The Unexplained Beach Meeting

The sea was still. The air was clammy. The sky was dark and cloudy, as if all colour had been drawn from it. The beach was long and narrow and sloped gently down the sea. I strolled along the sandy, eerie, lifeless beach. The whole beach was bleach of colour. I had never set foot in Culdaff Bay beach, as I was visiting my grandmother’s new cottage in Donegal. If I had known what would happen that night, I would never have set foot in Culdaff Bay beach...

My puppy, Daisy, tugged and tugged on my lead, trying to drag me back to the gate of the beach that we had entered, but I didn’t take any notice. I should have, or none of this would have occurred...

I continued my walk along the eerie beach. But suddenly, there was a change in the air. A cold swash came across me. It was like a spike in the air. Then, there was a strong smell of fish that washed over me. It was sickening. Was it the sea? The smell grew stronger and stronger.

In the corner of my eye, I spotted a little girl scurrying around in the sand. Slowly, steadily, I turned around. Stood in front of me was the dark outline of a women. She was a tall, lanky lady who was dangerously thin. Her tatty, long, black hair hung done her upright back. Her eyes where icy blue- cold and dangerous. Her skin was translucent. It was almost purple under eyes and limp shagging with wrinkles. Her lips where pale and pressed into a tight, thin line. She had a long, pointed face like a bird. She was so emaciated she looked like a walking skeleton. In front of her stood the little girl who appeared like a girl from Victorian times. She wore a black, ragged dress which matched the lady that stood behind her. They both glared at me, like they were looking into my soul, with no expression. They were surrounded by sugar white beaches, and a dull blue sea that stretched for miles. Both their eyes stayed fixed on me. My puppy, Daisy, lay on her belly and whimpered.

“Hello”, I stammered.

No response.

“Hello”, I stammered once again.

No response.

This is when I realised something wasn’t right...

The little girl stared at me with dark, empty eyes. It was like she was looking into my soul.

There was a long silence, and then the lady slowly turned towards the sea. She slowly walked towards the sea. The little girl followed. Once the water reached their knees, they stopped. The little girl looked back over her shoulder. Then the two figures began to fade into thin air.

My heart dropped. Panic swelled in me like one thousand knives cutting right into my chest. I ran as fast as I could towards the exit of the beach. My legs felt numb, and a thin layer of sweat covered the nape of my neck. I didn’t dare breathe. I pushed harder and went faster. When I finally reached the exit I took a second to catch my breath. A tear streamed from my cheek. A man must have seen the state I was in, and questioned what was wrong. The words spilled from my mouth and I could no longer control them. I blustered out everything that had happened. The man glared at me, without a word. Did he think I was crazy? Did he think I was mad?

The man’s face suddenly turned pale, and then turned grey with anxiety.

“Are you ok? I questioned in a soft, gentle tone.

He tried to speak, but no words came from his mouth.

I gave him a moment. After a silent, long hesitation he finally spoke.

“Well, many years ago, in fact 10 years today, a fisherman lost his life at sea.”

I was intrigued by every word he was speaking.

He continued…

“My daughter, Elizabeth was married to that man who lost his life at sea”.

My mouth dropped.

“I’m so sorry to hear that”. I sympathetically replied, “How’s she coping?”

“She couldn’t handle it, and she and her daughter, my granddaughter, drowned at sea. We never found out how they passed. Police say it was suicide, but we never found out exactly what happened”.

My heart dropped, and blood pounded in my ears.

“People made a rumour that she and my granddaughter, Emily, haunt Caldaff beach, waiting for Emily’s dad, and Elizabeth’s husband to come back to them…“

By Kathleen Stevenson