

WAVE RIDERS

Michelle Faure



OXFORD literature for southern africa

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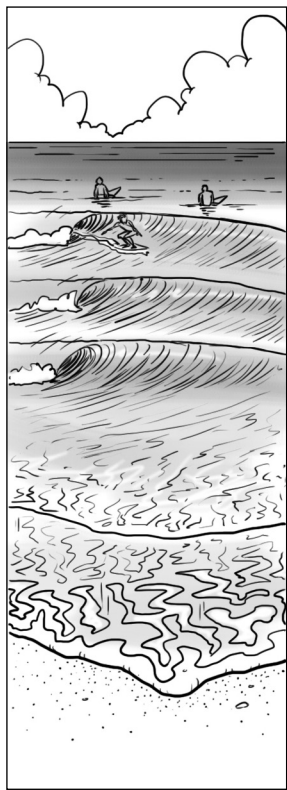
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Alison Immelman

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SOUTHERN AFRICA

Character

Why does Hanouk not want to see Tiffany or Kwesi?



Character

How does Tiffany feel when Kwesi tells her this?

worried he'd see Tiffany or Kwesi there. That was the last thing he wanted.

The same was not true for Tiffany, who went to surf school alone. Although she missed Hanouk, missed having someone to walk to and from the beach with, and to laugh with over their inevitable¹ blunders², she was determined not to let his absence stop her. Instead, she gave herself wholeheartedly to the waves.

Kwesi was also on the beach every day, and Tiffany was completely mesmerised³ by the way he rode the waves. He and some other experienced surfers always surfed the last line of waves before the wide, flat section of ocean began.

With all her heart, Tiffany wanted to be out there with them.

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Tired after a hard afternoon of surfing, Tiffany was sitting alone on the beach one day when she noticed Kwesi coming in to shore. She watched him unzip his wetsuit, and pull it off his shoulders. He left the top half of his wetsuit dangling down around his waist while he stood alone, drinking a Coke.

Tiffany was just about to get up and begin to wander home when Kwesi started walking towards her. He came and sat down next to her on the sand.

"Hi," he said, pushing out his hand towards her, "I'm Kwesi."

"I know," replied Tiffany, taking his hand as she blushed deeply. "You're an amazing surfer. Um ... I'm Tiffany."

"Thanks," said Kwesi. "I've seen you guys in the water – you and the Malawian guy. You're doing really well on that surfboard, Tiffany." Kwesi's smile flashed. "One of these days you're going to be on the backline. With me."

1 **inevitable**: unavoidable

2 **blunders**: mistakes

3 **mesmerised**: charmed, fascinated

Tiffany recovered just enough to say, “Ja, I’d really love to get out there.”

The two of them sat silently next to each other, watching the surfers dance along the wave crests on their boards.

“I haven’t seen your friend around for a while,” said Kwesi after a moment. “Where is he, by the way? Has he given up surfing?”

Tiffany shrugged.

“I don’t know,” she said. “He just stopped coming.”

“That’s a shame,” said Kwesi. “I don’t think he should give up on a great thing like this.” Kwesi turned to smile at Tiffany. “You’d better persuade him to come surfing again,” he said. “I think he’d come if you asked him.”

Tiffany smiled shyly.

“Hanouk’s afraid of a lot of things,” said Tiffany, “but most of all, he’s afraid of sharks. He would rather stay in the shallows.”

Kwesi stood up, stretched and zipped up his wetsuit.

“The backline is where the best waves are. And anyway, sharks don’t really want to eat people. It’s not in their nature,” Kwesi continued. “We go into their territory⁴ and they just mistake us for something else. Like a seal. If they wanted to eat us, they’d be munching on people every day.” He paused, and looked pensive⁵. “I guess we just have to take a chance. Ride the wave while we can, and hope for the best.”

Kwesi grinned suddenly. To Tiffany it was like the sun had come out. She found herself grinning back.

“No,” he said more to himself than to Tiffany, “it’s not sharks who eat people.”

Kwesi began to walk towards the waves. After a few steps he called back to Tiffany over his shoulder. “Persuade your friend to come out to the backline with you. I’ll be there.”

With a toss of his sun-kissed dreads, Kwesi dived into the surf and began to paddle out.

Theme

What does the word “dance” tell us about the wave riders’ attitude towards surfing?

Theme

Do you share Kwesi’s nature-lover’s perspective on sharks?

Theme

What does Kwesi mean when he says this?

Style

Explain the personification in “sun-kissed dreads”.

4 **territory:** turf

5 **pensive:** thoughtful