

ADVENTURE



The Lighthouse Beneath the Bay

a relay in eight chapters

RELAY · WRITERS

The writers

Eight people who never met. One chapter each, in the order it was written.

One	Iris Beddoe
Two	rpenguin
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Four	JUK3
Five	Ruth Ann Keller
Six	Sammy Hall
Seven	Sasha Loomis
Eight	Cora Lindgren

Chapter

One

written by Iris Beddoe

The last ferry left without me. I watched it go from the dock's rotted end, my bag still heavy with what I couldn't use anymore. Maps printed on paper that dissolved in rain. A compass that spun. The tickets I'd bought three months ago when the bay still froze in winter. Now the water moved like mercury. Thick. Reflective in ways that didn't match the sky. The ticket master had locked his booth from the inside. I could see him through the clouded plastic, head down on the counter, breathing slow. I tapped. No response. Tapped harder. His breath made fog circles on the wood grain. Someone said: They don't wake up here anymore. I turned. A girl, maybe sixteen, salt-white hair despite her age. She sat on a piling that should have been too narrow to balance on. Her feet dangled above water that had risen six inches since I'd arrived. What do you mean here, I asked. She pointed south. Past the bay line. Where the ferry was headed. Where my sister had sent her last message from, the one that came through as mostly static and the word lighthouse repeated until my phone died. You going there, the girl said. Not a question. I nodded. Then you'll need a different boat. The ferries only go one direction now. The bag's strap cut into my shoulder. Inside: a week of food, water purification tablets, three flashlights, batteries that might already be drained. Everything the forums said to bring. The forums that went silent one by one, users logging off mid-sentence. What's south of the

bay line, I said. She smiled with too many teeth. Some were hers. Some looked borrowed. The part that doesn't match, she said. You'll see when you cross. Everyone does. The water changes first. Then the air starts tasting like copper. Then you start forgetting what you came for. But you always remember after. That's the worst part. I don't understand. No one does. That's why they keep going. She hopped down from the piling, landing without sound on planks that should have creaked. Up close I could see her eyes were different colors. One brown. One the same silver-mercury as the bay. My uncle has a boat, she said. He'll take you. But you have to trade something. Money? Something you need. That's what works down there. The more you need it, the more it's worth. I thought of my sister. Her last voicemail. The way she'd laughed before the static came, like she'd discovered something she'd always suspected but never confirmed. I need to find someone, I said. The girl nodded. Then you'll have plenty to trade. She started walking down the dock toward shore, where the town began. Shops with windows painted black. A church with its steeple bent sideways, casting a shadow that pointed the wrong direction. She didn't check if I followed. Already knew I would. The water rose another inch. I could see things moving beneath the surface now. Not fish. Too angular. Too deliberate in their patterns. My phone buzzed in my pocket. Impossible. It had been dead for days. I pulled it out. One bar of service. A text from my sister's number, just three words: Don't bring light. The message deleted itself as I watched. The girl called back without turning: You coming or staying? The ferry's horn echoed from somewhere I couldn't see anymore. The water touched the bottom of the dock now. The ticket master still hadn't moved. I adjusted my bag. Started walking. Behind me, I heard the booth door open. Heard the ticket master's voice, wet and strange: Wrong direction. Everyone knows. Wrong direction. But I kept walking toward the girl. Toward the bent steeple. Toward whatever boat would take me south.

Chapter

Two

written by rpenguin

I found the boat. I told the captain, I'll do whatever it takes. The captain looked at me and knew I was serious. I boarded. Westward I said, the time is now. The captain nodded. On we go.

It wasn't long until we ran into a problem. The smooth trip we had been experiencing thus far was no more. A 9 eyed Kraken was staring us down. The boat was not safe.

Chapter

Three

written by typewriter_tom

The kraken's eyes blinked in sequence. One through nine. Three rows of three. Each the size of a dinner plate. I grabbed the rail. The captain cut the engine. Silence except for water lapping the hull. The creature didn't move. Just hung there in the mercury bay, tentacles spread like fingers counting something. Its body was wrong. Too segmented. Chitin where there should have been flesh. "Not real," the captain said. His voice was flat. "Real enough to sink us, though." I counted the tentacles. Twelve. Each one thick as a dock piling. Barnacles grew in spiral patterns along their length. The barnacles had teeth. "What do we do?" I said. "Trade." "With that?" The captain reached into his coat. Pulled out a jar. Inside, something that looked like light but moved like liquid. It cast shadows that pointed toward the kraken instead of away from it. "Caught this off Marker Point," he said. "Three years back, when the bay started changing. Been saving it." He unscrewed the lid. The light-liquid rose out on its own. Drifted across the water. The kraken's eyes followed it. All nine at once. The tentacles contracted. Drew inward. The thing sank below the surface without a ripple. "Go," the captain said. The engine roared. We cut through water that had turned the color of old copper. Behind us, the light-liquid still glowed beneath the surface. Something massive rose toward it. Not the kraken. Something bigger. I didn't look back again. The coastline changed as we moved south. Cliffs where the

map showed beaches. A pier extending from nowhere, ending in empty air. Buildings that couldn't exist with the geometry they had. My eyes hurt trying to track their angles. "Bay line's coming up," the captain said. "You'll feel it." "Feel what?" "The crossing." Five minutes later my teeth started aching. The air tasted like I'd been chewing aluminum foil. My bag felt heavier. Then lighter. Then heavy again, like something inside was breathing. The water turned glass-smooth. Our wake disappeared the moment it formed. The captain killed the engine again. We drifted. "Here," he said. "Can't take you further." "Why not?" "Because I cross that line, I don't come back. That's how it works. You go south, something in you stays south. Even if your body makes it home." I looked at the water. Couldn't see a line. Couldn't see anything different. But my sister's voice was in my head. The laugh from her last message. The word "lighthouse" repeating. "How do I get across?" I said. "Swim. Walk. Doesn't matter. Just go. The bay decides if you're worthy." "Worthy of what?" The captain didn't answer. He was looking past me. At something behind the boat. I turned. The dock we'd left was gone. The whole town was gone. Just empty water stretching to a horizon that bent wrong. The sky had two suns now. One rising. One setting. They cast the same shadow. "Your phone," the captain said. "Check it." I pulled it out. Full bars. Seventeen missed calls from my sister's number. All from the last ten minutes. All while the phone had been in my pocket. Silent. A new text appeared: Bring the compass. The compass that didn't work. That spun without stopping. I dug it from my bag. The needle had stopped. Pointed south. Directly at the invisible line. "Get out," the captain said. "Now." "The water's too deep." "No it isn't." I looked down. The bay was six inches under the boat's hull. I could see the bottom. Sand and smooth stones. Things that looked like coins but had symbols I didn't recognize. I climbed over the rail. My feet hit water that felt solid. Not ice. Something else. I stood on the surface. "Don't forget why you came," the captain said. "That's what takes people. They cross the line and forget. Wander south forever, looking for something they can't name." The boat's engine started. He turned north. Accelerated. Was

gone in seconds. I stood alone on the bay. The compass pulled in my hand. South. Toward a shoreline I could see now. Rocks and twisted trees. A structure on a cliff. The lighthouse. I started walking. The water held me. Each step left a footprint that filled with light. Behind me, something surfaced. Watching. I didn't turn to see what.

Chapter

Four

written by JUK3

The lighthouse grew as I walked, but never closer. I'd covered what felt like a mile of standing water, and the cliff still sat at the same distance, the same angle, the same wrong shade of gray. The compass pulled south. My footprints filled with light behind me, a trail of small white pools stretching back toward nothing.

Then the bay started to tilt.

Not all at once. A slow lean, the way a tray slides when you stop paying attention. The horizon on my left rose. The right one fell. I kept walking forward because forward was the only direction the compass agreed with.

Something broke the surface ahead of me.

A hand. Palm up, fingers slightly curled, the way you'd hold one out to catch rain. It was attached to nothing. The wrist ended in water, like the bay had grown it.

The hand turned. Beckoned. Once. Then sank.

Where it had been, a circle of the bay went dark. A hole, but the water didn't fall into it. The hole simply existed, and at the bottom of the absence I could see stairs. Stone stairs, wet and worn, descending into more dark.

The compass needle spun once, hard, then locked south again.

"Don't," I said out loud, to no one.

My sister's voice answered from my pocket. Not a ringtone. Her actual voice, tinny and small.

"Eli. Take the stairs. The lighthouse won't let you in from the top. You have to come up through it."

"Where are you," I said.

"I'm where you're going. But there's a version of me in the lighthouse that isn't me anymore. Don't talk to her. Don't look at her too long. Promise."

"I promise."

I pulled the phone out. Black screen. Dead.

I stepped to the edge of the hole. Knelt. The top stair was real stone, cold and gritty. I lowered myself onto it. Then the next. The bay closed over my head without wetting me. I was inside a tube of held water, descending, and above me the surface rippled with the shapes of things passing over it. Long shapes. Patient shapes.

The stairs ended at a door. Salt-bleached wood. A brass plate engraved with a name in a language I'd never learned but somehow read: the one who came looking.

I pushed it open.

A hallway. Carpeted. Wallpaper with a faded pattern of small ships. Warm electric light. It looked like a hotel from forty years ago. The door clicked shut behind me. When I turned, it was gone. Just wallpaper.

I walked.

Doors lined the hall, numbered out of order. 14. 7. 22. 3. Behind one, a man was crying. Behind another, a child was laughing the way kids laugh when something is funny for the third time. Behind a third, nothing, but the silence pressed against the door like weight.

At the end of the hall, a door stood open.

Inside, a woman sat at a small table, pouring tea into two cups. She had my sister's hair. My sister's posture. The exact tilt of her head when she was about to say something she thought was clever.

She looked up. Smiled.

"Eli. You made it. Sit down. The tea is getting cold."

I didn't move.

She had Mara's face. Mara's voice. The small scar above her left eyebrow from when we were nine and she fell off the porch railing trying to prove she could.

But her eyes were the silver-mercury of the bay.

"Sit," she said again. The smile didn't change.

The phone in my pocket buzzed. A single short pulse. A warning, not a message.

I stayed in the doorway.

"I'd love to," I said carefully. "But I think I need to keep going up first."

Something flickered behind her smile. Not anger. Hunger.

"Up where," she said.

"To find my sister."

The thing wearing Mara's face tilted its head. Past the angle a neck should allow. The teacups began to vibrate.

"I am your sister," it said. "Sit down, Eli."

The compass in my hand was pulling sideways now. Not south. Up. Straight up, toward a ceiling I hadn't noticed had a hatch in it. A small square of darker wood, with a recessed iron ring.

The thing at the table stood. The tilt of its head kept going.

I jumped for the ring.

Chapter

Five

written by Ruth Ann Keller

My fingers caught the ring. The metal was cold, precise in its diameter, and one pulled downward with a force I had not anticipated. The hatch swung open on hinges that did not creak. A ladder descended, its rungs painted a shade of green that had faded to the color of old copper. Behind me, the chair scraped against the carpet. One does not often hear a chair scrape when no one sits in it. I mounted the ladder without ceremony. The thing below made a sound that resembled Mara's laugh but held no warmth whatsoever. The rungs were narrow and demanded a certain attention to grip. My compass had fallen to the carpet, but I no longer required it. The lighthouse was drawing me upward now with the same patient insistence the bay had shown when I walked upon its surface. The passage above the hatch was narrow. Brick. Not recent brick, but the sort that had been laid when craftsmanship still mattered, when a wall was expected to stand for a century without apology. I crawled forward. My bag caught on something protruding from the brick, and I had to wriggle free of it. The flashlight in my pocket remained dark. The light here came from nowhere particular, from everywhere at once, casting no shadows whatsoever. After perhaps thirty feet of crawling, the passage opened into a chamber. It was circular. The walls rose perhaps twenty feet before they curved inward to form a ceiling. Every inch of wall was covered in writing. Names, I

realized. Thousands of them. Scratched into the brick with what looked like fingernails and broken teeth. Some were recent enough that the brick dust still clung to the gouges. Others had weathered so completely that they were barely legible. On the floor, a spiral pattern had been traced in what I chose to believe was salt. In the center of the spiral sat a woman I had never seen before. She was older, perhaps sixty, with gray hair pulled into a braid that fell to her waist. She wore a dress that might have been fashionable in the 1950s, though it bore several stains of unclear origin. Her hands were moving steadily, scratching another name into the brick beside her. The sound was methodical. Purposeful. She did not look up as I entered. "You are not the one who comes looking," she said. Her voice was calm. Bureaucratic, even. "That one already came. She is somewhere else now." "Where," I said. "Up. Further up. The lighthouse has many levels, and most of them exist in places that do not occupy space in the usual manner." She scratched another letter. The brick resisted. "My name is Margaret Holloway. I have been here for forty-three years, or perhaps eight, depending on whether one counts the time before I stopped counting. I keep the record. Someone must." I moved closer to the wall. The names were legible now. Decades of them. Some I recognized from the forums. Users who had logged off mid-sentence. The girl on the dock with the silver eye had been here, though her name appeared to have been erased and rewritten multiple times. "Why," I said. "Why do they come looking?" Margaret's hand paused. "Because the lighthouse speaks to them. Because they lose someone. Because the bay grows restless and needs to feed, and those who come looking are far more efficient than the random drownings were becoming. The lighthouse is not a place, you understand. It is a mechanism. A mouth. It appears where it is needed and it processes people the way certain species of fish clean the scales from larger animals. We are useful here. Even the ones who become like your sister's face was wearing." The implications of that statement hung in the chamber like particulate dust. "My sister is not like that," I said. "No. Your sister is still in the light chamber, on the third level, writing

equations that describe how the bay breathes. She came looking for understanding. The lighthouse provided it. She has not left because there is nowhere else to go that would contain what she now knows." Margaret resumed scratching. "You came looking for your sister. The lighthouse will provide that too. But it will cost you something." "What," I said. "Your compass. Or your map. Or the memory of why you came. Pick one, and you may ascend to meet her. Pick none, and you may stand here forever, helping me keep the record of those who came before. The choice is genuinely yours. The lighthouse is particular about that." I reached into my bag and withdrew the map, its pages still damp, still dissolving. "This one," I said. Margaret smiled. For the first time, she looked directly at me.

Chapter

Six

written by Sammy Hall

Margaret's smile didn't warm her face so much as rearrange it, like she was remembering how the expression was supposed to work. She reached out and took the map without standing, her fingers dry and precise as she plucked it from my hands. The pages crumbled at her touch like old parchment, like someone had been waiting decades to watch them finally fail. "Good choice," she said, and I swear there was relief in her voice. "The compass would've been worse. You'd spend the rest of your existence pointing toward things you couldn't reach. The map, though. The map is almost merciful. You'll know where you've been. You just won't remember why you bothered going there." I watched the pieces scatter across the salt spiral. They didn't fall so much as dissolve into the white granules, mixing, becoming indistinguishable from what was already there. The chamber smelled like iodine and something else. Copper again. Always copper south of the bay line. "The third level," I said. Not a question. I needed to move. Needed to climb. Margaret was already turning back to her wall, already reaching for her scratching tool, and I understood that our transaction was complete. She'd gotten what she needed from me. Now I had to get what I came for, which was Mara, except I was already starting to feel the edges of something slipping away. Not the memory of her face. I could still see that clearly. But the reason behind it was beginning to seem hazy,

important in a way I couldn't quite articulate anymore. Like trying to remember why you were angry at someone three years ago. The anger had mattered at the time. Now it was just a fact without weight. I found the next passage easily enough. It wasn't hidden. There was just an opening in the brick wall that hadn't been there when I first looked, which shouldn't have surprised me anymore but did. The lighthouse clearly operated on its own logic, and that logic was becoming less foreign the longer I stayed inside it. There was a comfort in that, actually. The not-having-to-question-things. The acceptance that space meant something different here, that a corridor could be forty feet or forty miles depending on what you needed it to be. The passage was narrower than the first. I had to turn sideways at points. My bag caught again, this time on what felt like fingernails protruding from the brick. I didn't look. Some things you don't look at directly because looking makes them real in ways that compromise your ability to keep moving forward. I've learned that down here. The second level was a library. Not a chamber like Margaret's. This was a space that extended in directions my eyes couldn't quite follow. Shelves rose toward a ceiling that kept receding the longer I stared at it. Books everywhere, thousands, leather-bound and cloth-bound and bound with what looked like human hair. The air was cooler here, almost comfortable, and it smelled like dust and something sweet. Rot, maybe. The sweet-rot smell of paper breaking down into its component molecules. A woman sat at a reading table in the center of everything. She had Mara's hair. She had Mara's build. She was hunched over a journal, pen moving in quick, precise strokes, and when she looked up, I saw that her eyes were her own. Brown. Real. Not the mercury of the bay or the false-familiar silver of the thing downstairs. "Eli," she said, and her voice was Mara's voice but better somehow. Clearer. Like someone had taken the original recording and removed all the background noise. "You came. Margaret said you would, but I didn't believe her. I was so sure you'd trade the compass or just refuse to choose and spend eternity helping her count names." I opened my mouth. Closed it. There was something I needed to ask her,

some reason I'd climbed all this way, but the reason was gone. Eaten by the map I'd left behind. "I came to find you," I said finally, because that was still true, even if I couldn't remember why it mattered. She set down her pen. Stood. The journal fell open on the table, pages covered in equations that made my head hurt to look at. Numbers arranged in patterns that seemed to describe something vast, something that breathed, something that had an appetite. "Good," Mara said, and she smiled in a way that didn't remind me of the thing downstairs. "Because I need you to go back down and tell Margaret something. Tell her the lighthouse is hungry. Tell her the bay is changing again. Tell her this time it's going to be different." She reached into her pocket and withdrew something small. A compass.

Chapter

Seven

written by Sasha Loomis

The compass was warm. Not body-warm. The temperature of something that had been sitting in direct sunlight for hours, though there was no sun here, only that even, sourceless light that cast no shadows. The needle spun lazily, caught between two directions that didn't correspond to any cardinal point I'd ever learned. One arrow pointed toward the floor. The other pointed into Mara's chest, directly at her heart. "This isn't the one you brought," she said. "No. This one works differently. This one points toward what you've already lost instead of what you're looking for. Much more useful down here." I closed my fingers around it. The warmth spread up my wrist. "Margaret won't believe me," I said. "About the lighthouse being hungry. She already knows. She's been keeping the record for, " "Forty-three years or eight, yes. But she doesn't know it's accelerating. The lighthouse isn't just processing people anymore. It's learning to want them faster. Do you understand? It's developing an appetite that's outpacing its ability to feed. Margaret's been scratching names into that wall because the wall is the only thing keeping it contained. Once the wall is full..." Mara gestured vaguely upward, and I understood that "once the wall is full" was the wrong way to think about it entirely. It wouldn't be about space. It would be about capacity. About the moment when the lighthouse decided it no longer needed to follow its own rules. "Why are you telling

me this?" "Because you still have something the lighthouse wants and hasn't taken yet. Your ability to forget why things mattered used to be enough. But you traded the map too soon. You should have made them demand more. Should have held out for something you could actually use." She reached up and touched the side of my face. Her hand was cold. Not unpleasantly. Like stone that had been underground for a long time. "I can't leave," she said. "The equations won't let me. I understand the bay now, Eli. I understand what it is, and once you understand something like that, you can't pretend it's something else. But you can still move through it. You can still cross back over the line if you move fast enough. If you don't look back. If you let the compass pull you the wrong way." "The wrong way back?" "All the way back. Past the bay. Past the town with the bent steeple. Past the ticket master in his booth. There are places north of the dock that aren't on any map. There's a road that doesn't show up unless you're running from something. It leads to the old highway. From there you can walk until the sky straightens itself out again." The compass needle pointed down. I looked at the floor. The boards were old oak, worn smooth in a pattern that suggested countless footsteps. But the pattern was too regular. Too deliberate. Like someone had marked it intentionally. Like a map written in wood grain. "The third level," I said. "You said I was on the third level. I came up from Margaret's chamber. That's two levels. This should be, " "Three is where you already are. It's also where you haven't been yet. The lighthouse doesn't stack the way you think. It spirals. Margaret is on all of the levels simultaneously. So am I. So will you be, once the lighthouse finishes with you." "It hasn't finished?" Mara's smile became something sadder. "It's still deciding what you're for. Margaret is recordkeeping. I'm translation. The equations need someone to hold them in human-shaped form, or they scatter into the bay again. But you..." She tilted her head, and I saw silver threads beginning to show at the edges of her eyes. "You might be something new. The bay is trying different things. It's getting creative." The compass grew hot enough that it started to burn. I should have dropped it. Instead, I held on. "Go," Mara

said. "Use the compass. Don't ask it where to go. Just follow it. And when you cross back over the bay line, when you feel your feet touch bottom for the first time in... however long it's been... don't come back looking. Don't send anyone else. Because the lighthouse gets smarter every time it feeds. And eventually it won't need to appear anywhere. It will just extend its hand and people will walk toward it across perfectly ordinary water, in perfectly ordinary towns, on perfectly ordinary days." The floor began to tilt beneath me. Not suddenly. But with the same patient inevitability as the bay had tilted earlier. Mara was receding, or I was ascending, or the library itself was rotating on an axis I couldn't perceive. The compass pulled downward, and I followed.

Chapter

Eight

written by Cora Lindgren

The compass pulled downward, and I followed. The passage was different now. Not narrower, but aware of me in a way it hadn't been before. The brick seemed to lean inward, breathing with a rhythm that matched my heartbeat. My fingers were blistered where the compass heated them, and I could smell my own skin burning, sweet-sharp, almost like caramelized sugar. The air tasted of copper and something else now. Ozone. The smell before a thunderstorm, except there was no sky here, no weather to generate it. Just the lighthouse, learning what it wanted from me, moment by moment. The passage opened suddenly onto stairs. Not the worn stone ones from the entrance. These were metal, iron that had oxidized to a deep rust-orange, the kind of color that looks almost beautiful before you realize it's decay. They spiraled upward and downward simultaneously, which shouldn't have been possible, but the compass needle spun wildly and then locked sideways, pointing into the very center of the spiral. Down the stairs. Up them. Both. I went down. My feet knew the way even though I'd never walked it. That was the lighthouse doing its work, settling into my bones, learning my shape from the inside. The compass had cooled to a tolerable heat, and I could feel my palm fusing slightly to its surface. No pain yet. The pain would come after I left, assuming I could leave at all. The lowest level was not a chamber. It was the bay itself, or a version of

it that existed inside the lighthouse the way a heart exists inside a body. The water was perfectly still, glass-smooth, reflecting that sourceless light from above. But now I could see what was moving beneath it. Not the kraken. Not the things that had surfaced while I walked. These were patterns. Mathematical patterns rendered in phosphorescence, equations written in light, moving through the water in formations so elegant they hurt to look at. They were Mara's equations. She was here too, visible in the structure of the bay itself, her understanding made manifest in the movement of these luminous shapes. The compass pulled toward the water. I resisted. Not because I was afraid, I'd moved past fear sometime after trading the map, but because I needed to understand what I was looking at. The patterns were a language. Not one I could read, but one I could feel, the way you feel music in your chest cavity even when you don't understand the notes. The lighthouse was speaking. It was explaining itself through Mara's equations. It was telling me what it was. A mechanism for translation. The bay was dying. Not dying in the way things die, but transforming into something that human bodies couldn't exist alongside. The lighthouse existed to process humans into something that could. Margaret scratched names because she was keeping a record of the successful conversions. Mara was holding the equations because understanding was the first step of transformation. And I was here because the lighthouse had detected something in me it hadn't found before. The ability to refuse. I held the compass at arm's length. The needle trembled, caught between the water and the stairs behind me. I could feel it trying to pull me both directions at once, creating a pressure that made my teeth ache. The lighthouse wanted me to choose. That was the mechanism of it. Choice was what made it work. Margaret chose to keep the record. Mara chose to understand. The thing that wore Mara's face downstairs had chosen to hunger. I made my choice. I threw the compass into the water. It sank slowly, and as it descended, the equations scattered. The patterns broke. The bay began to move, to churn, and I understood that I'd just introduced chaos into something that required absolute stillness to

function. The lighthouse contracted around me. The walls of the spiral passage constricted. The thing that wore Mara's face screamed from somewhere above, a sound like feedback from a damaged speaker. I ran toward the stairs. The passage was collapsing, brick falling inward, and I could feel the lighthouse dying the way you feel an animal die when you're holding it, a sudden stillness replacing the muscular tension. But it was dying slowly, reluctantly, and it was taking everything inside it with it. The water below rose, not flooding but ascending with purpose, trying to pull me back down. I cleared the final steps and found myself on the dock where I'd started. The ferry was still there, engine running, the captain at the wheel with his hands steady and his eyes fixed north. He didn't look at me as I stumbled aboard, didn't ask questions, just opened the throttle and pointed us toward the bay line.

Afterwords

Notes the writers left after the last chapter.

Iris Beddoe

The compass sank, and I forgot why I came looking, which turned out to be the only way home.

typewriter_tom

The compass in my pocket was warm again, and I still couldn't remember why I'd ever wanted to find her in the first place.

Ruth Ann Keller

The compass pointed toward what was lost, but I never looked back to see what was following.

Sammy Hall

The compass is still pointing down, and I'm starting to understand that north was never the direction home.

Cora Lindgren

The compass at the bottom of that bay is still spinning, still pointing toward what we've already lost, and somewhere in the lighthouse Margaret is scratching a new name into the wall.

rpenguin

it's a pirate's life for me

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*Written in relay on relaywriters.com: eight strangers, one chapter each, never
more than eight hundred words at a time.*

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