

I remember salty lips and smooth pebbles, sand between my toes. I remember the boats we carved out in the sand every year and the towers and turrets that sprung up from the golden plains. I remember a time when Wales seemed exotic and school was for friends, bruised knees and farm trips.

I recall one blistering hot summer, the sand was so warm it burned our little pink toes, and sitting, with my sister, looks of concentration on our sunburnt faces as we put the last tiny shells on to the doorways of our newly created palace. The soft cool shells, glistening in the sun and Daddy emerging through the heat waves with soft ice creams already dripping down the cone.

We spent what felt like years on that windy, Welsh beach, watching the sun go down, barbecues spitting, blowing smoke in our eyes and the sad, salty tears that stained our cheeks as our boats and castles slipped, quietly, into the sea. Ready for another day, doing it all over again, the rainy caravan and pancakes for breakfast, running onto the sand in the early morning, the feeling of the damp sand sticking to the sides of our flip flops and the first delicious wave as it broke over my toes, the muggy heat as it crept over the dunes descending, in waves, onto the beach and the people below, from far away they seemed like toiling worker ants zigzagging across the beach, the long line for the ice cream stall like a long pink centipede on the sand, I remember the shock of the ice cold water as we splashed in the sea, and the stiff salty plaits that hung down our backs in the afternoon. I remember barbecues and fish and chips on the sand, I remember the delicious warmth of bath time and the silty residue that stained its sides, I remember the long sleep and arms wrapped tight around teddies. I remember Newgale.

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