I am 10. Katrina has just passed through New Orleans.

15,000 people take shelter in the Superdome. Throughout the city there are dozens of assaults, and at least three rapes. People dying from heat and lack of water.

On Nantucket, the sky is grey, but the waves are perfect. I leap into the water, never feeling the cold the way the grown ups do. All of the waves are two-of-me high, and I find that if I position myself perfectly, they sweep me up and then spin me again and again under their curls.

A little over a week after the peak of the storm police, dressed in plain clothes, shoot and kill an unarmed 17-year old and a 40 year-old disabled man. In the same incident, a woman’s arm is partially shot off. Her husband is shot in the head, back, and foot. Their teenage daughter is shot four times. Their friend is shot in the abdomen, jaw, and hand. All are unarmed. The family is searching for a grocery store (Harris).

I am rubbed into the rocky ledge that forms at the point the waves suck all the fine sand away as they crest on the shore. I catch a wave, and then resurface once I am washed up, dizzy, and ears full of water, pale skin pink from the cold, lips blue.

In the weeks after, approximately 50 women report sexual assaults. Lt. Dave Benelli, commander of the sex crimes unit with the New Orleans Police Department, investigates four claims of rape during that time frame (Burnett).

I love the feeling of being moved by something completely beyond my power. I soften all my muscles and think only of how upside down my tummy feel and how I want to do this forever.

Drowning is the major cause of death during Katrina (Brunkard et al).