



The Captive Wife

Fiona Kidman

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A prize-winning historical novel that has become a New Zealand classic. When Betty Guard steps ashore in Sydney, in 1834, she meets with a heroine's welcome. Her survival during a four-month kidnapping ordeal amongst Taranaki Maori is hailed as nothing short of a miracle. But questions about what really happened slowly surface within the elite governing circles of the raw new town of Sydney. Jacky Guard, ex-convict turned whaler, had taken Betty as his wife to his New Zealand whaling station when she was fourteen. After several years and two children, the family is returning from a visit to Sydney when their barque is wrecked near Mount Taranaki. A battle with local Maori follows, and Betty and her children are captured. Her husband goes to seek a ransom, but instead England engages in its first armed conflict with New Zealand Maori when he is persuaded to return with two naval ships. After her violent rescue, Betty's life amongst the tribe comes under intense scrutiny. Based on real events, this is the compelling story of a marriage, of love and duty, and the quest for freedom in a pioneering age.

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