

## The Beach

The first thing that hit Kerry was the taste of salt in the air. Screeching seagulls echoed her every move and the rough sea wind hit her like a slap the face. The mellow tune of lapping waves crashing against the cliff was like an old friend to her ears. The symphony of this coastline was the only fuel for the fire that kept Kerry's heart beating. She looked down at the deserted shoreline and smiled, fond memories came flooding back, especially of him. There was one time in particular, she could picture it as clear as day. Just the two of them, on this cold, windy beach in the heart of winter, careless children running around like there was no tomorrow. White foam was being blown around the beach like crazy and the brisk cold had chilled their fingers into clumsy numbness, but they didn't care. It was just them. The rest of the world didn't exist. It was just them and the beach.

The beach also hurt Kerry. It gave and it took. It took what she held most dearly, it took him. She remembered the day. She had a scalding shower and a fresh bagel. She chose to wear colourful socks, colourful old socks. They were rough and small. She wanted to buy new ones. She needed to buy new ones. That was at the forefront of her mind when they arrived. This time it was summer. There was an infinite blue sky above, and a majestic deep blue ocean below. A warm breeze swirled around her, sending hair in all different directions. The glistening waves lapped against the shore and called for a willing participant to jump into them. She obliged. So did he.

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The water was gentle as he waded through it, a crystal of calm perfection that soothed the senses. And he realized he was alone. But that was fine. It was just him and the ocean. The misty-eyed ocean.

Then it happened. No screaming, no thrashing, no flailing. Only falling. He just fell, fell into the darkness until it swallowed him whole. His head pounded, his body screamed for breath. He gave in. It didn't hurt like he thought it would. It was almost peaceful. Just him, just him and the abyss.

They rushed to get him, to find the poor fallen boy. The poor lost boy. The poor dead boy.

So there she was. An urn in hand and tears streaming down her face. She knew what she had to do. Kerry took the lid and watched him dance in the sunset one last time. She watched him re-join the beach, the beach where it was just them. Now it was just her. Just her and the rest of the world.