

JAN STINCHCOMB

The Beach Is the Original Safe Space

I love how relaxed the monsters look here. It's like they know they are secretly loved. Whoever had the idea to leave the baby in charge of taking pictures is a genius. He looks so adorable trotting along with that old Polaroid camera, leaving tiny footprints in the wet sand. The Creature is walking right behind him, stretching out his webbed hands, pointing those famous talons, but the baby doesn't think he's being stalked. He's playing a game. And look at that old one with the skeleton body and long white hair. Someone told me they used to be a supermodel, but I said, they still are! Or better yet: they're no model, they're the real thing. Body and soul. A human.

Get ready. I want you to give me your best smile because that baby is heading toward us and now it's our turn.

Jan Stinchcomb is the author of the novella *Find the Girl* (Main Street Rag, 2015). Her stories have appeared or are forthcoming in *Gamut Magazine*, *The Aironaut*, and *FLAPPERHOUSE* among other places. She reviews fairy tale-inspired works in Notes From Rapunzel's Tower, her column for *Luna Station Quarterly*.