

Harbor

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The waves hit against the sleek ship as it slowly pushed its cargo towards its final destination, into the hands of the allied armies and the civilians under the military's protection. One of the ship's loyal crew, a sailor and navigator by trade, stood next to one of the massive containers, securing the load. She made sure nothing had slipped out of place or gotten loose in the high waves of the storm. The sky was thick with fog and heavy rain, but in the distance, the faint glow of the light house showed them the way forward. An old lighthouse, still using lamp oil to shine a beacon in the darkness of the desolate shores.

The sailor made a few more tugs at the container carrying

ammunition to the front, before starting to walk towards the helm of the ship, it was her shift to navigate the rough seas. There would be a long night of unloading and most of the crew were sound asleep. Weapons, medicine and food, all had to be carried out under the cover of night, to minimize the risk of being seen by the enemy fleet. This ship, and ships like them, were one of the few lifelines left for the forces still fighting on the mainland. Fast sleek civilian ships, capable of making suicidal runs between enemy patrols, flying no colours had been traveling for weeks to unmarked and forgotten ports, just as this one.



She shuddered as she heard one of the large artillery pieces down below move slightly, before settling down into its equally sinister, but stationary existence. She had mixed feelings about the cargo they were carrying tonight. On one hand there was medicine and bandages for the wounded, as well as food for soldiers and civilians, their work would save many lives with this shipment.

On the other hand, were the munitions, horrible things, as tall as she was, and made for nothing but destruction. One of these bombs were capable of taking out an entire city block, if aimed properly, or so she, and the rest of the nation had been told. Hers, and ships like her, carried the weapon

that would change the face of the war, forever.

After months of losing ground to the enemy, central command had decided that, if the front could not be held by conventional means, it would be flattened, leaving no place for the enemy to hide. Imagining the destruction, she would inevitably help create, all in the name of victory and unity made her feel sick to her core.

There wasn't supposed to be another war, after the last one. They were promised that the last Grand war was supposed to end all wars. That did not come to be, instead it only got worse.

Lost in her own thoughts, she solemnly stood by the controls keeping a steady eye towards the flickering light on the horizon, that was blinking a bit too irregularly for her liking.

Their destination was little more than a glorified natural harbor, with a few hamlets, and of course, a

lighthouse. Being a civilian ship, and a rather ancient one at that, it lacked much of the cutting-edge radar systems that their colleagues in the army had recently been equipped with. This meant she had to keep an eye out on the horizon for moving lights, as well as mentally keep track of any reef or shallows in the area. This suited her just fine, as it was something that kept her mind off the horrors hiding in her cargo hold.



Her mind nonetheless wandered to the munitions aboard her ship once again. There was the normal rifles, grenades and ammunition of course, she had carried all of these before, but the bombs, that was new. They were new for all of them, and honestly, they scared her, they

scared them all. The howitzers had already been smuggled in a few days beforehand and set up further inland. Her ship was to carry the first load of munitions, for a trial run of destruction and death.

She looked again at her destination, the lighthouse was definitely not blinking at the right intervals, but the rain and the fog made it difficult to tell properly. I was most likely a faulty fuel line, an engine about to give out perhaps. She would have to report this to her superiors on her return. As with any lighthouse this far out in the country, it was not unusual for them to act erratically due to lack of maintenance, or at least so she told herself.



The ship continued to lurch forward, struggling against the high waves, the strangely flashing lighthouse their only point of reference in the deep void of black and dark blue around them. To minimize the risk of being spotted, the ship was running more or less dark, a black spot, almost indistinguishable from the black void of the sea.

She hadn't signed up for this, carrying death and destruction to so many people. She was told that she

was doing something good, be a hero, save the day! That is what they told everyone, that she was the good one, and the last stand against brutality and evil. Her experience, and the experience of her crew, had proved these promises to be hollow and empty. In war she learned, there are no true heroes. Her current cargo proved this more than ever.

She decided then that this would be her last trip, her last run, she had done her part, no more blood on her hands! She quickly thought of simply sinking the ship, baling with the small crew, and claiming the ship and its cargo were lost at sea. Sure, some rations and bandages would be lost, and the civilians would have to wait a few more days for their supplies, but it was a small price to pay for the lives that would be saved, if these weapons were never used.

She was pulled from her thoughts by a bright flash of light at the horizon. Rushing forward, towards

the window, she grabbed her binoculars. The extra light made the scene at the shore easy to discern. The unsteady glow from the lighthouse had now become a bright pillar, cutting through the darkness and fog. The hamlet had been leveled, and the lighthouse was set ablaze, the flames had just reached the fuel deposit and blown it sky high. In the new light they were clearly visible, and with no safe harbor to hide in.

In the distance, searchlights appeared, and started sweeping towards their position, they were caught. She felt afraid, but also relieved, no more blood on her hands. . .