

A trail of footprints

Literature



A little bit before noon they were lugging their bags of food out towards the beach. Sara's dad immediately set up the grill. " Now kids go and have fun, but stay close," he advised.

Without hesitation, they all jumped into the warm, blue water and started splashing around. At first, Sarah tried to see for how long she could hold her breath underwater, but soon gave up on that. She dug her toes deeper into the sand and just sat there watching her two younger brothers and cousins wrestling with each other. They repeatedly tried to dunk one another in but quit when their mom scolded them.

Soon, getting tired of the water, Sarah waded back to shore. The sand was extremely hot beneath her feet and she hurriedly skipped her way to her towel and plopped down. Her mom smiled at her warmly and gave her a piece of cucumber to chew on while lunch was getting ready. Sarah sprawled back on the ground, lazily munching away. Squinting against the sun, she peered up at the sky, trying to make shapes out of the few wisps of clouds that slowly made their way across.

The call for lunch jogged Sarah out of her sky-gazing. The rest of the kids crowded around, dripping and laughing. Sarah spread out her pita bread and smeared loads of ketchup on it. After heaping little steak pieces on the bread, she rolled it up neatly. Now it was just the way she liked it.

After everyone was well fed (none of them could take in another bite, not even her brothers who were boasting about how much they could gobble down earlier on), they all made their way to the water again. It was much cooler now. The whole gang divided up into two groups and started playing volleyball. Sarah could hardly jump out of the water to reach for the ball, but it was fun nonetheless. No one bothered to keep score, they were all too

busy laughing and pushing each other down. Sarah fell in so many times that her brain seemed to be swimming in saltwater.

Tired and all splashed out, they headed to the shore. By now, the sun was well across the sky and the sand had cooled down considerably. Joana and Sarah tried to make a sandcastle, but it looked more like a volcano. They both decided to bury their feet in it instead. A few feet away from them, their cousins were busily piling sand on her Uncle Ted. Soon nothing but his head remained. Patting the last bits of sand in place with some water, they all decided to dance around him like Indians.

“ Woo woo woo whoo,” Sarah slapped her hand on her mouth and chanted with the rest of them. Mom and dad were doubled over with laughter. Her aunt decided that this was a Kodak moment immediately took out her camera.

Uncle Ted had enough after a few minutes and started to wriggle out, but Sarah’s brother thought otherwise. He sat right down on top of the mound and pretended that he was standing or rather sitting guard. No matter how much Uncle Ted tried, Sarah’s brother and cousins wouldn’t let him budge. Sarah soon lost interest and amused herself in digging a deep hole with her yellow, plastic shovel. She was seriously expecting to find some lost treasure chest or even a bag of gold. All she found was muddy water.

By now the sun had sunk low into the sky. The grown-ups were sitting around and chatting. Sarah realized for a brief moment that this was a rare incident. It was very seldom that all of the cousins got together along with the adults and dedicated a whole day to fun and games. Usually, everyone was busy with work or school.

She walked across the beach to where the other kids were and started

collecting seashells. Every wave seemed to bring in more. They ran up and down the shoreline trying to gather up the most. Sarah's small hands couldn't hold on and she ended up dropping a lot on her way back to mom and dad. The entire family sat around, with their finds scattered beside them, counting. She kept on losing track because it was very dark now. The silver moon and twinkling stars signaled the end of the day. Quickly, but reluctantly they gathered up everything, tied up trash bags, and folded their towels. Sarah didn't want to leave. She wanted to stay there forever and relive the excitement of the day again and again. As they trudged up to the parking lot, her mom told everyone to glance back in case they had forgotten anything. Before getting in the van, (Sarah didn't care if she got the window seat or not) she looked back to check if anything was there. All she saw were the trail of footprints they had left behind.