

## The Body in the Bath

By Lo-Arna Green

Her eyes peer out over the top of the bath water. Because of the reflection, it appears she has two sets of eyes. I notice her mascara is untouched, no smudges. It seems as if her eyes haven't come into contact with the water, just the rest of her. Her clothes are on but torn. Apart from the fact she is dead she looks to be deep in a peaceful sleep. Who is she? And why is she in my bath, dead? I feel a chill settles into my bones. I am frozen; I can't tear my eyes away from this woman. It is obvious she met with foul play, but why and more curiously, why here?

I can feel panic beginning to set in and override the numb feeling that had paralysed me from the moment I stepped foot into my bathroom. I don't even recognize this woman; much less know how she came to be in here. It feels so surreal, am I dreaming? I pinch my cheek hard, nope, not dreaming.

I have no idea what to do and I feel as if my feet are stuck in quick sand, rather than the slightly damp, bitter bathroom tiles. It feels like an eternity passes before I walk out to the hall to call Corey. He is always so laid back that he is a relief to be around in a crisis. He'll know what to do and he won't arrest me for being a victim of circumstance.

After I hang up the phone after his promise to be here as soon as possible, I walk slowly back into the bathroom. I have some sort of morbid need to stare at her, I can't even rationalise why or explain it to myself, but I feel like she shouldn't be alone. Someone should be with her; I hadn't told Corey what was wrong just that I needed him right away. We have always been close, he has always been there for me, and I hope he will be this time as well. I sink down slowly onto the cold bathroom floor and sit with my back against the wall, next to the door. I stare at the woman and try to guess her age. I suppose she looks around my age, slightly older, no more than mid-twenties. It's hard to tell when half her face is submerged. What happened to her? I study every inch of her face that I can see, every line, every spot, hoping somehow the answer will lie there, will jump out at me. She had been pretty and I feel an overwhelming

sadness come over me, threatening to take over. Corey's heavy footsteps shake me out of my trance and I look expectantly up at the door.

"What's going on here Carina?!" He shouts hysterically. He storms into the bathroom and takes in the dead girl; his back to me. He swears and jumps back as if he had been burnt. His leg hits my foot, but he doesn't react. He is looking at the dead girl intensely, his shoulders shake, his body jerks, sobs tear from his chest. I can't remember seeing Corey cry since the day his beloved dog had died when we were teenagers.

"Corey, get it together. We have to move the body!" I shout a little louder than I intend, but truth be told this display of emotion is scratching at my nerves; I start to feel that something is horribly wrong. I want his attention, this experience has shaken me to the core and I am depending on Corey to be the strong one pulling me through this, not falling apart like he is. As he curls into a ball of misery I have to wonder, does he know this woman? I step forward to look closer at the face I have spent the past hour studying, perhaps I did miss something. My feet shuffle forward across the damp tiles that now look dirty from the dirt on Corey's shoes mixed with the water that escaped from the deadly bath. As I inch closer to the dead body in the bath, a growing horror settles in the pit of my stomach. As I stand close to the bath, my shins digging into the sharp and cold edge of the bath, blood coloured water escapes and splashes my stockings. I realise I do know who was in the bath; it is me.

I turn to Corey and using all the energy I can gather, a bellow escapes my dead lips, his head snaps up. I think he can see me but after a moment he flops his head to his hands and continues his sobbing. I reach out to him and graze the back of his neck with my cold fingertips. He shivers but still doesn't look at me, can't see me. There is no place for me here now, I slowly turn back to my water grave and climb in, letting the water wash over and consume me.

The End

# Writing Raw

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**Lo-Arna Green bio:** Lo-Arna lives with her husband, two children and pet hermit crabs in Perth, Australia. When she isn't writing or daydreaming, she's usually found at her day job or on the beach, which both involve daydreaming.