

Sunrise Time

I just wanted to watch the sunrise.

Quick drive to Norah Head and some quiet solitude as I watched the sky transform from night to day behind the lighthouse.

I'm not usually a morning person, preferring the extra pillow time, but I hoped that a change of routine would start a 'magical wellbeing rejuvenation'.

That's what all the health influencers say, right? To get up early each day?

And drink kale smoothies.

Their advice pops up on my social media while I scroll mindlessly at night in my current 'me time', otherwise known as the hour between putting the kids to bed and my own body hitting the mattress. I half-listen to what they preach.

It's hard though. Hard to find time for myself as a working parent with a lengthy list of responsibilities to stay on top of.

Also doesn't help that I hate kale.

So, to make myself feel like I was trying to prioritize me, I was going to watch the sunrise. True 'me time'. Time to breathe. Maybe I'd force a kale smoothie down on the way home to really make me feel healthy.

Timing was important. The sun finished rising at 6.14am. Arriving at 6am gave me 14 minutes of 'me time' to watch the pink horizon turn blue.

5.40am.

My alarm rang and I dragged myself out of bed towards the bathroom.

Then I heard it.

"Mum! Why are you up so early?"

My ten-year-old daughter sat on the toilet, door wide open.

"Good morning, Baby. I am just going for a little drive."

Then from behind me.

"Where are you driving to?" my twelve-year-old son asked, wiping sleep from his eyes.

"Just to the beach. I will be back soon."

"Can we come too?"

I could hear my husband still snoring like a freight train from the bedroom.

He was not coming to save me.

"Pleeeeeeeease? We want to come be with you."

I looked at my watch.

5.45am.

A deep sigh escaped my lips.

"Ok, get ready to go."

5.50am.

“I can’t find any pants.”

“Where are my shoes?”

“My hair is knotty and hurts to brush.”

“There is no toothpaste.”

“I still can’t find pants.”

6.00am on the dashboard when we jumped in the car, dressed in pajamas, unbrushed teeth and hair to rival 80s glam rockers.

“I can’t get my seatbelt in properly.”

“Where does the moon go during the day?”

“Can we drive past the Rainbow Park?”

“Will we see whales?”

6.10am as we pulled into Soldiers Beach carpark, orange light already peeking out from behind the lighthouse. Only four minutes of viewing time.

But there was silence.

Silence and awe.

Their eyes were stretched wide as they witnessed rays of sunlight lick away the last signs of dark.

I stared at them.

Their littleness had been slipping away of late, and increasingly independent young people were taking the place of my babies.

Unable to peel my eyes away from the two beautiful beings that I had brought into this world, I realized soon they won’t want to watch the sunrise with me. Soon getting them out of bed before midday will be a struggle.

The sun was setting on their childhood as they raced ever closer to being teenagers.

I missed the sunrise that day, choosing to focus on their wonder instead.

Creating a mental photograph of them at that moment as another night of their youth was stolen by a new day.

My ‘me time’ would come. For now, my time was theirs.

I missed getting a kale smoothie that day too. What a shame.