

Dear Rose

I know they say the grass is greener but only you've seen the other side. It must be because you haven't come home since you left. They all tell me to stop writing to the other side of the gates, it's stupid, no one will respond but you will, you have to.

It's strange because I've been taking your advice, remember just put one foot in front of the other, but I have yet to get so far. I don't know exactly why, every day I take step after step to only end up where I started the next. How does this happen? I'm not sure, there are never footprints in the sand reminding me of where I started, where I left off. I can imagine you saying something about this being for my journey. But what journey? When will my journey start? Or has it already started? I hope not I don't want to go on any journey without you. When will you come home, Will you come home?

I haven't been back, back to that beach since. I remember you were happier than you had ever been, your smile lighting up the night, even though you had never seemed so free I could still see the hesitation in your eyes. I don't remember much about that evening. I remember when we were wandering down the beach talking about our mark in the world. You had said you already knew yours, footprints, they represent a journey with a destination and so much in life doesn't have a destination. You were always so concerned about journeys, always asking me about mine. I never knew what my journey was. One thing I will never forget is you always had your destination in mind, even Dad says it sometimes, often when he's drinking a scotch, he's started drinking.

On the beach, I remember you telling me about pearl encrusted gates you were going to visit, your destination. I asked you to take me, you just asked me to close my eyes and I did because I trust you, you kissed my cheek, I swear a tear gently tapped my forehead but my eyes were closed. Everything went dark. I woke up and I still vividly remember the crying, everyone around me crying, I wasn't crying, suppose that makes me weird?

A siren wail filled my ears. It was muted, I tried so hard to find you and I was looking for your footprints but it was like you had disappeared and all that was left was one set of footprints. Mine. Nobody would tell me where you went. I suppose that was okay though because I already knew where you were.

This is the seventh letter I've written in the last 3 months to you. But you haven't responded. Every time I write to you Mum cries, Dad yells at me because he says I can't post the letter, which all in all is stupid I think. Dad's cousin Shirley said that you're on the pearly side now and that you are theirs now, not ours, But I don't want them to have you, I really miss you.

I have come to the realisation Rose, that I won't be seeing you again for a very long time. After many arguments with Mum, she explained that you won't be back, however hard this may be it's true, don't worry I will still write to you always. I don't expect a reply maybe you haven't any paper or a pen. Grandma tells me that you're at the pearly gates and they don't have a lot of stuff that we have here over there. Today I moved on, well that's Mum said anyway, the only thing I did was make my mark on our beach, on our world. I left something, I left a trail of footprints in the sand. I told mum that they were for me, that made her happy but really they were for you. Just in case you can come back early and want to find us or you get lost. I will always leave footprints. Look for our mark in the sand.

Love Lily