

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Camera

by Sho Botham

I am a camera, with its shutter open. The golden hour light of sunrise is falling on my sensor capturing the landscape before me. Daisy, my owner, is trying out her new wide angled lens from the slopes at Beachy Head overlooking the red and white stripes of the lighthouse rising from rocks and the slightly choppy sea.

She turns me over and looks critically at the screen on my back, zooming in to check the sharpness of the lighthouse stripes and the motion freeze of the waves on the rocks below. I can sense her looking across the sea to where it joins the sky on the horizon. She is going to take another shot, another view of the well-known location before us.

Today must be a busy one because Daisy has her camera bag with her and several lenses. She is already kneeling down and starting to twist my wide angled lens off. She puts me down on the flap of the bag to avoid the damp grass and picks up her choice of lens to fit onto my body.

Daisy stands up with me in her right hand. I am heavier with my new lens on. The light is still golden giving the world a tinge of gold, orange and pink. Daisy looks down, sweeping the grass with eager eyes and moves quickly to lie down ignoring the dampness beneath her. Putting a beanbag between my bottom and the damp grass Daisy looks through my viewfinder at a tiny, individual, yellow-coloured flower. Just as well I am wearing my macro lens and can focus on the tiniest of details on this miniature beauty capturing every small, yellow petal and the smallest of individual grains of pollen carried on the tiny stamens.

Daisy presses the button on the back of my right shoulder to focus on this little lemon beauty and once more I am a camera, with its shutter open capturing another image. This time a fast shutter speed enables a sharp capture of the delicate yellow flower nestled on The Downs, bathed in the glorious light of the golden hour.

Daisy, seems happy and gathers up, me, the beanbag and the camera bag, stomping quickly across The Downs. She is clearly in a rush to make the most of this wonderful light.

Two people appear on the near horizon walking and laughing in the morning sun. I might be wearing my macro lens but Daisy knows I can take a pretty mean portrait with it too and she draws me to her eye, focuses on the faces of the couple and their smiling eyes and again, I am a camera, with its shutter open capturing the joy of the unknown couple on their morning walk. Daisy turns me over to look in detail at the eyes of the strangers sparkling in the light. She looks at her watch and slings me over her right shoulder on top of the camera bag and starts her descent to the car at a very brisk pace not stopping to capture the brightly lit undulations of the landscape in front of us.

We arrive at the studio where the model is already in the dressing room getting ready. Daisy puts me down on the table moving quickly and quietly setting up the lights, checking the background and the floor before turning to me and changing my lens to a 70-200 zoom and also adding a wireless trigger to my hot shoe for the studio lights.

Madeleine, appears in the doorway looking every inch the model that she is. Her eyes smudged with smokey brown shadow and blue-black mascara. Her lips are nude with just a hint of gloss and her cheeks are delicately flushed with a cream blusher.

Daisy wastes no time in putting me to her eye and zooming in to the model's face and once again, I am a camera, with its shutter open capturing the detail of Madeleine's face as she stands in front of me, lights triggered each time the shutter is pressed. Madeleine poses effortlessly, looking straight down my camera lens one minute and then with a tilt of her head, gazing far off into the distance the next.

I am a camera, with its shutter open capturing the truth before me, each small detail, the curve of her cheekbone, the freckles on her nose, the glisten of jewellery on her hand as it poses next to her face. But I know this truth I capture will never be seen as I see it through my lens.

They used to say the camera never lies and I don't but with Photoshop and all it is no longer my truth that is seen in the finished image. The photographer manipulates my RAW image, and so my truth is lost being replaced with another.