



WHAT I TREASURE

My Turkish ring

By Terri-Jane Dow

It's impressive – a crescent moon of onyx jutting out of one side, held in place by intricate silver leaves, tiny green and red gems glinting out from its centre. It's a bit of extravagance I wear every day, through the routine that can take up most of your time of being an adult.

When I first saw it, I was somewhere very different to my south London home. Forty degrees in the shade today, the man on the boat had told us as we sped across the water on a river taxi, from Calis across to Fethiye's Old Town, on the last family holiday before my sister and I were deemed “too grown up” to want to travel with our parents any more. Truthfully, we'd probably been “too grown up” for some time, but here we were, in Turkey for the last two weeks of August. Dad was already complaining about the prospect of an entire day devoted to shopping at the Fethiye market; my mother and sister and I placated him with promises that we only wanted to go for an hour. The market was huge, and hugely busy, and under blue plastic tarpaulins the heat was close to unbearable. For once, our unrealistic assurances proved true. We left the market and instead wandered around labyrinthine streets, stopping for drinks and lunch and ice-cream before getting lost again. I'd been told Turkey was an amazing place to buy silver, and I had been an extraordinarily well behaved magpie all day.

As it got dark, and we headed back towards the river taxis, we stumbled across



a treasure trove of a shop, piled up with ornate necklaces and rings, with precious stones embedded in everything. I vowed to be quick, and true to my word, found this – my huge ring – in minutes. I tried it on, and of course, it was much too big. Immediately, a dreadlocked woman wearing harem pants five years before they were cool, swooped down on me and explained that her silverworking studio was just across the street, and that resizing it would take just a minute. She swept out with the ring in her hand. I looked at Dad, who sighed and shepherded my sister out of the shop to go and “look at the boats.” Mum and I perched at a tiny table and drank Turkish tea in the corner of the shop, while we waited significantly longer than a minute for my ring to be returned.

Last summer, the inside of my ring split; worn away along the join where it had been re-soldered, and I've not yet taken it to be fixed. It's been worn every day for almost ten years, and my hand feels strange without it, like it isn't mine. I love it partly because it's so unusual, but mostly it's a reminder that there's no such thing as ‘too grown up.’

What means a lot to you? Tell us in 500 words; thesimplethings@icebergpress.co.uk