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Riptide

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Riptide

Abstract

Haifa sun,

Warm and thick like honey,

Melts over everything:

The port, the parasailers, the topless woman sunbathing.

I have befriended the lifeguard,

Whose laughter is abundant like pomegranate seeds.

He wears a red speedo and his curly hair reminds me of pasta. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

riptide, boetry, Israel beach

Disciplines

Creative Writing | Poetry

Comments

Written for ENG 305: Free Verse & Form in Poetry.

Mirabelle Cohen

Riptide

Haifa sun,
Warm and thick like honey,
Melts over everything:
The port, the parasailers, the topless woman sunbathing.
I have befriended the lifeguard,
Whose laughter is abundant like pomegranate seeds.
He wears a red speedo and his curly hair reminds me of pasta.

I am ten years old,
I am happily drowning in sunshine.
We are in Israel visiting my sister.
She wears long skirts now,
Her hair is bleached and chopped short.
I realize when we're out to dinner that I don't know her very well.

There is a small black notebook,
Where I keep track of the new words I'm learning.
I write *slichá* at the top of the page,
As a polite buoy,
(*Excuse me, sorry,*)
above the shouting currents of marketplace people.

I haven't written them down yet,
But I'm learning other words too:
Words like *depression*, *glioblastoma*, and *Zionist*.

When the wild wind dies down,
Parachute sails line the beach like big jellyfish.
I race toward the water one more time,
And dive headfirst into tangy tentacle waves.
Sand scratches my shifting feet,
The beach trying to retreat,
back into the depths of the Mediterranean.

Suddenly I'm moving with the sand, unaware
Of direction or air.
A riptide is folding me into the sea,
Like my mother's hands expertly kneading challah dough on Friday.
The water spits me out with a throaty *ch* sound.
I am far from my family and the jellyfish sails.
The sea pulls gently on the sun.