

The Wicked Wall of Water

Rrrringg!! My alarm clock suddenly rings waking me up. I groan, but then quickly remember that it is Boxing Day. “*Yay! Time to get ready to go on the train to go see Grandma and Grandpa!*” Quickly, I bound out of bed.

It is a loud and exciting day with so many natives and tourists bustling around Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka. Wafts of cinnamon and other spices make me feel lucky to be alive. Dad loads our backpacks with gifts to give to Grandma and Grandpa for Christmas, and we make our way towards the Colombo Fort Station along with many others to board the Samudradevi Holiday Train, meaning “Queen of the Sea.” The train bell rings, and we squeeze by hundreds of passengers to our reserved seats which we are lucky to have since there are over 1,500 people. After a while, we settle down for the two hour trip to Galle, the southernmost tip of Sri Lanka.

We pass by lush green coconut trees and the magnificent golden shoreline of the Indian Ocean. I imagine shapes that the cumulus clouds make just outside my wide window, and I see the brightly shining sun. Clear aqua-blue water washes up along the pristine, tropical beach where tourists and locals are basking and relaxing in the sun. As we near our destination in Perali, about an hour and a half in, the train stops at the signals. Oddly, I start to feel my new ivory-colored sneakers getting soaked by a little water. I wonder if I might have accidentally not closed my water bottle properly, but it *is* completely tight. I look around the train, and I notice that everybody's feet are wet. Amused, people begin to chatter assuming it was only a slightly bigger tide than usual.

In the blink of an eye, a twenty-foot high wall of water comes roaring towards the train, and people are stunned with no time to react. There is a moment of silence, and it is replaced by