

MILSTON

by,

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Genre:

Psychological Literature

This is a coastal town, dead from the sand to the sky. But the whole world used to come to life here- beauty queens and stars once shone along this ghostly promenade. These narrow and lonely streets were once full of heavy noise, the crashing waves not being the dominant sound then. There were whistles and laughter, and even the echoes of lost children crying had a sweet quality. Candy floss once floated on the sea breeze, the gulls circling around spilt tears of excitement.

Now the streets are paved with a former promise, and steps once taken have been taken back, reclaimed by a jealous past. There are hardly any people beneath the white sky on the beach. An old man paddles in the freezing shallows, the winter tide meeting him on the seamless yet polluted shoreline. His trousers are rolled up, revealing his thin, white ankles. Age has slayed any vanity he may have felt in youth, as he stands exposed in the shadow of the pier.

On the edge of the promenade, behind the loose viewing-rail, stands a shelter that has stood there for almost a century- once proud, now scarred and carved by generations of bored youth. A little boy sits in the shelter crying, and further up the beach an older boy flies an orange kite, not able to seriously consider a bright future, and dreamt of and laughing, it can only be darkly understood.

And just in front of the beach huts, only half-varnished, is an old lady slumped in the fraying canvas of a deckchair, almost cavorting as she reads the book in her lap, living romance in its' hardened spine. Her elasticated breasts heave with passion, and forty years before this would have meant something. After looking up at the sky, she reads on quickly, hoping that the hero will find the heroine before the rain comes down.

Finally, in the distance, a young woman is walking away, her luxuriant black hair in an old-fashioned style being gently caressed by the wind.

The boy in the shelter later became the old man paddling on the shore. He never went very far. He's the only person on the beach, it being so early on this cold morning. The boy with the kite is the boy in the shelter slightly older, and the old lady in the deckchair his mother, just before she died. The young woman with the beautiful raven hair was his wife, before she lost her heart and then her head to him.

The old man soothes his wasted ankles in the dark water, looking out at the horizon that's been there all his life. Suddenly he grabs his chest and gasps for breath as only a dying man can do. And as he hits the water, all that he sees are the ghosts from different stages of his past.