



## Into the Gray

*Margaret Killjoy*

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**Into the Gray** Margaret Killjoy

"You're using me," I said.

"That might be true, but I also love you."

One is the Lady of the Waking Waters, an immortal mermaid. The other is a thief, who steals lives until a wish can be fulfilled, and a life-changing choice must be made, in Margaret Killjoy's Tor.com Original *Into the Gray*.

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## Into the Gray Details

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Author : Margaret Killjoy

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## From Reader Review Into the Gray for online ebook

### Jen says

I like the twists and how the mermaid was a monster. 3 solid stars.

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### Lena says

*"We're not the same," she told me. "It's not possible for us to lead the same life."*

Beautiful trans thief falls madly in love with a mermaid, a *hungry* mermaid. With a love Laria understands is obsession they lead evil men to die in the Waking Waters.

*"It's always beautiful to watch someone perform their life's work... the Lady, she was beautiful as she stripped flesh from bone."*

Oh yeah!

But really, it's about trying to find acceptance... in the wrong place.

This dark fantasy felt rushed and clipped, like a compromised novella. Still a good read though.

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### Katie.dorny says

I didn't know I needed this book until I read it.

Here we love trans women who lure men to their deaths for their lesbian lover.

I also adored the writing - it was beautifully poetic.

It's an amazing quick read!

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### Devann says

Really liked this! It is a shorter story but the prose is so beautiful and the characters really come to life in a short period of time. And who doesn't love a dark lesbian mermaid/thief story? I definitely plan on checking out one of this author's longer works now.

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### destiny ??? [howling libraries] says

A trans girl lures terrible men to their deaths by feeding them to her vicious mermaid girlfriend? Yes, please. This was fantastic and sweet and had some incredible bits about love and respecting ourselves, as well as a

quote that I adored:

*I know what it's like to need to advertise to the world what you are, so that people don't just assume you are what they think you are.*

Available to read for free on [Tor.com](http://Tor.com)!

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### **Elise (TheBookishActress) says**

This story is short fiction about a trans girl thief in love with a lady of the pond who kills men— but only the terrible ones.

First of all, the writing is excellent, absolutely engrossing. This story is super atmospheric, which helped a lot. And also, the lead character is written quite well; I found it super easy to empathize with her.

I think the only reason this wasn't a five for me is that I went into this expecting a romance, and it's really... not? It's more of a character arc & coming of age, but that element didn't pop up till the end and felt like a bit of an abrupt change, so my expectations were a little off.

You can read this for free here!

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### **Ezgi Tülü says**

**“Is that what you want?”**

**“I want to be with you,” I said. “However I can.”**

**“Then do it,” she said. Her eyes were still searching my face. “Be with me.”**

**Was there no passion in her voice because I didn’t know how to listen for it? Was there no passion in her voice because there was none in her heart? Or was there passion, deep passion, and my terror kept me from hearing it?**

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### **may ↩ says**

we love trans women dragging bad men to pools where their mermaid lovers are ready to kill them

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## Acqua says

I've recently read *The Lamb Will Slaughter the Lion* by this author and I didn't like it as much as I hoped (still a solid novella, though), but I loved this. *Into the Gray* is the story of Laria, trans woman in a medieval-like fantasy village who brings terrible men to the Lady of the Waking Waters - the immortal, man-eating mermaid who is Laria's lover. Also, Laria would want to become a mermaid, but magic like that always has a price.

There are witches, mermaids and magic, the writing is lovely, and you can't not love that premise.

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## karen says

“I know a better place than your room at the inn,” I said.

“If you’re not a working girl, there’s no shame to be seen with you.”

“I know a place, a better place, where the wind runs cool off the water. Where I can rinse, where you can rinse, where we’d taste our best for one another while only the deer of the forest look on.”

“You’ve done this before,” he said. He was hungry at my words, at the thought of watching me bathe.

I had. Twice before. He would be my third.

“So have you,” I said.

“What do I call you?” he asked.

“Laria.”

“A harlot’s name.”

“Fitting, then,” I said, starting out for the edge of town with him in my wake. I didn’t ask his name, because I didn’t care to know it and because no one would ever call him it or anything else again.

this is one of the best free tor shorts i've read in a while: a transgirl thief-cum-assassin in the romantic service of a mermaid (the good hungry kind with teeth built for more than a pescatarian lifestyle), who lures her would-be lovers into her true love's tranquil pool where they are devoured messily before the couple passes leisurely afternoons of lovemaking together.

*She was beautiful. In the usual ways, yes, but she was also beautiful in the ways that anyone might become, when you get to know the secret language of their body and their lives. She'd been alive so long, seen so much, developed so much beauty. The longer I might know her, the more of her hidden beauty I might unearth.*

but fish-human relationships have always been complicated and theirs is no different, although it's a refreshing reversal of *The Little Mermaid*'s self-abnegating forfeiture of her fishself. *The Lady of the Waking Waters* isn't giving up her voice for no one, and even though she's the *Splash*-kind of mermaid who can transition between legs and tail without the agonizing pain andersen presents, she's happy with the terms of their relationship, so if laria wants more, it's on her to source the magic to make it all possible. which she will, albeit bitterly:

*It wasn't fair, that she could walk and swim and I had to choose forever between one or the other. It wasn't fair that I should be the one who would sacrifice for us to be together, when it would be so much easier for her.*

and then other things happen that make laria's complaints about this problem seem quaint, because if there's one thing fairy tales have taught us, it's that things can always get worse.

it's a bittersweet story about what we are willing to risk or sacrifice to hold on to an impossible love whose loss is inevitable and what previously unthinkable compromises suddenly seem acceptable when they're the only offer on the table; the only way to be together. it's also a nice balance between action and character, dark and light themes. these are the kind of tor shorts i love the most, and this one sits up there in that small, select group of five-star free tor shorts that kicked my heart's ass at just the right time.

read it for yourself here: <https://www.tor.com/2018/04/25/into-t...>

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### **Sh3lly ([grumpybookgrrrl.com](http://grumpybookgrrrl.com)) says**

This was really good! A beautiful trans girl lures men back to her lover who is a vicious mermaid. The land girl steals whatever gold or coins the men have to survive on and the mermaid eats her fill of flesh! A crazy, creepy romance! Quick and compelling read.

Free short:

<https://www.tor.com/2018/04/25/into-t...>

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### **E. says**

#### **4 ? Read here.**

***"I only led the worst of men down to the Waking Waters and death, down to my love in the pool below the falls. [...]***

***All so that the Lady of the Waters might love me.***

***Well, that and so I could rob their corpses."***

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Everyone needs in their lives a story about a trans bi woman leading awful men to her amoral lesbian mermaid girlfriend so she can have a snack before they bang. ??

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**eli says**

lgbt romance about a trans girl who brings men to a sea woman for them to die. very good!

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**daisy says**

3.5 stars, methinks.

We love a short story about a trans woman luring terrible men to the water so her lesbian mermaid girlfriend can eat them! I really enjoyed this, though- the ending was bittersweet but fitting and the writing style was really lovely. Also quite liked the fact that the mermaid was very clearly not a human being and therefore didn't think like one.

Some fave quotes:

? "*I didn't ask his name, because I didn't care to know it and because no one would ever call him it or anything else again.*"

? "*I know what it's like to need to advertise to the world what you are, so that people don't just assume you are what they think you are.*"

? *My life had been brief, to be sure, but many lives are, and length alone is no grounds on which to judge.*

I read this over at tor.com, so if you're interested it's available here to be read! : )

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**Suzanne Rooyen says**

I'm always frustrated by good short stories in that I want them to be novels!

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