

SURTSEY

ANA KRAKATOA



People Like Us

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People Like Us is a collection of stories by Surtsey Ana Krakatoa and Michael D Scott, including Surtseys novellas Life of Riley & The Spoils of War. THE LIFE OF RILEY In the 2008 Cycling World Championships, Jackie Riley is on the brink of setting a new world record and becoming world champion in the 3000m individual pursuit. As she reaches out for glory a tragic accident destroys her hopes and dreams, as well as shattering her legs, leaving her paralysed for life. After a year of physiotherapy and rehabilitation Jackie reluctantly employs Marcin London Luzik, a migrant Polish worker as her carer. Jackie hates the idea of this foreigner living in her home and interfering in her life. But Marcin sees Jackie as bitter and twisted - she'll be okay once he's sweetened her up and straightened her out. THE SPOILS OF WAR Lance Corporal Jack Shaw is discharged from the Army after extended tours of Iraq and Afghanistan. He returns to his birthplace of Bradford where he meets Parminder Sherwani in a local bar. Parminder is an attractive, confident University student who's not adverse to a bit of fun. To date, Jack has a 100% record with Asian women. They can never say no to him, but then again Jack's always been a soldier, and soldiers carry guns. The relationship gets off to a flying start and it seems romance is in the air but when Jack's physical advances are met with resistance, the result is serious conflict. Parminder claims she was raped. Her comments go viral on Twitter. Parminder's brother and his friends hunt down Jack and beat him half to death, and Bradford quickly finds itself reliving the riots of 2001. Asian gangs and students are fighting the English Defence League on the streets. After accepting there is no physical evidence of the rape, Parminder becomes pragmatic about the incident and wants to put it behind her. Her parents send her to Pakistan until the storm passes. On her return, Parminder discovers Jack is being hailed as a War Hero, and although permanently disabled after the attack, he's become something of a celebrity. Still, she's determined to let the matter rest. She even has some sympathy for him - the war has messed up his mind. However, the fun-loving girl quickly becomes a woman scorned when she hears Jack's latest claims in the media, Parminder was a prostitute that asked him for money.

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