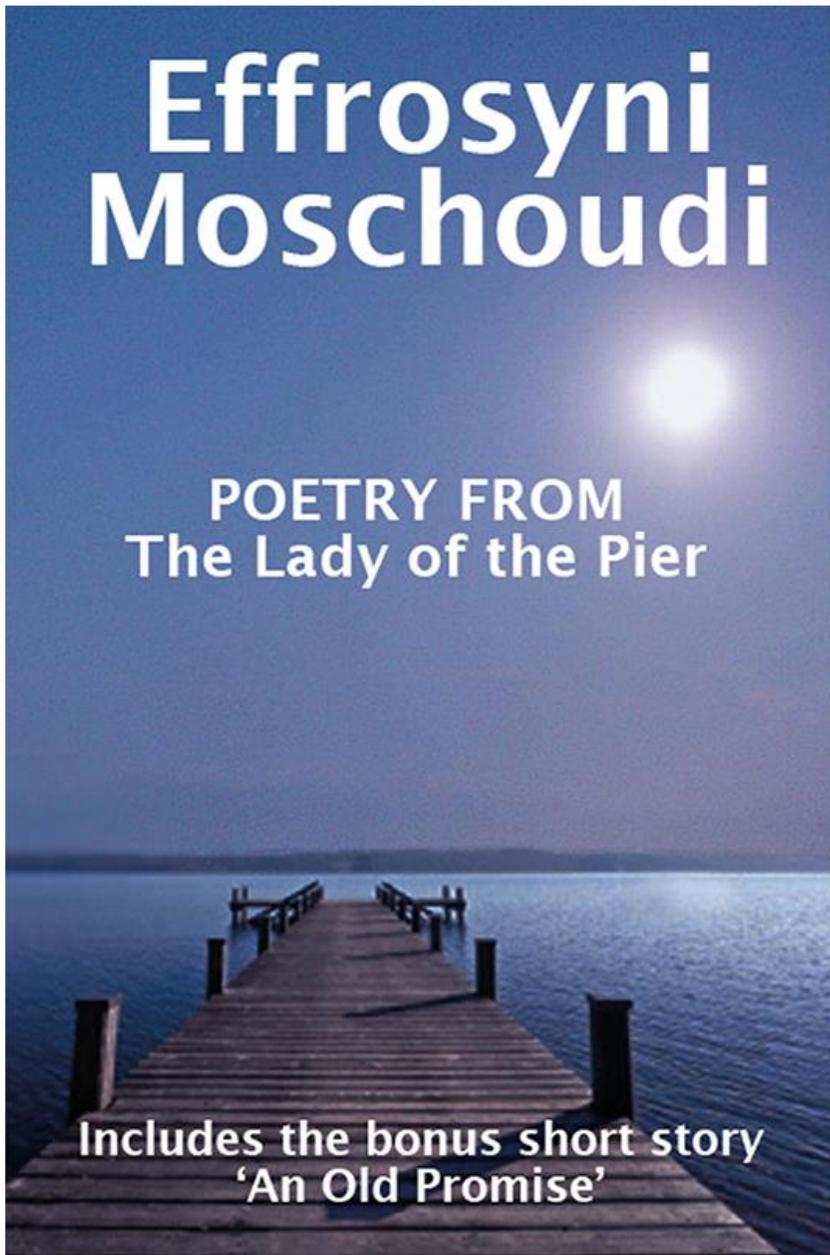


Effrosyni Moschoudi

POETRY FROM
The Lady of the Pier

Includes the bonus short story
'An Old Promise'



Poetry from The Lady of the Pier

by

Effrosyni Moschoudi

**A FREE ebook of ten romantic poems, and a short story
of sweet romance set on the Greek island of Sifnos**

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A FEW WORDS FROM THE AUTHOR

When Sofia falls in love on the Greek island of Corfu, she finds herself worrying about two things: village gossip, and the spirit of a lamenting woman that begins to haunt her dreams. Compelled by the spirit and her love for a boy, Sofia moves far away from home, entering a foreign world where the spirit awaits, haunting a derelict pier from a bygone era. The spirit has remained bound to this place, the West Pier of Brighton, for a great number of years. The locals have a name for her: ‘The Lady of the Pier.’

Enchanted, Sofia writes a series of poems . . . you will find ten of them in this book. I hope they will inspire you in some way, the way they inspired my heroine Sofia to follow her heart, no matter the adversity.

There are a number of themes in the Lady of the Pier trilogy, like the value of friendship, the importance of family, but, most of all, the irresistible power of heart over mind, and the sacred right that every person on this earth has for happiness and love.

Sofia suffers for love, sometimes giving in to reason, only to be overwhelmed by her strong emotions, following her heart once again. The bonus short story “An Old Promise” that you will find at the end of this book, serves as yet another reminder that if you ignore your heart’s desires for the sake of reason, you are in danger of losing your way.

I hope you will enjoy the short story as well as the poetry. I’m also including in this volume an exclusive excerpt from The Ebb (book 1 in the trilogy) that you won’t find as a free preview anywhere else.

ADVICE FROM THE MOON

Mother of tides
Your magic word the sea abides
Healer of pain
Look at my heart, the wretched, the slain.

Of gathering clouds you slide on the silk
Of worrying souls the bread and the milk
You are; as you were and always will be
I'm longing for truth, your face to see
I'm looking for answers, my dreams to come true
Will they from the clouds one day come through?

And then as She slid, majestically pale
Behind grey veils, so silky, so frail
She shone on my face and filled me with bliss
Then blew these words like a motherly kiss:

When morning should come
Then whispered The Moon
The Sun will awake and blind me too soon
He puts me to sleep with powerful rays
And blind I stumble throughout His days.
At night, I'm The Queen, The Mother, The Guide
But sometimes behind the clouds I should hide.

And if your keen eye should try to find me
Don't blame the clouds that gather to hide me.
Hold on to your dreams and hang on still proud
I hear your pleas - you stare at the cloud.
I haven't gone out; I'm still all around!
I hold all your dreams behind the cloud.

And as I emerge from silver grey lines
As clouds will then yield, as moonlight then shines
One day your dreams at last will be there
They're already here my child,
As long as at clouds you solemnly stare.

LOVING YOU FOREVER

It took a million days
To seize another chance
And yet the day she found him
She knew from just one glance
Beyond the dreadful end
She yearned some peace to find
His look just scratched the surface
Retrieval left him blind.

Oh don't you know that
I've been loving you forever?
This love grows strong and burns the eternal light
Loving you forever; once here, now gone
But never out of sight.

She hides deep down inside
For bitter errors cries
She claims they'll lead to toys
And rocking horses rides
Revenge they say is sweet
But are you satisfied?
When passion leaves us cold
We fail the truth to find.

Bereft of all my dreams
I'm wretched; hard done by
I'll fly and chase the wind
That's blown and passed me by.
Outrunning sad mistakes
I'll reach the cragged hill;
Love yields when sorry tears
Go burning through the mill.

And when I feel the clouds
It'll rain a million toys
The laugh of merry children
Will bring what time destroys.

Oh don't you know that
I've been loving you forever?
This love grows strong and burns the eternal light
Loving you forever; once here, now gone
But never out of sight.

SACRED

Oh soothing light / oh leading moon of mighty tides
The bosom of my granite faith
A restless, burning phoenix hides.
You're sacred / a hand that heals, a God divine
Oh precious, rise, oh brightest sun
With rays of awe through darkness shine.

Oh naked truth
It's round you that the earth rotates
Oh breathing air / through heartless time
My nameless soul your name awaits.
You're sacred / a hand that heals, a God divine
Oh precious, rise, oh brightest sun
With rays of awe through darkness shine.

Rise from the ashes / fly through the flame
Soothe me and heal me down to the core.
Burn through the night / take me inside
Nestle me close forever more.

OFF-WHITE DOVE

Hunting up high and then down low
Longing for you my feelings show
Letters I send and rhymes I write
Still on my own I wipe the tears I cannot fight.

But darling, we were born to love and made to woo
I only wish that you would see and feel it too
My soul still yearns
And seeks you like an off-white dove
That's stained its wings
Searching to find and bring you love.

Keeping the faith, trying not to cry
Without you near I can't get by
A thousand men may be around
Yet only you can make my heart with joy bound.

Your touch left scars all over my body
Your breath has thoroughly burned
Burned all my ancient dreams.
I said I'd go on stubbornly all the way
This only can provoke the end of me it seems.

But darling we were born to love and made to woo
I only wish that you would see and feel it too
My soul still yearns
And seeks you like an off-white dove
That's stained its wings
Searching to find and bring you love.

A COMET'S TAIL

Some time ago, an early night,
I asked the stars to grant me light.
They grew like suns and harmed my sight,
I witnessed darkness that burned bright.
Before I blinked, my eyes were frail
And blind to see a comet's tail.

I heard the sky tear wide apart
Revealing angels and an ode
High-note sonnets of my home
A paved with gold forgotten road.

They fluttered wings to start their flight
One brushed by me and warmed the night
His halo fell and scattered light
I held it up; it was so bright!
Above my head it made me cry
As stars in contrast chose to die.

My soul screamed, to watch him fly
To be like him, it took to die.
I lay awaiting for many years
The song that ended all my tears.

The music played along my sigh
My wings I stretched and looked up high.
Then blew the wind and, what a feeling!
I flew at last to find my healing.

Lost in the air and nowhere bound
We swirled and flew the world around
Amidst the clouds we loved and lay
Until the day he went away

He took the curse from Midas' hand
I cast the gold where sunsets die
The Horn of Plenty fell and hid
Inside a sea's eternal sigh.

Although he's gone and far away
He often comes at night to stay
When darkness falls, he holds me tight
And then we fly all through the night.

I HAVE BEEN TOLD

I have been told, my dreams like a crown to wear
To strive, to seek, to choose from means
The tough but fair.
To brave long paths and never tire
To give the weak, the same bread that I desire.

I have been told, I have been told a thousand lies
To carry on; yet no one hears my desperate cries
I have been told to roam forever
Seeking the peace I'll relish never.
I have been told that I would live a thousand years
If, like a cloud
I rained and soaked the earth with tears.
I have been told my faith should make me proud
I only weep behind my walls and laugh out loud.

I have been told the world is fair and bright
But promised love's been murdered slow
And out of sight.
The crown I wear, the gems I've gathered
Through the night
Are borne by fools like me
Who run and cringe with fright.

I have been told, I have been told a thousand lies
To carry on; yet no one hears my desperate cries
I have been told to roam forever
Seeking the peace I'll relish never.

CASTLES ON THE SAND

So vast you lie ahead, a fearsome sight of awe
I cherish all you are; my love, my friend, my foe
I'm stranded on this beach
You fail me, treat me wrong
The opposite shore is out of reach
You ebb and flow strong.

I wish I had your strength, and yet I am afraid
Still dreaming of a man who dwells in a distant land
Look at the life I lead, the dreams that I have made!
They fear a deep blue ocean, like castles on the sand.

Swept away in the storm
Crying helplessly at night
Born steadfast I stay the course
Still a poor I put up fight.
What if I sank inside your depths
To hear the murmur of the sea?
Willing to die a thousand deaths
I'd close my eyes and let it be...

I wish I had your strength, and yet I am afraid
Still dreaming of a man who dwells in a distant land
Look at the life I lead, the dreams that I have made!
They fear a deep blue ocean, like castles on the sand.

AROUND THE CORNER

I spent much time on my own
I ran and ran and hid away
Never met the mounted prince
Never smelled the blooms of May.
Sunsets proved to be so ugly
Should have been; was never there
Spent much time in isolation
Yearning for things that lovers share.

Now I know I'm not alone
The sun is up, fear yields to need
My stagnant heart beats strong again
And sows within my one left seed.

I ran so far to reach the truth
To find bliss, one cannot mar
I panted out the truthful words
That met the wind and drifted far.
Then came the storm that took my dreams
I held my ground and cried out, 'No!'
I licked the wound and now head home
It took so long the truth to know.

Love is waiting around the corner
My frenzied heart is beating fast
I've been a fool but now I know
It's never least what comes up last.

Now I know I'm not alone
The sun is up, fear yields to need
My stagnant heart beats strong again
And sows within my one left seed.

ASLEEP YOU LIE

Asleep you lie, here in my arms
And I, at last in place.
My aching hands are stroking you
Sore eyes caress your face.
The waves, the breeze, the seagull wings
A lullaby, a fateful song
Asleep you lie, and as for me
I fear my eyes are wrong.

How can it be? You're here with me!
My hands, like velvet, touch you
A thousand times I've dreamed of this
Eight years have passed without you.
And yet, at last you're in my arms!
My heart an airborne dove
That soars in summer skies of blue
Through fleeting clouds above.

My joy, a Christmas morning bell
That echoes far and wide;
My face ablaze with sheer bliss
A feeling I can't hide

And here I am, still wondering
Just what the future holds
Asleep you lie and as you dream
My own dream unfolds.

BLESS THE SEA

This is a story about a drop, a buoyant, fragile drop
Wafted by a summer breeze, over a splendid sea.
The sun was burning strongly
The wind caressing fondly
Bewitched it heard the singing
That lured it far from home.

That summer song kept calling
The crystal drop came falling
Huge waves rose up and beckoned
The sun began to sink.
It fell onto the foam, benevolent and light
But menacing and grey, She rose above too soon
It heard the sound She roared
It looked and lost its sight
It said this little prayer and sank into its tomb:

Curse the sun that burned my eyes
Curse the wind that carried me that far
Curse the magic in that song
Bless the Sea that bears the scar
Bless Your depths that hide my pain
Bless the skies that uphold the morning star
Bless the moon that yearns Your blue to gain
Bless Your waves that come to take me far.

EXCLUSIVE EXCERPT FROM THE EBB **(Book 1 in The Lady of the Pier trilogy)**

“Excuse me?” a young lad said, and Sofia was astounded to see it was Crazy Boy. He was paddling in the shallows, looking up at her with a bright smile. He was wearing his straw hat again over his short and spiky hair. His laughing eyes were brilliantly blue and clear, like fresh water ponds.

Sofia felt pinned to her spot, unable to let go of his gaze. A preposterous thought crossed her mind that if angels were to walk the earth, then that’s exactly how they would look like. She felt silly and consciously blinked a few times, trying to shake the mesmerising effect of his eyes.

“Do you speak English?” he asked, tilting his head playfully. The joyous smile all over his face hadn’t faded yet in the slightest. Sofia was amazed at how carefree he looked and found herself envying him again for that.

“Um, yes! I do,” she managed finally.

“Are you the lady of the pier?”

Sofia frowned. “Excuse me?”

He gave a confident smirk. “I said, are you the lady of the pier?” He moved a bit closer as he continued to float and grabbed onto the edge of the pier with both hands.

“I’m sorry, I’m not sure what you mean,” she responded with an awkward smile, squatting before him in order to get closer. She was sure she couldn’t hear him clearly.

“Allow me to explain what I mean, my good lady, if I may,” he said coughing once, playfully, just for show. He arched his eyebrows. “You work here, right?”

“Yes I do.” She gave an easy smile, relieved to be able to answer confidently an enquiry of his for a change. He was being very entertaining, and it tickled deliciously her funny bone.

“Well, this is a pier, isn’t it?”

"It sure is," she answered, humouring him eagerly.

"Well, that makes you the lady of the pier then, doesn't it? You seem to be the boss around here," he said with a wicked grin.

"Oh! Now, this is where you're wrong, you see. I'm just an employee here. The boss... that would be the man over there," she answered breezily, pointing to Jimmy in the far distance. At the time, he was busy helping the German onto the boat after his smooth descent into the water.

"I beg to differ, my lady! He's over there and you, well, you're here. That makes you the boss on this fine pier, as far as I'm concerned."

Sofia rolled her eyes. "Right, right." She couldn't believe how crazy he was but dared admit to herself that she found him now even more charming than before. She took a few moments to gaze at him and, once again, his eyes felt like magnets drawing her to him. She felt disoriented, as if she had been lost inside a thick fog, and as she was still squatting, she put a hand on the deck to steady herself. It was a prudent thing to do as in reality she had started to slowly tilt forward without even realizing it.

"So, how can I help you? Can I interest you in any of the water activities?" she asked confidently, just doing her job.

"I don't know... maybe I came here just to talk to you."

"Oh! If that's the case, then I guess I'm busy. Excuse me," she answered sternly, standing up like a coiled spring. It was her instinctive reaction to avoid a presumptuous flirt. She turned to go as she always did in these cases but was surprised when she realised she found it hard to do this time.

"Okay, wait a minute! Forget what I said!" He raised an open hand, palm exposed towards her.

"You shouldn't be doing that to the Greeks! It's rather vulgar!" She pointed at his hand, but her faint smile revealed that she wasn't offended. Surprising herself, she squatted before him again even though she was uncertain if it was

advisable to keep talking to him at all. An obscure inclination had risen inside her, coaxing her to stay in his company although another, a rather familiar one, kept calling to her to run away. But he was irresistible, and she couldn't help smiling at him again.

Attracted to this crystal clear signal and encouraged anew, the boy suddenly leapt forward, resting his elbows on the deck while raising a noisy splash from under him. Now half his body was out of the water, and his face had approached hers too close for comfort. Sofia retracted herself somewhat in order to protect her private space and scowled at him.

"So, what did I do back then and how vulgar was it?" he asked playfully, ignoring her annoyed expression. If he had gone too far, he was used to getting his way with pretty young girls, so he decided to ignore it.

"You splayed out the fingers of your hand and showed me the palm, *thus!*" she answered in an exasperated tone, displaying for him a Greek *moutza*; the number one offensive gesture of the Greeks, who relish making it when anyone or anything makes them angry or annoyed. It felt good to show it to him, right before his face, thinking that it served him right for his infuriating smugness.

"Like that?" he asked, repeating the gesture.

"Don't you do that to me!" She pushed back his hand and shook a sharp finger at him. It was a universal gesture that didn't need explaining.

"Okay, I'm sorry! Can we try again?" he asked, frowning a little. He had finally realised he was treading carelessly on dangerous ground.

"Fine. How can I help you, *sir?*" she asked, giving emphasis to the last word, rather mockingly.

"Well *my lady,*" he answered with similar emphasis for the sake of playfulness, "Actually, I'm rather interested to try one of your fine pedaloos over there!" he said, putting on a hoity-toity accent to sound extra prim and proper.

Sofia thought it was hilarious but didn't show it. The last thing she wanted was to encourage him again. "A pedalo, *sir?*" she asked carrying on with the mockery, feeling increasingly amused with every comeback.

"That's right, my fair lady, if that's all right with you. If you deem your humble servant as worthy enough to rent one, that is!" he answered with the same ridiculous posh accent that she found hysterical. By now, she was trying really hard not to dissolve into laughter.

"You're mad!" she responded with an exasperated huff, her face deadpan, but only she knew how hard it was by then to look so serious. Feeling herself unable to keep up the pretence any longer, she decided to turn and go before her amusement started to show.

"No, please don't go, I mean it!" he protested, and she turned to fix him with a look of sheer disbelief.

"No, honestly, I'd really like to rent a pedalo! That is, as soon as I manage to get that lazy friend of mine to stop reading his book and come with me," he said, pointing to Blond Boy. He was sitting under one of the thatched umbrellas outside Karavi, looking engrossed in a particularly thick volume.

Sofia chuckled. "I see."

"Well, do you think it's possible to get him to stop reading that? Any ideas?"

"You could try to get on his good side for starters. He's highly unlikely to do as you please if you keep embarrassing him. Say, by singing and dancing like a silly-billy in public."

"Oh! You were watching us yesterday!" he exclaimed, grinning from ear to ear. "I was strutting my funky stuff," he added with a lopsided grin that she found irresistible.

She tilted her head and frowned. "Is that what you call it?"

"Yes," he answered with a slow smile, tilting his head too, playfully.

"Well, why don't you strut your funky stuff back to your friend now? Try grovelling to him, it might work," she said,

turning to go. It was the perfect timing to get to Karavi for a snack. She was walking away when she heard him giggle, and she turned around again.

“Here’s an idea for you. You could try to find him a nice girl. That might distract him from reading. Perhaps he’ll get on the pedalo with better company than you,” she teased from across the distance.

“Ouch!” he replied, pretending with a theatrical gesture that he was removing an arrow from his heart. “That hurt! Do you think I could find a pretty girl to keep me company on that pedalo while they’re smooching?” he asked, smiling naughtily.

Sofia twisted her lips. “Who knows? Someone might notice you if you really try. You’re not that bad-looking.”

“Is that right?” He smirked, and with a big splash he let himself fall into the water.

His hat fell off his head, and he picked it up swiftly from the water’s surface. He put it back on rather crookedly, and stood with his feet planted firmly on the seabed, as the water dripped from the straw hat all over him.

Sofia tried desperately not to break into hysterics. She brought a hand before her mouth and stifled a snigger just in time. “And you might want to lose the hat too if you want to get a girl. You look silly.”

Totally unaffected, he looked up slowly, hat still dripping, to find her standing on the pier head, smiling pleasantly down at him.

“I couldn’t! My mummy gave it to me!” he answered in a toddler-like manner, and Sofia dissolved into laughter. Just at that moment, Jimmy arrived in the boat, and the boy swam away to give him room to manoeuvre. As he swam past Sofia, he gave her a little wave, and came out to shore with a wide grin across his face.

Discover The Lady of the Pier trilogy

The Lady of the Pier trilogy tells the stories of Sofia and Laura - two girls from two different worlds who have a mysterious connection. In book 1, although similar in some ways, the two stories are seemingly unrelated. In book 2, they begin to merge and in the concluding volume, The Storm, they become one story. The author recommends to start reading from The Ebb (book 1).

When Sofia falls in love, she is haunted by a spirit...



Visit Effrosyni’s website for free excerpts, book trailers, and purchase links for The Lady of the Pier trilogy:

<http://effrosyniwrites.com/books/>

The books can be read on all portable devices.

Go to the next page to read the bonus short story, “An Old Promise.”

BONUS SHORT STORY: AN OLD PROMISE

Joanna was the first passenger to enter first class. She found her seat and smiled amicably at a pleasant woman in her thirties who came to sit beside her. Leaning back in the luxurious seat, Joanna tried to relax as her eyes rested idly on the few passengers around her. They were storing their belongings in the overhead lockers and getting settled in their seats. Their chatter was a welcome distraction. Joanna didn't have a fear of flying; her nervousness involved the destination itself. She peered out of the window to see the cloudy view of JFK under a soft morning rain and wondered if perhaps she'd lost her mind. This wasn't like her at all. The vacation was an impulsive decision she had made overnight.

For the past five years since her husband's death, Joanna hadn't had a single vacation. In fact, she hadn't done anything that remotely resembled fun. And yet, here she was, boarding a plane to Greece and, for the first time after many years, traveling alone. Her husband was a wealthy businessman, who treated her like his most prized possession during the ten years of their marriage. Although she grew to love him over time, their co-existence lacked the romance and the passion she'd always hoped for in life. They traveled the world together, flying first class and holidaying in five-star resorts, yet, they never visited Greece together. Whenever he suggested this country, Joanna would always refuse with one excuse or another. Far from disliking Greece, it was all she ever dreamed of. But the very thought of it was her inner sanctum, an experience she could never have shared with her husband.

Now that she was alone in life, for the first time it was possible to consider going there again. It had all started two weeks earlier with an article about the Cyclades that she saw in a glossy magazine. The pictures of deep blue and pure

white rekindled in her a desire she thought she had long forgotten. And then, the strange bout of synchronicity that followed meant she couldn't get Greece out of her mind anymore. It was everywhere; a constant reminder of an old promise that pained her like a stab at the heart: roadside adverts, newspaper articles, her friends talking about it, even the movies on TV became persistent reminders of Greece she could no longer ignore. Inevitably, her yearning returned, stronger than ever. With her husband's passing, it no longer felt wrong or prohibited. As she sat back in her seat, Joanna marveled at the resolve that had made her do this. The butterflies that fluttered in her stomach signaled she was doing the right thing, but also reminded her it had been very long since her last visit.

After take-off, and a glass of wine later, Joanna managed to relax. She was still trying to concentrate on reading the paperback she'd picked up from the terminal when the passenger next to her dropped her glasses case. Joanna bent down to pick it up and handed it to her with a smile.

"Thank you," said the woman.

"You're welcome. You're Greek?" said Joanna, not really needing an answer. She had guessed this from the woman's accent, as well as her beautiful, olive skin.

"Yes, I am."

"Were you visiting New York?"

The woman rolled her eyes, her face beaming. "Yes, what a city! I had a wonderful time."

"That's great. Was it your first time in the States?"

"Yes, and I intend to go back. I loved it there!"

"You know, I'm an admirer of your country, too."

"So, this isn't your first trip to Greece?"

Joanna gave a wistful smile. "It will be my second."

"Are you staying in Athens?"

"No, I'm only passing through. As soon as we get there, I'm rushing to the port to catch a boat to the island of Sifnos." Joanna's cheeks flushed pink, her excitement igniting in her.

She hadn't spoken to anyone about her decision until then. Back home, she'd left a vague message on her answering machine about a vacation. She'd felt unwilling to share this with anyone including her parents and siblings. This is why she felt so astonished she was eager to discuss it with a total stranger. And it felt wonderful, liberating; therapeutic even.

"Oh, I love Sifnos!" said the woman. "I've been there a couple of times. Is this where you went the first time?"

"That's right. "It was a long time ago . . ."

"How long, if I may ask?"

"Twenty years. I was only twenty-one at the time. A student!"

"Wow! I bet you'll see some changes when you get there. Nothing stays the same for too long in the touristy parts of Greece. Hotels, bars, and restaurants, they keep popping up everywhere over the years."

"I guess so. But I expect it will still be as enchanting as I remember it."

"Of course. Are you staying in Kamares?"

"Yes, I have a reservation at a quaint hotel on the beach just a stone's throw away from the port. I can't wait!"

"Make sure to go around the island. There are many beautiful places to see."

"Oh, I know . . . I went everywhere last time. Let me show you!" Joanna produced a small photograph from her purse. In her forties, Joanna was a beautiful woman, but she had looked truly radiant at twenty-one. Her blond hair was very long back then and, in the photograph, it fell loosely on her shoulders. Her blue eyes glinted above flushed cheeks. There was a young man standing next to her with his arm around her. He was slim with a broad smile and kind brown eyes. In the background, the bay of Platis Yialos was deep blue and shimmering under the soft afternoon light. Every time Joanna had looked at this picture over the years, the memories flooded back vividly as if not a day had gone by.

Even now, Joanna could smell the salty air and remember the vibrant colors of the wildflowers on the roadside. The boy's rusty scooter stood behind them in the photograph. It had tirelessly taken them everywhere around the island through coastal and inland country roads, some dustier than others. Joanna's favorite memory from those scooter rides was her clinging lovingly onto the boy's back as the wind took her hair. The scooter would cough and whiz along obediently, taking them past windy roads, each turn revealing before Joanna's eyes another visual surprise: secluded bays of crystal clear waters, weather-beaten windmills atop barren hills, stone fences that glinted in the sunlight, and white-washed pigeon houses that stood lonesome amidst golden wheat fields.

The rest of the flight was a blur to Joanna. As soon as she got reunited with her trolley bag at Athens airport, she exited the arrivals hall in a hurry. By then, her heart was yearning for the sight of the boat that would set her on her way to her own private Ithaca. In order to save time, she chose a taxi as opposed to a train or a bus. Soon, she was leaving the airport behind as the taxi cruised comfortably along the highway. In the Athens suburbs along the way, they got caught up in traffic, but when they arrived at Piraeus port, the salty breeze and the squawk of the seagulls overhead compensated her completely for that small inconvenience.

After the taxi drove off, Joanna took a few moments to take it all in. The docks were busy with passengers laden with bags and hopes for the perfect vacation. Behind her, the streets were lined with neoclassical buildings that looked tired, yet also proud for standing the test of time during turbulent periods of both war and peace. It was all as she remembered it from her youth. The exhilarating feeling inside her returned as she cast her gaze upon the sea, ready to embark on her aquatic adventure across the Aegean.

Joanna bought her ticket from the travel agency and hurried to the end of the dock, her designer luggage trailing behind her like a reluctant travel companion who had witnessed vacations during saner times. She walked up to the nearby canteen and bought herself a chilled coffee. It would help her combat the jetlag that lurked around the corner. Smiling to herself, Joanna sat on a bench, sipped her delicious Greek frappé and watched the world go by. The timing had worked out perfectly. The next boat would depart in just over an hour. Joanna threw another glance at her designer bag and chuckled to herself. It seemed so prim and proper, out of place in the disorderly and loud dock, like one of her mother's prude elderly friends. Any of those women would wrinkle their nose in distaste to hear of Joanna's *coup de folie*. But even that made Joanna smile.

To be in Greece again made her feel alive. Even the butterflies in her stomach were gone. She cast her gaze upon the sea that murmured softly before her, egging her to come along, daring her to prove she'd kept her old promise. It had been a long time; she didn't dare wish for any miracles. Yet, she liked to believe she could still retrieve even a small part of what she had forever lost, if only for a while, to steal a few moments over coffee perhaps, for old time's sake, with the young Greek boy she had never managed to forget.

The time passed easily enough and embarkation soon commenced. Joanna sat on the busy, top deck. After departure, she gave that paperback another try to keep her mind occupied. Under any other circumstances, she would have devoured that thin volume in just a few hours, and it was interesting enough, but not today. Fearful thoughts and doubts kept churning in her head, causing her eyes, time and time again, to stray from the pages, and to rest upon the vastness of the sparkling sea. The air smelled of salt, her hair blew in the breeze, and the feeling that started stirring in her soul felt more and more familiar thanks to that distant memory. Somehow, these moments brought back the feeling

of being on that scooter, twenty years ago. It was then that she realized that during all those years in between, there hadn't been a single moment where she'd felt half as free, half as alive.

Smiling happily to herself, Joanna closed the book and shifted in her seat so she could properly face the sea. Sifnos was somewhere ahead, about to emerge through the haze. Now, Joanna had no more doubts. She was out to retrieve the answer to a question that had been torturing her for too long. She didn't need the book anymore to distract her. Now she knew she couldn't be wrong. Nothing that feels so good can be a wrong choice. As she waited, her eyes looking straight ahead, she welcomed the murmur of the other passengers chatting excitedly.

Before she knew it, Sifnos finally came into view. Joanna saw the sleepy-looking town of Kamares in the distance with its whitewashed houses on the surf, the beach of golden sand, the imposing rocky hills in the background, and the lonely chapel on the highest peak. It was a vision of serenity; she was astonished at how well she could remember it, well enough to tell immediately that little had changed over the years. She was pleased with that, to know that there are still little corners in the world that don't get taken over by massive hotel chains.

A half hour later, she was in her private hotel balcony drinking in the shimmering sea view. In the distance, the quaint taverna she remembered so well seemed like a black bird on a leafy nest, perched on the rocks, right at the surf. Unable to bear her excitement any longer, Joanna hurried back to the room to have a quick shower. Next, she put on a plain tee, cotton slacks and sandals and exited the room. As she strode along the beach with a newfound spring in her step and a pleasant breeze on her face, her eyes twinkled with sheer determination. With flushed cheeks and a broad smile, Joanna arrived at the taverna at the end of the bay where the fine sand gave its place to ragged rock formations.

To the onlookers, she seemed like another tourist when she took a seat by herself at a small table. Nothing about her could reveal her deeper purpose for being there. When a teenage boy came to take her order, Joanna gave a start and took off her dark glasses to take a better look. The boy's eyes seemed familiar. Her heart sank.

"How can I help you?" asked the boy in broken English.

"A Greek coffee please," said Joanna. She could almost taste the thick, sweet beverage she'd come to miss so much. "Glyko!" she added, still remembering how to request a sweet coffee in Greek. She had a devoted teacher during her last stay. The few Greek words he had taught her had been etched in her memory forever.

"You speak Greek!"

Joanna gave an easy smile. "A little. I have been here before."

"I don't remember you," said the boy, his eyes twinkling in the sunlight as he studied her face.

Joanna gave a titter. "It was a long time ago. I don't think you were even born yet!"

The boy raised his brows and nodded, not finding anything suitable to say.

"Last time I was here, there was a young man in this taverna. He used to run it with his parents twenty years ago," said Joanna pointing at the establishment's humble-looking entrance.

The boy gawped at her for a few seconds, then his face got animated with surprise.

"You knew my grandparents? That's nice . . . They have both died, you know . . ."

"Oh, I am sorry to hear that. I used to know your father, too. I presume it is your father, that is. His name is Costas, right?"

"No, that's my uncle. He and my father are brothers. Uncle Costas used to run the taverna with my grandparents in the

old days.” His eyes lit up. “So *that’s* the young man you knew!”

Joanna’s eyes widened. “Your uncle! Is he here?” Her voice came out breathless, and she turned to throw another glance at the doorway. The thought that he could be inside that very moment made her heart beat violently against her chest.

“No, my parents run the taverna now. Uncle Costas doesn’t work anymore; he is retired.”

“Retired? But he must be in his forties!”

“He was a military man; a naval officer. They retire early.”

“Oh, I see! Does he live here on Sifnos?”

“Yes, he lives close by.” The boy pointed vaguely to the distance, then shrugged his shoulders. “I can show you the house, if you want.”

“Thank you, that would be lovely,” said Joanna, but in her heart she felt unsure. How could she show up at Costas’s doorstep after so long? What could she say? And what would his wife and children think? *Surely he’s married!*

“I’ll bring your coffee first!” said the boy and, without waiting for an answer, rushed through the front door.

As she waited, Joanna gazed out to the open sea. The soft lapping of the waves echoed sweetly in her ears from the edge of the shore. The sea murmured her eternal song as gentle waves crept under the ragged rocks, making soothing splashing sounds. When a man delivered lunch to a nearby table, Joanna turned to face him and guessed it was Costas’s brother. She hadn’t met him before, but he had the same eyes as the boy. Gorgeous, long lashes and thick eyebrows seemed to run in their family. Before going back in, the man turned to her and nodded with a smile. Later, he brought her coffee and introduced himself as Sotiris, Costas’s brother. His son had relayed his conversation with her, and he lingered by the table to chat for a while, and to let her know that his brother was well and enjoying retirement.

“Lucky man, having all this free time!” said Joanna.

“Yep, that’s my brother, the organizer!” replied Sotiris. “He must have thought it all out! He roamed the world in his youth and now, in his best years, he just enjoys life. Not like the rest of us, slaving away!” He smiled and gave a wink.

“It must have been hard for his wife when he traveled, but I bet it’s paid off now that he’s always home, right?” asked Joanna. She felt ashamed of herself, fishing for information like that, but she was desperate to know.

“Wife? My brother?” said Sotiris with a chuckle. “Costas never got married. Mind you, my parents and I tried to marry him off with many local girls from time to time, but he wouldn’t have it. Very strong-minded man!”

Joanna was relieved that Sotiris turned to go at that point, leaving her alone to digest the news in privacy. She felt relieved, of course. Not that she allowed herself to have any high hopes after so long, but it would certainly make it easier for her to pluck up the courage and knock on his door, knowing there was no wife to cause any upset to.

A few minutes later, Joanna was ready to go. The boy, true to his word, after receiving a handsome tip with the payment for the coffee, escorted her swiftly to Costas’s front gate.

“Here we are! My uncle should be in, just ring the doorbell.”

“Thank you,” said Joanna, fanning her face with one hand. The brisk walk under the fierce heat had been strenuous. Of course, the boy seemed unaffected, fresh and cool, as if he’d just come out of the shower.

When the boy went in a hurry to return to his post, Joanna stood at the gate, numb with uncertainty. She hadn’t really given it much thought. *What am I going to say?*

“Hello, can I help you?” echoed the voice of a man behind her. Joanna gave a start and turned around to find Costas walking towards her. He was smiling amicably, his head tilted to one side. Despite the distance, Joanna recognized him easily. His boyish looks had been replaced by the

ragged, unshaven look of a fully-grown man and he looked more handsome than ever.

“Oh, hi!” Joanna’s eyes drifted down to his hands. He was holding plastic grocery bags.

Costas’s eyes lit up when he stopped before her, his jaw dropping.

“Hello Costa,” said Joanna with an awkward smile.

“Joanna?” Costas bent over to leave the bags on the sidewalk, then put a hand on his chest, his eyes huge. “Oh my God!”

Joanna’s face brightened. “You remember me?” This was far more than she had permitted herself to hope for.

“Do I remember you? Joanna! I don’t believe it!” Costas opened his arms to give her a warm embrace. They swung to and fro, oblivious to the people who passed by. Costas didn’t mind any locals watching. It had been a long time since he’d last felt he owed any explanations to anyone.

“How did you get here?” His initial shock was gone and now he was grinning from ear to ear.

“I think an airplane and a boat is the obvious answer!” Joanna gave a giggle. Looking into his eyes made her feel young again. She relished the feeling.

“Of course, I am sorry!” He broke their embrace and took a step back with a chuckle. “I meant to say . . . it’s been a long time. Wow! How did you find my house?”

“I asked about you in the taverna. Your nephew brought me here.”

“Ah, he’s a good boy!” Costas scratched his head and gave a goofy smile. “I must say, Joanna, I’m still shocked. It’s so good to see you.”

She locked eyes with him and gave him a beaming smile. “It’s really good to see you too, Costa.”

“Oh, where are my manners? Please, do come in!” Costas picked up his bags and motioned her to follow through the front gate, then along the garden path to the house. It was an enchanting villa that looked gorgeous with its quaint, tiled

roof and stunning rhododendrons on its façade. A neat line of planters on the porch contained blooms of vibrant colors. The vegetable patches in the front garden seemed to be thriving too. Everything one would need for a Greek salad or a vegetable casserole was hanging generously from the plants.

"You have a lovely garden!" said Joanna as Costas escorted her through the front door. The living room was bathed in sunlight. Five minutes later, they were out again, sitting in the shaded patio at a small table with a tumbler of orange juice each.

"When did you arrive?"

"Ah . . . yesterday!" she lied. She couldn't admit she'd gone straight to the taverna looking for him after her arrival on the island.

"And how long are you staying?"

"For about a week." Joanna had just decided in her muddled head that this was a sensible answer. The truth, of course, was she had an open airline ticket for her return home, but she couldn't say that either. It sounded weird even to her.

"That's great . . . If I may ask, are you here on your own?"

Joanna saw hope in his eyes, and her heart fluttered against her breastbone. She hadn't rehearsed any of this and now felt stupid that she hadn't. She had to think on her feet, and she wasn't good at this. Lying had never been a strongpoint either.

"I visited Athens with a friend . . . but I am on my own here on Sifnos." She hated lying to him but what was the alternative? She could hardly say she'd come all the way from the States on a whim, hoping to see him again.

"That's great . . ." repeated Costas, but he seemed unsure if he liked her answer.

Joanna saw his expression and took heart. *Is he wondering if the friend is a man or a woman?*

"It's really good to see you!" Costas burst out.

Joanna smiled back at him, hoping he couldn't tell how erratically her heart was beating. "I met your brother, too. He seems like a good man."

"Yes, he is. He's doing a great job at the taverna."

"He mentioned you're a retired naval officer."

"True! I bet you didn't expect that from a mere island boy!" Costas chuckled, but then, a shadow fled past his eyes.

"And why not, Costa? Of course I always knew you'd do great in your life." She beamed at him, too enthusiastic to notice the bitter undertone in his statement.

"I can't believe it! You remembered to drop the 's' from my name," he said happily, changing the subject.

"Of course, I remember everything you taught me. The final 's' of a Greek name must be dropped when you address the person, right?"

"That's right." Costas gave a wide grin. "Yet, I didn't teach you that, Dora did."

"She was only the interpreter. She hardly deserves the credit. You were the actual teacher." Joanna giggled as she picked up her glass to drink.

Costas beamed at her. "True!"

"How is Dora, by the way?" said Joanna leaving her glass on the table.

"No idea. She left the island ages ago. Mind you, she was a strange girl, I certainly don't miss her . . ."

"Her English was excellent."

"Well, I can't tell. I didn't speak it at the time, remember?"

"Yes, I meant to say! Where did you study? You speak English like a native!"

"I studied it in the Naval College . . . and, before that, I taught myself with books. You know, Joanna, meeting you was a pivotal point in my life. It changed a lot of things."

Joanna knitted her brows and leaned forward. "Really? Like what?"

“Well, first of all, I realized that English is important. I mean, there I was working in a taverna, and I could hardly communicate with the tourists. Until I met you, it hadn’t occurred to me I needed to learn the language.”

“Well, whatever you lacked in language skills you overcompensated with gallantry and charm!” Joanna gave a warm smile and, without thinking, reached across the table to pat his hand.

“Thanks,” said Costas looking down at their hands for a moment. Then, he fixed her with a confident stare that made her heart leap. He leaned forward, his eyes pinned on hers. “Why are you here, Joanna? Why now?” The feel of her tender hand on his seemed to overwhelm him. He pressed his lips together as if the words had come out before he could stop himself.

“I needed a vacation,” she lied, running a hand through her hair, faking nonchalance. “I missed Sifnos. I always dreamed of coming back.” At least, that statement had truth in it. It made her feel relieved a little.

“Are you married?” His eyes penetrated hers, his expression sombre.

Joanna gave a little sigh. “I am widowed.”

“I’m sorry to hear that . . .”

Joanna shrugged, then gave a thin smile when she found nothing to say.

“Were you happy?” His index finger slid over her hand on the table, caressing the back of it. The feeling brought a shiver down her spine.

“He was a good man,” she said, looking away. “I hear you never got married,” she added with a nervous chuckle, trying to change the subject. It wasn’t that she felt she had something to hide, but speaking to Costas about her marriage made her feel uncomfortable. It was like admitting a terrible mistake and she felt ashamed. *Why, oh why, didn’t I come back here the next summer to seek him out? Now, twenty years later, what am I hoping for?* Joanna drew a sharp

breath as she pretended to admire a trellis in the far wall of the garden. It was laden with a stunning, bright pink bougainvillea. When she turned to face Costas again, something deep in his eyes gave her encouragement, but then his expression changed, his brow furrowed as he frowned, a shadow fleeting past his eyes.

“Why didn’t you leave me your address, Joanna? You said you wanted to write,” he burst out, taking her by surprise.

Joanna scoffed. “I did leave it with you! What are you talking about?” Her fingers were entwined with his on the small table. She squeezed his hand gently, to put emphasis to her stunned words.

Costas shook his head. “Joanna, come on, admit it! The address you gave me was non-existent! I got Dora to write to you many letters, and they all came back marked ‘unknown address!’”

“What?” Her eyes wide, Joanna retracted her hand from his and leaned back on her chair. “I gave you a valid address! And I waited, I waited *desperately* for your letters!” She gesticulated wildly as she spoke.

Costas waved with an impatient hand. “Don’t lie to me, I know it’s been a long time and . . . perhaps it shouldn’t really matter anymore, except . . .” He bit his lip, his eyes resting, glazed over, upon his vegetable patch in the distance.

“Except what?”

Costas turned to face Joanna, his eyes on fire. “Except, it *does* matter, Joanna!” He slammed his fist on the table, causing the glasses to jump. He had drained his, and that was fortunate because when it fell intact to its side, there was no spill. Still, it seemed to Joanna he wouldn’t have noticed even if the glass had shattered into smithereens. He carried on, his face ablaze. “It matters to me! I loved you!” He leaned toward her across the table, his eyes two live, glistening pieces of coal.

“What did you say?” Joanna’s voice was a mere whisper. “You loved me? I thought . . .”

“You thought what? You *knew* I loved you, I told you so!”

“I loved you too, Costa!”

“If you did, then why? Why did you give me a non-existent address?”

“I didn’t! I’ve already told you! The address I gave you was valid! That is why I never understood why I never heard from you! Did you *really* write?”

“You don’t believe me? Come, I’ll show you!” Costas jumped to his feet, grabbed Joanna’s arm and led her purposefully across the lawn. A few minutes later he had retrieved his old letters to her from a storage box in his shed. He led her into his house to speak more privately, and they sat together on his sofa where he delivered the bundle of letters into her trembling hands. The dog-eared envelopes were tied together with string. Joanna eyed them speechless. *He kept them?*

“Well? Is this a valid address?” he demanded.

“Oh my God! How is this possible?”

“There’s no need to lie! Why don’t you admit it, Joanna? I wasn’t good enough for you!”

“Don’t say that, Costa! Listen, you’re right! This is a wrong address! But I gave you the correct one. It is where my parents still live, and back when we met, that was my home, too. Look! The postcode is all wrong! You see that ‘1’ in the beginning? This doesn’t exist on the valid postcode! And that ‘8’? It should be a ‘3’! The postcode is too long! Even the city name is misspelled! No wonder these letters never reached me!”

“What? Are you serious?” Costas brought his hands to his head.

“Costa, believe me when I tell you, I gave you my real address at the time! And if you remember, we had agreed I would reply to *your* letter. You never gave me your address, remember? How was I to write back to you if your letters never reached me?”

“I know, I know that! But how did this happen? If you gave me the right address, how come these envelopes have a wrong one on them?”

“I don’t know . . .”

“Wait a minute,” Costas interrupted her, untying the string to take a better look. “Inside my first letter, I had left the scrap of paper you wrote the address on.” Hurriedly, he slid his fingers in the first envelope of the bundle. Joanna could do nothing but watch while her mind tried to make sense of it all.

“Here it is!” Costas opened the little note. His fingertips touched it gently, reverently, like a precious relic. As she watched him, Joanna realized she wasn’t the only one who hadn’t forgotten over the years. When she took the note from his hand, the old memories flooded in. On their last night together, he had cut a piece from an old newspaper for her to write her address on. Dora was there as usual, lurking in their company, being their eager and precious interpreter. Joanna wrote her address on the note and handed it back to Costas with a kiss. Looking at it now, Joanna spotted easily the erroneous postcode digits as well as two blotches on the city name. It was obvious that someone had tampered with the address. Joanna couldn’t believe Costas hadn’t noticed it.

“I think we know what happened here,” she said, pointing at the errors on the address, the way you point at thieves on a police lineup upon infallible recognition, determined to make them pay for all they’ve robbed you from.

“Was it Dora?” he asked and Joanna simply nodded. “She must have tampered with the address before I even sat with her to write my first letter to you. But why would she do that?”

“Surely you know why! She was always following us around. It had crossed my mind that she fancied you, but I never thought she’d be so nasty. She wanted you, Costa! She wanted you for herself!”

“Why, that conniving . . .”

Joanna put up a hand, shaking her head. "It doesn't matter now, Costa . . ."

"Of course it matters! Look what she's done to us! And you know half of it!"

Joanna arched her brows. "Let me guess. She lied to you about me, didn't she?"

"How did you know that?"

"Take a wild guess . . ."

His eyes bulged. "She didn't!"

"Yes, she did! She lied to me about you, too."

"But when? What did she say?"

"It was after we said goodbye that night. It was late so I went straight to my hotel room to sleep. It wasn't two minutes after I got there when she knocked on the door and asked to talk to me."

"What? She never mentioned any of this to me!"

Joanna shrugged. "Why would she? She came to lie to me, Costa! Now, I see it all clearly . . . She came to warn me that you don't take girls seriously, that you fall in love with foreign girls all the time and that if I had any sense, I should forget you."

"Please tell me that's not true! I can't believe it!" Costas shook his head, gesticulating frantically.

"Calm down, Costa, what's done is done! It's no use getting angry now."

"It's hard not to!"

"If you don't mind me asking, did you two ever get close?"

"Are you serious? Of course not!" Costas pinned his eyes on hers. "I was just glad when she left the island. She was a nasty piece of work! You should hear what lies she said about you!"

"What did she say?" Joanna wore an expression of distaste that signaled she wasn't totally sure she wanted to know.

Costas gave an exasperated sigh. "It was about six months after you left . . . I was still sending you letters with her help, to no avail, of course. One day, she said she had something to

confess, that it was for my own good that she was breaking her promise not to tell. She said that while you were here, you told her you had a serious boyfriend back home and that all I was to you was a summer romance and nothing else. I remember how angry it made me. I didn't believe her at first! But as the letters kept returning to me unopened, I started gradually to believe her. That's when she lied to me some more. She said you told her that you could never be with a simple island boy, someone who couldn't even speak her language."

"Oh, Costa, I'm so sorry! How you must have felt!" Joanna leaned towards him as he sat beside her and squeezed his arm with a tender hand.

"Tell me, Joanna, did you believe her when she said that I flirted with all the girls and that you meant nothing to me?"

"Of course not! Costa, I knew you loved me. I loved you, too! That's why it hurt so much when I never heard from you."

"Why didn't you come back? Why Joanna?" Costas shifted in his seat and took her by the shoulders gently.

When they locked eyes, Joanna felt transported to their distant past together. It felt too much to bear. She broke her gaze and stared at her lap, feeling ashamed, at a loss. "I'm sorry, Costa . . . You know, I kept asking myself that for years. I guess, in time, I believed what Dora said. Also, my family and friends back home tried their best to make me forget you. They'd introduce me to all those charming boys, or they'd sit me down and reason with me. They said I had no future with someone living in a faraway land. They all conspired to keep me focused to my everyday life and my studies, hoping I'd soon forget all about Greece as if it were no more than a meaningless whim. By the following year, I guess I had convinced myself you were more like a happy dream I once had rather than someone real, someone who I could still run to. After my graduation, I got a great job and that's when I met my late husband . . ."

“So that’s how you forgot me . . . that’s how you gave us up?” Costas said bitterly, shifting in his seat to look out the patio window, away from her.

“I never forgot you!” she protested, putting out a light hand to touch his shoulder with her fingertips.

Costas turned to face her again, his eyes feverish. “But, can’t you see, Joanna? It wasn’t only what Dora did!” His voice rang heavy with emotion. “We allowed her lies to poison our minds. We gave each other up. We didn’t fight. I could have had the sense to give you my address too, I could have asked someone else instead of her to write my letters to you. Now that I think of it, it all makes sense. It was so obvious she was after me. Why didn’t I stay away from her? What a fool! How could I not have noticed the smudges on the address?” He was yelling now as he chastised himself. He stood up, huffing, and began to pace up and down before the open windows.

Joanna’s heart contracted with upset, then began to swell, with timeless, rekindled feelings. “Don’t blame yourself, my love! I hate to see you this way!” She went to him and took his hand. Her own hand was trembling, but she no longer cared if he noticed. In his words, in his demeanor, she’d just found all she’d been hoping for and more.

“What did you just call me?” mumbled Costas searching deep in her eyes.

“I called you, ‘my love’ . . .” Joanna gave a lopsided grin and shrugged a single shoulder. “What else am I going to call you? Oh, Costa, can we just forget the past and start over?” Her face was bright with hope.

“Really?” he whispered.

“I never let you go, Costa! And I never forgot you. Don’t you see? Why would I be here after twenty years if I had?”

“Joanna, my Joanna!” he said before taking her in his arms to kiss her passionately the way she’d waited all her life to be kissed.

“Oh, I’m so sorry, Costa . . .” she said, cradled in his arms as soon as their lips parted.

Costas caressed her cheek with the back of his hand. “For what, my darling?”

“I have a confession to make. I lied to you earlier . . . I came all the way here just to be with you! There was no friend in Athens. I went to Piraeus straight from the airport earlier today. I arrived here just a couple of hours ago and, after checking in my hotel, I went straight to the taverna looking for you.”

“Oh, Joanna!” he said, his voice breaking. “I always knew this was right!”

“Remember our promise?”

“Yes, of course! We promised never to forget and we didn’t . . .”

“Look, Costa . . . I kept my promise . . .” Joanna produced a locket from inside her tee. It was half a silver heart hanging from a delicate chain.

Costas’s eyes turned huge. “You still have it?”

“Of course I do! You bought it for me in Apollonia during the festival.”

“Well, I’ve kept my side of the bargain, too.” Costas winked at her, then hurried back to the sofa. Within a few moments, he’d found what he was looking for among the stack of discolored envelopes. He opened a tiny paper box that was in one of them and took out a half silver heart, the mirror image of hers. “I’ve always kept mine safe, too . . .” he said when he returned to her with two long strides.

“I’ll be honest, I didn’t wear mine all this time,” said Joanna as he placed his half of the heart next to hers on the locket. They clicked into place like two long lost friends, like a puzzle that awaited completion for too long.

“What matters is that you kept it, Joanna . . . That’s proof enough for me.”

“Well, if it’s proof you need, Costa, all you have to do is look into my eyes. They never lied to you,” she said before he sealed her lips with his again.

Joanna’s flight back home had to wait for a few weeks. And even when she finally got there, this time it was only for a while, for as long as it took to make arrangements for the life change she’d always wanted but was once too young and too unsure of herself to fight for. When she returned to Sifnos, this time to stay, it felt more right than anything else she’d ever done before.

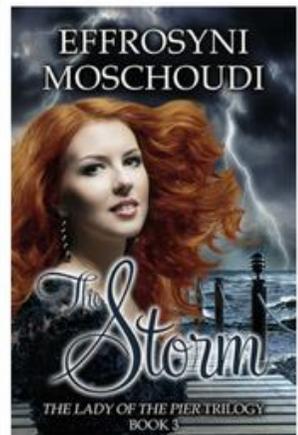
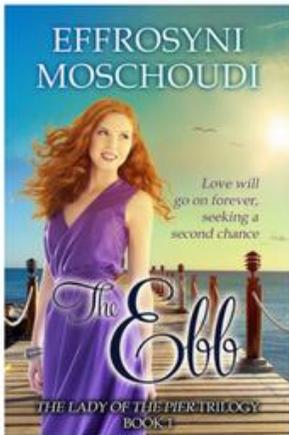
Throughout the years that followed, each time she rode with Costas on his moped, Joanna made sure to let her hair down, free to flow in the breeze. It had made her certain of her wants once, that irresistible feeling of freedom on Costas’s old moped as she held on to him, when they were both still young. Back then, she had betrayed her instinct. Nowadays, older and wiser, the same feeling of freedom served her as the perfect reminder that to test your choices all you have to do is to simply ask yourself how you really feel inside.

Thank you for taking time to read Poetry from the Lady of the Pier. If you enjoyed it, please consider telling your friends or posting a short review. Word of mouth helps me continue to write books, and I'd be most grateful. Thank you, Effrosyni Moschoudi

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When Sofia falls in love, she is haunted by a spirit...



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