

In New Zealand

‘Look, Mum! The holiday home is beside the beach.’ Zoe holds up her phone. ‘Can you see Gemma?’ Zoe’s sister is in the water, swimming.

‘Oh, yes!’ Zoe’s mother Alice says. ‘I see her. Give her my love. That sky looks nice and blue. It’s snowing here today.’ Alice is at home in England.

‘Yes, it’s sunny. Christmas is in summer here in New Zealand!’

Alice smiles. ‘I remember.’ Alice is from New Zealand. ‘I’m making Christmas cake today. I know you love it.’

‘Great! Gemma and I will be home for Christmas. I’ll eat a lot of that cake. But I have to go now. It’s time for breakfast. Fran is making pancakes.’

‘I remember Fran’s pancakes. She puts bananas in them. Dad is cooking dinner here. Be good for Fran, darling.’

‘Yes, Mum. Love you. Bye.’

Zoe ends the video call. She and her sister are staying with their aunt, Fran, in a holiday home. It’s in Mercury Bay in New Zealand. Zoe is fourteen and Gemma is eighteen.

Gemma comes back from the beach. ‘I’m hungry!’ she says.

Fran and the girls eat breakfast on the veranda of the house.

Fran says, ‘Girls, I’m sorry, but I have to work today.’

Fran is a lawyer. She can work online. Her computer is on the dining table. ‘You can go into town and to the beach. But stay together, please.’



Zoe and Gemma walk along the beach.

'I love it here,' Zoe says. 'I want Mum and Dad to be here with us. It's not a family holiday without them.'

Gemma says, 'Yeah. But we're here with Fran, and she's our aunt.'

At the wharf, the girls see fishing boats, tour boats and a little ferry. It goes across the estuary. People are fishing, working on their fishing boats or taking photos. There are lots of tourists in Mercury Bay in summer.

A bird is swimming near a fishing boat.

Zoe laughs. 'It's fishing for its lunch. Everyone fishes here!' She takes a photo of the bird. Then she takes a photo of Gemma. 'Smile!'

A boy says, 'Do you want me to take a photo of you and your friend?' He's about Zoe's age, with dark, curly hair.

'She's my sister!' Zoe says. She gives her phone to the boy. 'Thanks. I can send it to our parents in London.'

He takes the photo and says, 'I'm Danny.'

'I'm Zoe, and that's Gemma.'

Gemma is looking at the boats.

Zoe asks, 'Do you live here in Whitianga, Danny?'

'Yes. And we say *fit-ee-anga*. It's a Māori name.'

'*Fit-ee-anga*. Thanks,' says Zoe.

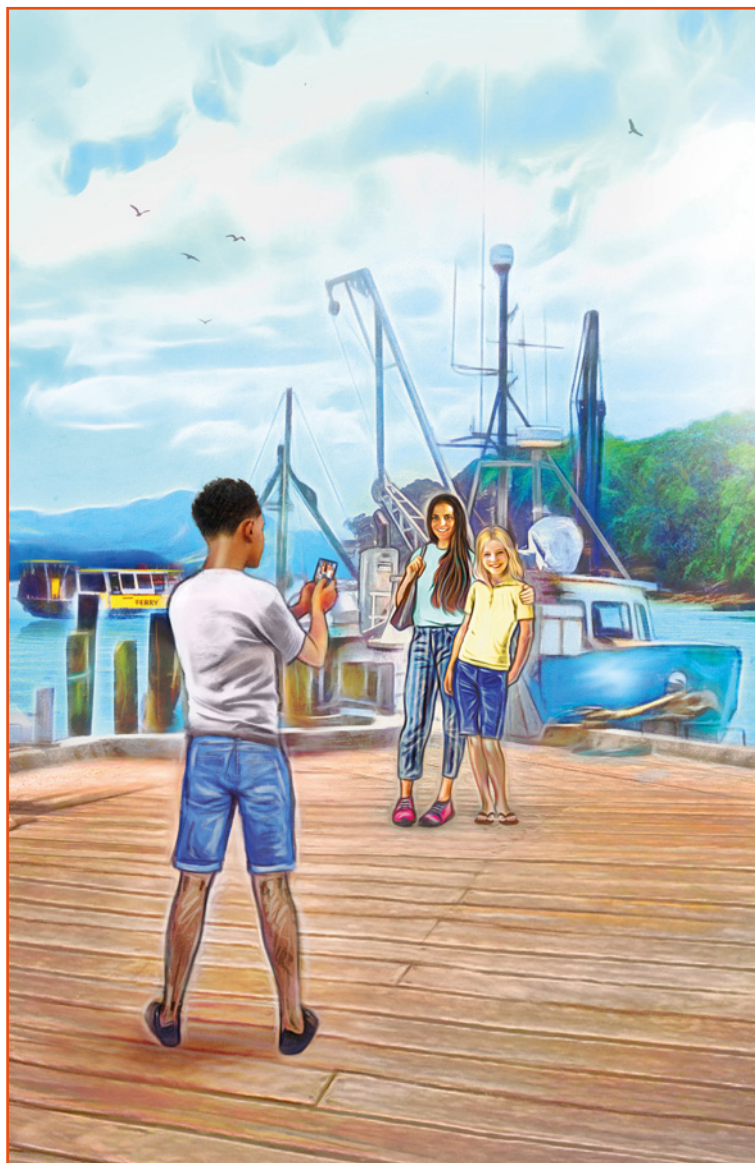
'Danny, do you know everyone in Whitianga?' Gemma asks.

Danny smiles. 'Yeah. It's not a big town.'

'Do you know a man called —?'

Then a man on a tour boat shouts, 'Hey, Danny!'

Danny says to the girls, 'Sorry. That's my uncle. I'll see what he wants. Come and say hello.'



The girls and Danny go over to an orange tour boat. The side of the boat says *Cove and Cave Snorkel Tours*. The man's T-shirt says that too.

The man asks Danny, 'Can you work today? Tom is sick.'

'No, I can't. Sorry, Mac.'

Then Gemma says, 'Mac! Er – hi, Mac. My name's Gemma and I can work today.'

Mac looks at her and asks, 'Can you swim?'

'Yes, I can.'

'Okay, come on.'

Mac and his family

‘Gemma! Wait!’ Zoe says. ‘You can’t. We’re going swimming! We have to stay together!’

‘Sorry, Zoe,’ Gemma says. She steps onto Mac’s boat.

‘I’ll go swimming with you,’ Danny says. ‘Come on, we can get the ferry across the estuary. I love swimming at Front Beach.’

‘Okay,’ says Zoe, but she’s not happy. What is Gemma doing? Zoe doesn’t say goodbye to her sister.

The ferry comes across the estuary and stops at the wharf.

‘Oh, but I don’t have money for the ferry!’ says Zoe.

‘That’s okay. I know the skipper.’

‘Hi, bro!’ calls the ferry skipper.

Danny calls back, ‘Hi, bro!’ He grins. ‘That’s my brother, Liam.’

The ferry takes about five minutes to go across the estuary. Zoe sees the Cove and Cave Snorkel tour boat go into Mercury Bay. Mac is the skipper. Gemma is giving bottles of water to the tourists on the boat.

Danny says, ‘Come on, we have to walk for about ten minutes to get to the beach.’

Zoe and Danny walk along the road to the beach. There are no cars.

‘Are you okay?’ Danny asks.

‘Oh, this holiday is weird. My parents aren’t here, and my sister is being weird. She phones Mum, but she stops talking when I come into the room. And now she’s on the

tour boat. She doesn't like to work, but she's working! And she doesn't know about boats ... it's all very odd.'

'Families can be weird. I have a big family and there are lots of odd people in it!'

Front Beach has white sand and blue-green water.

'What a beautiful beach!' Zoe says.

She and Danny swim.

'Do you like fishing?' he asks.

'I don't know. We don't go fishing in London!'

'Come on, let's go fishing now.'

They go back across the estuary on the ferry.

Danny says to his brother, 'This is my friend Zoe.'

'Do you want to be the skipper, Zoe?' Liam asks.

'Can I?' Zoe goes to the front of the ferry and she's the skipper for a couple of minutes.

Then Liam says, 'Here, I'll take the ferry in to the wharf now.'

Danny runs to one of the fishing boats. An old woman is the skipper there. Danny steps onto the boat and gets two fishing lines.

'Hey!' the old woman calls. 'Aren't you going to give the skipper a hug?'

Zoe is on the wharf. Danny gives the old woman a hug.

'Who's the skipper?' Zoe asks Danny.

'My grandmother!' Danny laughs.

Zoe laughs too. 'Is everyone in Whitianga in your family?'

They sit on the wharf and fish for a couple of hours. They talk and laugh. They watch boats coming and going. They talk to tourists.

'Are you having any luck?' one woman asks.

'No,' says Danny. 'The fish aren't hungry today.'

'Good luck,' says another woman.

'Thanks,' says Zoe. She says to Danny, 'You meet lots of people fishing!'

They both laugh.

'Look,' says Danny. 'Here comes Mac's boat.'

'Oh, and here comes my aunt,' says Zoe. Fran is walking along the wharf.

'Hi, Zoe,' Fran says. 'Where's Gemma?'

'She's on that boat,' Zoe says.

'Oh. She's not with you?' Fran's not happy.

'Hi,' says Danny. 'Zoe is with me.'

'Fran, this is my friend Danny.'

Mac's boat comes to the wharf. Gemma helps the tourists to step off the boat.

'Thanks for working today, Gemma,' Mac says.

They step onto the wharf together.

Gemma says, 'Mac, this is my aunt, Fran, and this is my sister, Zoe.'

Mac smiles and says, 'Welcome to Whitianga. Hey, why don't you three come to my place for dinner? We're having a barbecue. You can meet my family.'

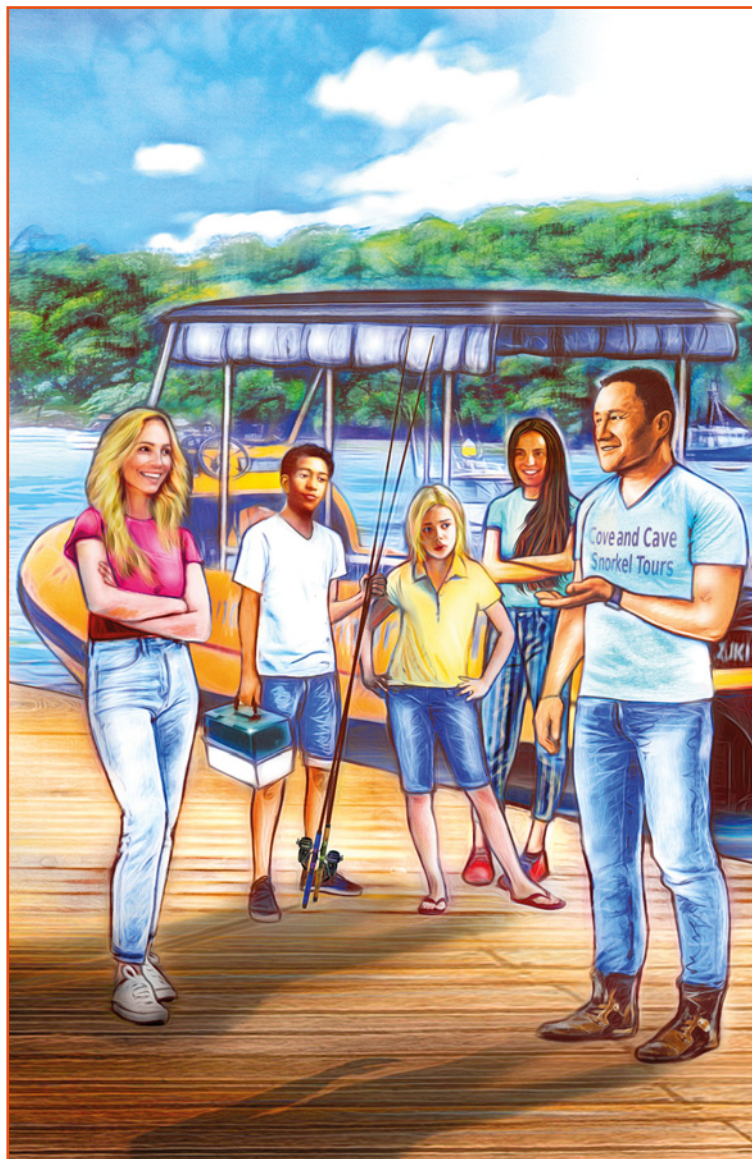
'But we're going to the pizza place tonight,' Zoe says.

'We can have pizza tomorrow night, Zoe,' Gemma says.

'Please, Fran, can we go to Mac's tonight? Please?'

Danny says to Zoe, 'I'll be there.'

Zoe says, 'Will you?'



‘Yes – so will everyone in the family.’

Fran smiles and says, ‘Thanks, Mac. I’ll make a potato salad.’

It’s six o’clock. Zoe is helping Fran to make the potato salad.

‘Zoe, can you please get Gemma?’ Fran asks. ‘It’s time to go.’

Zoe walks into her sister’s room.

Gemma is on a video call. ‘... and he’s about your age, Mum. He’s tall and has dark, curly hair. He comes from a fishing family. It’s him, Mum, I know it is.’

Zoe says, ‘Are you talking about Mac?’

Gemma looks up at her sister. ‘Oh, Zoe.’ She says to Alice, ‘Sorry, we have to go now. Love you, Bye.’

‘Hi, Mum. Bye!’ says Zoe. Then she asks Gemma, ‘What’s going on? You’re being weird.’

‘Nothing. Mum wants to know what we do every day – like me working on the tour boat with Mac. He’s the skipper.’

Zoe says, ‘Is Mum okay? She looks tired.’

‘She is. She needs a holiday. Come on, let’s go.’

Something is odd, Zoe thinks.

This is the German version of **The Fishing Trip**

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