

## Chapter 1

Dr Hunter stood in the middle of the room, awkward in the unfamiliar space. His eyes traced the sweeping frame of an ornate mirror hanging over a magnificent fireplace. He took the richly upholstered sofa, the king-size bed, the large writing desk and the inlaid patio doors that opened out onto a stone balcony. All was tastefully decorated in soft gold and ivory, with decadent hints of old colonialism. And none of it was 'him'.

He frowned and thought back to the blinding sunlight and stifling heat that greeted him when he stepped out of the plane; to the young boy who tried to catch his eye at the luggage carousel; and to the bored taxi driver waiting outside Arrivals in the dingy shadow of the concrete flyovers. Oh, and the cloudless sky as they followed the clifftop coast road, only the occasional gull distracting from the perfect blue. Breathtaking azure bays had passed them by, one after another, each dotted with tiny yachts dancing on the glistening sea. But in the still cool of the taxi it had all seemed as if in a dream.

Snapping out of his reverie, he hung the Do Not Disturb sign outside his door and shut it firmly. He took off his jacket and placed it carefully on the back of a chair. His shirt was damp and he stood with his hands on his hips, cooling gratefully in the breeze across the middle of the room. Once he was comfortable, he went back to his jacket and took out his wallet and passport, placing them side by side on the mantelpiece above the fireplace. He put his mobile phone precisely in the middle of the bedside table, then picked up his suitcase and lay it carefully on the luxurious, hand-woven blanket that lay over the duvet. He took out several shirts and pairs of trousers, placing them in a pile next to the suitcase. He took out his underwear and divided pants from socks as he placed them in the top drawer of the wardrobe. He picked up a neatly folded t-shirt but froze when he saw the gilt photo frame beneath. He dropped the t-shirt on the bed and stared at the picture. A torrent of emotions crashed through him, and was nearly sick.