

HIDE AND SEEK

Helena Gurr

Wirral Grammar School for Girls

Key rings jolting on the back of the rucksack of the girl in the seat in front. Jumping and shaking with every speed bump, rattling in my brain. Mickey Mouse is attached by an elastic band, stretching as it flies around in this bubble of the bus.

Packet of Polos and a can of Fanta – not quite the Mentos-and-Coca-Cola explosion factor, but satisfactory enough all the same. Fit in your pocket just as well, if not better. They don't quite have the same effect, but I suppose they'll have to do. The Co-op ran out of Coke.

Reaching the beach, sitting on the stone slabs of the promenade. Cold concrete dusted with sandy particles. Seagulls stealing ice cream. Children amusing themselves in rock pools. Splash. Children crying because they fall in. Children told off for going near.

Waving hands in the sea. Perhaps a face I recognize. Swimming never really was for me. Waving figure in the sea. I never wanted to be a mermaid. Being clever was much more interesting. Waving figure in the sea. Like that poem. Ironic.

Figure no longer visible. They must have found their footing. People leaving the water's edge. Must be one of them. Children eating ice cream. Children crying as it falls in a melting clump. Children's parents regretting coming to the beach.

Dancing hands in the sea. They seem to be enjoying their game of hide-and-peek in the waves. Over there, crowd gathering, something happening. I never wanted to go swimming. Who needs to swim when you're as clever as I am?