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When I Wake Up

by Marina Davies

When I wake up the other side of the bed is cold, I am not surprised. I sleepily swipe a tanned arm across the sheet, as if to conjure him up.

The high-pitched tinkling strays tap against the mast and the gentle rhythmic bass of the sea soothes me. This caressing movement encourages further napping, but the temperature is too heavy.

I listen for Ted, his footsteps on the deck. It is stifling inside the compact sailing boat. My bare back feels the warmth seep through the wall of the bow. It's too uncomfortable.

Silence, no birds, no engine.

I ruin the stillness as I manoeuvre awkwardly into shorts and a vest, causing the room to lurch. I swing my brown bare feet towards the stern and slide ungainly out of our bed.

Dozily, I pad towards the toilet, open the door and reverse in. With eyes still adjusting to the bright sunlight, I lower myself towards the seat with practised perfection.

My mouth is dry and I long for a cup of tea. I leave the heads and automatically step three paces to the galley.

'Ted...Ted?' I shout it again. I poke my head out of the hatch.

Just Blue.

Flatness in all directions.

'Ted?'

Nothing.