PRIVATE
BEACH SECRETS
ENCOUNTERS
TIDE AND TEMPTATION
THE
BEACH SECRETS
COLLECTION
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Private Encounters

TIDE AND TEMPTATION

by

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Late afternoon alighted softly on the bay, the light gold and pink as if the horizon itself had been brushed with watercolor. The tide was low, revealing long reaches of pale sand where ripples of shallow water glinted faintly.

A warm hush lingered in the air. Even the palms at the edge of the beach seemed content to stand still, their fronds swaying only when a breeze wandered through. Farther away, the white curve of the resort was muted by distance, so that there was only the hiss of water and the slow movement of the sea.

He walked along the shoreline without hurry, his bare feet sinking into warm sand. The grains clung briefly to his skin before being washed clean by the retreating tide. His shirt was loose, the collar open, the faintest breath of wind sliding across his neck and carrying the salt-sweet scent of the ocean.

All day he had moved between shade and sun without finding anywhere to truly settle. The island's stillness should have soothed him, but instead it stirred a restlessness he could not name. With the light beginning to soften, he found himself walking further than he had before, drawn by the quiet curve of the beach ahead.

A few hundred feet on, he saw a wooden fishing boat resting in the shallows. Its hull was worn smooth by years of saltwater and heat, the timber dark and sturdy.

A single man stood ankle-deep beside it, drawing a length of net from the side. The threads caught the dying sunlight in silver flashes as his hands worked, quick and deft yet unhurried, as though he had all the time in the world. His hair was damp, curling slightly at the ends, and a faded vest hung open against skin browned deeply by the sun.

The fisherman looked up. For a moment, their eyes met. The acknowledgement was subtle, a small tilt of the head, a glance that seemed neither invitation nor dismissal, only awareness.

The tourist slowed. The quiet between them was as steady as the tide.

"Hello," the man said at last. His voice was low, the vowels shaped by an accent the tourist could not quite place. A slight smile touched his mouth. He turned his gaze towards the boat and then back, his open hand making a gesture that needed no words.

The tourist stepped forward until the warm water lapped at his calves. The sand shifted beneath him in a slow, steady give-and-take.

The fisherman's gaze remained steady, not hurried, not expectant. At the boat's side, the fisherman reached out a hand, the skin firm and calloused. The tourist took it, feeling the strength in the grasp, and pulled himself up. The hull was warm under his palm, the boat rocking slightly as his weight settled.

The deck gave a low creak. The air was rich with the smell of sun-warmed rope and seawater, underpinned by a faint resin scent that seemed to rise from the timber itself. Overhead, the sky deepened toward evening, bands of orange fading into crimson along the water's edge.

The fisherman's hand rested on the net, his gaze thoughtful. He crouched with an easy steadiness, bare feet planted against the worn planks, and reached for a loose strand of twine. His fingers moved with the surety of long practice, pulling the fibre through in a small, neat knot. When he looked up, it was with a slight tilt of the head.

Immediately, the tourist knew what to do. With no words needed, he lowered himself beside the fisherman. Their knees met lightly, the contact brief but certain, and he took the length of twine into his own hands. His first attempt was clumsy. The fibres slipped away from his grip, thin and unfamiliar.

The fisherman leaned across, unhurried, the movement bringing them closer so that the faint scent of saltwater and warm skin reached him. He guided his companion's fingers with light pressure, showing the pinch, the pull, the tightening that gave the knot its shape. His voice did not rise above a murmur, low and almost lost in the quiet, though the approval it carried was clear even without words.

They continued in an easy rhythm, the rasp of rope against the planks mixing with the faint slap of water against the hull.

Sometimes their hands crossed. Once, when a stubborn tangle appeared, the fisherman leaned in from the side, his shoulder brushing the tourist's as he pointed out the path of the thread. The boards beneath them still held the sun's warmth, pressing gently into their palms whenever they shifted the net.

When the tourist's fingers caught the wrong loop and the net bunched into a stubborn knot, the fisherman gave a quiet, amused laugh. It had the warmth of something private. He moved closer, knees on either side of the tourist's thigh, and reached forward so that his arms enclosed him for a moment.

Together, they threaded the twine through, their hands moving as one. The fisherman's breath passed across the side of the tourist's neck before he leaned away again.

They fell back into the work. Pass, knot, tighten, turn. The net smoothened under their touch. Light thinned from the horizon, and the fisherman's profile was cast in warm bronze, the lashes of his lowered eyes tracing faint shadows on his cheek.

When he looked up, his gaze lingered for a moment too long. The tourist met it and held it, the pace of their work slowing until it stopped. The net lay between them in a loose fold. Something settled in the air between them, as if the tide itself had stilled to listen.

The fisherman straightened, his gaze still locked with the tourist's. It drifted down briefly to the tourist's mouth before returning to his eyes. The boards gave a muted creak as he stepped forward. Warmth seemed to gather between them, carried in the scent of salt and sun on skin.

He reached out and brushed the inside of the tourist's wrist with his fingers. The touch was light at first, then drew a slow line up along the forearm. The movement left a trace of heat in its wake.

The tourist's breath tightened in his chest. His hand found the fisherman's hip, resting lightly, feeling the fabric of his shorts soft beneath his palm and the firm line of bone beneath. They stayed like that for a moment, the evening air thickening around them.

The fisherman's mouth curved faintly. His glance moved toward the short door at the stern, the frame shadowed in the dim light, then back again. There was no question spoken aloud, only a small inclination of his head that carried the meaning. The tourist grinned back.

The fisherman turned and stepped through the low opening, vanishing into the dim cabin. The boards creaked under his bare feet, then fell silent.

The tourist stood. His pulse kicked faster with every movement. The boat swayed beneath him, the edges of the world blurring in the dusk. He crossed the deck and followed. Inside, the ceiling pressed close, forcing him to duck. The air was thick with salt and sun-warmed wood, the boat's slow rocking like a steady breath beneath them.

The fisherman leaned against the wall, bathed in the faint gold light from the hatch above. He watched, silent, eyes unblinking. The floor sighed as the tourist stepped forward, closing the distance between them.

For a moment, there was only their breathing. The quiet magnified everything—the tilt of a head, the shift of weight, the faint catch of air in a throat. The fisherman's gaze held his, unbroken, until the quiet settled into the tourist's bones like the day's heat lingering in the wood.

Then the fisherman's hand was on his chest, fingertips pressing through the thin cotton, testing the shape of him. His thumb dragged upward, tracing the open collar, pushing the fabric aside with deliberate slowness. His eyes never left the tourist's face, as if memorizing every reaction.

The tourist's own hand found the fisherman's side, skin warm under the worn shirt, rising and falling with each breath. The space between them hummed, charged, waiting. When they leaned in, it was slow, inevitable. A brush of lips, testing, then deepening. The fisherman's mouth was rough, tasting of salt and sun. The tourist let out a low sound, and the fisherman swallowed it like a man starving.

There was no hurry. The boat's gentle roll pressed their bodies together, shoulder to hip, thigh to thigh, until there was no space left. Hands learned the shape of each other, fingers tracing ribs, the dip of a spine, the hard line of a jaw. The fisherman's palm slid up the tourist's neck, fingers tangling in his hair, tugging just enough to make him gasp.

Clothes became obstacles. Buttons gave way under impatient fingers. The rasp of fabric against skin was loud in the quiet cabin.

The fisherman's shirt fell open, revealing sun-darkened skin, the lean muscle of his torso. The tourist's hands followed the lines of him, mapping the unfamiliar terrain with greedy touches.

The fisherman crowded him back toward the narrow bunk, his mouth never leaving the tourist's. When his knees hit the edge, the tourist went down, pulling the fisherman with him. The bunk was barely wide enough for one, let alone two grown men, but they made it work. Every shift, every press of skin, sent heat licking through them.

The fisherman's hands were everywhere, rough palms skimming ribs, fingers digging into hips, thumbs brushing nipples until the tourist arched into the touch. His mouth followed, teeth scraping a collarbone, tongue laving over the sting. The tourist gasped, fingers tightening in the fisherman's hair.

"Look at me," the fisherman murmured against his skin.

The tourist did.

What he saw there, hunger, yes, but something darker, something possessive, made his breath catch. The fisherman held his gaze as he palmed the tourist through his pants, fingers firm, relentless. The tourist's hips jerked, a silent plea.

The fisherman smiled, slow and knowing. "Yeah," he said, like he'd been waiting for this. Like he'd known exactly how the tourist would fall apart for him.

Then his hand was inside the tourist's pants, calloused fingers wrapping around him, stroking with just the right amount of pressure. The tourist groaned, head thumping back against the bunk. The fisherman watched him unravel, his own breathing ragged, his pupils blown black with want.

When the tourist came, it was with the fisherman's name on his lips, his body bowing off the bunk. The fisherman followed him over the edge moments later, his forehead pressed to the tourist's shoulder, his breath hot against sweat-slick skin.

After, they lay tangled in the narrow space, limbs heavy, hearts still racing. The fisherman's head rested on the tourist's chest, his fingers tracing idle circles on his stomach. The tourist carded a hand through his hair, marveling at the quiet, the rightness of it.

Outside, the tide kept its steady rhythm. The boat rocked gently, cradling them in the dim gold light.

The fisherman lifted his head, met the tourist's eyes.

No words were said, none were needed.

Just the sea, the silence, and the promise of more.

The sea moved gently beyond the hull, the sound carrying a rhythm older than either of them. The evening air slipped down through the hatch in thin draughts, cooling the dampness along their skin. The fisherman's arm draped loosely over his middle; once it tightened briefly, then eased again. In the slow roll of the boat, the tourist felt the pull of

sleep come in pieces, each breath carrying him further from the moment while still holding it close.

When he woke, the cabin had deepened into shadow. The air held a cooler edge, the scent of sun-warmed rope replaced by something sharper, more like the open sea. Beside him, the space was empty. The blanket lay in a loose fold, its faint heat seeping into the boards beneath. He remained still for a moment, letting the absence settle into recognition.

He rose, movements unhurried, and stepped up onto the deck. The light had gone violet, the first stars faint through a haze of thin cloud. The outline of the beach lay dark against the sky, the palms at its fringe standing almost motionless. The air was clearer here, cool enough to cut the heaviness left by the cabin.

He stood for a moment at the rail, listening. The water moved in small, regular laps against the hull. Somewhere far off, the sound of a wave broke against the shore. The fisherman was nowhere in sight.

Stepping down into the shallows, he felt the chill of water break around his ankles. The sand beneath was firm now, its heat bled away with the day. The coolness climbed slowly, numbing and clean.

Halfway to shore, he turned. The boat lay as before, anchored in its small arc of water, a dark shape in the fading light. The cabin hatch stood open, but no figure emerged.

The silence of the pressed in alongside the residue of what had passed. The memory of the fisherman’s gaze felt as present as the salt still drying on his skin. It was a thing that would fade, he knew, as surely as the tide withdrew, but in that moment it lingered, caught between the sea and the darkening sky.