

A detailed botanical illustration in a dark, muted green color serves as the background for the top half of the book cover. It features several large, five-petaled flowers with prominent stamens, some in full bloom and others as buds. Delicate fern fronds and small, winged insects are scattered throughout the composition, adding to the intricate naturalistic theme.

A NOVEL

The Cartographer of Quiet Tides

A novel

Elia Vale

NORTH WINDOW PRESS

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**NORTH WINDOW PRESS
TORONTO**

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*For everyone who has learned to read the weather
in another person's silence.*

*A shoreline is only a promise the water
agrees to keep for a while.*

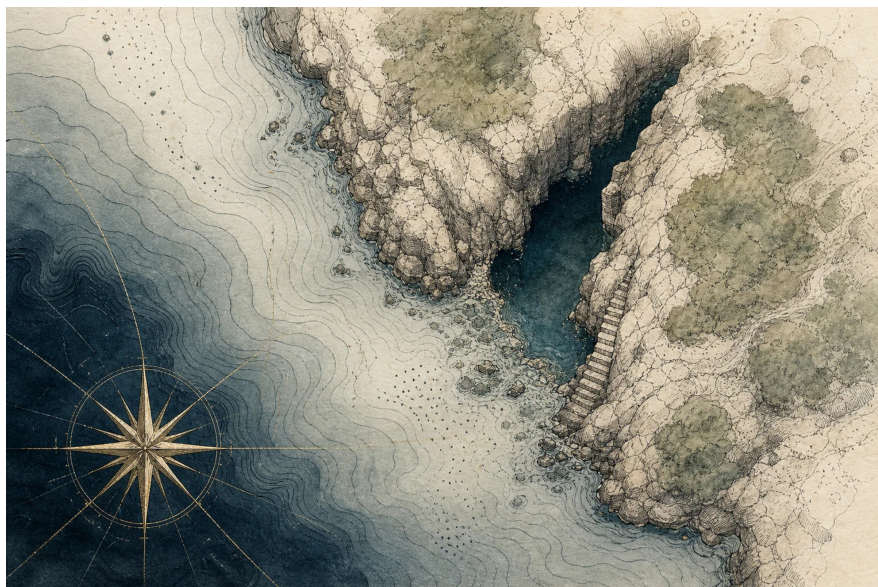
From the notebooks of Mara Venn

Contents

01 Chapter One: The Harbour That Wasn't There

Acknowledgments

Notes



Frontispiece

The Harbour That Wasn't There

At first light, Ilyen found a blue line where the western cliff should have been. It trembled at the edge of the chart, thin as a vein beneath skin, and ended in a mark no cartographer in the survey house used.

She laid the brass rule across yesterday's soundings. The line remained. Beyond the salt-clouded window, gulls wheeled over an ordinary grey sea, but the paper insisted on an inlet opening beneath them.

Master Senn had taught her that an error repeated three times became a feature. Ilyen measured the line a fourth time, then closed the shutters before anyone else arrived.

. . .

By noon the tide had withdrawn farther than any table predicted. Steps emerged below the cliff, each one black with weed, descending toward a harbour no living map admitted existed.

A map could tell you where the rocks were. It could not tell you which absence would break you.^[1]

Acknowledgments

This fictional sample was written to demonstrate chapter openings, scene breaks, quotations, front matter, and back-cover typography in the Literary Edition.

Notes

Names, places, publishers, reviews, and ISBN details in this sample are invented.

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1. North Window Press; Toronto; 2026; First edition. ↩

On an island where every inlet has been measured, apprentice mapmaker Ilyen Voss discovers a harbour that appears only at the lowest tide. Its arrival carries a letter in her missing mother's hand and a warning: the island's most trusted map is also its oldest lie.

Luminous, precise, and quietly devastating.

The Alder Review

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elian Vale writes fiction about memory, place, and the stories hidden inside ordinary work. This fictional biography appears only in the sample edition.