

SUNK

He drifted where the boat had ruptured. Its goat skinned belly burst on the unforgiving rocks. Frank watched young clouds like goose feathers fly by in formation. He heard the squawking ravenous seagulls tear his soaked, packed lunch apart. An aeroplane piercing the bluish gap in the puffed cumulus, pumped an icy contrail along a fading funnel. As his head bobbed just below, he realised direction had become meaningless. There was just up and down and around now. It reminded him of boyish dreams of one day becoming an astronaut. The landing on the moon in grainy black and white filled his young life with colour. The sense of weightlessness, felt in the hypnagogic state before dreams, sucked him deeper in. He was surprised that he could keep his eyes open below water. The salt cracks on his eyelids no longer stung. The silver streaks of young sprat, swimming in the warming sun, left trails like tinsel sparkling in the brine. Jellyfish on leave from the Gulf Stream moved closer to investigate. Their long tentacles reached out, his mouth numbed, taste tinged of iron and algae. Later, the 'putt-putt' of a boat engine passed over. The surreal view of its hull splitting the silver-blue waves, echoed a Salvador Dali painting he'd once seen. Frank had no sense of how long he'd drifted but clearly remembered it was five-to-seven as the pocket-watch slipped off the precipice. He thought of taking a photo but last saw his phone spinning downwards, spurting bubbles in its wake. Through the layers of the green kelp duvet, his grandmother's unmistakable rusted voice called out. He struggled to answer, wrapped in this embryonic sac of jellyfish. Her voice grew faint as the engine's putt faded. If this was the end, it wasn't anything like he'd expected.