

**Life is a pre-stage.
Open your chakras,
receive the cosmic energy,
express yourself,
live your wholeness.**

Anantram E. Osho

Chapter 1

A smell of diesel fuel hovered in the air and the seagulls screamed as if they were being roasted on a barbecue.

Grilled poultry, Bill thought, I've already started hallucinating. He felt his stomach rumble as he studied the birds. They were drifting like cottonwool under the deep blue sky right above him. He unfolded the Land's End Gazette and prepared to cover his head with it.

Moira laughed at him and shook her long black hair. It gleamed like a raven's plumage in the sunshine. But Bill did not feel like he was in a witchcraft fairy tale, and today Moira was not at all his beloved Indian princess. Not even if she had been wearing the red sari her grandparents had sent her as a Christmas present last year.

Moira was wearing bright khaki jeans, a green camouflage T-shirt and brownish walking boots. She looked like she was on a military mission. All her frailty and tenderness had disappeared and Moira looked like one of those tough ladies from that stupid movie "Charlie's Angels". He had hated that film.

Bill stepped under a small canopy and looked back wistfully to the Cornish mainland they had left behind an hour ago.

Even though this was an island of outstanding natural beauty he hated the idea of going there. Not because of nature or beauty, but because of the alternative spiritual reason for their journey. In fact, it was not even his idea. He would have preferred a trip to the Canary Islands as they had done only last year. Lanzarote was a paradise for every man who liked a real meat dish and a golden suntan.

However, Moira seemed determined to give up smoking with the help of some good-for-nothing guru from heaven knows where, and to have some fun.

Both missions seemed to contradict each other to Bill, especially as he had never smoked. How could she expect to have fun without cigarettes? And how could he have fun without her having nicotine and without him having a single proper meal? The prospect of a vegetarian hotel with the rather suspect name of "Spiritual Heavens", and a bunch of old maids longing for enlightenment sent shivers of irritation down his spine.

"Come on, Shorty", Moira giggled, "don't be a spoilsport! You'll see, this island will be fun!"

"Don't call me Shorty", Bill snarled and watched Moira laugh out loud. She obviously enjoyed calling him Shorty, just like his mother did, although he was more than a head taller than Moira.

"What can be fun on an island in the middle of the icy Wadden Sea with no cars, only one coach, freezing water, and a bloody tidal range of twelve metres which leaves a slimy mess when the tide goes out? Not even sailboats can get there ..."

"Stop complaining, my dear little tom cat," Moira smiled and tousled his hair as if he was a pet. Bill shook off her hand and looked at his reflection in the window of the

small ferry. What he saw was his face with unmanageable red hair standing in all directions – as always.

Next to the window a young man with long fair hair, as straight as Moira's and reaching his shoulders, was staring at the table in front of him. An older man, perhaps his father, with old fashioned glasses and a tweed cap, was sitting on the opposite side of the table and talking to him. His face had a worried expression and the youth nodded very slowly.

Behind them a woman with a man's haircut in outdoor clothes was moving about in the middle of the cabin as if in a trance, spreading her arms like an albatross trying to lift off. Some sort of Tai Chi, Bill thought and sighed. His nightmare had already begun.

He turned back to Moira and followed her gaze. They were approaching St. Thomas' Island. The ferry was just passing through a narrow harbour entrance, formed out of two huge rocks. The sea was quite rough and Bill grabbed the rail. He tried to concentrate on the horizon. He had heard this would avoid sea sickness. The horizon was pretty close now, and something in the foreground caught his attention. It was a human body. And it was lying on the pier.

Bill watched Moira, who had started to unwrap her medical instruments. She always had her favourite scalpels with her, just in case she needed to cut some fruit – or body tissue.

Automatically Bill fumbled for the sample bags in his backpack. He always had them at hand, just in case he came across a crime, which seemed to happen quite often.

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