

## **ZORBA**

### ***Chapter 15***

He had a hot shower and change of clothes and then lay on the bed. His mind wandered to the last words the Goddess had said: "*Seek out Zorba the Fisherman who owns a boat with one eye.*" He didn't know now whether she meant a one eyed fisherman named Zorba or a boat with one eye painted on its side owned by a man name Zorba?

The soft bed seemed to lull him to sleep. He awoke instantly with a soft tapping at his door and a voice: "Meester Chisholm, I brought you some food, a liddle snack of bread, pickled fish and humus. You like?" "I like very much," said Peter, getting off the bed and opening the door. The owner was not a tall man and possessed a huge, disarming smile and wore an equally huge white apron. "I also bring you some coffee, very strong. You Like?" the owner said again. "I like," said Peter quietly, meeting this honest man's kind but humorous eyes, "I like very, very much, sir." "Ples', call me Stavros. I know you English are very polite, very much so." "Stavros it is, then," said Peter. Stavros put the tray down on a small table and with a smile and a little bow, left the room.

Peter poured himself some of the rich, aromatic coffee and put in a little cream and then devoured the contents of the tray as though he hadn't eaten since he left Blighty. The humus was like no other he had eaten and although he was mainly a non-meat eater he did like the occasional fish. The fish was of a sardine look and taste, pickled in wine vinegar and olive oil, the bread was warm, white and crusty and the tastiest he had ever eaten.

So *Leucatheia* had led him thus far and indeed this little hotel was a haven, just what he needed. But he also needed to know about the man called Zorba, if indeed he existed.

Stavros was the receptionist, barman, and waiter, all in one. However, he didn't do the cooking, this was left to his wife Mara; however, even she helped serve the food.

The hotel seemed very quiet and Stavros said that it was the time of the year. There were about four other guests: an American couple who kept very much to them selves, and a couple of Greek men who were out for the fishing.

Peter sat at the bar sipping white wine. As it was quiet Stavros stood behind the bar cleaning glasses.

"Do you have a lot of fisherman come in the bar, Stavros?" "Yees, a very lot. They come in after the catches," Stavros said simply. "The catches?" said Peter. "Yees. The catches at the end of the day out with the fishing, you understand, Meester Chisholm? I am not making you understand?" "I understand perfectly, Stavros." "They tend to be very noisy." Stavros laughed. "Work hard and play hard, eh?" Stavros laughed again, "This is true, Meester Chisholm, this is very true."

Peter didn't know how to approach Stavros about the subject of Zorba. Then he noticed a large black and white photograph of a group of fisherman behind the bar. "Are those the fisherman, Stavros?" said Peter, pointing at the picture. Stavros followed to where Peter was pointing. "No, no. They are customers. French, Italian, Swedish, English. They all come here for the fishing."

Then Peter noticed a tall, broad fisherman wearing a woollen hat, woollen sweater and a sleeveless sheepskin jacket! He was unshaven and dark skinned unlike Stavros who was olive skinned. Can I have a closer look, Stavros?" "Why yees, Mr Chisholm, you are very welcome

to." Stavros took the photograph in its thick wooden frame off the wall and handed it to Peter. Peter couldn't believe his eyes. It...it was **Anthony Quinn** the American actor who had played *ZORBA THE GREEK* in the film of the same name!

"Who is *THAT?*" Asked Peter. "Who is what? Said Stavros casually. "Him!" said Peter pointing. "Him? Oh he is just a fisherman who owns the boat. "But...but, he looks like..." stammered Peter, "Ha, you English are all the very same, you all think that he is the actor." "Well, he certainly bears a very striking resemblance to..." "Anthony Quinn?" said Stavros, "or Zorba the Greek?" Peter paused. He took a deep breath. "Yes," he said slowly, "Zorba the Greek."

"Everybody call him Zorba, but his real name is Nikos. He is a fisherman like no other fisherman I have ever known. "What do you mean?" said Peter, curiously. Stavros went very quiet, shook his head and turned away. "I have said too much," he muttered. "Why, what has he done that is so bad?" said Peter. "Oh, he is not a bad man, he is a very *good* man...in his way, but strange in his ways." Stavros realised that he had said too much and changed the subject.