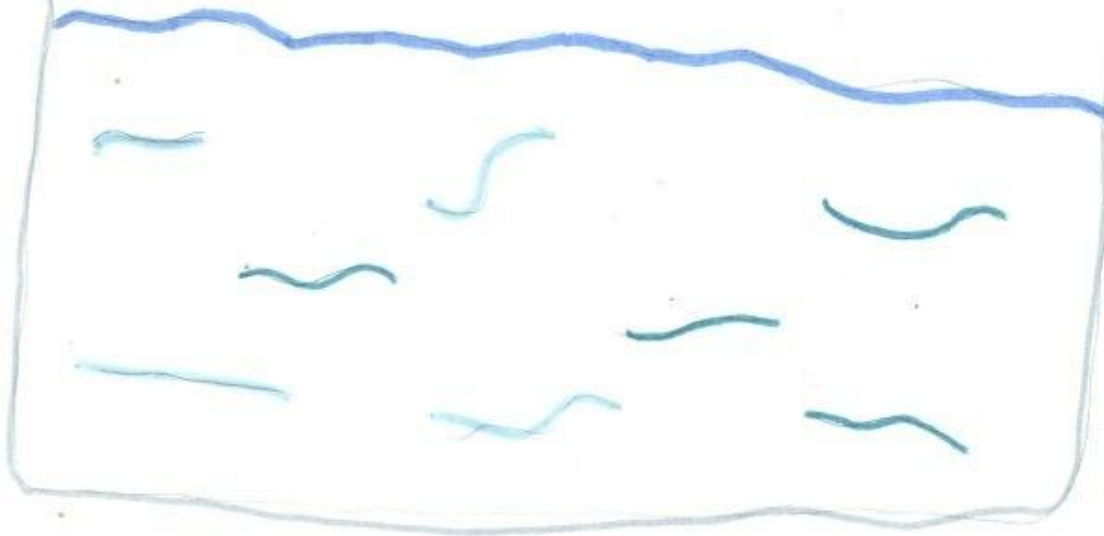
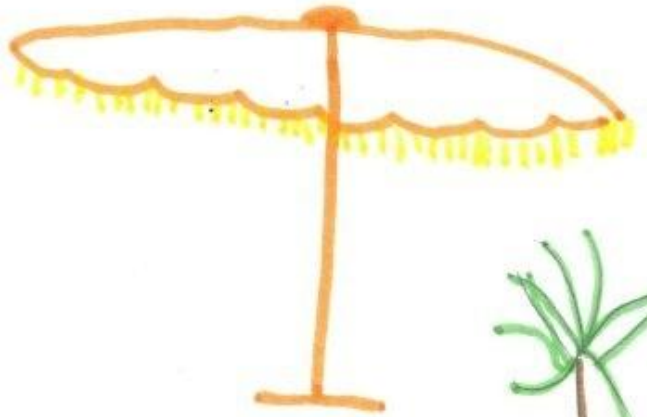


Darkness!

by Marnie



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The bell rang, it was finally summer! I had all sorts of fun planned out to do. For example swimming, baking, and also riding my bike. This summer was going to be one of the best! I woke up the next morning. It was the first day of summer! But sadly I didn't do anything fun that day.

About five days later, my friend Saleena called me and asked if I wanted to go swimming at the rec center. Well of course I did. My mom drove Laura and I to her house. Saleena got her swim stuff ready, and we were on the road.

As her mom pulled up in front of the rec center, we jumped out of the car, raced inside and scanned our cards. In about five seconds, we were in the locker room. We all had our swimsuits on underneath our clothes so it didn't take long to change.

We rushed to the pool and all jumped in. Quickly we ran back out again. It was freezing! I suggested the outdoor pool might be warmer from the sun, and it definitely was. We had a phenomenal swim that day. Laura and I swam a lot with Saleena that summer. But I didn't know what was in store for me in a couple of weeks.

Still the day came when Laura called her friend Alana to go swimming with her at the rec center. Most of the time I was pretty mad because I had nobody to swim with. So I just kept following them around to annoy them. Laura kept yelling at me, but I didn't care.

Finally when they were at the diving board, they let me swim with them. We had a contest to see who could jump in and touch the bottom. I tried tricks off the diving board, but I could never get deep enough.

Then once I ran and jumped off as straight as a pin. I cut through the surface of the water with merely a splash. My eyes were closed and I was holding my nose. Lightly my toes touched the bottom of the pool and I missed my chance to push to the surface. Slowly I let go of my nose and opened my eyes. I saw the sun twinkling above me, and it seemed that the world of air was distant and far away. I was floating gently under the water in a blue world.

Then my hair came over my face and all was darkness. No longer was this world of blue a calm and gentle place. I was running out of air and desperately needed to get to the surface. But, I didn't have the strength to swim upwards.

I gave one last weak push with my arms and slowly I was rising. Then it got faster and I could hear bubbles racing alongside me. I broke through the skin of the water grasping for

air, but I just couldn't get enough. I feebly swam to the side of the pool and pulled myself onto the concrete.

I lay there heaving for air. When I recovered, I was very excited to tell my story. That was my frightening experience.