

Seafieidbooks.com Tasters

# The Raven Staff Saga



## Part Two: The Raven Staff Truth

*Russell J Willens*

Dedicated

To

[WWW.Nanowrimo.org](http://WWW.Nanowrimo.org)

This is a work of fiction. Names, places and incidents are either the product of the authors' imaginations or, if real, are used fictitiously.

Copyright © Russell Willens 2011.

All rights reserved

First published by Seafieidbooks.com

Scotland

Cover photograph by Alastair Combe

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, transmitted or stored in an information retrieval system in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping and recording, without prior written permission of the writers.

Special thanks:

It goes without saying this book would not have been completed without the fantastic support of my wife Heather and daughters Freya & Tya. To Dunbar Writers' Group, my thanks for their valid input and support, whether I was there for the meetings or virtual member. Finally to all our families, friends and associates who have helped us in their various capacities.

&

[WWW.Nanowrimo.org](http://WWW.Nanowrimo.org)

## Chapter One

“As if it needs saying you won’t be missed around here.” Mr Allan wasn’t being mean spirited when he said this, but he was telling the truth. Under the instruction of the late Alexander Cleland he had stood guardian and trustee over a considerable estate whilst his grandson was brought up to speed having missed out on the first sixteen years of his life. That was some twenty one years ago. The will had stated that Angus Cleland was to be handed his full entitlement when he reached twenty one years of maturity. That happened with the fluid efficiency which Angus Cleland had come to expect from his Trustees and Guardians. “But of all the places to head for. You could move to anywhere in the world.”

“It’s a bit late to change my mind. I’ve loaded everything I want to take with me into the van and the rest is in boxes ready for me to build when I get up there.” Angus looked at his watch and sighed heavily. “I had better get the hell out of Dodge before they come round with the pitchforks and torches.” Angus offered his hand which was taken by the exhausted and extremely peeved Mr Allan. “Thank you again and remember to visit when I get set up properly.”

“I would lie and say I will, but you couldn’t get me on that island if you paid me a small fortune. I do want to stay in touch, but not physically. No good has come from that place.”

“If you’re waiting for petrol money, I’m sure I could get the street to chip in.” It was one of the Neighbourhood Watch brigade there to make sure Angus was leaving.

“Travelling show suits your freakish background. Maybe folks around here will get peace from the media and other freaks who just want to be seen around you.” These rantings were water off a duck’s back for Angus who had heard them since before he knew what they were talking about.

“I had half a mind to hold off selling this place or move it into company ownership so I could benefit from the sharp in prices on departure.” Angus smiled as he lit a cigarette. “However the money offered by the film company was just too much to resist. So whilst I might not be here in body, I will be in script.” With a haughty laugh Angus made one last sweep of the house to make sure that he hadn’t left anything he wanted, but he had been quite methodical in his departure plans. By the time he climbed into the van he was convinced that he was doing the right thing.

With a slight jolt from the trailer attached to the van Angus was under way. He had just shy of three hundred and forty miles to cover. According to the Satnav it was a six hour journey, which he planned to break exactly half way through with the sandwiches, coffee and a cigarette. Then onto his new home and life on The Isle of Song.

The first hitch in the journey was an unmarked, but absolutely beautiful Jaguar XF Police Car. The two Officers were perfectly polite and whilst it might have been a tip off which came one of the former neighbours, or even one of the new ones, but it was what sat on the trailer which kept their attention. A pristine Wolseley which had been his grandfather’s. In the will it had said that he was to keep it

to mark the past, but to modernise it to mark his ability to live in the modern world. He, Angus had done just that, but not by fitting a sporty engine or chopping the roof as suggested by one of his former college mates.

“Look at the shine on those hub caps.” Declared the smaller of the two Officers whilst his colleague explained to Angus why he had been pulled over and what procedures they were going to go through. “What the hell? Oh no. It’s not got an exhaust or a fuel tank and that suspension looks like it has been upgraded with the brakes, but what the hell is all that?”

“Tell your colleague it’s electrically powered.” Uttered Angus and sat back again in the back seat. The Officer in the front seat was more interested in the details coming up on the small computer screen in front of him.

“It looks like both the car and Van are legally on the road. I also see that you’re in the middle of moving house. You obviously do things by the book. My colleague will get round to checking the trailer and then we’ll let you on your way.” The Officer was looking at the screen again where it came up with all Angus’s details. “That makes sense. Look I’m sorry Mr Cleland we were working off a tip off. I’ll make sure we get the person responsible for the call.” The Officer let Angus out of the back seat of the car and escorted him back to the driver’s door of the van. “We’ll clear the lane to let you out thank you for your time.”

“No problem Officer.” Angus drove on expecting to be pulled over again, but managed to make it to his pit stop. Leaving the van and trailer for a comfort break meant he

returned to a couple of grown men taking a lot of interest in his Wolseley. Without a word Angus got behind the wheel of his van deciding that he would eat and drive, there was way too much interest in him and the car. His only hope would be that he'd be left alone when he settled into his new house on the isle. At least there he would have a better idea what he was there to do and why. To date his life had been a series of stop gaps for this final push for Song.

## Chapter Two

Only having seen photographs of his new house, it was particular poignant moment when he drew up at the top of the track. He might have driven further down but a tractor and trailer which belonged in the Transport Museum were blocking his path. Blasting the horn would have frightened the skittish looking sheep in the fields and more importantly appeared boorish. As a result he locked up the van and set the alarm on the car before lighting a cigarette.

Given the time of day the main road was silent and bar the calling of the lambs and ewes there was only the sound of the sea which was less than fifty yards from his house. He might have stayed there all day had he not needed another comfort break. Thus leaving the van where it was he made his way down to the house. Yes the photographs had been a little on the flattering side, but it looked solid enough and the work he had requested had been carried out to a high standard.

“I’ve called the police.” Started a soft accented voice which was common among the islanders. Angus damn near jumped the height of himself and turned sharply to stare at the woman who’d caught his attention so dramatically. “Breaking into a man’s house isn’t necessary; there are facilities all over the island.”

“Angus Cleland at your service.” Angus glanced at the wedding hand noting the rings. “Mrs?”

“You’re the man who’s bought this place? I was led to believe you were a lot older.”

“That might have been because I had my solicitor do all the hard work.”

“Another holiday homeowner, just what this island needs.” The woman turned to walk away leaving Angus somewhat gob smacked.

“Two more moments of your time, please.” Waiting for the woman to stop and turn Angus rummaged in his wallet to find one of the mock up business cards he had been experimenting with before moving to the isle. “I’m here for the long term all things being even.”

“At least it’s not pottery or picture galleries. Just how many pictures can you draw of what’s right in front of you.” The woman was suppressing a smile in reflection to Angus’s.

“If you’d be so kind as to move your tractor I’d happily show you one that I prepared earlier. Blue Peter can’t beat it, wholesome entertainment.”

“Never had enough time to watch television.”

“Maybe you have ten minutes for a cuppa?”

“Alone in a house with a strange man.”

“You have no idea.”

“We know who you are Mr Cleland and why you’ve come back to the isle. Still.” The woman put out a grubby hand which Angus didn’t hesitate to take. “Moira MacLeod. Moira.”

“Angus, but you knew that.” Angus felt proud of himself that he hadn’t exploded on hearing that he was instantly recognisable, it might have led to asking why she, Mrs MacLeod hadn’t just said from the outset. This was one of those strange things which Angus had never gotten to the bottom of, whereas he was on occasion abruptly honest. “Just say if I am stating the obvious, but I assume you or your husband is renting the land?”

“I am. It’s no secret that I am a widow, he was lost during a tour in Afghanistan about three years ago and now my children have moved on, well I didn’t need such a big house.”

“I’m sorry to hear that. I dare say your children have been drawn to the mainland?”

“They’ve both joined up. Engineers.” Moira climbed aboard her tractor and started it without another word. Angus followed at a distance drawing the trailer up to the side of a stone barn.

“The kettle and Coop supplies are in the back of a van. Let yourself in.” Called Angus as he raked out his supplies.

“I noticed that you’d had a fair amount of work done to the place. Fresh broom?” Moira had perched herself on the bench just to the right of the kitchen door. It looked between two large grassy dunes onto the sea, on a day like this it was a dream. Angus could easily see why it was a wrench to leave such a place, but he also considered the ghosts that lingered, which made him wonder if he had been inconsiderate in suggesting the cuppa.

“The work I had done was nothing more than a bit of soft lowlander stuff. The solar panels were a joy, my old local council dragged their heels when I approached them. I just hope the turbines meet with the same response.” Angus handed over the mug of tea with a plate of biscuits. His adopted parents had been harsh but fair when it came to manners. “I know that look, you’re thinking those monsters you see when you first land on the island, but my ones will be a quarter of that and of a more advanced design. Quieter, though I have to say I love the sound of them compared to the chopping ones.”

“So you’re not here as a holiday maker, am I to believe then that you’re here to educate us poor ignorant islanders.” Moira was smiling again, a wry smile which made Angus shake his in confusion. There were a dozen responses which he was used to giving, but this one was unexpected. “Come on now, if you can’t convince me, you won’t last long.”

“Our lords and masters in Edinburgh have decided environmentally sourced power, with the exception of the power station at Cockenzie in East Lothian. But we won’t go into that. It’s the way forward? If I can set up a small enterprise here, then maybe we can set the revolution in motion.”

“A revolutionary? Can’t remember the last time we had one of them here. We’ve had a couple of saints and the like, but a true revolutionary? Definitely not.”

“You’re mocking me, which is what I expected to begin with.”

### Chapter Three

There was plenty to be done once Moira finally went on her way. The Wolseley was removed from the trailer and placed in the upgraded barn and the trailer abandoned at the side of the building. A thousand different thoughts were going through his head, but Angus kept referring to his encounter with Moira who had to be ten or fifteen years older than him, but he'd been fairly smitten by her. However her words of warning about knowing why he was there was a concern, he tried to convince himself that she had thought he was one of those holiday home makers, but there had been something in her tone that suggested that she knew something of his past, which as it happened was all he knew; even if it had left its' mark.

The first job that needed doing was the construction of his bed; it would be required sooner than anything else. He hauled the large cardboard boxes from the van and then returned to collect his indoor toolbox only to find a police Land Rover parked in the yard. Angus halted his progress at the front door and waited until he came to the attention of the Officers. Only one of them had a little too much braiding to be a simple officer and it was he who finally decreed to notice Angus only when he asked abruptly. "Of course you have a warrant to see in there or anywhere else. Not that I have anything to hide."

"Of course you don't Sir. We got a report that travellers were trying to pitch up. You'd be Mister? Cleland." The Officers eyes rolled for a moment but Angus made no comment. "The new owner, I dare say you can prove that."

“Can I ask what the issue is Officer? Inspector? I only ask because I have a van load of things needing built and then a shower to get.” Angus’s tone was a little more than put out and his body language suggested he was fixing for a fight.

“I like to get to know the people on this island. This is my beat and I want to know, need to know what new comers are up to.” This was a blatant change in subject which Angus remained mute to. “My card, Inspector Alan MacLeod of The Isle of Song Constabulary. I hope we can expect your full cooperation in keeping this island free of serious crime.”

“Always happy to help. Don’t let me keep you from your duties.”

“I was hoping to avoid this, but I was warned that you could be a bit mouthy around authority. Two rules especially for you. You stay away from The Brothers and the first sign of mischief and I’ll have you thrown off the island, regardless of how much you think you own of it.” Inspector MacLeod’s voice wasn’t threatening but left no room for a comeback. “I assume we understand each other.”

“Fully, I just hope I can rely on just as much expediency and cooperation. Let’s just say to further my enjoyment of my new life.”

“We’re here to help everyone.” The Inspector returned to the Land Rover but leaned out of the window once he had fastened his seat belt. “I hope you have everything you

need in those boxes, it wouldn't be the first time there's been a screw missing."

"Very good, but I'm fairly self reliant." Angus walked away from the house so he could watch the Land Rover leave the top of the drive. "You better be self reliant because you're going to get little or no help from the locals." Getting back to work only happened when Angus had sat down to something to eat cooked on the cottage's new cooker.

The toasty sat heavily in Angus's stomach as he set about putting together his bed, in the neighbouring room was the mattress which he had released from its vacuum sealed containment. Now slowly it was regaining its form, which was more than the bed was. Angus believed that he was no idiot and instruction diagrams were no harder to read than a child's book, but there was so much more work than he anticipated. Shockingly he fell asleep on the bed fully dressed and the front door unlocked, more over so was the van.

Waking from a dream he had hoped to have left behind Angus rushed to the front door and in the summer evening gloom he saw everything was just as he left it. A quick patrol of the yard and barn brought his heart rate down. Nonetheless he got back to work starting with a parking boot for the trailer, then setting the alarm on the Wolseley and the shed. He quickly returned to the house and checked through it for signs of unwelcomed visitors, there was none. In need of some serenity he made his way through to the kitchen where he snatched up his cigarettes

and filled his travel mug with coffee, then on locking the doors he made his way down to the small bay just beyond the aforementioned grassy dunes.

This evening and possibly the last couple of days had been dry, given the ground was so dry and dusty. It made no difference to Angus who was there for the space.

Suddenly he was aware that he was being watched. There were several vantage points, but he wasn't about to turn until he was sure in what direction to do it. Slowly Angus turned his head and caught sight of three dark figures on a distant dune, which Angus figured out, that were just outside his land. It struck him that he should wave and start approaching them, but the sound of a car coming down his drive disturbed his train of thought. "I don't know about you but I can afford to wait, see you around. But not before I'm ready for you and yours." The Brothers bowed defiantly before quietly leaving.