

Chapter 1



Lilia sat by the window watching the snow fall. School was closed because of the storm. Lilia and her brothers spent two hours shoveling the driveway. The Heights was a great place, but winter was sometimes too cold!

Antonio was upstairs on his computer. And Franco was home from college doing laundry. Lilia

went into the kitchen to talk to her parents.

“Hey, Lilia,” said her dad, Rafael. “Get your brothers. I have some news.”

When all five Silvas were in the kitchen, Rafael surprised them.

“Your mom and I just made vacation plans. I’m going to Australia tomorrow for work,” said Rafael. “You guys will meet me there when my project is finished. We’ll all fly to Vanuatu from there.”

The three Silva kids looked at each other.

“Vanna who?” Lilia asked.

“V-a-n-u-a-t-u,” Ana responded. “It’s a group of islands in the South Pacific. It’s a three-hour flight from Sydney, Australia.”

“They are islands in a part of the South Pacific called Oceania,” said Rafael. “Beautiful flowers and birds are everywhere. And there’s great scuba diving. We can even hike up a live volcano.”

“Awesome!” Antonio smiled. “I’ve always wanted to see a volcano. Sign me up.”

“You’re already signed up,” Rafael laughed. “You’ll be there in three weeks.”

“Hey, Dad,” said Franco. “Aren’t those islands part of the Ring of Fire?”

“Say what?” exclaimed Lilia.

“It’s a part of the world with a number of volcanos. And lots of earthquakes. But I wouldn’t worry about it,” said Rafael.