The first time I saw Rafael, I was walking along the beach with my younger brother Pablo.I saw something shining under the dark beard.Near them was an old wooden boat-house.Inside there was an old wooden fishing boat.It was a dirty young man with long hair and a beard.He looked at us, but he didn't see us. He was very thin.He spoke words, but they didn't mean anything.'She gave me the ring,' he shouted.'Crazy Rafael!'they shouted.Crazy Rafael!'He stopped laughing and screamed at them.'The children called him Rafael."He isn't dangerous.But I never forgot poor, mad Rafael.Our parents were talking with my uncle and his family.We boys went along the beach to look around.At the end of the beach there were high black rocks, where the mountains behind the village came down into the sea.It had no doors.The roof was broken at one end, and open to the sky.My brother and I looked inside.The sand was deep and soft on the floor.Suddenly, in a corner behind the boat, something moved in the shadows.He stood up and looked at us. His eyes were open, but empty.He put one hand to his neck.There was something small and bright on a thin fishing line round his neck.He pulled it out to show us. It was a small gold ring in the shape of a fish.Suddenly he spoke.His voice was clear, but thin and high.'She gave me the golden fish,' he said.'She gave it back to me.'Then he laughed.And when he laughed, my brother and I were very afraid.He laughed and laughed, but his eyes were big and sad.We ran out of the boat-house.The thin young man came out behind us. He stood in the sunshine and laughed.'I still have it.'Some little boys from the village came running.Some of them threw stones at the thin, dirty man.Then he went back inside the boat-house.The children laughed and ran away.We went back to my uncle's house.'Who is that crazy man on the beach?'we asked.'He's only a poor, mad young man,' said my uncle.He went mad about a year ago.We don't know why.Nobody can help him.I'm afraid.His mother lives in the house at the end of the village.She brings him food every day.All the people in the village help her when they can.'Soon the adults began to talk about other things.Every time I thought about the village, I remembered the poor, mad man in the boat-house on the beach.Sometimes I saw him in my dreams.He looked at me with his big, empty, mad eyes.He called to me. He had the gold ring round his neck, and he held it out to me. He called for me to help him.

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