

Portuguese Victories Preview:

Beach Read

One of my many inexplicable contradictory quirks is that I

(a) love to read and yet

(b) have never wanted to read on the beach, an activity so common – even among non-readers – that there is literally a genre of books for the occasion (many of them with the name Beach Read in the title).

Well, I decided to break that 40 year dry spell and actually brought a novel to read on the beach and by the pool. It turned out to be the perfect book for just such an occasion.

The book was Dune by Frank Herbert. You've probably heard of it – it's a sci-fi classic, thrice adapted into underwhelming films. As much as I live the indie author life myself, I generally have no interest or patience for any book unless it has 10,000+ glowing reviews and has withstood a few years (preferably decades) of aging. I want to only read the best, and I tend to trust my fellow readers to guide me (just as I trust restaurant and movie reviews, sometimes to a fault).

Set on the desert planet of Arrakis, Dune follows the lives of the Atreides family, a rising house in the interstellar confederacy of this fictional future. Told in an unusually omniscient POV, the narrative constantly reveals what each character's secret thoughts and ambitions are, yet manages to surprise the reader with multiple plot twists.

As gripping as the storytelling was, the book was especially immersive for me because of *where* I was as I read it. I started reading Dune at our Lagos resort, the tropical oasis dubbed *Dom Miguel II Charming Residence*. As the tale of this family unfolded, I was basking in the sun beside the pool; the relentless heat of Arrakis sat close against my tanning skin.

In the novel, the obsession with water – the most valuable resource and greatest sign of wealth on Arrakis – frequently influenced my sense of the actual reality around me. *How can this resort afford so much water?! I would find myself marveling. They have literal pools of it to simply splash around in! This place must be run by billionaires!*

It was even more striking when I read on the beach. One minute, I'd find myself holding my breath as Paul and his mother tried to cross the scorching sands beyond the Shield Mountains, praying their Fremen tricks would prevent a sandworm attack. Lying on the sand myself, squinting against the high sun, I would take in the surrounding cliffs and imagine I was right there on Arrakis with them. Then I'd hear the crash of the surf against the shell-stippled shore and startle – *how is there so much water nearby? I must truly be in paradise!*

With a great book in my hand, lounging on a breath-taking beach, relaxing beside my beautiful wife, could I honestly doubt it?

