

SYNOPSIS

Women of the Sun examines the lives of five Aboriginal women; Towradgi, Alinta, Maydina, Nerida, and Lo-Arna which is divided into five chapters. Written by Sonia Borg and Hyllus Maris, the story conveys the story from Aborigine's and European's point of view. This novel was written based on the television program, though it was originally from these authors.

The story opens when the authors describe the life of Towradgi, the elder woman of Nyari people. Towradgi is a traditional woman who still holds the tribal culture tightly. She is the one who teaches younger generation, women particularly, many things about their culture, ancestors, and their wisdom of life. She teaches Alinta as well. Nyari people consider her as powerful woman; means that she holds power toward the Nyari people. She inherits cultural power and sense. She can feel what is going to happen toward her people by learning what nature signs her.

In chapter two, the story brings its readers closest to the customs and culture of tribal Aborigines and gives a fascinating insight into rituals and legends. The lives of the Nyari people are completely disrupted when they discover two convicts washed up on the beach of their tribal lands. Subsequently, the Nyari people meet other whites, settlers searching for grazing land. The abuse of the Nyari's sacred tribal ways follows and eventually leads to the annihilation of the tribe. Only Alinta, 'The Flame', remains with her child to carry the torch for her culture and the future.

In chapter three, the authors picture the life of Maydina. As the seal hunters discovered the rich bounty off the southern coasts, they supplemented their isolated lives by kidnapping Aboriginal women to fulfill the role of sex partners. Maydina was one whose life was changed when abducted by the sealers. As the story opens, Maydina and her half-caste daughter Biri escape. Events lead them to be delivered into the care of Mrs McPhee, founder and guardian of a church mission. Maydina and her child are separated when Maydina is put into service. She sickens of the alien existence and along with Biri and another Aboriginal man, they escape, intending to re-establish a tribal way of life. The man is shot and Maydina and her child are separated forever.

This chapter is based on the event known as “The Cumeroongunga Walkout.” Nerida has been working in the city as a bookkeeper. While she has been away, conditions on the government-established reserve have deteriorated so badly that she attempts to motivate her people to improve them. This is a display of independence so angers of the reserve manager that he retaliates by having Nerida and her family tried for treason. The charge is dismissed, but the manager is not. As the young male members of the reserve join the army to fight Australia’s war, life on the reserve continues to deteriorate. Nerida, her family, and the entire population of the reserve pack their belongings and leave their reserve and their tribal lands, never to return as one.

The authors introduce the readers with Ann-Cutler, who is the 18-year-old daughter of middle-class parents in an Australian country town. The loving relationship she has with her parents changes dramatically when she discovers that

she is not French Polynesian, but Aboriginal. She finds herself that she is the natural and biological daughter of her adoptive father and Alice Wilson, who lives in a nearby Aboriginal shantytown. Ann, whose real name is Lo-Arna, feels ugly, cheated, and insecure. She attempts to resolve her emotional turmoil by re-establishing contact with her biological mother. Apparently, she cannot cope with the confrontation. She drives away, but Alice runs after her. She stops and starts to walk back to her mother.