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## The Ship on that Day

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## THE SHIP ON THAT DAY

Starlit D. S. Taie

**T**HE 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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MUSE, THE CONURE  
Dalton Wright



swirling around her ankles, and it wasn't until she heard the rattle of the hanging beads covering the hut's doorway that she realized she had been staring blankly out into the horizon, those few vivid moments of battle replaying over and over in her head, with no thoughts of her own interrupting it.

She squinted in the sunlight and saw a few members of her group emerge onto the porch, walking with ease. Quincy's injury took that moment to flare up; a sudden, sharp piercing that penetrated deep into her abdomen, making her wince and place her hand on her side. Over on the porch, someone spoke, the voice lost in the distance, and at that the group erupted in hearty laughter. She watched them, the pain subsiding and saw the joy expressed so readily on their faces. As she continued to watch their smiles and happy expressions, she felt a sudden distance grow between her and them. It felt farther than the sandy beach she looked across; farther than the entire island even. Because as she stared, she wondered, how it was they could act that way? People had died; some would never be found as the ocean had stolen them away, and some would never be remembered as time passed. Yet there her comrades were, people who had only heard of those terrors, not seen them, smiling and laughing amongst each other. To them, there was nothing wrong with today- it was beautiful, as the sun shone and the ocean glittered before them. But for her, today could only be seen through the fog of yesterday, and it was cold, and sad.

She looked at them one last time before turning back to the sea, the memories already playing in her mind. The world her companions lived in was so distant from hers, and yet, she could never see herself wanting to be a part of it.

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UNTITLED  
David Goldenberg

