



**An excerpt from the novel “Behind the Waves” by Li Sam**  
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As Sara opened the door she spotted Peter sitting in his chair in the living room. Peter didn't move; he just looked at Sara with a bent head and big, sad eyes. Sara put what she was carrying on the kitchen sofa. Her small summer jacket she took off and placed without looking on a table beside the living room door.

When she entered the living room and met her very depressed husband sitting in his chair, she immediately sensed that this was it: he was going to tell her something shattering, and a chill crept up her back. Peter asked her to sit down in the chair next to him, with a small table between them. Sara did so without saying a word, and then Peter took a deep breath, still staring at the floor.

Peter opened his mouth, and as he tried to talk he started to cry. Sara was even more confused; she had never seen him this way. She rose from her chair, went over to him, and put her arm over his back and hugged him gently.

“What is it, what is it you're trying to tell me?” she whispered in a friendly tone. Peter's crying got heavier, and she tried her best to give comfort without knowing what for.

After a while Peter got hold of himself a little, and, with a broken voice, he carried on, telling Sara about how bad he felt. And with another deep breath, Peter also told Sara about dressing up in women's lingerie to ease his pain.

Sara felt confused and yet relieved—there was no one else—Peter wasn't going to leave her. And she'd known he'd been really depressed all summer. But what was that other dressing-up thing, what was that all about? What was it Peter was trying to tell her?

Peter saw the confusion in her face and slowly handed her an envelope that had been on the table beside him with a poem inside it. Sara received the piece of paper with mixed feelings, looking first at Peter and then at the page.

## Me

At dawn a little girl is about to see the light.  
A gentle touch, something is not right.

She has longed with enthusiasm and joy,  
but the touches she feels are meant for a boy.

Blindfolded she's held back by a silent ban,  
not to interfere with her image of a man.



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With no friends for comfort or hand to hold,  
the little girl does what she has been told.

While her manly image grows strong, but sad,  
the little girl collects pieces of a life she never had.

The pile of pieces grows high as years pass by.  
The little girl cherishes her pile, while wondering why.

Being who I am, is that so wrong?  
Her pile grows heavy, her waiting has been far too long.

As pieces of her life fall hard to the ground,  
for her only sorrow and pain are there to be found.

Blinded by her manhood image and eternal lies,  
Will she ever see her true face, before she dies?

This poem stunned Sara. She could feel tears building up inside her; somehow she understood the importance of the moment without knowing what it really meant yet. Still on one knee next to Peter, Sara searched for him, and he did the same for her. They hugged each other gently as if they both understood that this moment was going to change their lives forever.

Time stood still.