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The Island of Us

SS Granite no longer sails. She once captured the eye of every beholder. Now, her bones house sea life until they deteriorate over the next eternity. In her death, thousands of people died with her. As captain, I should have perished in the frozen waters with them. However, I cowardly sacrificed six more to the oceans for eight lives and my own. You see, I sailed these waters before, and discovered an unclaimed island. This island, which we now call home, became our refuge from sure death. I still remember deciding who should come join me in the voyage to life.

Fourteen passengers and I clung to life on a small remaining portion of the *SS Granite*. Nearby, a lifeboat harbored a little water and scraps of food. I was the only who could operate the boat, and I was the only one with knowledge about the island. The most painfully experience was to deliver the news that only nine of us could fit in the lifeboat. Before I spoke, this is how I decided the few who remained, would have an opportunity to survive.

I began with the people I knew. Yasmine Salvador. TJ Hyder. I could not forget their faces if I left them to die. The memories of them would provide me nightmares for an eternity. Yasmine Salvador, was once my lover, but still remained the love of my life. Back when we were together she excelled at spending my money, cosmetology, and sweet talking my soul. None of her talents meant anything where we were going, but I decided that when I justified her presence I'd call her Dr. Salvador. TJ was a former English professor of mine, whose B+ still infuriated me from the belly up. However, he is a skilled fisherman and campfire chef. I could not forget that long drawn out introduction he gave at the beginning of the course. Although the island had plenty of fruits, vegetables, and wildlife, the wildlife still needed to be caught and cooked. TJ provided that.

Next I focused on the people I knew I needed. Isaac Carter. Mother Frances. Samantha James. Isaac Carter still wore a purity ring into his late twenties, but Isaac carved that ring on his own. Although he vowed celibacy, a good craftsman and carpenter would be necessary to build permanent housing or potentially a boat to get us back to the United States. Mother Frances took to hunting during her time in Alaska. Although a retired nun, her service to the church was followed by a career as a professional hunter, and television star in *Mother Hunter*. Her skills were needed to maintain the level of protein in our diet. In addition, The Mother's leadership skills could push our group to survive in tough times. Samantha James also debuted on television in one of the many chef cooking competitions. Not only would her skills as a professional chef service the group, but her leadership, which she continued to display through her shivers and chattering teeth. Since Mother Frances was older, and I just didn't know how much longer I could last, I believed Samantha would be well respected in command of the remaining island survivors.

Following those that were necessary for survival, I wanted to save those that deserved a chance. Christina Wallace. Pamala Marcella. Christina Wallace, a tall and lean 19 year old, whom would provide athleticism for hunting or defense, and could contribute to a good gene pool, if the island were to continue on. I could see Christina as an understudy for Isaac Carter and Mother Frances. Pamala Marcella was only sixteen, but had lived through more pain than anyone could imagine. I remembered reading about her in the newspaper about two years before the SS *Granite* went down. She was on trial for killing her pimp during a physical altercation. The press revealed that Pamala was a brilliant mathematician despite never attending school after eight grade. The judge found her guilty, but sentenced her to one year in a rehabilitation facility. I figured Pamala could at least keep inventory or help Isaac design. I had no idea when the last time Pamala used drugs, but I knew that her soon to be born child deserved a shot at life.

The last seat was the hardest. At that point I considered not proposing the plan at all. I knew the crazy killer Doctor was not an option. The actress Jennifer Cortez looked like she was

one more cigarette away from death. Barry Obama was too frail and was slowly fading into hypothermia. I was deciding between an olympic runner, trumpet player, and smart teacher. I felt that Christina provided me with enough athleticism to remove the runner from the equation. Although Samantha Miles could play like Miles Davis, her other skills and aptitude were unknown. I finally settled on the last seat going to Jesse King, a middle aged woman, but with her high IQ and excellent memory of facts. I decided she would come in handy as our last library.

When I proposed the island, and broke the news of who I was taking with me, the remaining six knew death was closer than previously anticipated. The minister began to pray. Barry stopped fighting the cold. Ms. Cortez drown during her attempt to hop into the lifeboat at the last minute. I worried what the Doctor would do to the remaining group. In the end, we survived and thrived on the island. However, I will never forget those I left behind or the thousand that never had a chance. I just hope the Lord forgives me as I lay on my death bed.