

Written by Niko Mikael Korhonen

## Layover

Another layover in another city, in another airport. Only this one caused just the tiniest flicker of excitement in her. She'd never been to Iceland, but had always wanted to go. Only exchanging airplanes was not proper visiting, was it? She couldn't very well go around telling her friends that she'd been to Iceland and "oh yes, it was so beautiful and brilliant and fantastic". She couldn't even add a pin to the huge world map she kept in the wall of her room. No, that would be against her self-imposed rules.

She'd heard that they had no trees in Iceland and wondered if that was true. Supposedly they cut them all down long time ago. But they did have volcanoes and geysirs. Geysir. That word made her giggle a little. She knew it was stupid and childish, but she couldn't help it. *Give me a break, I'm only fourteen!* She commanded herself.

Just maybe if she was lucky enough, she might see something of interest from the airplane window. That was unlikely, because her father was a famous cheapskate. For a man who's worth was more than 2 million dollars, he was really stingy. Dad always bought the cheapest seats for her. These were the seats that came with a wonderful view of... well, the huge flapping wing of a Boeing 757. They were also the seats where you were most likely to get killed should the plane go down. *Gee, thanks dad,* she thought to herself.

Although it was barely 7 AM, the Keflavik airport was busy. After the officer had eyed her passport suspiciously, he handed it back to her and waved her ahead. She went to wait in a line. This was what you did on airports, and it made her feel like a big girl, instead of one who

barely had gotten out of her training bra. She even felt grown enough to cast admiring glances at the fair-haired barista who was mixing her café latte. She didn't have any local currency, so she paid with her Visa. Yet another thing that made her suddenly grow several inches. All her friends in Oslo were jealous of that credit card, although she really wasn't suppose to use it anywhere. And rarely she did, because she was a good girl. Besides, her father would have a cow, if he got one of those red bills on the mail they always gave you in the movies.

Tina could tell you a thousand things of a life lived on two continents. She could tell you interesting stories. She was good at that, or at least that was what her teachers always said. But mostly she could tell you that it sucked. Sure, New York felt like a cool place to anyone who lived in Oslo. And Oslo sure seemed exotic to anyone who lived in Brooklyn. But she was just tired of this life. Six months here, six months there. Rinse and repeat. When they divorced, her parents told her that now she would get two lives in one. Instead it sometimes felt like she had none

And sure enough when she boarded the plane there was the old familiar view waiting for her. The sun was rising from the horizon, but Tina wouldn't see any of that famous landscape of Iceland. No geysirs or volcanoes. No treeless tundra. Instead she would see another wing of another boring airplane. Oh well, maybe her father would keep his promise this time. Maybe he would take her somewhere nice instead of running around Manhattan and attending an endless string of pointless meetings. Maybe in the weekend they would go to the Niagara Falls. Or Metropolitan Museum. Hell, even Bronx Zoo would do. Because one can always hope.