

THIRD HONOURABLE MENTION
IN THE BOATHOUSE WRITING CONTEST

THE PERFECT VACATION

By Frank Visakay (Phuket)

It had been the very best week of my life. The sun sparkled and danced on the waves as the sailboat advanced gently in the breeze.

We had been on the water for three hours, giving me plenty of time to reflect on how perfectly things had worked out. Here I was, gliding across the ocean with my beautiful wife. My wife, my wife, my beautiful wife, I loved her so much that I married her twice, ran through my head like a romantic melody.

Soopies was from Bangkok. I had met her during a wine tasting at the Boathouse. I was mesmerized by her beauty: skin the color of dark honey, large brown eyes, full sensuous lips and mahogany red hair flowing over her bare shoulders. She was wrapped in a yellow silk sarong, her body reminding me of a ripe mango, full and lush, bursting with sweetness.

She said she was on holiday and was just passing through, visiting Phuket for the first time. We spent two weeks together.

I saw her every day and every night. I fell head over heels in love with this alluring creature. The first time that we were married was three years ago and she moved into my house in Kamala. I had everything that I had ever wanted in my life and was deliriously happy - until I discovered that she had been cheating on me. She was sleeping with several other men while I worked in my restaurant.

She finally left me and we were divorced. My life was a shambles. I was heartbroken, devastated. Thailand was filled with beautiful women but I only wanted Soopies.

Today I am a very, very happy man. You see, she came back to me. Last year, I received a collect phone call from Soopies. She had made a terrible mistake in leaving me and wanted to start anew. I was overjoyed; my life would be whole again. However, the thought of her possibly abandoning me once more was too much to bear. I wouldn't be able to stand it. I couldn't take that chance.

I resolved my fear by explaining to her how much I loved her and that this time we would stay together forever. We both made this pledge. That was almost a year ago - funny how things turn out.

Soopies was not at all interested in going on vacation with me until I showed her the brochure. The Royal Palace Hotel in Hua Hin was at one time the summer residence of kings and Queens. It was filled with old tapestries, antiques and marble stairways. It had a luxurious spa that catered to your every whim. I knew that Soopies would spend most of her time being coiffured, massaged and manicured and that was fine with me. It was all quite expensive, but I wanted this week to be very special.

The late afternoon sun cast long shadows over the waves. The water looked cold and dark and very deep. How dark and cold I didn't know. How deep and dark was the cold in my heart? I didn't know that either. We were gliding silently seaward. I scanned my eyes over the horizon. There was nothing in sight, no one, not a boat or an island or even a seagull.

Soopies didn't want to be here but it was important that she accompany me. This morning I had taken her into one of the fancy stores that ran along the side of the hotel lobby and let her try on large emerald ring. I left my American Express card on the counter; the ring would be fitted and ready by dinner time. It was quite costly and it was my anniversary gift to her - that and this holiday trip. Her gift to me, I explained, would be her coming with me on this sailboat ride. She hated the sun and never went swimming. She was concerned about her elegant complexion and didn't want to be exposed to the elements.

I wasn't worried about the distance from shore. I had been here a few times in the past week. I turned and looked back at the long expanse of ocean; there was nothing behind us as far as I could see. I was alone with my beautiful wife and the tranquil silence. I was blissfully contented as we glided peacefully along the waves. I glanced over at Soopies. She had never liked sailing and was gripping the rail with both hands.

"I don't know how I ever let you talk me into this. I can't stand it so far away from land," she said in an annoyed voice. "Don't worry, my darling, everything will be just fine," I said gently. We were far enough into the ocean. It was almost time. I moved closer and put my arms around her and told her how much I loved her and asked if she remembered our vows to be together always.

"Yes, yes, I remember. Now stop, you are making the boat sway." I spoke to her in a calm and quiet tone, slowly, as if to a child. I wanted her to understand perfectly. I couldn't help smiling as I talked to her.

"Well, if you remember, why have you been going out with other men? Did you think that I wouldn't find out? Do you think that I'm stupid?"

"Yes, you're stupid. I'm sick of you and I'm leaving you as soon as we get home." She pushed against me with her hands.

"If you do, you'll break your promise and I can't let you do that," I said, my smile growing larger. I felt serene and exhilarated at the same time. I was ready now. The boat moved forward contentedly. I whispered in her ear.

"My darling I love you so much and I vowed that we would be together forever and we will be."

My arms encircled her, moving her closer to me. "Everything will be fine."

"You're crazy, let me go. I want to get off this boat." Her face contorted in anger.

"Really?" I asked, my grin spreading across my entire face. "How funny", I thought.

I had separated the anchor chain from the boat and in a quick motion wrapped it around us, pulling her close, her breasts pressing against my chest. She was starting to panic. I could see her eyes widen and her mouth open, as if to scream.

I held her tightly and slipped off the boat with the anchor. Her grip on the rail broke instantly and we plunged into the sea.

We would be together forever now and no one would ever disturb us again.