



The Blue Flower

We both saw it happen. We'd been walking for four hours on the coast path between Mundeena and Fisherman's Paradise. It was a hot, clear day, the flowers had just started to come out and we even saw dolphins surfing in the morning. We were both so happy. We'd come down into a lush green valley and Martina had spotted an unusual, tiny, blue flower. She'd pulled out her pocket book on Australian Flowers for the fiftieth time and was staring at it. I went over and looked at it over her shoulder. Right then it was pulled down into the ground, like in a cartoon where a rabbit pulls carrots into its tunnel. It went down slowly at first, then in a rush. In a second it was gone.

We were both silent, waiting, our heads almost touching, staring at the little hole it had disappeared into. Then I backed off a little and waited to catch her eye but she wouldn't look at me. I looked at her face from the side, she was frowning, she got out her little knife and started to dig, carefully at first, then more roughly. I sat on a rock and watched. After five minutes, still frowning, she put her knife away and set off down the path. "Wait" I said. She stopped but didn't turn round to look at me. I stood up and looked at her back and all the love I felt for her was pulled out of me, into the ground, like the little blue flower. It took longer, maybe two seconds. I caught up with her and we walked on in silence.

On the train on the way home she said "Let's not talk about that flower." "Why?" I said. "Because it will make us look like idiots."

"Maybe we are idiots" I said.

"You might be, I'm not."

And that was it. I moved out a few days later. Now I have Louise and Billy every other week and soon, when Martina moves to Paris, it'll just be the three of us.

For four years I've given her a little bunch of blue flowers on her birthday. Each time she she'd take them, smile charmingly and say thanks as if she they were just blue flowers. And whenever I see her smile I want to be back with her more than anything else in the world.