

Twenty Two Truly Twisted Tales

by Terry Spring

SHEPHERD'S WARNING

It's going to be a beautiful day, despite the red sky. 'Red sky in the morning, shepherds warning', the old adage came back to her. Last night it had rained - a heavy downpour. Just what she had needed. There were still puddles of rainwater in the uneven pavements and gutters. But now the sky had begun to show streaks of red, illuminating the Sydney suburb in a glow of light. The birds had woken up, and from the trees above, she could hear them begin to twitter.

When she had first started the morning jogs along the coastal path, it had been winter, but spring had come early and the warmer weather that came with it, made running hot and difficult. Antonia hadn't wanted to join a gym and enjoyed exercising in the open air, so she started to set the alarm earlier and earlier to avoid the heat of the early morning sun.

It suited her especially when she would be ready for work just as others were getting out of bed. Antonia also found her morning run exhilarating. It set her mind free and gave her the energy she needed for the day.

Funny how things had worked out. At first, Antonia had just smiled and acknowledged the only other person she passed, jogging in the darkness. The young Chinese woman had nodded in return and this happened every morning for a week before they found themselves pounding the same route together. Antonia had introduced herself as 'Toni' and the tiny Asian woman had also offered her name. Panting in the darkness, they ran the coastal path together in silence. Towering over the small frame next to her, Antonia tried to come to terms with the coincidence. Astonishingly, the woman who stood between her and marriage to Andy, his wife Pearl, jogged beside her.