

Summer days

I'm sitting and watching birds. I'm at Blue Moon Beach. I think it is the best beach in the world. The water is warm and blue. The sand is very white. Blue Moon Beach is my beach. I've lived here all my life. Other people come here for a week or two. They swim at the beach. They come to see the fish too. There are many fish in the water at Blue Moon Beach.

My name is Samuel Martin. At home I am called 'Sammy'. At school I am 'Sam'. I like the name Sam. I think I'm too old to be Sammy now. I am fifteen.

I live with my mother and father in our hotel – Blue Moon Hotel. When I was little I loved all the rooms and the stairs. I loved the big kitchen and all the food. I liked the people who came to stay. I played with lots of children who came with their families.

What I like now are the animals and birds that live near our hotel. I like the sea eagles best. I want to write a book about them one day. They are big, strong birds. Sea eagles are the kings of all the birds. They fly over the water to look for food.

When I was little there were lots of sea eagles at Blue Moon Beach. This year there are only two sea eagles. Why? Because there are not many trees now. Sea eagles need trees. Now there are lots of houses. It makes me angry. I don't want the birds to leave Blue Moon Beach.

Today is the first day of summer – no school for five weeks! Five weeks to swim and watch the sea eagles. I'm lying on the sand. I'm watching one sea eagle. It is on the

rocks at the end of the beach. I haven't seen the other sea eagle today.

Two men are walking along the beach. I don't think they are here to swim. They are wearing dark clothes. They are wearing shoes and socks. People never wear shoes and socks at Blue Moon Beach. The men stop near me. They look at the rocks. They must be looking at the sea eagle. They talk quietly. Who are they? They see me looking at them and then they walk away.

I go for a swim. I love swimming. There are a lot of people in the water today but not many of them swim out in the deep water. I swim out a long way. There are a lot of fish swimming below me. I lie in the water and look up. I see the sea eagle flying above me. I love being out in the water at Blue Moon Beach.

The sun is high in the sky. It's time for lunch and I'm hungry. I swim back to the beach and then I walk back to the hotel.

'Sammy,' Mum calls from her office. It is at the front of the hotel.

'Yes, Mum?' I say.

'Dad needs your help in the kitchen after lunch,' she says.

'Today? But it's the first day of summer, Mum. I want to go swimming again this afternoon. And the birds...'

'I want to go swimming too,' says Mum. 'But we all have to work. We have a lot of visitors.' She looks tired. She works very hard.

'Okay, Mum.'

Mum smiles at me. 'Thank you, Sammy,' she says.

'Sam, Mum, not Sammy. I'm not a little boy now. I'm fifteen.'

‘Okay...Sam. Go and eat lunch. Then help your father.’

I go into the kitchen. Dad is cooking. I think he is the best cook in the world. He uses lots of pots. I’ll have to wash them after lunch.

‘Hello, Sammy,’ says Dad. ‘It’s time for lunch. Are you hungry?’

‘Yes! And it smells very good.’

After lunch I help my father. We clean the kitchen. I wash the pots and Dad washes the floor. I like to work with Dad. Some boys don’t see their fathers very often. But Dad and I are good friends.

‘How are your birds today, Sammy?’ Dad asks.

‘The mother is there. I want to see if there are eggs in the nest. Sea eagles always have two eggs.’

‘Eggs?’ Dad says. ‘It’s a long time since I’ve seen a baby sea eagle.’

‘Yes,’ I say.

We have nearly finished cleaning the kitchen. ‘Can I go now, Dad?’ I ask.

‘Okay, Sammy.’

‘Dad – my name is Sam, not Sammy.’ I often say this to Mum and Dad. They forget.

‘Okay, Sam. Go on – look at your beautiful birds.’

‘Thank you, Dad.’

I walk through the hotel. I open the front door quietly but Mum hears me.

‘Sammy? Come here, please,’ she calls from the office.

Shall I run? It is a beautiful, warm day. I don’t want to do any more work today. I run.

Mum comes out of the office.

‘Stop, Sammy!’ she calls.

I stop. I walk back to the office.

‘Dad and I have nearly finished cleaning the kitchen, Mum,’ I say.

‘I need to talk to you now,’ Mum says.

‘But Mum, I want to see the sea eagles.’

‘Sam,’ says Mum. ‘Please.’

So I sit and listen.

‘A boy is coming here today with his mother. His name is Tim Bailey. I want you to show him the village. Take him to the beach.’

‘But Mum, I want to watch the sea eagles. The mother has been in the nest all day. They’ll have baby sea eagles in the nest soon.’

‘Sam, please listen. Tim’s mother, Mary, was my best friend at school. They live in the city now. Tim’s father died after being sick for a long time. Mary is very sad. Tim is sad too. I asked them to come here. The sea air will be good for them. Tim needs a friend. I told his mother you will be Tim’s friend.’

Mum looks at me. I look at the floor. I don’t want to be friends with Tim. I don’t want Mum telling me who to be friends with. I want to swim and watch the sea eagles.

‘Mum – do I have to?’

‘Yes, you do.’

‘All right, Mum,’ I say.