

# Living by degrees



**Kristin Conard** realises that you can't have your cake and eat it

Summer days go by quickly and easily for me. I work during the day, go out at night. I have good days and bad days like everyone. But last week, I had a day that was so randomly surreal, I still can't believe it. It wasn't a nightmare day; I wasn't naked in the middle of a roomful of people at work, I wasn't being chased by a psychotic killer. It was just a bizarre day that started innocently enough with a doughnut.

I suppose it all began last Monday with the start of my craving for one of the fried and greasy doughnuts from the pier. Determined to look good in my bathing suit, I held out against the doughnut temptation, munching instead on apples and Weetabix. I was sure it would pass, like when I wanted to become a vegetarian despite not liking vegetables. But this was no casual craving. Every time I had a meal I thought how much nicer it would be if I could finish it off with a doughnut.

It took two days before I caved. Not sure what had started this need, but sure that my body must really need a doughnut if I was thinking about it this much, I headed off to the pier. And then I had it. I finally had it. My first bite was perfect. Exactly what I'd been wanting for days. About to take my second bite, there's a rush of wings around my head and something scratches my face. I shriek and fling my precious doughnut at my attackers. This, in retrospect, was a mistake because that's precisely what they wanted me to do. I stood and watched in horror as eight seagulls made a quick meal of my doughnut.

After about 30 seconds of standing in shock I slowly walked away. Reaching up and touching my cheek where it was stinging, I found that they'd drawn blood! I was bleeding, all because of a doughnut. I sighed.

At this point, I decided I was in need of some sort of therapy and decided on retail. Not having too much cash, I headed to Primark. After some wandering, I grabbed a shirt and headed to the queue. Ridiculously long as always, but what else can you expect? So there I was standing in line, touching my cheek every once in a while to see if I had started to bleed, when a cup of juice was poured over my foot. Yes, a small child had crawled over, decided that his juice would be happier on my foot than in his cup and just dumped it. I was a bit shocked and looked at his parents. They just looked back at me like, hello! That's what he's supposed to do. Pour juice on you. Get with the programme. Right.

I pay for my shirt with a sticky foot, hoping that I look so friggin' good in it after all I've been through that I pull every single guy at every club I go to including the gay ones. Wanting a bit of sympathy, I ring one of my closest friends. I go through the seagull story and try to move onto the juice, but he can't stop laughing. Trying another friend, I get the same response. So, I try my mother. I go through the story and pause, waiting for the maniacal laughter that had been the response so far. She does respond with the suggestion that next time I get a doughnut, I simply eat it in one bite preventing any chance of another attack. She choked off a laugh at the end. I hung up. I headed home and crawled into bed to watch movies until I fell asleep, assuring myself that if Keira Knightley and Orlando Bloom can fall in love even though he's a pirate, I will someday be able to have my doughnut.