

## THE LAST BEAUTIFUL ESCAPE

Ronald Groth

*It may not seem like it, usually it remains un-noticed. Some of us are not aware its barely sedentary now, poised and awaiting the tipping point. It has begun to reveal its presence, that it is closer now than it has ever been. Even from paradise I can see it and I simply will not sit and wait and do nothing! We will all see the nothing, feast and grow until it has become too much bare.*

Every time that I set sail just over the water. The shores of the crown jewel welcome me. The people, the creatures, its beings are all happy to share. They are aware. These people from the ancient land have stories they tell. They were told by the generation before them and so the pattern goes. Seasons pass and come and go, just roll on by. They never falter until now.

These wondrous tales from Wulgurukaba, custodians of the Mangroves, with all its creatures that would sustain the people if only they share. They would only ever take what was ever really needed. The flutter and sparkle from Mr Mangrove Jack. The persistent journey of the Dugong and its travel through the ecosystem, grazing on the underwater pasture, and the delicate Green turtle who takes his home with him. They have been custodians of their world as far as they could see. All the way to the reef. And as we all have grown by number some stories have been forgotten. It's just how things go, but they wait to be found again.

It's the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the nothing has grown, even more from when I first heard its howl. The unpredictable bands of rain, that held so much downpour and downfall. I was waiting inside that cold room. The water dripping from the ceiling into the mixing bowl strategically placed on the ground. The echo of the water sounded into the night. That place, it wasn't so long ago and if we were to point fingers for why it happened we would be pointing at ourselves. But to wish for it not to happen would be to undo all that has been learnt, and all the progress that has been become. Look at how far we have come.

Its wonder and value is remarkable, so priceless and I remain here with passion and pride. The sunlight touches the brightest hues, it's a technicolour dreaming. It is my responsibility now and I have been given purpose to preserve for future generations because there are so many still to come.

Golden sunsets, outline the native gum, the sea side lapping at the shore. Mother nature's heart keeps on beating so I move in silence. I'm awe inspired with my surroundings. This moment is sent to my core memory and something that I will cherish forever.

Bloodwood and wiry old trees have scattered through the land. With dusk approaching, they seem to come to life. They move and dance to an ancient song. They creatures of the island now nestle in for the night time. This place is a refuge, untouched by the needs of supply and demand.

There is much to do here! It is colossal and everyone knows it. But for me, for you, and for everyone we don't have to do this alone.

The familiar pattern of the seasons that has lasted for 200,000 years of humankind seems to falter even more but this paradise that I have found it still welcomes me ashore.