

Edited once

First two chapters need changing to past tense.

Farewell Island

By Max Smith

It's hard to name an island that gets more hyperactive, hyperbolic and satirical over politics than Britain. Great Britain, the country of pissheads ran by pissheads. In the midst of a heated national debate, it was easy to see how the story of Fare Island from 2002 went unnoticed as the modern age had their eyes on other problems. There was a mountainous debate in Britain that took precedence over all other discussions at the time.

Under the radar, Fare Island had become its own independent nation; it followed its own laws and rules and no longer would follow the guidelines of a British way of living. Not a lot is documented on the island but on the latest census report it's clear that a quite substantial popularity of 8 whole people live there.

I have been intrigued by the island ever since I it came across it on Google Maps one day. At the highest point of the Scottish isles it lies there not to be confused with the Fairs Isle, which is very much still under British law and protection. Judging by its incredibly brief and poorly edited Wikipedia page you can see that it has been an independent state since 2019, but as I told you before it was actually 2002 they voted out, but people believe anything they read online.

I have searched YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, all of them to find just something on it. Of course there is some information on Fare Island, but not enough to really comfort me. I want to know more, the island isn't exactly well-advertised on Maps either. On some maps, like the Atlas is doesn't exist, or is too small to zoom my eye on. On Google it does not allow street view, but can show a picture of its largest building, a Tesco as well as a picture of a runway, an unused runway at that.

Perhaps it's just a well organised mini state that just keeps itself to itself. Various articles related to it on the internet describe it as 'Farewell Island' as if Britain were happy to be rid of it and the people, another article described the people as 'Bottleneckers' which is I presume down to the lack of potential for the people living on the island to have relations

with foreigners and spread the seed if you will. I'm sure that was just a vulgar nickname however, like calling a Welsh person 'sheep shagger' or a poor American white person a 'peckerwood' never understood that one, but I hear it on American shows all the time.

Truth is the mystery of this island intrigued me so much that I felt I simply had to document it. So I decided to go and see. I didn't expect to go for long, just the day, the island was small enough that I could go there, look around, interview a few people and get back within 12 hours. Finding a way to get there however would not be easy, I actually saved up a bit of money so I could rent a boat off the Scottish northern coast.

I drove all the way up from my hometown in Gateshead and made it to the very northern point of Scotland, well Inverness. And to which point I was approached and helped by an experienced fisherman.

The fisherman stood in front of me dwarfing my 5 foot 10 height with his monstrous 6 foot something tallness. He then unleashed an almighty Scottish accent upon me. 'You have quite the nose laddy' I wasn't even offended, my nose was large; I was reminded of it on numerous occasions. I smiled and replied 'It's the Jewish in me'.

The fisherman simply laughed and began pulling on the rope attached to my boat as he was ready to release the anchor's grip. 'Bloody yids ay' he said to himself, I however overheard and accepted it. His racism didn't come from a nasty place, he wasn't going to kill me because I was Jewish, he simply just jested, nothing more to it, I could tell. Many people would find this insulting, offensive and uncomfortable, but I saw it as life, no person is perfect, and no person is liked by everyone, just accept it and move on.

'I can't talk laddy, I'm a fucking immigrant myself' the fisherman said to me still pulling on the rope, his bottom lip quivered in the cold, and his scalp was scarred to bits.

'oh right' I replied uneasy, 'so where do you stem from?' I had never used stem in my life before, it was as if the situation had changed my whole diction.

'Norway, my father was Norwegian, and my mother was full-fledged Scotland' he finishes on the rope and wipes his head even though it was too cold to sweat. I was well wrapped and didn't feel the cold as much as him, I was used to freezing conditions in winter but he was wearing little to the imagination.

I approached my rented boat and took a step on to it. The fisherman backed away and began to leave me to it. 'So you're a Viking then?' I said with a smile, the man didn't reply to my question, he ignored it, not through anger or misplaced judgement, he just didn't care, he remained none-insulted.

'Where are you going out of interest boy?' he asked me, he called me boy which pissed me off a bit, I was 24 years of age for goodness sake, but did always fear I looked a bit young. 'I'm not a boy' I replied, 'I'm 24'.

'Aye well I just saw the spotty forehead and I thought... don't matter' he said digging himself out of a metaphorical hole 'where you going laddy?'

'To Fare Island' I replied with an excited expression. My notepad was in hand ready to note down any intrigue.

The fisherman laughs hysterically, almost as though he was faking 'Fare Island? What where the Bottleneckers live, be careful there son, probably get raped knowing them'

The funny thing about his response to which I simply forced a fake laugh out, was that he seemed so jokey about it, if anything it reassured me. I was reassured that where I was going was not in fact dangerous but a joke to people who live nearby. I was sure that I wasn't risking my life by going there, the more I thought about his comment the more I thought it to be funny casual racism against an island that saw itself too good to be part of Britain.

'Have a good time sailor' he shouted to me as my boat slowly drifted away from the coast and he waved frantically like he was taking the piss out of me. I didn't even thank him for his help.

After he disappeared out of sight and I looked back to see no land, I then wondered 'how the hell you steer a boat' I'm sure I'd learn, he said it wasn't too far away. Then before I knew it I was already there. A big sign that I could see a mile off 'FARE ISLAND' not exactly trying to hide itself is it. All seemed a bit too on board, I really wanted a story out of this island but at this rate it appeared I'd probably have to make something up to interest my followers. Let's hope the people give me something to write home about.

Chapter 2

Upon my arrival at the island I could see the rust on the sign as I got closer. Seemingly it had been badly maintained, either through a lack of courtesy, or a lack of resources to be able to keep it pristine.

My boat pathetically washed up onto the beach. The beach was mostly sand but had the occasional rock. The beach was small and very unwelcoming; it was after all the end of autumn. However I couldn't see myself recommending this beach to folks back home. What caught my attention more so than the rather underwhelming beach was the damage I had potentially done to my rented boat?

I quickly hopped out of the vessel and checked all around scratching away the guilt on the back of my head. My nerves were not made easier by the fact that I could see clearly a large scrape across the bottom of it. The red painted base of the boat was tarnished by rather chunky boulders wedged in the sand.

The tide attempted to come in and wash the boat away but it was to no avail. The boat remained unmoved, though I did notice the scratch become red with a colour similar to the paint it was surrounded by as the water washed over it. The paint must have been smearing over the fresh scratch.

'That's not good' I said to myself biting my bottom lip firmly making it bleed. 'Shit' I exclaimed, worried sick that the paint would never last the whole time I was staying here. If it was beginning to smear from the water already, then who knows how much of the paint will be ruined by the time it came to the end of my visit.

It laid there cemented into the wet sandy beach depressed, resembling a washed up sperm whale waiting to cave in and explode. It had an upset slant to it like it was emotionally drained by the journey. I wouldn't blame it, I couldn't steer the damn thing.

As it looked at me with its own personality I sat there with my knees raised high into my chin contemplating what the hell to do. Do I attempt to move it with my bare hands, I suddenly laughed to myself. I looked at my hands however, and did for a moment wonder, can it be done. My hands were certainly the hands of a builder, a man who had ripped away layers of skin and calluses through my years of writing freehand articles and essays. Then I turned my attention to my skinny little arms and realised I was screwed. That boat wasn't moving.

In aid of some sort of assistance I thought it led me on nicely to travel the small island a little bit for some help. I jumped back in the boat quickly just to claim a few belongings, my WH Smith all day breakfast sandwich, my small plastic bag of clothes and delicates, my notepad of course to note down all what I see for my blog and my pen... Which I actually couldn't find. 'Surely to god they have one here though' I thought.

Noticeably I didn't bring a phone with me; I did this deliberately to allow myself the chance to live a life on the edge without technology. Crazy I know.

I stumbled up the small cliff face that led away from the beach carrying my plastic bag in hand with everything inside. Once I managed to fight my way to the top of the cliff my first thought was to just quickly check on the boat. It was fine, hadn't moved. I couldn't help myself but look out over the sunset however, it looked so beautiful. I began to grow excited as to whether I could potentially see the Northern lights from here; I was basically in the Nordic region of the Scottish isles, if there was ever a time in my life where I would see it, it would be here.

The water looked a different colour to what I was used to further north. It was a bit darker, the sky was quite a light blue, in fact it was incredibly clear, and why on earth was the water so dark. The darkness seemed to fade out as well. I presumed it was something to do with the Northern Lights, all I could think in that moment was seeing the Aurora Borealis in its glory.

I turned away from the boat for a moment and saw the island. Fare Island stood like a tiny little town. Must have been only a mile in length coast to coast. It was very skinny too, maybe about 50 or 100 metres in width as I looked down it.

The island was so full of vibrant green life. It had overgrown bushes everywhere, but it didn't look tacky, it looked deliberate. There were six buildings, all varied in size. The white picket fences that surrounded them all were covered by nature that had engulfed it.

Outside every building there was flag poles to which where sparkling white. It seemed as though they really took care of them. Their patriotic mentality was on show through their blowing flags in the light breeze. Their flag was waving at me with its golden sunrise over a green background. It was an odd colouring scheme, but seemed to be one that avoided any resemblance to that of the British flags.

There were no people so I just chose to keep walking looking left, then right then left again trying my best not to miss a thing.

The first building I hit on my short walk was the largest on the island, it looked like an abandoned shop. It was some sort of small supermarket, like a Tesco Express, in fact if I looked closely enough at the worn sign I could make out it used to be a Tesco. I couldn't resist the temptation to approach it.

As I closed in on it I chopped all the wildlife out of the way and pulled back the poison ivy attached to the windows. The windows were grey and mouldy, and this made it difficult to see through them. I sheltered my eyes from the low sun that was only getting lower as it set. I looked as deep as I could into the contents of the abandoned supermarket and saw nothing there other than empty shelves.

There was a small puddle of stagnated water near the till and an overturned trolley cart. I looked close to see a lonely packet of unopened crisps on the floor. I moved around to the doors of the building and gave them a firm push and good yank and neither way made them budge. I was disturbed in pursuit to get insight by the three crows above the shop barking away at the top of their lungs.

It seemed ominous; I decided to leave the building to its own devices. The next few buildings appeared a lot more homely and welcoming. The first was a small cottage. Two windows either side of the large oak door. The house seemed well kept, it was unlikely the building was neglected and odds are someone lived there. The cottage had a lovely slated roof that looked hard to maintain, and this could be told by the multiple gaps in it and the numerous broken up slates on the concrete pathway leading up to the front door.

I looked up at the flag pole and again more crows lay on top. All that could be heard on this island were the crows chirping and the wind flailing the flags and washing up the sea. I backed away from the white picket fence of the cottage that was covered in greenery and looked at the next building.

The next building was a cottage too. This time the roof was a lot more even and straight. I could see there was someone definitely inside this one however. I could see the candle lit on the windowsill of the front room. Then a silhouette of a pregnant woman pass by it. I thought best not disturb a pregnant lady. So again I backed off with the intention of going to the next building.

As I back away a sudden clench appeared in my right shoulder, like a grim reaper gripping me tight, or a stroke. Either way I didn't like it, and I struggled to shake it off. I dare not turn around, but I did. I saw an old sweaty man with his unshaven stubble and his wandering cross eye reconfiguring itself towards me. He was old, about the age of 50 or more, he wore a green suit jacket and flat cap that covered his near perfectly bald head. His brown swade pants were torn and ruined by years of wear and tear. It took him little time before he opened his mouth to reveal multiple gaps in his teeth and his strong, almost foreign Scottish accent.

'What you doing here?' he asked me

'Hello' I replied taking a mighty gulp for air. 'I'm here to simply see what this island is about', in hindsight probably not the greatest response in all honesty.

'You sound like you're from Newcastle boy?' he spoke in rhetoric's it seemed.

'Aye I am, kind of, I'm from Gateshead' I replied nervously, wondering what on earth he'd think of it. His breath stunk.

'Sorry, let me take my hand off your shoulder shall I?' he releases his grip kindly. I again stumble as to whether to respond to his rhetorical question. 'How the hell d'you get here then? Boat? That is an almighty error on your part to end up here' he laughs.

I back away politely and catch breath of clean air. 'I didn't stumble by this place by accident' contemplating what to call him, call him sir? Is that too respectful, is it a bit kiss-assy, I don't know I just said it 'Sir'.

'Oh don't have to call me sir boy, call me Alastair' he says zealously and then returns to his hands behind his back and small walk towards his own cottage with the oak door. 'So what have you come to see then?' his voice rises as he walks further away. 'There ain't too much to witness here to be honest'.

'Now, now I'm sure there is, I'm sure you people who live here must be wonderfully intriguing, you know being an independent state and all?' it was my turn to be rhetorical, but he answered me back, I must have pinched a nerve.

'Oh you think' he turns his head around just before he enters through his fence towards his oak front door of his dull, lifeless looking cottage. 'Let me tell you, and I mean this' he

pauses for my name, so I tell him Jack. 'Let me tell you Union Jack, being an independent state ain't always a good thing, you can let the assholes around here pretend it is, but let me tell yee, it ain't' He opens his front door, and in that moment as he backed into his house he did strike me as the village drunk. The type of drunk who prophesised that leaving Britain would somehow invite alien life forms or some other conspiracy to lay rest here. Maybe its aliens who live here, my mind began to wander and I grew excited at the prospect of this island. 'If you need guidance on anything round here, or need help getting back home, I can help, just come to me' Alastair finished our first ever meeting with an abrupt attempt of being kind, it felt very disingenuous and lacked conviction.

The meeting with Alastair however did give me confidence that there was a way home for me if I needed help, and also inspired me to approach others on the island as none could be as odd as him surely. I approached the cottage with the candle lit and the pregnant woman had disappeared now. The door was black and bleak, but everything else about the cottage seemed perfectly neat. On the door was a large metal British cast iron doorknocker. I swung backwards and forth two times loudly and in no time at all I could hear rumblings inside the cottage as someone approached the door to let me in, there was no going back now. I was here to blog about the island, I was about to be given something to write about.

Chapter 3

On the other side of the door of the second cottage was a surprise to me. Resuming it would be the pregnant silhouette revealed, it was instead a young man, with floppy blonde hair and an incredibly posh, inflated bottom lip. He answered with half a smile like he had just passed wind.

The young man answered with his eyes ever slow slightly wincing in the bright sunset in the distance behind me. He then continued to struggle looking up and down at me to gauge a better understanding of who I was and what I was doing here. 'Can I help you young sir?' he asked with the most posh Scottish accent imaginable.

I for a moment just stood unresponsive, taken aback by the man's rich demeanour. He had a strange crouch to his posture that made him look like something out of a Gothic horror story. However I didn't look at the man and think he was ugly, just not beautiful. His cheeks were rosy and this I could tell wasn't out of shyness, it was just because of the cold as the wind swept across his face as he opened the door to me.

‘Well I’m Boris anyway’ he welcomed me for a handshake. I then reached out to him and shook his hand with a firm grip of my right. ‘Who are you then?’ he asked me.

‘I’m Paul, my boat floated towards the island and I thought it looked intriguing’ I thought it was best to lie in this situation, perhaps the locals on the island wouldn’t take too kindly about a man writing a blog about their lives.

‘I see well where is your boat now, can’t you get home?’ Boris subtly suggesting that I didn’t belong here. ‘If you need help getting your boat back in order I can help get you home’ his smile was fake it seemed.

‘Yes it’s just on the beach about 50 yards that way’ I pointed to the west of the island.

Boris pondered for a few seconds; his eyes followed my pointed finger. He then took a deep breath and backed away into the dark corridor that the front door lead directly to. ‘NIGEL!’ Boris shouted at the top of his lungs. ‘Nigel!’ Boris attempted again this time quieter.

I began to consider if Nigel was the name of the pregnant lady I saw through the window, surely there isn’t three people living in this tiny cottage.

Eventually Nigel arrived. Much older than Boris, Boris was around my age where as Nigel struck me as around 45 maybe pushing 50 years of age. His hair was thinning and receding and his cheeks were long and flabby and wobbled with every word he spoke. Nigel wasn’t a fat man, but certainly could become one had he not been so active.

‘What is the matter Boris?’ Nigel had a wonderful Scottish accent, the most charming Edinburgh diction. ‘oh a visitor I see’ Nigel realised that I was there and suddenly Boris became very irrelevant. ‘Boris, go put the boil some water, this man looks thirsty, cup of tea?’ I was surprised by Nigel, he didn’t even ask for my name, he seemed like the most welcoming chap I’d ever met, and surely something wasn’t right. My suspicions where certainly aroused.

Nigel holding the front door firm so the wind didn’t blow it closed ushered me into the cottage. He didn’t have a clue who I was or my motive for being on the island yet he waved me into his home like he’d known me for years. I turned around as I walked past him to see him poking his head out of the front door that he slowly closed rather conspicuously, like he was making sure that no one on the island could see a guest in his home.

‘Is this your house then Nigel?’ I asked, then realised I hadn’t introduced myself, ‘it’s Paul by the way’.

‘Oh I know who you are’ this stopped me in my traps, I was petrified, how did he know who I was, he must have just overheard me and Boris acquainting ourselves before. ‘You’ve been here many times’ Nigel whispered down my ear, my body shivered, I stood very still in his thin long corridor that lead to the kitchen where the iron kettle was boiling water.

How the hell does he know who I am, he thinks I’ve been here before. I thought I could stumble across some freaks on the island but I never thought I’d be in contact with them this quickly, he might kill me. I had to ask.

‘What do you mean?’ I looked directly into his small mirror hanging on the crème painting wall of the corridor, I stared at myself and my face had gone so red, and my eyes were wider than I’d ever seen them. Beneath me was a candle and shined a shadow of my large chin against my neck and the everything felt like it was shaking around me. ‘How do you know who I am, I’ve never been here before’.

Nigel again approached my ears whispering, I could see him in the mirror getting closer and closer, he smiled into the mirror before he opened his mouth and in a gleeful tone in his again charming accent he jested ‘I’m only joking with you’ he laughs quietly, ‘I do it all the time with guests to the island. It guarantees a scare every time’.

‘Oh thank god’ I breathed a sigh of relief, ‘well let me tell you I’m pretty relieved’.

‘God you are a little scaredy cat aren’t yer’ he stumbles past me and I look around his corridor and look back at the front door still shaking, and then follow Nigel. ‘Honestly do you think I was gonna actually kill you or something, I wouldn’t harm a baby me’.

Safe to say I didn’t trust him, I didn’t trust Boris, I didn’t trust Alastair, there was definitely something not right about them, and I was determined to find out. After all I had to blog about something otherwise my journey was wasted.

‘That water boiled yet Boris?’ Nigel shouted at the top of his Scottish voice.

‘What do you think I’ve been doing for the last 2 minutes sir’ Boris responded, it was obvious that there was a father-son relationship of some sort between the two.

‘Sugar?’ Boris looked directly at me as I entered the kitchen behind Nigel. ‘Just one please’ I responded.

‘And yes this is my home by the way’ Nigel finally answered my question and he held his hands out open as if to show he owned it all. ‘There ain’t no upstairs, but you can sleep on the couch’ he had already presumed I wanted to stay, what a creep. No one normal lets someone stay the night in there house when they’ve just met the guy, he is definitely not all together there. ‘Thank you’ I smiled at Nigel and Boris handed me the cup of tea.

‘Have a seat’ Nigel encouraged me to which I obliged and sat around his oak table in his kitchen. I then had my first intake of tea, suspecting that it would be poisonous or something I took a polite, tiny sip. Then after gave off a fake satisfying gasp of air and looked around his kitchen. His kitchen was tiled floor to ceiling in beige tiles and his stove wasn’t a working one by the looks of it. I looked at his kettle, made out of pure iron and not electric. It was just lying over a manmade flame.

I had many questions to ask Nigel, but held them back for the time being. Beginning to see past the original suspicion of poison in my brew I took a few more sips and seemed perfectly fine. Nigel’s house seemed so old fashioned and worn down I almost felt sorry for him. ‘So do you live here Boris too?’.

‘Me, no’ Boris replied shaking his head and looking at the floor. ‘I live up the road with my sister, does cracking massages by the way, you really should give it a go whilst you’re here Paul’.

Bit of an odd thing to tell me but ok I suppose ‘aye I will, is she cheap?’ I asked thinking nothing of it.

‘The hell does that mean?’ Boris turned from smiles to frowns, he looked offended, ‘calling my sister cheap?’

‘Oh heck no, of course not, I meant for massages’ I quickly dug myself out of a hole.

‘Paul, you need to get a sense of humour mate’ Nigel laughed and then Boris joined in.

I laughed, boy did I laugh, yet I laughed too much, my fake laugh tends to go on for too long, and think they were clicking on so I stopped immediately, ‘oh you had me there’.

‘Anyway yeah I live with my sister and I come and visit here to see my friend Teresa, his daughter’ Boris finishes explaining the relationship he has to Nigel and his home.

‘Yes and can I just say for the record’ Nigel intervenes ‘they are defiantly just friends’ He looks at Boris with the most stern face I’d ever seen. ‘Exactly’ Boris agreed.

A long silence followed, the wind could be heard whistling against Nigel’s thin single glazed windows of the kitchen.

‘So what’s in your bag?’ Nigel asked me

‘In, in my bag?’ I made sure he was directing it at me and then continued to open my plastic bag and pull my possessions out.

‘Yes your bag’.

‘I have clothes, a notepad and an all-day breakfast sandwich’ I name each item as I pull them out and place them on the table being careful not to knock over my brew.

‘oh a sandwich, haven’t seen one of them in years’ Nigel said giddy and excited, he held the sandwich up and looked at it carefully.

‘You hadn’t seen a sandwich for years?’ I asked with one eye closed more than the other like an inspector or detective.

‘Aye no, ever since we voted out of Britain we haven’t been able to have fresh bread, for about..’ he takes a while to wonder and then laughs to himself ‘16 years now, my god has it been that long’

‘Certainly looks disgusting whatever that is’ Boris looked at it repulsed.

‘Nah these things are tasty’ Nigel describes to him, ‘oh and it’s a full English one, with the bacon and the sausage and the egg. My god, seeing that has made my day’ he places it so delicately back on the table. ‘You take care of that’ Nigel parts with the sandwich.

I struggled to keep a straight face, my lips where vibrating desperate to laugh, my tears built up in my eyes, how can man be so overwhelmed by a sandwich.

‘Well I think it looks like shit so’ Boris adds his opinion. ‘So what about the notepad?’ he asked me.

‘So I can write, I love writing, so for instance I’ll write about my experience here, I blog back in England’.

‘Blog?’ Nigel seems baffled.

‘Like articles and stuff’ I explained, but I didn’t want to say online, it seemed obvious to em now that these people had never seen modern day technology, frankly, I was tired and couldn’t be arsed explaining it right now. It was like I’d travelled back in time or something.

‘Well you’re free to write about anything you want here, we have nothing to hide, you haven’t got a pen though?’ Nigel noticed.

‘Oh that would be wonderful if I could have a pen actually if you don’t mind’ I asked politely, and I admit was becoming more and more warm to them.

‘We do have pens yes’ Nigel smiles with a sense of achievement that they have something that is still used in Britain to this day. He stood up to get me a pen from the top shelf of his kitchen unit by the sink and as he reached up to grab a pen from its plastic container he let me know ‘if you need any kind of history lesson on this island on why we left Britain and what happened after, just ask, and I don’t mean ask me, ask anyone, we’ll all help you out’ he claims a pen and gives it to me. ‘We’re not animals, we like having guests’.

‘Exactly, just don’t speak to Alastair, he’s an odd ball’ Boris carries on.

I nod my head and with a slight smile feel at home, well not really, I feel like I’m on a really bizarre holiday, but a nice one.

Just as I begin to settle into a rhythm and I place all my things away in my plastic bag again I hear a voice behind me. Yet another version of Scottish dialect behind me, this time a female.

‘What’s with this entire bloody racket, can’t a pregnant lady sleep’ I correctly presumed that this lady was Teresa.

‘You ain’t no lady, you’re my little girl Teresa’ Nigel told her straight. I looked at Teresa, and immediately knew that something wasn’t right.

Chapter 4

There she struggled to stand in the doorway between the kitchen and the lounge that I was yet to enter. Teresa caressed her pregnant stomach; she stroked it like a precious orb or a globe. Looking at it with her head tilted to the right with pride. It did cross my silly mind that she might have just been fat.

Just in case of a situation where she was just fat, I held back on congratulating the girl. I waited, and I waited, I dared not say anything just in case.

‘As you can see this is my very heavily pregnant daughter’ Nigel confirmed, and like that I was free from any trepidation, I breathed a sigh of relief.

‘Teresa?’ I questioned with a pointed finger and my plastic bag full at my knees. I went to stand up but then held back, and now I just looked stupid. Up and down like musical chairs, I was so nervous, is it possible to fall in love in an instant.

Perhaps it was because she was pregnant and a natural overwhelming sense of fatherly love came over me, more like a protective love than a passionate one. She was gorgeous though, absolutely beautiful. Did I perhaps just have a thing for pregnant ladies? Anyway I tried my best to quickly by-pass my silly thoughts.

‘Pleasure to meet you’ I reached out my sweaty hand as she confirmed her name was Teresa with a quiet nod. I was so nervous.

‘You sound like you’re not from round here’ Teresa said puzzled.

‘Aye he ain’t babe, he’s from Gateshead’ Boris answered for me. Babe? I thought, babe. Are these two an item then, their either seeing each other or he’s gay? I looked over to Boris and saw his face looking as dumb as anything I’d ever seen, he had a face slanted to one side like he was ill, a small collection of white filth on the side of his mouth, wipe it away Boris. Surely she wasn’t seeing him; surely he didn’t get her up the duff. I feared it, but it wasn’t to be confirmed.

‘Yes, I am from Gateshead’ I confirmed.

‘Strange I don’t know what that is?’ Teresa asked very confused.

‘Where that is honey’ Nigel helped Teresa, ‘excuse my daughter, she’s a little slow’.

‘No its fine, she’s not slow’ I lied through my teeth, how the hell did she not know Gateshead was a place. ‘It’s in England, mainland England’ I explained to her.

‘Interesting’ Teresa said abruptly and walked into the kitchen and began to rub the top of Boris’ head whilst looking in the other direction towards the sink and window. I instantly found her intriguing; all of a sudden I wanted to know everything about her, who’s the bastard who got her pregnant, are they marrying her? What’s her star sign? What does she do for a living? How old is she? What are her plans for the future? Why is she touching Boris’ head like they are a couple, and why is Boris looking at me like he is about to orgasm in his pants right there and then, it’s so off-putting whilst I tried to think of more obsessive questions to ask Teresa.

‘Is that it, interesting? You don’t want to know more?’ I asked Teresa hopefully, I was practically begging her to want to know my story.

Teresa turned back at me from looking out at the sea through the window and just shrugged her shoulders at me and went ‘meh’. Well that put me in my place.

‘Teresa is never and has never really been interested in anything outside of this island, especially Britain. I mean we voted out of Britain 16 years ago, Teresa was 4, she doesn’t even know what it’s like to be part of Britain’ Nigel explained.

‘As don’t I’ Boris said too. Yes Boris I thought to myself, I don’t care about what you think though, a girl is in the room now.

‘Shall we leave these two to it’ Nigel suggested to me leaning forwards in my direction. Confused, I just went along with his plans. ‘I can show you all about why we left Britain, and how it came about if you like’.

I was caught in a tough spot, whether to remain in the kitchen and perhaps make a play for Teresa, or actually focus on the blog and why I was here. Looking at Boris’s stupid face I really wanted to remain where I was sat, but I agreed to leave with Nigel. Looking back as I followed him into the lounge two or three times to check on Boris and Teresa. I saw them chatting, the jealousy I felt was outrageous.

Chapter 5

Nigel knelt down in front of me and searched through a large box in the corner of the lounge, the only way I could tell it was a lounge was by its old furniture of two three piece couches and a few tables and a fire place. No television set, Christ.

‘Take a seat’ Nigel said to me. I did so and then I didn’t know where to look, there was no tele to look at, it was either out the window of the lounge towards the white picketed fences or Nigel’s’ big bent over arse whilst he searched for something.

‘So are them two a thing then, not just friends?’ I couldn’t help it, I had to ask.

‘Teresa is very much not with Boris’ Nigel confirmed. This if anything made me uneasy as she was literally in the kitchen rubbing his head seductively.

‘Right ok, who got her pregnant then?’ I really wasn’t holding back.

‘Found them’ Nigel ignored me, maybe he didn’t hear me, I hoped he didn’t me, I realised as soon as I asked the question it was inappropriate and I really should wait till I speak to Teresa on a one-to-one.

Nigel sat beside me on the couch with a big bunch of old newspapers. My mind was still very much in the kitchen, and it was picturing Boris and Teresa touching one another’s bodies, my jealousy was uncontrollable. Despite Nigel’s reassurance I couldn’t get Boris’s face out of my head, his satisfied, ugly orgasmic face.

‘Are you listening to me!’ Nigel said and I immediately shook my head and regained my focus. I just nodded quickly and directed my eyes at the newspaper he was showing me.

The newspaper had the date in the top left corner of 02.02.2002 and the article read ‘Farewell Island?’ it all looked too familiar to me. The newspaper was called the Fair News. I liked that title, thought it was clever, we all know journalism is built on lies, and the complete opposite of fairness.

‘Mind if I read the article’ I took it off his hands gently.

‘yes be sure not to rip it’ Nigel begged politely.

“The fact that the part of the deal focusing on the future relationship with Britain was not legally binding, the mayor of fare Island Mrs Johnson’s letter suggested, had left MPs “concerned” that no-one could guarantee where negotiations might finally end up.

For many opponents of the Island mayor's deal, the key phrase appears early in Britain's response.

"As you know," the letter says, "we are not in a position to agree to anything that changes or is inconsistent with the withdrawal agreement."

The legal underpinning of the backstop proposal, in other words, will not change.

There are plenty of words in the British letter about how the backstop has only ever been designed as a temporary measure "which would represent a sub-optimal trading arrangement for both sides".

Britain would "use its best endeavours" (a phrase we've heard before and which carries some legal weight) to ensure that "the backstop would only be in place (if at all) for as long as strictly necessary".

This isn't just telling Fare Island what it wants to hear. The rest of Britain really doesn't like the backstop and it was a significant compromise for it to accept it."

‘There was no backstop’ Nigel says quietly as I complete the small chunk of the article. The picture to the side of the article squeezed in near an advert for a cottage up for sale, was of the Tesco just down the road which was now abandoned. So full of life, I could even see Alastair stood in the picture in a yellow hardhat and a high-vis jacket.

‘So no deal was agreed?’ I asked concerned.

Nigel was unresponsive he looked up at the ceiling and I could see a tear in his eye. I had sympathy for him, but it didn't last, they voted out after all, how can I feel sorry for a bunch of people who knew what they were getting themselves in for is beyond me.

Nigel obviously affected by the memories, got up off the couch and blew out the candle that was lighting up the room and turned to me in the now dark evening. ‘Time to go to bed I think’ he said to me.

‘Nigel’ Boris crept his head into the lounge, ‘I'll see you after’.

Yeah whatever, bye Boris I thought to myself.

‘Goodnight Boris, see you tomorrow’ Nigel replied. I heard Boris slam the door behind him and Nigel handed me a battery powered torch and book. ‘If you don’t mind, sleeping on the couch, that ok?’ Nigel asked so worried and concerned for me.

‘Yes absolutely fine’ I was quite touched that he was so caring for me. He handed me an old version of Gulliver’s Travels. I thought that was quite cute, a bit of travelling satire for my own journey. Nigel stroked my cheek like a father saying by to his son and went off. In a quick moment I went to ask where Teresa would be sleeping, but I presumed she’d be fine, Nigel will look after her.

‘Good night son, we’ll have more of a look at all that Farewell Island stuff tomorrow when I’m less exhausted, and you too should get some rest, you’ve had a long day’ Nigel said as he went away and closed the lounge door. I could hear slight vibrations from Teresa and Nigel speaking, but it didn’t last long, and I was too intrigued by Gulliver’s Travels to care.

Edit this chapter a bit, flesh it out

Chapter 6

My eyes slowly awakened to the sight of the pregnant Teresa sitting in front of me. Her back leaned over facing the floor. I could hear her fidgeting with something. My initial thought was to check, but my tiredness was far too overpowering. As I clicked my neck forward to check what she was doing, my eyes began to rapidly move again and flopped back onto the couch.

Soon however she made me erect with zest as she touched my thigh and caught my attention. I was excited, what could she want off me; she wanted to speak to me. The pregnant lady, with a partner, or a lover or a man of some description wanted to speak to me, and nothing more I’m sure.

‘Look at this’ Teresa imperatively said and handed me a small jigsaw piece. ‘Where the hell does this go on here’ she points out to the jigsaw she was most of the way through in front of her. She moved aside slowly, shuffling her and her infant inside her to the right.

To say I was rather placid after collecting off her the jigsaw piece was an understatement. But of course I helped her. As I leaned forward making sure I remained firmly on the couch I checked the jigsaw. My pen that I forgot was safely tucked behind my ear fell onto the floor. As Teresa went to grab it I insisted she relaxed.

I scanned the jigsaw, a large picture of Napoleon in the battle of Waterloo. I moved aside my plastic bag of belongings, and it crumpled and cried as I through to it one side and latched the piece of the jigsaw onto Napoleon's noble horseman behind him. 'There you are' I looked at her impressed with myself; I really got that quite quick. I was half tempted to jump across the room and rob the box of the remaining pieces and finish it myself, but I restrained. Then began to wonder what her reaction would have been if I had done such an odd act.

'Dad making you read Gulliver's Travels?' Teresa asked, trying to make conversation with me, I simply laughed in my mind at the desperation of the poor woman, she obviously fancied me. I knew sure as hell that I fancied her. Her wonderful rosy, freckly cheeks, her perfect lips, her gleaming blue eyes, like they'd be bleached by an angel and her perfect brunette shiny hair, her incredibly big forehead, that is some forehead. But I like it.

'I've read it before' I confirm with the most smart ass tone I could register. 'Have you read it?' I asked her back.

'Yes, it's the only book I have read' she answers with slight depression in her voice. 'It's a good book though, it's the only one I need, its great because it's about travelling and that's something I have never done'

'Would you travel?' I wasted no time in asking.

'Perhaps. I do like it here though, it's what I'm used to, I certainly would never go Britain, I know too well what that place is like' Teresa said with assurance.

I was incredibly confused by her hatred of Britain, I know Britain had done some things wrong before, but to deserve someone to hate it without knowing anything really about it seemed a bit far. Who was I to argue with Teresa though as she turned away and carried on her jigsaw.

'SOUP?' I heard a shout from the kitchen.

'Yes please dad' Teresa replied without lifting her head from her puzzle. I suppose I better reply to Nigel too I thought, 'Yes please Nigel, thank you'.

Nigel came waddling in no more than two minutes later with two trays balanced unevenly on his two arms. Nigel promptly told me to take the tray and I urgently responded

and he breathed a sigh of relief. It was definitely tinned cream of tomato soup, the type of soup that never goes off. 'Any bread?' the question naturally slipped out of my mouth, my mother always gave me bread with my soup.

Nigel responded in raptures, his laughter was almost ridiculous, like I told him the funniest joke I know. He then quit laughing and turned a bit more serious, 'we don't have bread on this island, it all went stale then mouldy, like the rest of it'. Nigel then handed Teresa her soup and asked 'what was it Boris calls it?'.

Jesus, they mentioned him again, another example of Boris being the father of Teresa's unborn child no doubt.

'He says all food is food, except for the food that goes off' Teresa poetically demonstrated just why I can't stand Boris, and my first impressions of him were proving me more right with every passing mention of him. Fuck you Boris, as I sipped the first boiling hot bit of soup off my spoon.

The soup tasted nasty not going to lie. Even though it could never go off, it tasted more like a creamy honey than soup really. I shook my head in disbelief; I couldn't understand how it could taste this bad. Then as though he was reading my mind, Nigel said something 'taste horrible, aye, food does round here, blame you Brits for that'. he didn't say it in a menacing way, more out of desperation.

I felt I was being a naughty guest and very disrespectful in my visit, so I went into my bag and pulled out my sandwich and handed it to Nigel. 'Here you go Nigel, have this, for nostalgia'.

Nigel looked at me as he caressed the sandwich, his eyes teared up, he looked so sad and happy, it was baffling. 'You Brits aren't all bad' I could see the saliva build up in his mouth, some of it escaped as he spoke, he was so emotional over it. 'I can't wait to have this' Nigel said, and then turned to Teresa, 'Teresa, one night we will have a piece each and we will enjoy it'.

Nigel stood up with the sandwich and took it into the kitchen, as my eyes followed him away I was then disturbed by Teresa's beautiful face looking at me, 'haven't seen my dad that emotional about anything' she doesn't laugh, I think she was being serious. No way was that the most emotional his daughter had ever seen her father.

Chapter 7

If the Northern lights were visible in the night you could never tell. All that could be seen in the morning sky as the sun rose was a blood orange sky.

A quick route through my plastic bag and a change of clothes and I was ready to explore the rest of the small island. I managed to sneak a quick spray of deodorant from Nigel who had plenty stocked up like an apocalypse was occurring.

Joining me on my journey across the island was my notepad and pen, tucked back behind my ear ready and waiting. But most importantly joining in on my adventure was Teresa. I was reluctant at first to see her walk around when she was quite so heavily pregnant but Nigel actually insisted.

We left the cottage through the backway and this was an eye opener. Through the backway was quite a large covered conservatory. The glass was so green and dirty, and the tiles had naturally become broken and wobbly. The door handles and hinges to both the entrance and exit doors were rusty as old nails. But the way the conservatory was didn't catch my attention anywhere near as much as the contents.

The conservatory looked like a pre-apocalyptic bunker. It was full to the brim with tins of food, deodorant, oil, water bottles, some full and some empty, wasn't sure why. An awful lot of Gherkins in jars that really caught my eye. I personally always despised gherkins, but my mother always said, keeps the food fresh.

On the wall of the conservatory was an old article titled 'Stop the presses' and as I read it, it was clear that this was the last newspaper ever printed on Fare Island. I didn't have time to read it, but I'm sure it would have cleared up some of this to me. Before I knew it I could hear the sweet Scottish tone of Teresa down my ear.

'Mars bar?' Teresa asked me holding one in hand.

I shrugged my shoulders, it didn't take me much persuading, I took that Mars bar like a shot.

'I could even ask dad to batter it for you if you like, we have oil' she points to the oil as if they have endless supplies. Teresa seemed as if she was actually convinced that they were living a normal life here. To me this was not normal, but she seemed very happy and content.

‘No the batter won’t be necessary, just you and me, and Fare Island’ I smiled at her and she smiled back and actually comforted herself into my ribs. Boy I think she’s into me, I thought.

We left the conservatory and walked out into the back yard that led to the edge of the island. It wasn’t really a back yard; it was just a bit of land that had a fence around it. It had a tonne of overgrown grass that wrapped itself around the wood.

‘Sorry about my overgrown grass’ Teresa apologised with an innocent smile, her cheeks where incredibly pronounced when she smiled like that, already picked up on it. I had never been in love before, nor even had a crush, 23 years of age and no crush ever, but I could feel something developing here. I had never picked up on a girl’s smile before.

‘Well if you can just be bit more prepared next time then, thank you’ I jokingly flirted away with her. She laughed at my sarcasm.

‘You know for a Brit, you seem like a nice enough guy’ Teresa said and really meant it, her brunette strands where getting tangled across her face as the morning wind stroked her cheeks. God I was so in love I could tell, what a fool. Falling in love with a heavily pregnant woman from an island of presumably odd balls.

‘I try; I mean I do enjoy listening about other people’s cultures’ anything to get something to write in this blog, because this islands giving me nothing interesting so far. Yes, yes it has a conservatory of well stocked items and an abandoned supermarket, but so do a lot of places around the world. ‘So what about technology then, you were messing with a jigsaw earlier, do you not have anything else to do to pass the time?’ I prodded.

Teresa put her hands on her hips and almost seductively tapped her chin whilst looking up, down, to her left, to her right and out to the sea. ‘We don’t really use technology, Britain stopped its supply to us for all sources of signal, electricity, gas, all that sort of stuff 16 years ago when we voted out’.

‘So you don’t have phones, like mobile phones?’ I asked in shock.

‘No, I’ve heard of phones, my dad has one, but it doesn’t work anymore, a Nokia I think from 2002. But I’ve never had one that worked. Doesn’t really bother me though, ignorance is bliss as they say’ Teresa was mad, it was commendable, or was she actually genuinely mad and my admiration for her was blinding?

‘Do you, do you hate Britain for it?’ I asked tentatively.

‘How can I, like my dad said, we chose this, we voted out’ Teresa replied with dignity. ‘After all it gave my dad quite a powerful role on the island when everyone else fled’. That point interested me greatly, ‘oh so is your dad like president of the island then?’ I asked half joking.

‘Basically, although we call him just leader here’ Teresa replied looking proud of her father.

‘So why did people flee when you all agreed to vote out, well I mean the generation before you agreed to vote out?’ I asked again trying to get deeper into the details.

‘I don’t know exactly, my friend David would know, he lives just a few cottages away we should go see him, he’s gorgeous’ Teresa excitedly grabbed my arm. Not another one, David, Christ another rival. Maybe he’s the father. Perhaps David Junior is living inside her. But I needed to write something and the story of the island’s history was beginning to get a little more bloggable ‘yes sure let’s go visit gorgeous David then’.

‘Just quickly’ I had to ask ‘you’re heavily pregnant, how long?’ her face turned stressed, her slightly wrinkly 23 year old face had aged 40 years.

‘Not long, my little bun in the oven’ Teresa said and stroked her belly.

‘That what your dad calls it?’ I asked because she must have heard that term from her father, no one else would know of that term here surely.

‘No actually, everyone says it to me’ Teresa replied like a proper smart Alice.

‘Are you excited?’ I queried as she rubbed her belly more and more gently.

She didn’t reply and instead just looked up at me right into my eyes, a right powerful stare it was.

I gazed into her eyes with what must have been love, there was a good chance it was love. Then she asked ‘Should we go see Boris too?’.

Are you messing with me? I thought to myself. I just wanted to shout, but your dad said you two ain’t a thing, but I kept quiet, a theme that I would keep up. ‘Yes, good

suggestion Teresa' I smiled through gritted teeth and then she endeared me once again, 'you can call me T, if you like?' she began to walk away from me letting go of my arm like she was letting go of our relationship to go to that prick. 'How about I just call you brew ay?!' I joked, what a stupid joke, she didn't respond, who the hell would, what a ridiculous human being you are. However in my blog, she laughed so much she pissed herself, only a white lie, every writer lies a little bit.

Chapter 8

We approached Boris's mundane cottage. No fence around the outside, the paint of the front door was scraped like it had been attacked by a dog or something vicious. His windows were like every other window on this island, untampered dirt smeared all over it.

Teresa shouted for Boris, but had no response off him. She would shuffle around the whole cottage knocking on windows, doors and even walls shouting Boris or the occasional 'Excuse me sir!' in her playful Edinburgh derived accent. After a few minutes I finally reached my tether, 'I really don't think he's in you know T' it didn't feel right calling her T, it was too empty an adjective for how much she meant to me.

'Aye' she holds her hips and pronounces her pregnant tummy out, 'he probably gone fishing'. In that sentence she had answered my next question, where on earth do they get a good meal from in this place? It's all good having soup and tinned meatballs, but where's the sustenance, the meat, the protein?

'So is that what you eat then, fish?' I asked her looking at the long grass outside Boris's trampy cottage. Before she responded I began to walk away from her and towards Boris's front window.

'Yeah we eat fish, but rarely, we tend to eat the rabbits as well, lots of rabbits on the island, my diet consists sometimes of only rabbits in fact' Teresa continues to reply, calm down dear, didn't ask for your life story. I looked through his window and saw a bed, on the bed was a thin sheet crumpled up, and a large pillow with stains all over it. Is this where Teresa's baby was conceived then? I tortured myself with the thought. On that stain filled horrible, bug ridden bed, the baby may have been conceived? I need to take Teresa back to Britain with me and treat her right, but granted her father seems nice.

‘Did you say you only eat rabbit?’ I asked puzzled, I finally acknowledged what she actually said.

‘Aye yes’ she replied itching her leg, it was a real strain for her.

‘Eating just rabbit isn’t healthy for you though’ I winced and then offered her assistance with itching her leg. She looked up at me with the most gorgeous twinkle in her eyes, I was mesmerised by her puppy look she gave me as she itched away. I could hear her ripping away at a rash of some sort and could see her sweating and her stomach bulging up and down, and I’d never looked at a girl with quite as much love in my heart as I did in that moment. This was new territory for me.

I had slept with women before, but never had I been so entranced by one when they were doing something so mundane and ordinary as itching their leg.

‘I obviously don’t just eat rabbit, any who how do you know that?’ she asked me like I was thick in the head.

‘Excuse me, I have the internet at home’ I answer and itch her leg for her. Christ should itching someone’s else’s leg be this rewarding, am I a bit obsessed, I was so confused.

‘Oh yeah I’ve heard about the internet, that’ll do’ she refers to her leg and I back away immediately. ‘My dad told me about it, it was just becoming a thing before we voted out of Britain’ she explained to me.

‘Yes, well it’s a pretty big deal where I’m from’ I then demonstrated to her by pointing up at the sky. ‘You see that yellow ball in the sky?’ she replies ‘yes of course, the sun!’.

‘Exactly’ I pretend to be impressed, ‘you can find out everything you want to about the sun, by typing into a device “the sun” and you will get thousands of articles, pages and information about it, images even. Do you have cameras here?’ I asked.

‘David does, which reminds me, let’s go see him, he’s gorgeous, you’ll love him, he has so much to tell you’ Teresa begins to move quickly away from me and towards the next cottage along. Does she think I’m gay, is she trying to set me up with David, or maybe she has slept with him, she does seem slightly into him. I can’t live with this paranoia.

And of course when we got to David’s cottage, it was anything but a cottage, it was a lovely two story brick house. Double glazed windows, spotless, perfect. The door looked like

it been crafted by angels, or a very good carpenter, Jesus perhaps. The grass was well kept like it had been trimmed with tiny scissors. The fence was just a fence really.

I could see the chimney had smoke coming out of it, why on earth did David have a house and the leader of the island Nigel have a tiny cottage for him and his daughter? I could hear the sound of wood being chopped coming from behind the house. I dread to think what David looks like; I'm terrified to see what he looks like.

One more swing of an axe against wood and then he was making his way to see us. I looked over at Teresa and she looked like a teenage girl in the midst of Beatlemania. She was clapping her hands together, licking her lips, and then looking at me disappointed that I was still here.

There he was, David with his filthy vest top on, get a wash. Massive tree trunk arms, lovely tan, how I have no idea, he must be of ethnic origin or something. He had lovely long flowing hair, a chiselled chin and one heck of a set of eyes. They were penetrating, right into my soul. Even his legs were so perfect; his chest was like two tits, but solid hard ones. He was also carrying an axe which was incredibly threatening and terrifying to me, but I acted brave for Teresa.

'Quite the weapon you have there!' I said.

'Thank you' David thanked me like a pussy.

'Oh he has quite the weapon' Teresa insinuated. Then I thought what the hell does that mean, you saucy cow? You definitely have slept with him and Boris. My dream woman was becoming more and more ruined... not really, I still crushed on her terribly.

'You wish you knew' David said wiping the sweat away from his forehead.

I breathed a sigh of relief, literally, I didn't hide it, David had just eased my worry slightly, he wouldn't sleep with you he's well out of your league Teresa, get with me instead, know where you belong.

'So who is this T?' David asked in his feminine Scottish voice.

'It's a visitor, from Britain, Jack' Teresa told him.

‘Ah, my folks live in Britain, yeah they moved there about 15 years ago when shit was hitting the fan here’ David revealed to me, he dropped his axe to the floor and shook my hand. The grip he had was incredibly strong; it quite literally clicked my fingers.

‘Where in Britain?’ I asked instantly.

‘London ways, I don’t know, I don’t have a map, I’ve lived here my whole life so’ David breathed out his response with exhaustion from chopping wood.

‘Why didn’t you go to Britain?’ I treaded carefully with my questions; this guy could kill me in an heartbeat.

‘I don’t know, woke up one morning, parents where gone, I was left a letter, the house was left to me and my sister’s’ he said rather sadly.

‘Sorry to hear that’ I responded with sincerity.

‘David and his two sisters are so clean compared to the rest of us’ Teresa explained. ‘Where are they David?’

‘They’ve gone fishing with Boris and his sister’ David pointed in a general direction.

I was hopeful we wouldn’t have to go and visit them all, thankfully we didn’t. David invited me into his lovely home, and it was spotless everywhere, I even sneaked a peak at his bed sheets, lovely, all in order. He made me and Teresa a cup of tea and then sat with us on a couch in the lounge. However his house was similar to the others in terms of technology. As in there was none.

What did catch my eye was there was a chess set on the table. ‘So how can I help you Jack was it?’ David asked me as he sipped his brew and opened out his legs so I could see quite clearly his crotch and Teresa, she couldn’t take her eyes off it.

‘Yeah its Jack, I was just hoping to ask you some questions, I’m looking to write a blog about the island, just wondering if I can like interview you and ask some questions, informal of course’ I asked with both hands on my tea, with the cup balanced on my lap. I must have looked so awkward.

‘Yeah no sweat man, you ask away, wanna do this over a game of chess, do you play chess?’ David asked like a fool, do I play chess? I live chess, although mainly on my phone, rarely do I play it against a real person. This could be tricky.

‘Well I’ll leave you two to it then, I’m not feeling too good, must be the baby’ Teresa just had to ruin my excitement.

‘I can come with you if you need?’ David says with a wink, ‘escort you home?’ what does the wink mean I thought to myself, they definitely have some sort of chemistry.

I had to step in, be a man ‘I can take you home if you need’ I made sure she knew I wanted to protect her. She however quickly declined us both.

‘No its alright, my dad will look after me, might even pop along and see Boris on the way’ Teresa assured us and then David escorted her out of his house ‘Aye I see T, no worries, I get you’.

She’s going to see Boris; obviously, she’s going to slyly have pregnant sex with Boris in his cottage, what a manipulative, lovely pregnant human being. Then I thought to myself I’m being ridiculous, she’s pregnant, she doesn’t love you, so stop it.

‘Shall we play chess then?’ David asked with his arms out in desperation and frustration. I didn’t reply with words, just with action as I stood up and sat in the seat he was previously in, small tactical mind games. My stern face was ruined by Teresa’s final contribution to my visit to David’s home when she shouted ‘I’ll love whoever wins’.

David looked at me with a very competitive face, and with those words of Teresa’s ringing in my ears I was ready. Let’s win this.

Chapter 9

It would be fair to say that I was on the back foot. David had taken my Queen, my two rooks, a knight and multiple pawns. All this whilst wearing the most modest of faces, almost apologetic, I’d rather he was surprised by his success rather than expectant.

It would help me somewhat if I had actually been used to playing with real pieces, so many hours of my chess life has been spent on a touch screen on my phone, and I didn’t even realise the rule whites go first applied to the game, I just went with whatever my app told me.

Then I wondered why do whites go first, I went to my pocket to pull out the answer on Google, but then realised my phone wasn't there.

He was on the brink, we hadn't spoken much throughout the game, and we were in complete concentration. His Rook had checked my king into moving up the board. His Queen was pondering a move, she could see my king like it was prey; David is one sad bastard to be this good.

At the end of the day it all mattered very little, I'm sure he wouldn't brag about it to Teresa, and in my blog I would just lie and say I won. Just a white lie again, its fine. However I did believe if I actually asked him a few questions it would distract him and maybe lead to a mistake or two, a misplaced move.

'So where are your parents from, you have quite olive skin?' odd question by me to break the silence and he stopped and let go of his Queen in an instant.

'Never heard someone describe me as olive skinned actually, people round here just call me the black one' David said it with acceptance, it was seen by him as a funny joke, he was a racial outcast, a loser, turns out David wasn't as perfect as I perhaps thought. Then I reassured his perfection in my mind by looking at his monstrous arms still on display with his sweaty, yellow stained vest on. What a hunk.

'My mother was from Morocco, so I'm part Arab, she moved to this island with my father before I was born and then they fled again to mainland Britain after the independent vote and I was left on Fare Island'. David seemed rather hurt by it all, he started to click his knuckles and become uneasy. I gave him a moment; I'm just such a nice person that I thought asking him another question would be a bit much. Did cross my mind as to whether I should just destroy him there and then however, give me a chance with Teresa.

He held back some sort of emotion I could tell as he looked up at the ceiling and then placed his hand back on his queen. I had to stop him quick, 'so you a Muslim then?'

'No, no, no, no 100% no' David seemed hesitant.

'Are you sure, you sound doubtful?' I jested.

‘Are you religious?’ David quickly changed the topic. I did consider poking the bear and asking more about why he isn’t a Muslim, but it didn’t interest me to be honest. I didn’t like them, I was raised not to like them, and that’s that, it’s not racism, just the way I am.

In response to his question I was considerate, do I go full out and say I’m Jewish or do I hold it back slightly, he could get mad, he might hate Jews, everybody hates Jews.

‘I’m Jewish technically, not fully, or religiously, but I am by birth’ I told him like I was opening up about my feelings for Teresa to him.

‘Ah I can tell actually’ he point to his nose and smiles. I knew he was joking, so I let him off, and he was huge and attractive, so I was intimidated.

‘It ain’t that big’ I said unsure ‘is it?’ I felt my nose, I knew it was big, the bane of my life.

‘No bigger than your wallet’ He said again, another racist stereotype, I did begin to think I should say something. I could say something about Morocco, but who cares about Morocco. Who cares about Arabs? I didn’t say it though, too much of a coward, but in my blog I’ll say I defended my ethnicity to the death.

Whilst I considered making a comeback he had moved his Queen right into the path of my King. And it was a rookie error, I knew I could take his queen now with my one remaining knight, the fool he didn’t see it. I decided to wait for him to notice himself so I kept talking and asking.

‘So what about Teresa hey?’ I thought it’s time to bring my new-found love up ‘she’s a nice girl’ I tried to say as much about her without incriminating myself.

‘Fancy a bit of her do you?’ David saw right through me with his big beautiful blue, penetrating eyes. I thought what do I say now, I’ve gone red.

‘No, of course not, I just think she and Nigel have been lovely to me since I got here’ I remained as PC as possible.

‘She doesn’t go for your type my man, tends to go for... men’ David said like the arsehole he was. ‘That doesn’t mean like your ugly or anything, she just likes you know’ he flexes his muscles. Even though he was just being honest, I hated him. Men? I’m a man, though he was slightly older I think.

‘How old are you by the way?’ I asked off the cuff.

‘Oh, well I’m 32 and I was 16 when we voted out of Britain, I’m the second oldest guy here behind Teresa’s father’ he answered in shock, I suppose not many people would have asked about his age, would he even have to keep count.

Come on, I thought to myself, notice that I can take your queen.

‘So what’s the population here, because I read that there were about 10 people who lived here?’ I wanted to start asking relevant questions, this was a big opportunity.

‘There’s 7 now, me, my two sisters, Boris, his sister, Teresa and Nigel, tight knit we are’.

‘Don’t you mean 8’ I was sure he missed someone.

‘No, don’t think so’.

Oh my god, was Alastair a ghost, is this island haunted, I hope so, that will really be something to blog about, everyone will be well interested to hear this back home. The island we neglected has become haunted by itself.

It didn’t surprise me that the idea of Alastair being a ghost popped into my head; he did seem ghostly, like he didn’t belong. Then again I remembered that Nigel or Teresa mentioned him earlier I was sure of it, so that idea was crushed quite quickly. Doesn’t mean I can’t blog it though, a misunderstanding of some sort. Doesn’t harm anyone.

‘Alastair?’ I asked him.

David slapped his head in realisation, ‘oh of course, yeah that odd ball’

‘Why is he odd?’ I got comfortable in my chair and David remained still like he had actually seen a ghost, I knew what it was though, he was puzzled, he knew his queen was exposed.

‘David, David’ he was flummoxed, he was dazed, he was a beaten man and I knew it. Not so big and bold now are we, you beautiful, beautiful Arab. ‘Why’s he odd?’ I asked with a smile stretched right across my face.

I wasted no more time in taking his Queen and David quickly looked away in disbelief and then redirected his sight back at me and pretended not to care. ‘Well played’ he said half-heartedly. He then sighed quickly and answered my question.

‘Alastair hasn’t really been present ever since we voted out of Britain’ David rests comfortable in his seat to explain, ‘He was, when we were in Britain, the richest man on the island, and back then the island was a lot more populated than it is now. He owned the local supermarket; he owned a private jet that rested on the runway just by my house. If you go outside you can see it buried underneath the overgrown weeds. He hates it on this island, he thinks Fare Island is some type of awful mess, chaos and anarchy driven dwelling. Whereas you ask anyone else who lives here and they’ll tell you that this place is Utopian, exactly what they wanted out of the vote. Our own laws, our own way of life, a happy community’. David described it all so calm to me, it was difficult for me to find any loophole in what he said. I tried, but I felt I was lying to myself when creating excuses for why this place is not the opposite of Alastair’s unpopular opinion. I can’t blog that this place is Utopian; no one wants to read that. They want guts, and blood and crazy people, but everyone seems so bloody normal here. The thought then reached me that I was going to have to pay Alastair a little visit. Then I was reminded ‘It’s your move’ David implied by pointing at the chess board and handing me his Queen.

‘So what do you do for a living?’ David asked me as I looked closely at the board so as not to make any more mistakes. David was definitely asking me questions to put me off my game, but I was surprised this was the first time anyone on the island had really showed any interest in *me*.

‘Bit of a failure really, I work in a sales job in Gateshead’ I replied with one eye on his hand as he prepares to make his move. I felt like I could be honest with David, I wasn’t trying to impress him really.

‘So what are you doing here then?’ David asks puzzled.

‘Good question, well I’m writing a blog as you know so I can add it to my portfolio to send off to various journalism jobs’ I began to ramble, ‘every journalism role requires experience and a portfolio, so I thought what better experience than travelling to an island off my own back and writing about it, doing my own kind of investigation, if you like’. It made so much sense to me, but David still had questions.

‘Why here though?’ David put his hands out in intrigue and then with his other hand moved his rook forwards on towards my king. ‘Check!’ David said with so much confidence and he had regained the upper hand with a move out of nowhere.

Taking a while to think of a reply as I was so caught up in the game, he had to nudge me with his foot to remind me I was in his presence. I found it a bit odd; I found his attempt to regain my attention a little bit homosexual to be honest. I thought perhaps he's gay, I'd love it if he were gay, really would. Because if he's gay than that's one hell of a specimen that is out of the assumption when it comes to who is impregnating my new found love. He then clocked his fingers at me as I was entranced by the thought of David being gay. Clicking your fingers is a bit gay too, I was just stereotyping really, he was just acting camp.

'Oh why here' I realised, I began to answer on autopilot and had one side of my brain considering the possibility that both him and Boris were gay together, and that would really pave the way for me to get Teresa, maybe Alastair, that old saucy devil. Then I had to stop, stop thinking about two men I hardly know being gay together, so much gay in my mind. My brain couldn't get it off the mind. 'I chose this island because it's mysterious' I replied quickly, 'is Boris gay?' I had to ask to put my mind at ease.

'Gay?' David replied with a chuckle, 'there ain't any homos on this island as far as I know'. He paused for a while, 'why do you fancy Boris, its ok if you do like, we accept everyone here'.

'me, no, no, no' kept on saying no till even I started to think I was being stupid, 'no, no, no, no, not a chance. I hate them!' that was inappropriate I admit, a bad thought, a spontaneous, wrongful opinion. 'I don't hate them sorry' David was looking at me baffled, with one eye wincing and the other still glued to the chess board 'I don't know why I said that, but no I'm not gay'.

David waited patiently for me to make my move and when I did it took him no time at all to go again. He moved his other rook down towards my last remaining pawn and by taking it I heard him say, 'Checkmate!'

Fuming I was, I couldn't believe what happened, I was in the ascendancy, I was in control, but then out of nowhere he ruined me, why, how did he ruin me so much.

'Too much cock on the brain?' David asked jokingly, I wasn't impressed but gave him a courtesy giggle.

'It's a nice house you got here!' I attempted to move away from the game as quick as possible; David was half way through sticking his hand out for a sportsmanlike shake, fuck

you. He moved his hand away like a right pussy, and as he retracted it he moved it under the table and could see my face turn red with competitive anger, he looked almost frightened. 'I said it's a nice house David!'.

He genuinely looked petrified, like he had seen the devil or something; I was getting worried as to what he was seeing. He was looking directly at me; I stroked my face quickly and made sure there was nothing on it. 'What's up?' myself now concerned.

'Nothing, good game' David just went normal again like nothing had happened, he then returned to his usual seating position and continued my topic of conversation. 'Aye me and my two sisters need a big house, it used to be Nigel's but bless him he gave it to us after his wife passed away, Teresa's mum. Plus one of my sisters was pregnant so had to help her through that, having a big house helps, the calm open environment keeps the baby tender you know' David answered like such a caring man, a caring brother and Nigel came across as a very generous person. I couldn't see any faults in them.

His sister was pregnant, so that means Boris must be sleeping with his sister, hence the baby. 'I presume Boris is the dad then?' I asked almost sure.

David stood up and walked away a little, and then suddenly stopped dead in his tracks. 'Aye, he *was* the baby's father'. David proceeded to walk away into the kitchen of his large house and leave me there with only a chessboard to look at and remind me of defeat.

Chapter 10

Following David's abrupt change in mood I was shown the door to leave his house. I was still rather curious as to what the rest of the house looked like, but he wasn't in any mood to give me a tour after I brought up the discussion of his sisters baby. I could only speculate in my head what it was that happened to the baby, from what I've seen of Boris, I can see him being a terribly, inept father.

Gosh I do give Boris a hard time.

As I left David's house I did quickly look to the right as he suggested there was a runway that had been unused since the island's infamous vote of 2002. He wasn't lying, no one seemed to tell fibs here, everything was either so honest, or if anything did seem dodgy, they would sidestep it.

The runway was right by the cliff edge, the cliff was only about 15 feet high, and as I looked over the edge of it I felt a bit woozy, the wind was pile driving the waves into the side of the island. Then I heard the noise of a magpie flying above me, I quickly looked away from the edge of the cliff and looked up at the sky.

The magpie flew alone; I got worried, my suspicious mind was running like crazy, one magpie ensures bad luck. I looked rapidly for another, and all I could see were crows resting on the roof of David's house barking away. I lied to myself and said they were Magpies to avoid any untoward luck. The black and white bird eventually landed no more than a few yards away and looked over the cliff in similar enthusiasm and intrigue as I did.

Almost like the bird was copying my moves, I saw it look around and then look directly at me, no fear at all. It then flew down the cliff and hovered above the water looking for something. The waves would every now and then smashed into the magpie causing it to flap away in panic. It must have been looking for food, but slightly bizarre, never seen a magpie act like that, I thought they ate worms. I thought they hung around dewy grass and scavenged similar to the crow friends on David's roof.

There was only so much I could stare at a magpie keeping itself balanced above the water and fighting not to crash into the limestone cliff before I got bored. It wasn't bloggable material.

As my posture straightened up and my attention wore thin looking at the bird struggling I felt a crisp connection on my right shoulder. A firm grip and my back suddenly became very sweaty, my chest began to hurt, my stomach felt punched and my lung gasped for air. A tear built in my eye, this was it. I was about to be thrown over the edge of the cliff, maybe the fall won't kill me, it's only a few feet. How much is 15 feet, two and a bit times my height. I can survive that surely. The water though, that must be so cold, I'm freezing to death here as it is.

'You must be Jack' I heard a sweet Scottish accent. I turned to face the thing grasping my shoulder and it was a woman, I'm ok, it's just a woman I thought, she can't throw me off a cliff. The words didn't remain in my brain however, 'oh thank god, you're a woman' I said and immediately gasped and put my hands over my mouth.

The sad realisation hit me that in a moment of panic for my life, I accepted it and allowed death to happen, I didn't fight it. What kind of man was I? A coward it seemed, one who gave up immediately.

Slowly I slid my hands away from my lips and replied to her 'I am Jack, and you are?' I'm Nicola, suddenly from behind Nicola popped another girl, both around the ages of late twenties to early thirties. 'And I'm Angela' both with incredibly similar faces and hair, it was confusing to tell the difference between them; although both had very butch looks about them. Nicola looked a sturdy woman who would never back down in a fight, but Angela looked a little softer. Both would definitely be tough to handle.

'So are you two Boris's sisters, or is one of you Boris's sister?' I asked squinting every time I said his name. I still hated him even though I had a feeling that he and Teresa weren't an item and perhaps it was David I had to worry about.

'No silly' Nicola said shaking her head playfully and allowing her sister to finish, 'we're David's little sisters' Angela confirmed. I just wanted to know which one had the child, who lost the baby; I couldn't ask that, could I? Safe to say I didn't, I have some social standard to keep. The pair of them certainly fell far from Teresa's league, both in looks and in the way I felt towards them in an instant, my heart very much belonged to Teresa. But damn, I wanted to know who was pregnant and what happened after.

'Do you like our brother?' Angela asked as she completely revealed herself from behind her sister.

'Yes of course, lovely man' I responded with the grittiest of teeth as the realisation sunk in that David might have actually lied to me about him and Teresa's relationship.

'Did you win at chess?' Nicola asked me with a little shake of her head, she was so flamboyant it was actually quite annoying. It was like she was on drugs or something but in reality she was just a very irritating person. I was a bit baffled as to how they knew I had played chess with David, news travels fast on this island. 'Yes I did win' I answered with the most emphatic, silly lie I'd ever told, but who died, it's no big deal.

'Impressive' Nicola again with her infuriating twitch of the head, why does she do that?

‘Where’s Boris then?’ I asked expecting a straightforward answer, but it was obvious with these two I wasn’t going to get one. I was growing quite tiresome of them and I’d only known them five seconds.

‘Guess’ Nicola joked, and I didn’t respond, it didn’t deserve a response.

‘He went home obviously, you silly’ Angela explained with a tongue dangling out of her mouth making out like I’m the idiot. I prayed for them to just shut up!

Give me more tedious magpie watching instead speaking to these two. They had the same Arab tan as their older brother and it did very little for them. They were just so maddening.

‘Well it’s been a pleasure meeting you girls, but I should get back to Teresa... and Nigel of course’ I squeezed past them and they let me go, god bless them they let me go. Being with them reminded me just how much I love Teresa. I just had to see her.

Before I left them both however, a question popped into my head. I wondered whether to ask it, but it was a tough one to decide on. Eventually I found a way to phrase it so not to bring up what I presume is a dead baby. ‘Nicola, Angela’ I paused and thought of the perfect way to phrase it ‘who out of you two is banging Boris?’ and so slipped out the worst question I’d ever asked two women after knowing them for a minute. What was I doing?

Incredibly there was no reaction out of them other than answering the question, and it was Nicola who went to lift her hand up and suddenly stopped. I considered she was perhaps looking to ask a question rather than provide me an answer. Angela then quickly answered me ‘neither of us, look at Boris as if we’d go near him, he’s more a friend’.

I thanked them and walked away with my head in tatters, I was so confused. So David their older brother claims that one of them was made pregnant by Boris, no one will tell me what happened with the baby, or maybe there wasn’t a baby at all. I know now though that this island isn’t as honest as they make out to be. This is definitely going in the blog.

Chapter 11

I followed the scurrying rabbits running for their lives, and hiding away in their holes next to Boris’s house. The rabbits were quite big and chunky about half the size of a new-born baby. The holes they dug were hefty and incredibly neat. They made no noise, even as they

pelted across the overgrown grass of Boris's front yard; they remained silent in their footsteps.

Poor fearful buggers I thought to myself, imagine being scared of a man like Boris. I did stand and consider what on earth the rabbits actually ate, after all they normally feed on carrots, but then I pondered that that may have just been a stereotype and they actually just eat grass. The way the mind wanders when there's little to do. If I lived on this island I would have killed myself of boredom long ago I think it's fair to say.

I did however admire the way these 8 people had remained so tight knit, they were like a big happy family. On the surface of it all of course, as I was sure I would find something to question their perfect little utopian existence on this island. How can an island with no technology, no electricity, and no real good source of food except for rabbit and tinned tomatoes, be genuinely happy or even content?

As I took large steps over the long grass near Boris's front door I heard a grunt come from within his house. My eyes closed slowly and my anticipation was not one of excitement, but rather one of dread. Why can I hear grunting? Satisfied grunting? Surely he is not.

I moved closer at a tortoise's pace towards his house and knelt down underneath his window, I waited to hear the noise again. It didn't come for a while. I looked over in the direction of David's lovely inherited home towering over all other cottages on the island. I rested my weary head against the limestone bricks of Boris's lodge. Initially the contact with the stones hurt, but I was more emotionally hurt than physical and it showed.

The murmuring soon restarted, the sound of two people talking was certainly not a formal conversation. My intrigue peaked to an unwanted level; I didn't want to see it. Boris sleeping with my Teresa. My Teresa, who doesn't even know I love her and is pregnant, I felt myself going insane.

The words I could just about make out would soon turn to grunting again, a sound of pleasure and satisfaction. I hoped and prayed that this was another of my misunderstandings that I have had so many of so far on this trip. I could hear the creaking of a bed, the banging of the mattress. Maybe a rabbit got into the room and they were trying to kill it? I was hopeful.

I could hear clearly a woman's voice, 'you like that?' not too passionate though, not too overtly sexual I had to say. Then I heard the words breathing out of what sounded like an exhausted Boris 'keep going, that's it!'

Get off my Teresa, I thought to myself. But as you are probably thinking, she wasn't my Teresa at all. She didn't belong to me, I couldn't be angry, I couldn't be upset, I hardly knew her, love can't be that transcending. Gosh it can, my stomach felt like all the butterflies had escaped and I rested down to my backside and sat there listening more and more. The bed kept rambling, and the voices got more impossible to understand and the windows steamed up. He was sleeping with her. I knew it.

I got angry and I stood up, my legs wobbling a little off balance and I knocked hard on his front door. I was ready to kick off. It did cross my mind that I had very little to kick off about, he hasn't done anything wrong. 'Just a minute' Boris shouted in his obnoxious posh Scottish accent. I heard his footsteps move closer and closer to the door. He opened it up and there he was in a towel, looking sweaty, or oily. Then I realised it was oil, not sweat.

'Oh, Paul, hello there. Can I help you?' Boris acted so cool and calm, like he was the 'top shagger' on the island.

'Is Teresa in here?' I asked bluntly with my lips closing tightly in fury.

Boris initially laughed, 'you're not going to believe this, it's embarrassing really' trying his hardest to be nice man, I can see through him. 'You ok by the way?' Boris asked me concerned, I quickly released my lips and stopped looking so frustrated, 'yes fine thank you, sorry' I replied with the fakest of smiles and resumed to my natural thought of hating him.

'Yes, you've come at a bad time really, Teresa's not here I'm afraid' Boris eloquently explained.

Through my relief I then considered who he was with, the only woman it could be is his sister. Surely not, is Boris a bit of a creep now, wouldn't surprise me, this place would turn someone mad eventually, maybe sleeping with your sister would become the norm. It's fine as long as he isn't sleeping with Teresa.

'Right I'll leave you two to it then' I waved and said my goodbyes and Boris quickly pulled my arm back into his smelly cottage. Then everything was explainable. The steam was

caused by the kettle and iron both hazards and both very much ready to use. His sister was fully clothed with oil in her hand and the bed was full of towels.

I turned my attention away from his embarrassed sister, who was by quite some distance the most attractive girl on the island. ‘Your sister?’ I pointed at her and asked Boris. ‘Yes she was giving me a massage, embarrassingly. Down at fishing my back I felt a slight strain and she is a masseuse, well at least the only one capable of massaging on the island’ Boris went incredibly red-faced. I could tell I had intruded on something genuinely innocent. I felt like an idiot.

I looked around the house sniffing in the stench of death, must have been rabbits hanging in the back kitchen or something, it absolutely stunk. Boris was one filthy man, the type of filth that girls who I have known in the past adore. Girls like Teresa love men like Boris, low lives with a smell to them.

‘Sorry Boris, sorry...’ I awaited to hear his sisters name, she eventually replied with a lovely Scottish voice, not too dissimilar to Teresa ‘my names Guy’. Odd name for a girl, ‘well lovely to meet you *Guy*’ I nod my head towards Boris and awkwardly scuffle past him and away I went.

The door slammed shut behind me and the rabbit’s cowered towards their holes again right in front of me. My eyes where wide open with shock, and also slight horniness, I wanted a massage from someone as gorgeous as Guy. ‘Guy’ I laughed to myself. The image of her blow job lips and her instagrammable face etched into my mind like the love for Teresa in my heart. I felt like I was cheating on Teresa by just looking at Guy.

Chapter 12

I sat across from her and I could feel her feet messing around with the slate tiles on the kitchen floor. Teresa looked at me with those seductive eyes, her head slanted to one side; I could tell she had some soft spot for me. Sure she was pregnant, but that can’t stop you falling in love, maybe she will fall in love with me, in fact I almost presumed it. She could

blame her change in emotion on the hormones of pregnancy. You can kill a man with those hormones and get away with it.

Her father was preparing something; it smelt delicious in the broth cooking away on the stove. Every now and then he would blow the froth away into the atmosphere. The tense, emotional, romantic atmosphere that I felt with a woman I loved. The only woman I have ever truly loved. It's insane, love. I couldn't explain it, how can I love her so quickly. If she stopped staring at me it would help. I flicked my head around to see Nigel's big ass right behind me and very smoothly shifted my chair away.

'Are you both ready for the broth?' Nigel asked, I felt like saying of course, I'm starving. He turned around with a bowl full of some meaty, watery substance. He had a red spot on his shirt, a large red spot. He planted the bowl down in front of me and Teresa. 'Enjoy' He said 'bon appetite' he killed it.

Teresa took one look at it and felt sick, I could tell. Her eyes went a bit dizzy and her skin went pale and she began to rip her bottom lip to shreds. But it smelt good, very well-seasoned. I played around with it for a bit, I ran my spoon through it like a very thick soup, and every now and then a big chunk of red almost bloody meat would pop to the surface and then sink again.

'What meat is this, ain't nothing that I've ever seen before?' I asked Nigel, I looked directly at him as he cleaned his apron.

'It's rabbit!' he answered, and I nodded, I'd never had rabbit before, but it was tasty, a bit veiny and red though.

'Where's the fur?' I asked and Nigel, Teresa laughed.

'Where's the fur?! God you're funny you Brits' Teresa said making my day.

'It's gone, the fur is cut off, I can't put little hairs in the broth, you'd choke on them, so I skinned it' Nigel explains to me in the most polite, gentlemanly way possible.

I returned to my dinner and ate it relatively quickly, there was again no bread, which reminded me of the sandwich.

'Where's your sandwich then Nigel?' I asked sipping my rabbit broth.

‘Ah the sandwich, well let me tell you I ate it in a jiffy, it was gorgeous’ he answered and the red mark on his top was still on show.

‘You’ve got a lot of blood on your shirt there you know Nigel’ I could not hold it in my politeness anymore; I had to tell him, it was annoying me.

‘Oh this, it’s actually ketchup, from the sandwich’ He explained gleefully. He then licked the red into a smear and enjoyed it. I’m surprised he ate the sandwich without any courtesy, he seemed to really be in awe of it and almost in love with it, but then he ate it so quick, like he didn’t care about it at all.

‘How is it then?’ Nigel asks concerned that my soup wasn’t going down too well.

‘Fantastic actually, a bit bloody, but you know nice, thank you’ I reassured him.

‘It’s dad’s speciality, he makes it for the whole island’ Teresa looks up at her father with such pride. Why can’t she look at me like that, what must I do?

‘Anyway I’m off to bed’ Teresa tells us both and struggles getting her pregnant self-up off her chair. She does however and gives her dad a kiss on the cheek goodnight and then moves round to me munching on my rabbit meat. She leans in and I was thinking, if she wants to neck on with me right here now in front of her dad, who am I to say no. Sadly it was just a kiss on the forehead, I couldn’t lie to you.

Her dad watched her go safely and I did likewise, mainly looking at her backside and thinking just how horny I was, it had been two days now since I watched porn. Two days since I had internet, or a phone, or real technology. Sooner or later somethings got to give. Nigel saw Teresa’s exit as an excuse to finally take a seat and rest his old legs and have a chat.

He sighed loud and noticed my bowl was finished and went to pick it up, but I made sure to give the old man rest, and I put it in the sink for him to clean up later.

Chapter 13

As I proceeded to follow his daughter into the lounge to rest for the rest of the evening, Nigel stopped me in my tracks. ‘Sorry laddie can I just have a little talk with you?’ I had no idea

what this could be about, but his tone seemed serious. Perhaps it was to tell me to wash the bowl and not just leave it on the side, maybe it was to shout at me due to my rudeness, he could have even noticed my obsessive staring and longing for his daughter.

‘Sure’ I just caught a glimpse of Teresa resting her head on the couch and her pregnant belly facing the ceiling and she looked so relaxed and beautiful I could have looked at her all day. Sadly I turned my attentions away from the love of my life so far and went back to speak to her rather uninteresting father. Her father, Nigel, just seemed like the perfect role model really, he lived his life by the book, everyone seemed to like and respect him and he didn’t do much else other than cook, eat and sleep.

‘What’s the problem?’ I asked presuming I was in some sort of trouble.

‘Oh’ Nigel looked at me perplexed stroking his chest in disbelief. ‘You’re not in trouble my son, just have a seat, I want to speak to you and its best we leave the young girl to some rest’. I thought to myself quickly, he definitely knows I fancy his daughter, I can tell.

‘What would you like a chat about?’ I asked scraping my chair closer to the wooden circular table in the centre of the kitchen. Nigel just watched me a few moments struggling to tuck myself in.

‘How are the royals?’ Nigel asked like he knew them personally. I was startled at first, maybe he knows the royals, and this could be the news to spark my blog into a bit of interest. He tilted his head to the side and pleaded with me to answer I could see.

‘The royals? Yes they’re ok, all fine’ I answered him. Soon however, Nigel gave the game away that he didn’t know the royals personally at all, ‘still getting away with murder?’

‘I presume you mean Princess Diana or something?’ I supposed he was being quite the conspiracy theorist.

‘No just in general, you know, the rest of the country treats them like gods, and then they’re put on such a pedestal that they can’t be treated equally when it comes to the law’ Nigel seemed opinionated, for the first time since I had arrived on his island, he was somewhat controversial. It could have been the jealousy within him that he couldn’t lead an island to the same success as the royals did with Britain.

‘I don’t mind the royals you know’ I prepare myself for an argument. Nigel looks away for a moment, I can see him directing his eyes at a large glass jar of whiskey which has been sat there for what must be sixteen years now. Does whiskey go off; I thought to myself, I didn’t really consider even asking him that, instead I would pretend to be a connoisseur.

‘I myself am quite the sommelier’ I show off my knowledge to impress him and also to thread the conversation away from any potential argument over the royals. Nigel lets off a large sigh and stands up, walks towards the whiskey, collects two glasses and sit back down and as he pours me out the tiniest amount, a large sips worth he sees through my pretentiousness.

‘So you’re an expert in fine wines then’ he looks up at me and smiles, it leads me to wonder what you actually call a whiskey expert then. I didn’t even know what whiskey it was, it could have been whisky for all I know, what’s the difference, do they look different, taste different, I had no idea.

Eventually after a long pause, he gave me the glass and grasped it firmly and rolled the alcohol around like I was used to drinking it, but this is just what I’d seen in the movies. I began to think to myself, why on earth is it I do this, pretend I’m someone I’m not, I always pretend that I know something that would have been perfectly acceptable for me to not yet understand.

‘You know you don’t have to lie to me to impress me, it impresses me more when you ask, I enjoy your questions’ Nigel explains calmly before his first sip, he licks his lips straight after not to allow any of the drink to escape his mouth. This old frail man was so polite and lovely; he just made me want to impress him immensely. Eventually I gave in to my intrigue.

‘So, is this whiskey with an E, or whisky without one?’ I asked as I planted the glass down on the wooden table, I could hear a couple of groans of pain coming from Teresa in the other room. I looked at Nigel concerned, he wasn’t too worried, ‘just pregnancy pains’ he explained coolly. ‘The E is only present in bourbon whiskey’s, so the American ones, whereas Scotch, real whisky, is without the E’. Despite his lovely demeanour, he was also very opinionated with most of his comments I found. The subtle ways in which he would suggest his ideology on things was very much the leadership qualities on display. It was as if he was testing me, giving me a carrot on a stick so I’d argue back.

‘You know 16 years ago’ He looks at his whisky held up high and then chuckles in realisation ‘16 years. I was left three crates of whisky, and I’ve made it last this whole time, I have never shared it with anyone from anywhere other than this island, I never thought I’d share it with a Brit that’s for certain’.

I was quite moved by his comments, I felt like I had joined an exclusive club, I was far too happy to be sat here on this island, I needed something to write about. I needed a reaction, a negative one out of someone. ‘So what do you call yourselves here then, fairies?’ I laughed at my own terrible joke.

‘Fairies would be a good one’ Nigel agreed, his eyes were slanting, the whisky had obviously gone to his head. ‘We call ourselves by our names, not by our race’ Nigel then takes another swig of his drink and then flaps his hands to suggest I should join him in sipping. ‘See in Britain, in some articles I’ve read about when you voted out, you were called bottleneckers, do you find that offensive?’

‘Not at all’ Nigel responds immediately with much conviction ‘it’s only a name, it’s just the way it is, your country hates us, we voted out, we pushed our big fat friend off a cliff and he never climbed back up to help us, why would he’ Nigel explains diplomatically. ‘They hate us, the French hate them, we all hate Germany, the EU is full of snakes and the countries out of the EU thrive’ I could tell he was rambling in a somewhat drunken rage. ‘We don’t hate though’ Nigel gets serious, ‘we get by, we live’.

I considered stopping with the questions due to his ever increasing lack of soberness, but I needed some more information, ‘so how do you trade here, you know with other countries?’

‘Limestone, the island is full of limestone, and those Norwegians love a bit of limestone, so they give us things in return, it isn’t a trade deal written in stone per say, but they don’t mind, and we like it so’ He has a final big swig of his whisky ‘and the Norwegians have always done things on their own, and it works for them, so why not, who needs a real trade deal anyway, we have rabbits here, that’s all the meat we need, and the occasional fish’.

I just stared at him, I took in what he said and then noted in my mind to write down later, it was that weird what he was saying. Well it was weird, but maybe the way he said it made it seem so straightforward and obvious. My blog is a disaster.

‘Want me to escort you to bed?’ I asked concerned, he stood up and pushed the chair under the table in skewwhiff fashion. ‘No its ok, I’m fine, I’m an old man, I can take care of myself thank you boy’ He replied with a big liquor-smelling burp half way through. I wafted the smell away as soon as he left and then found myself naturally magnetising myself towards the front room where Teresa lay.

She seemed so peaceful; her pregnancy pains had eased her into a soft sleep. She had the cutest little snore, the most wonderful breasts and the best arse I’d ever seen as she rolled round ever so slightly so I could take a peak. What am I doing? I looked away quickly like I was sinning. I didn’t really know what to do with myself. Where do I sleep, she’s on the couch, where’s does she sleep, where’s her bed, do I wake her up? All these questions should have been the thoughts that entered my head but instead my id was on high alert that night.

I didn’t want to think it, but I did, I thought I could masturbate to her right here, right now. I shook my head as if trying to flick the thoughts out my head and through my ears. I grabbed my you know. But it was only for a brief moment and I realised what I was doing, what the hell was I doing? Just thinking about it makes me feel sick. But it was just a thought; no one can ever track a thought, in that moment something in my head definitely wanted to wank over her.

I just went into the kitchen and sat down rubbing my head in anxiety. I just liked her so much, I wanted to demonstrate my love to her by showing how sexually attractive I find her. She’s pregnant to someone else, this is all wrong. I think it’s the island; I blame the island, not me. It’s never my fault, believe me.

I quickly started to rush through other ideas in my head to take my mind off the idea of self-fornicating over Teresa. She was pregnant, I thought to myself, but that didn’t help. I hadn’t masturbated in so long, three days is a very long time this day and age, and I needed some sort of pornography or something to get me through it normally, but not here, she was perfect. Maybe I could kill her, popped into my trail of thought; I have no idea where that came from. My mind was like a blank canvas and I was just chucking paint of different colours all over it.

I don’t know what my mind was thinking, it may have been the concoction of alcohol and love forcing my mind to go crazy, you do hear of people doing crazy things when in love. Maybe the old man poisoned me, even if he hasn’t I could always blog about that. I can write,

Sure the people are kind on Fare Island, but they poisoned me. They turned me into a weird, pregnant woman hunting sex offender and killer.

Whilst the mess went on which was my brain, I was disturbed by the lovely soothing Scottish voice of Teresa. My banging and scraping of the table and chairs in the kitchen in my fit of bizarre thoughts had woken her up.

‘Jack, you ok?’ she asked so concerned, so normal, she was so normal, compared to me and here she is living on an island with only 7 other people.

‘Yes, I’m fine, thanks, are you ok?’ I asked back sweating slightly. I looked at her, her little baby bump, her concerned face, her messy, gorgeous hair, it was an obsession, it had definitely become a bizarre fascination that I had never experienced before. Maybe it would be easier if I did just kill her. Again I quickly erased that thought from my head and carried on smiling at her till she went away.

‘I’m going to bed anyway, you can have the couch again, I left Gulliver’s Travels close by for you’ she explained to me and then as she walked off she stopped and turned back around. My hand was firmly placed on my crotch, like I was uncontrollably horny. ‘Actually, are you sure you want to sleep on the couch, alone?’

Oh, oh the thought entered my head, everything was forgotten, all the bizarre feelings and twisted ideas that I had in my head had just disappeared like the blood had rushed my head and straight to my... I liked what I was hearing. ‘No its alright, I can live sleeping on my own, its fine, you’re pregnant there wouldn’t too much space on a couch for two of us’ I tried to act calm and collected.

‘Well yes, sure, unless we cuddled close together so we could both fit on’ Teresa then said to me in the softest tone, almost like she felt guilty, was I going to sleep with a pregnant woman. All this is very odd. I should blog about this I considered, instead of the island.

‘I mean, yes, sure if you want to, we can cuddle on the couch’ I couldn’t have said it quick enough, if I was playing poker I would of showed my cards right away, my jaw was so dropped it nearly hit the table like a Looney Tune cartoon.

‘Actually, I might actually go to bed, I’m getting a few pains in my stomach’ Teresa with a few words made my penis go more flaccid than cooked spaghetti pasta. My eyes rolled and she didn’t notice.

‘That’s fine, I understand’ I tried to be reasonable, she then smiled and thanked me. She then began to take her shirt off and placed her finger over her mouth. The big boy was back, I got comfortable in my chair. She lifted her shirt past the midriff, her pregnant belly was all on show, wasn’t too fussed by that, but I could see a few bruises and a few cuts around the area. Thinking nothing of it at the time I waited, she slowly lifted it further and further and just as I saw the bottom of her breast she stopped in pain and left instantly to head towards her own bed apologising.

I sat unimpressed, but hopeful that she actually liked me back. If she didn’t I think I would have to kill her to get her out of my head.

Chapter 14

I had managed to squeeze a few chapters out of Gulliver’s travels before I fell asleep on my couch that was quickly becoming my new home on this island. The night before was now a messy blur in my head, what the hell was I thinking last night? I suppose we all have our own little insane outbursts in our mind.

The type of rude outpourings in our heads that we think of when bored, the likes of how I would love to sleep with every woman I see on the morning commute right there and then. The type of anger that overcomes me when I hear another person on their phones on the same commute and want to literally torture them to death for it. The weird leakage of insanity that overwhelms me when I see a puppy run towards me to just to kick it and see how far it goes. I never go through with any of these things, but we all have it, moments of bizarre thought.

Never, however, had I such an emotional attachment to my weird feelings as I did last night. I felt affected by them, I was damaged over it.

Once more I was getting lost in my silly thoughts again, I must be boring you. Am I boring you? If I am, stop reading then.

‘What chapter to up to Jack?’ Nigel sneaked into the front room and asked me, it startled me, I was now wide awake.

‘I don’t know actually, chapter 7, 8 maybe’ I answered and Nigel saw this as an invitation to sit down on the couch with me. I didn’t want to share the couch with him; I wanted to share it

with his gorgeous daughter. Of course his sweaty backside warmed my feet for a moment before I flicked them away from him. Try not to be sick, I thought to myself.

‘Has Gulliver begun his travels yet then?’ Nigel asked relatively quietly, a morning whisper, as if there was someone in the room still asleep. It was obvious from that question alone that he had never read the book, bizarre considering he literally has sweet nothing to do all day on this island other than read the small library of books that he has. I didn’t even reward his question with an answer.

‘Do you write Nigel?’ the question just fell out of my mouth, no thought process to it at all.

‘I used to’ he answered quickly and then paused, wiped a tear that had built up in his eye and leaned forward like he was about to vomit, ‘but then my wife died’ Nigel eventually couldn’t hold onto his tear anymore and it fell to the floor slowly.

Usually a person in this situation would say something like ‘oh that’s awful’ or ‘oh no, so sorry to hear that’ but I wanted to be a journalist, and journalists ask questions that no one else would.

‘What are you crying about?’ I shrugged my shoulders and chuckled a little as I asked; it was as though I didn’t hear what he had just said.

‘You’re right, what am I crying about, it’s been forever since it happened’ Nigel began to cry even more, and then eventually leaned back into the couch and relaxed, still releasing the occasional drop from his eyes.

‘forever, that isn’t too long, how did she die?’

‘Just one day, aneurysm, and she was gone. We tried to perform first aid, it was no good, and she was dead just like that’ His explanation into her death was as brief as the death itself sounded.

I moved on quickly, I could tell that was what Nigel wanted. ‘So, I hear there was new born on the island not too long ago?’ I suggested a new conversation.

‘Ah yes, the new born, you heard about it then’ Nigel replied with excitement.

‘Sorry, so where is that baby now, in fact where are all the kids?’ I asked.

‘Well the Norwegians come, on their boats and take our babies to schools over there. We don’t want to raise them on this island, no one should have to be raised on this island, the Norwegians are awfully helpful’ Nigel explains with a lovely smile on his face, it seemed to cheer him up talking about how he allows life to live on elsewhere and took his mind away from his wife’s death.

I was in no mood to let him get away with anything yet though, ‘so your wife then, she voted out too? Out of Britain?’

‘Of course’ he answered laughing at my question, ‘she had to, she wouldn’t have stayed here otherwise, we never let anyone stay here who doesn’t want to be here, it’s not fair on them’

‘Except Alastair of course’ I state to him laughing.

‘Oh yes, Alastair is just an enigma really’ Nigel quickly bypasses any talk of him. ‘I love fare Island, I really do, but even I have to accept that this place after we voted out became hostile to live in really. We are struggling for supplies and despite any help from Norway, we still struggle, and Britain, rightly so, don’t help us at all anymore. We voted out after all’ Nigel opened up to me and I was finally starting to find something to write about in my blog.

The remorse, the regrets, the wishing they had done things differently, this was what I needed. If I throw in a couple of lies about the people, make them out to be insane then this could really attract readers.

‘So you want to be a journalist then?’ Nigel asks.

‘Yes I do, a Jewish journalist, like there isn’t enough hey’ I make an horrendously bad racist joke about my own people to which Nigel sees through me and doesn’t laugh.

‘Jewish journalists, there’s nothing wrong with that, Jewish people are smart, must be in the genes’ Nigel didn’t find anything that I said weird, or abnormal, he accepted all the words that fell out of my mouth with grace and dignity and seemed to know how to respond to every possible sentence I said. He was either a devilishly charming man, or a devilishly manipulative man. Either way he was devilish and I didn’t trust him, probably killed his own wife. Why do I think like this? I’m so paranoid.

‘So far, I haven’t had much luck with a journalism career, though I’m only 23 so it can all change I guess’ I delved deeper into my career goals.

‘Oh of course, keep going, you have to, you’re so young and you’re not stuck here, you have a British passport’ Nigel backs me up, ‘if I were you, I would leave this island now and crack on with writing your blog about us, chase the dream’ Nigel encouraged me with a smile and firm hand on my shoulder. Is he about to lean in for a kiss, no my minds just overplaying things again.

‘Are you trying to get rid of me?’ I asked seriously but played it off as a joke as he moved his hand off my shoulder and I could breathe a sigh of relief that the old man was not about to make a strange move.

‘No, stay as long as you like, please, I actually love having guests, we love having guests’ Nigel couldn’t sound more sincere and then got himself up off the couch and left me with two more questions, ‘do you want breakfast, Rabbit stew again, and do you require a wash today, Teresa is boiling some water for you and her to use?’.

I leaned forward on the couch interested, both of us using the same water, having a wash at the same time, surely not. ‘Rabbit stew sounds formidable’ I replied and then thought, formidable, that’s not the right word, where the hell did that come from. ‘I mean sounds good’ I corrected myself.

My eyes caught a picture in the far corner of the room by the window. It was a picture of Nigel and what looked his wife, and she was quite hideous I have to say. She was about 5.5 out of 10 in terms of looks, but they looked happy. Odd how I didn’t notice this picture before I knew of her death, but I suppose that happens sometimes.

Chapter 15

It was true, me and Teresa where about to have a wash together.

It was freezing cold mind, so cold. Must have been no more than 3 degrees on the island and as I was encouraged by her to take my top off I could see Boris looking at me from his cottage. I could tell he was trying to catch a glimpse of Teresa naked, well fool him she was fully clothed.

I saw him and he saw me and he didn’t leave, he just kept staring at me, I felt vulnerable, I was topless after all and then I heard Teresa shout me over to her and Boris eventually looked away.

‘Sorry Boris was staring at me’ I explained to Teresa trying to make him out to be weird. ‘Does he normally stare at topless men?’ I walked towards her, she was wearing ragged clothes as she stood by the white fence that surrounded her back garden.

‘Maybe he fancies you’ Teresa said playfully and with a beaming smile looked directly into my eyes and flickered them and then pointed to the bowl of slightly steaming water.

‘Who could resist me hey?!’ I said flirtatiously and my nips were solid as rocks in the cold, I was desperate to just chuck the water all over me. ‘Do you have shampoo?’ I asked shivering.

‘Really? Do you really think we have shampoo here?’ Teresa made a valid point. ‘You numpty’ she then gave me a little sly dig on my arm and it turned into a grasp, and clutch and I could tell she was feeling my arms. Not much muscle I worried to myself. It was an elephant in the room, I had to clear it up, ‘I haven’t been the gym in a while, so I’m not as big as David’ I explained to her pathetically, that’s right, just big up David, turn her on and send a horny, pregnant Teresa to a muscular, olive skinned beauty. May as well bloody watch as I want it to happen so much obviously. Watch David and my love have sex long into the night, bet he lasts like a Pornstar too.

‘I prefer skinnier men anyway, muscle is just pointless if you ask me’ Teresa interestingly enlightened me. So that meant that the odds on David being the father had dropped significantly or maybe she was saying it because she was trying to send me off track. Or maybe, shit, Boris is skinny, oh no.

‘Shall we?’ Teresa asked, she was such a tease, what the heck does that mean.

‘Shall we bloody what?’ I asked going red in the face, shivering however more so.

Teresa just laughed to herself and backed away letting go of my arms and then crossed her arms over her cheap cloth-like poncho and removed it. And it was all on show. Well her breasts were anyway, and her massive pregnancy bump. She was stunning, perfect, stretch marks all over yes, but if anything that made her even more perfect. She was far from being a model, but she was my model, a model in my eyes. I definitely, without any doubt loved her. Still not knowing why.

She then proceeded to grab her cheap pants and as she was about to pull them down I stopped her. ‘Hang on, your dad might see’ I was concerned.

‘See what?’ she was confused, ‘me having a wash, there’s nothing he could see that he hasn’t seen before. Except for your dick, are you too scared?’ she asked, I didn’t respond with words, I responded with actions, I pulled my pants down that instant and showed her everything, I didn’t care.

I felt liberated, and very cold. Both my nubs were growing more and more blue and solid and then I looked at hers and they were doing like wise. The pain I was suffering, I just wanted to sleep with her right there and then, more so than any girl I’d ever seen on my commute to work. Why can’t I just grab her and do everything with her, display my love for her.

She returned to pulling her pants down and now I could see the whole package. I’m not going to describe it, some things are best left to my own personal mind, and you don’t deserve to know. It was good though.

I think she liked what she saw as well, but it was hard to tell, I didn’t know what was going through her mind. She was quick to wash herself and throw herself back inside the house however. She couldn’t have washed herself more frantically. She just poured the water on her and a quick sweep in the private parts and then she was gone.

‘Far too cold for this, I’ll see you back in the house’ she said to me and ran off holding her stomach tightly. I looked around to see Boris staring again, he makes me sick. Like a peeping Tom, he just looked at me wash myself, I felt violated and he smiled and I too followed in Teresa’s footprints in washing myself very quick and running inside.

Chapter 16

Now clean and ready for action, I was waiting patiently for Teresa to put on some clothes. Every so often she would walk in to the front room to say the occasional thing to me, or ask me a random question, like small talk. Every time she would enter the room she would have a new item of clothing on.

Her first question was asked as she walked into the front room where I was pulling up my last clean pair of socks. Fully naked she sat next to me like she didn’t have a care in the world, like we’d been married for twenty years or I’d just slept with her and we already knew each other’s body parts well enough. It was the sort of sacred bond that you have with

someone after you have sex, but didn't seem to matter to her, she was comfortable around me, and I was happy. The view was good.

Her hair was slightly frizzy still from the wet and the cold, she was so natural, not a lick of makeup on her, she didn't have any to put on her, no fake tan, no lip stick, no eye liner, not even nice clothes, she was just her, her normal self, and I fell in love with it. Only a fool would fall in love with that these days surely. I should want an Instagram influencer, or a Tinder fling.

I loved her stretch marks more than anything else. It was like she didn't care about what they represented; she would flaunt those marks anyway and basically say a big "fuck you" to anyone who thought they were an imperfection. She rested her head on my shoulder, her naked body sat beside me, I didn't know what to do, where to look, I was fully clothed. I found myself giving her a slight shrug of discouragement, I felt she was hinting that she liked me, but I could have been getting the wrong end of the stick, maybe she was just screwing with my head, she was after all a foreigner to me, maybe this was normal on Fare Island.

'So, do you have a phone, like mobile phones in Britain?' Teresa asked me like she was from the 18th century.

'Yes, we do, they're incredible these days, touch screen, internet, you can even phone people and see their face as you phone them. And they can see you!' I could literally feel myself getting excited about myself as I explained it; I had a rush of blood to all kinds of places. I was so excited, the technology that I missed so much, the naked body in front of me, the socks warming my feet. It was just too much to take.

'That sounds amazing' that was it, that was all Teresa said, she then stood up in a struggle and walked off. She would re-enter the room moments later with knickers and a bra on.

'Oh cover yourself up love' I jested and she laughed, she seemed to understand my humour better than anyone I'd ever met, but then maybe I was being bias. Love can do strange things to your psyche after all.

'What's like the coolest technology then these days?' Teresa asked me readjusting her delicates.

'oh' I was stumbling with my words as I was so entranced by her standing in front of me, she eventually had to leave the room and I would shout the answer, 'it's hard to say, the cars, the

phones, the computers. I mean we have this thing called social media where you can speak to anyone from all around the world’.

‘Could you speak to me?’ she shouts back in. I don’t reply for a few seconds whilst I sadly ponder the reality that she would not be able to ‘no, you’d need the internet and a computer’.

‘Oh well, could send you a message in a bottle when you head back home to where was it?’ she asks another question and walks back in the room now with a top on and her legs still bare.

‘Gateshead in England, just south of Scotland’.

‘My dad always said I had a Scottish accent, didn’t think you sounded like me’ she smiles and lies down on the couch and rests her naked legs over my lap. She starts to twiddle her toes and I just didn’t know what to do. I was staring at her toes for far too long so looked away and saw up her top and could see clearly her bits. Her bits were very much on show and I could see through her underwear clearly. I looked at her eyes and she said nothing. She just stared at me. Normally a woman would say ‘do you mind?’ as I stare right at her precious parts. She didn’t though, but she also didn’t tell me it was ok to look.

I took a sharp gulp of nervousness and Teresa leaned in and whispered into my ear. I was so apprehensive as to what she was about to say to me. ‘Can you give my smelly feet a massage?’ she asked in the least seductive way possible, it was like she was asking me as a friend. Had I just been friend zoned by a person who didn’t even know what friend zoning was. I got worried, do I just have sex with her now, I could just force her to have sex with me and get it over and done with, I am not going into that zone where love dies. No way.

It wouldn’t be like I was raping her, raping a pregnant woman, with her dad and her closest friends and the father of her child somewhere on the island. It was more like a forceful love making to get us over the bump, pardon the pun. Forceful love making, that’s ok. I can’t do that, my mind is just teasing again.

So I grasped her foot and massaged it. I rolled my eyes in deep, deep dissatisfaction; it felt the opposite of erotic. It wasn’t how porn made it look. I turned my face to her and she wasn’t even looking at me, she wasn’t even getting slightly turned on by it, making no noise what so ever. Was I doing it wrong, I don’t know.

‘Do you know Boris’s sister gives great massages’ Teresa basically insinuated that I was not fulfilling her massaging needs. Screw Boris and his sister.

‘I see’ I stopped immediately, she didn’t complain.

She took her legs off me, her left leg stroked my lips and she walked out of the room again.

‘When are you due? Soon I presume?’ I asked.

‘Yes, should be very soon, days maybe’ Teresa answered.

‘Is it possible you could come see me one day in Gateshead, or Britain, I can show you the real world’ I suggested.

‘The real world, no thank you, it’s nice to speak about it in fantasy, but I have it too good here. I enjoy my life here, it’s simple, it’s just nice.’ She’s mad, I mean she was absolutely crazy, how could I love that.

‘Plus I can’t get in without a passport hey’ Teresa makes a valid point.

She stumbles back in and is holding her stomach in slight pain; now fully clothed she quickly budes me out of the way and sits on the couch. ‘If you don’t mind, I’m going to stay in a bit today, feeling a few niggles with the pregnancy’ Teresa was faking the pain, I could tell. Something happened and she no longer liked me. I don’t think she ever did like me, but her actions said otherwise.

‘Want me to get Nigel?’ I pretended to be concerned.

‘No my dad will come along shortly anyway its fine’ Teresa casually palmed me away and I headed towards the front door.

‘Well I’ll see you later then’ I said my goodbyes in awkward fashion.

‘One more question please Jack’ Teresa just didn’t want to let me go did she, she liked me again ‘Are you a virgin?’ she asked me completely out of the blue. I was shocked. I was scared. I am a virgin, so what the heck do I tell her. A 23 year old virgin, what a sad man you are Jack.

I laughed before I answered, ‘random. Of course I’m not’ just a white lie. White lies don’t hurt a soul.

Chapter 17

Alastair’s home was unwelcoming to say the least. I could smell a stench of fish that was escaping the melting pot on the flamed stove in the kitchen. The house was the same blueprint as the other cottages. Though this one had a personality that represented its inhabitant more than the others I found.

Alastair was a scruffy man, cared little for how he looked, smelt or came across. I actually struggle to recollect any particular feature in his cottage other than the smell of fish, it was so sickly that all other opinions I had just became irrelevant. If memory serves me correct however, there was a large hole in the wall of the front room and the radio on the table was constantly scrambling for signal.

‘Can we turn that shit signal off’ I was so tempted to order throughout my time there as it would really get in the way of any conversation. I remained polite as possible though.

Alastair poured himself a bowl of fish stew and sat down next to me, I waited patiently for him to prepare his food as he was so lovely in allowing me to come to his home and interview him. He even offered me some of his fish stew, but I refused very quickly. He fetched me a glass of water, I was so dehydrated, my throat was actually rasping a bit.

‘Ever had fish stew?’ Alastair asked me as he slurped away and some of it would drip from his chin on to his lap.

‘I have yes, but yours certainly has a uniquely strong smell to it’ I felt obliged to be somewhat honest.

‘I can explain that, its rotten fish, it was caught quite some time ago, we don’t really have in date supplies here. I caught it about two weeks ago’ Alastair answered me like he was telling me that 2 plus 2 equalled 4, it was the most normal and obvious thing ever.

‘You eat rotten fish?’ I asked with a raised eyebrow and I made it clear I found it bizarre. He slurped again and looked at me and pulled an understanding face.

‘I can see why that would sound odd, but let’s be honest look at the way we live our lives here. Do you think anyone wants to live like this, ask anyone here and if they say they like it

here, it's a damn lie' Alastair explained to me, he held his spoon firmly and pointed it towards me, he actually flicked some stew on to my pants, I wanted to punch the pathetic old man. 'In some cultures around the world, they eat roadkill, they eat rotten flesh and organs of animals, it's funny how different is seen as abnormal sometimes'.

I stood up and walked around for a few moments, I looked out of his dirty windows and could just make out Boris in the distance having his usual morning walk, I saw him every morning on his walk from the far end of the island to the cottages. He moved with the type of arrogant swagger that a world leader or royal would walk with. Prick.

'So I presume you voted to remain in Britain then?' I asked him, knowing full well what the answer would be.

'I care not to say, it wouldn't change anything now would it hey' Alastair remained as impartial as he possibly could, but I could see in his face he was triggered by my question.

The long silence between the two of us felt like an eternity, this was supposed to be an interview, but I was struggling with my questions. Eventually after a lap around his front room he broke the silence and helped me along.

'What would you have done, voted in or out' Alastair lifted his bowl and finished off his fish stew, I could see him pull out a fish bone from in-between his teeth. I looked away, I couldn't bear to see that, and I noticed a Valentine's Day card on his table. I moved towards it and answered his question, 'I suppose I would have voted to remain, you know to keep your friends close kind of thing, better than being left with no one to help you'.

Alastair nodded and then moved into his kitchen to clean his bowl.

Whilst there I quickly sneaked a peak at his Valentine's Day card, I checked the back of it to see what year it was from, 2002. The year Fare Island became an independent state. Inside the card it was empty, nothing written on it. I presume he had the card there as a reminder of happier times, a time when consumerism was a possibility for these people. It had stamped on the back the trademark and logo of the shop he had bought it from. It could have been the shop that Alastair owned before it was forced to close down in 2002.

'Please don't touch that' Alastair asked politely but meaningful. I placed it back on the table and as I did realised that there was many other examples of a man clinging to the past. A jar

of tomato Bolognese sauce, a designer shirt, trainers with a big tick on them, all in pristine and mint condition. All lied around his front room like unopened collectable action figures.

‘What do want to know about Fare Island then?’ Alastair questioned me and sat down with a glass of water for himself now.

‘Right’ I was ready to get down to business, ‘don’t get offended by any of my questions’-

‘I wouldn’t dare’ Alastair interrupted me, ‘however, let me guess Nigel and the others are all incredibly friendly when answering questions. Well they ain’t honest ok’.

Oh hello there, I thought to myself I had hit the mother lode, this guy is going to give me some real stuff to write about.

‘So what happened to your shop then?’ my question was met with an extremely over reactive laughing fit by Alastair.

‘Let me guess, they told you, David was it?’ I couldn’t remember. ‘Well yes I had a shop, the biggest and most important one on the island, I was the Richard Branson of Fare Island. That is literally what they called me, I also had a little bit of a Branson look to me too. But the stress of leaving Britain took its toll as you can see’ he smiled and waited for my response.

‘No you’re still looking good’ I lied straight to his face, but he wouldn’t be hurt by it, it was a good lie.

‘Anyway, you see all these’ he pointed out all the objects I had seen earlier, the trainers, the sauce, the shirt, the card. ‘These are all just memories of a time when I lived in the real world, this is not the real world. You are far from the real world, where technology is taking over, the atmosphere is toxic, the world that is increasingly becoming more lazy and less like its ape relatives, the world I want to live in. A place where you can thrive and make your way to the top, not some dead end piece of rock in the middle of the North Sea’ I could see a tear build up in his eye, he really missed living the life in the contemporary world. He was the first person I had spoken to since I got to the island who felt this way, who really didn’t enjoy himself here, embrace the challenge of Fare Island.

‘It was the politics of it all’ he continued, ‘the politics of the vote, it was a mess, it wasn’t fair’. He gets settled into his couch and I suddenly felt the need to take the pen from behind my ear and jot this stuff down.

‘They couldn’t agree a deal you see’ Alastair explained, ‘Nigel tried to get a deal, my god he tried. He would be on the phone to Britain everyday “Mr Prime minister, Mr prime minister” he would desperately kiss backside and crack’ Alastair went from being a creepy old man, to a creepy impersonator of Nigel who he made out to sound like a frantic little girl.

‘He would say things like “oh please, please accept the deal, we didn’t realise we would have such a hard Farewell” Britain had none of it, we all voted out, “All” I say sarcastically’ he mimics quotation marks and carries on ‘I sure as hell didn’t vote out, and I know a few others who didn’t, a few foreign ones, but you don’t see them anymore do you. Britain took them, they’re lapping it up on the coast of Blackpool or Torquay or Christ they might even be trading between the Irish border for all I know. The land of the free’.

I’d never thought of Britain as being the land of the free, I saw Fare Island as a more unrestricted place to live in that moment. ‘Safe to say then you don’t see this as utopia then?’ I asked him knowing full well the answer, but also slightly apprehensive to take his opinion literally, he was the first person to question this island since I got here, and I saw little wrong with it really.

‘Utopia is a state of mind, dear boy. One man’s utopia is another man’s dystopia’ Alastair attempts to be a philosophical man.

A long pause follows, I jot down what he said to me and I manipulate his words to make it seem that this is the common consensus on the island. Dystopia I picked up on, utopia I certainly didn’t. You don’t sell stories by saying they’re utopian, I’d take the opinion of a mad man, they’re the views that grabs readers attentions.

‘Tell you what though the lasses, that Teresa, I’d give her a good hiding, being Nigel’s daughter and that. I remember when I was rich and she was young, I used to think, I’ll wait and see what she grows up to be like then I’ll make my move, you know, groom her’ Alastair laughs, and I suddenly feel sick. When he was rich, before the vote, I quickly did the maths; she would have been under 5 definitely.

‘Care to explain what you just said?’ I asked politely, giving the old man a chance to rectify what he just said about the love of my life. I pulled the sternest of faces.

Alastair looks at my face and laughs ‘oh come now, don’t tell me she’s got you by the bollocks as well’ he freakishly clenches a fist like he was cupping a pair of said bollocks.

‘She is the biggest head fuck on the island, be aware of her. She preggers again ain’t she?’ Alastair asked me and I winced, I knew she’d been pregnant before, but cared not to think about it, the stretch marks, the bruises, she had obviously given birth before.

‘Always pregnant the girls on this island, either one of them fellas out there has got a clump of spunk or there’s a rapist ghost on the island, my moneys on either the ghost, or that big lad, David. But I wouldn’t know, no one tells me anything, I keep myself to myself and fuck everybody else’.

Interestingly, he didn’t think Boris. I still think Boris, though it could be both him and David, it could even be Alastair now, he seems the type to rape a woman pregnant, the sick bastard. ‘It’s all theory anyway, all talk. Suppose I just wanted a bit of lad chat with you ay’ Alastair backtracks.

Alastair stands up and walks over to his book shelf and picks out a novel to read. I can’t quite catch a glimpse of the title and before I know it he is escorting me out, ‘anyway out now, that’s enough, you have your story, tell the folks back home about how you met an oddball on an island full of “normal” people living a life of utopia. Funny when I was rich, I was seen as the abnormal and now that I’m poor I am seen as a creepy one. Can’t win’.

On my way out I trip over his designer footwear by the front door and in a world of no consumerism at all, I view to see him as the oddball. His radio finally stops trying to gain signal as Alastair turns it off and slams the door shut behind me.

Chapter 18

Boris was chopping into his front lawn with a pitch fork. He was struggling as he got tangled up in his overgrown grass. I laughed a little and then realised what I was laughing at, this weird odd, Igor type man. If he is the father to Teresa’s baby, do I really even want Teresa in my life, does she really see this low life as a good representation of a man.

I looked at Boris sometimes however and saw myself in him, I have to be honest. The lack of courtesy he had, almost rude. The ridiculous fringe, I had one of them too when I was in my teens. His casual way of going about things half arsed. He wasn’t doing anything with the grass there, he was just pretending.

As he dug away he noticed me and let the pitch fork rest in the soil and waved at me frantically. He seemed so happy to see me, he always did. He didn’t approach me like I was

some foreigner, but more as a friend he'd known for years. I bet if I was black, he would act different, probably a casual racist who gives off the impression that he's being nice, maybe everyone here is casually racist, hence the vote out. You don't just vote to leave a country if you like them all. There is always a hidden agenda I'm sure of it.

Christ he's walking towards me now. Stumbling over every plate of grass on the way. What a fool.

'Hello there' Boris said in a posh English accent, a poor attempt to hide away his strong Scottish accent.

'Hello Boris' I sighed. He tilted his head at me like a dog struggling to understand. 'What are you doing?' I asked him hardly concerned at all.

'There's showers coming tonight, so poking some holes in the soil so the water can seep through, help the grass grow' Boris replies looking at his messy, overgrown front lawn. Is he mad, he wants the soil to grow, is he trying to reach heaven. Maybe he sees this island as hell, maybe this is deeper than I thought, or perhaps he's just a scruffy oddball. Go with the latter.

'Saw you getting washed the other day naked' he winks at me. Ok, this is promising I thought to myself, maybe he's gay, that would eradicate any fears that he was the father to Teresa's bun in the oven.

'Yes I was naked, did you like what you saw?' I asked trying my absolute best to make it come across jokingly, I didn't want him getting any ideas.

Boris begins to laugh; I may have got the wrong end of the stick here. 'If I had a cock that big I certainly wouldn't be impressed with myself' he jokes back, I hope.

'Quite the whit Boris' he looks at me blankly, 'I get the feeling you weren't trying to catch a glimpse of me then, possibly somebody else' I reply with the smartest comment I can possible.

'Certainly hope you're not referring to my fair lady, Teresa' He seems genuinely offended so I stop the shenanigans. The tension is cut by Boris's sister stood at the doorway with just a nightie on and a warm cup of tea.

‘You two must be freezing, come in here, Boris stop being so rude and invite Jack in’ I forgot her name for a moment and then Boris thankfully reminded me, ‘Yes Guy coming in now, welcome to join’ Guy, how could I forget, a woman named Guy.

Boris and Guy both crushed me into their tiny couch in their kitchen, that’s right a couch in the kitchen, these two were in all purposes the definition of stupid millennials, without the technology. Boris to my right, Guy to me left, and I was stuck in the middle with a box on my lap of 16 year old developed photos.

‘Look how young we were, me and Guy’ Boris describes pointing to each of them in a photo of a happy family, a paddling pool and the sun peering out from behind the clouds. The island looked so well kept in the photo. ‘But its better now’ Boris said, I felt confused but I could only presume he saw it this way as it was just the way he was used to things now.

I flicked onto the next picture and this one had the two of them and another little girl, no adults in this one. Before properly looking at the photograph I recollected the previous image, ‘so who were the adults?’

‘Mother and father’ Guy revealed to me, she sipped her tea and still hadn’t made mine or Boris’s, not that I cared, lazy cow.

I then gave the new photo my full attention, and had to ask about the other girl, ‘who is she?’.

‘Ah you’ve met her’ Boris really perked up, ‘Its Teresa of course, little young Teresa, she should be in most of these pictures actually, we’re inseparable’ I thought oh god what does that mean, inseparable, in literal terms or as friends? I had to ask.

‘So are you two a thing then?’ I actually asked it, and suddenly I was shaking, I knew what the answer was going to be, I knew it was going to be bad, I went red. My hands were sweaty, my knees were weak, I had an Eminem track in my head. If he says he and she is a thing, I’m going to sleep with his sister, Guy, right here, right now. Right in front of him and he can watch or soil his grass.

‘Me and Teresa?’ He asks and guy starts to laugh, ‘of course not can you believe this, look at Guy she can hardly contain herself’ he breaks into a right big chuckle, what’s the big deal. ‘I and Teresa have been friends for years, since we were born; she’s friends with Guy too. In

fact I can't remember a moment in my life without her in my life. I would never even touch her, she's practically forbidden for me'.

'Oh' I shrugged my shoulders, but inside I could see all kinds of magic going on, all kinds of celebrations and sighs of relief. Didn't take long though before I realised I was mad, of course Teresa and Boris weren't a thing look at him. He's a scruff and she's well, also a scruff, but a gorgeous one.

'So who got her pregnant then, who's the lucky fella?' I asked again wincing at my own question. Both of them stopped laughing and answered seriously, 'oh we couldn't possibly say, but isn't it obvious' It is obvious to me yes, I thought, but I wanted to hear it. David. It was David, they didn't even need to tell me, they wouldn't have anyway, and everything was so secret and immature here. It was like an episode of Love Island. All the kids just get together and sleep with each other, sounds actually pretty good.

I came the assumption that Boris still got his end somewhere on the island, and I presumed it was David's sisters, one of them maybe both. To be honest now, I couldn't have cared less. Boris was out the way, but David, shit. He is something else.

'Well I'm quite done with the memory lane now, thank you guys, literally Guy and Boris' I make another poor joke and leave them to it. Boris doesn't see me out he instead collects the photos I "accidentally" dropped on the floor. Still didn't like Boris and as I left I was escorted by the one who welcomed me in in the first place. Guy then grabbed my arm tight.

Guy begins to stroke my arm and plays with her hair. She then begins to speak to me in a very soft version of her normal voice 'you know its slim pickings on this island Jack, and well, although I like living with my brother, I do like guests' Guy is attractive but her name is so off putting for a woman. Me being scared of what was to come I pulled my arms away and she came back for more.

'I can give you a free massage' she then gave some hand gesture which was quite obviously intending more than a massage. Do I just do it? Do I sleep with her, will Boris hear it all, and it's a small cottage, all these variables dancing around in my head. David would just do it, he's a man. He has my girl wrapped around his little finger. In that moments thought I felt sick. Guy was trying her best, but there was nothing, I had to leave. I was far too love sick.

‘Wait right there, before you go, I believe you’ve been to see Alastair?’ Guy suddenly went from being seductive to very serious, and if anything it was more of a turn on.

‘Yes I did’ I replied doing whatever she tells me to do.

‘Don’t listen to a word that he says. He’s a bastard’ she then grabs my crotch and suddenly leans in for a kiss, a full on Frenchie. I wasn’t focused on the kiss, I wanted to ask more questions.

‘wait, please’ I pull her off my face, ‘liar about what?’

‘He murdered Nigel’s wife, Teresa’s mother, he pushed her off a cliff’ She told me.

‘What’ I reply shocked and stunned, ‘why?’

‘I don’t know, nobody knows except for Alastair, and Nigel, so if you want a story Mr Journalist, get to the bottom of that’ Guy gives me a final peck on the lips and allows me to leave.

‘But Nigel said it was an aneurysm.’ The door slams shut in my face.

Chapter 19

I sat outside David’s house, the thick long grass whipping my legs. Sitting in a couched forward position I played with my knees a little. Giving the occasional irritable pinch. I moved my neck and head to try and peek inside his front windows to see where the noise was stemming from. The noise being David’s perfect guitar rendition of U2’s “With or without you”, so fitting.

An Irish band I see. Seems you haven’t completely neglected UK’s culture after all. He played guitar better than I could ever play an instrument in my life, why bother I suppose, I always had music readily available to me. A simple four digit code on a touch screen and I had 1000 songs to choose from. Here they had to make their own music.

I looked at David with a critical eyes, but couldn’t find anything to criticise about him. His massive arms, created from hard work, the type of hard work, I couldn’t dream of putting into practice. His ability to learn new languages Arabic, Spanish and English, his

intelligence, his chess skills. He was everything I could have been, but didn't bother becoming.

Suddenly it all hit home, and as a storm cloud formed over my head and threw rain at me I saw the beautiful, unmistakable silhouette of Teresa and her pregnant bump. She sat there looking into David's eyes I can imagine. I wanted to look away but couldn't.

The rain came thrashing down; my face was covered in droplets of sweet tasting water. The drops would fall off the cliff of my nose and into my crotch. The occasional drop would get lost in my tears. I was inconsolable. She was there, sure as hell about to sleep with a man who I could never compete with.

I just wasn't her type, and he was. That thing growing inside of her stems from him. Who am I to argue with that?

All these thoughts raced through my head at a hundred miles an hour and suddenly I stopped. I came up with a great idea.

'I could kill him!' I said out loud and then rapidly looked around to check if anyone was there, maybe his annoying sisters were lurching. Perhaps Boris was staring out his window at me. Guy could have been trying to seduce me. Nigel and Alastair could have been on a walk. No one was around me, I was alone on an island in that moment.

The only way I can beat David, is by killing him. If he is out the way, then maybe me and Teresa can raise the child as our own. A happy family. I'm better for her than he is, I love her more. He could not love her as much as I love her. I could do this for her.

How do I do it, I considered. Maybe the axe he was using when I first saw him, that big sharp blade, a perfect way to end him straight away. No question asked. Chop him into little pieces and place him in a broth and then feed him to Alastair, he's a murderer too after all I just found out. We could be murderous bastards together.

Wait for the lovely Teresa to leave and then make my move, grab his axe, stand behind him and swing it into the back of his head. No competition, no problems. A perfect future for me and Teresa, I could move here even. I like this island. I smiled so much as I thought of it, the rain got heavier but it only increased my adrenaline.

Then I proceed to his legs, and his arms and finally his torso and then just chuck his muscular, fibered body in the North Sea. Maybe steal his intelligence by eating his brains. Become the man I've always wanted to be, its fool proof. It is a bit sinister though.

I could use Boris's pitchfork, I could see it right there, stuck in the ground, I could almost reach it. I could just smash into his house now and stab him in the chest with it and stand on his corpse with Teresa watching. The beta male becomes the alpha male against all odds. A true David and Goliath contest.

Something about that wouldn't impress Teresa I don't feel. Knowing her like I do, I feel she would prefer a more thought-out approach. Maybe bash his head to death with the book Gulliver's travels. Smash it into his face, over and over and over again until he takes his last breath. These scenarios were making me weak at the knees, I was so excited and so happy thinking of them. I could picture them in my head perfectly. The David stew, the David on a fork, the smashed up face of David.

I needed rid of him. Suddenly though clarity hit me and I realised I wasn't going to do that, was I. I don't know anymore. I stood up and walked towards the front window. I saw her there clear as day right up close to him, not yet kissing. Not yet. Still he plucked his guitar to the point of pretentiousness.

I was worried as to where his annoying sisters were, they were such oddballs. But I had a mission. I walked around the back of his house and could see the axe stuck in a big log of wood. I approached it with the most intense eyes. I could see myself turning mad. Mad with envy, mad with love, mad with something. I clutched the handle of the axe and found myself struggling. I was sweating and dripping with rain. I really yanked at the axe but couldn't release the blade from the log. I tried again and again and nothing, it wasn't budging at all.

The rain stopped and the wind came, it blew me and I fell to the floor like the frailest piece of paper. I couldn't kill anyone. Look at me. The guitar stopped playing, and I presumed that only meant one thing. I didn't dare look through the window again. They were having sex, I could feel it. My lovely Teresa, with David's child already inside her, sleeps with him once again.

I would have swapped my life for his in a heartbeat. I was so jealous of him. My liking of Teresa, had gone beyond love, past obsession and dwarfed insanity, it was a sin. I

had put her on a pedestal to make god look small. It hurt so much. If I had died in that moment, I would have died the most depressed man in the history of humanity. I could not understand why this hurt so much, but it did. It was like they were doing it to spite me. They weren't thinking about me. Not even for a second. I had hoped the wind would blow the pain away, it didn't. I gave the axe one last yank with the expectation it would come loose.

The axe was unmoved, I had no chance. No chance of grabbing it, no chance of killing David, no chance of being Teresa's one and only. How could she not love me, how could she love him. I even wish she was with Boris now over him; I'd have a chance at least. I made myself laugh with that thought. At least I ain't Boris, loser.

I thought to myself staring at the house, they're both in there; I could just run in and punch her stomach. I could kill their future right here, right now. But I didn't, I thought about it. I couldn't do that, I'm too nice.

Too nice, too nice? I'll show them all too nice; I grabbed my pen and clutched it in my hand. I considered what to do with it, stab them both. No one will ever have to know. My mind was in bits, I knew I was going to kill someone, I just didn't know yet how, what weapon, or when. Something had clicked in my head though, and a killer was definitely born.

Chapter 20

In order to kill I had to be prepared to leave no trace of myself on the island. So I was making sure my hired boat was ready to leave as soon as requested. In order to dislodge the large vessel from its settled position on the beach I needed assistance.

The assistance was provided by my host Nigel, the father to the love of my life. His daughter was the sole reason why the only love I had ever felt was unrequited love and nothing more. It wasn't his fault, it wasn't my fault, it was David's fault, and he must be punished.

Despite the temptation eating away at me to tell Nigel my true feelings for his pregnant daughter, I kept it under wraps. I was also disturbed by the constant yelling of Nigel to pull one way and then the other. The boat would soon begin to move as we tugged away on the rope that he had claimed from his conservatory.

I could see the boat slowly shake its way to freedom and now we waited. The tide would come along and wash the boat away with ease, so we quickly anchored it down for when I needed it. Nigel explained what I had to do in order to free the boat. 'You tug on the such and such, you pull it and push it and then there you go tu libre' your free in Spanish, he must have known Spanish, but I didn't care enough to ask further. I didn't really listen to his instructions carefully, my mind was elsewhere, in fact it was everywhere. It was concentrating on his daughter, the face of the man I hated, the face of the man I used to hate, being Boris. My mind also couldn't help but panic the large scratches on the bottom of the boat where so noticeable; the fisherman was definitely going to charge me for this. How the hell am I going to pay him?

'Quite the scrapes on the bottom there!' Nigel states the bleeding obvious.

'Yes, I'm going to have to pay for that when I get back to home shores' I reply scratching the back of my head stressed.

'So how is the blog coming along, can I read it?' Nigel asks and I almost immediately reply 'no!'

'Not yet anyway, it's not done, needs a lot of editing' I was concerned to show him, it was just an article of lies, anything to make the blog seem of more interest, I was a desperate up and coming journalist after all. No journalist made it telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth did they?

'I must ask though Nigel' I point my finger and wag as he finishes off anchoring my rent-a-vessel down, 'how did you say your wife died again, was it May?' I asked nervously, the wag of my finger was a coping mechanism.

'May died from an aneurysm' Nigel reconfirmed, something didn't sit right however.

'Someone on the island, I won't name them, told me that she was murdered, is that true?' I asked wincing, I was panicking, what if he flipped.

'I'd rather not talk about speculation' Nigel shies away and then looks out to the setting sun.

'You can tell me, was it Alastair?' I shimmy towards him.

'Look, I don't want to talk about it, the man was obsessed, he was in love, it's all fine now, it's in the past' Nigel confirmed, no tear in his eye, more anger than anything else.

‘You don’t seem too sure Nigel, if I was you and someone had killed the love of my life, I would want revenge’ who the hell did I think I was all of a sudden, I had the thirst to murder and now I wanted death on every turn.

‘I’m not a vengeful person, I’m a survivor you see Jack. I don’t wish ill on anyone, I just wish for my own safety. I’m selfish really, you could say’ Nigel was a sweetheart, the guy was so relaxed and mellow in every thought process he had. He didn’t deserve this pain.

Like that I stopped my line of questioning. If he didn’t want to talk about, he shouldn’t have to. He’s a bigger man than me.

As he walked away from me and up towards the top of the small cliff, I couldn’t help ask him one more question however. ‘Is that why Alastair is exiled on this island?’

Nigel chuckled to himself and replied ‘he exiled himself the minute he voted to remain in Britain. The irony that we wanted to become an independent state and the one person who didn’t, became an independent man. That’s why he is treated the way he is, because he wants to be’.

Chapter 21

After following Nigel’s path back to his house and the plans on how to kill David still not totally figured out I was slightly dazed and lost in that moment. The fences on the island had become very familiar to me, the long over grown grass and the clean tidy house further up belonging to David had all become sick memories of a broken heart.

Speaking of which, David was in there, in the house, with Teresa I can only imagine. And then I heard her laughing and I heard him laughing and Nigel seemed very confused. He barraged his way into the cottage of his rapidly.

‘Erm, excuse me’ Nigel shouted. I could only imagine what he had just found, a naked pregnant daughter, a half-naked Arab man, a pillow covering his private parts, him explaining himself with guilt all over his face. Surely Nigel knew they were a thing though.

I poked my head into the cottage to have a look, one eye closed and saw they were both fully dressed.

‘You better not have finished that jigsaw without me you two’ Nigel then says with a beaming smile. The three of them laugh together like total arseholes with no life at all.

‘Oh you’ve brought him have you, I thought he was going?’ David asks Nigel talking about me like I wasn’t there.

‘No, we were just organising his boat, getting it ready for him to set off tomorrow morning’ Nigel explained to David. David stared at me like he knew a secret about me, that look of pure smugness, perhaps the blog maybe? I asked myself. He couldn’t possibly have a clue. He winked at me, what does he know? He couldn’t have found my blog tucked away neatly in Gulliver’s Travels, page 275. Please, no.

He nods his head and looks at me with devilish eyes. Shit! He’s found my blog of lies and nastiness. I begged him with my eyes not to say a word. Or, I considered, I could just kill him a bit earlier than planned. Either way if the guy was going to say anything to anyone, he better make it quick, because he’ll be dead before he knows it, poor guy has no idea. Smile now David, whilst you can.

And whilst he’s at it he can remove his workmanlike, greasy, coalmining, firm hands off my lover’s leg. And unwrap her skinny arms from around his bulky trunk arms. He’s going to say something soon, I can tell.

His mouth begins to open, and he reaches for his back pocket of his ripped jeans. David was on the brink and just as he was about to reveal my blog to Nigel and my Teresa and expose me for the liar that I was, a painful sound came from the kitchen. Nigel’s face immediately turned to excitement, and he let off a breath of laughter as he ran to the noise. The noise being that of Teresa and her labour pains. It was time.

‘Coming darling’ Nigel comforts her straight away and David reacts calmly and moves towards me. He sniffs me out, he stares at me in disgust. ‘Don’t think I’m not going to tell everyone here what kind of person you are’ He pulls out the blog from his back pocket and unfolds it in front of me.

‘Listen to that’ I try and redirect mine and David’s conversation towards Teresa. ‘Shouldn’t you be more concerned about your child being born, than trying to catch me out?’ I asked pointing into the kitchen and still hearing the screaming. It was horrible, she was in so much pain, I wanted to help but I couldn’t. My poor Teresa was in pain. I blamed David.

I grasped the pen behind my back and was prepared to lunge at him. Was I about to become a killer, could I even muster the strength to kill him, the guy is huge. I will kill him, I assured myself. No one screws with the love of my unrequited love and gets away with it.

Then I saw it, he put it straight in my face, my blog. Yet to be edited, it was a mess and it didn't make any sense. But I read it for the first time and for the first time I could hear myself through me. I sounded like a total dick.

Upon my first evening at the crumbling shack on the island I was warned of the terrors that be at the abandoned supermarket just down the road from where I was staying. Haunted it was said to be. Haunted by a man named Alastair whose spirit was killed in the aftermath of the referendum. Nigel the man who's shack I stayed at, and the man who was self-proclaimed leader of his fare Island clan was an unwelcoming, estranged man who had completely felt the aftermaths of the vote and this could be told by his depressed demeanour and inability to keep his own sanity. I would hear him talk to himself in the night, and I would hear him smacking his own head against the window and when I offered him a sandwich he declined, 'he doesn't eat processed foods'. Not too weird until I realised that he didn't have to eat at all, the man never ate, yet remained relatively large. I was beginning to think that the people living here, were perhaps not humans, but ghosts. Ghosts of the islands past.

Nigel's daughter the heavily pregnant Teresa, was certainly quite the favourite on the island, and despite there being other feminine options the young men seemed to choose her every time, god only knows who impregnated her. Perhaps it was both Boris and David. Both however deny because they are lying, two faced customers. Although granted, I do believe the island to be haunted; perhaps it was a miraculous conception by a ghost.

Boris is the definition of a man who is lost, he eats on rabbits all day, and this can be told by his underweight body and lack of fibre in his hair. Give it a few more years and he will be no more, which is of course if he isn't a ghost anyway. Boris and David both seem awfully scared of Nigel; Nigel feeds off their fear, and offers them very little comfort. Boris' sister gives out massages to everyone on the island, and I have a feeling she gives out more.

The island has gone mad, since the vote they have stocked tins and all kinds in a conservatory. It is like a nuclear war is about to take place on the island. They did not assist me with my boat that I crashed into the beach and I think is due to them enjoying having a

man who actually knows a bit about the outside world. So much so that they stole my phone off me and most of my clothes. I'm lucky that I still have hold of this blog.

The island is a racist mess, they hate people like me and they'd probably hate you too, I said I was of Jewish origin and they kicked me off the island. I'm relieved to be honest that I'm still alive, I had to fight to get away and they told me stories of the things they did to the last few Jews and Muslims on the island. That's why they voted out, they didn't want anyone who wasn't Fare island blood living there. Well I say Farewell Island, farewell. Highly do not recommend.

~~*Some Arabs guy thought he could racially abuse my Jewish heritage but I showed him. I left my own fair share of sly digs in on the racist Muslim, but of course he wasn't the only racist, I had to be strong willed and courageous to defend not only my heritage but my nation.*~~

Everything I had written was a lie. There wasn't a single shred of decent reporting in there at all. I had abandoned all my principles in writing and journalism to create an utterly fictional story. Am I this dishonest, or am I just incredibly creative. Or perhaps I'm just messed up. I felt like I was the monster on the island. However it as the type of crap people reading it would want to believe.

David then dropped the blog onto the floor and allowed me chance to pick it up. David then waits for me to make some sort of move, but I'm frozen in time.

'Pick that up, put it in your pocket and get the fuck off this island, you lying piece of British scum' David orders and I quickly reply by scrambling on my knees picking up my blog and doing as he said, folding it into my pocket.

'Good, now go say goodbye to Nigel and Teresa, and I will never mention the shit you wrote about us' he was sparing me if anything and although Teresa and Nigel had more concerning matters to deal with I still poked my head into the kitchen to say my swift goodbyes. My farewells.

They didn't reply to my well wishes, what I did see was Nigel helping with the birth. The idea of that made me a little bit uncomfortable and seemed odd to me again. But if I'd learnt anything from being on Fare Island it was to not make assumptions and not create lies in my mind.

I took a final look at Teresa, and although flustered and sweaty, and red cheeked, she still looked perfect as she gave birth to I'm sure was beautiful baby. Her eyes caught mine as I left the kitchen and I felt damaged. Loving her had done me no favours at all. She had done me no favours at all.

David suddenly clinched onto my shoulders and forced me out of the cottage.

After he escorted me outside I managed to break free from his grasp and worried I had to ask, 'why are you so concerned about me when your baby is being born?'

'My baby?' David asks confused and then continues to force me towards my boat.

'Yes your and Teresa's baby?' I asked again in clear English for him to understand.

'It ain't my baby.' David revealed to me and I was left totally bewildered, so much so that his soft pushing on my back was making me tumble and fall towards my boat.

Who's baby is it? I thought to myself and then as I hopped onto my boat I snapped and asked the question.

'Go on David, you be the one, who's baby is it?' I asked him shouting it at the top of my voice, 'put me out of my god damn misery?' I was concerned, is this going to be twist ending, is it mine? Wouldn't bloody surprise me.

'Just get the hell away from us' David wouldn't say. Frustrated by his secrecy I again clutched my pen in my hand, considered jumping onto him from my boat and stabbing him in the neck. The satisfaction of killing him would have however faded after hearing he wasn't Teresa's impregnator.

Could I trust him though, it surely must be him, it has to be him. I was so confused. I just decided to go for it. I jumped back off my boat and landed on his tall, muscular figure and sat over his chest as he lay there struggling to breath on the sandy beach. I lifted my pen high in the air and then swung it back down and caught sweet connection with his neck.

I took a massive deep breath as he panicked beneath me. The only thought that rushed through my head was confusion and excitement. No thought of what I did was wrong, just the thought that I had to do this. For Teresa, for me, for us. I pulled the pen out of his neck; the blood squirted all over the bottom of my rented vessel and submerged the pen into his neck once more.

I then got up off of him and watched him squirm, fighting for his life, covering his neck with his hand that was quickly pouring blood all over the beach and reaching for the shore. I felt relieved. Overwhelmingly satisfied. I had achieved an impossible feat. I had killed a man that I saw as perfect. A bigger man, a more powerful man. Little, old me had conquered him and that was it.

Now for the consequence, I began to panic, I had just murdered someone in the name of love and passion. Maybe they had some unwritten rule like in Italy where murder is allowed to be if it's out of passion. I very much doubt it. I had blood all over my hands and I quickly launched my pen into the North Sea and it washed away. I too ran into the North Sea to wash all my guilt away.

There wasn't much guilt though.

I thought if I acted quick enough I could drag David's dead body into the sea too and let him just drift away without anyone knowing. Perhaps even write a letter, a simple goodbye one.

I couldn't cope with raising a child with Teresa; I decided to go live with my family in Britain. Got a lift there by Paul. Paul's a great guy, wouldn't harm a fly.

Yours truly David (Arab/Muslim one can't remember his surname, in fact just leave out surname)

That sort of letter.

As I dragged his body and the trail of blood followed across the sand towards the water I looked up. I could see standing over the cliff edge was Alastair. I'd been caught, but Alastair simply shook his head and walked away calmly with his hands behind his back and whistled. I presume to go and tell Nigel what I had done, but everyone was surely too occupied with Teresa's new-born. There was a chance I could get away with this and get off in time before everyone found out.

I was very stressed and managed to let go of David's body and he began to float away. His lifeless body rushed in and out from the waves. The surrounding water was turning red. I fell to my knees and let out the slightest tear. Not because of what I had done, but because what I had done didn't change a thing, Teresa still didn't love me.

Chapter 22

The water surrounding my floating vessel was calm. There was no reason for me to panic out here, I was all alone. No sign of any life with the exception of my beating chest. I had seen Farewell island. I had seen the portrayal of Utopia and the display of dystopia in one visit. Given the time I had in the middle of the North Sea I was able to recollect my thoughts and write to you. This is my love letter to Teresa, finished, the truth. My real feelings displayed to you. Hope she likes it.

The water was incredibly red again. The reflection of the morning red sky above me was gleaming and my eyes could barely focus on it. I rested my pen, not the one I used as a weapon and laid back and rested my eyes. I wasn't quite ready to return to Gateshead just yet. Just a few more moments of peace and tranquillity on the sea.

I felt good. I let the sun struggle to kiss me with any real heat. It is a bit bitter in temperature it's fair to say. After a short while of relaxation and stress free calmness I looked behind me to see the island, dwarfed by the distance I was away from it. No intention of ever returning to the place I committed such a hideous crime. The place where I felt so completely dismantled and lost in my love and twisted appreciation for the people there. I was mentally stuck in the middle of home, and Fare Island. Physically I could sail to either with ease.

I stood up and rested my hand over my eyes to shade them from the morning sun. As I look out to the sea I see a small seal floating closer and closer towards my boat. Looks like a seal from a distance anyway. Perhaps it's a baby dolphin. Isn't moving with any vigour or excitement. A trail of dark follows it behind like a shadow.

The object finally hits my boat and I check it straight away. I have nothing to reach out and grab it with other than my bare hands, but then I see it clearly. I don't want to touch it. I don't even really want to look at it. It's not an animal at all. It's a baby, a human baby. A dead human baby. A destroyed, savaged human baby. I dare not describe it anymore, but if I had to in simple terms, I would say it had been mauled to death. Sliced, bitten, burnt.

I feel very little sympathy in that moment; I just sat there and refused to look anymore. I didn't throw up, or feel sick. I feel nothing really. Something was itching the back of my mind, like guilt. Or an idea, or an inkling. Is this dead baby's origin from the Island? I play with my hair violently thinking to myself I'm going insane. I know I'm not insane. Not this time.

Fair to say I'm sailing back to Fare Island. Facing some demons, but challenging some too.

Chapter 23

All the secrets are revealed, Alastair killed Nigel's wife due to her lack of authority in clinching a deal even though Nigel claimed it was because he loved her.

The beach looks the same even after a few hours had passed for me to write my long letter to Teresa. The blood of David all over the coast. I had the letter in my hands. My blog remained firmly folded in my back pocket. David was out of the way, Teresa is all mine. But I am worried that she might be a baby killer. That they all might be baby killers.

On my way to Nigel's cottage I see Alastair sitting over the edge of the cliff fishing. His rod resting besides him and he sits there chilled and relaxed. He knows what I've done, and he has seen me, but remains calm and focused on fishing.

'What you fishing for?' I ask curiously.

'For evidence!' Alastair looks at me and smiles.

Evidence, I can't help but chuckle. I know exactly what he's fishing for, who he's fishing for. A certain dead body. But why, he saw me do it, he saw me throw David into the North Sea, why is he looking for evidence to incriminate me, he's got me. I'm literally right here, on a plate for you.

'Any luck?' I interrogate further.

'I'm starving too' Alastair replies with the most ambiguous answer possible. He did however say it in a very sinister way, like he was planning on eating something that wasn't all together normal. His smile really gave it away; he looked like a Cheshire cat. An unusual response by a man who has been rather unorthodox since I met him, but so far very honest.

'You must be so confused mentally to even consider coming back here after getting away' he goes on. I itch the back of my leg with my other foot in nervousness.

'Why wouldn't I come back, I just went for a little sail, is there something you're all not telling me?' I ask stumbling as I speak.

Alastair doesn't answer my question; he just turns his head away from me and faces the water. He quickly monitors his fishing rod making sure it is still in order and eases back into his chair again to relax, staring at the sun. 'The babies born, rejoice, the baby's born' he tells me and then rests his hands on his head like he was in the Bahamas.

This is big news to me. The baby was born, though I can't hear any screaming, crying, anything. I make a move towards Nigel and Teresa's cottage and do so with a serious stride and panicked springs in my steps. I am worried about what I am about to witness.

The closer I get to the cottage door the more noise I begin to hear. The muffled sounds of chit chat inside. The windows steamed up with an atmosphere, the condensation caused by a gathering of many people. There must be almost every inhabitant in there. The whole of Fare Island crammed into a little cottage, what's the big occasion I wonder, and why is Alastair again left out?

I have a quick glance down the island to see David's house and Boris's cottage. Both of which now tarnished in my mind for many reasons, reasons such as hate, guilt and anger. David's house now particularly resonated with me, not because of my brutal murder of him, but because of his ability to claim the girl I love. Even when he's dead he still wins.

Boris's cottage was a mess, and I simply just laugh to myself and contemplate how stupid I was thinking that that man could ever even be considered in the run in as potential mates for my Teresa. And then like clockwork, I can hear his sniggering little laugh coming from within Nigel's cottage. I see through the drip of condensation on the window him hugging Teresa tightly. Already making his move, David's only been missing for a few hours. You have me to thank for that Boris, I killed your best friend. Your greatest fiend.

It's only right that I should be invited in to see the child. I presume the child has been born and all is happy judging by the smiling faces.

I approach the front door and ready a knock and then Alastair yells behind me 'don't bother, you won't like what you see' I do hesitate for a moment, but I ask no questions, not this time and change my stance, instead of knocking I just go straight in.

The noise of conversations and happiness throughout the cottage changes to complete deafening silence. Boris pokes his head around the corner to see me. His sister, Guy, likewise. Boris doesn't say a thing; he just smiles and holds his arms out to embrace my body

in a welcoming hug. I almost fall into his arms, and he grabs me in a Lenny-like-vice grip. I can feel my lungs becoming crushed under his strength, and soon he releases thankfully. I breathe a sigh of relief. He then caresses my cheek and whispers in my ear 'you're just in time, we don't know where David is, but at least we have you' I was clueless as to what that meant.

Then Guy approached me as Boris stroked my eye as if wiping away a tear and then left us. 'Nigel said not to grow too attached to you, that you'd leave, all Brits ever do is leave. Think they're better than everyone else. Not you though, you not gonna leave us are you?' Baffled I pull a confused face and shake my head as if the idea of me leaving the island is preposterous.

'Where's Teresa and the child?' I ask completely ignoring what Guy had just said to me, what a stupid name.

'The child? In the kitchen' Guy informs me innocently. 'You need to go and take a seat in the living room, please. Guests get the couch' she then grabs my crotch and bites her lip before shouting at the top of her voice 'Give me a baby! Give me a British baby!' I manage to flick her hand off of me before Teresa can see and I walk into the kitchen to see a gathering in the kitchen.

Surrounding the kitchen table where I had my rabbit stew, is Nigel, David's two irritating sisters who care to forget about and never talk about and her. Teresa. But what are they looking at?

I walk past Boris who is sat on the floor licking his lips like an ape. I touch Teresa on the shoulder. Teresa then bends her neck and rubs her face against my hand and begins to purr like a cat. 'You smell differently' she says to me, surely confusing me for someone else. She might think I'm David. My thoughts didn't consider this possibility for long. Suddenly I saw something much more important, something that for the first time took precedence over Teresa. A dead baby on the table.

A new born baby. With various grass and tins of baked beans and all kinds surrounding it. The stove boiling away water and stock behind Nigel who was praying. Teresa turned around and noticed it was me and looked horrified. The sisters said something, but it was irritating so my brain automatically drowned out the noise they made.

‘What are you doing back here, I thought you’d gone’ Teresa looked at me wide open eyed.

Shaking and struggling to catch breath I looked at the corpse on the table and as Nigel broke his prayer and looked up at me, he smiled picked up the baby and dropped it into the stove of boiling water.

‘Everybody’ Nigel begins to order his people, ‘please go and sit in the living room, I will serve you your food any moment now. Just need to speak to the Brit in private’.

The two sisters of David left, not knowing that I had indeed been the reason for his disappearance. Teresa however went the long way round and went up to Nigel, grabbed his face and kissed him. Not like a daughter to her father, not a kiss on the cheek or a peck on the lips, but a full on passionate display of love and profanity and incest. My Teresa, what is she doing? Please no, not this, what is going on. A tear builds up in my eye, everything had become a mess. For the first time I had felt a million miles from home. Get your lips away from Teresa, you fucked up old man. But Teresa enjoyed it, it was two ways, she wouldn’t let go of him and he wouldn’t let go of her. I just watched. I felt sick, my stomach hurt, my head vertigo and my eyes dripped tears that felt like blood.

Then my emotions became worse when I saw the broth bubbling with that poor newborn inside. Teresa finally let go of her father’s lips and then he proceeded to grind salt into the broth. She was still beautiful as she shrugged past me into the living room. Nothing could truly taint her in my eyes, I was utterly blinded by love. I even killed for her. Killed an innocent man out of some subconscious feeling I had.

I composed myself and raised my head off the floor to look deep into Nigel’s eyes; my eyes must have looked satanic. Nigel smiled at me with lipstick across his face from his daughter’s lips. That sick, evil bastard of a man had just put his new born grandchild into a broth of boiling water like a lobster.

The silence was interrupted by the whistling wind outside, quite the pathetic fallacy when I think of it.

‘Don’t worry, we’re not going to hurt you Paul’ Nigel reached his hand out for me to grab; I refuse to touch that hand. ‘We can’t touch a Brit like you, otherwise that would become a British problem, and we don’t want to cause Britain any problems’.

‘What the hell is going on?’ I asked with a burning desire to find out, I was incredibly angry.

‘What’s going on, I’ll tell you what’s going on Paul’ Nigel suggests for me to sit down. ‘You think when we voted out all them years ago, decided to break away from Britain and be independent, do you think we were well informed?’.

‘Do you think the people of this island were told the truth, were able to make the informed correct decision. Of course not. We were lied to, I was lied to. You come here like a backpacker on a hostel crawl across Europe or South America like some kind of rich kid. Completely ignorant’ he slams his fist on the table. ‘When we voted out of Britain to become independent, we didn’t think that would mean we’d be completely neglected’

‘But you haven’t’ I argued ‘Norway, you said you had Norway’

‘A trade deal with Norway Paul?’ He laughs ‘Don’t make stupid fucking jokes around my table, where I eat a well-earned meal. Norway won’t come near us, they have it well over there, they have their own trade deal, it’s all wonderful over there. Do you seriously think we export sandstone to other countries in exchange for goods, of course not, every country in the world has god damn sandstone. You think we eat rabbits all day every day, you think that was rabbit stew you ate the other day. If you eat rabbit and only rabbit as protein you will die. I am not dying because we voted out like ignorant, uninformed fools’ Nigel then returns to his broth and stirs the wooden spoon in it like its second nature.

‘So she was pregnant with your baby... that’s sick, that’s disgusting, I feel ill’ I can hardly get my words out, my lip was quivering.

‘Yeah I fucked my daughter, I fuck them all. Every day. David’s youngest sister is pregnant right now, noticed the little belly. I need to provide food, I need to put food on the table’

‘You say you were uninformed, what do you mean?’ I asked.

‘My wife, the lovely May. She was the whole leader of this organisation, this Farewell Island project, and she lied about everything. Ok she didn’t lie so much, but she certainly didn’t deliver on her promise. When we all voted out of Britain, we were expecting a deal of some sort, we did not expect to be left to our devices and stripped of all our privileges. The runway shut, the supermarket shut, boats taken away, there was no way out of this shithole. There was only one way out, we were starving, all of us, me, Teresa, May, the rest. So I killed May, my own wife and we all ate her that night. I provided and in doing so became a very popular man. But made sure that any visitor would be told it was the creep down the road Alastair’

Nigel laughs to himself before finishing his explanation ‘Alastair is now accustomed to the idea of playing the role as a creep. We know you killed David, he told us... I have to say, and think I speak for all of us when I say this, thank you for that. He’s been strutting his stuff about for the last 15 years, I’m sick to death of it, touching the women where he wants, and flirting with my Teresa. Boris is alright he knows where he stands. David was one who voted to remain the creep, and ever since he has been so self-righteous about the whole thing. Fuck him. Now because you’ve killed him, Alastair’s out there fishing his corpse so we can have a bit of desert, you can stay if you like. I mean you enjoyed the rabbit stew I served you the other night’ he laughs at me. He’s mocking me.

Quick mock him back ‘yeah it was bit too overcooked for my liking’ I threw up in my mouth a bit as I responded; I ate parts of a baby. I murdered a completely innocent man. Fair to say I really screwed up on this one.

‘So you going to go back to the queen and the red post boxes?’ he asks me tongue and cheek. ‘I think I might’.

Nigel reaches up to grab a few bowls from his top cupboard and I strongly consider stabbing him with his knife resting on the table. Christ I want to. I reach out but pull my hands back.

Nigel turns his head and sees me stood there waiting, not sure what I’m waiting for. ‘Go home Paul. You’ve got your blog, write what you want, the world already writes garbage about us anyway. A want-to-be pathetic journalist isn’t going to make any real difference’. Well that was me told. My life analysed in two seconds by an old crooked man, who not only produced but is also fucking the love of my life. And with that I drop to my knees and begin to cry all over his kitchen floor. Fare Island had destroyed me.

It was all too much, the cannibalism, the guilt, the blood on my hands, the incest, the smiling old man in front of me, the first person I’ve ever loved more than myself, my shit writing, Boris’s retardation, Guy’s name, the two sisters infuriating personalities and bubbling broth that is making the most obnoxious screaming sound ever.

I flipped, grabbed the knife in front of me and I got to my feet quickly and backed away out of the kitchen and into the living room, Nigel was too focused on his food to notice me missing. I kept an eye on his as I backed up, making sure I didn’t miss any smugness on

the old bastards face. In the living room Boris was awfully quiet, and even his silence seemed to create a messy atmosphere. The two sisters looked very unconcerned about their brothers disappearance, I knew why now of course. Guy was probably fingering herself in the corridor to the idea of me giving her a new baby to eventually eat with the rest of the sick inhabitants on the island.

Then there was Teresa, sat as if nothing abnormal was happening. Her hands on her upper thighs like an innocent young woman. Her smile so cute, so lovable. Her head tilted towards me in such a way that seduced me to trembling knees. Her luscious, shiny brunette hair and her infuriatingly perfect persona. How could I hold someone like her in such high regard?

I revealed the knife to her from behind my back and her eyes turned from innocents to shock. She shook her head and made little sound. I pulled a face that must have looked like the devil incarnate towards her. I clung tightly onto her hair and pulled up. Exhausted from only recently giving birth, she gave little resistance and no one was quick to her aid. I had dreamt for the last few night of ragging her hair and showing her a lesson or two, but never like this, never in anything but love. In a way this was because I loved her too, I couldn't let my idea of her be tarnished by what I'd just seen, if I kill her now there might still be a way back, possible redemption for her.

I held her close and whispered in her ear that everything was going to be alright, before I balanced the blade on her neck. I moved towards the front door, she was in my grasp, I had the chance to kill her now. She had torn me apart, I loved her and I was doing this out of love, I'm sure they would all understand. Eventually Teresa gave up and just allowed me to take her.

Nigel had panic written across his face when he found out and slowly walked towards me with his hand out trying to calm me down, like I was about to jump off a cliff in suicide. The usual clichés like 'you don't want to do this' or 'just give her to me; we can forget all this' suck my dick old man was all I could think about in response.

Eventually I got her outside, the rest of the civilians of Fare Island in front of me. Front row seats to watch me slice the throat of Nigel's daughter, sex partner and lodger. Just as I was about to slice her neck and end her life, end my love for her, free myself forever, she whispered back 'Help me!' it was directed at me. Help me? From what myself, I began to

think, or is she aware that the way Nigel treats her is not normal, does she know that Nigel is a sick bastard who has locked her in a cottage and raped her and killed her children. Do they all know about how sick he is? Do they all just have Stockholm syndrome but know they do. Maybe she wants to come back with me to Britain and live with me. Maybe she would have voted remain, maybe all of them apart from Nigel would have voted remain. Perhaps he's lied about everything, I don't know anymore.

I released the knife from her neck but she didn't move, she whispered again 'save. Me!' and then kissed my cheek subtly so Nigel would miss it with his terrible vision.

Suddenly everything went to black.

Chapter 24

I woke up from what seemed an eternal sleep. The sky was blue, not a cloud in sight, I felt I was floating. I think I might be dead. Eventually I came round and realised I wasn't. I was just on my boat, floating towards the coast of Scotland.

I quickly looked behind me and saw no island, I was too far away. I could see the port in which I borrowed the boat from. The fisherman was waving in the distance towards me. How had I ended up here? I had no idea, it took me a while to finally conclude that the only person it could have been who knocked me out was Alastair delicately creeping up behind me.

The fisherman soon roped me in and tied the boat back onto the pier and helped me up. I had dry blood at the back of my head. Blood in the boat. The fisherman was going to comment on it and decided not to. He then went to check on the scratches on the bottom of his vessel, the blood of David etched across it like I remember.

I rapidly checked my back pocket and found my blog. But there was no sign of my love letter, that had gone. Hopefully it had fallen in the hands of Teresa.

'So how was Fare Island then?' The fisherman asked in his incredibly strong Scottish accent, much stronger than that of those of Fare Island.

'I can see why they call it Farewell Island' I smile whilst itching the blood on the back of my head.

‘You’ve had quite a nasty little accident by the looks of it sir’ he checks my head and seems concerned.

‘I’m glad to be back in Britain’ I confirmed to him with my teeth gleaming on show a lot more yellow and unhygienic than when he first met me.

‘Delightful to have you and my boat back in one piece too sir’ the fisherman said to me.

I walked past him and just kept walking towards the land end of the pier. He watched me go by and I began to think to myself all about Teresa, David, the things I’d seen, the things I’d done, the things I’d thought. Who was I? I had never been so confused and scared in all my life, so unsafe and so unsure. I felt like I was losing friends I never had, and keeping enemies I never wanted to keep. I never felt so little power in my life to change anything, yet I had never felt so guilty for instigating change. I looked at my blood soaked hands and thought how I killed David and gave them a free meal. I travelled, and I struggled, glad to be home.

The fisherman shouted one last thing to me before I re-entered the oblivion of Great Britain ‘Fair to say sir, there ain’t a scratch on the boat’.

The end.

Check if morning in chapter 22 and 23 makes sense