One day there was a young woman in her early 20’s. She was a college student at UCSB. It was her third year and everything leading up to that point was just like any other UCSB students life; normal. Also, we’ll call her Maritza.

She and 3 of her friends had decided to go drinking on Sands Beach and have a bonfire. Just like any other regular students at UCSB looking to have a good time. So just after the sun starts setting they decide to meet up at Maritza’s house to bike from there. All is going well as they gravitate towards their normal banter. It was the same as any other day, they gossiped about who they had class with; who they didn’t like; and how much they appreciated each other. After a few shots and a bit of pre-gaming, they start their bike trip.

The sun was still up but the sky was an orange colored canvas. They knew the sun would be setting soon and giggled at the Cliffside beauty. They continued their small talk, mundane to others but so inviting for them. They passed people who were leaving the beach with surfboards. Maritza stopped once or twice to greet someone that she was acquainted with. She would hurriedly give a hi and a bye while her friends waited almost impatiently. Maritza was very involved on campus and could not go to any event or party without knowing someone.

They had finally made it to the beach and quickly built a fire. They had chosen a spot next to an abandoned and graffiti building next to the ocean. Maritza teased and encouraged the girls to each take a turn in the abandoned building alone. Nobody had taken her up on her idea. So Maritza just dropped it.

With the fire blazing and blankets set up around the fire, they cracked open a bottle of their favorite kind of alcohol. It wasn’t too soon before they began chatter in agreement that they were each feeling a pretty decent buzz. They cackled about how much needed this was. They then began to notice they were the only ones on the beach, which is abnormal as any UCSB students knows.

The liquor had given Maritza almost a sort of liquid courage as she remembered the abandoned building. So she decided to show them that nothing was to be scared of and went inside. The others heard her, but also were not paying much attention.

As soon as Maritza enters the room she feels a bit queasy. She figures that it must be the alcohol and decides just to observe the inside of the building with a flashlight.

She then hears her friends speaking. “She’s so dumb for going in there.” “What is she trying to prove?” “She is being a bit much right now.”

Then she collapses. She comes to very quickly, within 5 minutes. This goes unnoticed so she decides not to bring it up. She returns to the campfire and finds everyone significantly making a dent in the bottle of alcohol. One of her friends has her back turned towards her when she hears her say, “So I guess Maritza doesn’t want to be here right now. If you didn’t want to be here you didn’t have to come.”

“What did you say?” says Maritza.

Each of the other girls looks up in confusion.

“Of course I want to be here spending time with you all”

“What do you mean? I guess someone is feeling sentimental” says another girl aloud.

“Maritza must be wasted,” she hears in her head. She can’t pinpoint exactly who said it.

There is a moment of silence among the girls after the giggles die down. Maritza sees each of the other girls’ faces reflecting the campfire.

“It’s getting cold” she hears.

“Yeah it’s freezing” she concurs.

“Huh? Nobody said anything.” Says the girl sitting next to her.

“This is the last time we let her get ahold of the bottle” she hears almost as a whisper in her ear.

She looks around and sees nobody’s mouths moving. She then begins to hear overlapping voices. The voices echo each other. Some echo, some are saying something completely different. She scans and sees no mouths moving and comes to realize that there are 3 distinct voices; those around her. And she can hear them all in her mind.