

My Eyes

I tore open the crisp paper envelope and found a hard plastic cassette. It was my birthday that day. My sixteenth actually. My sister Emma had sent me a letter. She was attending a boarding school in Sydney at the time. She would always write to mum and tell her of the fun she would have with her friends. Ever since I can remember, I've been jealous of her. I did "home schooling" while she got to go to the big city. She had dozens of friends, while my best friend was my mum.

Although I was envious of her, I was very excited to receive a letter just for me. After a few failed attempts to fit the cassette into the tape player correctly, I finally got it right. I pushed the tape deck shut with a "click", found the "play" button, and began to hear the voice of my beloved sister...

"Happy birthday sis. A couple of nights ago I was thinking about you. I was wondering what I should put in this special birthday letter, then I thought of this. It's called I'll be your eyes...

I don't really know what it is about eyes. There's something special. To adults they're just another set of body parts except they reflect and bend light into something our brain recognizes. To me, there is much more to them. I'll be your eyes

When you stand in front of the mirror, you can watch them work their magic. Shut your eyes until you can't remember where you are. Then, when you feel like you are suspended in limbo, quickly snap them open.

Look into your own eyes...

A swirl of colour closes in on the void. Or maybe it's the other way around. Maybe the darkness absorbs everything in reach, sort of like a black hole. When I look into my own eyes, they look like the ocean. So deep that if you looked hard enough you might be able to catch a glimpse of my thoughts and feelings drifting idly. That's probably how grandpa can tell if people are lying to him or not. He says "I know you're telling the truth, I can see it in your eyes."

I'll be your eyes...

Eyes are beautiful. When you look up close, that perfectly round ring of colour looks like fine and delicate lace coated in gloss. In blue eyes, bursts of electric coloured lightning, threaten to penetrate the calm night at the centre or maybe ripples gliding across the surface of a deep, deep ocean.

I'll be your eyes...

When you're lost and no light seems to break through the darkness, I'll be there for you, I'll be your eyes."

I could feel the tears welling and prickling the back of my eyes. I fumbled around for the "stop" button, and when I couldn't hear the voice of my sister any more, I just sat there in the company of silence, darkness and my thoughts. By now the tears were running so continually that the sleeve of my jumper which I had been wiping the tears away with was soaked.

When I came to my senses and realised that Emma was trying to help, I began to play the tape again.

"Sometimes I wonder if I see things differently to other people. What if what I see as red, is really blue to other people. I guess that's the problem with me being your eyes, you'll never really know if that is what you would have seen.

I wish you could see..."

With that, I turned the tape off for good. In my head I thought, "I wish I could see too Emma"

After that day I realised that I would never be able to see again, no matter how hard I wished. Even though I do live in a seemingly dark colourless world, my mind makes up for it. When I speak to my sister, I picture the little girl that I knew when I was young, you see, I wasn't always blind. I have the memories of my childhood, the best part of my life.

Kathryn Gray