

MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY!

They arrived in Parga on a sunny afternoon, clear skies, still waters and a fresh warm breeze. A charming picturesque town on the coast of the Ionian Sea in Greece. They strolled down, past the brightly painted houses, to the harbour.

She wore a blue cotton dress with seagulls, sandals and a straw hat, pulling along a small smart blue suitcase. He wore a blue t-shirt and khaki shorts and white trainers and carried a large heavy duty rucksack. All ready for their sailing adventure.

" Do you know how to sail? " asked Will.

" No! The nearest I got to that was steering a friend's 50 foot Swedish yacht down the river Orwell in Suffolk. More of a picnic rather than sailing! " replied Ava.

"But I do know my port from my starboard and I learn fast Will, " she added in a cheeky voice.

" I booked us on a flotilla holiday, we have a Dufour 32 sailboat, it has everything we'll need on board, including cooking, sleeping and bathing facilities." he explained, sounding pleased with himself.

Every morning they were given details of weather conditions and instructions on how to navigate to their destination. There were always experts available to answer any questions or concerns. It was a safe way of learning to sail, so she thought.

They discovered many beautiful sandy, sun-kissed beaches and swam in crystal clear blue waters. They sailed to small islands dotted about in the Ionian.

" This is the life Will, I feel so relaxed!" She enthused.

It had been a crazy time in her life, but now she felt away from it all.

" If only life could always be just plain sailing Ava!" Replied Will, in his usual mellow laidback voice with a big smile on his face.

Today, they were sailing to the caves near Lakka, on the northern tip of Paxos. When they started the weather was calm, but as the day went on, it became very windy. They had anchored their boat just outside the caves and rowed into the caves in their dingy.

On their return, they secured the dingy, and were about to set sail, when they

encountered freaky crosswinds, which made their boat spin in circles, uncontrollably.

The boat was going to hit the rocks...

" Make the emergency call! " Will shouted.

Ava tumbled down into the cabin to the radio.

She could feel the adrenaline rush, her heart thumping as she went into emergency mode.

Somehow, she managed to make the call in a calm, assertive voice.

She had rehearsed this many times in her head, she said:

"Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!
This is sailing yacht Endeavour, Endeavour, Endeavour
MMSI 2341880 Callsign MBC5

Mayday, sailing yacht Endeavour
MMSI 2341880 Callsign MBC5
My position is 39.23675 N, 20.13248 E
I am spinning and have lost control, about to hit rocks
I require immediate assistance
Two persons on board
Over "

Along came a reply:

" We see you, on our way. Over."

She felt great relief knowing that help was on the way.

She quickly stumbled back on deck, as the boat spun round and round. She felt giddy and disorientated.

Before she knew, three people were on board taking charge and steered the boat way from the rocks and pulling the sails down and gaining control of the yacht.

That evening, Will and Ava laughed at their adventure, as they enjoyed their supper on board, under the star lit sky and toasted to a life well lived!

