A Drop in the Ocean

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Summary

Rebellion AU. "He has a name!" She snaps, throwing her body in front of his. "His name is Finnick, and just because he fought with the Capitol doesn't mean he's a traitor."

Notes

I've never written a Hunger Games fic before, but don't let that stop you. Not beta'd, so I'm sorry for any mistakes. They're all my own.

See the end of the work for more notes

"Just like a star across my sky

Just like an angel off the page

You have appeared to my life

Feel like I'll never be the same."

Annie Cresta is no stranger to the powers of water. The only early memories she has are filled
with the salty liquid of the ocean.

Though she has come to fear many things, the fear of dying in water never bothered her. Sure, the thought has occurred to her at times, but it's difficult to focus on with water engulfing her body.

The warm and salty tendrils would wrap around her body, almost like the hugs from her mother she couldn't remember receiving.

How could dying in something so comforting be an issue? It seemed like the best way to go.

"Do you remember, Annie?"

Her father has repeated the same question twelve times in the past hour. Katniss has been keeping track alongside Annie. This time, the redhead bites her lip in response and leans against the boat's railing.

The best part of being on a boat is the water that surrounded them. To be honest, the sea makes Annie feel more comfortable than any of the guards on board. It isn't a large ship by any means; no lower deck, and only enough room for around thirty passengers. However, the insufficient amount of babysitters is a breath of fresh air for the eighteen year old.

There isn't a name for the ocean they are traveling through, nor the land they are heading towards. District Four. It didn't have a name now. The country hadn't been divided into districts for two years, and the Cresta family had been part of the rebellion since Annie was five. But no matter how hard her father wished, Annie couldn't remember the place she'd spent her childhood.

The salty air is the only familiar face.

"It seems familiar." Annie forces a smile in his direction. She can feel her nose scrunching, and her father's face falls. Great. It's a known fact that Annie Cresta was cursed with the inability to lie at birth. "I remember the water."

General Cresta shrugs his shoulders, leaning against the railing along with his daughter. A hand reaches up to remove his flimsy black hat; the other pushing back what little hair was still on his head. "Maybe you'll recognize more of it once we hit land."

Annie nods. "Maybe."

As her father turns to bark orders to the rest of the crew, a shadow appears behind Annie. It can only be three people: Johanna, Gale, or Katniss. All of them had been fighting in the rebellion for years, all of them connected to the Hunger Games in some way. All refused to speak of what happened behind the scenes.

The only one who actually gravitates towards Annie at regular intervals is Katniss. Annie has to resist the urge to roll her eyes. After all, she knows that Katniss is only trying to help out by hanging out with her. Still, even though Gale and Johanna have made it clear that they despise their jobs as babysitters; they treat her as an adult. Not an equal, but she's getting closer.

Katniss is different, to say the least.

"I won't step ahead of anyone with a real weapon, honest." The redhead grins, a mischievous glint in her green eyes. Katniss glances at her for just a moment before her eyes turn back to the horizon. Distracted and jumpy, the way the young soldier always was. Katniss isn't the worst babysitter in the world. It wasn't like she actually bothers Annie.

"A real weapon? As opposed to what? This toy right here?"
Gale whips his knife before Annie's eyes. He could slice her in half without any effort, and all she'd have to protect herself would be the shoes that she was wearing on her feet. Annie's mouth stuttered open, eyes wide. This is probably why her father uses the soldiers as bodyguards.

"Stop being such an ass, Hawthorne. General Cresta will have your ass if you scare Annie again, and I'm not about to take any blame for you." Johanna bumps her shoulder against his. The force is enough to force Gale to the side, making room for the young woman to pass.

Annie ducks her head at the burning sensation in her cheeks. This is just more proof that she'll never live down her reputation as General Cresta's daughter, the little girl who needs to be protected from everyone and everything outside of the Rebellion.

"He didn't do anything," Annie protests. "We were just kidding around. It isn't a big deal, Johanna." She reaches for the older soldier's arm.

"Just watching out for you, kid." Johanna wretches her shoulder out of Annie's grip. Her eyes are still locked on Gale's as they face off in a showdown of epic proportions: a staring contest.

Katniss rolls her eyes, and for a second, Annie is sure that her expression is apologetic. Annie's about to ask about Peeta, the boy she might have caught Katniss spying on in the infirmary, when she something catches her eye. Turning, something is clearly visible bobbing in the water. And it kind of looks like….

"Is that a head?" Annie whips around to face Katniss, who has her bow at the ready. The older girl points her weapon towards the water as though the vast liquid, the only thing that Annie truly feels comfortable around, will be destroyed with a simple arrow.

"Dad! Dad, I think there's someone in the water!"

Heavy footsteps grow closer to Annie as her heartbeat quickens. What if it's one of the Capitol citizens? Though many of them have already been captured by the Rebellion, there is always the additional character who wants things to go back to the way they once were.

Annie swallows as her father's eyes narrow at the water. Whatever she thought she saw has disappeared. She blinks. Katniss' hand is on her shoulder, an awkward squeeze is meant to comfort her.

"Annie…" Her father's voice trails off as he rubs his temples. "Maybe it was too soon to take you with me."

Of course not. It's not like past the age of adulthood now, far too old to stay back in the main base with the other children and elders. True, there had been reasons why her father refused to take her on voyages for so long, but she's a woman now. She can handle it.

"Annie? Do you want to sit down?"

The redheaded girl blinks, a flash of a nightmare on the mind, and snaps her eyes open. Katniss' voice is low, but cracks in yet another attempt to be soothing. Katniss is like water. Dangerous to most, but comforting to some.

In fact, Annie's feeling so comforted that she doesn't even shriek when the sound of wood snapping stretches out beyond the horizon. Annie's eyes widen, is all. And she might've stumbled backwards and onto Johanna's lap.

"What the hell was that?" Gale jumps towards the front of the boat, Johanna hot on his heels.
"Check the masts! Go, go!" Her father is running across the ship in a flash, the rest of his soldiers following footsteps behind him. Annie's hand tugs at Katniss' leather jacket against her will.


"I saw." Katniss narrows her eyes, bow aimed in the same position as before.

It doesn't take long for the boat to completely tip over.

"Grab the ropes!" Annie's father is yelling. Soldiers are tying themselves to each other, ready to swim to land.

Like anyone but her father knows where that could be.

"Annie! Annie!"

The boat rocks back and forth, like the dreams of sea sickness Annie is prone to. There's yelling and screeching, but it's not long before all of the noises fade into the background.

Water tugs down at her, pulling her deeper into the darkness. She tosses and turns, looking for her father. Her head bobs up only once before a slab of wood smacks her head. The aspect of life that was once her friend has betrayed her, she realizes, as her lungs begin to burn.

Wood. Brown, mucky pieces of the long wood that was once part of a boat push down at her. The women in the Capitol used to worship tiny frames, but it's at this moment where Annie curses her own. She can barely maneuver her body enough to see legs moving towards a body of land.

At least some of them made it.

Her eyes are starting to close on their own. Annie wonders if the fire in her chest will spread to the rest of her limbs, slowly burning her to death. It would be much better than this fate.

If she could just make it a few more feet…

A pair of arms snake around her abdomen. She gives a few weak kicks, but the darkness seeping into her vision tells her that it's no use. Annie can feel bubbles blowing in her ear. Something in the back of her mind tells her that there has to be someone blowing the bubbles, but it's the last thought on her mind as the rest of the world fades to black.

The first thing Annie sees when she wakes up is a palm tree. It's a stupidest idea in the world; it doesn't even have covering to shield someone from sun. Annie's heard stories about how those types of trees used to hold fruit, but it never seemed important. She hasn't been anywhere near the ocean in years, anyway.

He moves into her vision, and she's thrown off guard. Annie wants to refer to him as a boy, but the title doesn't do him justice. A boy wouldn't have the chiseled jaw, the cheekbones that this person sports. No, he's a young man. Annie is used to the title being tossed around with sarcasm, but it's the only term she knows that will do him justice.

The young man looks like he walked straight out of a program the Capitol would produce, too, with slightly parted pink lips and hair the color of bronze. The Capitol. Oh goodness, the Capitol.

Annie pushes her hands onto the ground to brace herself but the sand falls between her fingers. She can't push herself away fast enough, not bothering to get up. Maybe if she stays low, he wouldn't kill her. He's almost double her size.
Annie blinks, and the image of his eyes is ingrained into her brain. Green and blue swirled into one, both colors on display at the same time, like the colors of a kaleidoscope. The colors are so similar to the ocean water that she almost feels homesick.

Then she remembers how she almost drowned.

The young man cocks his head to the side, staring at her like she's some sort of actress. Annie coughs, spluttered water dribbling down her chin. His hands reach for her, but she stumbles back. The sand burns her hands.

"You alright, sweetheart?"

His mouth cocks to the side of his face, mirroring his head's movements.

It's enough to make Annie want to kick his ass. First he tries to drown her, and now he has the nerve to flirt with her? Does that even count as flirting? She urges the blush to spare her face as she runs through her thoughts. Dad. Where is Dad? Did he make it to land?

Annie tries to speak, but her teeth are too busy chattering to communicate.

"Y-you t-ried t-to k-ill me," She's able to stutter out.

His picture perfect smile falls for a moment, but just a moment. When it appears, Annie can tell that it's forced. The kaleidoscope eyes are stuck on one slide of blue, lines around his mouth visible. He turns his body back towards the water, and Annie grips his arm. He has to be the only one who knows this land. He's the only one around who can help her find Dad.

"Wait," She orders. "Please."

A blonde eyebrow arches in a perfect fashion. Annie opens her mouth, but then shuts it. What does she say to someone who is supposed to be eliminated?

"Who are you?" Annie asks.

The smile returns, all natural. "I could ask you the same, sweetheart."

Annie shakes her head, wet ringlets smacking her cheeks. "Please don't call me that."

Another moment for the faltering smile to appear, then take its leave. "What should I call you, then? Or should I continue to refer to you as the beauty that you are?"

Annie's lips twist into a frown, lines etching between her brows. "I'm not sure that makes much sense. Besides, I asked who you were first."

He continues to hold the dazzling smile on her, but she holds his gaze with what she hopes is equal intensity. There is no way that she's going to be swayed by a potential killer with a smile. *Ugh.* Just thinking about the idea bothers her.

His smile finally falls, and doesn't return.

"You haven't heard of me?" He doesn't allow her to finish before he continues. "I've heard plenty about you."

Annie forces her jaw to stay in place as realization dawns on her. Her father was never the type to be patient enough for stories, but she'd heard plenty from Peeta about the citizens of the Capitol.
Kaleidoscope eyes stare at her, waiting.

But he wasn't from the Capitol. At least, not by birth.

"You're Finnick Odair."

The corner of his mouth twitches into a smile for a flash of a second. Annie blinks and it disappears.

"And you're-"

"I must've been wrong. Maybe Annie should be allowed to carry her own weapon, General."

Annie knew that Johanna would do something stupid before the crossbow clicked into place. It was then that the strange young man's eyes widen, fear at a foreign situation finally seeping into his brain. Part of Annie wants to let out a sigh of relief, but the other wants to chuck something at Johanna's head.

Now, of all times?

Behind the girl's frame, General Cresta's mustache turns into a frown.

"He didn't do anything," Annie says almost like some sort of reflex.

"What do you think, General? Should I get it over with now?" Johanna stares down at Finnick, eyes filled with malice meant for the citizens he had once been associated with.

No one spoke of the Hunger Games anymore, but Annie has vivid memories of watching Johanna shiver in the arena. She can practically see a fourteen year old Finnick wandering around with a group of Careers.

So why is Finnick the enemy? Is he not one of them?

"It would be nice of you to do it quickly," Finnick says. He's fixing Annie with a glare as sharp as Gale's knife. Annie blinks.

She's not the one pointing a weapon at his head, is she?

Annie makes the mistake of blinking again, and Finnick is whizzing past her. Another stupid move. Annie wants to call out to him, but the glare her father has set on her forces her mouth shut. She watches as Finnick's legs carry him down the beach, swiftly, not fazed at all by the moving ground.

Gale comes out of nowhere, barreling down the dunes and gripping onto a gun like a life line.

Annie reaches out, but her father's arms wrap around her abdomen. His beard drips sea water on her shirt. Over his shoulder, she sees Johanna trudging towards the scene.

"I thought I'd lost you. I thought you were gone, like your mother." He holds her close, like she's some sort of life line. His hands rub smooth circles on her back, the way he used to when she was little. Annie feels air escaping her lungs, like she's drowning again. It could be from watching Gale throw a punch at Finnick's face.

"They're hurting him, Dad."

The patting on her back hesitates. "They won't kill him, Annie." There's another pause, and she can tell that he's struggling with what to say. "We can't have civilians running around and starting
problems. The way things were before…” His voice cracks.

Annie is silent, her eyes suddenly interested in a shell sticking out of the sand. She can hear grunts of pain from down the beach.

The wood was what was pushing her down before, in the water. Something created by the Rebels to help them run the newly recovered country almost killed her.

She remembers a hand. Strong arms wrapping around her body.

He wasn't trying to pull her under. She was already drowning by the time he got there.

And here she was, hugging her father while he was punished for his good deed.

"But he's not from the Capitol, not really," Annie blurts the words out before she can filter them. "He's not like them. He was from here, like us."

"He's not like us, Annie. Not anymore, alright?" He uses the soft voice, like the one she used to coax her out of the nightmare she had last night.

As Gale tosses Finnick's unconscious body over his shoulder, Annie can't bring herself to respond.

End Notes

Feedback would be lovely :)

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