

It's 3 a.m. and Elizabeth Gilbert is sobbing on the bathroom floor. She's in her 30s, she has a husband, a house, they're trying for a baby - and she doesn't want any of it.

A bitter divorce and a turbulent love affair later, she emerges battered and bewildered and realises it is time to pursue her own journey in search of three things she has been missing: pleasure, devotion and balance.

So she travels to Rome, where she learns Italian from handsome, brown-eyed identical twins and gains 25 pounds, an ashram in India, where she finds that enlightenment entails getting up in the middle of the night to scrub the temple floor, and Bali where a toothless medicine man of indeterminate age offers her a new path to peace: simply sit still and smile. And slowly happiness begins to creep up on her.