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# Sea Change

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It used to be fashionable to invite school students to predict the direction a novel might take on the evidence of the first page ? or even the first sentence. Try this one: ?When Davinia Morgan-Harwood was first shown into our sixth-form common room and introduced by Stalag 14, our class tutor, the whole place went silent.? The opening page also includes: ?an incontinent dog?, ?she was gorgeous. I mean, seriously, unfairly gorgeous?, ?long legs, great tits?, ?the sad ex-prison guards who?ve got jobs as teachers here in this godforsaken, all-girls, fee-paying ghetto?. In case you?re wondering, what happens is that Chloe (our narrator) is knocked out by Davinia?s sheer ?sod-the-rest-of-you chutzpah? and not a little impressed to hear that she?s been kicked out of her previous school for using cocaine. So Chloe is thrilled when Davinia invites her to join her with her affluent parents on a small island off Malta for the summer hols.

Literary islands have brought clarity to misguided minds from Shakespeare onwards (yes, the title hints as much, though all the tempests that rage around this isle are distinctly human); not long after Chloe has landed on Caminos, she realises what the rest of us knew all along, that Davinia is a selfish, amoral, whingeing brat of a fashion-victim. Davinia?s parents have pretty much spawned the monster they deserve, so the outlook for the summer is not at all promising for Chloe. But the following days bring boys, parties, booze, bitching, bust-ups, despair and then maybe more than a holiday romance. Fortunately for Chloe, she cuts herself loose from Dav?s shiftless, self-absorbed mum and dad when she is offered a job by a woman restaurateur, just the kind of ageless and life-embracing role model every girl ought to meet. Scales fall from Chloe?s eyes to be replaced by clearer insights about what really matters to her. And so, **Sea Change** is an unashamedly light, page-turning read which doesn?t need or expect to be read twice. Just right, maybe, for the holiday flight or an afternoon on the beach. Cann seems wryly attuned to current forms of youthful self-dramatisation; even if you guessed the ending from the first two or three chapters, you?d still read it for the entertaining ride the author sets up to get you there.

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