

Summer in Paradise [B2]

Forse è solo quando ci allontaniamo dalla nostra città natale che ci rendiamo conto di cosa ci perdiamo. Tu quale preferisci, Hawaii o Irlanda?

I don't know why you have [to go all the way to Hawaii](#)," Caoimhe's dad said, for what seemed like the hundredth time. "Don't you live a mile from..." "...the most beautiful beach in Ireland?" Caoimhe finished his phrase for him. "I know, Dad! But this is Ireland, where we had the rainiest July on record last year. I don't want to risk that again." Last summer had been Caoimhe's first summer since completing secondary school. And she had spent all of July at home, feeling depressed because of the constant rain. Now she had finished her first year at university, and had been [working part-time](#) to save enough money for a trip to Hawaii. Her family home was about a mile from Ballybunion Beach, which was one of the most famous beaches in County Kerry. But it couldn't compare to the tropical beaches of Hawaii. "Look, Dad," she said, showing him the images on her phone of the places she planned to visit, on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. They were Instagram images of happy people snorkelling in clear waters, [hiking on lush trails](#) and swimming under cascading waterfalls. Her dad [grunted](#). "Don't we have all that here in Kerry? You have the beach, the trails, the waterfalls." "Oh Dad, it's not the same. First of all, we don't have the warm ocean and [reefs](#) for snorkelling. And even when the weather is nice, this is no tropical paradise." "Well, you know what they say, the grass is greener on the other side," he said. Caoimhe laughed. "I'm not going to Hawaii for the greener grass. We have plenty of that in Ireland. I'm going for the warm ocean, blue skies, bright sunshine..." A few weeks later Caoimhe woke up to all of those things. It was her first morning in Kauai; she was staying in an Airbnb near Poipu Beach, considered one of the best snorkelling [spots](#) in the world. Anna, the woman who owned the Airbnb, lived on the property and had told Caoimhe to visit her anytime. Caoimhe would have liked to have come to Kauai with her friends, but none had been disciplined enough to save enough money for the trip. Besides, she was very independent and liked having the freedom to do what she wanted whenever she wanted. This morning, she wanted to go snorkelling for the first time in her life, and be one of those happy people she'd seen on Instagram. She rented [fins](#), a mask and a snorkel and went to the edge of the water. She put on the [fins](#), but when she tried to walk into the water, she kept [tripping over](#) them. The people on Instagram always looked so elegant. She knew she looked like a clown. It was embarrassing. "You have [to walk in backwards](#)," said someone. "Oh... thanks," said Caoimhe. It was good advice, and Caoimhe was soon in the water. She put on her mask and snorkel, but when she put her face underwater, she felt like she was suffocating. She [pulled the mask off](#), [gasping](#) for air. She had to repeat the process several

times until it became more comfortable. And soon she was swimming by the [reefs](#), observing the exotic creatures all around her. She was beginning to feel like the happy people on Instagram when she felt a [stinging](#) on her leg. “Ouch!” She went to the edge of the water and saw that her leg was [bleeding](#). “Oh,” someone said to her. “You must have swum too close to the [reefs](#).” Caoimhe had had enough of snorkelling for now. She spent the rest of the day lying on the beach under the sun. “Ouch!” was her first thought the next morning. This time, it wasn’t her leg that was [stinging](#); it was her entire body. She was [sunburnt from head to toe](#). “Oh dear,” said Anna, when she saw her. “You’re as red as a [lobster](#)!” “I know. But I wore sun cream,” Caoimhe protested. “You need more than sun cream, my girl,” said Anna. “This isn’t Irish sun. This is tropical sun. It’s potent.” Anna gave Caoimhe a [sunhat](#) to wear and that day she hiked to Hoopii Falls on the east side of the island. Trying to ignore the sting of her sunburn, Caoimhe started out on the trail, but soon [she was on her bottom](#); the trail was [muddy](#) from a recent storm, and she — like the other hikers — kept falling and getting more and more [muddy](#). At least she could wash herself at the waterfall at the end of the trail. But when she arrived there, she found that the water was icy cold — much colder than the Irish ocean. “The water in waterfalls is always very cold,” someone told her, “because it comes from underground.” The people on Instagram looked so happy and comfortable when swimming under waterfalls. But now Caoimhe realised that their smiles were a lie. As much as she hated to admit it, her dad was right. Hawaii was beautiful, but so was Ballybunion, where she intended to spend her next summer, swimming and [hiking](#) — without the suffocating snorkel masks or perilous [reefs](#) or [stinging](#) sunburn, and with a renewed sense of [appreciation](#).

Glossary

- **pulled the mask off** = togliersi
- **stinging** = puntura
- **bleeding** = sanguinare
- **lobster** = aragosta
- **she was on her bottom** = stare con il sedere per terra
- **to go all the way to Hawaii** = andare fino alle Hawaii
- **hiking** = fare un'escursione
- **fins** = pinne
- **appreciation** = gratitudine
- **reefs** = barriere coralline
- **spots** = luoghi
- **to walk in backwards** = camminare all'indietro
- **gasping** = respirare a fatica
- **sunburnt** = bruciata dal sole
- **working part-time** = lavorare a tempo parziale
- **lush trails** = sentieri rigogliosi
- **grunted** = grugnire
- **sunhat** = cappello da sole
- **tripping over** = inciampare
- **from head to toe** = dalla testa ai piedi
- **muddy** = fangoso