

A Serendipitous Disaster

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Serendipity. It is how the Kollpiti Archipelago was discovered. An idyllic haven where turquoise waves undulated like pleats of a sarong, gently lapping against its golden sands. Thatched roof huts formed the island's coastline. Inside, families of fishermen lived simply and harmoniously with nature. Despite their lack of material wealth, they held a deep connection to their land and traditions.

Across the waters lay the main island of Delft. A sprawling metropolis of bustling streets and vibrant culture. Throughout the island, coal plants billowed grey clouds of smoke. The people of Delft revelled in their amenities, heedless of its cataclysmic impact on their surrounding environment.

On the island of Kollpiti lived a fisherman's young daughter, Mali. As she wandered on the beach, Mali recalled memories of when the shore used to stretch out far, and the sunlight would beam through the ocean surface, illuminating the coral and sea floor. But now she mourned, as this is no longer Kollpiti. Day by day, she watched as turquoise waves inched closer to the thatched roof huts, as lively corals became lifeless; each day she grieved another fragment of Kollpiti.

As Mali walked barefoot along the beach, a salty breeze combed through her hair. The air filled with the sweet aroma of frangipani. Fishing boats, resting under a canopy of coconut trees, lined the shore. Then, in a single moment, the sky grew sombre. Mali observed each wave crash more violently than the next. Weathered by time and tides, an intricately carved, tarnished relic washed up on the shore, along with a note. The note was written in an ancient language.

Mali, realizing the gravity of her discovery, gathered the village elders. Among them was Kavi, the village chief, and Ira, a spirited young activist. The note, written in a language long forgotten but somehow comprehensible to Kavi, foretold of catastrophic climate changes and lauded the instrument's power to reverse them. Yet, it carried a warning of wielding such power; a price veiled in mystery. They debated assiduously about the next steps.

"We must inform the main island," Kavi said, his voice steady. "They are the ones responsible for the erosion of our lands. They have the means to bear the consequences of using this instrument."

Ira, however, was wary. "But what if they misuse it? Or worse, what if they seize our island to protect their interests?"

The elders nodded in agreement with Kavi's suggestion, despite their doubt. Mali and Ira were chosen to make the perilous journey to Delft, a decision that filled them with both hope and dread.

Upon arrival, they were met by towering skyscrapers and the deafening roar of machinery. The contrast to their sanguine home was stark. Soon they were greeted by the Governor of Delft, Jain, an imposing figure known for his shrewdness and ambition. As Mali and Ira presented the instrument and the note, Jain listened intently, his eyes glinting with interest. When they finished, he leaned back in his chair, a calculated smile on his lips.

"This is indeed a remarkable find," Jain said. "We will use the instrument, but there will be conditions. Given the potential risks, you must agree to cede control of the Kollpiti Islands to us. We cannot afford to take chances."

Mali's heart sank. "But it is your negligence that has caused this crisis! We came to you for help, not to surrender our home."

Jain's expression hardened. "The stakes are too high. If you do not agree, the consequences will be dire for everyone."

The room filled with a suffocating silence as Ira stepped forward, her eyes blazing, "We will not be cowed into giving up our island. If you won't help us without any demands, we will find another way."

Jain stood, his figure towering over, "There is no other way. Decide now."

Back and forth, the arguments flew. The main islanders blamed the people of Kollpiti for not modernising, while the Kollpitians accused Delft of negligence and greed.

As tempers seethed, a sudden tremor shook the building. The sky outside turned sullen, the air ripe as the sea engulfed with fury. They watched as disaster stood on the frontline of their islands. The instrument, still untouched, seemed to pulse with a life of its own as if reacting to the escalating tensions.

In the chaos, Mali seized the instrument, her mind racing. "We have no choice," she whispered to Ira. "If we do not act now, we all perish."

Ira nodded, her face set with determination. "Then we do it together. For Kollpiti. For everyone."

As they activated the instrument, a blinding light enveloped the room. The ground beneath them rumbled violently, and a deafening roar filled the air. The people of Delft and Kollpiti watched in awe as the power of the instrument unfolded.

And then, a deafening silence spread across both islands.

The sky, painted with a hue of blue, kissed the horizon of the placid ocean. The air was buoyant. The crisis had been averted, but the price became apparent. The dance of humanity froze, with no one left to tread its steps.

Years later, as new life began, the islands thrived in unity, a testament to those who valued action over complacency. The instrument and the note were lost once again, buried beneath the sands, waiting for another era should they be needed. But the hope was that they never would.