

Sample Novel Outline

Down to the Island (Outline)

Act 1 Main Points

- Dave, a semi-retired drummer, is travelling to the USVI location St. Croix with his son, Jake, after a messy divorce.
- Dave's ex, April, can be verbally abusive.
- Dave is staying in a house owned by his agent, Geoff, and deciding where he should take his life next.
- Has to decide soon, since Jake needs to go back to school in the fall.
- House is beautiful. Dave has been here a few times in the past. As nice as he remembers it.
- Gives Jake huge upstairs bedroom in which he can play.
- Goes to town for supplies. Jake begs to be left at home. Dave reluctantly agrees. Stops at a grocery and, on the way back, a bar and grill he remembers. Meets Jenny, a bartender, and builds a good rapport. Ends up leaving his number with tip.
- Back in States, April is getting herself into trouble.
- Next chapter: Gets a package with a letter from Jake. Shows it to her current boyfriend, Ray, a big jerk.
- Starts plotting with Ray to kidnap kid for ransom since Dave is rich.

Act 2 Main Points

- Things going well between Dave, Jenny, and Jake. Jake is adjusting to island well.
- Dave noticing increased frequency in calls between Jake and his mom. It's over the standard time allotted by their court agreement, but he decides to let it slide.
- Relationship between Dave and Jenny getting pretty serious pretty fast. Both Dave and Jenny secretly hope this isn't some crazy rebound thing or something along those lines.
- Dave and Jake go on glass-bottom boat tour. Dave waves Jake off when Jake begs him to come snorkeling.
- Dave dozes off. Wakes up to a weird silence. Notices someone who looks like Jake floating a good bit away from the group. Sight is immediately sobering. He jumps into the water.
- Jenny receives a call at work asking her to come quick because of accident. She actually shuts down restaurant to go to hospital to visit. Fortunately, Jake is okay.
- Back in States, April and Ray are robbing people to get the money for airfare, either scamming or mugging people, depending on situation.
- Almost have enough. Ray steals a laptop so they can buy tickets or something like that.
- On island, Jake is doing okay but imagines hearing things in basement. He doesn't know if it's due to drowning or trauma of nearly drowning (something to that effect).

- Dave increasingly worried despite doctor's demand he not be.

Act 3 Main Points

- April and Ray touch down on island.
- Jenny afraid Daves looks down on her because he's rich or something to that effect. Basically feels like he doesn't take her seriously.
- Dave frustrated because she won't just come out and say that.
- Briefly split up.
- Jake has developed mild psychic powers due to accident. Sees April and Ray's plane touching down on island. In real life, makes him seize.
- Dave understandably freaked. Calls Jenny from hospital again. They reconcile.
- Dave decides they have to leave island soon. Uses situation to his advantage by bringing it up when he knows she won't start a fight. It works, but it makes him feel crummy.
- April and Ray find address from return address on package Jake sent. Lay in wait near borrowed house. One day, while Dave is out and Jenny is in keeping an eye on Jake, Ray distracts her and April lures Jake to car.
- Dave rushes home upon getting Jenny's call. Calls cops. Cops indifferent, which infuriates him.
- Starts driving around island, looking for gold SUV.
- In car, April is freaking. Thinks a cop might be following her. Takes a bunch of crazy turns. Succeeds in losing him but is now lost.
- Finds an old oil refinery. She, Ray, and Jake stop there, take off to hide.
- Dave finds SUV parked in refinery lot. Has Jenny with him. Also has pistol he found in home office.
- Search for hours around huge concrete lot until they are tired. Feet are blistered, etc.
- Finally find the three camping in a shed.
- A tense standoff, in which one shot is fired, but no violence thanks to cops.
- Prologue: Two years later. Dave, Jenny, Jake live in States now. Are going to see sentencing.
- Jake isn't bothered. Dave not sure whether that's good or bad. End.

This is just a sample.

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