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## Poems

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## Poems

### **Abstract**

Baths, Boy on a beach, Lizard in the Love letter

# Charles Jordan

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## BATHS

Tony, who's a little retarded,  
swims his fifty metres.  
In his goggles and his nob hangers.  
He's off course and crashing into things.  
From the grandstand we giggle,  
but our guilt stings,  
like chlorine in our eyes that evening.

Frank, the cranky inspector,  
hoses the steamy pavement.  
His glasses are foggy  
and his slimy brown belly,  
shines in the damp evening air.  
But in spite of our mischief,  
he shares his hot chips with us,  
he is one of the best blokes here.

Two girls, we can sometimes talk to,  
are here again this evening.  
One in a bikini,  
her smooth white body,  
shivers in the evening breeze.  
I boast that I kissed her . . . underwater,  
and that's why my friends didn't see me.  
They don't believe me.

From the highest tower, beyond the water,  
I can see the girls we were talking to.  
But they're not even looking,  
so there's no way I'm jumping –  
then they close the towers and I have to.  
It's lonely at the top.  
The wind blows around me. The lights are on  
but a second too late, I've already gone,  
plummeting into obscurity.

## BOY ON A BEACH

Some afternoons he and his father went fishing  
They never caught anything  
His father had bought the rods two years ago  
And didn't know anything about fishing  
So it was probably just as well.

It was an embarrassing thought,  
An angry great cat fish –  
rolling and swishing from side to side  
While his father kept missing it with the knife  
They usually gave up after an hour or two  
And had a swim  
Then walked back along the beach.

His mother and sisters came on holiday too  
He was always lonely.  
His sisters were friends with the girls –  
in the next caravan  
He wouldn't play with them.

Last Christmas they tried to pull his clothes off  
But he got away, and ran off into the dunes  
They'd been smoking pot.  
His father drank beer with their father  
Their mothers talked.

One day he went for a walk  
further than he'd ever gone before  
Past the pinballs,  
and the milkbar with the sandy floor.

To beyond the headland.  
Where flabby women like beached whales –  
bathed nude  
And the men just walked around,  
He looked for a second  
And then to the ground.

Soon he was all alone

His shadow made a dark path down to the water

He undressed and went in

He did backward somersaults, over and over again

And imagined a pretty mermaid his own age,

She swam with him.

## LIZARD IN THE LOVE LETTER

Between the delicate

    folds of my paper

There hides

    a little stowaway

Nestled together

    in a dark innocence

We're stamped,

    and posted away

Traveling companions,

    our fate's sealed together.

We'll soon be discovered,

    The truth

    hovers over us

    like a guillotine

If only it would

    fall

    and free us

    from each other.