

TOMAS STONE

## The Honeymoon Cottage

Jill gazed up at Jim. 'It is absolutely perfect,' she sighed, 'even more beautiful than it looked in the brochure.'

Jim grinned ruefully as he inserted the key in the front door. 'I can't deny that it is beautiful, but it isn't Venice is it? That is where I really wanted to take you for our honeymoon.'

Jill gazed at him lovingly. 'We will make it to Venice one day, at the moment I cannot think of anywhere else I would rather be. It is so romantic staying in a cottage that is only rented to honeymoon couples.'

With his brides arms linked around his neck Jim carried her across the threshold into the lounge.

'Look!' she said excitedly, pointing at a huge bouquet of flowers and a bottle of champagne.

Jim picked up the card that had been standing against the champagne bottle and handed it to Jill. 'It's from the management and staff at the letting agents, offering their congratulations and welcoming us to The Honeymoon Cottage.'

Jim gently lowered Jill onto the settee. 'And they have even left the television switched on to make us feel at home.'

Jill smiled at Jim coyly. 'This is our honeymoon darling we won't have time to watch television.'

Leaving their cases unpacked. With their arms entwined around each other's waists, the newly-weds strolled in the beautiful garden which ran down to the cliff top overlooking the sea.

The week in the cottage had been idyllic.

Jill sighed and closed the lid on her suitcase. 'I have booked a table at the Tavern on the Cliff,' Jim's words broke into her thoughts. 'We must make the most of our last night here.'

The sky outside was moonless and dark, a night that merited a torch, but a torch is the last thing you think of, when you are in love.

‘Stop walking, you are going too close to the edge of the cliff.’

Jim gave Jill a puzzled look. ‘Did you say something darling?’

Jill shook her head, then, they heard someone shout. ‘If you walk further, you will both fall.’ A ghostlike figure of a young woman appeared front of them. ‘If you continue walking you will end up on the rocks.’

For several seconds they stood with their eyes following the direction of the pointing finger.

A gust of wind changed the phantom figure into a white misty cloud, which slowly drifted over the edge of the cliff that the finger had revealed.

Aware of the danger just a few metres from their feet, Jim and Jill backed cautiously away.

The man from the letting agents called at the cottage the following morning to collect the keys. ‘I hope you enjoyed your honeymoon.’ He said, with a cheeky grin.

Jill glanced nervously at Jim, before replying. ‘It was wonderful, except for last night.’ With a tremor in her voice, she told him about the incident on the cliff.

The young man’s grin disappeared long before she finished had her story.

‘If you had fallen,’ he said, ‘it would have been history repeating itself. Thirty years ago a young couple was staying at this cottage on their honeymoon. On their last night they went for a stroll along the cliff and fell over. The next day they were found dead on the rocks below. They were still holding hands.’

Ron and Jody were sitting on the settee watching television. Drawing Jody closer to him, Ron said. ‘You never cease to amaze me darling, for thirty years we have been hiding the fact of our existence from others, yet to save the lives of Jill and Jim, you went ahead and materialized.’

Jody gave her husband a loving smile. ‘I had to do it, I didn’t have any choice. Sharing our lovely cottage with honeymoon couples every week is bad enough can you imagine what it would be like having to live here for the rest of eternity, with another couple of ghosts?’

