

Linette, born on the West Blue Island of Lode, did not have a discernibly excitable childhood. Through the age of fourteen, she rarely knew hunger, boredom, or strife. Her family which consisted of herself, her mother, her father, her two brothers, and her elderly grandmother. As the youngest of her siblings, she would often take shelter from her brothers by hiding under the wing of her grandmother, a retired shipwright who had countless tales of her time in the grand line. Linette would often cook simple things for her grandmother as she listened to stories of and from pirates and marines alike, enough to fill the shelves of a library twice over.

Pirates were not common to Lode. This made the attack on her fifteenth birthday, the first in twenty years for the island, all the more devastating. Cannon fire struck down the building besides her home. Her father, a low-ranking marine, scrambled and ran out, panicked and with a cutlass in his hand. Her brothers, both already of age, grabbed their wooden practice swords and rushed out behind their father. Linette, much less versed in fighting, grabbed a metal sauce pan from the cupboard and fled to her grandmother's side. Lastly, her mother snook around back to attempt to assist their neighbors.

A half an hour passed where nothing in the house budged. Her grandmother, for inability, and Linette, for fear, the veins in her hands contrasting the pale white of her straining hands as she gripped the pan's handle. Unlike their usual interactions, no stories were told. It was oddly dissonant to be quiet next to her grandmother. She longed for a new story, even now, to calm her. But for the first time in her life, her fears were stronger than her desires.

Suddenly, the front door was kicked off of its hinges. A swordsman held a rapier in Linette and her Grandmother's direction, inching forward through the doorway. He made only one demand. Either, Linette would go with him quietly, or he would quarter her grandmother and then attempt to take her by force. Unconvinced of her own ability, Linette's arms fell to her sides. With pan still in hand, she took a step forward. Satisfied, the swordsman turned faced and walked out. For some reason, unbeknownst to her, Linette continued to follow despite the number of opportunities she had to slip away.

She was not the only one who had been taken in this manner. When they finally reached the ship, after trodding over one of her brothers' bodies, while watching the other brother get beat senseless by a man with a quarterstaff, she found herself amongst the company of three of her other school friends. Amber, Kieth, and Sibyl. Once onboard the ship, they were thrown into a side room under deck, without more than one crew member standing guard on the outside.

It wasn't until after they shoved off that the four came to the realization of the gravity of their situation. It was as if some metaphysical wool had been pulled over their eyes until that very moment. Amber tried to escape after a few days. Her ring finger, barren, was dropped back into the room an hour later. They were always provided for and, in time, a few other young adults would come to join them. Linette told her grandmother's lifetime of stories to keep them entertained, Kieth became the defacto leader of their little squad, and then the rest of the group sat in hopes of an unlikely miracle.

Nearly a year had passed by the time things would change. A year of bland meals, the same stories being told with new ears, and the occasional toy being thrown into the room. It was as if they were pets. None of them knew why this was happening to them, only that they had been promised one thing. "It would all be over soon".

One night, the striking of a bell woke the eight of their group. Calls from the deck above signaled that a marine warship was approaching them head on. They could tell only that they were being boarded. Crew members rushed past their holding room, and eventually another set of footsteps were running back. A marine, bright eyed and blood-stained just about fell into the room as he entered it. He collected himself, stood tall, and smiled, extending his hand towards the group. He offered to take them away, offered to take them home. But a problem arose. Somewhere in the span of that year, the pirates that held them had sailed into the north blue. The Marines who took them in had not heard of Lode, and much less knew how to get them there. While the rest of their group was split and taken back to their homes on their respective islands, the remaining three were given a choice. Be put on the next transport ship back to West Blue, be taken to one of the more heavily populated islands, or they could join the marines. Sibyl elected to go back towards West Blue, Kieth opted to stay in North Blue, and Linette decided to take them up on the invitation to join them at their base on the island of Solace.

There was basic combat training to be had. Drills, nothing back-breaking, but not particularly easy either. When it came to weapons training, Linette turned down the sword. The old saucepan that she had brought all the way from home seemed like a much more suitable weapon. Sharp implements were meant for the kitchen. Sharp was refined. Killing was muddy, brutal, blunt. Blunt instruments of war were much more apt to the task of defense.

The head chef for the marine base became a second father for Linette. After only a few meals, she tried to pick apart the things that he was doing, purely out of curiosity if nothing else. She asked about spices, about heat, about preparation. Amused by the young girl's questions, he began taking her into the kitchen for times of meal prep. She learned basics that she had been fudging throughout her earlier years. The head chef, Lucien, would watch her grow to be his right-hand assistant throughout her five years on the base.

With time and trust, Lucien used Linette to get himself time off. He started to defer meals entirely to her, telling her to "go wild" while he returned to his quarters and read a book. Age had taken a small toll on his body, and he only continued to rot it by letting it sit idle, but he figured as long as he had a potential successor, it would do no harm in the long-run.

Life with the marines, while an educational experience on multiple fronts, was not what Linette saw herself doing for much longer. In the culinary world, you ask why. Why do these spices work well together? Why do you stuff a fish with that particular combination of vegetables? These questions were always answered happily by Lucien, or on the occasions where he simply didn't know, he'd use a book. But questions are frowned upon when it comes to the marines and their assignments. "Because those are orders!" was always the response. "We do things that are hard for the good of humanity! We are their saviors!"

Her grandmother's stories resurfaced in her mind. Pirates, pirates who did things because they wanted, sought out answers, who didn't take "nothing" for an answer. In her haste and her situation, Linette had joined the wrong side.

She let Lucien know first. To this, he simply laughed. It made sense after all. As a parting gift, he gave her a new sauce pan to replace the now rusting one that had not seen a burner since her second year on site. Linette put in her two weeks notice, found a small little shack towards the outskirts of the main city, and "retired" for a while, keeping a watchful eye on the nearby shipyard for potential recruiting parties. But alas, why in their right mind would pirates

dock at an island with a large marine base?

Linette spent the next four years working a little soup stand out of her front window. Visiting cargo ships would stop in, old friends from the marines, even Lucien (who would, of course, criticize the dish over showing any real enjoyment he might have felt). It was a quaint, hermit-like, existence. Somewhere in time she picked up fish dishes and pastries as well. With a rainbow of soups to cook, a cod dish, a trout dish, and multiple fruit turnovers, she was always fully stocked and equipped to try and accommodate any dishes that travelers would describe.

One such cargo ship came in. As a fan of Linette's, the captain brought her a crate of apples and a crate of salted trout, all in exchange for her attempt at a particular apple pie using the very apples that he brought. As Linette began to get to work, she noticed something odd about one of the apples on the top. To start, it most certainly had not been like that a few moments beforehand. Where it was once a glistening, mostly bruise-less, bright red apple, it now sat very brown, somewhat wrinkled, but still entirely "full" looking. Curious, she sliced a piece off of it, revealing a still juicy interior. While it still looked somewhat okay, once she had tasted it, she immediately came to regret her decision. It tasted awful. Awful was an understatement. Rotten food was often better than what she just ingested. Glad that she hadn't tried to cook it into the pie, she threw it into the waste bin across the room and continued on.

With only the baking left to complete, Linette went to open the oven door. But the strangest thing happened when she did. While she did indeed open the stove door, she only opened half of it. The glass bent as if it were paper, and she was able to place the pie right in on top of the shelf. Subsequent attempts to open the oven went as normal, the entire thing opening and closing as it was designed. She waited out the pie, creating small talk with the ship's captain, asking for the (albeit few) stories he had about his travels. One done, she wrapped the pie up in a box, thanked him for the donations and the stories, threw the trash bag into the wasteyard not far from her shack, then retired to her room to watch the sunset. She was sure that whatever had just happened was just a slip of the imagination, signs of overexertion (despite there being no evidence to suggest that she was overexerting herself). While it bothered her and did subtract from her sleep for a good while, it finally passed through and allowed her to rest.

A knock on her door late at night jolted her awake. Quickly pulling herself together, she opened the door to reveal the captain from before. He explained that the marines had ordered a lockdown on the island while they looked for something, the likes of which they would not say, but they wouldn't allow him to so much as step foot on his ship. On his refusal, they had thrown sea water at him, looked satisfied with the result, and then instructed him to find lodgings within the town. So he came to the only place he could think of.

They spoke of more stories, specifically the one of the only time he had ever come in contact with a devil fruit user. He described gas that emanated from the man's hands, how at some points the pirate was there, but later he was just a cloud of smoke. The man stole a crate after crate from his ship, and try as he and his crew might, they couldn't catch or stop him. They tried little glass jars, waving sticks at him, everything. He was especially passive, didn't do anything to harm them, but stole anything worth anything from their ship only one day before they were to reach port.

As the story concluded, there was another knock at the door. Two marines, lieutenants as Linette remembered them, walked in and greeted her. Assuring her that these were just routine checks to be thorough and that they didn't suspect her in the slightest, they asked to be shown where she stored most of her wares, knowing how much cooking had consumed much of her daily life. They pilfered through the crates of apples and bananas, and then finally returned to the living room and asked her to step outside. Confounded, she agreed, and then was met with a cold splash of seawater the moment she crossed the threshold. The ensign dropped the bucket and began to apologize profusely, but stopped as Linette slumped over, more-so than usual.

Her body felt heavy. Extremeley heavy. And it didn't go without being noticed by the two admirals who immediately grabbed her by the arms and started to drag her away. Linette questioned what was going on, unable to resist their strength in the slightest. They explained that there was a private execution being held today in the underground of the marine base. An old pirate, finally given in, who had eaten the "Door-Door" fruit, one of these fabled devil fruits. They had intended to imbue a certain pineapple with the powers of the fruit after his death, hoping to send it off to Marine HQ to give them a hefty lump sum. But once the light had faded from his eyes, the pineapple sat bare and unchanged. Understanding the implications, they were sent out to every home to search every cupboard and to throw sea-water at every civilian until they found the fruit, or the dumbass who had already eaten it.

Linette was brought before the leading commander, a man whom she had only met with once before. As an act of good faith, they let Linette stand on her own in the center of the room. She was given a choice. Rejoin the Marines, learn to use her devil fruit powers and quickly ascend in the ranks to command a fleet of her own, or lie in shackles for the rest of her life until she was ordered to be executed in a much more secure location, where they would be able to control more easily where the fruit would resurface.

A flashback to her grandmother intruded upon her thoughts. She thought of the man who took her away, the man who gave her a choice that wasn't really a choice, and how she regretted the choice not to return even when given the opportunity. She saw her younger self hitting the man with her pan, stealing his sword, and turning it back on him. How she would have been held champion (if only for a few moments) for her heroic deeds. Deeds not befitting of an "honor-bound" marine, but deeds of someone with real honor: A Pirate.

In the present, Linette drew a circle with her foot and kicked the floor beneath her. A door opened up and she fell into the storage closet below, quickly shoving the door back up and sealing it. She slipped back into the all-too-familiar marine garments as she snook through the hallways of the base she had once called home. Alarms sounded. She joined up with a group of Marines running in some direction, broke off, and then joined another group. She continued this until she reached the perimeter of the building. She climbed out of a window, running through blindspots until there weren't any left, making a mad dash for the town. With a new-found rush of desire, she had only one thought: Find the captain who's name she didn't actually know, stow away on his ship, and find a new place to continue her search for a pirate crew.

The lockdown had been lifted after she was found, so ships had already begun to leave the port. As she approached, that cargo ship was second in line to leave. She shouted up with "Hey!"s and "Stop!"s, hoping that he would be on the deck. And on the deck he was. Without

any explanation, he tossed the ship's rope ladder down. Linette jumped off the pier, her foot grazing the sea-water as she clung to the rope as if her life depended on it. Probably, because it did. The captain called to another crew member, and the two pulled her up onto the deck just as the rear of the ship was scraping by the edge of the pier.

She thanked them profusely, and with her reputation became the cook for their voyage to the next island. Cooking at sea was much different than cooking on land of course. Where the body of her work had originally been soups on land, with the resources available to her she was forced to venture more on the path of cooking fish. While she wasn't spectacular, it was a welcomed change to having the crew members cooking their own fish.

At the next port, near the entrance to the grand line, she bid them all farewell. She and the captain, who's name she had learned to be Thomas, assured each other that they would each have asylum with the other should they ever need it. So Thomas and his crew stocked up on goods to continue on towards the next port, and Linette made her way to the inn to see where she might be able to be taken next. She pulled one of the three purple bandanas that always adorned her body, and pulled it over her face. If she was going to get out of North Blue alive, finding a crew almost immediately was going to be the only way. So she grabbed her saucepan, pushed through the wooden salon-style doors, and sat herself down at a table, ready for the excitement of the world.