

Surf's Up

Tera stuck a naked toe into the wet sand. The water rose to fill the hole left by her toe. She hated/loved the tickling sensation that the rising sandy water made. She imagined sinking down, deeper down into the sand, like an explorer in a Tarzan movie zipping down to her chin in quick sand.

Why did people try to build sandcastles? Bucket after bucket, tediously placed, topped-off, shaped into castles that would stand proudly a half of a day at best only to be liberated by the relentless ocean, swept into the same particles that tickled Tera's toes.

When Tera was eight years old her parents took her to Ocean City, NJ. The sand was so hot that Tera couldn't stand still, she had to keep moving, almost hopping from foot to foot. The sun was so bright on her brown eyes that she squinted. Squinted to see and in squinting could hardly see. It made the world look funny.

"What are you looking at, Tera? Said her Dad.

"Leave her alone, she's just enjoying the beach, said her mom, donning a snazzy pair of Ray Bans.

"But *look* at her, she's been staring at that patch of sand for twenty minutes, like she's trying to figure something out...What is it Tera? What are you looking at?"

The ocean, which had been inching up for over an hour as the shadow of the beach umbrella lengthened and the beach towels were periodically pulled ever close

Something Bigger
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to the boardwalk, lapped at the feet of Tera and washed the spot she'd been watching. Washed it – clean – away.

"There was a message in the sand," she said. "But I don't know what it means..."

"What did it say?" asked her Dad.

"It said...Surf's Up..."