

Porthangwerna - The Story Of Lovers' Cove

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This is a simple story - about two people who loved each other.

Their love for each other was immense. *Total.*

But, as so often happens, people got in the way...

They regularly met in Lovers' Cove. Porthangwartha.

They loved it there as they could be alone and share their love in a truly beautiful place. They were so happy. And they wanted to share their happiness. So, they told their family and friends about the love they had for each other.

That's when the trouble started.

Their parents said that they *should not* love each other. They gave no reasons, just took a rigid position to try and drive the lovers apart.

They said that they should never meet and never marry, which was unnecessary and cruel - and they did all they could to prevent them seeing each other.

The poor lovers led a life of heartbreak and misery - and felt totally persecuted. Their hearts were breaking for each other.

Finally, their persecutors got their way, by driving the young man away.

He decided to go to the West Indies. The family congratulated themselves that they had achieved what they set out to do - parting the lovers forever.

In spite of all their precautions though, the two poor heartbroken lovers managed to meet once more before they parted. They met in the Lovers' Cove on a cold, moonlit night.

They clung to each other for the last time and made a solemn vow. They agreed that, whatever their situation, they would meet again in that same place, at the same time, exactly three years from that moment.

It was so desperately sad for both of them, to leave the one they loved.

The next day, the young man sailed away, and the girl lived with her parents, going about her duties quietly and patiently. But, as the days, months and years passed - in spite of her sadness - she had hope in her eyes, which didn't go unnoticed by her parents.

They tried to introduce young men to her, but she refused to be interested in them. Her parents were puzzled to know what it was, that was driving the sadness from her face, and the languor from her step.

The long years dragged to a close and at last, the end of the three years drew very near. And with each day, the girl's step grew lighter and more buoyant, her eyes glistened and her lips curved in a smile that puzzled her parents even more.

Now and then, they even caught her singing.

Then, at last, the three years were really past and gone, the last day dawned and quickly turned into evening. The night was beautiful, moonlit and peaceful - a fitting night for lovers who had planned to meet again.

In the Cove, it was as light as day, and you could count each wave as it rose and fell, with the white foam at its edge as it broke on the beach. The sands gleamed like silver and the rocks threw dark shadows.

Locally, all around the coasts, the witches and wizards were busy manufacturing their spells.

High up on a cliff overlooking the Lovers' Cove an old woman, - not a witch - was sitting in her usual place, preparing her medicinal herbs which she knew must always be done by moonlight.

Suddenly, she was very surprised to see the figure of a girl in the Cove below, as it was nearly midnight and most people are in bed by nine around there.

The girl made her way to a rock far out on the sands, which was close to the water. She immediately climbed on the rock and sat herself down as though it was 10am in the morning.

The old woman was immediately uncomfortable about what she was seeing.

Clearly, the tide was rising very quickly and the rock was already partly surrounded. Apparently, though, the girl didn't know, or simply didn't care.

She sat there, staring intently out to sea, apparently searching for something.

Finally, the old woman could stand it no longer. The girl was in great danger and her situation was worsening every moment. So she felt she had to go and help.

She was trembling as she tried to hurry down the side of the cliff. But, the path was rough and winding and she nearly fell a few times. She was old and her progress was slow.

When she finally reached the sand, the end of the beach where the girl sat was temporarily cut off from her view for a few moments.

Then when the old dame caught sight of her again, she was amazed. The girl was not alone anymore. A young sailor was also sitting on the rock, right beside her!

She shivered. Not from the cold, but because something very strange was going on. She felt it.

They both seemed totally unaware of their danger. They sat together on the rock, now completely surrounded by water. The sailor had his arm around her and she had her head on his breast. They were oblivious to anything except each other.

"Well my young woman!" said the old dame to herself, "is this how you conduct yourself while your lover is away? And after the way you pretended to love him, too!"

She felt quite cross, very frightened and very tired - and in no mood to smile at the lovers' foolishness. She sat herself down on a rock alongside the path they would have to take, to go back to the village.

She would give the girl a good telling off for her reckless behaviour. And, she wanted to see who this young man was, who had won her heart away from the absent lover.

The lovers, though, appeared in no hurry to move. There they sat clinging to each other, with the moon shining down on them and the water glistening around them. The wind had died away until there seemed to be scarcely a breath of air stirring - and the sea was as calm as a lake.

The old dame watched as the tide rose higher and higher and the only sound to be heard in that lone, desolate spot was the lazy splash of the waves on the shore and around the cliffs.

In a short time, the water had risen so high that the rock was almost covered. For them to get off it now, the lovers would have to swim.

Yet they paid no heed. They seemed lost to everything but each other.

It made no sense what was happening. The poor old woman grew wild with nervousness and concern. She shouted to them at the top of her voice, but they simply didn't respond at all.

And then, suddenly, she was horrified to see a large wave completely engulf them and she screamed out loud and covered her eyes with her apron. She could not bear to look and watch them being drowned.

She waited for their calls for help, but none came. She uncovered her eyes and looked at the rock. It was completely under water.

Where were these two crazy young people? She gazed frantically around, first at the beach, then out to sea. Nothing. Then, all of a sudden, she caught sight of them

They were in the sea, already yards from the beach, floating out on the scarcely moving waters, hand in hand, gazing into each other's eyes, smiling happily and without any sign of concern.

She watched as they drifted further and further from the beach. Then across the calm water, she heard the sound of sweet low voices singing.

In the eerie stillness, she heard the words distinctly...*"I am thine, thou art mine, beyond control. In the wave, be the grave, of heart and soul..."*

Further out they went, through the moonlit sea, sweetly chanting their song. The old woman was transfixed. Then, in unison, they turned and faced the shore.

At that very moment, she recognised that the sailor was the lonely girl's lover, who had been cruelly driven away by her parents so many years before.

She watched as they both took a long look at the Lovers' Cove - and then turned their happy faces to each other, their lips meeting in one long, long, kiss.

While their lips were still together, they sank quickly beneath the waves.

A few days later, the maiden's body was found on a shingle beach not far from Lovers' Cove.

Many months passed, until one day, news reached the village that on the very night that the young girl had been seen with him on the rock, her sailor lover had been killed in a foreign land.