

# Into The Sea

by Iris Ann Hunter

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## INTO THE SEA

I wander the streets, aimless, lost...uncomfortably numb. Not even the warm night air, kissed by summer, can break the spell. I know I am woman, but something in me has forgotten what that means. I have breasts, but I do not feel them. I have a pussy, but I do not touch it.

That is what he has done to me.

Only twenty-six years old and I feel empty, as though my identity was somehow linked to his, and now that he is gone, I am left fractured, falling helpless into a dark abyss.

Once again, I have flaked on my friends, too weak to take in their worried glances and careful smiles. At least I tried. This time, I made it to the door of the bar, only to turn back, offering them nothing but an apologetic text. But they understand. They always understand.

For a moment, despair washes over me and I have to stop and close my eyes.

*Think of something else.*

*Feel something else.*

So I search, into the moment, into the now, feeling for the skirt that brushes against my legs in the gentle breeze, feeling for the long blond hair that rests like silk on my bared shoulders, feeling for anything tangible that will distract me from the pain and anguish that threatens to break me.

I will survive, I tell myself.

*I will survive.*

But I want to do more than survive, I want to *live*.

In the distance, I hear a noise, faint and muffled. I open my eyes and walk on, seeking it out with curious ears and hesitant steps.

I round a corner and the sound grows louder.

It is a frantic beat, a living beat.

Turning another corner, I see a line into a club. My gaze drifts as I walk by, loitering over scantily clad women and young virile men, out searching for the time of

their lives on a warm Friday night. The bouncer—a big burly bald man with small dark eyes—glances at me, his gaze raking me over. He lingers, licking his lips.

“Want in?” he asks, pulling back the rope.

I blink, my eyes darting from him to the line, then back to him. I hesitate, but something about the pulsing beat emanating from within beckons.

“Thank you,” I say, and walk past him, acutely aware that his eyes follow me.

Inside, a wave of heat rolls over me and settles deep into my lungs. I stand at the railing and look down into the crowd that swells like a writhing sea, churning and shifting with a life of its own.

The music pulses, the air pounds.

I have not heard a band like this before. Brutal. Vibrant. Hard. So many drum beats, so possessive. It is punk. It is tribal. It is wild, so fucking wild.

I descend the stairs and walk into the sea, eager to lose myself among the masses, to feel what they feel, to live like they live. With a rush, I’m taken by the shifting tide and pushed further and further into a far darkened corner of the small, shady club.

Crazed bodies surround me, all strangers, all focused on the stage, on the animals who perform. It reeks of sweat, of alcohol, of unleashed aggression and discarded angst.

Awareness settles in and I feel someone behind me. It is a man. I can tell by the firmness of his body. I am pressed into him, and he is pressed into the wall, for there is no more room. We are all sardines packed tightly in a hot tin can.

He speaks to a friend nearby, shouting to be heard over the noise, the chaos. I do not register what he says, only the beauty of his voice that sounds like torn satin, rough and smooth all at once. It is mesmerizing. I picture the man who would possess such a voice; dark hair, I think, and perhaps deeply brown eyes; long lashes too, and large hands. He laughs at something his friend says. It is a deep laugh, a hearty laugh...the laugh of someone who lives life fully.

The sea of bodies swell and a sudden wave crushes me against him. His hands, indeed large, and strong, grab my waist to steady me.

“Are you alright?” he asks into my ear.

Again, that voice, this time intimate, this time soft.

“Yes,” I say, not wanting to look back at him, not wanting to shatter the fantasy in my mind. His hands are still on my waist, on the exposed skin that rests between my tank top and skirt. I realize I will miss them when they are gone, but to my surprise, they remain.

Now a fever takes me and my breath comes faster. It’s been too long since I let a man touch me...too long since I’ve been willing, or even able to move on to another.

I can feel him now...feel his warmth behind me. So close. So very close.

I think at first I’m mistaken, but then I am sure—he grows hard against me.

Something stirs from deep within; a whispered memory of the woman I used to be. Strong. Sensual. Fearless. The whisper grows louder, calling to me from somewhere in the distance. It’s as though some part of me is waking after a long and arduous slumber.

The strength of his grip tightens on my waist just as his breath falls on my bare shoulder, followed by his lips. His kiss is delicate, unsure, testing the boundaries. My response is to let my head fall back against his chest; to surrender...to surrender the fear, the heartache, to let go of the memories that have held me hostage for too long. It’s time I made new ones. And here, now, in this crazy moment, in this darkened corner, wrapped in the safety of anonymity, I feel free...free to finally offer myself up to someone new.

We are walled in, trapped in the dark, so no one can see that his hands grow bold and venture over my breasts, his thumbs grazing along hardened nipples. He squeezes gently, carefully, still unsure. I arch into him, a silent offering.

*Take me.*

*Feel me.*

*Make me whole.*

As if hearing my plea, his hands leave my breasts and venture lower, and lower, gliding along my waist and onto my hips, his touch reminding me that I still have curves, that I am still woman.

The thunderous beats of the drums taunt us, tease us, goad us on with primal chants. His touch becomes hungry, then devouring, spurred on by the animals on stage that feed the frenzy in the air. With a violent surge, his hands delve under my skirt, searing me with heat. My panties are swept aside while his fingers invade me, easily as I

am so wet. He expels a rush of breath that grazes my cheek, while the womb aches and yearns, swallowing him up. One, two, three fingers, thrust upwards, mauling and insistent, but it is not enough. He knows this. He retreats. I feel the urgency of his movements behind me.

There are people everywhere, but they are zombies, drones, latched onto the stage with empty, crazed eyes.

When he returns, it is the engorged prick I feel. Hot. Slick.

He shifts the angle of my hips, but the height difference is too great and he cannot enter my womb while I stand upright. I hear him groan, then I hear the sound of spit and feel him searching and wedging himself into my bottom. I am unsure. My hands move to block him, but he does not listen. He is mad with lust, a slave to the pull of nature. He forces his way in and I cry out, my voice drowning in the undulating sea, swallowed up as though it never existed.

*“Please,”* he pants into my ear.

I am helpless to his voice, so desperate, so honest, that I will my flesh to soften, to accept him. He feeds it to me, slowly, inch by inch. It fills me, stretches me, breathes me with pain and fills me with fire.

*“Oh, fuck,”* he groans.

Powerful arms wrap around my body and hug me to him, while his teeth rake along my neck. He bruises me. He hurts me. But I am lost in it all. The music. The madness. The man inside me. He takes me as I want to be taken, as I need to be taken. My body arches, my eyes close. So deep he goes, until I am split in half and can no longer breathe. He stills for a moment, letting me adjust, while his lips breathe winded kisses along my temple. I am skewered on his flesh like a stuck pig, a sacrifice to the dominance of man. Then he moves, at first tentative, then building with strength, until he is unleashed. My poor little hole struggles to take him, and tears spring to my eyes while desperate whimpers leave my mouth.

The pain...Oh God, the pain.

*Let it cleanse you.*

*Let it strengthen you.*

The adrenaline seeps, the body warms, accepting, inviting. He drives into me as though no longer in control, as though instinct in all its primitive glory has taken over.

Fingertips dig into my flesh, needy, possessed. He is like the music, like the drums that pound, like the voices that shout, demented with rage, blind with passion. Inside me, the fullness consumes, like a monster frothing at the mouth, pain and pleasure molding together, until every cell is bursting and every nerve is screaming, louder and louder, until I cannot reason, until I cannot breath, and then I come, *oh God*, I come, blissfully, wildly. It feels like I am being tossed and torn apart by the tide, by the man inside me, by the world around me.

Then suddenly, I'm falling...falling to depths that will crush me.

I cannot stand.

He senses this and holds me up, by his hands and by his cock, which continues to thrust inside me. That voice, so beautiful, so desperate, groans deep into my ear as his body peaks and swells, a current of hot liquid spurting inside me, again and again, his hips lunging frantically to purge every last drop . His muscles jerk and his breathing stops, then his arms tighten around me as he presses my body to his so tightly I think perhaps he will never let me go. Then, as though a storm has passed, our bodies slack and lean into the other, panting, sweating, dazed in the aftermath.

For a moment, we stand still, merged as one being, one sexual entity. His hands caress me, his breath warms me, and I think perhaps I could stay here forever.

“Thank you,” he murmurs into my ear.

His lips trail along my temple, leaving the languid kiss of a spent lover. He withdraws from me and I feel empty, but sated.

Delirious.

*A woman erotic.*

My trembling hands work to adjust my panties and my skirt, as he too puts himself back together. Around us, the pulsing beats come to a close as the animals wind down, depleted, like us.

I hear the call of his friends and I reach for his hand and wrap it around me quickly, then press my lips to his palm with closed eyes, stashing away his scent, his feel,

his essence, burying them deep in my memory where they will live forever; the fantasy who became the man, the man who became the fantasy.

Then I let his flesh fall away, but as I step forward into the dwindling crowd, his fingers tighten around mine, leaving my arm stretched out behind me, as though he doesn't want to let go. Yet, there is hesitance in the way he holds me, uncertainty, as though perhaps he has his own baggage that he carries, his own demons that he battles. Without looking back, I give him a gentle squeeze, to let him know it's okay, then pull my hand from his grip and walk slowly away.

It is only when I am on the other side of the club that I risk a turn back. I cannot help myself.

I discover he is as I imagined, and yet different. He has the dark hair, almost black, but instead of brown, he has deep blue-green eyes...eyes that watch me, even now. He's older than I might've thought. Mid-thirties perhaps. The black slacks and the white dress shirt, open at the collar, the sleeves rolled up, makes me think he left an office somewhere, and perhaps went straight out after work. Even from a distance and beneath the clothes, I can still see the build, the strength, the beauty. His looks are mesmerizing, just like his voice, sort of rough and smooth all at once, coming together to form something beautiful, something wonderful.

He is man. All man.

I watch him study me, as I study him, then I offer a parting smile, to say goodbye.

He blinks, once, twice, then his lips part. Suddenly, he moves, walking towards me, his gaze unwavering. His friends call out to him, but he ignores them.

*No. Please. Let me go.*

Panic sets in and I climb the stairs, two at a time, moving quickly towards a side exit. I glance back and see him begin to push his way through the crowd, shoving bodies aside.

“Wait!” he calls out.

With a rush, I lunge through the door and into the cool night air that crashes into my lungs like a rogue wave. I tear passed the spent sweaty bodies hovering about the club, dazed from their offerings.

Behind me, I hear the door fling open with a loud bang. And so I run, past darkened storefronts and walls of brick, my sandaled feet flying over the cracked empty sidewalk. I hear footsteps behind me. Turning a corner, I dip into a side alley, hiding in the shadow of an inset doorway. I hear him round the corner then stop abruptly.

“Fuck!” he shouts.

His feet shuffle, pacing this way and that, and then he groans, so loud and so guttural that tears spring to my eyes.

“Come back,” he calls out. “Come back!” Then in a soft broken voice, he whimpers, “*Please.*”

My body yearns to step forward, aching for him, longing for him, but my heart holds steadfast, still too raw to offer itself up. I feel, more than see, his attention turn to the alley. I slink further into the shadows. With a heavy pit in my stomach I lean my head against the wall and close my eyes.

“I’m sorry,” I whisper to him.

*I have given you all that I have to give.*

*I am not ready for anything more.*

*Please, forgive me.*

As a tear slides down my cheek, I hear him breathe a tortured sigh, then his footsteps slowly retreat, growing softer and softer until he is no more.

I stand there, gazing up at the starlit sky, surrounded by darkness, surrounded by the unknown. My world has been rocked, shattered by a nameless man. I can still feel his touch on my skin, like leftover warmth from the sun. I can still feel his cock inside me, surging and pulsing, like it remains buried deep within. But perhaps most precious, is that I can still feel...*him.*

Then it dawns on me, bright like a blinding sea; I am no longer numb, no longer empty, no longer a shell of a woman whose heart has forgotten what it means to beat. I have life now. It is a new life. One he helped to forge, through fantasy and fire.

I press my hands to my face, breathing in his scent that still lingers, treasuring it as though it is my last breath. I hold it, savor it, letting it feed my soul and strengthen my spirit. Slowly, I let it out, letting go of the past and welcoming the future. Then with

slightly shaky steps, like that of a newborn foal, I step forward, leaving the shadows behind to enter the light...the light of a new world.

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Six months have passed since that fateful summer night. I am a little stronger, a little wiser, and—perhaps most importantly—I am whole again. It has been hard at times, easier at others, but through it all, his memory has stayed with me, like that of a devoted lover.

There are days I wish I could go back to that night and step forward from the shadows and into his arms and other days that I'm grateful I let him go. I was not ready for him, because instinct tells me I would have loved him had I known him. I know it. I know it because every night I dream of him, and every day I think of him. His voice, his touch, the way he held me, the way he took me, the way his eyes shimmered like a warm sea as they looked at me from across the way. At night, when I lie beneath the sheets, my back arched, my legs splayed, my breath leaving me in jagged pants, he is the one I think of, he is the one I come for.

There have been moments I have thought of returning to the club, but fear has me staying away. What if he is there with someone else? What if I see him again and he has forgotten me? There are too many questions which I do not want the answers to.

So, I tuck him away, deep inside my heart, a fantasy, a memory, a lost love...a love who helped me move on from another...a love who reminded me that I am still woman, still powerful, still beautiful.

My friends have invited me out tonight. For so long I have put them off, shut them out. But today, perhaps I am ready.

*Yes. I am ready.*

I walk along the sidewalk, relishing the swoosh of my silky dress while my eyes drift up to the fiery sky, streaked with crimson reds and buttery yellows, when I find myself suddenly face to face with a dark grey suit and stumbling backwards. A strong hand grips my wrist, catching me before I fall.

“Are you alright?” a flat, rough-cut voice asks.

I blink.

Wait.

Those words. That voice. It's different, but...When I regain my footing and glance up, I find myself staring into somber blue-green eyes that grow wide as they stare back.

"It's you," he breathes.

Sadness takes me when I see how weary he looks; the dark circles beneath the eyes, the tired shoulders, the down turned mouth.

With infiniteness slowness, he reaches out and carefully touches my cheek, as though afraid I might not be real.

"I've searched for you, for so long," he croaks.

His eyes graze over my face, lingering, savoring.

"It's...it's really you," he says with a rush of breath.

I manage to smile while still searching for air.

His face softens as he smiles back, the tell-tale signs of suffering slowly fading away, disappearing like magic. Then, I watch with joy as his eyes begin to light up, until they shimmer once again like a warm sea...a sea I find myself falling into.

This time, I won't be running.

This time, I am ready.

*The End.*

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*Thank you so much for reading.*

*If you enjoyed the story, please consider leaving a review. I would be most grateful. I am a new author and every little bit of praise helps me along. It also helps others find my work and gives them a reason to take a chance on someone new.*

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# Excerpt from Claimed: A Tale of Surrender

*By Iris Ann Hunter*

[Claimed: A Tale of Surrender](#)

*(links to Amazon)*

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## CHAPTER ONE

I sit at the end of the bar, sipping my martini to the soft, jazzy notes of a lone saxophone, all the while wondering if I'll have the courage to go through with it. Because I never do this sort of thing, and I never wear this kind of dress. But I don't want to be alone tonight. I'm tired of being alone, tired of hiding from the world.

There's something else though...something else that has lured me out into the night, into this place, with its sultry red glow and wandering eyes: I feel like I'm searching for something, but without knowing what it is, I'm having a hard time finding it.

All I know is how I feel. Trapped. Afraid. Imprisoned by a life that has made me fearful and anxious, of everything. Like now. My heart beats a little too fast. My breath comes and goes a little too quick. Inside, I feel empty, as though a void exists but I have no idea how to fill it.

*Silly girl.*

How naïve I was to think that a change of scenery would solve anything. Here I am, twenty-three years old and a few weeks into my new life, still living off my

inheritance, nothing but a stranger in an even stranger city, with still no answers, and still no peace.

When the threat of tears starts to build, I tip the rest of my martini back just as the bartender with the bowtie glances over, his eyebrow arched in a silent question. I shake my head and offer a weak smile. *One is enough. One is plenty*

He nods in understanding then turns his attention to the far end of the bar, where an elderly woman with sad eyes and an empty glass waits.

*If I'm not careful, that's going to be me one day.*

I shudder when I think of the last time—the only time—I let a man touch me, let a man inside me. It's not that I haven't had the opportunity since then. I'm aware of my looks and my affect on men, I just...I haven't been willing. I've been keeping myself locked away, too haunted by the past, too unsure of the future, but mostly, too afraid to put myself out there.

Until now.

Only it feels like I've waited too long. Because a man's touch is not something I simply want, it's something I *need*.

With a shaky breath, I finally allow my eyes to scan the dimly lit room. The place seems quiet for a Friday night. Perhaps it's the rain outside, or perhaps no one is in the mood to play. Either way, it's fine with me. I hate crowds.

My searching gaze wanders, taking in the men and women who sit scattered among the tables, some single, some coupled, some huddled close together as though sharing secrets, others appearing locked in the throes of serious conversation.

Movement in the far corner draws my attention where I watch, with a touch of envy, a young attractive couple—tipsy and drunk with desire—rise from a table and leave, allowing my gaze to drift to another table that had previously been hidden from view, and it is there, through the haze of a darkened corner, that I see him.

He sits alone, reclined in his chair, legs crossed, one hand holding the cell phone he speaks into, while the other casually swirls the snifter on the table, as though he's in no particular hurry, as though time will wait for him. Despite the shadows that surround him, I can see that he's older...at least older than me, late thirties perhaps, and striking, with salt and mostly pepper hair and glowing ice-blue eyes. And while the three-piece

suit is a gleaming grey and finely cut, offering the promise of a gentleman, there's something about him that doesn't seem gentle at all. Maybe it's the leisurely repose, the way his languid movements seem belied by some predatory instinct, that I find myself reminded of a lion lounging in the grass.

I can't help but wonder who he might be talking to. A wife perhaps, or maybe a lover. Yet the way his mouth moves, the way he appears almost bored, instinct tells me it is not a woman, at least not a woman he is intimate with, but a friend perhaps, or a business colleague.

After a moment, he sets the phone down, gives the snifter a final swirl, then brings the glass to his lips, and as he tilts his head back, his eyes fall upon me.

It's as though someone has just tossed a warm blanket around me on a chilly day.

Turn away, I think, but I can't.

I can only watch, helpless, as the glass hovers at his lips while his penetrating gaze remains locked on me, and in that moment, everything else fades. It is just the two of us, until it isn't.

"Hey gorgeous. Can I buy you a drink?"

I tear my eyes away and glance to my right, where a young man with a cocky smile and puffy face hovers next to me, his breath a bit too heavy.

"No, thank you," I reply quickly.

Undeterred, the man starts talking something about how he's never seen me before as he's sure he would remember, but I ignore him and glance back to the suit. A strange feeling of loss sinks heavy into my body.

The table is empty.

I turn back to my drink in a daze.

Suddenly, a warm hand falls upon my thigh, slipping just under the hem of my little black dress. I gasp and turn, only to see a shoulder clad in a fine grey fabric. A five o'clock shadow grazes my cheek and a man whispers into my ear, "I'm in the hotel next door. Penthouse."

His voice is warm and smooth, like the expensive cognac on his breath. His subtle cologne drifts around me, hypnotic and seeping into my pores until I can taste him on my tongue. With a soft caress, his hand leaves my thigh and suddenly he's gone, the

only evidence he ever existed is the closing door and the lonely snifter left behind on the empty table.

A whisper of adrenaline begins a slow, seductive crawl through my body, coaxing a tingling sensation into my limbs and everything in between.

The man next to me has fallen silent, yet when I glance over, he is still watching me, but perhaps his smile is a little less cocky.

With a polite nod, I excuse myself from the bar and go to the ladies' room.

In the mirror, I see the reflection of a young woman I recognize but feel as though I barely know. The fragile face and long blonde waves appear familiar, but the mystery rests in the wide hazel eyes gazing back at me. They seem filled with a hunger that reminds me of a wild animal that has been too long without food. Such a thing is bound to do things it should not do, and go where it should not go.

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## ***About the Author***

*Iris Ann Hunter is a romance author who writes to affect as much as arouse. Her stories are raw, sensual, and achingly erotic, and span the spectrum of beautifully dark to tenderly twisted. Fond of the shadowy side of love and lust, she harbors a borderline unhealthy need to pen books about tortured souls and forbidden desires.*

*When she's not lost in the minds of her characters, or stumbling around social media, you'll likely find Iris playing in the garden, riding her horse, or drinking wine by a wood-burning fire. She's also an avid reader who spends entirely too much time on her kindle. Home is with her man and a small herd of animals in a quaint little town in Southern California, with oak tree-covered hills and an almost empty lake. One of her favorite things is to hear from readers. It always, always makes her smile.*