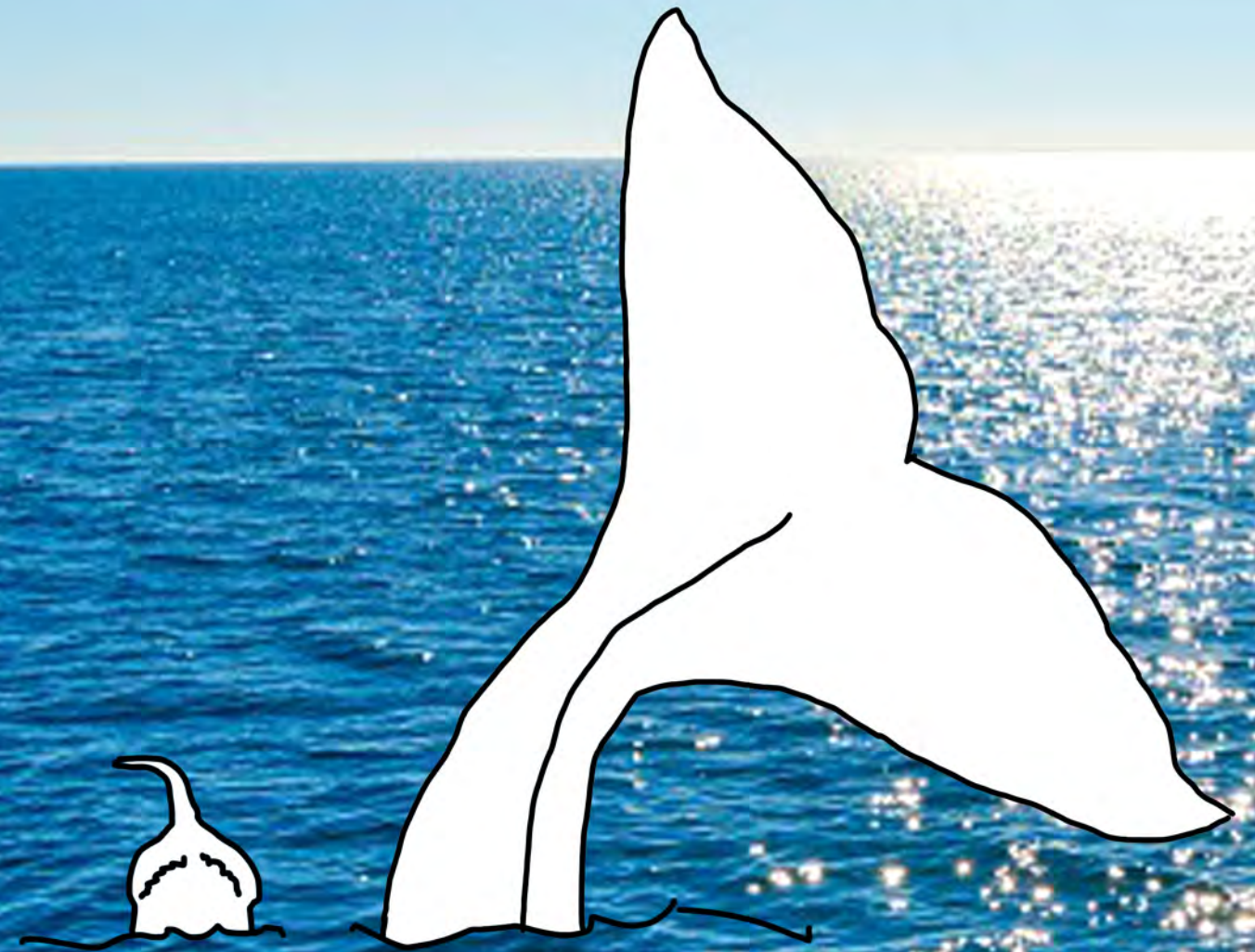




There are mysteries that a dog never could know,  
In the silent underwater world below,  
With a whip and a flip of a huge gray tail  
Tippi's special tour began as a guest of the whale.



The whale picked up speed as it swam through the sea,  
The windy spray in her face made Tippi happy!  
She bore down her paws on the rough surface cling.  
The power of the whale was exhilarating!

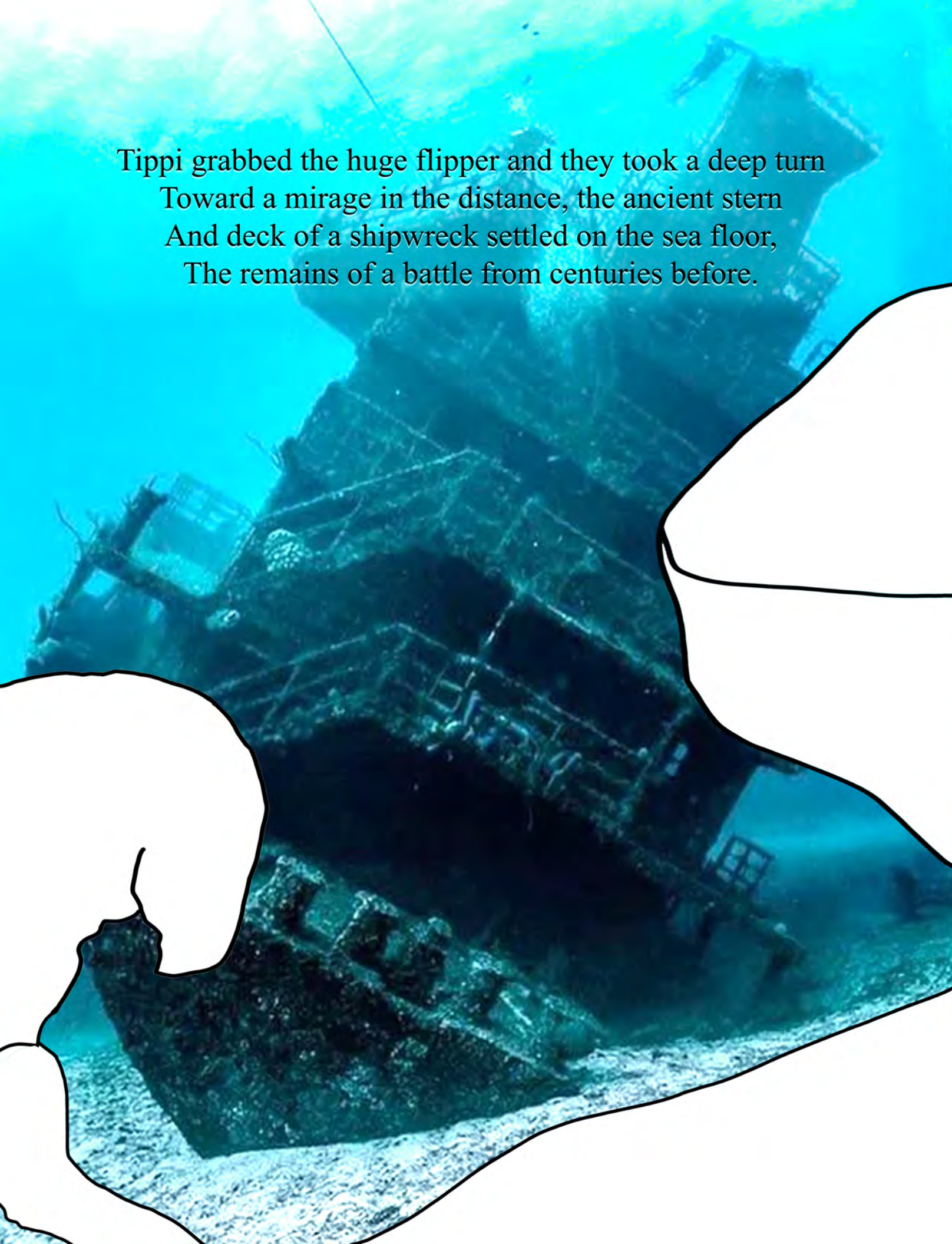




She saw cod fish and walleye, sole, flounder and char,  
Seals of all sizes, sea creatures bizarre,  
Steelhead and bluegill, bass, perch and salmon,  
A community of wild sea creatures all having fun!





An underwater photograph of a large, rusted metal shipwreck resting on the seabed. Sunlight rays penetrate the water from the top left. A white line-art outline of a whale's head and back is superimposed on the right side of the image.

Tippi grabbed the huge flipper and they took a deep turn  
Toward a mirage in the distance, the ancient stern  
And deck of a shipwreck settled on the sea floor,  
The remains of a battle from centuries before.



The whale blew a bubble, the biggest she'd seen,  
Nearly as large as a submarine!  
Tippi tried her best to out blow the great gust  
But her itty-bit bubble was the blip-littlest.



Their adventure was awesome on the ocean's subfloor,  
But the time now came for Tippi's return to shore.  
Across the big tail she tread a barnacles trail  
To the sand on dry land, thanks to the whale!



The gentle giant swam softly, like a sweet lullabye,  
With a wave of its flipper the whale said goodbye.  
Was it saltwater, or could that have been a tear  
In the friendly whale's eye as it disappeared?







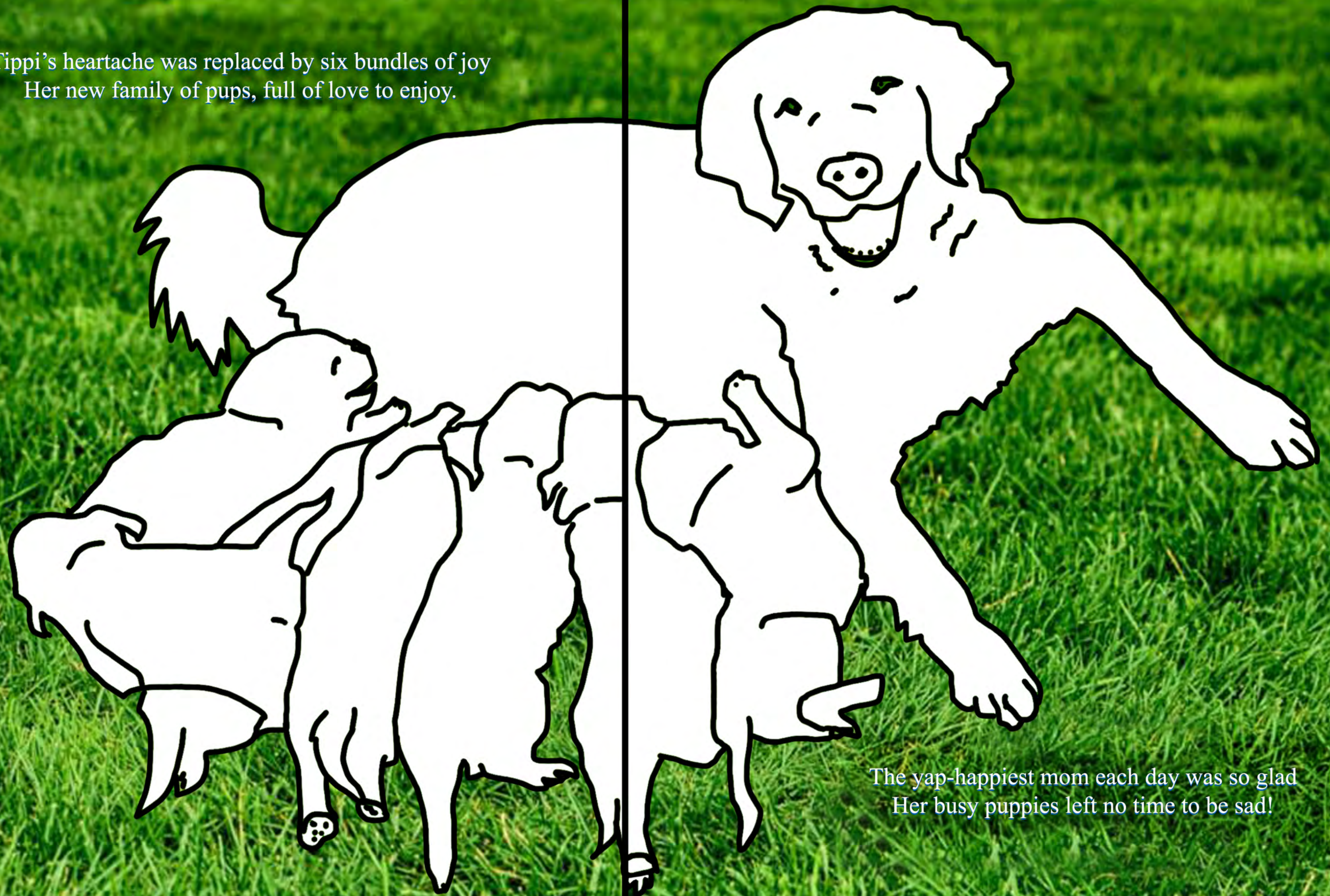
The next day Tippi came to the beach at first light  
With a treat for the whale but, with nothing in sight  
But the waves, her heart sank, she missed her friend.  
She wanted an underwater adventure again.

And so it went every day, with the same sad result.  
Tippi continued to grow and was soon an adult.  
At night, by the fire, the whale swam in her mind  
Through an ocean of friendship, waves gentle and kind.





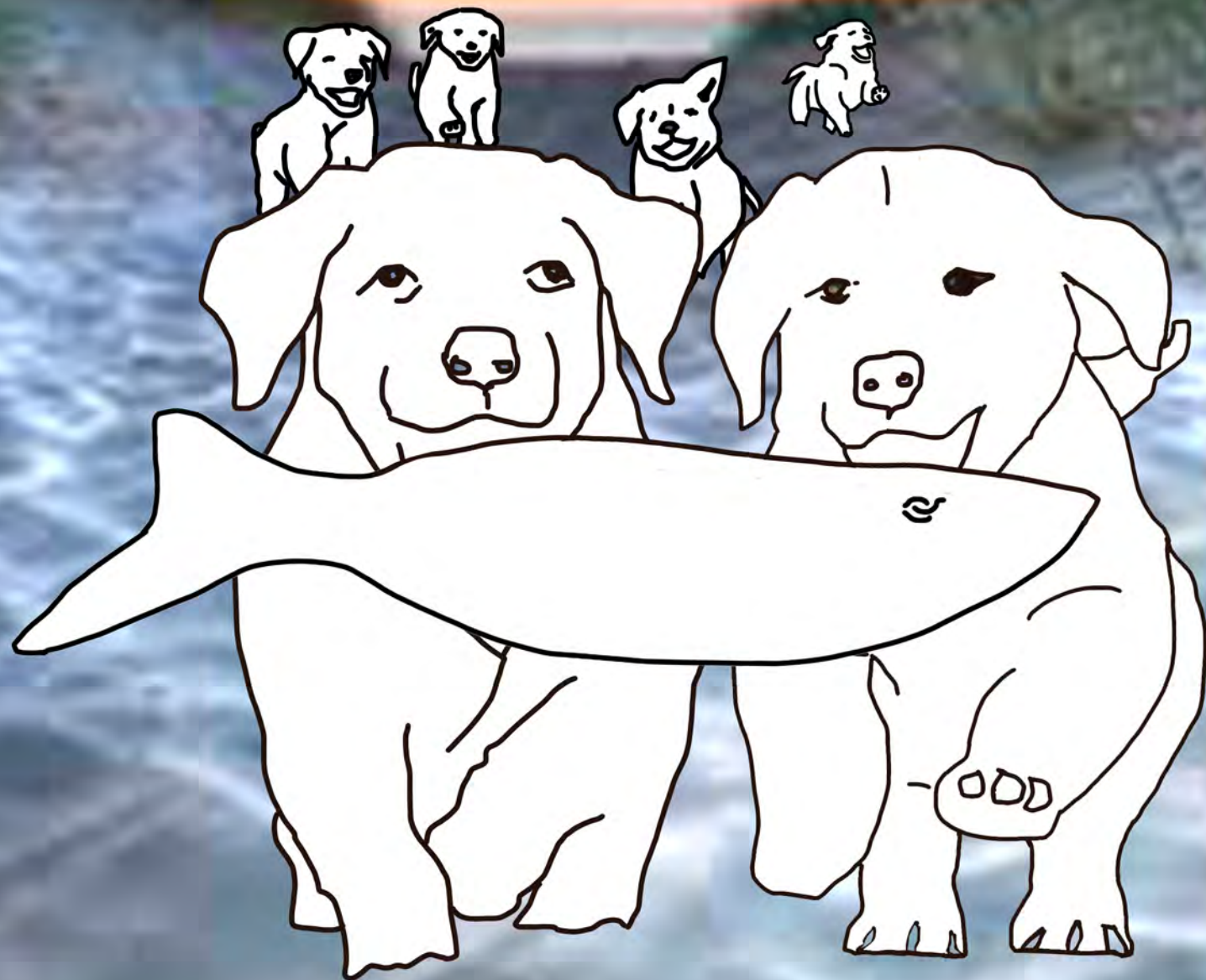
Tippi's heartache was replaced by six bundles of joy  
Her new family of pups, full of love to enjoy.



The yap-happiest mom each day was so glad  
Her busy puppies left no time to be sad!



Then one day Ebb and Flo came home after play  
Carrying something that washed ashore that day.  
It was Tippi's favorite stick that she lost when she flew  
Into the air on the water spout the whale blew!

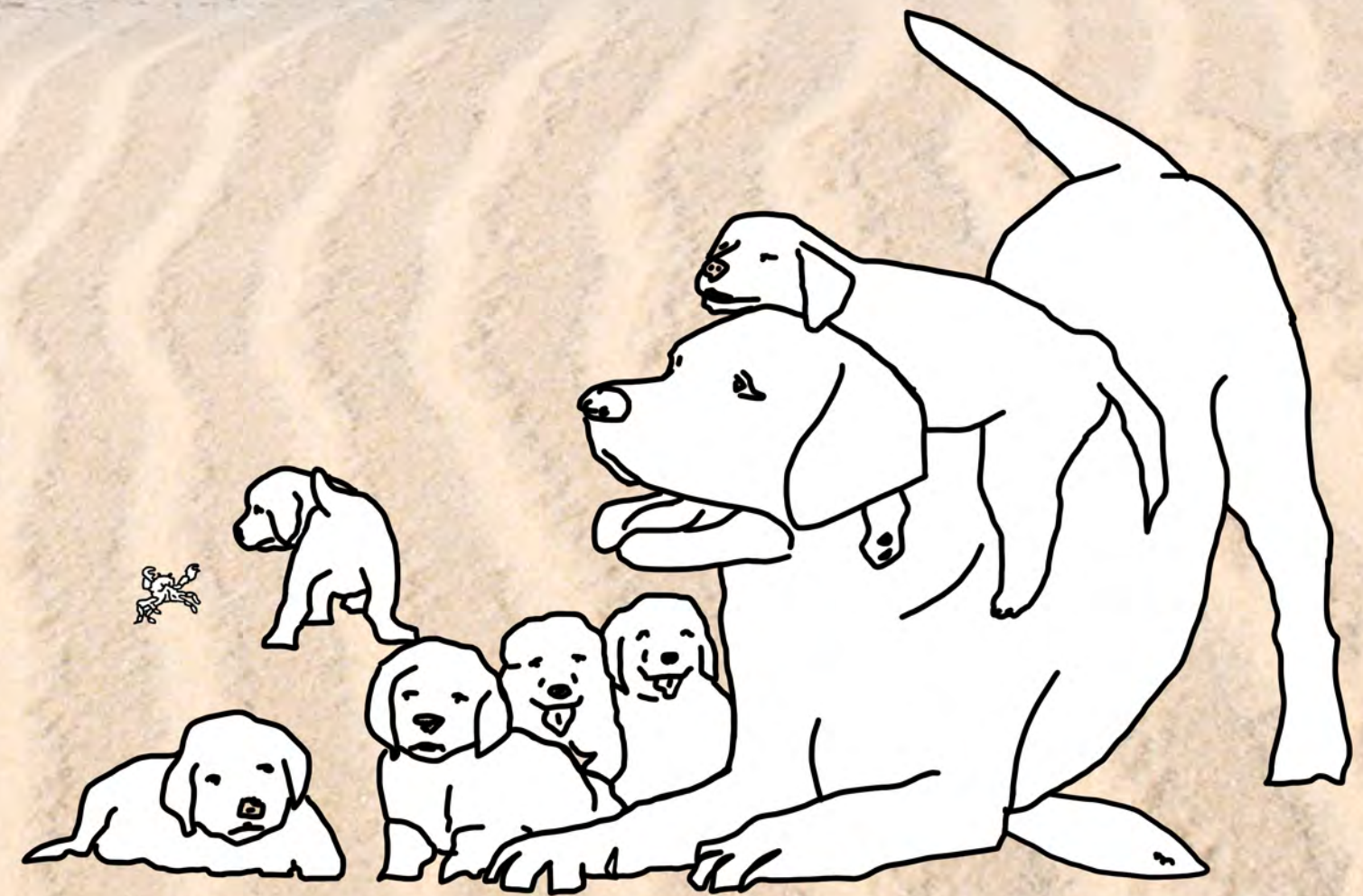


She was shocked and amazed, thrilled beyond belief.  
Could it be possible the reason for her grief  
Had returned to visit the sweet labrador?  
They all rushed to explore what was floating offshore!





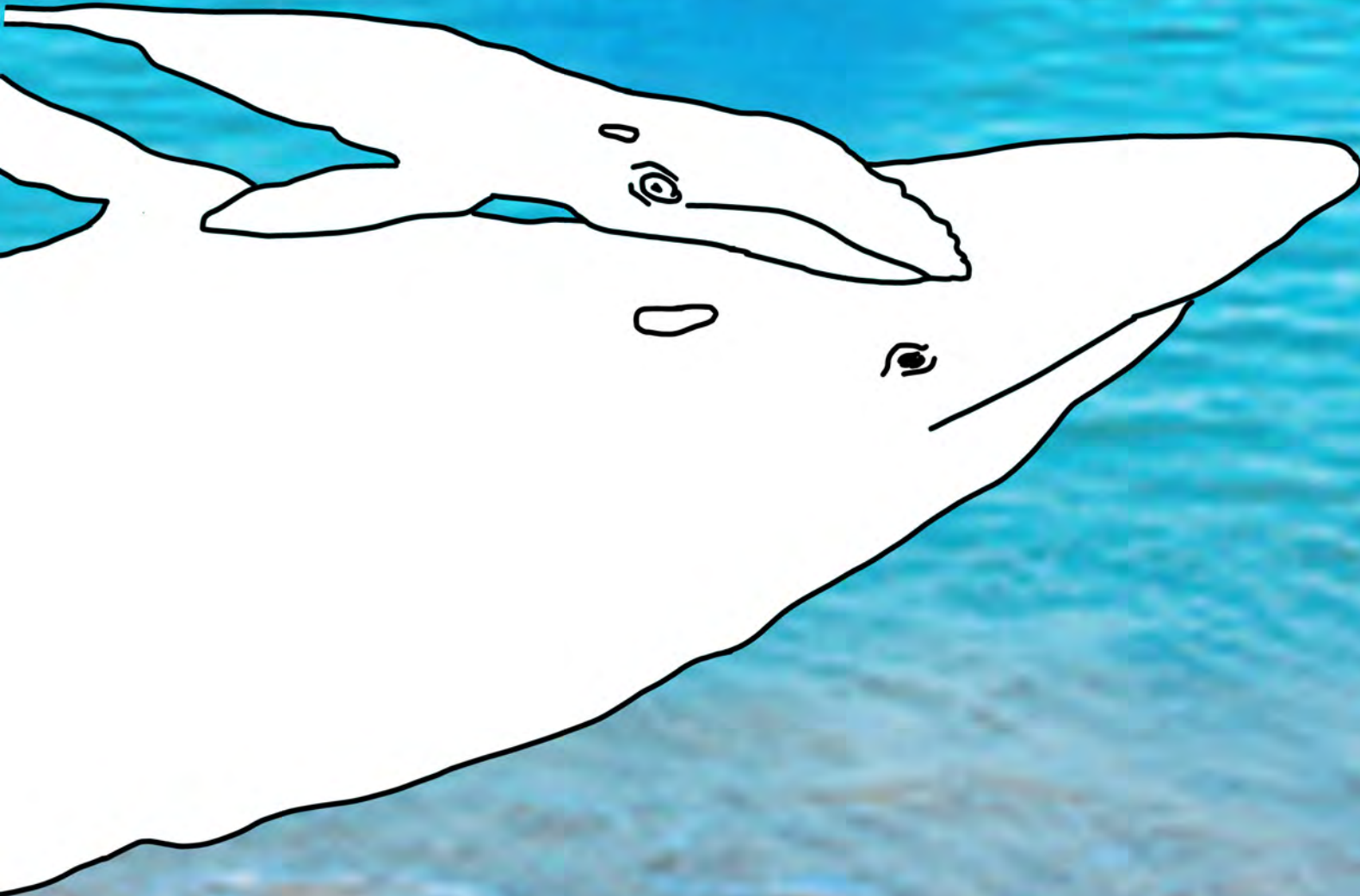
A familiar shape rose up out of the sea,  
White with barnacles, posing magnificently.  
Tippi jumped and twirled and her pups came unglued  
The whale's return filled her with gratitude.



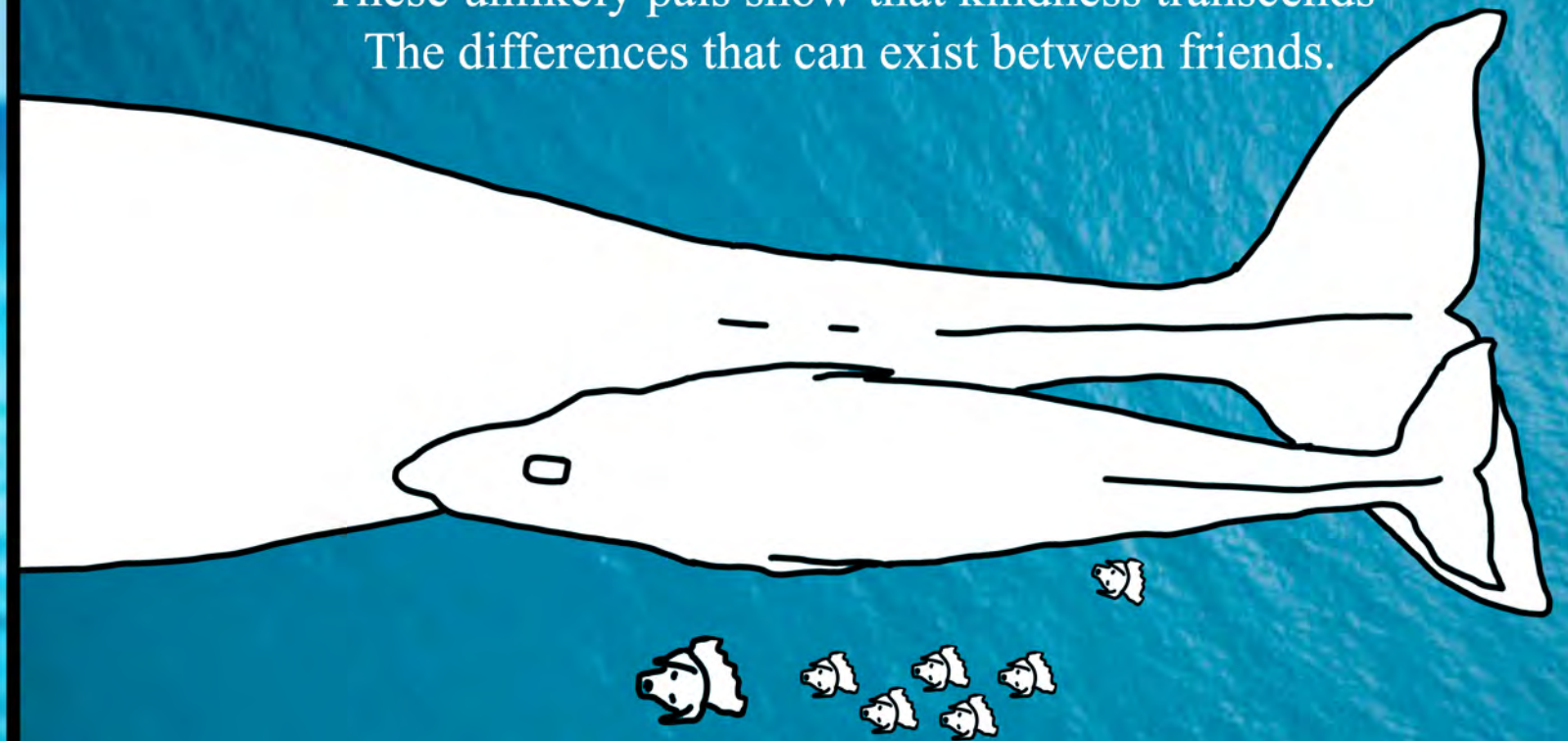
Tippi showed off her pups, Ebb and Flo were the pair  
That found the fetch stick the whale brought back with care.  
Fore and Aft snuggled up next Bog, the shy one  
While Comber had trouble paying attention.



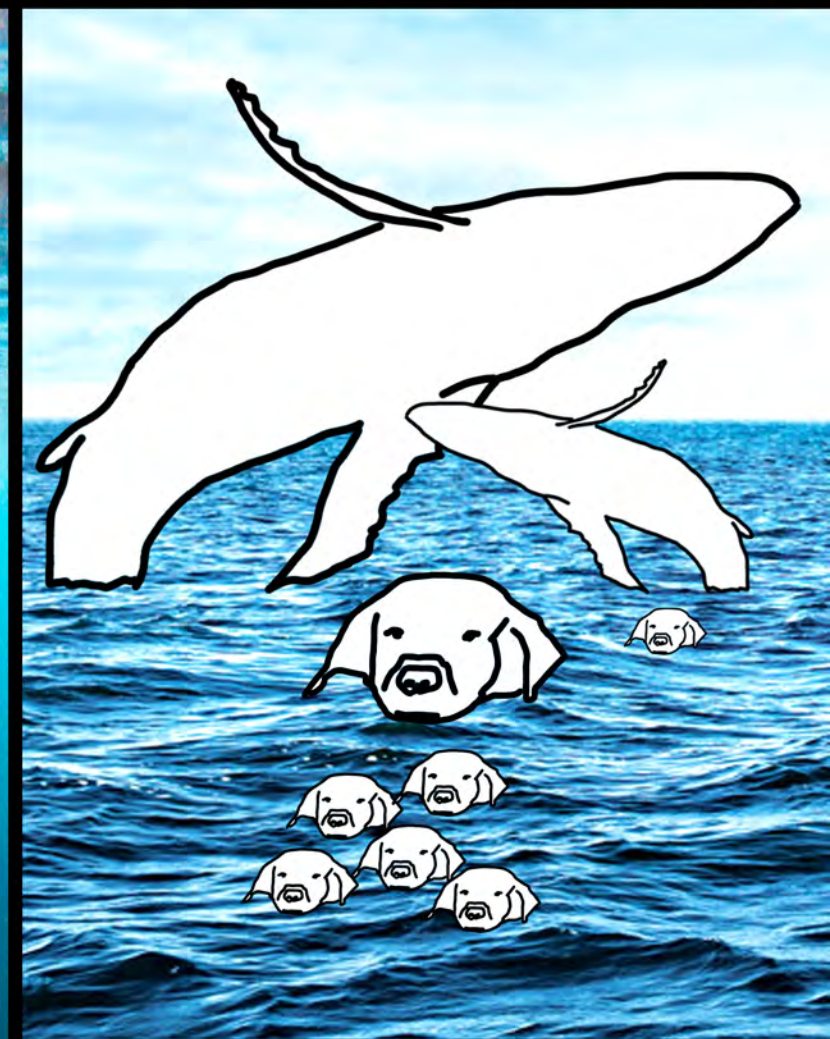
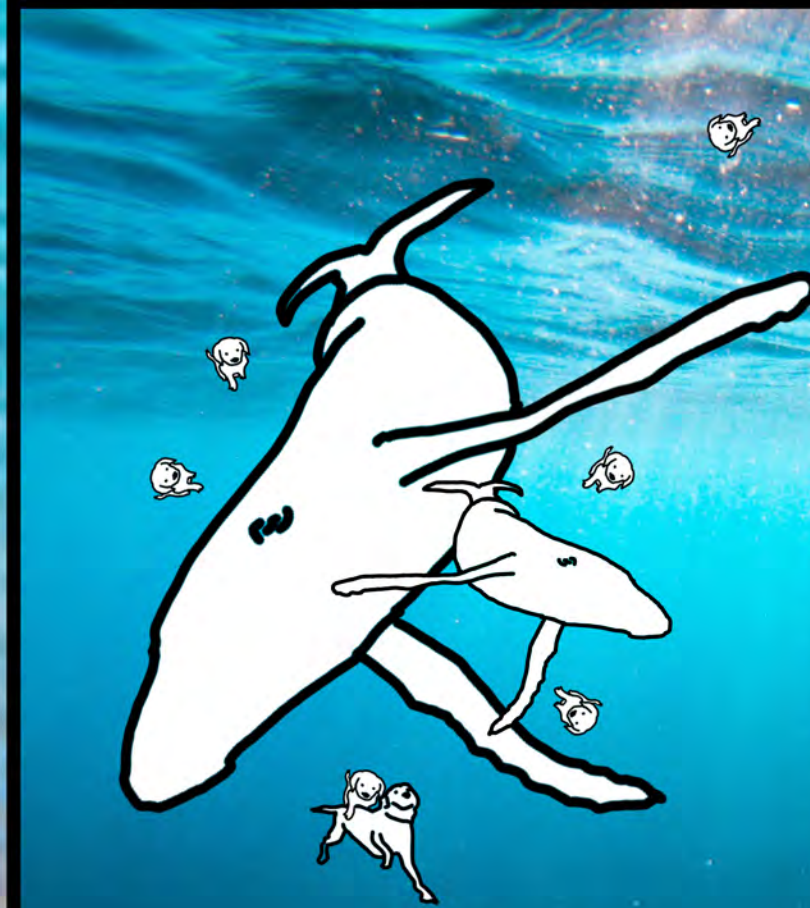
The proud whale turned slowly to reveal her surprise,  
She lifted her flipper, the water began to rise.  
Her new baby calf surfaced, then swam closer to say,  
“I’m your new friend, can you come out to play?”



These unlikely pals show that kindness transcends  
The differences that can exist between friends.



Big or small, land or sea, the best way to be  
Is to act with compassion and think lovingly.





Who could have predicted how life would unfold?  
On the baby's large back tiny paws take hold.  
Nine friends head out, spouting rainbow hearts,  
Sun shining the way, their great adventure starts!





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