

The Great Alaskan Scavenger Hunt

Cruising to Alaska! My family was thrilled to bits. “Good morning, Captain”, me and my sister, Viki, called as we saw him greeting passengers.

“Welcome aboard folks, you’d enjoy our cruise-long family scavenger hunt. Visit the kids club to sign up.”, he responded jovially.

My family instantly made a bee-line for the kids-club.

“Team name?” the caretaker asked, “The Hunting Humpbacks” we chorused. She handed us the first clue on a turquoise slip of paper -

I jump so high and I swim so deep,

On your adventure, you shall venture,

To spend some time with me.

The answer had to be a whale since we were going whale watching in Juneau. Mystery solved!

The next day, my family kept their eyes peeled for another clue. Grandma searched the colorful whale models lining the windows and exclaimed, “Aha! This one says, ‘*You must choose a colorful whale to continue your hunt, if you fail, your team is eliminated, we have to be blunt.*’”

I nervously suggested we choose the Turquoise, just like the slip of paper. Papa picked up the whale gingerly, thankfully we were right! This was our next clue,

Take a train that takes you to the gold,

Where fearless travelers walked so bold,

Rush to find gold of your own,

For it is the key to your next zone.

Aboard the Yukon and White pass trail train in Skagway, the stunning scenery amazed us. At the peak, Mum picked up a gold rock and said,

“We just need to uncover a turquoise one of these. And quick, before the train leaves!”

We discovered one right when the conductor called ‘All aboard’. It had our next clue,

Totem poles tell community tales,

A turquoise pole must be saved,

Your team must lift

to receive your gift.

In Ketchikan, while visiting the Saxman Native Village and admiring the intricate totem poles, we saw the nursery where old poles were restored and an older pole waiting to be brought in. Bringing it in had to be our next move, and we needed our whole tour group. After they generously agreed, we lined up and Grandpa led,

“All right team, Heave Ho!”

Sure enough, we found our next clue,

Tomorrow is the last day of the cruise,

If you don't want to lose,

Each member finds at least one duck

But if you cannot, you're out of luck.

On our last day, my family was ready to win and scoured the ship. Papa found a duck in the theater, Mum on the skywalk, Viki and I found matching sports ducks, Grandma's duck was hiding under gelato cups and Grandpa spotted one perched at the buffet. All teams assembled when the final bell rang, trying to see how many ducks others had. After final count the Captain announced,

“Thank you participants! However, one team stood out with fourteen ducks! The Hunting Humpbacks!”

We all cheered as we accepted our turquoise trophy, and we couldn't have done it without working as a team!