

Paignton Pier

It was a warm sunny day on Paignton seafront. The beautiful area seemed to thrive in the glorious sun, as its charming characteristics came to life. The air filled with a warm sensation of joy, and life, welcoming visitors to the area. Holiday makers relaxed and let go of their worries as the warmth of the sun poured through into every crevice of their imagination, instilling a sense of peace with life once more. The feeling of lightness, and fun filled the air, as everyone delighted in the sounds and sights of Summer, which echoed playfully throughout the busy seaside town. Bustling with life, it seemed to bestow a magical sense of wonder and enchantment.

Lisa like many before her had felt an instant rapport with the magical seaside town, and its idyllic, and pretty setting. As she absorbed these feelings of excitement and pleasure, she couldn't help noticing that the atmosphere felt similar to a time when she had first met Geoff. The sounds seemed to mingle into a blend of warm ambience, as her heart felt drawn into events of the past. She reminisced, as she walked softly by. The salt of the sea air heightened her senses, bringing a feeling of freshness to the day. The excited voices of children playing happily on the beach echoed throughout the air, reminding her of a time long ago when she was a child and how simple and care-free life had seemed then. Lisa walked slowly, reminiscing, as she passed the seafood sellers, on the promenade. It reminded her deeply of a time when she had walked hand in hand with Geoff, and how perfect life had seemed to her in that moment. Her memories seemed to cascade into reality as she reminisced. Her heart came alive with the feelings of oneness and joy; filling every living cell with love. As she filled with happiness once again, Lisa could feel Geoff's presence alongside her, and in this moment the feeling of separation was lifted, and there seemed to be no distance between them.

How time had passed, it seemed like only yesterday that she had first met Geoff on the pier, while on holiday with friends. They had met through circumstances, neither had planned, but that particular day was to change the course of her life forever. They had fallen in love at first sight, and subsequently decided to move into the area together. They both felt a natural affinity with the warm vibrant setting, which felt safe and welcoming, a place to return to; a place of love and enchantment with the world. Their meeting seemed to emphasize their feelings of kinship with this magical place, and complimented their love for each other. Lisa felt the synchronicity of events and their meeting were intricately woven into her destiny, and were an eternal part of the magic of the area. The place connected whole heartedly to her feelings for Geoff, inseparable and vivid, they were firmly woven into the very core and fabric of this beautiful land.

This day though was different; Geoff had been abroad on deployment for many months. He had contacted Lisa by text the day before to say that; he had a few hours off duty, before moving to his new unit. He had suggested; that it would be nice to meet on the Pier, just like they had done all those years before, to share the few hours he had been allocated. For some reason it seemed relevant today of all days to meet on the Pier. His text read! "Meet you on the Pier at 2pm, should be there on time, but if not wait there until I arrive."

Lisa arrived early, and strolled along the pier, before finding a seat facing the shore, her searching eyes, watching out for Geoff. Time passed, 2 o'clock came and went, and as her watch signalled 2.30, she began to become quite anxious. Her mind creating all kinds of scenarios, where was he, is he alright? All manner of thoughts passed through her mind, as she sat patiently waiting. Just as her anxiety grew, she caught sight of a figure waving on the Promenade. Yes, she declared, as her heart jumped with delight indicating at long last it was Geoff. She felt reassured that he had made it. "Wait there" he shouted, as he began to run towards her. As he reached her, he smiled, "Sorry I'm late love, the train was delayed, but at least I'm here." They gave each other a big hug, and kissed. Time seemed to melt away as Geoff said "Love, I just had to see you, it has been a long time away." Lisa cleared a tear from her eye, "Geoff, I have missed you."

"Hey you" said Geoff, "Remember the day we met here. It was just like a day like this. I was so happy, Just like I feel now." "Yes, replied Lisa, "I remembered how we spent sometime in the Amusement Arcade." "Come on" said Geoff, "Let's go in again, I will try and win you a teddy bear." Lisa laughed, "Come on Geoff, you spent a small fortune last time, and still didn't win anything" "I know, but I'm determined too this time, come on."

The Arcade, as usual was busy, everyone, it seems, was trying to win a fortune. However the expressions on their faces told a different story. Geoff headed towards one particular machine. "Here it is Lisa; the machine to win a Teddy Bear." Lisa laughed, "Come on Geoff, you could not do it last time, what is the point of trying now." "You just watch me" said Geoff, as he set about to claim a prize. *You May remember this type of machine yourself; you insert the money, and a crane comes along and tries to grab a prize, while you direct it. Most people do not succeed, nor did Geoff, from the first twenty tries. Then, with a piece of sheer luck, a pink teddy bear was grabbed, and deposited down the winning shoot.* "There you are Lisa" he said proudly, as he handed over the pink teddy bear, "You've done it, well done." Lisa laughed, "Well it's taken 7 years to get there, but well done," and she kissed the Teddy Bear, quickly followed with one for Geoff. "Come on," said Geoff, "shall we go for a coffee."

Geoff purchased the coffee, along with two rather large cream donoughts, and sat down next to Lisa. He leaned over to, kiss her gently. "I wanted to come and tell you that I am going on a very long deployment." Lisa looked startled, "But you have just come back from one, and it is unlike the Army to send you away so soon." "I know," said Geoff, "That is why I wanted to come and see you today, even though, it is only for a few hours" he went on, "I want to thank you for your love and support over the years we have been together, I could not have wished for such a loving partner." Lisa looked at Geoff, "I love you too, and no matter how long this deployment is going to take, I will wait for you."

"I must go now love" said Geoff, "My time is limited, and I must get back to the base." "My train leaves in 20 minutes." Lisa smiled, "of course, you best be getting back." The couple made their way to the entrance of the Pier. "Bye love" said Geoff, "I love you." Geoff made his way along the promenade, looking back to give Lisa a wave.

It had been good to see Geoff, Lisa thought as she reached for her mobile phone. She sent Geoff a text which read "Bye love, I will wait for you," signed with a kiss. Lisa was indeed sad, as she made her way home. Although short, the day had been so special to her, a lovely day with plenty of laughter with Geoff. All be it short, it was all worth it. On returning home, she put her key in the

front door, and let herself in. It was early evening, so she decided to make a cup of tea, and sit and watch some television.

It must have been an hour or so, when the doorbell rang. Lisa jumped up quickly, not expecting any visitors at that time she proceeded to answer the door. She was surprised to see before her, standing on her doorstep, a Policewoman and Policeman, with rather sad looking expressions, on their faces. "Are you Lisa," they asked, "yes", she replied, "may we come in" Yes, of course" said Lisa. She proceeded to lead them into the lounge. The two constables came into the lounge and suggested that Lisa take a seat. "We have been trying to contact you all day." "We have some sad news to give you." "We have to inform you, that your partner Geoff has sadly died in a road traffic accident. It happened yesterday, while leaving his base" "Yesterday," Lisa looked shocked, but that is not possible, I have just spent a lovely afternoon with him. You must be wrong." "I am sorry to say that we are not wrong Lisa." "His Landrover was involved, in a car accident, when he was driving back to base from the airport. "We are deeply sorry."

Lisa just could not believe what she was hearing. She thought; surely it just cannot be, this must all be a mistake, it cannot be. The constables spent some time with her and arranged for her sister to be with her, and also advised that she would need to travel tomorrow morning to arrange a formal identity of Geoff. Lisa, just could not believe it, how could all this be happening to her now. No Lisa's mind refused to accept it, it must be wrong. The constables assured her, that there had been no mistake.

Lisa could not sleep at all that night, as she cuddled the pink teddy bear tightly. A beautiful day had turned into a nightmare. Lisa tirelessly examined all the events, trying to make sense of everything, but still her mind continued to question what she was hearing and feeling, how could it be, how could Geoff have died the day before, it doesn't make any sense. The night seemed endless and lonely, and in her deepest despair she fell into a state of exhaustion. It seemed like a dream, when she heard Geoff's voice say "I had to come to say I love you, and I will wait for you, as you waited for me on the Pier. I love you."

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