

BLACKPOOL STOP - OFF.

'How about having a day in Blackpool?

We could just stop off as it's on our way.

An hour on the beach? Maybe visit the Tower?

Years since we were there. What do you say?'

Blackpool! He'd been there lots as a kid.

How he used to love The Golden Mile!

The Kentucky Derby, the Pleasure Beach...

The Hall of Mirrors always made him smile...

'Okay then, let's do it,' he heard himself say.

(He'd been driving three hours and needed a leak.)

'We'll really relax on the beach,' his wife said.

'Breathe in the sea air. Have Bubble and Squeak.'

'Oh no! Not in *Blackpool!*' he heard himself shout.

'It's *famous* for fish and chips!'

The thought of this really did spur him on.

It'd been so long...he was licking his lips.

And so, they arrived and lay on the beach.

How happy he was with his little band!

His son and daughter, in their early teens...

His wife, still the prettiest girl in the land...

‘Just savour the moment’, he told himself.

How lovely again, to see the sea!

Alas, as he dozed, his wife’s voice, shrill:

‘Your son has just been stung by a bee!’

Ten minutes later, his daughter cried,

‘My contact lense fell out!

It’s got to be here in the sand, somewhere...’

Stay calm, he thought. Don’t shout.

So, getting down on hands and knees,

under the pitiless sun,

they searched and sifted through the sand.

In vain. The sand had won.

Then off they went for fish and chips,

too hot, too tired to speak.

Only to find the chip shop closed.

Re-opening the following week.

‘Whose idea was it to stop?’ He barked.

His wife, well she just sighed,

‘It seemed a good idea at the time.

***You thought so, too!’* she cried.**

**The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
had rained down on his head.**

It really had been one of those days.

He should have stayed in bed.

**But as he drove to their destination,
he was certain of one thing, at least:**

**No matter how hungry he was for the past,
he would never return for the feast.**

Melville Lovatt