

The summer they were fragile

The children swam like they'd just found out about skin cancer.

The mother read *Women's Day* and fell asleep dreaming about sharks.

The sky was made of glass. The water was always colder

than they expected. The father's fingers tingled as he thought about fishing, leaving

to go somewhere, to fish, or just to never come back. The children ate

but because of the sand everything crunched like glass beneath their bloody teeth.

The

mother served food that felt heavy in her hands.

The beach was freckled with people but none of them looked at each other. The waves

came suddenly, but caused by boats, as if they weren't real by themselves.

The father tried to watch his children but he couldn't pick them out

so he stared into the thrashing mess of water bodies and wondered why

they all looked like they were drowning.