



Synopsis of “Horizons Past”

Genre: Mainstream Fiction

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Chris Maven is a 60-year-old reclusive poet with a guilty past. He lives a lonely life on a deserted stretch of Texas’ Mustang Island beach where he exorcises the demons of his guilt, which revisit him nightly in his dreams, by writing his poetry. He is accosted one morning while surf fishing by Trish Lowe, a young star suffering from moviemaking burnout, who is filming an action flick in nearby Corpus Christi. She needs help because her car is stuck in the sand about a mile down the beach where she was looking for a secluded place to jog and read poetry.

He has no car or phone and can’t help. As a poetry lover she is intrigued by the poetry he writes in the sand, and enjoys her first fishing experience. Forced indoors by a rain shower, he cooks their morning catch for their lunch. In the warmth of his cozy beach house, they both develop an emotional and physical attraction to each other.

Jeffrey Randall is a State Park Ranger who has provided a safe haven in Mustang Island State Park for Trish’s past beach outings. He is alerted that Trish is missing and “rescues” her later in the afternoon at his friend’s, Chris’, beach house. She learns from Jeffrey, while he is returning her to her car, that she spent the day with Christopher Maven, whose published poetry she loves.

Over the course of just days, they develop a relationship that is satisfying to her, but amplifies his guilt, especially when Lottie Langton, his friend and longtime lover, discovers their affair and dumps him.

Danielle Stokes, the movie’s Type-A director, Leah Amour, Trish’s long-time personal manager, and Trish’s two friends, her hair and makeup team, work around the problems created by Trish’s distraction by her new lover. Her agent, Rod Blitzer, senses problems at the movie shoot and arrives in Texas to check them out. He also brings an offer for Trish to star in a remake of Anna Karenina, the type of dramatic challenge she has dreamed about throughout her action-movie career.

Trish feels she has found contentment with Chris and announces she is taking a hiatus from making movies. Rod’s unrequited love for Trish makes him jealous of Chris. He also is desperate for her to take the role of Anna Karenina, and maliciously destroys her new relationship by conniving to run photos of Trish and Chris in “The National Investigator.” Hordes of Trish’s fans – not to mention her movie company setting up to shoot a scene in front of Chris’ beach house - flush him out of his sanctuary and into Lottie’s home in the nearby island town of Port Aransas. Trish confronts Lottie in the hope of finding Chris. Lottie explains that Trish can never have a relationship with Chris because he is wanted for murder in California.

Trish retreats to Russia to film Anna Karenina. Chris returns to his beach house and salves his emotional pain by writing a new book of poetry he titles *Horizons Passed*.

Six months pass. A hurricane hangs in the Gulf of Mexico before making a rapid advance on the Texas Coast. Law officers, including Jeffrey, barely evacuate Port Aransas in time, but Jeffrey cannot get back to rescue Chris. The storm-surge washes his house away. He fights valiantly in a rowboat, but it capsizes, knocking him out. As he floats unconscious underwater Lesa Tolivar, his long ago fiancé who was killed in a freak accident, appears again and tells him the accident was not his fault, and he must forgive himself and move on to a new life.

Trish, Lottie, and Jeffrey all grieve over Chris’ presumed death in the Hurricane. In Marin County, California, a disheveled man walks into the District Attorney’s office and

announces, “I am wanted for the murder of Lesa Tolivar.”

Trish’s movie’s action scenes, and the roaring passages that tell of the hurricane’s destruction, are crisply detailed and lend urgency to what is in its essence a story of two people searching for love and escape from their current lives – and it is the love story’s realism that transcends both Trish’s glamour and Chris’ guilt to make for an unanticipated and satisfying ending that readers will jump up and cheer.

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