

The harbor was a vast, angry, white speckled expanse of rough jade set off by the steel grey of the low hanging clouds. Days like these James was almost convinced Poseidon was real and was churning the seas like he, himself, stirred his coffee.

The relative silence of the pilot house was broken by the ringing of bells; Picking up the receiver James spoke in a steady tone "Go ahead." He listened intently without taking his gaze off the tempest in the small harbor outside. "I understand. I'll be right down."

Hanging up the receiver he finally turned away from the wintery scene and motioned to the hooded fare haired man just outside the door. Tom entered, throwing back his dripping hood, and waited for instructions. It didn't take long for James to speak, striding past Tom; "they think they have figured it out, but they want me to go down and see what they had to do."

"Any orders?"

"Yeah, dry off and get warm" James said as he turned and for the first time in days a slight smile was seen in the corners of James's eyes, even though his mouth was as straight and thin as ever. He turned back towards the hatch to the stairs and disappeared down them, leaving Tom to look at the harbor himself.

Below decks the smell was briny and dank mixed with the deep caustic odor of oil and fire. Steam hissed from nearby release valves as gauges began rising and dipping down slightly before raising again.

"We figure there was a crack in the number two boiler because it over pressurized. See that valve there?" The grease smudged engineer asked, pointing to a valve high up over the boiler. "It was stuck mostly closed, but because the screw head had given way we had no idea until we went through the system top to bottom."

"You said you fixed it though, why aren't the turbines turning?"

"These boilers have been off line for three days, Captain, I don't want to raise the pressure too fast until I know that patch is going to hold on that tank."

"How soon AI?"

"Hard to tell, I'm off pressuring at interv..."

"How soon?" James spoke sternly. He knew AI and the engine crew had been working hard for days now, to find and fix the problem, but he was anxious to get back under way.

"Give me a day James."

"A day?!" James snapped, "That storm is only gonna get worse."

"Which is why I don't want to have any more problems. I'm sorry, but it's the best I can do."

"I know AI. I'm sorry. Of course you're right. This harbor is a better place then the open sea. I just hope Jenny will understand."

"Jenny wouldn't forgive me if I didn't get you home, I'm sure she'll understand one day more." AI had known the captain since they were young and was, possibly, the only person who could talk James out of a hasty decision.