

Just as I was about to burst into tears, I saw Merian!

"That was so exciting!" yelled Merian as she ran up to me.

Whew! She's alive! But what had happened?

"Are you crazy?!" I replied. But all the desperate worry inside of me disappeared in one big poof!

Then she explained that she figured out it was a rip tide that was pulling all of us. But, she had a brainstorm and thought she could probably dive under the current and then swim sideways until she was free.

I stared at her in awe.

"Weren't you scared?" I asked.

"Not really," she replied.

"Wow! I would never have thought that. Plus I'm not a good swimmer like you."

Just then I saw my dad finally walk over to me. Everyone was safely on the beach, thanks to him. Mission accomplished!

I ran over and hugged him. Hard!

I felt him hug me right back, and the first words out of his mouth were, "I was so scared!"

What?! HE was scared?

"No way! You were the bravest person on the beach!" I objected.

And then... he said something that changed my thinking forever.

He said, "Being brave doesn't mean not being scared. It means doing something important even IF I am scared."

Then he let out a huge laugh and swung me around.

Joy!