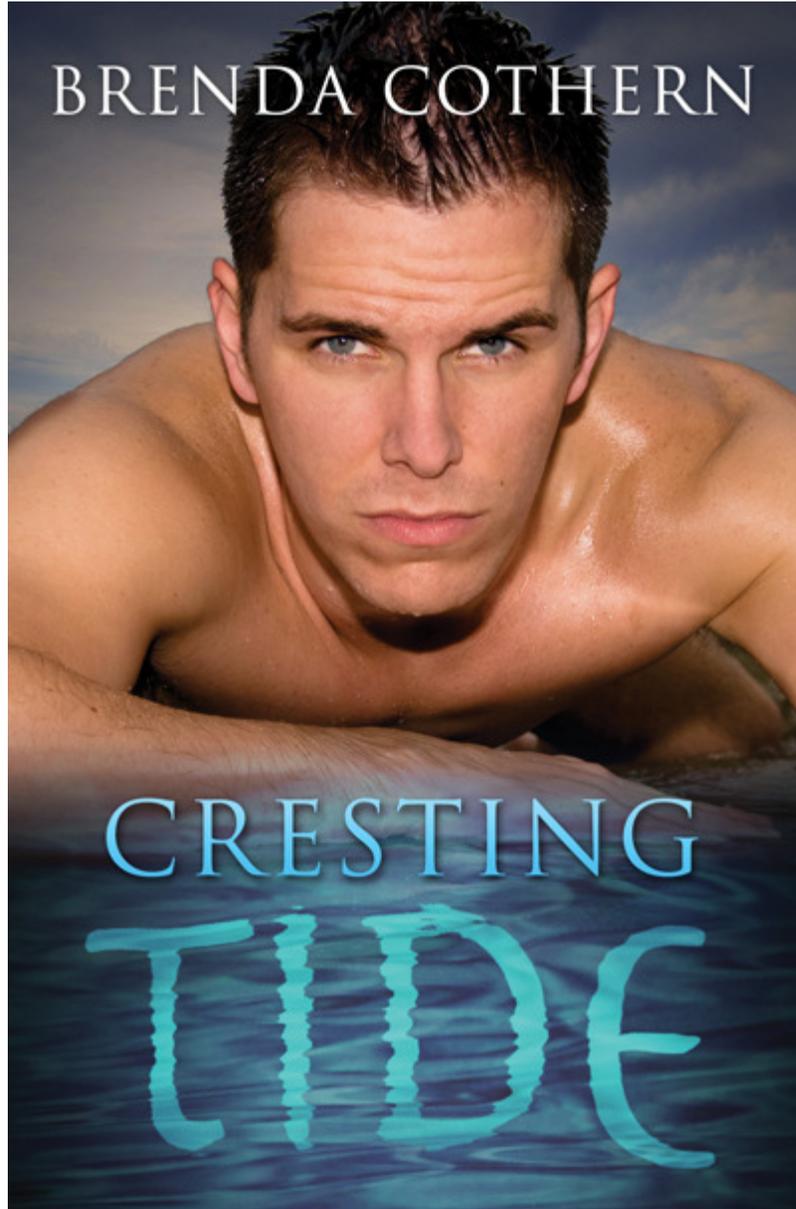


BRENDA COTHERN

CRESTING

TIDE



# Cresting Tide

Brenda Cothern



*Cresting Tide*

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ISBN: 1477527532

ISBN-13: 9781477527535

First Printing: June 2012

Second Printing: October 2013

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This book contains adult sexual situations and is intended for readers of legal age in the country in which they reside.

Brenda Cothern Books, Inc.

136 E. 145th Avenue

Tampa, Florida, 33613 USA

## Dedication

To my fans, both old and new, for continuing down the twisted trails of my imagination with me.

## Acknowledgement

To my wonderful beta readers:

Steve, Lora, Kevin, Cheryl, and Tracy. Thank you for all your help!

Special thanks to 'my office,' The Body Shop!



## Author Message

Thank you for buying this book. As an indie author it means a lot to me that you are spending your hard earned cash to read my work! To show my appreciation, I make a promise to you, my reader. The first chapter of every book that I have ever written or will ever write will be FREE on my website for you to read. As an avid reader myself, I know there is nothing worse than purchasing a book only to discover it is not that good.

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## Chapter One

Sunshine, brutally hot, blazed down upon the water without a cloud in the sky to impede its deadening brilliance. The crystal blue-green waters of the Caribbean reflected light like shards of mirrored glass scattered upon the waves. The water was almost too warm, far too relaxing, and swayed with the tide causing the body that floated upon its surface to rock gently.

Peter lay on his back floating along with the current that tried to lull him to sleep. Lull him to his death. Why he fought the inevitable, his sun-fried mind no longer knew. He deserved this fate for stowing away on the Tide Runner. A watery death awaited any stowaway, but he no longer thought about the captain's brutal hands as they stripped him bare of his few possessions and threw him overboard. He no longer thought of trying to reach the distant shore or treading water to survive. He thought of nothing at all but instead just drifted on the ever relaxing currents of the sea that he so loved.



Cuke felt the thrill that always coursed through him when he explored the span of sea the human crafts traveled. To the depths with what his parents and the elders decreed! The humans were interesting and always seemed to be doing curious things upon their surface crafts. Finding the human items on the sea floor or in their sunken vessels was his greatest pastime aside from dreaming about meeting an actual human one day. If only Poseidon would grant his prayers!

Cuke heard the distant clicks and whistles that belonged to one of the resident pods of dolphin in this stretch of the sea. He listened to their excitement at finding something new before he called out to them. They urged him to join them and see what they had discovered so he swam in the direction of their calls.

It was not long before he sensed the disturbance near the surface that had his finned friends so excited. As he looked toward the surface he knew his prayers to Poseidon had been answered. The human floating above him almost looked like a sea lion basking in the sun upon the surface. Cautiously, he swam closer and sent another prayer to Poseidon that the human still lived. The closer he swam, the louder the faint beat of the human's heart could be heard.

Cuke broke the surface several meters from the floating man. The clear membrane that protected his eyes from the wind of the sea slid into place but that did not obstruct his view. What he saw before him took his breath away! The man was the most beautiful creature he had ever seen. Hair the color of the

sandy sea bottom floated away from an angular face. Sun blisters were starting to form on full chapped lips that were under a slightly crooked nose. Long pale lashes that could barely be seen were at the end of the man's closed eyes. Cuke wondered what color those eyes could be but before he could splash the man awake to see for himself, the human began to sink. Panic replaced Cuke's fascination and building desire as he dove beneath the surface.



Peter knew he was either dreaming or he was dead. He hoped it was the former and not the latter. Either way there was nothing he could do about it but enjoy the sensations. He was floating upon the surface of the sea, but not as he was before. This time he felt as if he was moving though the water even though he was still lying flat on his back. He concentrated on the feeling and it was then that he felt the hardness that was rubbing against his pant-clad ass. So this is a dream after all, he thought, might as well enjoy it.

Peter tried to push back against the hard cock that was continuing to rub against the crack of his ass but he could find no leverage. He lifted his arms and it was then that he realized he was being held. One arm was wrapped firmly across his shoulders while another was wrapped around his waist. Peter brought his hand down to grasp the arm that held him securely under his chin, but the moment he touched that arm, his brain short circuited. He could make no sense of what he was feeling under his water pruned fingers but he knew that it was not flesh. All thoughts of the pleasure that the hard cock was causing flew from his mind as he began to frantically flail away from the thing that held him.

Cuke watched the human as he raised his arms then brought them back to settle down onto his own. He was startled when the man began to thrash and cried out when sharp stabs of pain shot through his arm when several layers of scales were scrapped away. Cuke pushed the human away and swam quickly backward out of the man's reach.

Peter's eyes flew open as he began to tread water and search for the thing that held him. When he turned to look behind him, his mouth fell agape and the sea took that moment to give him a taste of her deadly poison. Instantly, racking coughs started as Peter tried to catch his breath but his eyes never left the creature before him.

Myths and legends of merman, selkies, sea elves, and other creatures flashed through his sun-drained mind but all he could do was stare. The being treading water several feet away from him was like nothing he had ever seen in the lore books. Hair that looked like kelp fell long and loose over pale green scale like skin and floated gently upon the rocking waves. Long pointed ears stuck almost straight back from the side of its head but it was the eyes that Peter could not tear his gaze from. They were oval and seemed to shift between the deepest green to the deepest blue while flecks of golden glitter danced within like snow falling on a winter day. No lids graced the mesmerizing eyes that stared back at him with curiosity and something else that made him think of the hardness that was recently pressed against him.

Cuke watched the human's eyes grow wide and had his answer to their color. They were the palest blue of the sky when the colder months came to these waters. He was not sure what the human would do and tried not to think about the warnings his parents and elders had drilled into him since he was a child.

"Wait," Peter croaked out from his parched throat when the creature ducked under the waves.

Cuke heard the sound the human made as he submerged, but he did not resurface. Instead, he swam lazy circles around the human just out of reach. The sea was healing his scratched arm but he spared no thought to the minor pain. He could scent the man's arousal the closer he swam and it was as if that scent drew him to the human. Cuke already missed the feel of the human against his chest as he swam them closer to the shore.

Peter scanned the water around him as if he were searching for sharks. For all he knew, sharks may be less dangerous but somehow he doubted that the sea creature wished him harm. If the aqua-man had wanted to hurt him he would have and what about the arousal he felt? Surely that was not just something his sun baked brain had cooked up.

A hand touched his bare calf and he yelped before he could stop himself and he turned around in the water. Peter could barely make out the aqua-man as he swam beneath the surface, even though the water was crystal clear. It was as if the creature blended into the environment like the lizards of the tropical jungles and he soon lost track of where the aqua-man swam.

Cuke touched the smooth pale skin of the man's leg and darted away. He had to get the man to understand that he meant no harm and the only way he thought he could do that was by touch. However, he still did not trust the man not to hurt him again. It did not escape him that the human was larger than he. Not only longer but wider as well and Cuke knew that those who were larger were usually stronger. He darted in for another touch but when the human flailed again, he darted away.

Peter tried to calm his racing heart but every time the creature touched him, he practically jumped out of his skin. He just wished the aqua-man would come back to the surface. Well, if he won't come up, I will just have to go down, Peter thought. Peter took a deep breath and let himself sink beneath the waves. Immediately he sought the creature. Salt water stung his eyes but he fought the pain as he searched the expanse of blue-green water around him. Movement caught his eye and he spun to find his quarry. It took all of Peter's control to not gasp in the sea water around him.

The creature, the aqua-man, before him was stunning. Hair longer than any woman's flared out around the creature's body. He blended almost perfectly into the surrounding water and had it not been for that hair, Peter may not have spotted him at all. The creature was small and lithe as he silently and effortlessly floated before Peter but what caught Peter's eye was the flaring of skin along the aqua-man's ribs. Like the gill slits on a fish, they flared in and out steadily. The aqua-man was naked and still clearly aroused but Peter drug his eyes from the creature's organ to the trident that was somehow strapped to its back. Peter had only seen tridents in the books of lore and legend but they never looked as deadly as the weapon poking up from the creature's back. He watched as the aqua-man floated in front of him like some watery version of an angel from the heavens until he had no choice but to surface for air or drown.

Cuke stared back at the human trying to be as nonthreatening as possible before the human had to resurface to breathe. Once more he swam closer but resisted the urge to touch. Instead, he broke the surface himself a few feet away. He could tell the man was tiring again but did not want to wait for his mistress that was the sea to claim him. Slowly, he reached out his hand.

Peter stared into the mesmerizing eyes of the creature before his gaze shifted to the outstretched hand that broke the water's surface. Sunlight reflected off the pale blue-green scales that covered the aqua-man's hand and arm. Long thin fingers that ended in claw like fingernails reached out slowly toward him. Peter was sure those claws could tear and shred his flesh but he did not feel threatened. Before he knew what he was doing, Peter raised his own water-pruned hand. He was not sure which one of them moved but when their hands touched a shot of pure pleasure crashed like a wave over him and he gasped. Fingers interlocked and it was then that Peter noticed the webbing.

"Let me take you to shore," Cuke said but knew the human would not understand.

Peter heard the creature make noises similar to those of a dolphin and knew it was trying to communicate. "I don't understand," Peter replied though it hurt his dry throat.

Cuke nodded his head toward the distant land without breaking his gaze from the human. Just as slowly as he reached for the human, he moved toward the distant land.

Peter thought he knew the creature's intent and let himself be tugged along but soon his legs became too exhausted to keep up with the aqua-man swimming at his side.

Cuke stopped when he noticed the human was struggling to keep swimming at his side. When he looked at the man, it was clear he could go no further under his own power even with Cuke's help. If the human had not fought him off earlier they would have reached the island by now. He held the human's stare as he pulled him closer and tried to turn him around.

"Relax," Cuke said to the man. "I have you and will get you to shore. Trust me."

Peter blinked his salt encrusted eyes at the aqua-man as the creature pulled him closer and spoke in his strange language. He was too tired to fight whatever the aqua-man was going to do so he let himself be pulled forward.

Cuke was relieved when the human did not fight him and let him pull him close enough so he could float the man on his chest and swim them to shore. The moment he stretched the human out above him, his body reacted. Just holding the beautiful man to keep his head above the water while he swam them to shore made him hard. There was no way to avoid rubbing his groin against the human and the friction only hitched his desire to an almost unbearable level. Cuke felt every inch of the smooth pale skin against the scales of his arms and chest as he held the human while swimming beneath him. The man's long hair brushed against his face and reminded him of the gentle touches of sea urchins but smelled like nothing he knew in his watery home. His own kelp like hair floated around him and over them as he swam backwards. The human did not seem to mind and Cuke liked the contrast of his dark green hair against the human's reddened skin. The sight of all that smooth skin made him wonder what it would taste like. Cuke

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glanced over his shoulder to the land behind them and knew that with the human as relaxed in his arms as he was that it would not be long before they reached their destination.