

Magenta

Jacinta stood on top of the unstable white mass of sand that slid beneath her feet and threatened to cave in. She breathed in the fresh salty air, her diaphragm expanding and falling. The deep green ocean pounded the shore with supernatural force.

Looking at the sandy slope below her reminded her of her childhood - sliding down these dunes...

"Hey Jacinta" she felt her brother push her from behind, falling, tumbling, screaming. Rolling down the soft sandy surface below her reaching the bottom she laughed, looking up at his mischievous face. He laughed too. The sun was always shining in these scenes and feelings of warmth, purity, happiness coloured these days. Now these memories were empty, hollow.

She let herself fall now down the dunes. Her limbs limp like a rag doll, she rolled into a heap at the bottom. Pausing there she felt the warm sand on her skin, cradling her weak, tired body. The sun bathed her in warmth that seemed to penetrate deep within and she almost forgot her pain.

The air was soft, like velvet around her and the distant rhythmic sound of the waves whispered soothingly in her ear. She closed her eyes - but only for a moment - it was too horrible. Images invaded her peace and pounded behind her closed lids.

Dragging her body up out of the sand she breathed in again. The dark green ocean was beckoning her. All she could hear was the squeaking of the dry white sand beneath her feet.

Pulling her t-shirt over her head revealed a green swimming costume beneath. Goose bumps rose all over her brown skin. She flung her t-shirt absent-mindedly on the now wet sand that squeezed and squelched between her toes. Though her body could feel the cool morning air, she felt numb.

Flinging off her shorts she approached the white wash rolling in - in small lines and then bigger and bigger masses of white. She stood letting her feet sink into the cool, wet sand. Maybe she would sink right through the granules, keep on going and be swallowed up.

The small white wash rushed towards her feet as she proceeded into the waves. It was like greeting an old friend. As the water rushed up her legs and torso she felt she was being embraced by a huge force - beyond herself. A loving, wild force.

Beginning to run through the resistance of the wave, she was tripped over by a medium sized wave that slapped up against her middle and legs. Falling beneath the surging white wash, she lost her breath and fought to get to the top.

This was what she loved about the ocean - the power and the powerlessness. It was like this benevolent, dumb beast that had a personality at the same time. Becoming part of it, she surrendered to the rise and fall of the full, smooth swell.

A large wave broke just before her and she felt that familiar feeling of ecstasy and fear. It had crumbled into a large surge of white that came thundering towards her. The sound and size had caught her off guard, as she was enveloped and pushed beneath the strong current. Her body struggled as she was tossed and tumbled around beneath the water. Arms and legs flailing everywhere - moving rapidly, seeking the top, seeking air as she was held under.

Her brother was holding her down - on top of her. She couldn't breathe, his naked body weighing down on her - he was touching her. Screaming her mouth choked in the saline water. His face came to her; she sank down further - her body ceasing to struggle.

Maybe it was best this way - to surrender to it all. The ocean was turning her, holding her, keeping her down. She no longer struggled. Her body was like lead. Exhaustion replaced strength in her sinewy limbs she didn't

fight anymore.

Her body gave in to the overwhelming surge of the wave that was moving her towards the shore. She didn't know -didn't care. His face was still there when she closed her eyes. Beginning to push him away, she could feel his oppressive breath on her face, suffocating her.

Pushing, pushing, pushing him away she screamed releasing bubbles of air through the water. Her limbs felt strong, her body began to struggle. Jacinta fought through the white bubbles and froth to the air above. Desperately heaving air into her starved lungs, she began to sob. Cold, wet, broken sobs. That came from the knowledge that nothing in life is completely trustworthy. Swimming a bit closer in, she stumbled and tripped through the smaller waves.

Her body finally collapsed onto the wet compacted sand. There she lay - her torso heaving in and out. Gasping, sobbing and embracing life, the way it had been at birth; with screams, tears and shock.