

SUNNYSIDE MERMAIDS

By

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At first glance, blinded by its precious beauty and strolling mermaids, (no, not stunning woman but mermaids), mermaids who could only breathe in the softness of pure water. You could mistaken the carnivorous nature of Sunnyside; the city of lost dreams. I have strong convictions that I have not been the first, nor will I be the last to observe this nature. It preyed on the weak not on special days like Sunday or tired days like Monday, but on all days; Sunnyside days. Here I witnessed the young sparkle to replace the current and the old wither to replace the fallen leaves.

She had strategically positioned herself at the center heart of Pretoria; the radiant capital city of South Africa. My turn had come, and I too would be a victim to her piercing claws. The night was fresh and humid, those pleasant nights where owls are asleep and stars are wide awake. What I later discerned to be a misfortune, that day I saw it as manna from above; a blessing from the sky. I found myself among loud music, dancing souls and lots of empty bottles. My initial idea was to celebrate the success of my latest book; a lonesome and solitary life only afforded me to celebrate by myself. This was when I found her or perhaps more accurately where she found me.

I was at the bar, trying to get a cold and soothing drink with my wallet open – a peaking stranger could easily see that the papers inside the wallet had hardly any place to breathe. Perhaps this is what started it all. “Buy me a smoke” a voice whispered, turning around I caught glimpses of divine beauty. Her speaking lips assured me that the plot was about to take a sensible turn. Bianca

and me then drank too much and spoke too little. When we ever did converse, truth was not among us although at the time I was blinded to this.

There was a singular moment when smoke made its way through the passages of her mouth when she told me a little about herself. She had seven siblings; all male. “I am the queen of the house,” she said “I wanted you to meet my father, but unfortunately he was leaving before dawn”. She then told me how since it was late and other stories my ears could not easily grasp. That if I will have her, she will dine at my place tonight. Given that this was in agreement with what I had hoped, I readily accepted her handsome offer. Little did I know that this was the first string of lies, her silent lies that would lead to my life abandoning my youthful soul.

In my apartment we were two individuals who had drunk a bit too much and laughed a bit too loud. Fun and my entertaining nature soon led her to wear the natural clothes of skin. It was a marvelous sight, the kind which an artist would stare bewildered. But I could not help but notice the scars that her body carried. This was not the scars of a rich suburban girl, whose only adventure was at a zoo, as she later came to tell. These were the deformities only associated with woe and suffering. But the scars on Bianca’s body... were perfectly sited, so my Bianca, my Sunnyside mermaid inspired the jaw dropping amazement of awe.

In the morning light, Bianca’s two eyes got teary when I told her I had to go to work. Her arms wrapped around me as if her breathing depended on mine. When I tried to convince her otherwise I could tell my words were

falling on deaf ears, “Is it a sin to want to be with you?” she asked with puppy eyes. The yellow morning sunrise soon changed, Bianca and I laughed and sighed and shared memories of our past. I still recall the innocents of her eyes, but what scared me was her guilt-ridden mind. She would hold me a bit too tight as if there was something or someone she feared. This reminded me of the scars on her back... at first I thought it was her father, Lucas Smith, a man she could not speak of without scorn on her face even when her lips smiled.

A call she received, reminded me of Yesterday. How Bianca was almost famous at the club we met... the varied men who knew her by name, the varied fingers that pointed her way. Somehow I was oblivious to all this, deafened by her soft and hypnotizing words on my ear. Especially how just before we left she spoke to a scar faced man with broad shoulders and dark eyes... he glanced at me, then discretely handed her a concealed parcel. Perhaps my title of being a well known author convinced her that money knew me by name. I believe that was when she made it her objective to mine every last penny I had. She squandered my small wealth the way a child would extract honey from a jar.

Her consuming nature did not look far in the future, as she spoiled and mutilated every tap of money that came my way; I lost my job in the months that came. And what was worse I had not written a single word since I met her... she had become my shadow – a thing which is always there, but its reality always doubted. Her stories were similar; my brother was in an accident... I need money; stories, stories... and more hideous stories. But

the more I listened the more I believed, the more I became a Sunnyside fool.

There were moments, however rare, where her eyes would not lie, moments where I could feel her presence close to my skin as if veins and arteries connected our hearts. And all my entirety, the thousand molecules in my heart dwelled there for her, but this much was clear; I had become a fool... a fool in love.

Soon all the small wealth I had accumulated died in the night, and when the day came I turned to the few friends I had, and when friends were exhausted by time; I turned to enemies. They did less good and more harm with their sharp teeth exposed in the dark.

"Friends... they made me do it" she said one night assuming I was asleep,

"I didn't mean to do this; I didn't mean to destroy your life". She spoke about a rock, those friends must have neglected to tell her how this rock, this stone becomes your way of life once it made its way through the bloodstream.

"They made me do it; and now I am in love with my kill... no matter how much I fight it I am madly in love with my kill."

At dawn, we were two souls one begging for forgiveness and one willing to forgive. "Please get me out of this life" she said, those eyes crying by fear and by hope of an almost bright tomorrow. The one thing which led my mind to the valleys of foolishness was the hope that I could save her... the fools hope that love outweighed all things.

And I did, I saved her...we lived, together we lived. It was not without pain and vigor, but day by day, she instilled less and prayed more... we crawled before we could fly. I loved her each time and she loved me each day.

There were days of sorrow were my Bianca would evaporate to fade for days. The voids she left entrapped my broken heart, when misery and distress would try to fill those spaces around. Our later blend and bond would then fade the sufferings of the past and bring joys of the present... dreams of the future.

For her, I sold all my possessions, and what was mine in this world I could now carry on my back. It was then when I realized my mermaid's true nature. A sexy and deadly bloodsucker; my beautiful Sunnyside mermaid. Her eyes darkened and the door violently opened, his massive arms blotted out the outside sun on my apartment door. I recognized that scared face instantly... and somehow I knew he was here for her.

By senseless gallantry and heroism, I opened my mouth to ask, when my mermaid was in those giant arms. He said very little, in fact, I never saw his teeth. Only a silver blade that punctured a hole through me... and as the red river of blood flowed out of me. I felt my life abandoning me as they left hand in hand, my heart abandoning me as she looked and blew a final kiss of death.

I have little memory of what transpired when darkness and nothingness was all I managed to see, except waking

up in a hospice bed... with my lungs finding it difficult to breathe when oxygen had turned to toxic fumes.

I loved a girl, and she lied to me on one occasion, she fooled me on one occasion... then within a lie she lied once more and I was fool once more. I loved a mermaid ceaselessly, and she loved me sometimes... she killed me sometimes.