Parting shot

Many, many years ago I was on a trip to Eilat in Israel in the days when film was film and shorediving was simple.

The week had gone well with no floods and some nice exposures confirmed by my trusty traveling E6 processing kit. It was the last dive of the trip and we didn't choose our site very well at all. It was quite a sandy, rubbly location with small patches of coral outcrops which didn't excite my photo imagination that much.

I was using a Nikonos V with a Sea and Sea 12mm full frame fisheye lens and Ektachrome 100 film. It was a lovely compact outfit.

The overall scenery was a muted sandy brown so rather than shoot horizontally and waste film I decided to put the camera under corals with the camera set to "A" aperture priority and the lens aperture at F16 for maximum depth of field.

There wasn't enough room for me to get my eye behind the viewfinder so I held the camera at arms length and used my thumb to press the shutter release. I lined up the camera as well as I could, took a shot and pulled the camera out from under the coral to wind the film on.

I only took one shot of this coral but repeated the technique under other pieces and eventually finished the film and therefore the dive.

Back in London I took the film to an E6 processor and was amazed, a couple of hours later, to see this shot jumping out at me from the lightbox.

When I leant forward with a Lupe to my eye I was amazed with the graphic simplicity, the lucky positioning of Snell's window and the final icing on the cake with the central starburst.

Now I know where "point and shoot" photography comes from!

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Do you have a nice shot with a short story behind it? If so e mail me and yours could be the next "Parting shot".