

## from 'At the Bay' by Katherine Mansfield.

A few moments later the back door of one of the bungalows opened, and a figure in a broad-striped bathing suit flung down the paddock, cleared the stile, rushed through the tussock grass into the hollow, staggered up the sandy hillock, and raced for dear life over the big porous stones, over the cold, wet pebbles, on to the hard sand that gleamed like oil. Splish-Splash! Splish-Splash! The water bubbled round his legs as Stanley Burnell waded out exulting. First man in as usual! He'd beaten them all again. And he swooped down to souse his head and neck.

"Hail, brother! All hail, Thou Mighty One!" A velvety bass voice came booming over the water.

Great Scott! Damnation take it! Stanley lifted up to see a dark head bobbing far out and an arm lifted. It was Jonathan Trout—there before him! "Glorious morning!" sang the voice.

"Yes, very fine!" said Stanley briefly. Why the dickens didn't the fellow stick to his part of the sea? Why should he come barging over to this exact spot? Stanley gave a kick, a lunge and struck out, swimming overarm. But Jonathan was a match for him. Up he came, his black hair sleek on his forehead, his short beard sleek.

"I had an extraordinary dream last night!" he shouted.

What was the matter with the man? This mania for conversation irritated Stanley beyond words. And it was always the same—always some piffle about a dream he'd had, or some cranky idea he'd got hold of, or some rot he'd been reading. Stanley turned over on his back and kicked with his legs till he was a living waterspout. But even then...

"I dreamed I was hanging over a terrifically high cliff, shouting to some one below." You would be! thought Stanley. He could stick no more of it. He stopped splashing. "Look here, Trout," he said, "I'm in rather a hurry this morning."

The use of a complex sentence in this situation helps to develop the idea that this character, Stanley Burnell, is undertaking a journey. The phrases are separated by commas which develops a sense of the many different steps in his journey. You can imagine him hopping over the various obstacles on the way to the water.

Unless there has been an oil spill nearby, sand does not usually gleam like oil (ha ha) the use of this comparison develops our impression of the way the sand looks early in the morning. It is wet, shiny, smooth and is reflecting the morning light. The tide has most probably just gone out to reveal the sand in this new, shiny condition. It is a new day, and the new sand reflects this.

The "Splish-Splash!" sounds are crisp and short and echo the noise Stanley Burnell's feet would make when entering knee-high water. This appeals to another of our senses, and helps us to feel that we are "in" the passage, because we can hear these events unfolding as well as imagining them.

The use of a simple sentence has the effect of making the sentence seem like an announcement, or exclamation. With only one verb, a simple sentence only does one thing. In this situation it is announcing that Stanley feels happy that he is first in for the swim, and announces it to the world. This is obviously important to him.

The use of the word "velvety" as an adjective to describe a voice is unusual, as velvet is a fabric. In this situation, velvety is used to develop the impression of the smoothness of the voice, like the feeling of velvet. Perhaps this man has a voice that is as nice to listen to as velvet is to touch.

By repeating the word "sleek" twice in the same sentence, the author is emphasising how sleek Jonathan Trout looks in the water. It suggests that his hair and beard must look flattened down and wet with sea water. It is apparently one of the most striking things about him. It also reminds us of this character's surname- Trout, which is slimy and sleek.