

### **The Jungle Demon**

Once upon a time, about thirty million years ago, when the world was still developing, a little piece of land broke off from the coast of Japan. It drifted and drifted until it finally stopped, right in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Nobody knew that it was even there.

No body knew, that is, until around ten years ago, when a property investor name Richard discovered the land while he was sailing on his boat, the *Ruby*. As soon as he spotted the land, he immediately instructed the captain of *Ruby* to anchor the boat next to the island. It was just a small piece of land; covered in trees, mangled, overgrown trees. Despite this the investor had spotted a great business opportunity and he was not going to let it pass, no matter what.

Richard checked the jungle style land for obvious dangers. He walked to the edge of the boat and then, cautiously, he gingerly place his left foot on the land. He moved it to the left and to the right to check the ground was stable. Once he was satisfied it was safe he stepped onto the land. The grass was knee high and the branches of the trees threatened to fall on him at any minute. He was putting on a brave face, trying to act cool, but in his mind thoughts kept popping into his head, '*What if the land collapses? Or 'What if one of the trees fall on me?'*' He tried to put these thoughts to the back of his mind, but no matter how hard he tried they were always there. Suddenly he heard a rustling behind him. "Is that you Mick?" (Mick was the boat driver. He was about sixty and near his retirement.) He asked. There was no reply.

There was another rustle behind him. He turned round but still he could see no one. "Mick if you don't stop messing around now you are so fired. Get out here now!" Suddenly there was a rustle then an almighty crash. Richard spun round to find something standing in front of him. Something he had never seen before. Richard had no clue what to do, he stood there, almost like he was paralysed. All of a sudden his survival instinct kicked in. He ran. Picking up speed all the way as he went. There was a rustle behind him. He was making his way to the boat. He was almost there. But he could feel the creature gaining on him. He looked back. There it was, a matter of feet away. As Richard turned back round he saw a branch. He hit it and tripped. The creature pounced on him like a tiger. Richard knew there was no hope. Suddenly the creature put his long arms around him and he felt himself sinking. He let out the loudest scream his body would allow then disappeared into the undergrowth.

The boat driver heard this scream. He realised there must be something on the island. He did not know whether to be loyal or escape. He heard a rustle through the trees, almost like someone was running

towards him. He knew now what he was going to do. He started the engine and put the boat on full speed. He sped away but didn't dare to look back. He never told anyone about what had happened, he was worried people would think he was mad.

What he had seen that day troubled him for the rest of his life, but when he was seventy, he was about to revisit the past. He was sitting in his armchair as he always did to watch the lunchtime news. He flicked on the television and took a sip of his coffee. *'Breaking news'* came across the screen. "What now?" Mick moaned, thinking another war had started or whatever. "There is always some sort of breaking news. Why can't they just have normal news for once?"

Mick lived alone in small bungalow he had bought about five years ago. A very serious looking news reporter flashed on the television. *'Breaking news'* she announced. *'There has been new land discovered it is reported to be somewhere in the middle of the Indian ocean. It was discovered by three sailors touring the world in their boat.'* For once Mick was glued to the TV.

Suddenly all of his memories of that frightful day came flooding back to him. The way he pulled up, the scream, the way he sped off leaving Richard to die. He felt sick.

*'I have to do something'* he thought *'I can't let happen to those people what happened to Richard.'* A shudder went down his spine when he mentioned the name.

He pulled on his coat and boots and made his way down to the boat shed he had near his house. Of course, he lived nowhere near a beach so he left the cover on the *Ruby*, attached her to the back of his car and then sped off to Scarborough.

When he got there he parked up his car and got out. There were a couple of young boys walking past at that time he shouted them over. "You boys want to make a fiver?" he asked.

"Yeah, okay." Said one of the boys, looking excited although he had no idea what he had to do.

"What do you need us to do?" asked the other one. He looked calm but very serious.

"I need a hand getting my boat down to the beach. You couldn't give me a hand could you?"

"Sure," they boys said together. "My names Bradley and his is Jim."

"Nice to meet you both," exclaimed Mick. Mick detached the boat from the back of his car. Bradley took the front of the boat and Jim and Mick took the back. Between all three of them they pushed and heaved but eventually got the boat down to the beach.

Mick removed the cover. He stared at her, just looking at her he could see all the good time he had with her, but then all of the not so good

times. 'Cool boat!' Jim yelled. Although he was trying to hide it, the boat fascinated Bradley too.

"Where are you going with it?" asked Bradley, trying but failing to sound casual. The excitement was rising in his voice every time he spoke.

Mick was racking his brains trying to think of an excuse to tell the boys. "I'm just going for a trip in the Indian Ocean."

'Sugar!' Mick thought. He wasn't meant to say the Indian Ocean. Neither boys clicked what he meant. "Ooh, nice!" exclaimed Jim. Bradley looked thoughtful. Mick was worried, what if he clicked. "Hold on. Are you going to find that island that was on the news?" asked Bradley.

Mick knew it was time to come clean to the boys. "Yes I am."

"Why do you want to go and see a piece of land that is nothing but...land?" asked Jim.

"Well, because I have history there." Mick was trying to get around telling them the story.

"What do you mean history. They've only just discovered it!" exclaimed Bradley, who by this time was completely baffled.

Mick knew it was time to tell his story. "Well," he began. "It was about ten years ago. Do either of you remember a Richard Webb?"

"The property investor that went missing about ten years ago?" asked Bradley.

"That's the one," stated Mick. "Well, I used to work for him. We went sailing around on his boat one day." He pointed at the Ruby. "That was his boat. So as I was saying, we went for a trip on his boat and as we were sailing we spotted a piece of land in the Indian Ocean. The one that was discovered today. He was on the land and I heard a scream. After that I heard someone or something coming towards me so I sped off. That was the last time anyone ever saw Richard. I didn't dare tell anyone in case they thought I was mad."

"We don't think you're mad!" remarked the boys together. "It all makes sense. The disappearance, your story. They kind of click." Exclaimed Bradley.

"You're not playing with me are you? You really don't think I'm mad?" asked Mick. He really thought they were joking with him.

"We don't think you're mad. But you are not going by yourself. If there is something there it will take more than one to fight it." Whispered Bradley. He had now lowered his voice so that no body but the three of them could hear.

"Look, it's not that I don't appreciate it and all lads, but this is something that I really need to do on my own." Mick really wanted to take them but didn't want to get them into any danger.

"But we want to come. You may need protection and even if there isn't anything there it will be a fun trip out for us," pleaded Jim. "Plus, I've never been on a boat. It would be an experience for me."

They had persuaded Mick. They all clambered aboard the boat. Mick started the engine and they sped off.

As you would expect on a ten-year plus old boat it wasn't exactly state of the art. But it got there and back and that was all they needed.

Anyway, it took them around three days to get to the island. It seemed to go really slow. But they all took turns driving and they got there eventually.

When they arrived there they saw another boat that was anchored up to the side of the island. So they anchored up next to it. As Jim and Bradley looked around then stepped onto the island, Mick could see it all again. He suddenly felt dizzy. The next thing he knew, he was staring up at Jim and Bradley; he had fainted.

Jim and Bradley helped Mick to his feet and they both grabbed an arm. They carefully stepped onto the land Mick felt like he was going to faint again but managed to steady himself. They walked a little around the island and then Jim and Bradley started shouting, "Hello!" They heard something running towards them, "Get back to the boat. NOW!!!" yelled Mick. All three of them ran back to the boat and grabbed the nearest thing they could, ready to hit someone or something.

Out of the trees came these two men. "Thank god you are here!" panted one of them. "Our friend has gone. We don't know where he went. He was there one minute. Then the next thing we heard a scream. We turned around and he wasn't there."

"We thought he was playing for a minute. But after we searched a while we realised he wasn't there," explained the other.

"I told you there was something here," said Mick defiantly.

"We believed you there was something here. Why do you think we offered to come?" asked Bradley. "So don't get all high and mighty with us."

"Sorry." Mick was slumped in a corner, breathing deeply.

"You guys come aboard," Jim offered.

"Can I tell you what we would like?" asked one of the men.

"What?" Jim and Bradley asked together.

"We would like some help finding our friend please." The two men were almost begging. Jim and Bradley looked at each other and then looked at Mick. Mick nodded.

"We'll help you." They all said together.

Mick, Bradley and Jim all gathered a few things they thought they might need in a rucksack. These were: a few heavy but small planks of wood, some bottles of water, a few sandwiches, (soggy sandwiches by this point,) and a large fishing net. Together they all walked off the boat and met the two men.

The two men were waiting for them on the island. "Sorry," exclaimed one of them. "We didn't properly introduce ourselves. I'm Billy and this is Joe."

"Nice to meet you," replied Jim.

"Well, hadn't we better get going?" asked Bradley. They walked onto the island, they had no idea what they were about to face.

"Right," yelled Mick; to the boys behind, "You had better show us where you last saw your friend." Billy and Joe took lead in front and the other three followed. All of a sudden, Billy and Joe stopped dead in their tracks.

"This is where we last saw him," they told the others. "We were in front over there and we looked back to see that he was okay. We walked another couple of yards and then heard the scream and then..." Joe broke off and screwed up his face.

Billy put his hand on Jim's shoulder as a kind of reassuring move. All of a sudden they heard a rustle in the trees. They didn't know what it was but they weren't going to hang a round to find out.

"Get back to the boat all of you. NOW!" yelled Mick. "Bradley pick up three large sticks as you go and Jim you pick up three fairly large stones too."

When they got back to the boat they all clambered inside the cabin and locked the door firmly behind them. "Bradley did you get the sticks like I asked?" asked Mick

"Yep. Here they are," replied Bradley.

"Jim, please tell me you got the stones," Mick begged.

"Ai, ai captain," replied Jim. Everybody looked at him when he said that. Jim blushed. Mick pulled out a penknife from his pocket. Everyone moved back. He picked up one of the stones and started to scrape them together. Soon it was starting to look like a diamond shape, but with a very pointy end. He took one of the large sticks and the string out of a drawer and tied the stone around the stick. He did the same with all three of the sticks and gave them to Bradley and Jim and kept one for himself.

"What about us?" asked Billy.

"You two can have these," replied Mick, handing them two very large pieces of wood. Billy and Joe looked baffled but didn't argue. After all, it was better than nothing. "Come on then. Let's go," commanded Mick.

They all set off, back to the spot where Mike (the third man) went missing. Once again, they heard the all too familiar rustle amongst the trees above them. All of a sudden they heard something drop behind them. They spun round quicker than a flash to see an extraordinary sight. Standing about ten feet away from them was a creature of some form. It had crazy spiked up hair, extra long arms, tiny stubby legs, and cats' eyes and was only about four feet two inches high. He looked harmless, apart from his piercing teeth and his extra long claw nails.

None of them knew what to make of it. Mick stood forward. He pointed his spear and swung his arm as if to say get behind him. The others did as they were told and got behind Mick. They didn't dare argue, especially not in that situation. Mick pointed his spear towards the thing. He heard it coming toward him. He held out his spear. He closed his eyes ready for it to pounce. Suddenly there was a silence. Moments later there was a screeching. Mick opened his left eye. He could not believe what he was seeing. On the end of his spear was the creature. Mick had speared it: right through the heart. Mick dropped his spear and stood back. He looked almost traumatised. Jim and Bradley went to comfort Mick whilst Joe and Billy went to inspect the dead body.

While they were walking back to the boat Joe noticed a hole in the ground.

"What's this?" he asked the others.

"It looks like some sort of hide out," explained Bradley. Jim walked over to the hole and peered inside. He stepped back quickly, wretching and gagging. "What did you see?" asked Bradley.

"There are loads of bodies," Jim gulped, "dead bodies! Including your friend. I'm so sorry." They all looked very sorrowful as they all walked and nobody spoke.

"Well this is where we leave you," explained Billy, "Here's our numbers, call us any time."

"We will. Bye!" They all shouted.

They all clambered aboard and Mick went straight to the wheel of the boat and started the engine. Bradley and Jim went and sat in the cabin. "I hope Mick will be okay," exclaimed Jim.

"He will be," explained Bradley "He's a strong man."

When they arrived back to England they all pushed the boat back to Mick's car. "Well thanks boys," said Mick.

"That's fine. It was an adventure if nothing else," explained Bradley.

"You know I promised you a fiver. Well here's fifty each. You really earned it." Mick was about to climb into his car when he stopped.

"Hang on, where do you two live?" asked Mick.

"York. A little street called Merle Drive," replied Bradley.

Mick laughed. "What a small world, eh, lads. I live two streets away from that. Would you like a ride home?" he asked.

"Thanks that would be great, they replied together. They scrambled into the car and set off home.

When they got back they said their goodbyes and then parted.

Well, I say parted, they really went to Merle Drive and Mick went to Brusly Terrace. Sometime Mick goes to the boys for dinner and the boys go to Mick's for tea and biscuits. What a pair!

**By Catherine**