

A Good Find

Gary L Beer

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The Author

Gary L Beer born in Kent, England and of English and Welsh descent became a traveller at an early age. The travels to the mountains of Wales with his parents as a child instilled in him a wanderlust that has remained to this day.

After raising a family a new life was forced upon him and taking up the challenge Gary went to university and achieved a BSc in Pharmaceutical Chemistry following this with a Masters Degree in Chemistry, studying nano-particle science at the very cutting edge of technology. Able to turn his hand to most things in life he has worked as a Carpenter, Steeplejack, Car Mechanic, Panel beater, Chemist and Teacher.

Gary has written many popular novels;
Journey Thru America My Quest For Peace
Journey Thru America The Way Home
A Good Find
SUZY
Starship Stinedern
Grailem
Belief of the Reborn

Gary L Beer the popular travel writer delves into the realms of fiction and presents us with a fascinating crime thriller.

Three friends go for a cycle ride along the North Kent coast and find a bag of money belonging to local smugglers and drug dealers. The drug dealers are soon hot on their trail to regain their money and the three friends soon find themselves in very serious trouble.

With twists and turns a complicated web of deceit

amongst the drug dealers is woven and the unconcern they show for the health of their customers in the dangerous substance they sell is portrayed vividly. The gangland life appears very real and one that is shocking and violent and strangely often hilarious.

S.Gregory

It is an intriguing tale and shows the cold business attitude of the drug dealers who plague our streets. The story captivated me immediately, many of the characters appear familiar I would not be at all surprised if some were my neighbours, they appear so normal!

George Burnson

An amazing adventure, one fraught with danger and showing a darker side of life that many do not believe exists.

The desire for money and power that the dealers crave is shown in this novel and the lengths people are prepared to go to obtain it.

Mr S. Ansenn

Chapter One

Nicola looked down at the mess on the floor; torn cigarette papers, sweet wrappers, shopping receipts and what looks like dirt is now spread out on the floor where Stef, her boyfriend, has emptied his pockets out. Nicola feels her face flushing with anger as she had only

cleaned and dusted the whole flat twenty minutes ago!

“Stef!!” Nicola shouts.

“What ya want?” answers Stef from the other room in a ‘do not bother’ me tone of voice. Stef has a light-hearted outlook to life; he knows his put-on tone of voice will upset Nicola and feels she takes life too seriously.

“Get in here; *now!*” shouts an angrier Nicola as Stef’s attitude does infuriate her.

Stef stomps his feet as he walks into the room; “What’s the matter with you now?”

“Look at the mess you have made; you complain to me that I do not keep this place clean enough, how can I with you around?”

Stef looks down at the floor; “Nothing to do with me.” he answers in a bored voice and starts to turn away.

“Stay right where you are, how dare you say that to me?” screams Nicola.

Stef turns and looks at Nicola’s red face; “You wanna learn how to take a joke, yeah sorry, I forgot about that.”

Nicola is off balance with Stef’s calm voice and easy admission of guilt and she stares at him as the anger inside her slowly fades; “You bastard.” she laughs; “Do it now please.”

“Of course dear, is there anything else that you would like me to do?”

Nicola stares at Stef, not sure if he is being serious or sarcastic she decides that “No thank you.” is the safest answer.

Stef nods in apparent obedience and walks into the kitchen for the dustpan and brush; opening the cupboard door under the sink he rummages around inside;

“Come on; where you put it?”

“Put what?” answers Nicola innocently from the dining room.

“The dustpan and brush; what else?”

“You had it last when you knocked my plant over.”

“Oh yeah I remember.” Stef laughs and opens the back door as the telephone rings.

“I’ll get it.” shouts Nicola.

Stef is closer and reaches it in two steps, picking up the receiver he says in a put on common sounding voice; “What’dya want?”

“Yo Dude, how yer doin?”

“Simon, good to hear from you Dude, how was the States?”

“Really great, had lotsa beer and bike rides.”

“Strange mix, ouch!” shouts Stef as Nicola comes up behind him and punches him on the arm for answering the telephone.

“Hi Simon” shouts Nicola into the telephone as she walks into the kitchen.

“What’s goin on Dude?” asks Simon.

“It’s Nic being a usual pain, hey, hope you didn’t spend too much on me present ya know I will get embarrassed.” laughs Stef.

“You don’t have to worry about that I got you nowt,” laughs Simon, “I spent the money on a taxi to get to the airport.”

“Thought you were going on the train?”

“Yeah I was, got as far as Rainham and there was a bomb scare at Gillingham. We sat and waited for about an hour and then got shunted back to Sittingbourne as they were meant to be laying on buses. I waited along with about a thousand others for half an hour or more, so got a taxi to take me to Paddington for eighty quid.”

“Bomb scare? Didn’t hear nothing about that.” asks Stef.

“Yeah well, you wouldn’t would you as you don’t read the newspapers or watch the news on the telly do ya?”

answers Simon, saying it as more of a statement than a question.

“So what do you want then? As you haven’t got a present to bring over.” answers Stef in a put on rough voice.

“Ha ha, sorry mate, now I got over the jet lag I was wondering if you and Nic fancy a bike ride.”

“Where you thinking of going?” asks Stef.

“Down to the cliffs, maybe bit further to the river if you feel up to it, sure is a nice day.”

“Sounds a good idea, could do with getting out of here, hang on.” replies Stef into the telephone, covering the mouthpiece with his hand he shouts to Nicola to ‘Get here!’

“What now?” shouts Nicola from the kitchen.

“Do you wanna go for a bike ride with Si?”

“Depends where he’s going, I am not cycling ‘till we are exhausted like last time!”

“Nah we’re only going as far as the cliffs, maybe go the other side.”

“As long as you promise not to go too far.” says Nicola as she enters the room.

Stef uncovers the telephone; “Yeah, she’s up for it; ouch!” exclaims Stef as he receives another punch on the arm from Nicola.

“She?” shouts Nicola, “Who’s *she*?”

“Yeah all right.” grumbles Stef in an angry voice as Nicola’s punches hurt!

“That’s cool I’ll come right over as long as you two ain’t gonna have a fight.” says Simon in a nervous voice, he had witnessed their fights and arguments and would rather avoid the unpleasantness.

“She knows better,” laughs Stef rubbing his arm painfully; “Give us a half hour.”

“Yeah Ok see ya in a bit.” answers Simon as he

disconnects the call.

“That hurt bitch.” says Stef as he puts the receiver down.

“I have got a name you know.” replies Nicola in a sarcastic voice.

“Yeah, well I keep forgetting what it is,” laughs Stef “right now I’ll call you Joe as you can make me a sandwich or something nice to take with us.”

“You can make your own sandwich, I’m gonna get changed.” laughs Nicola as she brushes past him and goes into the bedroom.

Stef and Nicola live in a ground floor flat on the outskirts of a seaside town on the north Kent coast in England. The flat is large, as the building, built in the eighteen hundreds and of Victorian design, was originally built for a wealthy land owner to be a home for his large family of nine children; and as many servants to look after them!

The house originally had a lounge, two dining rooms, a library, large kitchen and servant’s quarters on the ground floor, with an equally large cellar beneath. The cellar had been divided to accommodate more servants and had also been used for storage of hay for the horses. Upstairs was divided into two floors with each floor having a lounge, two bedrooms, with a modern kitchen and a toilet and wash room.

Stef and Nicola are lucky in renting the ground floor as this included a small private area of the back garden that led directly from their back door. The area is about three metres square and surrounded by a high hedge of green privet, giving them a little privacy from the other tenants. The cellar below them remains empty as it is cold and slightly damp and unsuitable for living in.

Immigrants from Poland live in the flat above; two young couples in their early twenties. One couple do

night work at the local supermarket and the other couple work during the day as casual labour on a nearby chicken farm.

The top floor also houses immigrants; three families from India who seemed to be involved in two restaurants and a Take Away. They do not appear to be short of money as each family owns a Mercedes and they have a multitude of children!

Even though they all live in the same building their paths seldom cross. Stef and Nicola work long hours; Stef as a forklift driver at a haulage company about thirty miles away and Nicola as a qualified staff nurse, who is often called to work long hours at the local and other hospitals.

Stef is a swarthy looking individual; about two metres tall with close cropped light brown hair sitting on top of a round chubby face that looks ten years younger than his true age of twenty five years. His body looks muscular, but is betrayed by the pot belly that hangs over his leather belted blue jeans. A belly that is due to the long hours spent in his forklift truck and the five pints of brown ale that he drinks each day.

Nicola is three years older than Stef and appears delicate compared to Stef; being a good twenty centimetres shorter with a slim body and long brown shiny hair that reaches to her shoulders. Dark brown eyes look out from a thin face that appears to have seen troubled times. Slight worry lines are making an appearance across her brow and her eyes seem shadowed from lack of sleep and appear dark against her pale skin.

Nicola looks through her wardrobe for something to wear over her blue sweatshirt and black slacks. Choosing a pale lightweight jacket she puts it on and

looks at her reflection in the long wardrobe mirror. Twisting to the left and then to the right and with a stretch of her arms above her head she appears satisfied with her choice. Removing the jacket Nicola lays it carefully onto the bed and looks down at the array of shoes and trainers that cover the bottom of the wardrobe. Picking a pair of silver coloured trainers she flicks off her slippers and puts the trainers on, she ties them up tight and reaching over to her bedside table picks up a book and starts to read.

Nicola likes to read, especially romance novels and this one, about a girl in Jamaica has become very exciting; and Nicola is finding it hard to put down! Avidly she reads, imagining herself on a Jamaican beach in the arms of a strong, Jamaican hotel owner when Stef snaps her away by shouting her name repeatedly, and loud!

Annoyed to be taken away from the Jamaican sunshine Nicola throws her book down on the bed and with a; 'I'm coming.' goes into the kitchen; where Stef is still shouting.

"Alright, alright I'm here what's all the fuss?" says Nicola as she enters the kitchen.

"Where you been? You been gone twenty minutes!" demands Stef in his loud voice as he knows what Nicola has been doing.

"I've been getting changed." Nicola replies defensively. Stef eyes her up and down; "Changed?" he asks in his indignant voice "All you've changed is your trainers!"

"Well I been doing other things"

"Like what? Reading your sappy novel, I bet."

"Maybe." Nicola replies with a small smile on her face.

"I can see you have, your eyes go all soft and dopey looking."

"They do not," Nicola exclaims; "Have you made

sandwiches for me?" she asks looking at the sandwich filled plastic containers on the worktop.

"No they are mine, and there is no more bread left, well only what's in the freezer."

Nicola looks dismayed and upset that Stef has used all the bread, before she can pass comment Stef laughs; "You don't think I'm gonna eat all them do ya; especially the lemon curd?"

Nicola looks at Stef's smiling face; Stef does not like lemon curd and despite his denial had obviously made sandwiches for her as well as his own.

Nicola smiles sweetly in reply, her whole face changing, the smile making her look younger and somehow more vulnerable; "Thank you kind sir, you are like Winston in the book I am reading."

"You'd better watch your language or I might confiscate your sandwiches." says Stef sternly, now with only a hint of a smile, as he feels jealous of Nicola's romantic dreams; even though they are only stories in a book.

Nicola is saved from answering as the front door bell rings several times; Stef runs to the front door and opens it quickly to a stressed looking Simon.

"About time you answered it I been standing here for ages."

"We never heard it, you have to push it dead centre to get it to work." apologises Stef.

"I weren't sure if it was working or not, till I heard you running up the hall; you ready then?"

Stef looks at Simons flushed face, Simon is breathing heavily from riding his bicycle, and his large chest pulsates heavily as he quickly draws breath in and out. Simon is a well-built man; over two metres tall in his socks, his long black hair is tied into a pony tail at the back and is tied tightly around a very round face. Weighing a hundred and eighty pounds few challenge

his muscular form and he is used to getting his own way; he asks first but usually takes what he wants.

“Just waiting for Nicola,” lies Stef “Come in for a second.” Stef stands back from the door opening it wider.

Simon looks at his bike which is leaning against the wooden front fence; “No, I’ll wait here.”

“Suit yourself” says Stef as he walks back into the flat. Nicola appears carrying two small rucksacks;

“I heard that, Hello Simon, I am ready it’s *him* we’re waiting for.”

“Hi Nic, yeah he’s always bragging you have to wait for him.”

“Yeah, too right.” laughs Stef as he takes a rucksack from Nicola’s outstretched hand.

“You as well? A lot of people believe his lies.” answers Nicola in a bored voice.

Stef gives a snort as he opens the door to a front room, taking a couple of steps inside he pulls out Nicola’s shiny red bicycle and pushes it towards her. Nicola takes it from him, putting her rucksack over her shoulders and sitting astride her bike she rides it out of the open front door.

Stef follows quickly, slamming the front door he jumps on his expensive shiny black bicycle. Costing five times the amount as Nicola’s, it comes complete with twenty one gears, suspension, disc brakes and ergonomic saddle. He speeds down the path and out onto the road, without a backward glance as he passes Nicola and Simon, he pedals quickly down the road and is soon lost to sight around the corner.

“Looks like someone’s in a hurry, you two had a row?” asks Simon.

“Not that I know of.” replies Nicola as she pedals after Stef.

Simon's bike is similar to Stef's but in a metallic blue with down swept handlebars and hard thin leather saddle, he pulls it away from the fence and follows Nicola and Stef down the road.

Stef is waiting impatiently further on at the entrance to the path that leads down to the seafront. There were steep cliffs here years ago; now the cliffs have been landscaped to an angle of forty degrees to stop the erosion. Paths criss cross the grass covered slope that is interspersed with small bushes of gorse and young trees, giving it the appearance of a park in its early years.

As Nicola approaches the path Stef turns and rides down the slope, not giving her a chance to stop and catch her breath. Nicola is annoyed with Stef's behaviour and would much prefer a gentler ride. She turns right halfway down the slope, as she knows that riding down to the beach will mean cycling back up; as steep cliffs bar their way further on.

Simon speeds past her as she takes the turning and he joins Stef to cycle along the concrete sea defences that border the shingle beach. Nicola does not mind cycling alone, in fact she is getting used to it as more and more these days she finds herself separated from Stef somewhere along the ride. She looks down at the two men cycling side by side; already they are fifty feet in front of her and seem oblivious to her presence.

"How far do ya wanna go Dude?" asks Simon as he pulls level with Stef.

"Dunno, not too far depends on Nic, we'll ask her when we get to the Towers." he replies in an impatient voice.

"Nice day for a ride Dude." Simon enthuses looking up at the sky which is a deep blue. White cumulus clouds looking like giant balls of cotton wool drift on a high wind

far above.

“Yeah, lucky for this time of year it being only April.” replies Stef with enthusiasm warming to the favourite subject of the British; discussing the weather!

“The forecast is for rain this evening.” replies Simon seriously.

“You wouldn’t believe it.” answers Stef looking up at a big patch of blue sky. He looks behind only now remembering that Nicola is meant to be with them, not seeing her he looks up the slope. For a moment he cannot see her as she is far behind them; “What’s she doing up there?” he asks.

“She ain’t daft, we will have to go up there at the end, unless you wanna carry your bike up the one hundred steps?” asks Simon, referring to the steel steps that scale the steep cliffs at the end of the concrete sea defences.

“No, better not, Nicola won’t wanna do that and we can’t let her ride around The Glen on her own.”

“Yeah, that is what I was thinking, that’s a lonely path around there you would never hear the last of it if she slipped and fell.” says Simon with a wry grin.

“If she fell down there, she would probably break her neck.” replies Stef, picturing the fifteen metre drop to the bottom of the gorge. Though only created out of the sand and clay cliffs by a seasonal stream The Glen’s cliffs have become a sheer drop. The fall from the narrow path through trees and bracken onto the sand and rubbish of rusty bicycles and supermarket trolleys far below, would probably result in serious injury or death.

Simon slows a little and looks up and back at Nicola who is now a good five hundred yards further behind. Stef pedals faster and pulls away suddenly seeming to be in a hurry, Simon, seeing Stef speeding up pedals

hard to catch him up;

“Slow down Dude, we got all day, give Nicola a chance to catch up man.”

Apart from themselves the beach and path before them is deserted and Stef sees no reason to go slowly as they can meet Nicola at the entrance to The Glen. Ignoring Simon’s plea Stef pedals harder and soon leaves Simon far behind who frowns in irritation.

Stef takes the path that leads off the seafront at speed, even though the path now leads upwards Stef is going too fast and skids on some loose dirt and gravel. In a big swirling of dust and stones Stef skids off the path and nearly loses complete control; as he wobbles dangerously, almost falling to the concrete several feet below. Putting on the brakes he skids to a halt and looks down at the front wheel as if something is wrong. The noise of Simon approaching makes him look up and he stares at Simon in embarrassment.

Simon stares back at Stef with a blank expression on his face and rides past saying nothing as if they are strangers. Nicola pedalling furiously towards them sees Simon ride past Stef and seeing that Stef has come to no harm slows down to a sedate pace.

Simon waits for her at the end of the path; “Bit of a daft one your bloke.” he says with a laugh.

“He has got so much pent up energy he feels he has to go mad all the time.” Nicola replies in disapproval.

“Well you are only young once I suppose.” Simon says in defence of Stef.

“He is going to kill himself one day.” Nicola says with conviction.

“Let’s hope it’s not today as be a long way to carry him home.” answers Simon drily.

Nicola stares coldly into Simon’s eyes and pushing past him takes the lead going up the path, Simon looks

back at Stef who is now only a few yards away; “You upset her today Dude?” he asks.

Stef looks at Nicola as she rides away; “I dunno man, this always seems to happen when we go on bike rides together, I always end up riding on my own.”

“Maybe you should try and go a bit slower and let her ride up front for once.”

“I tried that but she goes so *slowly*.” laughs Stef in frustration.

Simon looks at Stef and feeling as if it is none of his business cycles up the path behind Nicola.

Nicola is waiting at the entrance to The Glen; seeing Simon and Stef as they enter the car park she rides slowly into the trees following the narrow path. As she approaches the bridge, made of scaffold poles and planks of wood, Stef squeezes past and overtakes her; making her wobble and weave on the narrow path.

Nicola feels the blood draining out of her face as she tries to gain control of the handlebars;

“What do you think you are doing?” she screams.

Stef laughs as he passes her and not looking behind crosses the wooden bridge and pedals faster; only to have to screech to a halt, as a golden retriever pulling its master along appears from around the corner.

The man, wearing a flat cap and long black coat, scowls at Stef. The way Stef is riding is too fast for this winding path; and he had nearly rode into him!

Stef looks down at his front wheel ignoring the man and dog as they walk past. Nicola and Simon stop as they reach the bridge and let the man and his dog walk across first.

The man stares at Nicola as he walks past; the leering look on his face shows what he would like to do to her. Simon, seeing the way the man is looking at his friend

walks forward with his bike; narrowing the path and forcing the perverted man to the far side of the path.

As soon as there is room Nicola pedals hard and crosses the bridge with Simon close behind, Stef has already gone on ahead and they cycle a little faster to catch him up.

The path leads along the side of the gorge; the steep cliffs above and a horrendous drop below makes Nicola slow to a walking pace; Simon narrowly avoids crashing into the back of her as she gives no warning!

They cycle slowly along the path which leads them up and out of the gorge and onto a large area that is heavily overgrown with gorse, brambles and small trees and bushes. The path weaves its way amongst the bushes and undulations in the ground until it reaches the top of the high cliffs that lead to The Towers.

Stef sits out of the wind behind a large old building that looks out across the North Sea. The building was used as a Customs and Excise Headquarters many years ago, but is now empty and deteriorating in the wind and cold winters, and is a useful place to sit and rest.

“You took your time.” laughs Stef as Nicola and Simon reach him.

“We are in no hurry Dude.” answers Simon a little breathless as he lays his bike down on the grass and sits beside it.

Nicola leans her bike against the brick of the building and sits down next to Stef; leaning back gratefully against the cold brickwork she closes her eyes and gives a little sigh.

“You alright?” asks Stef.

“Yes, fine, that last bit is all uphill.”

Stef for all his apparent unconcerned attitude feels a deep love for Nicola and watches her with concern, Nicola had been ill over the winter months with constant

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