

BUT FOR THE WATER AND THE WIND

by
Steven Clark

© 2015

This written work may not be reproduced
without the express written consent of the author.

Email: SAClark69@verizon.net

FADE IN:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

An empty lifeguard tower casts a long shadow in the sand. STRAGGLERS stroll the shore. A gull wrestles pickings from a garbage can.

EXT. ON THE WATER - DAY

A cloudless sky looms above. Midday.

MAGGIE KING (34), blonde hair pulled back, sun-burned skin, lies asleep on a sky blue inner tube.

A SPLASH awakens her.

Blinks away the sleep from her eyes. She looks left, right -- all around. Nothing but water and horizon in every direction. Panic hits when she realizes where she is.

Opens her mouth as if to cry for help. She sits up and lifts a portion of her bikini -- the skin underneath milky white.

She puts both arms in the water and paddles.

EXT. ON THE WATER - LATER

The sun sits low in the sky.

Maggie's very weary -- just one arm paddles now. Still nothing in sight, the water lapping against the inner tube the only sound until...

Something else. A different SOUND. She strains to listen.

A WOMAN'S voice, faint at first. Almost like singing, somehow soothing --

WOMAN (V.O.)

Ma-ggie... Ma-ggieeee...

She stares ahead, transfixed. Curls into a fetal position, her dry lips slightly apart.

The voice trails off, but another sound takes its place. It floats above the waves, seemingly from every direction --

The COOING of a BABY. Happy and contented.

WOMAN (V.O.)

*Hush, little baby, don't say a word.
Momma's gonna buy you a mocking
bird...*

The baby gurgles, stops. Silence.

Now it CRIES in distress. Louder and louder, filling every open space.

Maggies closes her eyes and covers her ears. She sees a

VISION

of herself holding the baby, comforting it. *Shh... Shh...* The child's wails grow louder the more she rocks it. More insistent. It cannot be soothed.

The cries build to a crescendo.

Maggie opens her eyes, blinking at the sun.

MAGGIE

*I won't listen to you! Do you hear me?
I won't listen to you again.*

Heavy breaths, heart racing. Splashes water on her face, and almost chokes.

The cries eventually dissolve, as if carried away along the breeze, out into the ether.

She hangs her head and sobs.

MAGGIE

Six years and I still think of you.
Please tell me why. Why..?

(beat)

I'm so goddamn thirsty.

Silence, but for the water and the wind.

She lays back. A cloud floats by.

MAGGIE

(softly)

Forgive me. No more excuses, just...

Please forgive me. I'm sorry.

A FLASH on the water catches her eye. She paddles closer to inspect.

A discarded SODA BOTTLE, label peeling and stained. A small amount of water inside captures the sun's light.

She unscrews the cap and drinks. Spits it out. Sea water.

Clutches the bottle against her chest, throws her head back and laughs.

Darkness looms. The the sun bleeds a trail of red, westward across the ocean.

BUZZ! BUZZ!

Maggie looks up. Against the horizon, a little green light blinks on and off, on then off.

She waves furiously, can barely speak...

MAGGIE

Over here. Hey! Over here.

INT. FISHING BOAT

A pole with a dangling lure rests on the railing, a tackle box next to it.

A MAN (57), intermittently flicks a switch on the center console. He gazes curiously at a reflected light some ways off, then turns the key in the ignition.

The boat's small outboard grinds to life.

FADE OUT.