

Chapter Fourteen, in which a relationship is not consummated but a delicious breakfast is consumed.

Angie woke the next morning on the screened-in sunporch of Mickey and me'mam's cottage, for it was more cottage than house, and stretched happily. Taxi was sprawled at her feet, me'mam's dogs were at his feet, and she and Mickey had let friendship triumph over lust. Of course there was me'mam's presence to help keep a lid on things, but both of them secretly knew that there was no consummating this flirtatious relationship if there was any hope of its lasting, at least not in the near future. Falling in lust was easy to do, but awfully messy.

Angie quickly snuck her bra back on, in **that magic way girls have** without removing her t-shirt, and slipped on her jeans. Letting herself and the dogs out for a morning pee, the facilities not being attached to the house, she smoothed her hair and composed herself for the onslaught of me'mam's presence and Irish breakfast. But a hearty breakfast was just what was called for, as she and Mickey, actively suppressing other urges, had planned to kayak around the entire cay this morning and have a peak at the resort from both sides and just generally nose around.

Breakfast did not disappoint, sausages and eggs and potatoes and cheese all magically turned out in one pan but perfectly cooked. And a little spicy, like a memory of Fat Freddie remained in her cooking. Mickey had appeared silently, clean like a schoolboy in for inspection, and had apparently **passed muster** for he got a kiss on the head. He grinned at Angie and said "I'm almost eight!" and me'mam cuffed him lightly but lovingly, and said "That makes me twenty-eight." "Twenty-four, Mam, but whose counting," he said, ducking swiftly.

Mickey and Angie tried to clean up but it was a bust, and they were quickly shoed out of the kitchen, with assurances that me'mam could hold the fort down, bar and all, at least until four that afternoon. Grabbing some water bottles and a couple of beers from the bar's coolers they made their way to the waterfront and clambered into the kayak, which floated surprisingly well, once they were all aboard, with Taxi lying on on the glass bottom and

keeping still. Tying the beverages in lest they dump the kayak, they set out back down the Atlantic side of the cay that Angie had paddled the night before. Me'mam's figure could just be made out on the balcony around the old boat up on the shore, and they waved cheerfully in the morning sun.

It was a stunning morning, and the water was crystal clear, the Atlantic strangely calm. But the weather report was clear and the radar had looked clear too, just one of those lucky mornings. They paddled silently, soaking in the joy of mechanical advantage as the boat slid smoothly forward, and then laughing when they caught a paddle full, inadvertently, and sometimes vertently, soaking the other.

The cove and beach of the currently abandoned resort grew larger and larger, the beach augmented with ground up coral looking like a scar on the landscape. They stayed fairly far out, trying to see if there was anyone moving about while pretending not to. It looked clear, and they decided to paddle up a bit further to a little natural beach around the next point, where they could pull up the kayak and do a little poking around, but make a discreet exit if necessary, with Angie pulling the curious tourist routine.

It was amazing how quickly the remains of the resort were being reclaimed by the island, not to mention the islanders. The salvagers had removed almost every piece of metal, rope and wood that was loose and not too heavy, and sand and vines were working on the foundations. You could still see where everything had been ... a cooking area with fire pits and a huge old propane tank, an outdoor amphitheatre, with enormous sea buoys painted green and red in the jungle to guide the erstwhile tourists, the foundations of the rental cottages and main hotel building.

"Someone's dream," Angie said, in a whisper as if not to disturb it.

"Someone's nightmare," Mickey whispered back, and they both stood in awe at the vanity of man.

