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# Silhouette Romance

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## *He Was Her Husband—and Her Master!*

‘My wishes are not to be ignored, Martine. You must learn that when I say a thing I mean it.’

Her chin lifted. ‘I won’t be dictated to, Luke! There is no harm in my talking to Kelvin.’

‘I was not speaking about harm but about my wishes. You will keep away from this man, do you understand? In Greece, the husband is the master. The sooner you accept this the better it will be for you.’

She paled with anger. How could she convince him that he could not dominate her?

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### **ANNE HAMPSON**

currently makes her home in England, but this top romance author has travelled lived all over the world. This variety of experience is reflected in her books, which present the ever-changing face of romance as it is found wherever people fall in love

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**ANNE  
HAMPSON**  
**Realm of  
the Pagans**

*Silhouette*  *Romance*

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## Chapter One

The darkness was ghastly, creating monsters of the mountains and bringing them so close that Martine felt smothered within the confines of the car, and wished with all her heart that she had not succumbed to the impulsive desire to get away from her fiancé.

Her fiancé . . . ? Until a couple of hours ago he was her fiancé . . . but now . . . ?

Tears began to sting her eyes, impairing her vision so that driving became even more difficult.

'He didn't mean it!' she cried aloud. 'He couldn't have! It's only infatuation he feels for Sophia! He's flattered by her attention and—and—perhaps he thinks of her fortune—just a little. It would be natural. Dear Kelvin, come after me! I said where I was going—to Athens, so you know this is the road I would take. Please come to me—*please!*'

She and Kelvin had begun as boss and secretary. He was an author, having written several books on archaeology. Martine had always been

interested in archaeology and was, in fact, a member of the Archaeological Society in England. She had spent most week-ends helping to unearth a Roman theatre near her home town of Warrencester, in the Midlands. Kelvin, naturally interested in the recent find, had visited the site and within a month had tempted Martine to work for him, in spite of the fact that she had an excellent post already. The truth was that Kelvin had attracted her from the moment she set eyes on him—standing there, tall and handsome, his whole attention on the work that was taking place. It was done almost entirely by students from the nearby university or people like Martine who, like the students, were willing to give their services free; the joy of discovery being reward enough for the work they put in.

Martine had been working for Kelvin only a few weeks when after finishing his present book, he announced his intention of writing about Olympia in Greece. Thrilled with the idea of visiting the famous site of the ancient Games, Martine had rented out her flat, packed what she would need and was ready to go immediately when Kelvin had asked.

And on the plane going over to Athens he had proposed to her. . . .

Life was so good. She felt as if she were floating on a star as the plane hovered above the clouds, sunlit clouds, silver clouds with no shadows visible or even contemplated. Then from nowhere—or so it seemed—appeared Sophia, lovely young daughter of Andreas Sotiris, wealthy exporter of wine and the owner of vast acreage in other parts of Greece. Sophia had been away at school in Athens but after finishing

her education, she had returned home. It seemed that even at their first meeting Kelvin was fascinated by the dark beauty of the Greek girl. Yes, Martine thought as she drove the car along the perilous road with its twists and turns, its narrowness and its weather-worn surfaces unexpectedly making the car behave as if it were on tires of steel instead of rubber, the girl possessed a beauty which would attract any man. She was young, unsophisticated . . . but Martine guessed she was clever for all that, and unscrupulous. She had wanted Kelvin; she had made no attempt to ignore his interest; on the contrary, she had encouraged it. Yet Martine had never even suspected her fiancé of developing any deep feelings for the girl. He was kind to her, friendly, because her father was their neighbour and he had allowed them to use a small villa in the grounds of his house. It was divided into two separate apartments so it had been ideal for Martine and her fiancé—they were close but yet their sleeping quarters were respectably separate.

The road became narrower than ever and for a few minutes Martine's whole attention was on her driving. And then, just as thoughts and regrets and hopes began to take possession of her mind again, the car jerked and spluttered. Then she found herself pressing the accelerator in a futile attempt to get the engine purring again. With her heart lurching she came to a silent halt, and slid out into the blanket of darkness where not even the sound of a night bird could be heard. Shivering with incomprehensible fear, she just stood, her mind half dazed by what was happening to her. Fate was against her, she decided, wondering if she

would be here until daylight, or if by some remote chance another car would come along. It must be almost midnight. . . . She must have been mad to pack a bag and run from Kelvin like that! Only now did she realise that her optimism had been so great that she had been sure he would come after her in the big Mercedes he had bought on coming to Greece a few weeks ago.

What must she do? Begin to walk . . . ? Suddenly her thoughts braked and her heart leapt. Headlights! It must be Kelvin. He was sorry, contrite, guilty. He had come after her and now everything was going to be all right!

She stood in the middle of the road and waved her arms, then stepped back. Yes, it was the Merc! And so positive was she that the tall dark shadow coming from the car was, in fact, her fiancé that without hesitation she ran forward and flung herself into his arms.

'Oh, darling—I knew you would come! I shouldn't have run away—' She lifted her face in the darkness and, rising on tiptoe, pressed her eager lips to his. For one astonished second there was no response and then Martine felt the sensuous lips part and she was stunned by the passion in her fiancé's kiss. How contrite he must be to kiss her with such ardour! Never before had he shown such enthusiasm. He had been loving and gentle, yes, but without this show of passion, this new approach which made it seem he had had years of experience with women. She pressed close, putting her arms about his neck, thrusting her fingers into his hair. . . .

Kelvin's hair was soft and fine; this hair was strong and wiry. . . . She leant away, her eyes trying to probe the dimness.

'That was as delightful as it was unexpected,' drawled a faintly accented voice. 'My name's Loukas Leoros. What's yours?'

'I—I—' Hot with embarrassment, Martine wrenched herself free of the strong hands that held her. 'I th—thought you were—were my fiancé,' she stammered. 'His car is the same make—I saw the shape and concluded . . . ' Her voice trailed away to silence as she realised that this stranger, this Greek, would not want to hear her explanation. 'Will you give me a lift to—to wherever you are going, please? My car's broken down.'

'So it would seem. You were expecting your fiancé to come?' She said nothing and after a moment he added, a curious inflection in his voice, 'You've quarrelled and you ran away? Just like a woman to expect her man to follow, pandering to her perversity.' His tone was cynical and faintly contemptuous. Yet there was a certain pleasantry about it that scared Martine because she knew the reputation of the Greeks . . . and she was undoubtedly in the most vulnerable situation possible. He could do her any injury and get away with it, she thought. And then suddenly, expectedly, the moon emerged from the blackness of the clouds, spreading its silver effulgence across the landscape, lighting up the road to reveal the features of the man whose presence was bringing Martine both relief and fear. She saw a face of remarkable distinction, with nobility its chief characteristic. She found herself recalling the statues in the Athens Museum—statues of pagan gods and heroes, their faces severe and classical; ruthless, vigorous lines adding to the overall impression of severity and mastery. Masters of every-



thing—and everyone—that came their way. This man—Loukas Leoros—might have inspired the sculptors of ancient Greece, might have been a throwback, she thought. But whereas the statues depicted handsome, unscarred beauty, this man wore a scar down the left side of his face—not too noticeable in this pale silver light, but there all the same. Otherwise, though, he was indisputably good-looking, and she guessed his age to be around thirty. Were his eyes really black, she wondered, or was it merely the lack of proper light which made them appear so? His nose was straight, his mouth full-lipped and sensual, typically Greek. He differed from most Greeks, though, because he was tall—well over six feet, she estimated, comparing his height with that of Kelvin—and there was not an ounce of unnecessary weight on his lithe and upright frame. His hair, thick and black and wiry was inclined to wave on each side of the widow's peak, a feature which seemed to give him a decidedly satanic look. She shivered involuntarily, allowing her imagination to run away with her as she saw herself being molested by this man.

'Will you give me a lift?' she requested again, ignoring his comments and inserting a gentle plea into her voice, as if by so doing she could gain his sympathy so that he would feel he could not molest her. She looked up into the austere countenance and something stirred within her as a smile came slowly to his lips.

'Don't be afraid of me,' he said quietly. And then, 'Where have you left this fiancé of yours?'

'In Olympia. We live there.'

'Olympia?' in some surprise. 'What are you