

**Landings**

An infinity of sea and sky bluer and more brilliant than in any dream. Our wake made a white streak across the blue so struck with glittering points of light it smarted the eye. We passed islands to our left and to our right; bottle green bosomy mounds frilled about with white sand rising out of that electric world of blue.

Which one of them was to be our home for the next year? Its name, and the fact that it was situated somewhere in the Torres Strait where the Arafura and Coral Seas meet between the northernmost point of Australia and Papua New Guinea, was all we knew about our island.

We were travelling in an aluminium dinghy, resting low in the water under the weight of five people and luggage for the two of us who were to be castaway. Our temporary companions were a young female photographer and the two silent Torres Strait Islanders who were manning the boat. We were squashed close together but each clamped stiffly in a separate world of anticipation. The sensation of waiting and the vastness of the sea and sky made the passage seem timeless. We skirted the edge of a reef across a long stretch of open water and then the dinghy made a decisive turn and the boy steering pointed ahead.

“Tuin”, he said simply, the “u” sound like and “oo”.

The first impression was of a long narrow island with small hills to north and south muffled in dense dark green. Huge boulders, like gigantic molars, stood out in the middle of a wide open bay. There was a long straight beach with light coloured sand. And palm trees.

Word-bank

<i>ENGLISH</i>	<i>UKRAINIAN</i>
wake, <i>n</i>	кільватер, слід
to smart (sth)	спричиняти, завдавати пекучого болю
to one's left/right	ліворуч/праворуч
mound, <i>n</i> [ˈmaʊnd]	горб, пагорок, купа
to frill	прикрашати оборками
northernmost	найпівнічний
dinghy, <i>n</i> [ˈdɪŋɡi]	маленький човен для прогулянок, ялік
to man	саджати веслярів у човен
to squash	купчитися, тулитися
stiffly	напружено, вимушено
anticipation, <i>n</i>	очікування, передчуття, побоювання
to skirt	обходити
to steer (the boat)	керувати човном
muffled	загорнутий, обгорнутий
boulder, <i>n</i> [ˈbəʊldə]	валун, галька
bay, <i>n</i>	затока