

*To my Ella Marie, remember that with courage,
perseverance and the passage of time, we can face
our fears and turn them into victories – E.J.*



The illustrations in this book were hand-drawn using ink and painted using watercolours.

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I Will Swim Next Time

Emily Joof and Matilda Ruta

A watercolor painting of a landscape. The sky is composed of horizontal bands of light blue, pale yellow, and soft green. The middle ground is dominated by a large, textured area of pale yellow and light green. The foreground features a dark, reddish-brown area on the left, possibly representing a field or a path, and a blue area on the right, possibly representing water or a shadow. The overall style is soft and atmospheric.

When I first saw the big blue sea
I was scared and confused.
It crashed so loud and spread so wide.
It made me feel small inside.



Next summer, we went to a quiet lake
and I dipped in my little toe.
It looked so deep and felt so cold.
I wondered what hid in the dark below.







We played beside a river
with water rushing by.
We said hello to a friendly fish
and a hopping frog
and some tiny bugs.
I started to feel less shy.



Perhaps the water wasn't so scary.
The cool on my toes felt kind of nice.
As Mama held me tight, I thought:
Maybe I'll go in next time.

