

# February 7th, San Diego

*by* Mark Waldrop

When I step barefoot on sand you're here again  
warm and soft and you let me sink in while  
you hold me up and make my legs like running drunk in a dream;  
away from all the nice things  
everyone said about you.

And it seems like you're right here when I inhale  
salty wet air like droplets on your neck.  
I make your spot on the beach towel crumpled  
in the middle — you've gone out to dip your feet in  
or maybe just out of sight for a second behind me  
quiet as rigor mortis looking for shells.

Instead of sandwiches I bring sushi rolls and red wine.  
I have the tuna you always liked and I don't eat any of yours  
except a bite so that you have something half gone  
there on your plate. The rest of your rolls I throw with chopsticks  
back in the ocean but some don't make it.

I have to save them from the sand. Most  
of the wine I pour in after them right on the shore.  
Then I look so closely you can see the water sucking  
and gulping for yourself, spitting back and swallowing again  
making pink cotton candy foam  
until the whole ocean is drunk. The hollow  
empty bottle makes a hollow empty bottle sound  
when I drop it behind me.

