

The Forgotten Flamingo

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On a beach of Southern Crete, visitors often notice small footprints on the sand that arouse their curiosity.



Bewildered, they look around, initially suspecting the playful seagulls that sit comfortably on the soft sand, next to the gentle tip of the waves.



But can the feet of these birds mark the sand so lightly? On second thoughts, the eyes swiftly browse the vast beach from one end to the other.

Consecutive images parade during this search: seagulls finishing their flight, tourists searching for the best spot to sunbathe, swarming photographers, bent trees subject to the wind, picturesque little houses neighbouring the beach and Chryssanthi's tidy garden which stands out.

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Out of the blue, the culprit appears! A bird which is different from all the rest and can rarely be found on the island, stands alone overflowing with pride and elegance and observing the beach frenzy; a flamingo that, as Chryssanthi confirmed, was abandoned there when its flock opened their wings for a journey of emigration.



Day by day, this extraordinary flamingo seems to wander in the muddy part of the beach, avoiding every contact with the human element. Struck by this rare sight, some foreigners desperately tried to approach it in order to capture some of its beauty with their cameras. This is when the bird gracefully bent its long legs and vanished in the undergrowth.

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It vanished like a phantom putting people's sanity to a test. Like a dream hiding in the subconscious without any intention to be discovered again. Like a true recluse who knows perfectly well what will dawn on others a lot later.

If the visitors decide to disregard the lonely bird's denial of life and lower their eyes, they will see a brave crab that does exactly the opposite: it patiently carries its home, struggling to find its way back to the sea. No, it has already decided that it will not be left behind.

