

The Settler

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Campus Voice

Submit short stories,
poetry,
fiction, drama or literature
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original artwork,
such as comic strips,
computer graphics, etc.

Student Short Story:

Cruise Ship

continued from Issue III

By Geoff Breedwell

The old men's smiles get bigger as the discover that the camera has a zoom lens.

You are watching this and you laugh. The whole idea of that happening makes you laugh. Kids run by you playing with their action figures that resemble a television show that even you watched as a kid. You lay your head back.

This is the life, you say.

Nothing could be better than this, you say.

Everything, you say, is perfect.

You look at the college kids jumping into the pool. There is a small child at the top of the railing. He looks unsure of himself. Looks to be his first time. The important information of this kid is that he has brown hair, dark eyes, and looks as if they stretched skin over a small skeleton. He has a cheap pair of old jeans on, which are almost covered in patches.

Somewhere else on the boat, a fat kid buys a huge cone topped with three chocolate ice cream scoops. Heading to the pool, the kid drops a hunk of the chocolate ice cream. The fat kid looks at the chocolate as if now it was infested and lost, then continues to walk.

Somewhere else on the giant cruise ship, a father calls his kid named Elijah. The father calls out to the kid, and tells him it's time to go have lunch.

Somewhere on the boat, a waiter is close to bringing a family of four their food. But he doesn't quite make it there. The waiter's feet hit the wood in a hurry. His black shoes with black soles, and a belt buckle on the side scurry along as if two black rats in leprechaun suits were running after some food. As the left foot plants, the right goes down onto a scoop of chocolate ice cream. The waiter, smiling, acting to be some sort of enthusiastic machine, slips on the ice cream. He falls forward, trying to save himself, but failing. The waiter then slams his food and himself into the fat kid with two scoops of ice cream. The ice cream cone goes flying over the railing of the balcony.

Somewhere close on the boat, a bag of bones posted on top of the balcony railing, yells out to his father that he will be right there. Before the child named Elijah's foot can reach the safe wood paneling of the deck, a fat kid runs over and pushes the balcony railing. Elijah is unbalanced on the railing as he falls backward. He screams. Loud. Louder than the old lady dropping her teeth into a jar to eat a milkshake. Louder than the dolphins playing next to the ship. Louder than the kids playing with the action figures. Loud enough that everything slows down. Everyone else stops what they are doing. It was as if you pressed pause on the whole enormous cruise ship.

The kid, Elijah, continues to fall. He finally comes head first into the pine. His small, miniature ball shaped head snaps back towards his back as his back comes towards his head. His body cracks. His neck breaks. His body breaking is louder than the lady putting her ice in her tea.

Louder than the martini shakers.

Louder than the boat itself.

Blood is everywhere. No one is moving. They all pause. Silent. Deathly Silent.

You can hear eyes blink, you tell your audience at the party.

Pens dropping would make like a concert, you tell them.

The silence only lasted a few moments, you

say.

A woman screams. The children begin to cry. The father rushes over to kneel at the body of his own fallen child. His fallen Elijah. Security guards and medical personnel rush over to clear the scene. The father has to be torn away from his fallen Elijah's body.

You see all of this, and now, back at the party, the people, your audience is captivated. They are deathly silent. Just like that afternoon. You continue your story, as your audience is captured by your words.

A few days after "the incident", as it is called now, there began an increase in religious outbursts. People are so scared when it comes to being this close to death, even on the same boat. The pool was closed. It is supposed to remain closed until further notice. No one will go over there. But you will. They are all too scared. You, however, are looking for a good place to nap.

Everyone remains on the aft of the boat. Besides you, the father goes over there to remember his fallen son, whose body still remains on the wood paneling of the deck.

Two days later, you see the father come and kneel at his child's body. The father is still hovering, weeping across the dead body of his son. The father's important information is that he looks like his son who has grown to become an adult. The father reminds you of Tony Hawk, but it's not.

You see the Captain come to join the father's side and mourn with him. The captain looks as if he would be Colonel Sanders, if he was still alive. The father begins to utter something as he is weeping. It looks to you as if it might be a prayer, but you can't hear. Like everyone else, you don't ask. Don't speak a word. You continue to be there. Silent. Un-moving. Still watching. Still sitting there, watching, and sipping on your Piña Colada.

For the next few days, you did nothing but walk around and watch people. You decide to walk to the helm, and say hello to the captain. You begin to get closer and closer to the bridge of the ship. Every step taking longer than the last.

Suddenly, you come upon the bridge. There is smoke bellowing out of the door. Everything is dark inside of the bridge. You walk in. You wipe the smoke away from your face. You scream out hello, is anyone there. No answer. You turn to your left, and there is a crew member impaled with a steak knife through his ear. His body fallen limp, and his head is stuck onto the control panel by the knife. Blood is everywhere. Sparks fly up from the control panel. Going off as if fireworks had just erupted from the bloody electronic panel.

You continue to go deeper into the smoke. You scream out again. Louder this time, but no one seems to be in there. You pass more smoke. It's everywhere. You move your hand back and forth to move the smoke away from your face. Suddenly, you find another body. This one is on the floor, laying down. Face up. You look up on to the control panel. His brains are splashed and spread everywhere on the control monitor. There is a gun in his hand, and a hole in his head. You move on.

You again begin to move deeper into the smoke. You suddenly begin to see some light. You move towards it. You come upon a steel wall. You use the wall as a guide, and continue to walk towards the light. Then, finally, you come towards the door. You open it, and immediately

smoke begins to bellow out into the air.

You look out onto the beautiful ocean. So peaceful. So prestigious. So calm. You begin to wish that all of the ocean's peace, the calm, and the prestige would come upon that ship. You then look to your right, towards the bowl. There is nothing. Not a soul is there. The only things that still remain are the dried bloodstains on the wood paneling, and the body of Elijah, which is now swarmed with flies and is starting to decompose. You then realize how naive your thought actually was.

You then turn to your left, and see everyone still enjoying themselves. Balloons start to go up as you watch the back of the ship enjoy themselves.

You then notice something. The water hose door has been smashed, and there is blood on the edges of the glass. The hose is dragged out and hung over the white railing that stands in front of you. You look over the railing to the deck below, and hanging from a noose is another body. The body is limp, and is swinging. You then notice something to the right. Right underneath you. It's another body. This one is impaled face down on a light pole. You suddenly hear a moan. You scream who is there as you look down on the two bodies. You hear another moan. The body that was impaled on the light pole slightly lifts his head as he moans for a third time. You scream down again, asking if he's alright. He moans again, louder. But the body doesn't move. You scream again, is anyone down there? Everything is now silent. You shrug, and continue to walk.

You, along with everyone else on that titan size boat is nearing the end. It is only a few days after the last series of killings. Some have died by eating the Clam Chowder, but all of those were unrelated and dismissed by the chief detective. They did, however, find a message on the bridge.

Who has murdered who, the message says.

The message was written in gasoline, but far enough away from the control panel not to take down the whole ship.

The Captain had enlisted some men and women to help out on the ship. You volunteered yourself for one of the positions. He put you pretty far up there.

Everyone is now on alert. There is a murderer on the boat, and everyone is scared. There are no more balloons.

No more parties. No more loud music. No more metal eating utensils.

This ship is acting like a major country usually does after a horrible tragedy.

Oklahoma City. Columbine. World Trade Center.

The ones with power, always have the guns. That doesn't change in this situation. The only people who are allowed to have guns are the Captain, Security, and you. You're a part of security, even though at most, if any, the only guns you have shot have been linked to games in video arcades.

You, again, begin to walk around the deck of the ship. You're walking on the lowest part of the deck exposed to the ocean air. Walking along seeing the lifeboats. You begin to think why don't we just row to safety. You then realize that you are days away from land.

You then hear a noise that resembles the sound coming from a huge truck backing up. You go to see what it is. A security team of five is

being loaded into the water in a yellow air raft. You walk over to the Captain, and ask him what is going on.

He tells you that the security team is going to look for any breaches in the hull.

You look over the white railing and watch as they check. Some divers wearing black wetsuits dive down to look underneath. Others stay on the inside of the yellow raft to look at the hull above water. Your watching as the leader of the group watches his team do their jobs. A small smile is on his face as everyone reports that there are no breaches in this section. The leader smiles, replies with a good, and a let's move on. The whole group piles into the raft as it tees and totters, and after they are all in, the leader moves on. The raft moves down a few hundred feet to your right, as the group gets out to check.

Suddenly, a shot is fired. You look towards the sound, but you see nothing. It is so loud that it echoes on the invisible walls of the air. You look back down to the security team, and you see the leader shot right in the head, as he falls into the water. Another shot rings out, and another. These shots remind you of the concerts you went to back home. Their volume does not compare to how loud these gunshots are. You see the rubber, yellow air raft deflate, and another man get shot in the neck. He falls into the water. Blood is all over the top of the water. Smears inside the dark blue plain. You see the one with the neck wound rise up out of the water. He screams in pain.

Suddenly, you see a shark rocket out of the water. With his teeth raised far above the man who looks minuscule to the shark. The shark then takes his teeth, and crunches down on the tiny man. You can see his legs shoot out of the water, and be left to go down feet last. Then, suddenly, another shark downs the legs in one bite. Then, a diver comes up. Diver after diver after diver comes up, screaming for help. You look as you see those divers get ripped to shreds by the sharks. Blood is everywhere. It is feeding the sharks hunger as they continue to feed, massacre, consume all of those men.

You look at the Captain, who has been taken back by these events. These occurrences. They must be linked, you think.

Everything has to have a pattern, you think.

Who or what is behind all of these, you ponder.

To the Captain, who is distraught with fear, and pain you say, don't worry, sir. We'll find who it was or what it was. Don't worry, sir. Don't worry.

The ship is now consumed with fear. Everyone is scared of everything. No one will talk to one another. No one will even look at each other. Some have jumped ship, only to be eaten by the sharks. Some have also committed suicide, only for their remains to remain there. The plague of death and the smell of the dead now consumes the whole ship. It is in the air. Most people stay in their rooms and watch television. At least for the twenty passengers that are left.

You're hungry. At a time like this, that is an odd thing to be. Hungry. You decide to-
ATTENTION ALL CREW MEMBERS!
ATTENTION ALL CREW MEMBERS! ALL CREW MEMBERS PLEASE REPORT TO THE ENGINE ROOM AT ONCE! I REPEAT, ALL CREW MEMBERS PLEASE REPORT TO THE ENGINE ROOM AT ONCE! THAT IS ALL.

check out Issue V for the conclusion...