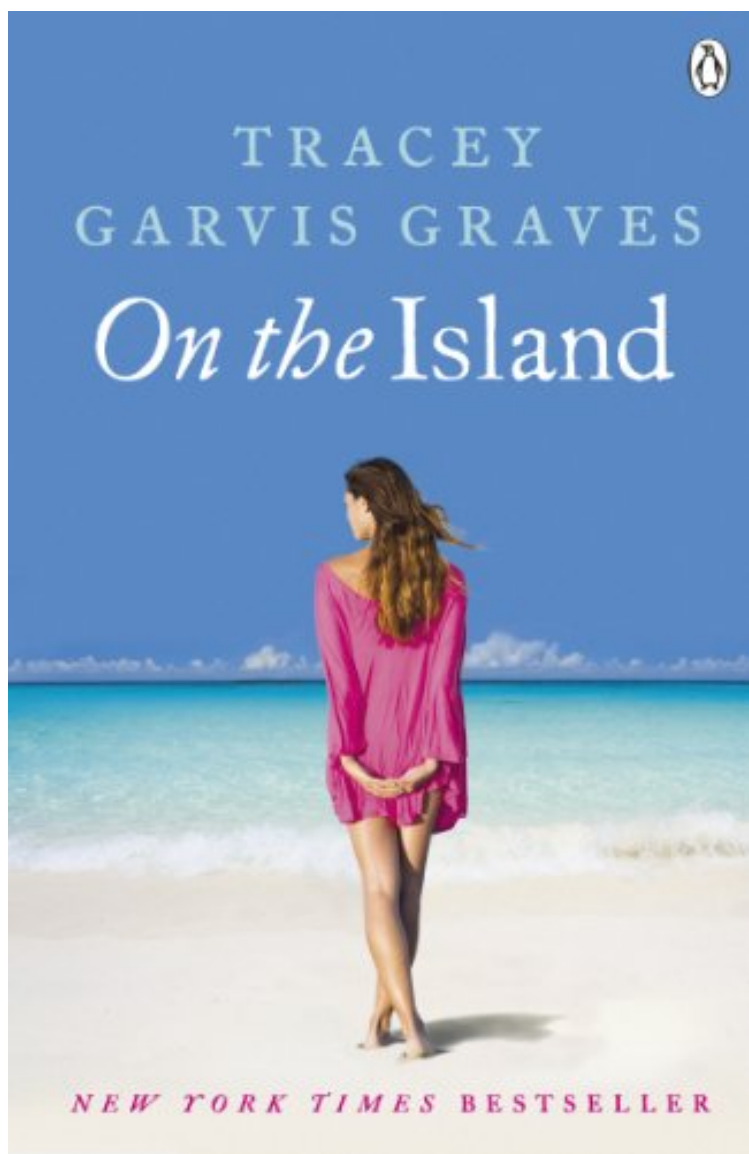


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On The Island



Par Tracey Garvis Graves
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurIt would always be summer on the island...A love story with a twist, Tracey Garvis Graves' *On The Island* is a US word-of-mouth success story to rival *Fifty Shades of Grey*, with 1500 5* reader reviews online (and counting!) and sales taking it top 10 in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and .com bestseller lists. Film rights have been optioned by MGM, with Temple Hill Productions (responsible for *Twilight*) slated to produce. When thirty-year-old English teacher Anna Emerson is offered a summer job tutoring T.J. Callahan at his family's holiday home in the Maldives, she accepts without hesitation: a tropical island beats the library any day. T.J. has no desire to leave town, not that anyone asked him. He's almost seventeen and if having had cancer wasn't bad enough, he now has to spend his first

summer in remission with his family instead of his friends. Anna and T.J. are en route to join T.J.'s family in the Maldives when the pilot of their seaplane suffers a fatal heart attack and crash-lands in the Indian Ocean. Marooned on an uninhabited island, Anna and T.J. work together to obtain water, food, fire and shelter but, as the days turn to weeks then months and finally years, Anna begins to wonder if the biggest challenge of all might be living with a boy who is gradually becoming a man...As romantic as *One Day* or *The Time Traveler's Wife*, US readers have fallen in love with Tracey Garvis-Graves' *On the Island*: 'If you're looking for something to fill the gap after reading *Fifty Shades*...here it is!' ***** Danielle'I couldn't put this down. I rooted for this couple from the beginning' ***** Kelkeligan'A bit *Castaway*, *Survivor* and *Lost* all rolled together, the minute I opened the book, I read till it was finished' ***** Michele'I loved, loved, loved this. It was a perfect way to spend a cold Friday night stuck at home' ***** KellyTracey Garvis-Graves lives in a suburb of Des Moines, Iowa, with her husband and two children.ExtraitChapter 1AnnaJune 2001I was thirty years old when the seaplane T.J. Callahan and I were traveling on crash-landed in the Indian Ocean. T.J. was sixteen, and three months into remission from Hodgkins lymphoma. The pilots name was Mick, but he died before we hit the water.My boyfriend, John, drove me to the airport even though he was third on my list, below my mom and my sister, Sarah, of the people I wanted to take me. We fought the crowd, each of us pulling a large, wheeled suitcase, and I wondered if everyone in Chicago had decided to fly somewhere that day. When we finally reached the US Airways counter, the ticket agent smiled, tagged my luggage, and handed me a boarding pass.Thank you, Miss Emerson. Ive checked you all the way through to Mal. Have a safe trip.I slipped the boarding pass into my purse and turned to say good-bye to John. Thanks for driving me.Ill walk with you, Anna.You dont have to, I said, shaking my head.He flinched. I want to.We shuffled along in silence, following the throng of slow-moving passengers. At the gate John asked, Whats he look like?Skinny and bald.I scanned the crowd and smiled when I spotted T.J. because short brown hair now covered his head. I waved, and he acknowledged me with a nod while the boy sitting next to him elbowed him in the ribs.Whos the other kid? John asked.I think its his friend Ben.Slouched in their seats, they were dressed in the style favored by most sixteen-year-old boys: long, baggy athletic shorts, T-shirts, and untied tennis shoes. A navy blue backpack sat on the floor at T.J.s feet.Are you sure this is what you want to do? John asked. He shoved his hands in his back pockets and stared down at the worn airport carpeting.Well, one of us has to do something. Yes.Please dont make any final decisions until you get back.I didnt point out the irony in his request. I said I wouldnt.There was really only one option, though. I just chose to postpone it until the end of the summer.John put his arms around my waist and kissed me, several seconds longer than he should have in such a public place. Embarrassed, I pulled away. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed T.J. and Ben watching it all.I love you, he said.I nodded. I know.Resigned, he picked up my carry-on bag and placed the strap on my shoulder. Have a safe flight. Call me when you get there.Okay.John left and I watched until the crowd enveloped him, then smoothed the front of my skirt and walked over to the boys. They looked down as I approached.Hi, T.J. You look great. Are you ready to go?His brown eyes briefly met mine. Yeah, sure. He had gained weight and his face wasnt as pale. He had braces on his teeth, which I hadnt noticed before, and a small scar on his chin.Hi. Im Anna, I said to the boy sitting next to T.J. You must be Ben. How was your party?He glanced at T.J., confused. Uh, it was okay.I pulled out my cell phone and looked at the time. Ill be right back, T.J. I want to check on our flight.As I walked away I heard Ben say, Dude, your babysitter is smokin hot.Shes my tutor, asshole.The words rolled off me. I taught at a high school and considered occasional comments from hormone-riddled boys a fairly benign occupational hazard.After confirming we were still on schedule, I returned and sat in the empty chair next to T.J. Did Ben leave?Yeah. His mom got tired of circling the airport. He wouldnt let her come in with us.Do you want to get something to eat?He shook his head. Im not hungry.We sat in awkward silence until it was time to board the plane. T.J. followed me down the narrow aisle to our first-class seats. Do you want the window? I asked.T.J. shrugged. Sure. Thanks.I stepped to the side and waited until he sat down, then buckled in next to him. He took a portable CD player out of his backpack and put the headphones on, his subtle way of letting me know he wasnt interested in having a conversation. I pulled a book out of my carry-on bag, the pilot lifted off, and we left Chicago behind.* * *Things started to go wrong in Germany. It should have taken a little over eighteen hours to fly from Chicago to Malthe capital city of the Maldivesbut after mechanical problems and weather delays we ended up spending the rest of the day and half the night at Frankfurt International Airport waiting for the airline to reroute us. T.J. and I sat on hard plastic chairs at 3:00 a.m. after finally being confirmed on the next flight out. He rubbed his eyes.I pointed to a row of empty seats. Lie down if you want.Im okay, he said, stifling a yawn.We arent leaving for several hours. You should try to

sleep. Arent you tired? I was exhausted, but T.J. probably needed the rest more than I did. Im fine. You go ahead. Are you sure? Absolutely. Okay. He smiled faintly. Thanks. He stretched out on the chairs and fell asleep immediately. I stared out the window and watched the planes land and take off again, their red lights blinking in the night sky. The frigid air-conditioning raised goose bumps on my arms, and I shivered in my skirt and sleeveless blouse. In a nearby restroom, I changed into the jeans and long-sleeved T-shirt I'd packed in my carry-on bag, then bought a cup of coffee. When I sat back down next to T.J., I opened my book and read, waking him three hours later when they called our flight. There were more delays after we arrived in Sri Lanka this time due to a shortage of flight crew and by the time we landed at Mal International Airport in the Maldives, the Callahans summer rental still two hours away by seaplane, I had been awake for thirty hours. My temples throbbed and my eyes, gritty and aching, burned. When they said they had no reservation for us, I blinked back tears. But I have the confirmation number, I said to the ticket agent, sliding the scrap of paper across the counter. I updated our reservation before we left Sri Lanka. Two seats. T.J. Callahan and Anna Emerson. Will you please look again? The ticket agent checked the computer. Im sorry, he said. Your names are not on the list. The seaplane is full. What about the next flight? It will be dark soon. Seaplanes dont fly after sunset. Noticing my stricken expression, he gave me a sympathetic look, tapped his keyboard, and picked up the phone. Ill see what I can do. Thank you. T.J. and I walked to a small gift shop, and I bought two bottles of water. Do you want one? No thanks. Why dont you put it in your backpack, I said, handing it to him. You might want it later. I dug a bottle of Tylenol out of my purse, shook two into my hand, and swallowed them with some water. We sat down on a bench, and I called T.J.s mom, Jane, and told her not to expect us until morning. Theres a chance theyll find us a flight, but I dont think well get out tonight. The seaplanes dont fly after dark, so we may have to spend the night at the airport. Im sorry, Anna. You must be exhausted, she said. Its okay, really. Well be there tomorrow for sure. I covered the phone with my hand. Do you want to talk to your mom? T.J. made a face and shook his head. I noticed the ticket agent waving at me. He was smiling. Jane, listen I think we might and then my cell phone dropped the call. I put the phone back in my purse and approached the counter, holding my breath. One of the charter pilots can fly you to the island, the ticket agent said. The passengers he was supposed to take are delayed in Sri Lanka and wont get here until tomorrow morning. I exhaled and smiled. Thats wonderful. Thank you for finding us a flight. I really appreciate it. I tried to call T.J.s parents again, but my cell phone roamed without connecting. Hopefully Id get a signal when we arrived on the island. Ready, T.J.? Yeah, he said, grabbing his backpack. A minibus dropped us off at the air taxi terminal. The agent checked us in at the counter, and we walked outside. The Maldives climate reminded me of the steam room at my gym. Immediately, beads of sweat broke out on my forehead and the back of my neck. My jeans and long-sleeved T-shirt trapped the hot, humid air against my skin, and I wished I had changed back into something cooler. Is it this sweltering all the time? An airport employee stood on the dock next to a seaplane that bobbed gently on the waters surface. He beckoned to us. When T.J. and I reached him, he opened the door and we ducked our heads and boarded the plane. The pilot was sitting in his seat, and he smiled at us around a mouthful of cheeseburger. Hi, Im Mick. He finished chewing and swallowed. Hope you dont mind if I finish my dinner. He appeared to be in his late fifties and was so overweight he barely fit in the pilots seat. He wore cargo shorts and the largest tie-dye T-shirt I had ever seen. His feet were bare. Sweat dotted his upper lip and forehead. He ate the last bite of his cheeseburger and wiped his face with a napkin. Im Anna and this is T.J., I said, smiling and reaching out to shake his hand. Of course we dont mind. The DHC-6 Twin Otter seated ten and smelled like airplane fuel and mildew. T.J. buckled himself in and stared out the window. I sat down across the aisle from him, shoved my purse and carry-on under the seat, and rubbed my eyes. Mick started the engines. The noise drowned out his voice, but when he turned his head to the side his lips moved as he communicated with someone on his radio headset. He motored away from the dock, picked up speed, and we were airborne. I cursed my inability to sleep on airplanes. Id always envied those who passed out the minute the plane took off and didnt wake until the wheels touched down on the runway. I tried to doze, but the sunlight streaming through the seaplanes windows, and my confused body clock, made drifting off impossible. When I gave up and opened my eyes, I caught T.J. staring at me. If the look on his face and the heat on mine was any indication, it embarrassed us both. He turned away, shoved his backpack under his head, and fell asleep a few minutes later. Restless, I unbuckled my seat belt and went to ask Mick how long it would be until we landed. Maybe another hour or so. He motioned toward the copilots seat. Sit down if you want. I sat down and buckled my seat belt. Shielding my eyes against the sun, I took in the breathtaking view. The sky, cloudless and cobalt above. The Indian Ocean, a swirl of mint green and turquoise blue below. Mick rubbed the center of his chest

with his fist and reached for a roll of antacids. He put one in his mouth. Heartburn. That's what I get for eating cheeseburgers. But they taste so much better than a damn salad, you know? He laughed, and I nodded my head in agreement. So, where are you two from? Chicago. What do you do there in Chicago? He popped another antacid into his mouth. I teach tenth-grade English. Ah, summers off. Well, not for me. I usually tutor students in the summer. I motioned toward T.J. His parents hired me to help him catch up with his class. He had Hodgkins lymphoma and he missed a lot of school. I thought you looked way too young to be his mom. I smiled. His parents and sisters flew down a few days ago. I wasn't able to leave as early as the Callahans because the public high school where I taught let out for summer break a few days later than the private high school T.J. attended. When T.J. found out, he convinced his parents to let him stay behind in Chicago for the weekend and fly down with me instead. Jane Callahan had called to see if it was all right. His friend Ben is having a party. He really wants to go. Are you sure you don't mind? she asked. Not at all, I said. It will give us a chance to get to know each other. I'd only met T.J. once, when I interviewed with his parents. It would take a while for him to warm up to me; it always did when I worked with a new student, especially a teenage boy. Mick's voice interrupted my thoughts. How long are you staying? For the summer. They rented a house on the island. So he's okay now? Yes. His parents said he was pretty sick for a while, but he's been in remission for a few months. Nice location for a summer job. I grinned. It beats the library. We flew in silence for a while. Are there really twelve hundred islands down there? I asked. I'd only counted three or four, scattered across the water like giant puzzle pieces. I waited for his answer. Mick? What? Oh, yes, give or take a few. Only about two hundred are inhabited, but I expect that to change with all the development going on. There's a new hotel or resort opening every month. He chuckled. Everybody wants a piece of paradise. Mick rubbed his chest again and took his left arm off the control yoke, stretching it out in front of him. I noticed his pained expression and the light sheen of sweat on his forehead. Are you okay? I'm fine. I've just never had heartburn this bad before. He put two more antacids in his mouth and crumpled the empty wrapper. An uneasy feeling washed over me. Do you want to call someone? If you show me how to use the radio I can call for you. No, I'll be fine once these antacids start working. He took a deep breath and smiled at me. Thank you, though. He seemed okay for a while, but ten minutes later he took his right hand off the yoke and rubbed his left shoulder. Sweat trickled down the side of his face. His breathing sounded shallow, and he shifted in his seat as if he couldn't find a comfortable position. My uneasy feeling blossomed into sheer panic. T.J. woke up. Anna, he said, loud enough for me to hear him over the engines. I turned around. Are we almost there? I unbuckled and went back to sit beside T.J. Not wanting to shout, I pulled him closer and said, Listen, I'm pretty sure Mick's having a heart attack. He has chest pains and he looks awful, but he's blaming it on heartburn. What! Are you serious? I nodded. My dad survived a major heart attack last year, so I know what to watch for. I think he's scared to admit there's something wrong. What about us? Can he still fly the plane? I don't know. T.J. and I approached the cockpit. Mick had both fists pressed against his chest and his eyes were closed. His headset sat askew and his face had taken on a grayish cast. I crouched down next to his seat, fear rippling through me. Mick. My tone was urgent. We need to call for help. He nodded. I'm going to put us down on the water first and then one of you will have to get on the radio, he gasped, trying to get the words out. Put on life jackets. They're in the storage compartment by the door. Then get in your seats and buckle in. He grimaced in pain. Go! My heart thundered in my chest and adrenaline flooded my body. We rushed to the storage compartment and rifled through it. Why do we have to put on life jackets, Anna? The plane has floats, right? Because he's afraid he might not get us out of the air in time. I don't know, maybe it's standard operating procedure. We're landing in the middle of the ocean. I found the life jackets wedged between a cylinder-shaped container that said LIFE RAFT and several blankets. Here, I said, handing one to T.J. and putting mine on. We sat down and fastened our seat belts, my hands shaking so badly it took me two tries. If he loses consciousness I'll need to start CPR immediately. You'll have to figure out the radio, T.J., okay? He nodded, his eyes wide. I can do that. I gripped the armrests of my seat and watched out the window, the rolling surface of the ocean growing closer. But then instead of slowing we picked up speed, descending at a steep angle. I glanced toward the front of the plane. Mick was slumped over the yoke, not moving. I unbuckled my seat belt and lunged into the aisle. Anna, T.J. yelled. The hem of my T-shirt slipped through his grasp. Before I could reach the cockpit, Mick jerked backward in his seat, his hands still on the yoke, as a massive spasm racked his chest. The nose of the plane pulled up sharply and we hit the water tail first, skipping erratically across the waves. The tip of a wing caught the surface and the plane cartwheeled out of control. The impact knocked me off my feet, as if someone had tied a rope around my ankles and yanked it hard. The sound of shattering glass filled my ears, and I had the sensation of flying followed by searing pain

as the plane broke apart. I plunged into the ocean, seawater pouring down my throat. I was completely disoriented, but the buoyancy of my life jacket lifted me slowly upward. My head broke the surface, and I coughed uncontrollably, trying to get the air in and the water out. T.J.! Oh God, where is T.J.? I pictured him trapped in his seat, unable to get his seat belt unbuckled, and I scanned the water frantically, squinting in the sun and screaming his name. Just when I thought he had certainly drowned, he surfaced, choking and sputtering. I swam toward him, tasting blood, my head throbbing so hard I thought it might explode. When I reached T.J., I grabbed his hand and tried to tell him how happy I was that he made it, but my words wouldn't come out right and I drifted in and out of a hazy fog. T.J. yelled at me to wake up. I remember high waves and swallowing more water, and then I remember nothing at all.

Revue de presse [Garvis Graves is] the patron saint of independent authors. Kirkus Features If you like *Lost*, *Castaway* and *Fifty Shades of Grey*, this initially self-published and now New York Times bestseller will float your boat. Genevieve Fox, Daily Mail (London) An addictive hybrid: *The Beach* meets *Robinson Crusoe* meets *Room*. Julia Llewellyn, The Telegraph The breakout hit. Susan Maguire, Booklist