



## The Beach Hut

*Cassandra Parkin*

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**A novel about love, loss, memory, and family relationships**

It is autumn time and on a peaceful Cornish beach, Finn and his sister Ava defy planning regulations and achieve a childhood dream when they build themselves an illegal beach hut. This tiny haven will be their home until Ava departs at midwinter for a round-the-world adventure. In the town, local publican Donald is determined to get rid of them. Still mourning the death of his wife, all he wants is a quiet place where he can forget the past and raise his daughter Alicia in safety. But Alicia is wrestling with demons of her own. As the sunshine fades and winter approaches, the beach hut stirs old memories for everyone. Their lives become entwined in surprising ways and the secrets of past and present are finally exposed.

## The Beach Hut Details

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Author : Cassandra Parkin

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## From Reader Review The Beach Hut for online ebook

### Chimene says

I've just put this down and can say that I'm sad it's over.

It's not my usual kind of read either but the author's writing style pulled me in. The chapters jump between past and present, giving up pieces of the puzzle but in a way that easy to follow.

Set in beautiful Cornwall, I loved the characters and following their stories. There were twists I didn't see coming and the ending was emotional and thought provoking. An almost heart breaking finale.

Would highly recommend as a summer read.

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### Tracey Scott-Townsend says

Two strands of story with one predominant location, a beach which has enormous meaning in the lives of a brother and sister who always dreamed of living in a hut on the dunes. The sea is the breath of the book, the soundtrack to the story of Ava and Finn, who visit the beach in Cornwall when they are children and it has an enormous impact on them. They return regularly over the ensuing years, until it becomes the only place they can conceive of being when their lives are irrevocably changed by a piece of devastating news.

Ava has always looked after Finn, and they always promised each other they'd make their mutual dream come true one day...

Donald brought his daughter Alicia to live in the seaside town ten years earlier, when her mother died. Alicia has always believed her loving but controlling father was in the Police Force.

Now Alicia's getting herself into deeper waters than Donald could ever imagine of his innocent little girl, whom he refuses to believe is growing up.

When Ava and Finn turn up and have the audacity to move into the mysteriously appeared hut on the beach, the carefully repressed violence in Donald erupts.

Cassandra Parkin's storytelling is exquisitely crafted and her characters utterly believable. What's best about them is their multiple dimensions. Donald could have been a baddie through and through, but his capacity for love counterbalances this and in turn, makes him loveable. Ava is so adult and yet so vulnerable at the same time. Alicia's a child still, yet, unmistakably a young woman too. Finn has been protected and coddled by Ava at her own expense, yet when she needs him, he steps up to the mark.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone who loves the complexity of human nature, and the joy of stories within a story, and the power of beaches.

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### Susmita Bhattacharya says

Enjoyed reading this book. Loved the brother and sister duo. There was so much said in the unsaid, it really

pulled at my heartstrings.

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### **Julie says**

I received this book for free through Goodreads First reads giveaway.

The book has a fascinating plot with plenty of twists and secrets which emerge throughout the book. The main characters are realistic and likeable. The writing is beautiful.

However I found the book didn't flow particularly well. It made sense eventually. Even with the chapter breaks suggesting the different times it still did not read well for me. For me a book has to really get me involved but unfortunately I found that it did not naturally capture me although still very readable.

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### **Helen says**

Contrary to its name, this is no light, refreshing beach read. Hidden secrets slowly unfold (a little too slowly for me at times), intermingled with flashback and fairytales makes this a rather complex read. All the threads slowly come together for dramatic twists by the end. Don't be mistaken, this is an emotional ride for the reader. However, for this reader, the journey branched out in too many places that I found it difficult to reconcile. However, it is well written, thoughtful and authentic, and for many, unforgettable.

Full review at:  
<http://greatreadsandtealeaves.blogspot.com/2014/07/review-beach-hut.html>

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### **Ruby Tuesday says**

I thought this book was absolutely stunning. I'd never read any books by this author but this certainly won't be the last. The main characters are Ava and Finn, brother and sister who have a strong bond that we are introduced to in the opening chapter. Ava and Finn set up a Beach Hut (illegally) to live in for a couple of months. Donald the local landlord has a dark past and we soon learn that his daughter Alicia has some dark secrets of her own. This is a book about family ties, fairy tales and secrets. This is a book to be savoured, it drew me in from the first page and it didn't want it to end. I adored the character Finn and the closing chapter had me in tears. One of the few books where I was completely surprised by the ending. Beautiful scenery, compelling storyline, one of my favourite books of the year so far, I just loved it.

Thanks to Netgalley and Legend Press for an ARC in return for a fair and honest review.

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### **Valerie Pate says**

I love fairy tales. I love the dark mystique of the original ones, from Grimm and Anderson, pre-Disney. Parkin must love fairy tales as well, because they are intertwined all throughout the narrative; new fairy tales

that capture that strange eeriness of those age-old tales.

This is a very interesting story, which wends and winds its way through different people's lives; dipping back to their past and through to the present. The characters are amazingly real; so much so that I feel as if I have watched this book like a film playing in my head. I could really see it all unfolding before me.

There were a few times when I got a little bit confused about timelines and such, but I soon flipped back through and figured it out. I think it's best to read this book quite quickly, rather than putting it down for a few days and trying to pick up from where you've left off.

What I like best of all is the realism. The old fairy tales did not always have a happy ending; this novel's ending is fitting, but far from the rainbows and glitter, Hollywood frame that we force so many good stories into these days.

I wanted more! I wanted to check in with each of the characters once again; see how they were getting on. But, Parkin knew when to put down her pen, and I applaud her bravery and confidence in letting her characters sail off into the sunset (perhaps not even metaphorically!). As a writer, I know that it's not always easy to let go of the characters you have moulded from nothing and cared for as your own; but sometimes to tell a good story you need to make sacrifices. And this was, indeed, a very good story.

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### **MetLineReader says**

Beautiful, magic, ethereal.

Review to follow. Highly recommended.

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### **Kim says**

The Cornish coast is described beautifully and provides a wonderful backdrop for the story. Finn and Ava are siblings and build a beach hut without permission which upsets the local pub landlord, Donald. His daughter Alicia dreams of using it when they leave- even though her dad is desperate to get it removed.

The characters are interesting and well drawn and there are plot turns that surprise the reader. Secrets are revealed over the course of the book and the story goes back in time to the past and back to the present.

With many thanks to Net Galley for a copy of this book.

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### **Jennifer says**

received this book as part of Good Reads First Reads

This book is about Finn and Ava , a very close brother and sister who decide to build a beach hut on a Cornish coast. Despite saying they will be gone by Midwinter they gain the annoyance of pub landlord Donald. He lives with his daughter Alicia, but whilst she loves the beach hut and dreams of living there, her father is adamant the beach hut should go as it has not had the proper planning regulations.

These 4 lives entwine, secrets are revealed and .....

This book is set in the past and the present and is a stunning novel, shock and awe are in these pages

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### **Stephanie says**

unexpectedly good, engaging

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### **Aoife says**

I received a free digital copy from the author/publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest feedback.

Ava and Finn have only ever had each other. For her whole life, Ava has watched out for her little brother Finn and in return, he's always kept her happy and been there when she needs him. Now, the siblings have returned to a childhood holiday beach to live in a tiny beach hut for a few months. Accidentally, they end up annoying Donald and entrancing Donald's daughter Alicia. As all their lives intermingle, secrets unravel and families fall apart and are sewn back together.

I really enjoyed this book. From the get go, Ava and Finn's relationship was so beautiful. I haven't read about such a strong relationship in quite a while and I think, as a big sister myself, I really connected with Ava and her overwhelming desire to keep her brother safe from any harm. This trait in Ava follows them into adulthood and even when they're living on the beach, Ava still thinks of Finn and how she can protect him. While we didn't get a really in-dept look at Ava, I still felt like I knew her and she was a very likeable character, as was Finn. Finn was one of the characters that's larger than life. He almost seemed liked a changeling child, full of stories and magic.

Finn's fairy tales are interspersed among the ordinary chapters in this book and I thought they were so beautiful, and in some way they related to the characters of the story and what was going on or had happened in their life.

I didn't much care for Donald and Alicia. I much preferred Finn and Ava's story, and I just wasn't bothered with Donald's back story. It wasn't as exciting and even with the twist bit, I was surprised but I still wanted to go back to the siblings. I would have liked a bit more of a conclusion to Alicia's situation as it was interesting and I feel like some kind of repercussions for those involved would have been good to see.

This book was a nice way to say a fond farewell to summer and now autumn until next year. It has a mix of summer and autumn feelings in it, and is just a great story of family sticking together and holding each other up through thick and thin.

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### **Paula Sealey says**

When Finn and Ava arrive in a small coastal town in Cornwall and promptly build an illegal beach hut, they ruffle the feathers of local publican Donald. Living with his daughter Alicia, he is irritated by Finn and Ava's lack of concern for regulations and sets about having the beach hut removed. Alicia however loves the beach hut and dreams of escaping there once Finn and Ava leave, and they have promised to be gone by Midwinter. As their four lives intersect, secrets of the past are revealed and lives are changed forever.

I savoured every minute of this stunningly beautiful, deep and moving story. The characters are just superbly portrayed, especially Finn and Ava who I felt an instant affinity with. There are fairy tales (written by Finn) dotted throughout, which I just loved and thought were such an original way to introduce details of the siblings background into the story, and they became particularly poignant at the conclusion.

There are two major bombshells in the plot, neither of which I had a clue about until they happened. The first had me open mouthed in shock, and the second left me in tears! I've read some cracking books so far this year, but this has gone straight into my top 3 and onto my favourites shelf. I highly recommend it!

\*Thank you to Legend Press for providing a review copy through NetGalley.

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### **Bouch The Bookworm Bookworm says**

The ending of this book hit me like a hammer to the chest.

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### **Sarah says**

This is a really hard book to review as I was really torn all the way through the book as to whether it's a three or four star read. The book is very well written with an intriguing story line, I did enjoy reading it but I can't say that I loved it.

The story flicks between present and past and also as Finn the brother is a writer, there is also some story telling in there, which as magical as it was to read, it kept throwing me when I was reading those parts.

The relationship between brother and sister, Ava and Finn, as children in the past was lovely to read and I really enjoyed the bond between them. In the present however I felt there bond was quite unnatural and strange and I will admit to just not getting it.

Father and Daughter, Alicia and Donald is another relationship that seemed like any other and was easy to relate to but then there is a twist which I won't go into which for me slightly ruined the story.

The setting of the story is wonderful and the authors descriptions were very realistic and made me feel that I was at the sea experiencing the caves and the sea for myself. Also the description of the beach hut itself sounded fantastic and I could really envision myself staying there.

Overall it is a good book, unfortunately for me some parts of it I wasn't as keen on, I would certainly read more by the author though.

Many thanks to Legend Press and NetGalley for an Advanced Readers Copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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