

Skaw Beach Is Haunted

Jess wandered doon da stairs, breifly noddin at her Mam wha wis standin in her bedroom door foldin Stuart's boilersuit. Sho wanted ta git ta da beach, an quickly. Somthin wis drawin her dere. Sho'd nivver felt onythin lik it, an it wis gluffin her. Sho chugged doon her tae and wolfed doon her toast, shoved on her owld trainers an left da hoose.

Jess had been walkin fir ages noo, an wis startin ta winder joost how far away it wis. Sho reached da beach, an a cowld wind whipped her face. Jess had nivver been ta dis beach afore. Sho didna stop, somethin wis drawin her ta da sea. Joost as her feet touched da watter, sho snapped oot o it an fan hersel ankle deep in da watter. Sho couldna even mind how sho got dere. Sho started da walk hom wi squelchy trainers.

Da nixt day, da sam thing happened. Dis time though, sho got in knee deep whan sho realised.

Jess wokened up early, an as usual, sho wis drawn ta da Skaw Beach. Sho quickly dressed an aet her brakfist, goid up ta da beach an fan hersel chest deep in da sea. Dis time, sho kept goin. Chin deep, nose deep. Sho sucked in a last breath an opened her eyes. Whit sho saw shocked her, and sho tried ta gasp, inhalin a mooth foo o sea watter. Sho spluttered ta da surface, gaspin in huge lung-foos o fresh air. Jess ducked under ageen, an swam doon ta whit sho saw...

Kirsty an Stuart wis lookin fur Jess, worried seek. Dey'd left da twins wi dir Granny at da hoose, so dat dey could look. Dey arrived at da Skaw Beach, ta fin Jess's body washed up. Kirsty let oot a sob, a real hearty sob. Sho sank tae her knees at Jess's body, howlin wind crashin around dem. Jess coughed.

"Mam?" sho said huskily, heavin hersel up. "A'm sorry if I gluffed dee."

"Jess!" breathed Kirsty, happy dat her daughter wisna gone. Sho flung her airms around her, pooin Jess in fur a cuddle. "Let's git dee hom, du looks freezin!"

Dey started da walk hom, Jess shiverin on Stuart's back.

"Mam's made bannocks!" Stuart gaffed. Jess stayed silent. "Kirsty, check sho's no sleepin."

"No, sho's no. I think sho's joost tired an hungry an cowld." said Kirsty. "Jess, whit wis du doing up yunder?"

Jess shrugged. "I wis drawn tae it." sho mumbled slightly, no even liftin her heed.

"Drawn tae it?" Stuart an Kirsty shared worried glances. "Whit does du mean?"

Jess shrugged ageen. "It drew me ta da sea. I keep finnin mysel in da sea, deeper each day."

"Dis is whit happened ta Granny whan sho wis dy age. Kept gitten drawn ta da sea. Sho's lucky sho survived. Joost lik dee," explained Kirsty cautiously.

"Whit wis it Mam?" asked Jess, wokenin up slightly at her Mam's wirds.

"It's the ghosts o da drooned, draain dee ta dem. Dey want dee fur dir communities, ta grow dem." Kirsty stopped. "A'm joost glaed ta git dee back."

Whan dey arrived at da hoose, da smell o fresh bannocks an hot soup hit dem. Jess telt da story ageen ta her Granny, an her Granny pooed her in fur a cuddle.

Eftir her hot soup an bannocks, a quick shower an cosy pyjamas on, Jess wantit ta keen more about Granny's experiences too.

"Granny, wis du drawn ta da sea too?" asked Jess. "Why wis mam an dad no? Why wis is joost wis?"

"Some folk hae stronger spirits dan idders. Mine an dine is stronger dan dy Mam an Dad's eens, so dey want dem. Da stronger spirits an souls keep dir communities safe an protect dem fae da boats passin ower-heed. Da boats hae soul-hooks ta catch dem, an if a soul gits trapped, it gits carried aa da way back ta da shore. Dey die whan dir no in watter. It's caaed da 'second death'." concluded Granny, seein Jess's horrified face.

"A'm glaed I fought dem. Dey wir horrible. Dey haed no eyes, no nose an no roof ta dir mooths. Ony half airms an leegs an no skeen on dir bodies. Seaweed fur hair, a scream dat maks your blood curdle. I can nivver un-see da things I saw doon dere."

Dey aa pooed into a huge cuddle.

"Wir aa here ta keep dee safe. Dunna wirry." Jess finally felt safe among her family.

By Teagan Johnson, P7, age 12