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The Chinese Ghostbuster

Peizhao Li

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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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