

Synopsis

***Wavering Goodbyes** is a contemporary, literary novel, dealing with friendships, loyalties and how they sift and warp under the pressure of harsh economic times. Nemed has returned to the violent world of the island. He has regained his grandmother and old friends but a girlfriend and other charms of the city still haunt. Emotional ties start to unravel as his trips to the cliffs breathe the temptation of a new love, another world.*

Banks can be bailed out but people have to keep going. The storm from the night before is still lingering as Nemed faces the squawl and heads for the dole office. He has come back to the island to take care of his ancient grandmother. Behind, in the city, he left Akhesa and a fumbling career writing ditties for the kids channel. Back home he has regained his friends but is living under the shadow of bank debts and wistful desires to write opera. Comfort comes in the shape of endless nights down the pub where Aker bails him out financially and Toci and Aefe keep him smothered in female care.

Outside the pub, however, he also starts to return to his childhood haunts, out on the cliffs. Before their accident his parents used to haul him back from the rocks, but out there again in the howling wind, that is where he meets her, a haunting presence from the islands past. She begins to capture his imagination and offer a new world full of hope and release from the drudgery of day to day drinking.

Struggling for a way out, Nemed joins Tlaloc in a risky and foiled attempt to smuggle drugs onto the island. A rival gang makes life dangerous and further distances him from his friends as he hides in fear in his bedroom. His grandmother watches every move carefully, suspecting the worst.

Aker comes to find him one day and encourages Nemed back into the fold. Toci, however, begins to suspect that Nemed may be difficult to retrieve. While Aker gets off with Aefe, Toci finally manages to get Nemed to bed one night but that too leads to disappointment.

His trips to the cliffs and that woman from the waves start enveloping him like a drug. Even a long-awaited call from Akhesa doesn't bring him around. His grandmother looks for help in a priest while Toci resorts to the old woman up the mountain who supposedly has the cure for all ills. The long expected letter from Akhesa gets trampled into the gutter. A car mounts the pavement killing Aefe while Toci realizes it was meant for her, to keep her out of the way. Down a side street the gang catches up with Nemed, but his beating is interrupted by the woman from the waves.

In the end, friends and family realize there is no restraining Nemed: wavering goodbyes become inevitable partings. The riot police and their baton charges cannot stop the hoard that rises from the ocean to reclaim their own. Once the blood seeps through the sand, those who remain go on with their lives the best they can. In the end, people, history and myth will always outlast dictators and banks.