

## A Chance Meeting on the Beach

I'd left my flat on Poole Hill to walk down through the park towards the beach. The sun was shining as I'd admired the flower beds planted in large circles on the right-hand side of the path in the park. I'd swung my beach bag loving the warm sun on my face and relishing the fact that I had a whole week off work ahead to relax and top up my tan.

Large flat tropical leaves and palm branches wafted in the slight breeze when I'd approached the mini golf course. I'd stared at the golf holes and remembering how Stephen and I used to tease each other when we were kids. 'I bet I can beat you up to hole thirteen on the little bridge,' he'd stated emphatically. And the challenge was set. He invariably won because he was better at any sport than I'd been.

Then I'd walked across the road underneath the over-pass to the beach area, and, looked up at The Bournemouth Wheel. Half of the white carriages had been empty because the children hadn't broken up from school, and, the beach area seemed reasonably quiet for ten thirty in the morning.

I'd stopped at the small café to buy a sandwich and juice to take onto the beach and noticed the small fun fair behind. The helter-skelter had been empty, and a young attendant had called out to everyone. 'Come on, climb on board one of the horses?'

When I was little, I'd always loved the brightly coloured horses on the carousel, and the secure golden twisted pole down the centre. My younger brother, Michael, who had been scared to go onto the rides would often sit up on a horse behind me. He wouldn't go on his own, but often said, 'I'm happy to have my big sister ahead of me and feel safe!'

Standing in front of the pier I'd been in a dither. The beach on the right of the pier was usually quieter, but they only had the white hard plastic sun loungers, whereas, on the left of the pier were blue softer sun loungers which were easier to lie on. I'd turned left.

The next day I'd blessed this decision because if I'd turned right, I wouldn't have met Andrew. And that

George Michael s

I'd walked onto

RNL lifeguards in

their shoulders

parasols and

Settled in my red

resist the sea I'd

legs and when I'd

delight. The sea

patches, it had

hotels and blocks

coastline. I'd swam

pain in the side

'You okay?'

with the small

'I think so,'

He'd put his arm

sand,' he'd said.

When I'd reached

applied an Elastoplast,

thought I was in

gorgeous. The type

Bournemouth beach.

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ng, like the  
ater's edge.  
nent bags on

scattered along the beach.

and then unable to  
at the sea edge had felt amazing on my hot  
at waist height I'd laughed in  
indigo dark blue and turquoise green  
I'd turned around to face the sand and stared at the tall white  
to the east and west forming a dramatic back drop to the  
I'd swam into the waves and giggled like a child, but on the way out I'd felt a sharp  
yelped.

Andrew had stopped to look at my foot when I'd lifted it out of the sea.

When I pulled it out a small trickle of blood mixed in

I'd said.

'Look, hang on to me and walk on your heel back up in the

and gasped. He'd obviously  
I'd simply gasped in awe at the sight of him. He was  
you see women meet on Baywatch, but not here on