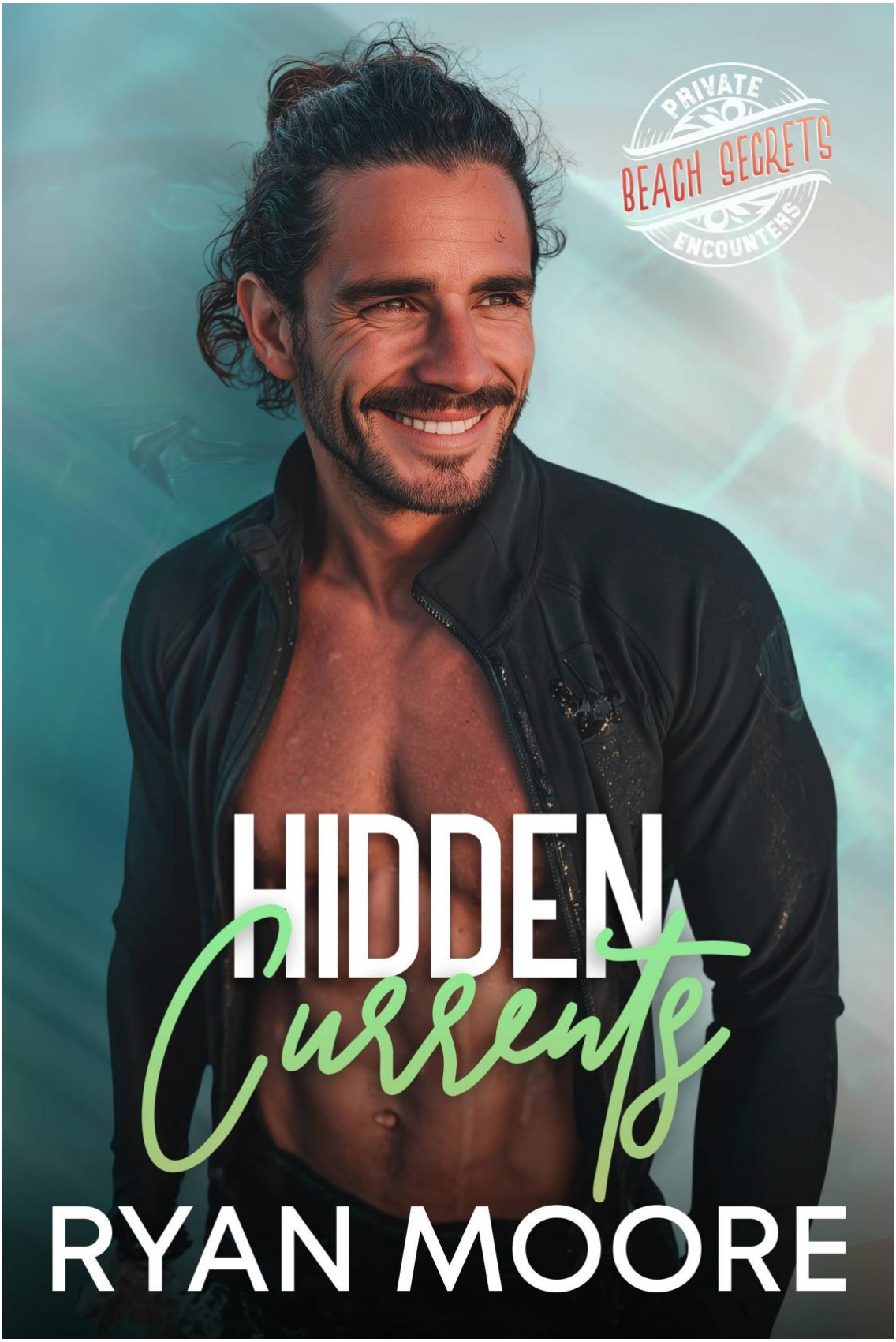
PRIVATE
BEACH SECRETS
ENCOUNTERS
HIDDEN
Currents
RYAN MOORE

Private Encounters: Beach Secrets

HIDDEN CURRENTS

by

Ryan Moore

A *Beach Secrets* Story

When Miles Whitmore flees to the Colombian coast, he wants silence, not temptation. But solitude is impossible when the ocean delivers Enzo Medina—a guarded marine biologist whose life's work rests on the reef just beyond Miles's rented cottage.

What begins with tangled fishing nets and sharp words quickly turns into something neither man expects. Miles doesn't do casual. Enzo doesn't do forever. But as nights grow hotter and secrets surface, boundaries blur into desire, and desire into something dangerously close to love.

Trust has always been the hardest promise to keep. On the shore where land meets sea, Miles and Enzo must decide if what's between them is just a fleeting tide—or the kind of bond worth holding onto.

A steamy, emotional M/M romance set against the wild beauty of the Caribbean coast, this story blends passion, heartbreak, and the question every lover fears: what happens when the one you shouldn't fall for is the only one you can't let go?

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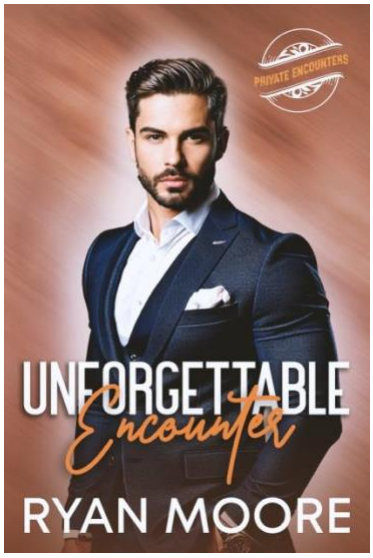

One night. One dance. One unforgettable encounter.

Grayson Hart wasn't supposed to be at the Westwood masquerade. Crashing an elite gala was a risk, but he never expected Logan Westwood—a powerful billionaire who sees right through him.

A stolen moment turns into a night of passion, but by morning, Grayson is gone. Logan never lets anything slip through his fingers—and this time, he's not letting Grayson go.

Unforgettable Encounter is a seductive MM romance packed with sizzling chemistry, high-stakes tension, and a love that refuses to be forgotten

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Chapter 1: The Crossed Lines

Miles Whitmore's fingertips brushed the surface of the water, sending ripples outward and scattering the sun's reflection like shards of gold across the ocean.

He floated effortlessly, the salty current cradling him as he closed his eyes, letting the heat of the Colombian sun warm his skin. It was the sort of peace he had come here for, a rare moment of stillness in a life that had been anything but.

His rented cottage, perched at the edge of a jungle-swathed cliff, felt miles away. The secluded bay of Bahía Escondida stretched before him, a stretch of coral reef so vivid that even its whispers seemed urgent, warning him of secrets deeper than the turquoise depths.

It was an early hour, the beach still empty, the sea unmarred save for the natural dance of waves against the sand. His mind, despite the rare calm, churned with thoughts he couldn't quite release. Sceneries, landscapes, stories—always stories. But here, in the water, he was alone.

A sound sliced through the peaceful quiet, the hum of a small motorboat cutting a swift path across the water, breaking the unspoken truce between man and sea. He barely noticed it at first, lost in his own murky thoughts. But as the boat drew closer, the growl of the engine became unavoidable. The air around him was now filled with the acrid scent of gasoline, salt, and something sharp.

Miles opened his eyes just as the boat screeched to a halt a few yards away.

"Hey!" A voice echoed across the water, tight with barely controlled fury.

The man on the boat was young, perhaps a few years younger than Miles. Dark wavy hair was tamed into a bun, his skin the warm golden brown of someone who lived in the sun all his life. His sea-green eyes gleamed with an intensity that shot straight through the water's calm.

"Do you know where you are?" the man demanded.

Miles blinked, confused, before realization struck. The boat had cut across a line—those buoys, the ones he had seen earlier marking the protected reef area. His stomach tightened with sudden guilt, but his pride flared first.

"I didn't mean to—"

"You're endangering coral!" The man's voice was no longer just angry; it was filled with something else. Something personal. "You think this is a playground? You think you can swim wherever you want?"

Miles pushed himself upright in the water, fingers gripping the edge of the reef as he stared at the man with an edge of defiance. "I didn't see any signs. You're overreacting."

"Don't lecture me," the man shot back. "You came here for a vacation, not to destroy what's been protected for years." His voice cracked with frustration. He tossed his head toward the shore. "Come on. I'm not done with you."

Reluctantly, Miles swam to the shore, his feet scraping against the sandy bottom as he walked up to the boat. He tried to brush the saltwater from his skin, but his irritation flared higher than the rising tide.

"Who do you think you are?" he snapped.

The man on the boat locked eyes with him, his expression unreadable.

"I'm Enzo Medina," he replied coolly, as if the name should carry weight. "I'm the one who's been trying to protect this reef from people like you."

Miles opened his mouth to retaliate, but something about the raw conviction in Enzo's eyes gave him pause. That fire, those eyes... they unsettled him in ways he wasn't prepared for. He wanted to fight back, wanted to snap at this stranger who dared to lecture him, but instead, he turned on his heel and stormed back toward his cottage.

Behind him, Enzo stood silently, watching him go, his gaze still burning through the air like an unspoken challenge.

And though Miles had every intention of leaving it behind him, the thought of that look, of the man who had delivered it, lingered in his chest, tangled with something he didn't care to examine.

The sun hung heavy in the sky, casting long shadows across the palm-lined path that led from the beach to Miles's cottage. Inside, Miles sat on the worn wicker chair by the window, staring out at the endless horizon, his thoughts a thousand miles away from his earlier confrontation with Enzo. He had been hoping to shake it off, to let the ripples of irritation fade into the vastness of the ocean.

But when the sharp sound of a knock broke the stillness, he straightened in his chair, a frown immediately pulling at the corners of his mouth.

Enzo stood at the threshold, his dark eyes clouded with discomfort as he held out a thick stack of pamphlets, the edges crinkled as if they had been handled many times before. He looked out of place here, standing in the soft light that filtered through the palm fronds. The faint rustling of the wind did nothing to ease the tension between them.

Miles sighed as he stood, bracing himself as he opened the door to let the man inside.

"I thought you might want to know more about the reef project," Enzo said, his voice softer than before, more controlled, though there was still a hint of that hard edge. "I wasn't trying to make things personal earlier."

Miles wiped his hands on the linen of his pants as if the gesture would ground him. He didn't want to make a scene, didn't want to engage, but it felt too late for that now. His lips twitched, forming the faintest semblance of a polite smile—one that didn't quite reach his eyes.

"I'm sure you didn't," he said, reaching out and taking the pamphlets, though his fingers brushed against Enzo's just a moment too long. The contact was brief, but it was enough to make him pause, make him reconsider the way his pulse jumped. He quickly turned away, forcing his mind back to neutral. “I’m Miles.”

He motioned for Enzo to sit, though the gesture was more out of obligation than hospitality.

Enzo hesitated but accepted the unspoken invitation, lowering himself into the chair opposite Miles. The space between them was tangible, filled with an air that neither of them seemed to be willing to break.

They exchanged pleasantries, neither one fully at ease. Miles poured them drinks, ice clinking in the glasses, but the silence between them was suffocating, the kind of silence that spoke volumes without a word spoken.

Enzo's gaze flicked down briefly to the watch on Miles's wrist, the gleaming silver of the timepiece standing out against the simplicity of the rest of his attire—linen pants, a t-shirt that had seen better days. The watch was out of place, almost absurd in this context, as if it belonged in a life far removed from the sun-bleached simplicity of the coast.

"I see you're still wearing that," Enzo remarked, his voice quiet but sharp. "I'd have expected someone like you to leave the luxury behind for a place like this."

The words, though not harsh, stung with an observation that hit too close to the core. Miles bristled but didn't respond, instead taking a long sip from his drink, feeling the cold liquid slide down his throat as if it could wash away the discomfort.

"I don't like people thinking they can come in here and disrupt things," Enzo continued, his voice shifting, more earnest now, almost pleading. "This reef... You don't understand how fragile it all is. It's not just water, Miles."

Miles put the glass down on the table with a quiet clink, his expression unreadable. He could feel Enzo's eyes on him, the quiet judgment still hanging between them like a weight.

"I'm not here to ruin your project," Miles said finally, his tone clipped, betraying none of the frustration that still simmered beneath the surface. "But I do have my own life, my own reasons for being here."

Enzo's gaze softened for a moment, but his resolve remained firm. "Just stay outside the buoys. It's not hard, Miles."

The warning in his voice was almost too much, too patronizing, and it pushed Miles to the edge. He stood up abruptly, the motion sharp, too quick for Enzo to respond in time. Tension strained against the swirl of the humid air, the distance between them growing with each passing second.

Without a word, Miles turned away, stepping toward the door. He opened it just enough to let Enzo pass, his body blocking the frame as if to push him out.

Enzo hesitated, but then, without another word, he turned and walked away, his steps heavy on the ground as he headed back toward the beach.

The door closed behind him with a sharp click.

Miles leaned against the door for a moment, eyes closing as he exhaled sharply, as though the weight of the encounter had drained him of all his energy. But still, the image of Enzo—his intensity, his quiet force—lingered like an ache he couldn't shake.

*****

The next morning, Miles settled into the sand with his notebook and camera, a careful facade of a man simply passing time.

The beach was quieter than usual, save for the distant hum of waves meeting the shore and the occasional squawk of a seagull overhead. He spread his materials out like an artist preparing for an afternoon's work, but there was no sketching today. No, today was about watching.

Enzo's team had already arrived, a small but efficient group working on the reef. The boat bobbed at anchor a little way off from the buoys, the water a brilliant contrast to the muted colors of the team's gear as they dove in and out, assembling underwater structures meant to encourage coral growth.

Miles kept his eyes on them, even as he scribbled lines and half-thoughts in his notebook, or took photos of the surroundings. It was more a distraction than anything actually purposeful. The wind ruffled his hair, and he ran a hand through it absently. He was trying to focus, but his mind wasn't on the coral.

It was on the way Enzo had looked at him yesterday, the sharp, unreadable expression he'd worn. Like an impenetrable wall, or a challenge he couldn't resist.

He glanced over the images of the reef he'd found online, then back at the small section of coral visible from the shore. There was a stark difference between what he saw now and the pristine maps that had been drawn up years ago, decades even, before the influx of tourism had begun to make its mark on the ecosystem. His sketch of the reef patterns mirrored the ones he had found online, but as his eyes traced the edges of the coral from memory, a deep sense of unease began to creep in.

They were pushing the boundaries here, pushing something larger than the water itself.

As he idly flipped through his notes, a voice interrupted his concentration.

"You should be careful, gringo."

Miles didn't need to look up to know who it was. The voice came from behind him, thick with the accent of a local fisherman. He was an older man, weathered by salt and sun, his face creased with age and the burden of years spent on the sea.

"Careful?" Miles asked, raising an eyebrow but keeping his eyes on the team offshore. "What do you mean?"

The fisherman lingered, hands on his hips as he watched the men in the distance.

"That one there." He nodded toward Enzo, though his gaze never left Miles. "The one who leads the team. He's been here longer than any of us."

Miles's lips twisted into a faint smile, though it didn't reach his eyes. He didn't like the way the man's words felt like a warning wrapped in indifference. "I'm sure he's used to tourists."

The fisherman shrugged, his leathery shoulders rolling in a motion that was more resigned than dismissive. "Used to them? Maybe. But he's been around too long to let anyone get in his way. You should keep your distance."

Miles let out a soft scoff, something sharp and contemptuous. "I'm not here to get in anyone's way. Just here to take some pictures."

He returned to his sketching, his fingers pressing too hard against the paper, the lines turning jagged in his frustration. The fisherman didn't linger, disappearing back down the beach to his shack, but the words stuck in Miles's head like a splinter he couldn't pull out.

Enzo. His team. The reef. It was all connected, and the longer Miles stayed, the more he realized that the line between observer and intruder was thinner than he had first imagined.

The warning hadn't been about the reef, not really. It had been about Enzo, about the man who protected it. A man who wasn't just part of the landscape, but someone who had claimed it as his own.

Miles glanced back toward the water, where Enzo moved with his team, his body cutting through the waves like he belonged to them, like he was part of the very fabric of the ocean. And for the first time, Miles felt like an outsider in a place he had hoped to call his own.

The line had been drawn. He could feel it in the air between them, a quiet agreement that had been established the moment Enzo had confronted him. And now, as the ocean rolled quietly at his feet, Miles wasn't sure which side of it he was meant to be on.

He closed his notebook with a sharp snap, rising to his feet. Whatever this was, whatever had been started between them—it wasn't something he could ignore. Not anymore. But just as quickly, he could feel the line tightening, the distance between them growing.

As night descended on Bahía Escondida, the warm air held the lingering scent of salt and damp earth, and the soft hum of the ocean filled the spaces between the chirps of unseen creatures in the dark.

Miles lay in his hammock, his body cradled by the soft sway of the fabric, yet he felt anything but relaxed. The evening sky was painted with deepening shades of purple and orange as the last light slipped behind the jungle cliffs, leaving the world in shadow.

He had expected the quiet to bring him peace—he'd been desperate for it—but it only seemed to heighten everything. The solitude amplified the restlessness he'd been trying to outrun. He could still feel the echo of his confrontation with Enzo, the harshness of the other man's gaze, the bite of their words still lingering in his chest like sand that was too stubborn to be washed away.

It was all too raw, too close. And now, in the silence of the night, it became something more than a random altercation with a stranger. Now, it was a magnetic pull he couldn't seem to shake.

Miles shifted in the hammock, one hand rubbing at the back of his neck, his eyes drifting to the water. The moon hung low, casting a silver streak across the dark sea, a luminous path that seemed to lead directly into the horizon. It was beautiful, in a sort of unsettling way.

Then he saw it. A distant glow on the water's surface, bobbing like a silent beacon in the night. His eyes narrowed, and his heartbeat quickened as he recognized the lights. Small, flickering at first, then clearer as the boat moved closer to the reef.

Enzo.

Chapter 2: Drift

He had seen the man diving during the day, watched his movements beneath the water, but this was different. This was night.

Miles knew the reef was fragile, but there was something even more intimate about the way Enzo moved now, invisible to everyone except the sea, the depths, and the light that swirled around him like some ethereal dance.

Miles couldn't look away. His thoughts tangled like the currents, swirling, uncertain, but there was something in Enzo's presence, something more than the conservation project, more than the way he guarded the reef with such ferocity. It was as if the ocean itself had claimed Enzo, pulling him deeper into its world, making him part of its rhythm, part of its quiet violence.

The silence between them—the silence from earlier, when Enzo had confronted him, when words had been sharp and distrust had settled like an iron weight—suddenly became an open wound. The waves beat against the shore, and in the stillness, the sound of their crash was strangely distant, yet close enough to carry with it everything that was unexpressed.

Miles closed his eyes, but the image of Enzo swimming in the dark water lingered, as if it were imprinted on his eyelids. In the quiet of his hammock, wrapped in the embrace of the night, his body grew restless. The heat of the evening stoked a kind of hunger he hadn't expected. It wasn't just for the answers he'd come to find in this place; it was something deeper. Something that lurked beneath the surface.

The dreams came without warning.

Tangled nets. The smell of seawater, thick and suffocating. Voices. Indistinct, muffled, like whispers beneath the waves. The sound of Enzo's voice was there, but it wasn't clear, and in the haze of the dream, it became an eerie sort of omen, like a siren song calling him deeper into the ocean's hold.

Miles could barely feel his heart pounding in his chest. The moon was still high, but the night had taken on a new shape, one that pressed against his ribs, making his breath feel tight in his lungs.

He didn't know why he was doing it, but before he could stop himself, his feet hit the ground, cold against the sand. He grabbed his camera and notebook, moving with a sense of urgency he didn't fully understand. The tide was high now, the waves rolling in with the rhythm of something ancient.

Without thinking, he made his way toward the reef.

There was no plan, no explanation. He simply followed the pull he felt beneath his skin, a tug that had been there since he first saw Enzo and the reef. He wasn't sure if it was curiosity, defiance, or something else entirely, but he could feel it pushing him forward, toward the water.

Toward the place where Enzo had been. The place where the ocean and the man had become one.

And as he stepped closer to the shoreline, the sound of the ocean grew louder, until it was all that filled his ears. The world around him began to fall away, and for the first time since he had arrived in Bahía Escondida, Miles didn't feel like an observer.

This time, he felt like part of the current, carried by forces greater than himself. Unsure of where they might take him, but unable to stop.

*****

The first light of morning crept softly through the palm fronds, a pale thread of gold against the deep blue of the receding night.

Miles awoke with a start, his mind still tangled in the remnants of dreams. His heart was beating unevenly, a lingering throb from the illusioned tension of the previous evening. Sleep had done little to soothe him, and the restlessness that had stirred in the hammock last night had followed him into the day.

He needed to move. To find something tangible to anchor himself to. Something *real*.

He left his cottage without a word to the empty room. The sound of his bare feet sinking into the cool sand was the only noise that marked his departure, rushed and muffled. The beach was still and quiet, the world waking slowly, as if the island itself were holding its breath. The tide had receded, leaving behind a wide strip of wet sand that stretched endlessly before him.

Miles walked along the shore, his eyes scanning the sand almost mechanically, until something caught his eye.

It was a tangle of sun-bleached fishing net, half-buried in the grains. He knelt down, fingers brushing over the coarse material. It was old and discarded, useless now. The knots had been long undone by time and the elements.

With a sigh, he grabbed hold of it, pulling it free from the earth's grip. It was heavy, and the wind tugged at it as he dragged it inland, each movement a struggle against the weight of the past—the weight of the mistakes this reef had carried with it, tangled and tangled again in nets just like this.

When he reached the edge of the conservation hut, Miles paused, his hand still gripping the rough net. He stood there for a moment, undecided, as he observed the small structure that had become Enzo's domain. His chest tightened with the same sharpness that had followed him all

morning. The echo of confrontation, the weight of judgment, and the curious pull he couldn't quite put a finger on.

Finally, he dropped the net at the edge of the hut, just outside the door. His fingers lingered against the fibers, brushing them one last time.

The door opened.

Enzo stepped out. His expression was cautious, but there was something else in his gaze, something that betrayed his wariness. His eyes flicked to the net, then back to Miles, and the moment stretched long between them.

Miles shrugged, offering a half-hearted smile.

"Thought you'd want more trash," he said, his voice dry, carrying the weight of sarcasm, though it felt thin in the air.

Enzo didn't immediately respond, instead eyeing the net with a brief flicker of something Miles couldn't recognize. He crouched down, fingers trailing over the tangled mess, and after a long beat, he stood up again, still silent. Then, with an almost imperceptible nod, he picked it up. The movement was deliberate, careful, but there no thanks were exchanged. No pleasantries. The air between them was still thick with words neither would say aloud.

Miles didn't wait to see Enzo retreat into the hut. He turned away, heading back toward the water, where the rhythmic crash of the waves was the only thing to keep him company.

Later that day, as the sun hung lower in the sky, Miles walked along the shallows with his camera in hand. The ocean had turned a deep blue, a color so rich it seemed to pull everything into its depths. He paused when he saw Enzo standing knee-deep in the water, cataloging the coral. His fingers were gentle as he moved, his motions slow, almost meditative.

For a moment, neither of them spoke. The quiet stretched between them, not uncomfortably, but with a weight that Miles couldn't quite explain.

Enzo glanced up, eyes catching Miles's before flicking to the pale khakis he wore. Out of place, like a city man trying to fit into a world that wasn't his.

"Not exactly reef-safe," Enzo said, the words dry but carrying a hint of humor, like a crack in the wall between them.

Miles let out a soft chuckle, feeling almost relieved at the shift in the atmosphere. He looked down at his khakis, an eyebrow lifting in mock offense.

"I wasn't planning to swim," he said, the dryness in his voice cutting the last edge of formality.

Enzo's lips quirked, the first sign of a smile that seemed to pull the distance between them just a little closer.

Miles stepped into the water, and the coolness creeped up his calves. They began to walk side by side down the beach, the conversation flowing more easily now. They spoke of the weather, of the ocean patterns, of things Miles hadn't even realized he was curious about. Enzo explained

plankton drift, how the currents shifted, how the world beneath the waves was in constant motion, invisible, yet essential.

Miles listened, actively engaged, feeling the conversation settle around them like the sand beneath their feet. He took photos of everything Enzo pointed out, from the tiny schools of fish swimming circles around them to the way Enzo looked almost golden under the afternoon sun.

They'd found a rhythm here, a quiet pulse to a world that was commonly missed.

As the sun began to dip lower, the tide turned, glowing faintly blue as the plankton stirred in the shallows. The light seemed to wrap around Enzo like a second skin as he waded deeper into the water, his movements fluid, graceful. He beckoned to Miles with a subtle gesture, his eyes crinkling around the corners as he smiled at the water.

Without a word, Miles followed, stepping deeper into the water. The coolness of the sea seemed to hum with life, a soft, shimmering pulse beneath the surface. For a moment, they stood in silence, the water around them glowing, an ethereal blue light that seemed to capture *everything*—their distance, their hesitation, the pull of something more.

They lingered there, just for a moment, before the night began to settle fully around them.

At the curve of the beach, they parted ways, Enzo's gaze lingering on the reef for just a moment longer before he turned back toward the hut. Miles walked in the opposite direction, each step feeling heavier than the last. The tension between them was like a thread, pulled tight, stretching, but not snapping.

Back at his cottage, Miles sat at the table, staring at the pictures he'd taken on his camera. He lingered on one of Enzo, pointing at a starfish as he talked animatedly. Strands of his hair had fallen out of its bun to frame his face, and his skin glowed like he was lit from within, as if the sea itself had chosen him to carry a piece of its light.

Across the sand, Enzo stood in the doorway of his hut, arms crossed, staring out at the reef, his posture lost in thought. His face was contemplative, as if the day had pressed something into him, something he couldn't name, or perhaps just didn't want to.

In his hut, Miles rinsed his camera gear, but his mind was elsewhere, tangled in the moments between them—the touch of the water, the quiet exchange, the pull that neither of them had named.

The sea was louder tonight.

A distant rumble of thunder could be heard on the horizon, like a storm gathering, but for now, the night remained calm. Neither of them would sleep well. Not tonight. The pull was there, strong and unsettled.

And neither knew where it would lead.

Chapter 3: Tethered

The morning broke over Bahía Escondida with a muted brilliance, the sky still soft with the afterglow of the passing squall.

Miles woke early again, the last traces of restless sleep lingering in the shadows of his mind. His body ached from the tension of the night—unsettled, as if the storm hadn't just passed over the land, but had moved through him as well.

The beach outside his cottage was littered with small debris: coconut husks, pieces of seaweed, and the occasional shard of driftwood. The wind still had a bite to it, though the storm had passed. The air was thick, wet, and heavy, a quiet reminder of the raw power the sea had only just released.

Miles didn't hesitate. He grabbed the clean T-shirt he'd found in his bag—the one he hadn't used yet—and folded it neatly. It was worn, faded from too many washes, but still soft. He draped it over the pile of tangled fishing net just outside Enzo's hut, alongside a ragged cloth, and left without fanfare or explanation.

No note. No words. He didn't want to overthink it.

He turned back toward his cottage without a second glance, not waiting for Enzo to notice, though something twisted in his chest, unsure whether this small act would mean anything or nothing at all.

Later, when the sun had climbed higher, the scent of damp earth and saltwater filling the air, Miles glanced toward the beach. Enzo was emerging from the hut, moving slowly, stretching his arms above his head, his hair still wet from the morning's work. Miles watched him for a moment, hidden behind the palm trees that framed his cottage.

Enzo didn't see him, but he did see the shirt. The small gesture had caught Enzo's attention, and for a second, Miles could almost imagine the brief flicker of surprise in the other man's eyes.

But then, with no word, Enzo bent down, picked it up, and disappeared inside his hut.

For reasons Miles couldn't explain, something inside him shifted. Softened, almost. He couldn't suppress the smile that tugged at his lips. It wasn't much, not really. But it was something, and that was enough for now.

The day wore on. The air grew hotter, and the sand began to bake beneath the sun. By afternoon, the storm's aftermath was a memory, and the reef looked almost otherworldly in its clarity, the water shimmering like glass beneath the sun's burning gaze. Miles found himself at the edge of the beach again, the rhythm of the waves pulling at him like some sort of lazy spell.

Then, a shout broke the stillness.

Miles turned, his eyes narrowing against the sunlight, and saw Enzo standing at the water's edge, staring out at the sea, hands on his hips. The man was soaked through, water dripping from his dark hair and down his bare skin, his breath coming in quick, frustrated bursts.

Miles could hear him from a distance, cursing under his breath in Spanish, though the words were indistinct, tangled in the rush of the wind and the surf.

Enzo waved his arm angrily toward the horizon, where a solitary buoy was drifting farther out to sea.

"The damn thing's come loose," Enzo muttered to himself, though Miles could hear the irritation in his voice, rising like a swell in the ocean.

Miles walked closer, not quite sure why he was drawn to the moment, but unable to ignore the way Enzo stood there, his silhouette sharp against the expanse of water. He watched Enzo run a hand through his wet hair, looking helpless for a moment as the buoy bobbed on the rising tide.

Finally, Miles stepped forward, breaking the silence.

"Need help?" he called out, the words feeling unfamiliar on his tongue.

Enzo's gaze snapped to him, and for a second, his expression was indecipherable. There was a hesitation in his posture, a flicker of something—pride, annoyance, something guarded—but it quickly shifted into resolve.

"Why not?" Enzo said with a sigh, his voice carrying a faint edge of frustration. "You always seem to show up at the right time, don't you?"

Miles raised an eyebrow but kept his distance, sensing the edge beneath Enzo's words.

"I'm not sure that's a compliment," he said dryly.

Enzo's lips twitched in a brief, fleeting smile, though it didn't quite reach his eyes. "I didn't say it was."

Without further words, they made their way toward the small boat anchored at the shore, its hull still slick from the rain. Their earlier tension had come back, but there was something softer beneath it now, something that Miles oddly wanted more of.

Miles grabbed the bow and helped Enzo push the boat out into the shallow water. The boat scraped against the sandy bottom before it finally floated free, rocking gently in the current. The wind picked up again, lifting the water into frothy waves as they climbed in, Miles taking the back, Enzo steering them toward the buoy.

The closer they got, the more apparent the damage was. The buoy's tether had snapped, the thick rope now trailing behind it like an abandoned lifeline.

"Damn it," Enzo muttered under his breath, his eyes hardening.

He steadied the boat with one hand, using the other to grip the oar as they neared the drifting buoy. The water was choppy now, waves lapping against the hull as the wind shifted, but Enzo's focus was sharp and his movements were steady, despite his clear annoyance.

Miles, sensing the urgency, reached out, grabbing the rope when it came into reach. It was heavier than it looked, and the wet coil was heavy in his hands as he tried to pull it in.

"Careful," Enzo warned, his tone more serious than before. "That thing's been caught in the current. If it's too tangled, we might lose it altogether."

Miles nodded, trying to maintain his grip as he reeled it in, both of them working in unison without words, the rhythm of the task becoming the only thing that mattered. The tension between them seemed to ease, the physical work of the task grounding them in the present.

They worked in silence, pushing against the tide, securing the rope to the boat, until finally, they had the buoy back on course. Enzo looked over at Miles, the faintest spark of something like approval in his gaze.

"That wasn't so bad," Enzo remarked, his voice a little less sharp, a little more open.

Miles gave a small, tired smile, the corners of his lips lifting. "I don't mind getting my hands dirty."

"Good," Enzo said, turning back toward the shore. His voice softened, just for a moment. "You'll need to if you're going to be around here long."

The sun was a little lower now, warm sunlight dipping into late afternoon. The sea was calm again, the waves lazy, the buoy now tethered to the boat and securely tied to the boat.

They paddled back toward the main buoy line, side by side, each man lost in his own thoughts. But for a small while, the pull of something else between them—the tension, the quiet understanding—had softened, just enough to let the world around them breathe.

The sea had its own rhythm, and for a moment, it seemed that they had fallen into it together, neither leading, neither following, just two forces moving with the tide.

The boat rocked beneath them, its small frame dipping with every wave as Enzo steered, his movements steady but taut with focus. Miles adjusted the gear, his hands brushing the tools and ropes as the heat clung to them like a second skin. Sweat beaded on his forehead, mixing with the salt spray.

"This is going to be a tight fit," Miles muttered, trying to make room on the crowded boat.

Enzo glanced over his shoulder, lips quirking slightly. "Not much room for comfort on these things, is there?"

"No," Miles replied dryly. "But we manage."

The buoy line came into view, drifting lazily in the rising tide. Enzo guided them toward it, steering with precision. Miles steadied the gear, trying to ignore the proximity between them,

the heat of their bodies mixing as their arms brushed during the work. It felt like the space between them had shrunk, just enough to make everything feel a little more charged.

When Miles lost his footing on the boat's edge, his body lurched sideways. Before he could catch himself, Enzo's hand shot out, grabbing his elbow and steadying him.

"Careful," Enzo chuckled, his grip firm but not forceful.

Miles straightened quickly, his heart racing for no reason he could name.

"Thanks," he muttered, still shaken.

Enzo laughed lightly. "That was almost a show."

"I'm not here for entertainment," Miles shot back, but there was no heat behind it. He steadied himself, then looked out at the buoy tied to their boat. "Let's get this done."

Their work became faster, more efficient. Tying the rogue buoy back to its rightful place wasn’t as hard as Miles thought it was going to be, and they didn't need to speak much. Just the occasional glance, a word here and there. In sync without effort.

As they finished, Enzo cursed under his breath, his hand slipping on the buoy's slick surface. A small cut appeared across his palm, blood mixing with the saltwater.

Miles reacted without thinking, reaching into the kit and pulling out a bandage. He gently took Enzo's hand, his touch lingering a fraction too long.

"It's nothing," Enzo said, his voice soft. But he didn't pull away.

Miles wrapped the bandage with careful hands, their fingers brushing as he finished. The moment stretched between them, heavy with a tension that was slightly different from before. Enzo's gaze softened but didn't break, a brief flicker of something in his eyes.

They paddled back in silence, the water now calm as the day began to wind down. Miles couldn't help but steal glances at Enzo, whose eyes occasionally flicked over to him before quickly turning away.

As the boat scraped the shore, they both stood, working in tandem to haul it up the sand. There was something in the space between them, something that wasn’t there before.

"Well, thanks," Enzo finally said, his voice quieter now.

Miles nodded, his throat tight. He almost said something, but he found himself stuck.

Enzo turned and walked away, his figure receding into the trees. Miles stood still, watching him go. For the first time, the silence between them didn't feel empty. It felt full, like something was quietly building just beneath the surface.

Chapter 4: Pull of the Tide

The evening air was thick with salt as Miles made his way back from the supply run to the town.

The sun had long since set, and the faint glow of the village bonfire could be seen flickering in the distance, spilling across the uneven dirt roads. He was halfway to his cottage when he noticed the familiar form of Enzo sitting alone at the small seafood shack by the shore, a glass of beer in front of him, staring at the horizon.

Miles hesitated, then approached, surprised to see him there. Enzo's eyes flicked up, recognizing him immediately. He gestured to the empty chair across from him with a casual wave.

"Didn't expect to see you here," Enzo said with a half-smile, his voice easy, but something deeper lingered beneath it.

"I could say the same." Miles sat down, shaking the dust from his sandals. The small wooden shack, dimly lit by a single hanging bulb, was alive with the smell of fresh fish and frying oil. He flagged down a waiter and ordered a beer. “This one’s on you, right?”

At that moment, conversation came easily. The tension between them simmered just below the surface, though neither acknowledged it directly. The evening felt different—lighter, more casual than the previous moments they'd shared.

A plate of fried plantains arrived between them, and they clinked their bottles of beer together. The steady beat of distant drums floated on the air, the rhythm of the village bonfire dancing through the open windows. For a moment, the world seemed to narrow to just the two of them—barely a word spoken, yet everything felt charged.

"So," Enzo started, breaking the quiet between them. "You've been here a while. What brings you to Bahía Escondida?"

Miles took a long drink from his bottle, eyes briefly flicking to Enzo's.

"Needed a break from work," he said, his words careful, his tone flat. "Sometimes... things just get too heavy."

“Photographer?” Enzo asked. Miles nodded, the shadow of a smile dancing on his lips. “Thought so. You carry that camera around with you everywhere.”

“I capture all kinds of scenes,” Miles explained. “Nature, urban city, rural life. Happiness, poverty, war. My last assignment... I guess it was too much.”

Enzo raised an eyebrow but said nothing, letting the silence stretch. Then, unexpectedly, he leaned back in his chair, his gaze softening. "Sounds like you're running from something."

Miles's laugh was low, almost self-deprecating. "I guess you could say that. Running from myself, maybe."

Enzo studied him for a long moment. "You don't seem like the running type."

"Maybe not," Miles muttered. He didn't offer more, and Enzo didn't press.

The conversation drifted easily after that, until it took a turn neither of them expected. Enzo sat forward, his eyes narrowed slightly, focusing on something in the distance.

"I had to leave my last project," Enzo admitted, his voice quieter now. "The funding got pulled. The research was... *unprofitable*."

Miles raised an eyebrow. "Unprofitable?"

Enzo shrugged, a bitter smile playing on his lips. "Conservation doesn't exactly pay the bills, unless you're doing it for the wrong reasons. I couldn't stomach it."

They were quiet for a long moment, the tension building between them like the slow draw of the tide.

"I got burned too," Miles said after a beat, his voice more ragged than he intended. "I saw something I wasn't supposed to. Sold the photos to people I thought were going to do the right thing. They didn't. I lost everything."

Enzo met his gaze, and the invisible weight of their frustrations hung in the air.

Then, unexpectedly, Enzo chuckled. Soft, almost bitter, but warm in its own way. Miles joined him, the sound filling the space between them, easing the tightness that had begun to build.

For a moment, there was nothing but the easy sound of their laughter, shared frustration knitting them closer than words ever could.

As the laughter died down, Miles stood, his voice barely above a whisper. "Come on. Let's walk."

Enzo didn't need any more prompting. Together, they moved toward the beach, the distant drumbeats of the village blending with the sound of the surf.

The night was alive with moonlight as they reached the water's edge. The tide was low, but the air felt thick with heat, a quiet charge lingering between them. They stopped, standing close, the surf lapping gently at their feet.

Miles's breath caught as Enzo shifted slightly, his foot brushing against Miles's. The contact was electric, a subtle yet undeniable spark. They both froze at the touch, then slowly turned to face each other.

The world seemed to fall away. The rhythm of the waves faded. The low murmur of the village was distant. It was just the two of them now, standing at the edge of something neither could define.

Enzo was the first to move. His hand reached out, fingers brushing Miles's jaw, a tentative touch that left Miles breathless.

Before he could speak, Enzo's lips were on his, soft at first, a delicate pressure, like testing the waters. Miles's pulse thundered in his ears, the world spinning around them. He kissed back, harder this time, his hands gripping Enzo's shirt, pulling him closer.

But then Enzo broke the kiss, stepping back with a breathless laugh, his voice low. "I don't mix business and pleasure."

The words hit Miles like a cold splash of water.

Enzo stepped back, his eyes dark, abstruse. Miles didn't follow. The space between them felt vast now, a canyon that neither of them could cross. The moment was unfinished, broken by something neither could control.

The walk back to the cottage was long and silent. The rain began to fall in a light, steady drizzle, the drops pattering on the ground as Miles entered his small hut. He sat at the edge of his bed, his hands still shaking slightly from the kiss. His camera lay forgotten on the table.

Instead, he listened to the steady rhythm of the surf outside, the sound a reminder of what he couldn't quite shake.

Across the sand, Enzo stood in his own hut, water dripping from his lashes, his fingers pressed to his lips as if he could hold the memory of what they'd shared. He didn't move for a long time.

Neither of them could forget. Neither of them could let go.

Chapter 5: Under the Surface

The sky split open without warning.

One moment, the horizon was a bruised purple, the air thick with the scent of salt and impending rain. The next, the clouds tore apart, unleashing a torrent that turned the beach into a blur of silver and shadow.

Miles sat at the edge of his cottage, fingers drumming against the wooden sill, watching the storm roll in like a living thing. The wind howled through the palm fronds, rattling the shutters, and the sea beyond churned, waves clawing at the shore like desperate hands.

Then, movement flashed from his peripheral.

A figure emerged from the chaos, sprinting up the beach, barefoot and breathless. *Enzo*.

Rain sluiced off his body, his dark hair plastered to his forehead, his shirt clinging transparent to his chest. He skidded to a stop just outside his hut, but didn't dare step inside. He gazed at the scene before him, looking, searching.

Their eyes locked, and something in the air between them cracked.

Miles didn't think. He grabbed an umbrella, knowing it probably wouldn't do much against the severity of the storm, and shoved the door open, stepping into the storm.

The rain hit him like a slap, cold and stinging, but he barely felt it. Enzo stood frozen, his gaze burning through the downpour, lips parted like he was about to speak, but no words came. The wind screamed between them, the ocean roared, and the unspoken thing between them snapped.

Miles got near enough to shelter them both under the umbrella. "You're drowning."

Enzo's mouth curved, slow and dangerous. "Not yet."

A bolt of lightning split the sky, illuminating the sharp angles of Enzo's face, the way his throat worked as he swallowed. Thunder shook the ground beneath them.

Miles's pulse was a wild, reckless thing. "Your place or mine?"

Enzo's smirk widened, slow and dangerous. "Mine's closer."

The hut was barely standing against the storm. Rain hammered the roof like fists, the walls trembling with each gust of wind. A single hurricane lantern swung from a hook, casting flickering gold light across the room—over the cluttered desk of water samples, the hammock strung in the corner, the space between them shrinking with every breath.

Enzo shut the door behind them, the latch clicking like a gun cocking.

They didn't move.

Water dripped from Miles's hair, down his neck, his shirt soaked through. Enzo's gaze tracked the path of a droplet sliding along his collarbone.

"You're staring," Miles said, his voice rough.

Enzo stepped closer. "You're here."

The air was thick with salt and sweat and the electric charge of the storm. Miles reached out, fingers curling into the wet fabric of Enzo's shirt. "This is a bad idea."

Enzo's hands landed on Miles's hips, pulling him flush against him. "Yeah."

Then Enzo's mouth was on his, hot and demanding, and every thought in Miles's head evaporated.

The kiss was deep, anchoring. Enzo's tongue was gliding against his, tasting of salt and rain and something darker, something Miles wanted to drown in. He groaned, fingers twisting in Enzo's hair, yanking his head back to bite at his throat. Enzo hissed, his hands tightening on Miles's waist, shoving him backward until his spine hit the wall.

"Fuck," Miles gasped, as Enzo's teeth scraped his jaw.

Enzo laughed against his skin, low and rough. "That's the idea."

Clothes became obstacles. Enzo's shirt hit the floor with a wet slap, Miles's following. The lantern light gilded the planes of Enzo's chest, the manta ray tattoo on his shoulder rippling as he moved. Miles traced it with his tongue, reveling in the way Enzo's breath hitched, the way his fingers dug into Miles's hips hard enough to bruise.

"You're infuriating," Enzo growled, yanking Miles's belt open.

Miles smirked, dragging his nails down Enzo's back. "You love it."

Enzo's answer was to shove Miles's pants down his thighs, his calloused palm wrapping around him in one smooth stroke. Miles's head thudded against the wall, his hips jerking into Enzo's grip.

Outside, the storm raged. Inside, the heat was unbearable.

They stumbled toward the hammock, a tangle of limbs and hunger. The woven fabric swayed dangerously as Enzo pushed Miles down into it, following before he could protest, his body a solid weight between Miles's thighs.

"Still think this is a bad idea?" Enzo murmured, lips brushing Miles's ear.

Miles arched beneath him, nails biting into Enzo's shoulders. "Shut up and move."

Enzo didn't need to be told twice.

The rhythm was slow at first—testing, teasing—then all-consuming. Miles gasped as Enzo rocked into him, the friction perfect, the ache too much to bear. The hammock creaked with each thrust, the storm outside a symphony of thunder and wind, but all Miles could hear was the ragged sound of Enzo's breathing and the filthy whispered curses against his skin.

"Look at me," Enzo demanded, fingers tightening in Miles's hair.

Miles obeyed, his vision blurring at the edges, his body strung tight. Enzo's eyes were black in the dim glow of soft lantern light, his lips swollen from kissing, his skin sheened with rainwater and sweat. Miles dragged him down, biting his shoulder, tasting salt and desperation.

"Enzo—"

The world shattered.

After, the storm softened to a murmur.

The hammock swayed gently, their bodies still tangled, skin sticky with sweat and rain. Enzo's chest rose and fell beneath Miles's palm, his heartbeat a steady drum against his ribs. The lights flickered, casting long shadows across the room.

Miles started to shift, but Enzo's arm tightened around him, holding him in place.

"Stay," Enzo murmured, voice rough with exhaustion and something else—something tender.

Miles didn't argue.

Outside, the rain slowed to a whisper. Inside, wrapped in each other, they slept—temporary, tangled peace.

Chapter 6: Low Tide

The morning light filtered through the small gaps in the palm leaves above the hut, but it was gray, muted. The storm had passed, but the air was clotted with the remnants of it—the salty smell still heavy, the clouds lingering like a memory in the sky.

Miles woke slowly, his body tangled in the hammock, a soft ache where his limbs had been pressed against Enzo's during the night. For a moment, he stayed still, letting the silence settle around him, listening to the distant sound of the ocean, the soft drip of water falling from the roof.

He reached out, expecting to feel the warmth of Enzo beside him. But the hammock was empty.

Enzo's side was cool, untouched.

Miles sat up slowly, he rubbed his face, trying to shake off the remaining fragments of the night before. But there was no getting around it. Enzo was gone. He glanced over at the small kitchen counter where a coffee pot had been set up, the smell of coffee already filled the room.

But there was no sign of Enzo.

The mug on the table sat almost full, untouched, like a quiet reminder of what had passed between them and what had gone unsaid. Miles stared at it for a long moment before he reached for it, lifting it to his lips and drinking in silence. The taste of the coffee was bitter against his tongue, but it was the stillness of the room that hurt the most.

He wasn't sure what he'd expected, but it certainly wasn’t this. The empty space, the silence that stretched between them now, was louder than the storm had ever been.

Back at his own cottage, Miles paced. He couldn't settle. His fingers itched for something to do, something to hold onto, but nothing felt right. He walked over to the small desk where his journal sat and flipped it open. But the words felt foreign, scribbles and sketches out of reach. His mind was a jumble of scattered thoughts, none of which he could quite capture.

He slammed the notebook shut in frustration, the sound echoing in the empty room. There were no words that would fit, no way to make sense of what had happened.

So, instead, he started folding his clothes. There was no sense in staying. Not when Enzo had pulled away so completely.

His hands moved mechanically, folding the shirts with a precision that betrayed the unrest inside him. He folded his shorts. His t-shirt. His pants. Everything had its place. He didn't know

why he was doing it—packing like this—but the act of it felt necessary. Like it was the only thing left he could control.

Through the window, he caught sight of the reef again. The waters were calm, distant, untouched by the turmoil that had come the night before. His eyes scanned the horizon, searching, as if expecting Enzo to appear in the surf, like some kind of sign that things were not as over as they seemed.

But there was nothing. No figure. No movement. Just gulls in the air and the slow crash of waves against the shore.

Miles slung his duffel bag over his shoulder, the thing was small but heavy. He didn't look back as he walked toward the dock, despite his feet dragging in the sand. His mind was elsewhere, replaying the moments of the night before.

Enzo's kiss, the way his body had fit against his own. The heat, the tension. Everything felt sharp and fractured now, and Miles couldn't seem to make sense of it.

At the dock, an old fisherman stood waiting, his hands clasped behind his back. Miles offered him a quiet nod, but his mind wasn't on the man. Instead, his eyes lingered on the empty water beyond, where the boat would take him far from this place. Far from the uncertainty that had crept in so quietly.

But then the wind picked up.

Miles felt it first in his chest, a cold gust that pushed against him, unsettling in its force. Something stopped him.

He hesitated, taking a breath and looking back over his shoulder.

There was a café near the beach, its weathered awning fluttering in the wind had caught Miles' attention.

For a long moment, he considered just turning around, but his stomach did a little grumble. So he thanked the fisherman and headed towards the little café. Miles decided he would eat first and give Enzo the day to return.

He could not understand what he was staying for. Maybe it was just the simple need to hold onto something. Anything.

Back at the cottage, Miles moved slower this time. The duffel bag was left by the door, abandoned for the moment. He stepped out onto the porch, sitting down on the step.

He stared at the horizon, the expanse of water stretching out before him. The waves were at peace now, the surf a distant murmur, but the ocean was never truly still—not in the way things should be.

Miles stayed there a long time, leaving and returning several times. He wasn't ready to leave the ocean behind.

Not until he could make sense of the pull between them, and this thing between him and Enzo that was still so uncertain, but felt real in a way that nothing had in a long time.

That night, he left the windows open. The wind picked up again, but this time, it didn't feel like goodbye.

Not yet.

Chapter 7: Hidden Currents

When the next morning arrived, it did so like a slow tide, bringing with it the weight of finality.

Miles had thought he would see Enzo at some point yesterday but Enzo had neither returned to his hut or Miles's cottage.

When Miles finally made up his mind, the sky, bruised purple from the early hours, was beginning to soften with streaks of orange and gold.

Less than an hour later, Miles stood at the edge of the dock again, the boat tied securely, ready to leave. The small craft rocked gently in the water, its hull creaking with the rhythm of the waves. He checked the engine, adjusted the sail, and moved to the front of the boat, fingers brushing over the weathered wood.

He couldn’t say goodbye to Enzo, and he was starting to realize that maybe there had been no need for it. But there was still something inside him, a tightness in his chest he couldn't shake off.

The bay behind him was vast, stretching out to meet the horizon. A calm light played over the water's surface, golden and smooth, the way it always was at dawn. He closed his eyes, feeling the air in his lungs. The scent of salt, the taste of the sea. The only thing left now was the motor starting, the soft hum of the boat pushing him forward into whatever came next. Miles clenched his jaw, bracing himself for the departure, and turned his face to the wind.

The boat's engine rumbled to life, a low vibration under his feet. He gripped the wheel, staring out at the water. His gaze lingered on the shoreline, just a sliver now, slipping further behind with each passing second. The dock was nearly out of sight when he finally turned, his eyes following the retreating land.

Something in his chest tightened again, but this time, it wasn't just the familiar ache of leaving. It was something more—a pull, a tug, something out of sync with the rhythm he'd been planning. His chest felt too tight, his breathing shallow. He hesitated, standing frozen in place for a moment.

Then he saw it—a flash of movement. A figure, small but unmistakable, moving—no, sprinting—along the shoreline. The soft curve of Enzo's form came into view, barefoot, arms raised above his head, waving with desperate, wild gestures as he shouted for Miles. It wasn't a casual wave; it was something else. It was raw. It was urgent.

Miles's heart stuttered in his chest. He didn't wait. He didn't think.

He dropped the wheel with a swift motion and pulled off his shirt. The fisherman shouted something behind him, but Miles didn't hear it. He was already moving, his body acting on instinct.

He dove into the water, the cold bite of the ocean surrounding him instantly. The salt stung his skin, but it was the only thing that mattered—the salt and the distance between him and the boat, the pulse of the water beneath him as he cut through the waves with long, powerful strokes.

Behind him, the engine of the boat sputtered, but Miles didn't care. He was moving toward Enzo, who was now running full speed along the shoreline, his bare feet kicking up the sand.

The fisherman's curses were lost to the distance between them. Enzo's figure grew closer with every stroke, and with each pull, Miles's pulse raced faster. There was nothing left but the space between them, the saltwater, the distance that now seemed too large, too cold.

They met at the edge of the water. Knee-deep, the waves crashing softly around them as the tide surged forward and back, taking its time.

Miles was breathless, heart hammering from the effort of the swim, the exhaustion of pushing himself forward. His clothes clung to his skin, wet and heavy, but that didn't matter. Enzo's grin was wide, his breath equally ragged, his chest rising and falling quickly as he looked at Miles, eyes bright.

"You're late," Miles said.

Enzo grinned back sheepishly.

The words were nothing. There was no kiss, no fireworks, no rush of overwhelming emotion. But in that moment, the space between them was filled with something else—something deeper, quieter. A connection that had grown through silence, through distance even. Something neither of them could quite explain, but both of them could feel, like the pulse of the ocean beneath their feet.

They stood like that for a long time, the water washing over them, the world around them slowing down. No need for more words. No need for anything else. Just hands clasped under the water, fingers laced together, a simple and quiet agreement.

For once, they had both chosen the same current.

Later, after they'd made their way to the shore and had walked, side by side, under the shadows of the palm trees, they settled down. The sand clung to their damp skin, but neither of them seemed to mind.

Enzo pulled out a second conch pendant from his satchel and held it out to Miles, the smooth shell glowing in the soft light of the afternoon. It shimmered against the fading rays of the sun, the edges worn with time, each curve a testament to the sea's constant touch.

Miles took it without a word, his fingers brushing against Enzo's in the exchange. There was no need for words. No need for explanations.

In the distance, the sea stretched endlessly before them, its surface calm now, no longer rough with the storm. The sound of the waves, soft and rhythmic, filled the air around them. The bay, the horizon, the entire world seemed to breathe in the same steady, quiet rhythm.

Enzo stretched out on the sand, his arm behind his head. Miles followed suit, lying down beside him. The soft rustle of the palm fronds was the only sound between them, the warmth of the day beginning to fade as the sun sank lower in the sky.

They didn't speak at first. There was no need to. They both knew that the silence between them was a kind of understanding—one that was still unfolding, still growing. The storm had passed, but the currents between them hadn't stopped shifting. Neither of them knew where they would lead, but they were both here now, and that was enough.

Ahead of them, the sea glinted softly, endless, a vast canvas of possibility. Behind them, the bay breathed, steady, calm, as if everything had settled into place.

For the first time in a long time, everything felt right. Even if they didn't have all the answers. Even if they didn't know what tomorrow would bring.

For once, they were simply here. Together.

And for once, that was enough.

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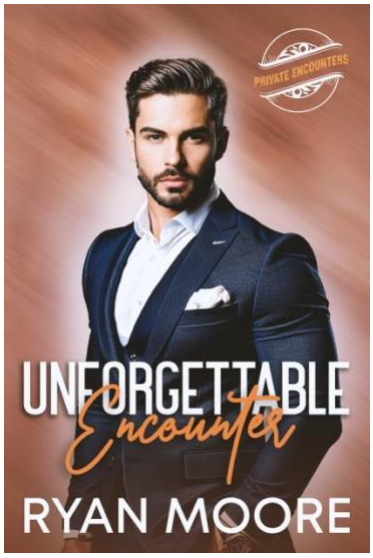

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About the Author:

Ryan Moore is an emerging voice in M/M erotic romance, known for crafting steamy, emotionally charged stories that explore the complexities of desire and connection. A native of the Pacific Northwest, Ryan grew up with a love for storytelling, finding inspiration in the region's brooding landscapes and vibrant, diverse communities. With a background in literature and a passion for exploring unconventional romances, Ryan has developed a unique style that blends heartfelt emotion with irresistible heat.

When he's not writing, he loves spending time outdoors — kayaking in Seattle's waters, hiking through national parks, and camping under the stars. At home, he enjoys cooking and entertaining friends, drawing inspiration from both his travels and his everyday surroundings to infuse a fresh perspective into the world of M/M romance.

In his new series, *Private Encounters*, Ryan invites readers to lose themselves in a world of hidden desires, intense passions, and the thrilling journey to love. He currently resides in Seattle with his golden retriever, Alex, a well-worn notebook, and an endless coffee supply, ever ready to capture the next story waiting to be told.

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