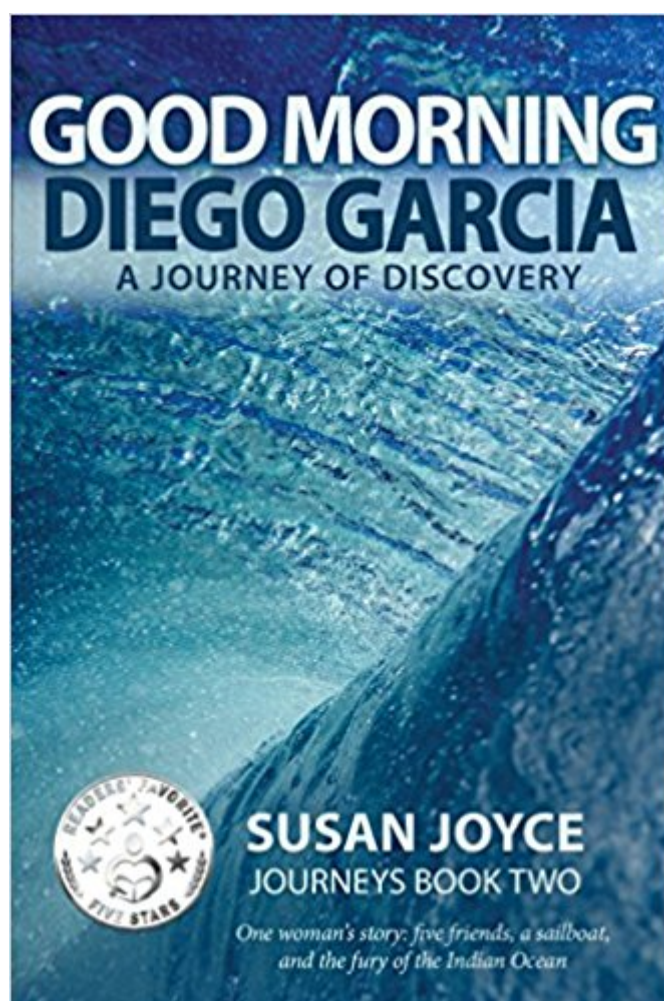


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Good Morning Diego Garcia: A Journey Of Discovery (Journeys) (Volume 2)



Synopsis

You're young, living comfortably in southern California. You're financially secure, though you don't know why or how. Your husband simply ignores you when you ask too many questions. He's hoping for another job overseas, doing something. You're not sure what, but you suspect it's not what he says. Your marriage is shaky. You survived a war in Cyprus together, and lost everything. Now you're basically biding time. A letter arrives from friends you knew in Cyprus. They're sailing a new yacht from Taiwan to Europe for a Swedish millionaire. You're invited to join them in Sri Lanka, as crew. Neither of you knows boats, but you'll learn -- it will be the trip of a lifetime, cruising the Indian Ocean in a pleasure yacht. And, it turns out, in monsoon season. With no charts. And an emotionally unstable crew mate. What could possibly go wrong? SPOILER: everything. Five stars Good Morning Diego Garcia: A Journey of Discovery by Susan Joyce is Book 2 in a series of travel memoirs that chronicle her adventure from the US to Sri Lanka, to Bombay, and across the eternity of the ocean, an adventure that curiously led her deeper into the depths of herself. In one of those doodles she makes in the still, quiet hours of the day, she reveals her deepest thoughts and new vistas into her questing soul. Here is one that captures the pulse of her heart, and perhaps, the reason for this book: "Collect information! Embrace Unknown! Embrace Uncertainty!" Susan Joyce comes across as a skillful storyteller. Her memoir goes beyond the retelling of a personal story to becoming one of the beautiful social commentaries of her time. Written with simplicity, this book is about courage. The tone can be serious, and at times humorous, but readers will love this book for the author's candor and honesty, and in the way she opens her heart to readers, revealing a very rich humanity. The dialogue, at every instant, feels honest and natural; the characters are as real and convincing as any non-fictional characters could be. The lessons from these personal travel stories are universal. It's interesting to see how the author's courage guides her in making choices that reveal her to herself and how embracing the unknown can be the surest path towards growth and self-discovery. This is one of the travel books that I highly recommend to readers. I loved the book. I smiled, laughed, and felt knots in my tummy at times. It's very entertaining and educative. - Romuald Dzemo for Readers' Favorite

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Reviewed By Jack Magnus for Readers' Favorite
Good Morning Diego Garcia: A Journey of Discovery, Journeys Book 2 is a non-fiction travel memoir written by Susan Joyce. Joyce and her husband, Charles, were planning on writing a book together detailing their experiences in and escape from Cyprus during the coup and war of 1974. They were currently staying in a rental home in Ojai, California for this new joint project when they received a letter from friends of theirs; Dylan, an English boat captain, and his Israeli girlfriend, Mia. When Susan and Charles knew them, they had been living on a Swedish millionaire's yacht. They would be sailing the Sweden's newest sailboat across the Indian Ocean from the tip of Sri Lanka down to Seychelles and then through the Suez Canal, and they invited Susan and Charles to crew with them. It would be an adventure of a lifetime, Charles had thought, but Susan, a non-swimmer, was not quite sure. In any event, they were soon on their way to India, their first port of call. Susan Joyce's non-fiction travel memoir, Good Morning Diego Garcia: A Journey of Discovery, Journeys Book 2, is such an exciting and eventful tale that I often had to check and see that it was indeed not an adventure novel, but a true story. I enjoyed the author's detailed accounts of places where she and her husband stayed in India, and found myself getting hungry each time she described the marvelous meals they enjoyed throughout their adventure. The portion of her memoir that deals with the actual voyage across the Indian Ocean is superb. I could see the gigantic swell tossing the sailboat around and the waterspouts appearing in the distance, and I was fascinated by the different ways each of the sailors dealt with the continual battering by the ocean and the ever-present possibility that their boat would sink. Good Morning Diego Garcia is well-written, and the author's conversational style makes it quite easy to get wrapped up in her tale. It's highly recommended.

Many people choose to spend much of their lives in the safe comfort and security of what is known to them. A few people like Author Susan Joyce, seem to spend a great portion of their time discovering new ways of broadening their life experiences and their encounters with discomfort, irrespective of it being one or four cornerstones of life, physical, emotional, intellectual or spiritual. The saving grace for the author is her willingness and ability to grow and learn from these encounters. "Good Morning Diego Garcia" is a memoir covering a brief period in the author's life when she and her husband are invited to spend time as crew, sailing from Sri Lanka to the Seychelles, up through the Suez Canal and places beyond. Well that was the intended plan. In life, for those who follow Robert Frost's advice and " . . . take the road less travelled", plans have a way of changing. Little could the author and her husband, really know what they were to experience on that fateful journey. There is a proverb attributed to many different nationalities, to the effect that people make plans and (the) god(s) laughs. The author and her husband were about to find out their own meaning of such a saying. As with her first book "The Lullaby Illusion: A Journey of Awakening" the author has utilised her lyrical writing style to bring the reader into her story. She has painted wonderful word pictures of life in Sri Lanka; the people, the animals, the colours, the aromas, the general richness of life that she observed while waiting to sail across the Indian Ocean to the Seychelles. Such is her writing, that the reader cannot help but feel transported to the island, becoming an invisible participant in the author's life at that time. The writing style changes appropriately once the boat sets sail from Trincomalee, ranging from the lyrical to the more strident and harsh, as the boat and its crew face the cacophony of endless days of storms along with the conflictual and discordant behaviour of the captain, towards the crew. It seems appropriate to offer a quote from my review of the author's first book that is equally applicable to this book "Without giving anything away, it is only the author's belief in herself, and her ability to trust and act on her intuitive feelings, that carries her through the great, the good, the sad, the fearful, the adverse and the indifferent." Fortunately Susan Joyce is not swayed by the quote from the fictional Captain Jack Sparrow . . . "The problem is not the problem, the problem is your attitude to the problem." Inherent in her being is a positive attitude that knowing one's self allows her to stride forward in life, re-framing negatives and learning from all her experiences, even if sometimes, the learning takes just a little longer to achieve. No stride so important for her own well-being, than the stride she takes at the end of this story. I unreservedly recommend Good Morning Diego Garcia as not only a most enjoyable read, but a challenge to the reader about their own belief systems, finding the conscious light that shines through the darkest of times.

This book is about sailing and spiritual exploration and I'd be hard pressed to think of two subjects that interest me less. And yet I enjoyed it thoroughly and am urging my friends to read it. Why? The only thing I can figure is that for a memoir to be deeply satisfying, you have to really like the author. You don't have to have anything in common with the person, but you do have to care what happens to them. This woman comes across as intelligent, kind, tough, vulnerable, and just screwy enough to make a good friend. My only complaint is that I didn't realize that it's the second in a series. The author makes frequent references to events that came before the long sea voyage that makes up the bulk of this book. AFTER I finished it, I learned that she's written a book about those events and I wish I'd read that one first. This one works as a stand-alone, but (trust me) you're going to want to know the whole story. I've already bought the other volume and started on it. Her writing style is unlike anything I've ever read and I'm still trying to make up my mind about it. It seems to me that the dialogue is sometimes stiff and unrealistic. On the other hand, she does an incredible job of "leaking" the details to you so that you feel that you're experiencing the traumatic events that shook this young woman's life. An adventurous girl married to a mysterious man, she experienced things that most of us never dream of and encountered people who almost seem like another species. And yet she makes you believe in those people and understand their motivations and even feel some sympathy for them. Today as never before we realize that our governments hide information from us and that the heroic struggles for "freedom" that seem so simple in the newspaper accounts are really eruptions caused by greed for power and wealth. Ordinary people are merely pawns in the game. The power brokers themselves care nothing about the damage they do. As to her spiritual journey, every reader will take away something different, depending on age, religious beliefs, and experiences. To be honest, the point of view I felt closest to was the youngster who said he hoped that he'd be reincarnated into a different life "Because this one sucks!" After days of horrific storms, with their small yacht damaged, and with no help in sight, I'm pretty sure I would have felt the same. This book is a fascinating look into an unknown world. You finish it realizing that most of us never scratch the surface of life. And maybe that's a good thing, after all.

Susan Joyce is believable. I nearly became seasick reading through the storms. And if that weren't enough the interplay between the varied personalities was a storm in itself, most especially those who had secrets to protect. Bottom line, never sign up for a sea voyage unless you really know the people and the seasons.

I found this to be a very satisfying read; but I also found that it failed to persuade me that it was a

true memoir. Too many unusual things happened in too short a time frame to be believable (to my mind). I found this to be an issue for me in her previous book, "Good-bye Lullaby." That aside, I loved every page. I think the writing style certainly is entertaining, and also educational. I enjoyed the little side trips where I learned about cultural facts, exotic botany, local foods, sailing, etc. I surely hope she continues to write, but would enjoy a true novel in which I don't have to wonder if the current story is partially embellished, if it really happened at all, or if it is reported accurately as it really happened. I will continue to read her books, regardless of whether they are presented as memoir or novel, but will just have to suspend belief that everything presented as her story in a memoir actually happened as recorded. She is a skilled storyteller without a doubt.

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