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Titolo How to Swim in Sinking Sands: The Sorites Paradox and the Nature and

Logic of Vague Language / Inga Bones

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Sommario/riassunto This book examines philosophical approaches to linguistic vagueness,

a puzzling feature of natural language that gives rise to the ancient Sorites Paradox and challenges classical logic and semantics. The Sorites, or Paradox of the Heap, consists in three claims: (1) One grain of sand does not make a heap. (2) One billion grains of sand do make a heap. (3) For any two amounts of sand differing by at most one grain: either both are heaps of sand, or neither one is. The third claim is rendered plausible by an initial conviction that vague predicates like 'heap' tolerate small changes. However, the repeated application of a tolerance principle to the second claim yields the further proposition that one grain of sand does make a heap - which contradicts claim number one. Consequently, many philosophers reject or modify tolerance principles for vague predicates. Inga Bones reassesses

prominent responses to the Sorites and defends a Wittgensteinian dissolution of the paradox. She argues that vague predicates are, indeed, tolerant and discusses how this finding relates to the paradox itself, to the notion of validity and to the concept of a borderline case.