

# **The Woman in the River**

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As I stood with my feet in the cool sea water staring into the early morning sun at Little Cove Noosa Heads I remembered her face as she surfaced from the river. Grey, covered in slime and decomposed, it was nothing like I remembered her. She was radiant, brilliant and charming as a teacher and even more exciting as a lover. Although I only ever kissed her once, I knew she loved me. Inside my heart we always had that special time between us that nobody could ever steal away from us, not her friends or her husband.

It was late July when I first saw her walking down Hastings Street handing out flyers for her café by the beach. She approached me with a brochure in her hand and a smile that indicated to me that she thought something more about me. We got to talking. There was something there, a facial gesture, a smile, a wink, the subtle way she move her hair out of the way and gazed back at me with those beautiful brown eyes. I could tell there was something there between us. A chemistry, electricity, that most would laugh at from a simple exchange on the street but I knew. I could tell there was more.

She smiled and waved goodbye and that was it. Until one morning early on the beach when I saw her sun bathing in the spot I liked to take my morning walk. Instantly she recognized me and waved while covering up her exposed breasts and motioning me over. Her husband was not there so she asked if I wanted to take a walk along the beach to have a chat. She was so beautiful. Tall, blond hair with brown eyes and long slender legs. Her name escapes me now but I will not forget her face, never will I ever forget that face. I walked down the beach around the rock wall right up to the

mouth of the river with her, talking in the sweet smell of her perfume mixed with the stinging sea breeze. When she realized we were alone I reached for her hand and she resisted, mentioning her husband. I led her over to a secluded spot near the river mouth. There she was in the moment staring back at me, wanting me.

We exchanged some pleasantries that I can't remember and then I knew I had to seize the moment to grab her hand again and feel it in mine. She smiled then reminded me about her husband and pulled her hand out from mine. I leaned over her, as I was much taller than she was and kissed her sweet lips, it was like tasting a perfectly ripe mango in the middle of summer. *Sweet.* There was nothing about her that was out of place, not a single thing. Her hair was right, her breasts were upright and firm, the tanned skin on her body was perfect from head to toe, her lips were chiseled out of stone and her smile could set the world on fire. It was then that I realized I would never have her. She was too beautiful for me. She was too beautiful for any man.

As she left murmuring about her husband I felt that if I couldn't be with her then nobody could. It was fate for us to be together and I would be damned if anybody was going to take her from me. Don't ask me what happened next, my blind passion for her silky smooth skin and striking outward appearance made me unable to control myself. Life is cruel. The lions stalk and kill their pray without mercy tearing the flesh from the bones of the animal as it lies waiting for death. I have seen death, men killing men, women killing women in all that I have done. Yet in all of this I have not known the peace and beauty I saw in that young girl. Do I know why I did it? No.

When they found her I thought to myself, there will be no other like her and nobody can come close to her. I loved her, yes, like all the others. I loved them enough to set them free from this world we live and breathe in. This was so they wouldn't have to grow old and suffer the consequences of aging and natural death. Why did I do it? Why would I kill something so beautiful? Why will I keep doing it? Because I can. I wonder around like a roaring lion finding those whom I may devour and I chose the most beautiful things to destroy because I can. There is no reason.

When they pulled her from the river, I knew one day I would pay for my sins. That day is surely coming and when it does they will throw me away. Then I will be the one hunted, I will become the pray, trapped in a cage for all to see. The fish are swimming around me in the water and a small flathead just shot out from under my foot. What a paradise I live in, but it's not for long. I can hear them coming. I know they are coming. I just wanted to be somewhere beautiful, in memory of her, before daylight is snatched away from me.