

## Not Alone

He used to look at me in a way I'll never forget. Those bright blue ocean eyes so big it seemed as if he could understand what I was trying to say without a single word coming out my mouth. His smile that would spread from ear to ear with those deep dimples that would make you smile back. His deep, husky voice. His soft hands, like silk, held by my little hand while walking down to the shore. All frowned upon now, all left behind, all forgotten.

I shook my head, stamped my feet, threw my jacket on, wrapped a scarf round my head, marched out the house and slammed the door behind me.

I ran down my road and along the fields with wind and rain battering my face. My hair was blowing around like crazy and sticking to my face through a mixture of rain and tears making my vision blurry. My boots were covered in mud. My jacket was soaked through to the bone. My grey jeans were now black from the stormy weather. My face was red from the wind and I looked as if someone had slapped me. I stopped and I thought about what I was doing. I was overcome with sadness, anger, fear.

It hurt, it really hurt. I could barely deal with the pain of losing my grandad, my best friend. I couldn't deal with all that grief and sadness so I had come to the beach to escape. He was the only person who actually understood me. I had never thought about losing him this early. I will never understand why this has to happen to the best people. I find it so strange. It all happened so fast. I blinked once and everything had changed.

I stumbled over the rocks, down onto the coarse, wet, grey sand. I stared down at it in misery as if it had done something to upset me. I kicked it and let out a scream. It didn't make me feel any better. I watched as the waves crashed over the rocks and the shorebirds watched over the banks. I looked up to the sky to stop my eyes from watering. The welkin was now full of dark, ragged tumultuous clouds. They grew more and more ominous.

I felt irritated so started walking further across the beach. "Why can't you just come back grandad?" I was thinking. Just as that thought rushed through my head, a flash of forked lightning tore across the sky, followed by a great clap of thunder. Then a heavy curtain of rain beat down from the heavens. Shivers went down my spine. I curled up into a ball and put my elbows on my knees and tucked my head into my hands hoping I would just disappear.

Something was tickling my fingers. I shook my hand and didn't think anything of it. It happened again. It felt like a feather brushing up against my skin. I opened my eyes and raised my head. My eyes were still blurred from crying. I squinted my eyes and to my astonishment I saw what was in the palm of my cold hands; a delicate, elegant, beautiful butterfly. It was a shiny ocean blue colour. I was mesmerised. The horrendous weather had gone. A golden glow had spread across the sky, filtering through the clouds, signalling the end of rain. The sand was now shining embers of gold. It was so odd it was almost like the butterfly had brought the good weather with it.

I just watched it flutter on my hand in admiration. I spent around 10 minutes just staring and speaking to this magical creature before it started to beat its wings and rise into the air.

I walked eagerly over to the shore line trying to keep in distance with the butterfly. I watched as it drifted away into the horizon. The sun shining brilliantly onto the calm water. In this moment it felt like I was in a different place. It then clicked. It was a sign. The butterfly is a symbol. An ocean blue butterfly the exact same colour as my grandad's eyes. It was him, it had to be. My grandad had been with me the whole time. He was listening. He came to reassure me that it was going to be okay.

Fresh air filled my lungs and I felt refreshed. I promised myself to treasure this moment forever. Now I know I'm not alone.