

# ***A Story of Blessing***

If you read the front page story of the SF Chronicle today -- Thu, 15 Dec 2005 -- you would have read about a female humpback whale who had become entangled in a spider web of crab traps and lines. She was weighted down by 100s of pounds of traps that caused her to struggle to stay afloat. She had 100s of yards of line (rope) wrapped around her body - her tail, her torso, a line tugging in her mouth.

A fisherman spotted her just east of the Farralone Islands (outside the Golden Gate) and radioed an environmental group for help. Within a few hours the rescue team arrived and determined that she was so badly off, the only way to save her was to dive in and untangle her – a very dangerous proposition; One slap of the tail could kill a few rescuers. They worked for hours with curved knives and eventually freed her. When she was free, the divers say she swam in what seemed like joyous circles. She then came back to each and every diver, one at a time, and nudged them, pushed them gently around – she thanked them...

some say it was the most incredibly beautiful experience of their lives. The guy who cut the rope out of her mouth says her eye was following him the whole time, and he will never be the same.