

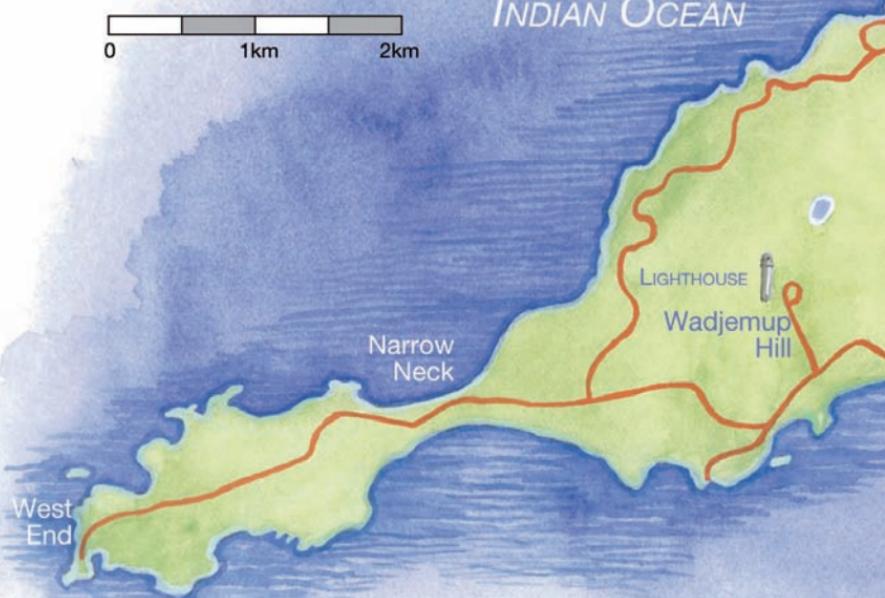
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# Rottnest Island



INDIAN OCEAN





## Chapter 1

# The visitor

The gardener glanced up from the roses. The man across the road was still there – standing on the footpath and looking up at the house. What did he want?

The man had a tattoo on his arm and his hair was long. He didn't look like a visitor. No, not a visitor to this house – this enormous house with its carefully kept gardens and its river views, its swimming pool and tennis court and four-car garage. No, the visitors to this house were carefully chosen. The gardener himself had only been inside once, and that was only into the kitchen. He snipped off another dead rose.

He heard the sound of footsteps.

The man with the tattoo had crossed the road and was walking up the path to the house.

The gardener quickly moved his position so that he could see the front door. He snipped off another dead rose.

'This will be good,' he said to himself. Whatever the man wanted, he wouldn't get past Mrs Balfour. She was fierce.

The man rang the doorbell. A moment later, Mrs Balfour answered.

The gardener was too far away to hear the conversation but he could see the man holding out a book towards her. Mrs Balfour raised her voice. Then suddenly she stopped. She disappeared into the house and left the man standing there. A few minutes later she returned and let the man into the house.

The gardener, surprised, snipped his finger by mistake.

'Agh!' he said, and went to wash the cut under the garden tap. 'I knew I should have worn gloves.' But his hands got so sweaty in the heat.

He took his finger out from under the stream of water. It

was only a small cut. It would stop bleeding soon. He turned off the tap and pressed his thumb over the cut.

He heard shouting coming from the house.

The front door opened and Mrs Balfour pushed the man with the tattoo out.

The man turned and looked at an upstairs window. He shook the book in the air.

'I'll find her!' he shouted. 'And she'll remember. She'll remember. And then the whole world will know the truth!'