

Believers

The smell of the ocean waves had drawn me to it. I felt the sand squish between my toes. The seagulls cried from the clouds, looking like they were soldiers patrolling the beach from the skies and the heat of the sun was baking me as if I were in an oven. All I could see for miles was the vast and wide blue ocean.

We walked past all the people sprawled out on towels, kids building sand castles, and surfers charging into the waves with their boards in tow. Everyone looked like they were enjoying the happiness that the beach brought to them.

We found an empty patch of sand, and it was perfect! There were no shells stabbing our bare feet, no seaweed that slithered it's way up onto shore, and we were out of reach of the tide. We pitched our umbrellas and laid down our towels, claiming this to be our spot, knowing it would be ours until the sun set below the horizon, and the moon took its place.

I glanced over at my friends, Emmie and Lakely. We flung off our cover-ups, and let our mothers smother us in sunscreen. After being warned about going too far, we put on our sunglasses and ran into the ocean.

As soon as our toes touched the icy cold water, we shrieked, and back pedaled back onto the warm sand. When the waves crashed back onto the shore, we played a game of cat and mouse, and ran away from the water before it touched us. We hooted and laughed, without a care in the world.

We cartwheeled in the sand, and landed in the waves. We kicked the water up to splash each other and laughed as we got soaked with the salty ocean

“Look!” Lakely suddenly called, and pointed to a seal bobbing up and down in the waves. “It’s a seal!” We jumped up and down, not even noticing when the waves touched us. The dark brown head was hard to spot in the dark blue water, but we found his rhythm and watched as he surfaced, and then dove back under.

“What if he’s trying to tell us something?” I asked as the seal came closer and closer.

“What do you mean?” Emmie asked, tilting her head to the side.

“I mean, what if he’s trying to send us a message from the mermaids!” I waggled my eyebrows, and smiled from ear to ear. Chills ran down our spines as we imaged a beautiful mermaid queen with a tiara made out of pieces of coral and seashells, a glamorous lavender tail that shimmered in the waves, wavy light brown hair moving freely as the water tugged it this way and that.

Lakely gasped. “What if the message he’s trying to tell us is that the mermaids need our help?” We all marveled at the thought, wondering if it could be possible that the mermaids chose *us* to save them.

“But why would they choose us?” Emmie asked, and the three of us shared glances among our nine-year old selves, looking at each other’s vibrant swimsuits, and hair braided into french braids. We were just three girls at the beach.

“What if they choose us, because—” Lakely began.

“Were mermaids too!!” Emmie and I finished her sentence. We grinned and slipped our hands into each others’, jumping up and down.

“I believe,” I declared, with a confident nod. I looked at Emmie and Lakely as their eyes filled with wonder, hope, excitement and joy.

“Me too!” Emmie concurred, clasping her hands together.

“Me three!” Lakely announced, and we all shared a giant group hug. The exciting thought that there were little mermaid girls like us out in the ocean, so wide and vast, and they wanted us to help them. It might sound a little preposterous to a scientist or a doctor, but to us, it was a reality, and we couldn’t wait to get our shimmering tails!

Right then, my little sister came up, sand bucket and shovel in hand as she asked us, “Whatcha guys doin’?”

“Oh, nothing. Just a little magic,” I replied with a twinkle in my eye. Lakely, Emmie and I giggled and started into the water to find the seal.

To me, the ocean is a wondrous thing. Creatures swimming about, playing tag in the tricky currents. Massive shipwrecks laying at the floor of the sea, not lost forever, no, only dreaming of when they’ll sail the great ocean again. The mermaid queen riding side saddle on her seal, slicing the waves with her tail as she holds on fiercely, with a goal in mind. She knows she needs help to save her kingdom. The queen knows that three small girls will be the best of help, because to us, anything is possible.

To me, if you close your eyes and let the salty air wash over you, you can be whisked away on grand adventures. To me, if you just believe, you can achieve great things. Behind my eyelids, I am a believer.