

Gatecrash

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Gatecrash

by [down](#)

Summary

It was the wrong time of year for this kind of weather

(Umi-has-a-yacht!no-magic!AU)

Notes

For fan-flashworks and the fan-flashworks bingo, both 'shelter' and 'ship'

Umi had been sailing since she could remember, though she hadn't been all that helpful when she was very small. Her parents had photos of her at the tiller of a little boat when she was five, in a bright yellow raincoat with a huge grin. She'd holidayed on cruise ships and volunteered as crew on more than one large sail ship when she was a teenager, and she was generally more at home on the water than anywhere else. So when one of her best friends asked her to come half-way around the world (and bring some of her friend's possessions with her) to attend her friend's wedding - well.

Fuu probably hadn't meant for Umi to decide it was time she had a go at crossing the Pacific on her own, but she had several months with nothing more pressing to do until she took up a more formal position with her mother's company next year as her mother partially retired. (Which was so her mother could spend time doing other things that interested her - the yacht Umi was using was half hers, half her mother's. Umi didn't expect to see it so much in the next few years.)

It wasn't like she'd set out randomly - she'd done long journeys before, she knew her boat, she'd been watching the weather forecasts for weeks - and still the storm came up from nowhere, while she was mostly in the middle of nowhere, Canada still out of reach - and she needed to get to shelter before the roiling mass of weather filling up the sky and her instruments managed to hit her.

"It's the wrong time of year for this shit!" Umi hissed, staring in horror at the clouds on the horizon. Her boat might manage to ride it out - but 'might' wasn't anything she wanted to rely on. Biting down on her lip, Umi steeled herself and turned the prow north - there were dozens of islands stringing out from the corner of the mainland. If she had luck, she would hit one and find somewhere to anchor herself up in some kind of sheltered harbour or - something. She needed to not knock a hole in the hull of the yacht, or she wouldn't be getting anywhere anytime soon - and as far as she could remember, most of these places were uninhabited.

She had to hope. There was nothing else to do.

oOo

The weather was crashing down about her by the time her eyes agreed with the charts she hadn't had chance to look at for over an hour, a darker grey rising out of the roiling mass of the sea. She grabbed the tiller harder, glaring up at the sky, through the rain stinging against her face. She'd already brought down the sails and the mast, and she was running on the motor that was meant to be more a back-up than anything. The wind was too strong and too changeable.

The line of the island got higher and higher as she got closer, and her heart started to sink - there seemed to be nothing but cliffs. She kept going. If she could at least hide on the leeward side of the island-

Then she saw it. A light, glimmering through the gloom of weather and oncoming night, high on the island.

"If it's inhabited, there has to be a harbour!" Umi hissed to the wind, and kept on.

oOo

What she eventually found was less a harbour and more a crack in the cliffs, but it was one with guiding lights and a bunker-shaped boat-house at the end of it. It was a little hairy getting her boat down the narrow channel without smashing against either side, and by the time she was nearly to the boathouse - that had to be what it was - she realised the next problem; the doors were shut, and with her boat rolling as the sea rattled up the narrow channel, she didn't dare take her hands off the tiller to go forward and try to open them. But if she didn't, what was she going to do?

Even as she took a breath, straining to see if there were handles on the outside or anything at all, the doors opened and light flooded out across the prow of her boat. She didn't hesitate, but sailed straight on in, gasping as she got out of the wind and someone was shutting the door behind her - a man, wrapped in a huge blue coat, who had presumably come down to make sure the smaller boat lashed to the other side of the boathouse was ready to ride out the storm.

"Who on earth are you?" The man snapped, (fortunately in English rather than Russian, which she spoke little of,) but his hands never stopped reaching out for the ropes she was holding; between them, they got her yacht in and tied up, and then she flopped on the deck, her legs going from under her.

The man skidded slightly on the deck as he jumped across, crouching down in front of her, and she blinked up at a face that looked as much worried as irritated. "Hey," he said again, quieter now, almost lost under the howling of the weather outside. "Are you okay? Do you speak English?"

"I- yes, thank you." She took a breath, and closed her eyes.

"Well." He huffed. "I guess you'll have to stay with me until this blows over - come on, come up to the house, it'll be safer than staying down here. I'm Clef, by the way, I staff the research station here." He stood, then reached out his hand to her.

Umi took it, pushing up on shaking legs. "I'm Ryuuzaki Umi. Sorry to gatecrash your island."

oOo

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