

THE MOONSPINNERS

MARY STEWART



THE MOONSPINNERS

It is a bright spring day on the island of Crete. You are high up in the mountains in a lonely place, and in front of you stands a man with angry eyes – and a knife in his hand. What do you do?

Nicola is frightened, of course, but she is not the kind of girl who runs away from trouble – not when other people need help. Mark is young, good-looking, and very, very worried. He has also been wounded and Nicola thinks that he needs her help. But Mark is an old-fashioned young man; he thinks girls should stay away from dangerous things like murder and men with guns.

So Nicola leaves Mark and goes on with her holiday. But she can't stop thinking, or watching, or noticing things. And very soon she finds herself back in the middle of Mark's troubles . . .





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CONTENTS

STORY INTRODUCTION	i
1 How it all began	1
2 Danger	6
3 Murder	14
4 The Moonspinners	20
5 The murderer	23
6 Tony	27
7 Sofia and Stratos	29
8 Frances arrives	33
9 A walk in the night	37
10 Colin	41
11 Colin's story	46
12 Together again	49
13 Plans	54
14 Discovered	59
15 The chase	66
16 All's well	70
GLOSSARY	73
ACTIVITIES: Before Reading	76
ACTIVITIES: While Reading	77
ACTIVITIES: After Reading	80
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	84
ABOUT BOOKWORMS	85

How it all began

It all started when the big, white bird flew out of the shiny leaves and yellow flowers. It rose up suddenly and turned away towards the mountains. I followed it. What else could I do in the middle of such a bright April day, at the foot of the White Mountains of Crete? The road was hot and dusty, but the valley was green and full of the sound of water. The white wings which flew before me moved quickly in and out of the deep shadow of the trees and the air was full of the sweet smell of the lemon grove.

The car from Heraklion had stopped where the path for Agios Georgios leaves the road. I got out and turned to thank the American couple who had brought me this far. Mrs Studebaker looked out of the car window. 'But are you going to be all right? You're sure this is the right place? What does that sign say?'

The sign was in Greek. 'It's all right,' I laughed. 'That's "Agios Georgios", and the village is not far away, down this path.'

I had been in Athens since January of the year before. I worked as a very unimportant secretary at the British Embassy. I had always wanted to visit Greece, and thought I was lucky, at the age of twenty-one, to get any