

## A place full of vibrations

### Gill Blow

'You don't arrive at Anderby Creek,' he'd said on that April day, 'you wander along the lanes until it finds you.' Her heart thumps, she recognises this road, the signs to the caravan sites, row of houses, little shop, even the telephone - no longer the red and sturdy kiosk - a plastic booth - but even so. She drives into the deserted car park and switches off the engine, the wind whistles, a white plastic bag is whisked into the air.

'It's an opening in the sandhills, that's all it is.' he'd said.

She locks the car and leans against the warm bonnet, struck by a strong sense of his presence. It's a strange feeling, as if he's here but not here at the same time, it's become familiar to her now, it is part of her. She watches a car pull into the car park and stop, a man and woman get out. They wave to her, she waves back. She looks about her, glad to be here. All is the same, the Beach Cafe, the sandy slipway, and beside it the steep wooden steps leading up to The Cloud Bar standing high in the quiet dignity of its' world status as the first official cloud spotting area.

'What's wrong with lying on the beach and looking up?' She smiles, she can almost hear his voice. She looks up to the skyline where the guardians of Anderby stand, the focal point for those trudging along the flat, isolated beaches, six houses built high on the sandhills, they tantalise walkers by appearing to retreat further into the distance the closer they get, as if to reinforce their lofty position overlooking the deep provocative pounding of the North Sea.

We stand on the spot,' he'd said that day, 'where there was once a Palm Court Cafe. It was the dream of a Miss Jukes in the thirties, it's true,' he said smiling at her disbelief. 'I looked it up.' She admired the courage and determination of Miss Jukes to pursue her dreams, pictured her gliding among potted palms and gossiping ladies sipping tea in china cups.

She zips up her jacket and sets off along the path, past the worn chalets and smart bungalows. They had envied those living so close to the sea, imagined life in a chalet together. Ahead, with a prickle of excitement she sees the path merging into woodland - Mogg's End! The mysterious Mogg, who was he? what had happened to him?They never knew.

The tunnel of trees silence the wind, twigs snap underfoot, birds twitter in alarm. She stops, they had stood close together in the stillness, breathed in the smell of dank earth, she closes her eyes.

Suddenly a dog barks and races towards her, it prances around, its pink tongue lolling.

A woman yells. 'Dig-by! Dig-by! Here boy!' She rushes up and grabs the dog's collar. 'So sorry.' her cheeks are flushed, eyes sparkling. 'He just want to play!' 'He's a lovely dog!'

'Sorry again.' The woman drags at the lead, ' Enjoy your walk!'

She's almost there.

She steps out of the wood and into the wind and a wide grassy space, she catches her breath....there it is! Nothing special - just a spot between the sandhills and Mogg's End, but it's their picnic place. She feels him so close now, he's here and all around her in the wind and swaying grasses, in the tiny yellow flowers and the rise of the sandhills, and the peacock's golden feathers cascading across the lid, the smell of dark chocolates, the sharp taste of sparkling wine and their promise on that long ago April day, when she knew deep inside that they would share a life together.

She climbs the sandhill, each step teases her with hints of wide pale sky and the sound of rushing waves and glimpses of beach, until finally at the top, the vast panorama of Anderby Creek is laid out before her. She takes it all in slowly, miles of glistening sands, clouds scuttling across endless skies, the deep boom of the grey sea, the far horizon a ribbon of silver.

Along the edge of the sea her footsteps make brief dents in the wet sand, and then they vanish, and the waves break on the shore, a scattering sound like the chatter of people telling their stories, their voices echoing over the sandhills.