

The Island

THE ISLAND

By Sarah Gonnet

CHARACTERS:

DAD:

Although it is not explicitly mentioned, it is likely that DAD suffers from some form of psychosis. He hallucinates the ghost of his father and cats. He also has a paranoid fear of the “outside world” beyond the traffic island.

Despite this DAD is an incredibly assured father. He tells amazing stories (mostly loosely based on Greek myths); actively plays with his two children and educates them himself (using books from the “library” hut he built on the island).

Physically DAD is tall, skinny and has wild curly ginger hair. He is in his late thirties.

MUM:

MUM has no interest in the children, except that taking them from DAD would feed her power hunger. She is the CEO of the business DAD inherited from his father, but wasn't interested in running.

MUM and DAD are recently divorced.

MUM is in her early forties, and tries too hard to hide this fact.

TALOS:

TALOS is the older child of MUM and DAD (around twelve years old). He is named after the inventor in Greek mythology (both of the

children are named for mythological figures due to DAD's love of Greek myths).

TALOS is much more "grown up" than DAD. He is the one that comes up with plans to get the family out of sticky situations.

TALOS gets on very well with his sister (THALASSA) and DAD.

THALASSA:

THALASSA is the daughter of MUM and DAD and sister of TALOS. She is around six years of age. She paints using natural materials found on the island (her brother makes her paints out of berries, leaves and mud etc).

THALASSA adores both her brother and her father.

THALASSA is proud of being weird, whilst DAD and TALOS are constantly slightly embarrassed.

GRANDAD:

GRANDAD is dead, but he lives on through DAD's hallucinations.

GRANDAD gives DAD sensible advice about how to raise the kids and deal with their mother. He died at the age of seventy.

ROY:

ROY is dad's friend. ROY is a driver for a large supermarket; he scrounges spare food for DAD and drives it to him. He also collects DAD's post.

The Island

LAWYER:

MUM's high-powered lawyer.

SCENE ONE

We see a map of a perfectly round island; it is carved into a large piece of wood. On the map we can see labels of places including: "Library", "Kitchen", "Forest", "Dance Hall", "Bedroom", "Port", "Thalassa's Studio".

We see TALOS' finger pointing at each area of the map as he talks about them.

TALOS: That's where we sleep. And that's where we eat. That's my dad's library.

Points to "Forest".

TALOS: That's where we play hide and seek.

Points to "Port".

TALOS: And that's where Roy delivers the food.

Points to "Thalassa's Studio".

TALOS: And that's my sisters...

TALOS is interrupted and the camera quickly swerves away from the map so that we see:

EXT forest. THALASSA and DAD run on screen, and head towards TALOS.

THALASSA: We found you!

TALOS gets up as fast as he can; then he runs off. DAD and THALASSA pursue him.

THALASSA passes the “tag” onto TALOS; then TALOS passes it on to DAD.

DAD begins chasing sister, whilst TALOS slows down a little to get his breath back.

TALOS suddenly realises that the DAD and THALASSA are approaching the edge of the island, and he runs after them even faster than before.

TALOS: Dad! Stop! Thalassa! Stop! Stop!

We see THALASSA and TALOS just stop short of falling off the island. We realise for the first time that it is not an island surrounded by sea; it is in fact a traffic island (a UK traffic island, one that marks the place of a roundabout).

SCENE TWO

EXT. Evening on the island kitchen area. DAD is cooking something in a pan over a fire. TALOS is staring at the fire. THALASSA is sketching with a stick as a pen; some mud as ink; and a leaf as paper.

TALOS: My dad's a terrible cook.

THALASSA: Shhhh!

TALOS: But we don't tell him that.

DAD begins serving something unidentifiable up. It looks disgusting. TALOS and THALASSA exchange a dismayed look.

THALASSA: He makes up for it though- he tells awesome stories.

DAD's stories should be acted out by some form of animation; preferably stop-start animation with plastercine.

DAD: Once there was an inventor...

TALOS: Named Talos! Like me!

DAD: That's exactly right. Talos the inventor had created many things over the years of his life...

In animation form we see the Talos figure creating a variety of wacky, and seemingly useless inventions.

DAD: Unfortunately Talos' father didn't appreciate his talents.

Talos: But you like mine don't you?

DAD: Of course I do. Every parent should love what their kids do. In the story Talos' father is in the wrong.

THALASSA: I need some more blue paint.

TALOS: You'll have to wait until the berries come out again...

THALASSA: I can't wait that long. Please dad, can we just go buy some.

The animation stops.

We go back to EXT. island kitchen area.

DAD: No.

THALASSA: It won't take long. Will it Talos?

DAD: The outside world is dangerous!

THALASSA: I know but...I mean we used to...

DAD: No buts. Promise me you won't go out there.

THALASSA: I can't finish the painting until I have some blue. The sky is blue and the river is blue!

DAD: Promise.

TALOS: Ok, it's ok dad. Let's get back to the story.

DAD: Promise.

TALOS: We promise.

DAD: Ok. So, back to the story.

The animation re-starts.

DAD: The Talos in the story: the inventor, he tried over and over to impress his father. But each time he showed his dad a new invention, his father would only shake his head and say: “Why can’t you do something useful for once. Like politics? Or at least find a wife.” But Talos always refused. He was determined that one day he would create something that would blow his father’s brain.

As he went along, his inventions got increasingly ridiculous. Each one was more complex than the last. But each one was also more useless than the last.

THALASSA: He was an artist then. Like me.

Back to EXT. island kitchen area.

TALOS: *(whispers to sister)* Don’t start that again.

THALASSA: I meant that if someone creates things, but no-one really knows what they are for, then they’re an artist.

DAD: Yes, I suppose Talos the inventor was an artist in his own way.

THALASSA: *(to TALOS)* See!

Animation re-starts.

DAD: Eventually Talos the inventor had created so many new things that his brain went completely numb. He found that he could no longer come up with fabulous; or even non-fabulous inventions of any kind. Deeply saddened he became a wanderer. Travelling from place to place, he tried to find inspiration for a new idea. But wherever he went, however far he travelled Talos found every time that it seemed everything had already been invented. There was just no room for anything new. This constant battle almost destroyed him.

Back to EXT. Island kitchen.

DAD: So what do you think happened next?

TALOS: *(muttering)* He invented the saw.

DAD: What was that?

TALOS: Nothing.

Back to animation.

DAD: So he was travelling between all of these places and that made him think “There should be some kind of link between all of these countries. So that they could all talk to each other, and share their inventions.” It was such a simple idea. Far more simple than all of his crazy previous creations. If he could pull it off, surely he would have

a chance of impressing his father. And that's how the internet was invented.

Cut away from animation. To EXT. island kitchen.

TALOS: That's not true! Vint Cerf and Bob Kahn invented the internet.

DAD: Ah, but did they?

TALOS: Yes.

THALASSA: In the original myth he invented the saw and then his dad...

DAD: This is my story! If you don't want to hear my ending then go away.

THALASSA: No, I want to find out if he impressed his father.

DAD: Of course he did.

DAD stands up. He suddenly looks deeply sad.

DAD: Bedtime I think.

DAD ushers the two kids to the bedroom area, where there are three scrappy mattresses and blankets on the floor.

Cut to: TALOS and THALASSA asleep and DAD watching over them. Without waking them DAD strokes their hair back and kisses each child on their forehead.

As DAD stands back up, we see that GRANDDAD has appeared behind him.

GRANDDAD: You're lucky.

DAD jumps then turns around.

DAD: I know.

GRANDDAD: I wish I could have met them.

DAD nods.

We see TALOS peeking. We see that TALOS cannot see GRANDDAD, only DAD can.

DAD: I'm scared I won't be able to keep them much longer.

GRANDDAD: She has no interest in them.

DAD: Yeah. Maybe. But she likes to win.

GRANDDAD: She never won me over. I still don't understand why you gave her the business like that.

DAD: I couldn't have...I couldn't have done it. My head...the stress...I couldn't have handled it.

DAD looks up again, but GRANDDAD has gone.

We see TALOS quickly close his eyes before DAD turns around to check on them.

DAD sits down on the ground and pulls his knees up to his chest. He rests his head on his knees and eventually falls asleep.

TALOS opens his eyes again, then sits up slowly to test if his DAD is asleep.

Then TALOS whispers to the camera.

TALOS: I don't like my mum.

SCENE THREE (Flashback)

EXT. On island.

TALOS and THALASSA (looking a little younger) are sat cross legged but fidgeting on the edge of the island.

DAD is pacing around him. DAD looks unusually well dressed, though in a suit that is far too large for him.

An expensive car drives up and the kids perk up.

MUM gets out of the car.

TALOS and THALASSA run up to MUM.

TALOS/THALASSA: Mum!

TALOS and THALASSA hug MUM but she just looks awkward.

MUM: Is there anywhere I can park the car?

DAD: Not really.

MUM: This is ridiculous, Kids, off you go. I need to talk to Ryan.

TALOS (NARRATING): "Ryan" is the adult name for "Dad".

TALOS and THALASSA don't let go of MUM but she carries on walking towards DAD anyway. Eventually they half let go and are half trampled.

MUM: This is not happening Ryan.

DAD: Go play in the library kids.

TALOS and THALASSA reluctantly leave. They look back at their parents several times as they go.

DAD: I'm getting a place sorted for us.

MUM: No, you're finding a place for yourself. The kids are leaving with me. Today.

DAD: You don't even like them.

MUM: I'm at work most of the time anyway.

DAD: They like it here.

MUM: No Ryan. How could they? They're kids. They can't make decisions for themselves. That's why they need to be around adults. Proper adults. I don't know what you are, but you're certainly not an adult.

DAD: I'm not letting you take them.

MUM: You have to. You have no choice in this.

DAD: You'll have to fight me for them. And I mean physically. Fight. Me.

MUM squares up to DAD.

MUM: Shouldn't be hard.

MUM thinks better of it and backs off.

MUM: You'll be hearing from my lawyer. I'm sure your social worker will find you a charity one.

DAD: You're not getting them back.

MUM: Yes I am.

SCENE FOUR

EXT. the island kitchen.

It is breakfast time and the usual mystery food is served. TALOS and THALASSA pull faces as they eat it. THALASSA hides some of the food under a bush.

DAD: Good?

TALOS and THALASSA make noises as if they are enjoying the food.

DAD seems to genuinely enjoy it.

TALOS, THALASSA and DAD all eat in silence for a while.

DAD's eyes become distracted by something. He is hallucinating a cat, and his eyes follow it up and down.

THALASSA: Is he ok?

TALOS briefly looks up from his food at DAD.

TALOS: It's just a cat.

DAD reaches out and starts stroking the cat that only he can see.

Gingerly THALASSA reaches across and begins to stroke where she thinks the cat is too. DAD smiles at THALASSA and THALASSA smiles back.

SCENE FIVE

INT. Library hut.

TALOS is sat surrounded by books. Dad is helping him with some maths.

Next to them, THALASSA is sat in her adjoining "studio". She is painting using pastes onto sheets of wood, and pages from books or newspapers.

There is a loud horn sound which makes them all jump.

DAD: It's just Roy!

DAD runs to the edge of the island. There is a supermarket delivery van pulled up alongside the island. ROY emerges from the back of the van carrying a handful of plastic bags and some letters under his arm.

ROY: Leftovers. Quite a good haul this week. Only a couple of days out of date.

ROY hands over the plastic bags to DAD.

ROY: And there's the post from the house. A couple of them are urgent.

DAD glances at them, then takes them.

DAD: I know.

ROY: You're going to have to face her one day.

The Island

DAD: I know.

ROY: Soon.

DAD: Yeah...

ROY: I know, you know.

DAD nods.

ROY: How are the kids?

DAD: Fine. Studying.

ROY: Thal still drawing?

DAD: She uses her full name now. Or at least that's how she signs her work.

ROY: Regular little artist!

DAD nods. He seems awkward and sad, even due to this limited contact with the outside world.

ROY: Ok, I won't keep you.

ROY leaves. DAD walks back over to where the kids are. He is so sad he just wants to hide.

DAD: I'm going to take a nap.

SCENE SIX

INT. Library.

DAD is lying on the floor with his eyes closed. THALASSA is drawing. TALOS checks DAD is sleeping by putting his hand in front of DAD's mouth to check for breathing.

TALOS reaches across dad and picks up the pile of unopened post. He flicks through them until he finds one marked "Urgent". TALOS carefully opens the letter. He reads some of it and then closes his eyes in brief despair.

We glimpse the letter- it is a formal warning from MUM's lawyer. We hover over the line "recommends immediate removal of both children".

TALOS carefully puts the letter back.

TALOS returns to sister. TALOS talks to THALASSA in a low voice.

TALOS: We're going on a journey.

THALASSA: What?

TALOS: We have to go to the mainland. There's something we have to do.

THALASSA: Can we pick up the blue paint?

TALOS: We won't have time.

THALASSA: Why?

TALOS: It's for dad.

THALASSA realises it isn't a joke and looks concerned.

THALASSA: But...dad says...it's the outside world...its dangerous!

TALOS: Don't worry. I have a plan. Do you want a piggyback?

THALASSA reluctantly jumps onto TALOS' back.

TALOS walks slowly to the edge of the island; he is scared but trying not to show it. THALASSA looks terrified.

TALOS waits for a gap in the traffic and then runs across the road.

Cut to: We see the two of them walking along a footpath.

Cut to: We see the two of them walking through a field.

Cut to: We see the two of them walking along another footpath.

Cut to: the two of them stop next to a map sign with a "You are here" map on it. TALOS traces his finger over several paths on the map.

TALOS: I wish dad had let me have that mobile. We could have used GPS.

THALASSA: Are we nearly there?

TALOS: Almost.

THALASSA: That's a lie. Isn't it?

The Island

TALOS: Yeah it is.

THALASSA: Where are we going?

TALOS: Mum's house.

SCENE SEVEN

INT. MUM's house, living room.

LAWYER and MUM are having a meeting. We vaguely hear them discussing DAD's inability to be a good father.

MUM: He's mad!

LAWYER: I would have to agree with you on that one.

We see that THALASSA and TALOS are crouched down outside the window.

THALASSA: Dad's not mad is he?

TALOS: Shhhh! I'm thinking.

TALOS sits and thinks.

TALOS: Ok, well, even though dad isn't mad, he is a little weird.

THALASSA: No!

TALOS: Shhh! It's all part of the plan. All we have to do is make mum seem more mad than dad.

THALASSA: How?

CUT TO: THALASSA in MUM's kitchen, she is sneaking around moving stuff about.

We hear MUM call through from the living room.

MUM: I'm going to make some tea. Do you want some?

MUM arrives in kitchen, THALASSA is hiding.

LAWYER: Yeah sure.

MUM puts the kettle on and gets a mug out. Then she looks confused.

MUM: Where are you teabags?

MUM goes and looks in the pantry for some teabags.

We see that THALASSA has the box of teabags in her hand.

Once MUM is inside the pantry; THALASSA locks the door behind her.

MUM tries to open the door. We hear her fiddle with the lock. Then she begins banging on the door.

MUM: Help! Simon! Help! I can't get out!

LAWYER: Mrs Haverstock are you ok?

THALASSA quickly unlocks the pantry door before the LAWYER enters the kitchen.

MUM: Help! Someone has locked me in!

LAWYER goes over to the door and opens it.

MUM: Thank god. What the hell was that?

LAWYER: It wasn't locked.

MUM: What?

LAWYER: It wasn't actually locked.

MUM: That's strange.

The kettle boils, the tea bags are back next to it.

LAWYER: And the teabags are right there. Next to the kettle.

MUM: They weren't there before.

We see THALASSA laughing in her hiding place, trying her hardest not to make a noise.

LAWYER: Are you ok Sam?

MUM: It's probably just a migraine. I'll go take some ibuprofen.

CUT TO: TALOS in his old bedroom, desperately looking for something amongst the mess. He finally finds it and smiles. It is a Halloween mask.

CU TO: MUM in the upstairs toilet.

MUM opens the bathroom cabinet and pops some ibuprofen out of their packet.

MUM hears a noise behind her and turns. Assured that there is nothing there, she pours herself a cup of water and takes the painkillers.

Suddenly the shower switches on in a direction that soaks MUM.

MUM screams.

TALOS jumps out in his Halloween mask. MUM faints at the sight of him in the mirror. TALOS switches the shower off and runs back downstairs; narrowly missing the LAWYER who we see running up the stairs into the bathroom.

LAWYER: Sam? Samantha? Mrs Haverstock?

MUM gasps as she regains consciousness.

MUM: There was a monster. It ran downstairs.

Cut to: Downstairs TALOS shouts to THALASSA.

TALOS: Come on!

THALASSA is laughing so much she can't move.

TALOS: Come on! Come on!

TALOS and THALASSA run out of the house into the conservatory. But the LAWYER steps into the doorway before they can go through it.

LAWYER has his phone in his hand. LAWYER DIALS 999.

TALOS and THALASSA exchange a look of terror.

SCENE EIGHT

INT. Island library.

DAD has just woken up from his nap. He shouts the children and when they don't come, he begins to search frantically for them.

ROY emerges from the forest. He has been running.

DAD: Roy what are you...?

ROY: It's the kids!

DAD: I can't find them anywhere.

ROY: The police phoned the house, they thought you lived there. They've been arrested. We have to get them before she does.

DAD falls down to the ground and pulls his knees up to comfort himself.

DAD: But...I can't leave the island.

ROY: You have to!

DAD: I can't.

ROY: The outside world has come to you. It's knocking on the bloody door. We have to rescue the kids.

DAD: No!

END OF EPISODE ONE

