

The Boys Are Back In Town

Thin Lizzy blared from the Ford Cortina as it swung into the field where the five lads would spend a week camping at the farm. High spirited and full of youthful anticipation, they picked their spot. Camping equipment tumbled out of the boot, with an equal amount of booze appearing from inside the car.

Smiling, Pete looked at his mates, all long hair and flared Wranglers. They'd just completed their college exams; time to celebrate before heading off to full time jobs. The sun beat down, the hottest summer he could remember. They'd started off planning a holiday on the Costa del Sol, but were certain a camping trip to Dorset would be better, never mind that the tent at night would be like a furnace!

With the aid of a couple of pints they managed to get the tents up in under two hours.

"Well if we get a move on lads," shouted Chris, "I reckon we can get a couple of drinks in town then grab some fish and chips down at the pier."

Heading down the lane towards the dizzy nightlife of Swanage, with regular disappearances behind the hedgerows, the group loudly sang 'Combine Harvester'. Pete chuckled, happy days.

Three rounds of a heady combination - lager, cider and blackcurrant, known as a Snake Bite, saw the lads worse for wear. They headed to the beach, the smell of fried fish sat comfortably with the aroma of the sea air. Neon lights and coins chinking enticed them towards the amusement arcades. Then Pete spotted the sign, a board advertising tarot cards readings, he told Chris he'd catch up with them. It suddenly seemed the most important thing in the world for him to get his fortune told.

The entrance was warm and inviting, coloured glass lamps cast light prisms, rich velvet fabrics with fringing draped over old chairs. Joss sticks created a heady combination of patchouli and incense. He couldn't see her at first, a voice beckoned him to the corner of the room. A crystal ball in front of her on the table, she looked up and smiled as he hiccupped, She was stunning; dark curly hair and smoky brown eyes. It was like being in the room with his pin-up, Kate Bush.

"Please seat down." she pointed to the chair opposite the table. Pete stumbled, a combination of his eyes adjusting to the darkness and alcohol on an empty stomach.

Stroking the glass dome she asked, "What's it to be tonight then? Cards, tea leaves, or what the crystal ball sees for your future?"

Pete remembered her name from the board,

"Err sorry Rosie, I'm not feeling too well." he uttered as the Snake Bite bit back, down his jeans and onto his trainers, he staggered out into the fresh air.

"You alright mate? Look like you've seen a ghost!" Chris observed.

Pete muttered that he'd just thrown up at the fortune teller's.

"Well, Rosie should have seen it coming!" laughed Chris.

Inspired by 'Cider With Rosie' - Laurie Lee

Main body - 497 words