

OCEAN EYES

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LILY ROSE

"BEAUTIFULLY PSYCHEDELIC" - CHRIS-EL BARKER



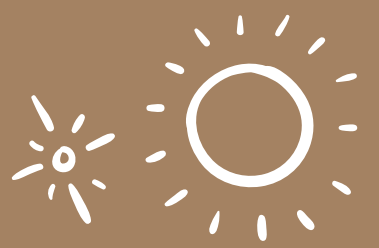
## serenity.

The sun shone like it would never set. Each ray an individual representation of strength, courage and beauty, a billion stories untold. As she hit my skin, I felt her powers bronzing me, forcing me to absorb her enchanting energy that flowed so elegantly into the atmosphere. As her victim, I surrendered willingly, accepting each ray like a gift I'd been longing my whole life for. Only she could make me golden, and today I glistened like a prized trophy, beaming with the utmost joy that she was kind enough to hand me with. She smiled at all of us, and the ocean smiled back, shimmering rhythmically into the skyline above us.

The clouds danced gracefully as she blew them sweet honey kisses and fluttered her eyelashes in unison with the waves that flowed below her. I purposely trailed my post-water, wrinkled feet through the warm, flaxen sand and refused to pick them up from the ground. No steps were being taken, just a continuous flow of unexplainable, glissading motions that made an unusual brushing sound at every moment of friction. Every grain of sand that passed through the gaps between my toes created a sensation that I could only describe as therapeutic. I was being caressed by the elements, and their touches had such a powerful effect but at the same time, such a tender approach. Magic.

When I am beside the ocean, every sense I own and feel is multiplied by a thousand and sent straight to the depths of my heart. A simple stroll along the horizon can set my soul on fire, making me feel like the blazing inferno that I've always longed to be.

In a trice, a salty and pungent aroma spreads like wildfire beneath my button nose. The smell is so crisp and potent that it is tenacious enough to follow me for the whole walk that I take along the never-ending sands.



The many different scents of salt, fish and seaweed fuse together to remind me of home. The colours of the rainbow are spread across the canvas that lies before my ocean eyes. The sea is so wondrously blue, yet the palm trees remain so green and pigmented. I am treated at every glance I take, a whole palette of colours attacking my eyes with such breathtaking ferocity.

In moments like this, I often find myself having to stop, pause and breathe. I feel it's important to really take in the beauty of the moment that I'm living in. I must be sure to always remain grateful for my surroundings and remember that nature is so much more powerful than I. After all, if I, The ocean's child, proceed to love, cherish and look after her, maybe, just maybe, she'll continue to look after me.

Which brings me to today, Sundays. I know what you're thinking, and I don't blame you, it's natural.. but no, I'm not talking about church. While Padre and my brothers wake to spend the day at church worshipping the Lord and fulfilling their Christian entitlements, I feel the need to devote mine somewhat differently. It was Madre who began the tradition. 17 years later, and I still follow the Sunday routine habitually.

I wake at 5 and gallop straight to the beach, being sure to avoid every obstacle that is sent in my direction. I always arrive just in time to watch the sunrise and ignite her flames, alluring the whole world into an abrupt awakening. I watch in adoration for hours before finally getting to work. Although admittedly, sometimes her elegance sends me into a field of procrastination, as she distracts me from the primary purpose that I am there for. I place myself at the very beginning of the beach, the first area that allows trespassers, and I begin to work my magic.



I remove the humongous backpack from my tired shoulders and sling it on the floor. Why does such a small girl need such a big bag you ask? Well, Inside I am loaded with ammo (and by ammo I mean 2 jam sandwiches and a few other vital supplies). I'm not even particularly fond of jam... or sandwiches as a matter of fact, but if you hadn't already guessed, I'm a vegetarian, and a fussy one too. Padre has no clue how to cook for me, or sympathy for me and my dietary requirements either. He says I get what I'm given. He just doesn't understand that friends aren't food. After all, wings are for flying, not frying. How would he like it if I started nibbling on his arm? Oh, how I'd kill for one of my mother's famous Croquetas de setas right now! Even though I'm fussy, mum always found a way to my heart through her delicious dishes.

Stuffed in my backpack, alongside my far from gourmet jam sandwiches, lie a vast stash of bags (biodegradable, of course). These are what I use for my weekly beach clean up challenges that I set myself. I start at one end of the beach and attempt to remove all of the litter and mess that is placed before me. I tirelessly follow along the same path, gathering hundreds of plastic bottles, cigarette ends, broken glass and other leftovers of the lazy, cruel and self-absorbed so-called 'human-beings' that have wondered these beaches throughout the week. Even though I do this weekly, it will never get any easier, or less devastating to see the harsh reality and the sheer mess that others are creating for the generations to come.







The closer I get to him, the more I begin to sense something peculiar. The seahorse lied so helplessly still, almost like he was in a deep sleep. He looked so peaceful and pure that I didn't want to wake him. Something inside me told me not to leave him. I felt a disruption in my energy, that warned me that all was not well. I began to notice the small rips at the bottom of his tail. In between the tears were minuscule pieces of what looked like broken up fishing line web.

I scooped him carefully into my sandy hands and placed him into the Tupperware pot that my sandwiches had been in. I filled the bowl with enough sea water for him to drift in until we got home.

I paced the streets of Costa Adeje like I never had before. Swiftly, I swerved in and out of the traffic jam of people that filled the streets on this sunny afternoon. I did all that I could to keep a posture upright enough that would allow me to maintain the balance of the pot so that my new friend... Frito wouldn't be disturbed.

As Frito and I arrived home, I took him straight into the kitchen. I filled up the sink with bottled sea water that I'd collected earlier on at the Puerto Colon beach and positioned him carefully into the water. While I allowed him to adjust into his new temporary habitat, I foraged around my kitchen cupboards in search of the first aid box. After finding the kit, I took out a large reel of bandage and got cutting. I managed to cut a piece of material so tiny that I could enclose his little, wounded tail.

First and foremost, I had to find a way to remove the pieces of netting from his precious little tail. With the smallest tweezers I could find, I managed to pluck away slowly and steadily at the parts attached to him. My heart raced frantically as I worked my way nervously around his wounds with the greatest of precaution. All those years of playing my favourite board game operation came in handy





*inconsolable.*

I stood gormlessly in the same spot for 5 long minutes. In that time, my feet had been tickled by the shoreline a hundred times. The seagulls had been singing the same song on repeat, like a broken record. Even the palm trees moved consistently in the same swaying motion, but Frito didn't. Frito was still. Completely and utterly still. As I watched him float along the ocean's surface, I felt a numbing pain stroke my face as a tear descended down my cheek.

Another love lost to the Ocean.

I laid down on the sand, laying sideways so that I was still in the direction of the Ocean. Hours went past, and Frito slowly swished backwards and forwards with the shoreline, until finally landing washed up in the exact place I found him in the first place. I grabbed his stone cold body and laid him down beside me. With my piercingly cold hands, I carved a portrait of my mother in the sand above me. My pinky became the paintbrush as I made sure that every detail represented her undeniable beauty with accuracy.

As I lay impotently beside the waves, I stare like a hawk prowling for his prey and evaluate their every move. I view in mournfulness as the tide washes her picture away, just like how it snatched her away from me. I jumped up and began to tear away at my clothes.  
"I'm coming, Madre. I'm on my way!"











