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Muse, the Conure

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THE SHIP ON THAT DAY

Starlit D. S. Taie

THE SUN HAD RISEN TO THE MIDDLE OF THE SKY when Quincy walked out onto the porch of the hut, squinting in the afternoon sun. She paused for a moment, glaring out across the sand to the shoreline, where small waves rushed onto the beach, and then looked further out, where clear blue waters faded into a darker blue. The sky was light and free from clouds, and a soft wind blew, making the thatch of the roof flutter, and the palm trees sway gently. Quincy watched all of this, her brow furrowed and a dark look on her face, the calm atmosphere of the island in stark contrast to what she felt inside. In fact, the calmness made her feel uneasy; it was as if the world was playing a trick on her, forgetting what had happened a few days ago. It all felt too nice, too perfect, too *normal* to be real in a way. In her mind all she could think of were burning ships, shattered and broken from hails of cannon fire, hissing as they sank into the ocean. She thought of the distant screams, drowned out as the swells of freezing ocean water submerged the ship, making the men of the crew vanish, one by one, as each wave passed. And then that terrible heavy smoke that hung in the air during the battles, from the muskets and cannons, which made her eyes water and stung

her nose from its sulfur smell. She took a sudden deep breath through her nose then, expecting to smell the smoke, but only breathed in the scent of the palms and their wood.

This shook her from her thoughts, and at that she stepped off the porch into the sand, barefoot having left her boots inside the hut with the rest of her comrades. She could hear them still talking; their topic had moved on to something involving plants, but Quincy had already walked out of earshot before she caught the gist of their conversation. She made her way to the shoreline, her arms crossed, mind wandering again to the battle a few days ago. Her feet waded into the water, it

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