

1st Anniversary — Dr Lucy

Diane Reddy

Being her dad's first death anniversary, she felt numb and wanted to be alone.

She stood on the salty rock, lost in her own world. It was a depressing day, both with the weather and the day's mood. Suddenly she realized that the gushing water was rising above her ankles. She thought for a moment when was the last time she was here. Dad, yes, dad. It took her back to that time. When he was lonely he used to bring her to the seaside.

Suddenly she heard children's voices and laughter and looked beyond the sand dunes. There was a family camping and so she thought nothing more. Looking at her watch, she realised she was fifteen minutes late from her lunch break. She came down from the slippery rocks and started to walk in the opposite direction. That is when she saw a curly blonde-haired little boy about 2-3 years old, sitting on the beach.

Approaching him she asked, 'What is the matter little one. Where is mummy?'

He started to cry. She noticed that he had been hurt or cut his underfoot.

She picked him up looked around, but no one was there. She thought the best place for the boy was the hospital to have the wound cleaned and dressed. Then the police should start looking for his parents.

She took little Andy (she named him Andy for the A on his shirt), to the Outpatient Department and spoke to the doctor on duty; then rushed to the ladies' room to freshen up.

Before she could step out from ladies' room two police officers were waiting to question her. Meanwhile the intercom in the hospital buzzing:

'Dr Lucy Burton, urgently to OP and OR.' The call was echoing in her ears.

Lucy knew they were short-staffed on public holidays. She had to carry out any duty that she was called out for.

'Please officers, whatever it is, you have to wait. I have lives to save.'

Doctor Adam on duty was waiting for Doctor Lucy in the Outpatients. He needed authority with little Andy to make a decision about the deep cut in his foot. The wound have to be thoroughly cleaned from sea and sand before stitching. This procedure would have to be done under General Anaesthetic. But how would it be possible without his parent's permission.

Just then they heard the officer say, 'I would like your name and address, Miss. You are under arrest for kidnapping this little boy. His description fits this youngster on the couch.'

A firm voice from behind the officer said, 'What, are you accusing one of my Surgeons of stealing a little boy? If she wants to steal, she has every opportunity to steal one from the hospital'.

'You have to wait, Officer, for questioning. If Doctor Lucy Burton did something wrong she can answer your questions after treating the young patient first. I suggest you let my staff carry out their duty. They are under a Sworn Oath to save lives.'

The officer stepped back and watched how quickly Doctor Lucy and Doctor Adam worked on this little boy to save his foot.

An hour later, Lucy looked tired. She walked to the officers, asking what charges did they have against her and what has she done wrong, besides finding a child alone on the shore with this deep wound.

'In my opinion I saved the parents and the little boy from further damage to his foot.'

The Officer stepped back and took a deep bow.

'I underestimated who you are, Madam. We will notify the parents. They can see the little boy in another half hour in your company. At the moment the child is under deep sedation.

'If anything, you should charge the parents for neglecting their child,' Lucy thought. 'Thank you, Officers.'

Lucy walked away with a numb and tired feeling. 'What a day,' she thought.