

**Chapter One, in which we meet our heroine, some pot is smoked,
and people swim with the fishes, in more ways than one.**

It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents ... and there was no point in doing anything. The houseboat was safely at anchor, there was wine in the rack and purple kush on the coffee table. Our heroine sighed, picked up her grinder, and started to roll another one.

"Thank god ... or Al Gore ... for the internet, and who knows whom for satellites and wifi," she thought as she searched again for any information about Andy Anderson or his company, Sandy Developments Ltd. There was virtually no trace of him on the internet or on the island, and though she loathed him, she was nonetheless afraid he had come to an unpleasant end. It would have to wait until tomorrow.

"Sufficient unto the day are the evils thereof," she said to her dog, Taxi, as she finished her joint, and nestled into the large bed in the aft cabin, which he reluctantly shared with her.

Morning did indeed bring another day, and the sun quickly burned off the rain clouds promising a perfect Bahamian day. A quick cup of coffee, and a not so quick swim off the bow of the boat with Taxi to the nearby beach so he could perform his necessary morning ablutions, which she carefully buried. They swam back leisurely, and as she climbed back up the swim ladder, slightly more elegantly than Taxi, who needed a great deal of lifting and seemed to be made of nothing but paws, she unhooked the mesh bag full of yesterday's dishes, nibbled clean by the obliging neighbourhood fish.

"Nothing but work," Angie thought with a smile as she hung her wet bikini over the rail, weaving the life line through the openings, such as they were, so it couldn't blow away as the wind blew it dry.

"The houseboat should have advertised that it came with a dishwasher and dryer," she laughed as she put on her other bikini. She had a bag full of clothes but she could have almost just as easily brought only bathing suits ... however the occasional foray into town called for shorts at least, and one had to be prepared for whatever the weather might deliver, which

lately had been as varied and heart-stopping as Eddie Minnis' Bahamian buffet.

Today, however, had dawned with perfection and it seemed a pity to Angie not to greet it properly ... and really, she was on holiday, or unemployed if you were a stickler, and this was technically a free day as she liked to call them, when she had no real responsibilities. And it was fabulous pot. She walked through the boat to the back deck, after a quick look at the internet as she rolled a fatty. No signs of Andy. Ah well, he had made his bed, and would have to lie in it. She sat down in one of the crappy plastic chairs on the tiny deck, happy as a clam.

"But are clams really happy," she thought, as she smoked in the warm sun, "down there in the cold water or lightly fried in a seasoned batter?"

Angie looked out through the clear water at the sandy bottom only 4 feet from the bottom of the houseboat and wondered if she could tell a happy clam from a sad one. She could see sea cucumbers going about their business; they looked pretty content ... a starfish gamely if not particularly cheerfully hunting sea urchins, and a flip flop, and a leg ... and she had found Andy Anderson, or at least what was left of him. "Even in death," she thought as she reached for the boathook, "he could really harsh your buzz."



Chapter Two in which Andy has to wait while our heroine goes for a paddle and Taxi gets a biscuit.

Oh why would she have to be the one to discover the body! They would never believe her at the police station, not after that episode with Taxi and the tourist from Morocco. Two bodies in one week ...

"It was surely over-kill," Angie laughed out loud, despite herself, as she pondered what to do.

She was becoming convinced that the local police chief was either very inept or extremely corrupt, and she could not decide which. Either way going to him seemed premature, at best, until she had a more coherent story for him, better than just seeming to have a propensity for finding corpses. And she really didn't want to have the police to the boat, not with the kush and all.

Angie poked at the bloated leg and wondered briefly about moving the body ... or the boat. Both such obviously bad ideas if and when the body was discovered. And you can hardly escape in a houseboat in the Caribbean ... just not a seaworthy craft unless the conditions are ideal. And where could you hide a houseboat? Think ...

"A few more hours under water couldn't hurt him now," Angie decided, "and no one knows I found him, yet." She looked around and shivered despite the hot sun, but there really seemed to be no one around. "I'll go to Fat Freddie's."

Angie pulled on a long sleeved tee to protect her shoulders from the tropical sun, quickly stashed her stash in the hollow she had found behind the galley fridge, and walked over to the kayak bobbing in the water alongside the houseboat. The kayak had come with the rental, and was one of those plastic resort things which had once boasted a 'glass' bottom, now scratched from years of beachings.

Luckily it was a calm day, and the 2 kilometer kayak to Fat Freddie's would be both pleasant and quick, and take her away for the moment from Andy's troublesome remains. She dropped in her towel, and clambered aboard. Bracing the paddle across the gunnels, she prepared for Taxi's ungraceful arrival, and the two of them paddled off down the bay.

Fat Freddie's was run by Skinny Pete, and he would know what to do, or who to call ... same thing often. He knew everybody it seemed, and everybody knew him, despite or because the bar was so hard to get to. You could get there by road, but it was almost impossible especially when it rained, and while it was easier by water, only boats with truly shallow drafts could approach closely. The shoals and tides were such as well that one simply could not approach with speed. Once in, however, there was a very protected harbour, from both weather and surprises, making the risky entrance worth it, as long as one had the time to respect the sea.

Nurse's Harbour, as it was known, had become a peculiar artist's enclave, of which Fat Freddie's was the focal point, acting as their point of contact with the outside world. A world one thought had passed right by, until you noticed the satellite dish and antennae, and realized that there was nowhere really isolated anymore. The big screen behind the bar was a give away too, thankfully off at this hour, with the bar deserted.

Angie walked under the thatched roof of the open air part of the bar, and sat down with an audible sigh. Skinny Pete came out from behind a partition, wiping a beer mug that he carefully put down when he saw her face.

"Did you paddle past the new resort site?" he asked, assuming from her glum look that they had been grinding up the coral reef again to make a 'beach' and that she had seen the calcified remains on her way. "Or take the outside on such a pretty day?"

He had a bartender's knack of drawing people out, and asked seemingly inane questions, but they got the job done. He reached down and scratched Taxi's ear, pulling a biscuit from his apron.

Angie looked over at him and said, "I found Andy."



