

CHAPTER 1

ABANDONED TO MAKTA ISLAND B1

THE MAKTA ISLAND SERIES

Romance-Adventure-Suspense-Thriller Fiction Novel

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10,627 words

Description:

Violinist Muriel Lennox, a psychic, is abandoned alone with religious-minded Preacher Glen Norman on Makta Island. Together, they must survive from each other's passions and trusted abilities until hope fulfills their dreams of rescue.

MAKTA ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC

EAST OF JAPAN WEST OF HAWAI'I

AND NORTH OF FIJI, COOK AND MICRONESIA ISLANDS

1867

Below in the desolate undiscovered seas of the Pacific, East of Japan, near their Bonin Island and West of Hawai'i and South of Micronesia Island discovered by James Cook in his three voyages on the Endeavor (1768-1771), Resolution (1772-75) and Resolution (1776-79) men scrimmage for a prize and rarity on their voyage from Australia to Los Angeles, California. Unnoticed above, God watched alone from outside and inside all the participants, principally the two underdogs chosen to deliver a dour message to the crew aboard the Valiant sailed by Captain Burriss.

Glen Norman waved his tattered Bible. "Captain Burriss you can't put us off on Makta Island. There won't be another ship for months!" Glen's black pants were dirty from scuffling with the men; he held his black waistcoat over his left arm.

"My violin will be destroyed! Why the humidity alone will soften the strings into silence," said Muriel Lennox, a pretty blonde with a dainty apple-bottom shape under her eighteenth-century-black bustle dress and holding her black violin case across her modest chest.

"Maybe not another ship for a year. Ye two vermin should have considered that, when you refused my men her sexual charms," Captain Burriss pointed to shocked Muriel, "and this demon preacher roughed up my men, and not to mention hitting me good right eye with your blemin' Bible."

"Aye, Aye!" the crowd of sailors yelled.

"Preacher is supposed to be a man of peace," said another injured sailor favoring his knee.

"Ye fight like a demon pugilist not a preacher," Captain Burriss snarled. "God will see ye in Hell."

"Not my God!" said Glen.

"Nor my God!" said Muriel. "You've no right to my person. I'm a blessed creature in God's eye."

"Ye may be blessed, but ye's damned on Earth," vent Captain Burriss.

Captain Burriss reminded Muriel more of a selfish pirate than a merchant sea captain.

"Why I'll," Glen moved closer to Captain Valiant. All of his injured men groaned and pulled back.

Muriel bending down, to the consternation of the sore men and she reached and pulled out a small pistol with a white-marble handle. "There will be no more fighting and threatening of my person, Captain Burriss. Preacher Glen and I will get off on Makta Island. You, Boswain Rolt, lower the dinky in the waters."

Rolt nodded, "Aye, Ma'am. Sorry the way the men behaved."

Muriel kicked her two black-granny boots together. "May God see you all in Hell or under the dust of my feet."

Captain Burriss winced, and then put his callous finger up to his red, sore-right eye.

The dinky lowered. First, Muriel got into the little rowboat. She sat down and kept her pistol pointed to Captain Burriss' face. "It may be your ship, Captain Burriss, but it is God's world."

Glen barked, "God governs and sees all, Captain Burriss. If you despicable roughens make it landside, I'll be surprised."

"Be off with you. Makta Island has savage-cannibal-eating tribes. You won't last a week. And that dinky boat is fit more for a fire than for sailing. Hoist the sails, Rolt."

Glen grabbed the oars.

Muriel held onto her violin and the pistol.

Glen said, "We need to wait while the ship's waters calm."

"We'll be all right," Muriel commented. "God is everywhere. He isn't limited to the pages of your book."

After some minutes, Glen began rowing. "On to Makta Island, God bless us with peace."

"And the safety to avoid becoming the meal of cannibals," Muriel added.

Muriel never loved the seagoing life ever since her dad sailed away eight years ago to America for bigger audiences than Australia offered. She was only fourteen at the time. Her dad said the trip was, too, dangerous for someone her age. And how right he was. Twenty-two did not make her much safer. Though, her wiser spirit kept her smarter as she quickly befriended Preacher Glen Norman, a quiet, serious religious man, who kept to himself, and avoid drinking grog on the Valiant for the ten days of their abrupt journey. She wasn't particularly religious. Religions hold on her centered on the peaceful words of trust and loyalty God held for those who

believed in him. Sure scandalous text existed in the Bible, but Muriel disregarded those as aberrant forewarnings of the baser instincts capable in man, if not held in check by the lofty goals of God's mercy and grace.

Her body lurched to the rowing rhythm of Preacher Glen Norman, who had claimed to sail to America to preach the Gospel. In fact, he'd lost his faith and only regained it when seeing a clear need to play the part God, evidently, intended for him. Men only wanted money and they wanted it fast. They didn't care how they earned it in England and Australia. Everywhere, he went, men wanted gold, country resources and lastly, if ever at all, to preach the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. Glen quit for a time and became a boxer. Earning prize money in this fashion, until he nearly beat a man to death; changed once more, Glen fought enjoying and listening to the roars of the English pugilist crowds. And now, he nearly beat up an entire ship crew to save one person, who for some feverish reason, he felt compelled to save. Of course, not many loved heroes of the spiritual kind and God predicted as such. Glen rowed and smiled a respectful smile. If he done anything good in his life, this fight for Muriel was it. All his other preaching in his younger days fell on rocky, barren, good, or fertile ground and on which it landed, Glen never knew.

"Glad you had that gun. I was plum out of fighting spirit," he lied to Muriel clutching her violin. He didn't see how the violin would last. Already in his mind, he saw himself breaking it apart for firewood. Plato was right. Artists in utopia fell into the superfluous category.

"Bring it out as a last resort' my brother said." She glanced down into her bosom where the little marble pistol lay safe from the splashing waves getting on her black granny boots and ankles. "It only has two shots."

Glen nodded and rowed. At least the girl had brothers. We might survive this little adventure, if she is the hardy type.

Muriel sensed his thoughts. "I know Plato said artist contributed nothing to Utopia. But I beg to differ. Even in Utopia, good music is appreciated. Even if that music only breaks up the day with some entertainment."

"Better clutch that tight to keep the waves off of it," Glen replied.

Muriel held things. Glen held nothing but his Bible and the oars. And here she was loaded down with objects, gun, violin, her dress and clothes and her body. All things separate from her soul that no one but God seemed to value. "I can cook."

"Aye! That's wonderful." Glen looked behind him as Makta Island drew closer. "Don't worry about the heathens on Makta. If we made it off the Valiant, we can survive on Makta until someone rescues us. All we need to do is find water before three or four days."

"Seawater?"

"Undrinkable," advised Preacher Glen Norman. "You can try it but you'll be wanting twice to three times the water afterward."

Muriel's violin teacher told her. "Never take a man's advice at face value. God's advice you can take, but man often forgets God's advice and substituted his own." Muriel reached down in the sea and scooped up a taste of the sea. Immediately, she spat it out. "Pure salt. A person can make nice ice cream from that using the right other ingredients."

"Ice cream. I love ice-cream."

"Different varieties of ice cream. Seasons and preserve meat, too, with salt."

"Good, if we find meat on the island." Glen asked her. "Take a good look around. This view won't be available for some months to come. Tell me what you see. Any coves, high places with clearings? How are the trees, palms, any trees with fruits? And see if you can find a nice place to set up camp. Somewhere away from the ocean, dry, protected at least on two sides."

What Preacher Glen Norman asked filled Muriel's brain with purpose. She looked around, not just seeing the isolated island now. She began to see with explorer's eyes. She even saw through the eyes of a chef or mom cooking dinner for young ones now. "I see a cove, that's an indentation in the land," Muriel pointed carefully. It is on the other side of the island, it is disappearing from view now."

"Damn." He flipped his head back to the left this time to see the cove vanishing. "Wish I had asked you that earlier. You see any birds? We can eat them if need be. Otherwise, we will be eating bugs."

Muriel kept looking. Her swan neck glanced this way and that, as the island grew larger. "I see birds flying higher in the trees on the mountains."

"Good. Where you see birds there must be fresh water."

Muriel clasped her violin tighter. "Thank God."

"Didn't say we'd find the water before three or four days, though. Could be out of reach, too?"

"Oh. I pray to God we find water and fast." For the first time, Muriel forgot she was a woman. She didn't think of protecting her body or what her body was doing. Fortunately, she held her violin against her chest that stopped any accidental spillage of her décolleté that might distract Preacher Glen from his rowing duties. "Palms. I see palms. They have coconuts I heard."

"Not all palms. Some though," said Preacher Glen rowing slower, but steady. This girl is going to be useful. Thank you, God, for providing a helpmate--not a romantic helpmate, but a partner in survival.

"I plan to be very useful. And I'll treat you as if you were my own dad or brother. I won't expect anything more than us working together to survive. I had a good dad and brother. They didn't bother me--inappropriately if you--"

"Aye! That's good, lass." He nodded. "A woman should be brought up like a lad, to accomplish something, defend herself, and make something useful of herself to God and humanity."

"We can use the row boat for fire and shelter," she nodded like Preacher Glen.

He chortled. "Trying to save your violin?"

"All I can. It is my life outside of God. I'll show you when we get settle in. I even think I could catch food with it. Play something nice and sweet and attract the animals." Muriel felt sick saying those words. Never in her life had she considered where food came from. Now, in this barbaric situation, here, she offered to slaughter something by luring it to its death with beautiful music. "I don't look ashen saying that, Preacher. Do I?"

"A little miss." He stopped rowing for a minute.

Muriel's heart dropped when he stopped rowing.

The ship bobbed in the ocean, drifting away from the cove and not toward it.

God wondered what was his servant doing. Here his helpmate offered to sacrifice her music to get food and he was resting his muscles. Good strength given to him by God for this purpose.

She must do something, Muriel thought. Her blue eyes watched the sweat on his brow. His smooth shaved chin and oval face relaxing. But she always watched the waves taking the ship back out to sea and further away from the Makta Island coastline.

"I can do it, Glen. Something inside inspires me to help you reach America. You can save souls. You have saved souls," Muriel acknowledged.

Glen heard those words, and sat upright and grabbed the beatup oars. "I have done a little preaching in my day," he gushed and begun rowing again. For the second time, his purpose sparked inside him. If she thinks I have saved souls, maybe I have. Maybe God speaks through this woman.

Muriel prayed to God. Forgive me for lying. He looked like he's given up on saving souls except for defending a lady's honor. I am so so very grateful for that protection you provided God. God helps us to help ourselves. "You can preach to the birds and mammals and plants, Glen. I won't mind. Keep up your practice. Don't let this time dull your skills to grab those lost souls looking for just a pinch," Muriel held up her long slender fingers in a pinch symbol, as if adding just a pinch of sweetness to a soup or meat, "of good encouragement."

Glen rowed harder. "I think God's given me my second wind." He huffed, grimaced, and rowed and the waves became smoother as he steered the dinky rowboat closer to Makta Island.

"We're nearly there!" Muriel watched the white coastline coming into view. How romantic the beach, if this were inhabited with waiters, cooks, servants, and houses and society? She saw fish swimming in the ocean. "Look fish!" Muriel pointed. "We can eat fish."

Preacher Glen looked overboard. He laughed. "Ha, ha ha, ha. Yes, together, we can."

Glen rowed. Muriel surveyed the coastline all she could. Such an opportunity would never come again until they needed to leave Makta Island. She looked in the water and gasped startled. She saw the face of what looked like a heathen or Indian native. He looked mean. Then she saw him sinking back into the ocean. She shook her head.

"What did you see? You looked frightened."

"Nothing, Glen. I saw a sunken treasure."

"Now, Muriel, don't go making up things to inspire me. I'm going to protect us both, God willing."

"I'm a little psychic."

"By the devils, you're a witch, a conjurer! I can't believe I protected a worker of inequity. God, protected me from your adversary," he bellowed, at Muriel.

God stared out of Muriel's eyes at Glen. How can you be so naive? Have you not heard of a prophetess? One blessed by God to see the future, be a watchperson, Glen.

Muriel started. "I'm not evil. I believe like you in God. 'She picked up his Bible and held it to her forehead. "Your sister lives in Ireland and she has two little girls, one blonde and one redhead. Prescilla is your sister's name."

Glen stopped rowing. "By God you're a prophetess! Thank God! We should easily find water now!"

Muriel sighed. She half smiled. One-minute Glen was ready to cast her into the fire and brimstone as a witch; the next moment, he wanted to ride her on his shoulders as a heroine prophetess as he rowed on to Makta Island.

Then one of Glen's oars broke. "Oh!" Glen frantically looked around. "Catch that oar!" Muriel held her violin and Preacher's Bible in one hand and then reached for the three-quarter oar with her other hand. "I got it."

"Then use it. Muriel, row for your life before the current takes us back out to sea!"