



Excerpt from *Bummer at Luna Beach*, by Lisa M. Lane

The hand sticking out of the sand at the base of the cliff was, unfortunately, discovered by a pair of tourists. The slimmer of the two, sporting a sunburn that clearly spoke of origins far inland, at first thought it was a jellyfish or cactus. He almost moseyed past it with his partner, but something in his gut told him this was unusual. As he approached, what he noticed mostly was the hair—hair on the knuckles, hair on the wrist—indicating a rather hairy person. It was, he told the police later, obvious that it had to be the body of a man.

Stephan followed behind, having tangled his ankle in some bladder seaweed, but was equally horrified. He ran for the lifeguard tower, a hundred yards up the beach. Two lifeguards arrived at the scene where Adam was digging out the sand with his hands, having managed to keep himself from throwing up at the thought of what was underneath. The lifeguards arrived with a rescue board, which would soon prove to be useless. One of them tried to keep back the gathering looky-loos while the other helped Adam dig.

Rosie McMahon happened to be walking on Luna Beach that morning, as she did every morning with her large orange tabby Hephaestus. The cat was singularly uninterested in anything that might draw a crowd and was pulling at his harness lead to avoid the cluster of people. But Mrs. McMahon, who at seventy-two was always assuming she'd seen everything, knew she hadn't seen this. A dead body at the base of the cliff was too big a draw to miss.