



CHAPTER 2

INDIA

Carrie and Suzanna flew to Tamil Nadu state in the far south of India.

Carrie had only been abroad once, and that was to France. This was nothing like that. From the moment they stepped off the plane at Coimbartore International Airport she was drenched in heat, dust and the smell of ... what was it?

“Orange blossoms,” said their taxi driver. “You like them?”

“Yes.” Carrie smiled.

While Suzanna dozed off in the back seat, Carrie drank in the sights. She couldn't believe how different everything was from England. Teenagers kicking footballs with bare feet. Men with huge moustaches smoking short brown cigarettes. Women dressed elegantly, their colourful saris outlined against a sky so blue it almost hurt.

The journey was a long one to their hotel in the little village of Attapadi. The taxi passed through a remote area of piled-up jungle.

"Silent Valley National Park," the taxi driver told her. "Very bad place," he said, waving at the hills looming on their left. "Wild dogs and leopards. Of course Indian wildlife is trained not to bite Western tourists."

He laughed, and Carrie knew he was mocking her.

She stayed silent the rest of the journey, watching the driver carefully, but he said nothing more until they arrived at their hotel. Then, after Suzanna paid him, and the driver was back in the car, he