Chapter 13: Barren Apology
by mmmdraco

Summary

A continuation of Lord of the Flies because I hated the ending.

Notes

The original work is William Golding's, not mine.

This starts immediately after the end of the novel.

The trip out to the cruiser was spent in terse silence. What words might have been spoken were lost to shock.

With the approach to the ship, they gathered, what few there were in comparison to their original numbers, in submission as though they were about to receive their punishment. But, no whip lashed out and no fire sought there skin to lick at.

The boys were herded onto the cruiser and shoved off into a barracks somewhere near the confines of the hull. Timid waves splashed the sides of the boat as she began her prop's turn. Most of the boys seemed to turn sickly shades of green from their browned, sun-beaten facade as the boat jerked into motion.

Still the silence hung like a funeral drape; fitting as they considered themselves dead to this world. It was filled to brim with all that they had abandoned in favor of murder.

Ralph was most beaten of the boys. He bled from skin he'd never touched before and ached in joints he hadn't known he'd possessed and bore the burden of the ordeals he'd become acquainted with,
letting the pain bring the food from his stomach rather than the roiling seas.

The cruiser was speeding up now, several men running down its resonating halls with horror tainting their screams. Samneric were huddling in one corner of the dark room whispering; a Littlun was sobbing quietly. His sobs were replaced with sniffles and the Littlun fell asleep among the other well-rocked Littluns with bile quick on their lips and dribbled across their skin. The air stank of the sickness, but the quiet kept them from bothering to complain. There was too much to try not to think about to worry about such trivial things.

The cruiser was racing now, tossing itself with abandon across the waves that must have been stained by blood for their thickness spurred the boat along ever more, slapping at the hull. More screams were heard beyond the barracks walls and the faint odor of gunpowder wafted into the room. Ralph sniffed at the air. It wasn't an unpleasant odor, exactly. It smelled of pain and even killing, but did not hold the scent of death. Odd, these modern weapons.

What boys were coherant gasped as some heated projectile broke the ship's hull and fell to the floor next to Ralph. It was a small bit of cannon fodder and now a thin strip of bright light broke the room's silence. Ralph, from his hoarse throat, called, "I will not die like this!"

His voice cut off as he tried to continue, coming out as a strangled moan as Jack crawled haltingly across the floor and leaned to rest next to Ralph. "Nor will I."

Ralph found his voice again. "That would mean living together. Since when do you want me alive?" He'd never felt so blunt and dull before.

Eyes closing, Jack whimpered. "No. That was the beast... the beast in me. I... I'm sorry."

Ralph nodded curtly, but said no more. Through the gash in the wall he saw endless ocean dotted with ships that were all headed their way. Perhaps he had no choice about what happened on the island. But surely he could have done something!

The final passing rays of sunlight shook their heads in silence before a final boom sounded and all in the room were jolted to consciousness with the bone-shattering jarr before they were engulfed in the flame they'd known they couldn't outrun.

As a long, snaking red flame worked across the room and all that it contained, Ralph let his mind wander slightly before he whispered out his final words in haste. "Here's your damned fire, Piggy. Sucks to you."

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