

FIRST DATE

He really couldn't believe his luck!

Armed with chocolates and flowers, he made his way to her door.

Not only had she agreed to a date,
she'd invited him round to her place for a meal!

He rang the bell once and stood, waiting.

Who knew where this evening would lead?

He waited a minute, then rang again.

Don't rush things, he thought. Be patient. Yes...

It really had been a very long time.

His wife, Amy, had been dead ten years...

He had never really tried to find anyone else.

All his friends said he should, but it always seemed
that Amy was still with him, looking on...

The door suddenly opened. Two men faced him.

The big one grabbed him, dragged him inside.

He stumbled and fell. 'We'll teach you a lesson.

We'll teach you not to chase another man's wife.'

The big man held him down. The smaller man kicked him.

There was blood, already, seeping on to his tie...

They kicked him again in the head and ribs,

then picked him up and tossed him back out.

He lay for a while, hardly conscious at all.

She had led him on. He had followed like a fool...

Darkness reigned.

Feeling his way, he moved forward.

He could see, ahead, a tiny ball of light.

But it grew no nearer as he went on.

The light just seemed to move further away.

What the hell had he done? Where was he now?

In a tunnel of some sort... some sort of tunnel...

He screamed at himself. 'GOD'S SAKE GET A GRIP!'

But although he tried hard, he remembered nothing,

had no idea how he came to be there.

Don't panic. Don't panic. Just keep moving.

When he reached the light, he would know where he was.

He would get his bearings... *Just stay calm!*

As a boy he had gone through a tunnel like this.

In Cornwall...no, not a tunnel.... *A cave...*

with stalagmites.... yes... he'd ended up lost.

His parents were frantic. Calling his name.

'Daniel! Where are you?!' Other voices joined in

in a kind of chorus. 'Daniel! Daniel!'

It had seemed to him, then, he would never be found.

But they *did* find him. Yes. They'd find him now, too.

He'd be back with Amy in no time at all.

How he loved her now more than ever before.

Keep moving! Keep moving! His legs felt like lead.

Keep moving! Don't think! It's pointless! Come on!

You'll make it. You will. The light's getting nearer!

The light's getting nearer! Nearer all the time!

'Okay. All done.' The white coated surgeon's voice

was soft. 'You've had a lucky escape.

You were badly beaten up, and left for dead...'

The telephone rang. Plucked him out of his dream.

'Hello, it's Ann.

About our date, tonight? Look, the Restaurants round

here are expensive, so...I was wondering if you'd

prefer to come here?'

END.

Author's Note:

Prompted by my poem *The Date*, this writing prompt is taken from *Dancing for England* - a collection of 74 of my poems.