

1

The ocean was quiet today. Too quiet. Bubbles were flooding my ears. They were attaching to my body like magnets, disrupting my view. My vision cleared, and the intense rush of water ceased. Dark coral glittered as the morning sun rebounded off them. Silver fish sparkled. *Focus*. I grasped my metal detector and flicked the switch. It frantically beeped to life. It scanned the ocean floor, attempting to pick up the slightest trace of metal. I descended, and my ears popped like an exhaust. As I scoured for metal, it only reminded me how alone I am, and how big this ocean really is. *Be-be-be-be-beep*. Excitement washed over me. I dived like a vulture; my hand outstretched. Metal has been found.

I lightly touched the floor, and gently rolled sand away, revealing a sheet of perfect, shiny steel. As much as I wanted to admire and celebrate, my breath could only be held for so long. I pushed off the sandy floor, but something kept me grounded. A tentacle latched around my leg, tightly grasping it so tight my feet became numb. I looked down. An octopus at least five feet high emerged from the sand. My heart and breath accelerated like a race car. My breath was disappearing. My body was numb. The rush of water was deafening. I pushed up as hard as I could, and my leg was freed. I could see the surface. My lungs felt like they were going to explode. I used all my energy for a final stroke.

2

Who was that? This arrogant, greedy man came into my territory and tried to steal my belongings? Okay. I have calmed down. I am in my cave. Nothing has stolen. I mustered up my

courage and pushed myself outside. The sand had settled. The ocean seemed peaceful, but I quickly grabbed my steel and settled back inside. You can *never* be too cautious.

Sunlight beamed through the cracked coral. It gently touched my body, generating a warm and comfortable feeling. My stomach grumbled. My mind was set on food. What could wander the ocean today? Some crabs, some shrimp, if I am lucky. I dragged myself out of the cave once again. Crawling along the ocean floor was my favourite thing to do. Playing with the thin, wet sand. Gliding through the soft kelp. *Focus*. Something shimmered in the distance. My beady eyes locked onto it. A butterfly fish.

I started slinking through the sand. Stealth was my greatest skill. The butterfly fish, unaware, drifted aimless through the coral. I could make out its beautiful, natural colours. Swoosh! I pounced. The poor creature only had a second to accept its fate. My tentacles worked at lightning speed. I would feel bad, but I was hungry.

### 3

I woke to the sound of waves crashing on top of another in the distance. A soothing sound to me. I had a mission today. I yanked open the fridge revealing some of the best seafood money can buy. I would have saved it for myself, but I had other plans. Waves became louder as I approached the beach. I slipped my shoes off and admired the ocean for a second. It seemed to stare back at me. I thought of it as my only friend. My cold feet pushed under the sand. I reached into my seafood cooler and started laying everything out. Shrimp, crab, clownfish. Which one would that octopus like the most? Even though the octopus attacked me, I grew a certain interest in it. I was so interested in fact; I gave the creature a name. Oscar. Oscar the

Octopus. Once I was finished laying everything out, I looked at the ocean one last time and then strolled back. I flopped in front of the TV, and the cogs and gears in my mind alternated and rotated. That night, I could not sleep. I just watched the ocean, wondering what Oscar was doing.

## 4

As the man started diving more frequently, my interest increased. I kept my distance but admired his swimming technique. He also started throwing me food. My favourites. How did he know? I started feeling more comfortable around him. Two metres of distance turned into one. He was careful, almost cautious. We did all my favourite things, but the lack of communication barred us. If only there was some way to talk with him...

## 5

I was lying in bed last night, with the energy of a sloth, when it hit me. I was thinking about how humans communicate. Brain signals sent to our brain through sound. What if I made a device where I could talk with Oscar? I half-fell out of my bed and raced to my workshop/shed. A light half-heartedly flickered. My energetic attitude was radiating as I walked into the bleak, dull shed. I started ripping projects apart. I worked all night. Crashes filled the room. Working for a night quickly became a week. I never left the shed. Bags were forming under my eyes. My brain was throbbing. After a week, it was done. My best project yet. Mechanics mixed with science. Now was the time to evaluate it.

6

The man has been missing a lot of dives now. I am starting to worry. A part of me longs for him. Another part adores the silence of the untouched ocean.

7

I eased into the gentle current. The ocean seemed tired in the early morning. I descended to Oscar's rock, where he popped out. I held out my hand. A tentacle wrapped around it, tightly seizing the shrimp. It was now or never. I pulled out the machine, and placed my hand on one side, and shrimp on the other. Oscar came close. Too close. I only realised now how much of a beast he really was. We were face to face, and a muffled robotic voice spoke through the machine: "Hello, kind human."