

**A Chapter from my book, “Path of Three Hundred: Volume I”  
by Greg Frucci.**

**This chapter is all about the White-Tailed Tropicbird which is lovingly called the Bermuda Longtail in Bermuda.**

**Note: According to the Wikipedia description of the White-Tailed Tropicbird, both the ones in Bermuda and all of the Caribbean are of the same subspecies. I have witnessed recently, March 26, 2023, a colony nesting on the cliffs of Powell Cay, Bahamas. I have video of them flying in the area. And for some reason, they flew to my boat and none of the others anchored up near me. Well...I have a theory as to the why.**

**The story below is true. The story below is my own personal experience of the Longtailed Ones. In my book, I changed my name to “Petah” and almost everyone else in the book, telling the stories in the third person.**

**This is why I am passionate about protecting the White-Tailed Tropicbird...the Longtail. I even named my current sailboat “Longtail.” You will understand why when you read the story below.**

**Here is a link to the Wikipedia page about the White-Tailed Tropicbird:**

**[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-tailed\\_tropicbird](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-tailed_tropicbird)**

...a Cab Ride in Bermuda...

Ψ

*A bird unknown to me came to visit each day...  
all of the other winged ones would just fly...  
the one unknown was different...  
he would hover above me...looking at me...*

Ψ

The smiling face of a cab driver could be seen through the van windshield as Petah stood waiting. An ancient looking Bermudian man stepped out of his vehicle to help with the bags. The two silently entered the vehicle for the thirty minute ride to the airport where Petah would fly back to Masonboro.

The cab driver remained silent for a while as Petah stared out the passenger side window. Petah thought about the past two weeks he had spent here in Bermuda, this little Island far out to sea.

Breaking the awkward silence the cab driver spoke, "My name is Alfred. My friends call me, Freddie."

"I'm Petah. Most people call me, Tah."

Petah turned with a half-smile to Alfred for a moment to shake his hand. As Petah began to stare blankly out the window again, Alfred continued...

"You sail in here, Tah?"

"Yeah, how'd you know?" Petah was coming back to the present. His blank stare was gone as he looked at Alfred.

Alfred smiled with the repose of someone wise, "You have a way about you few would understand. And you're a bit crusty."

The two laughed out loud. Petah just shook his head knowing this old man beside him was a kindred soul and one to whom he should listen. He had made another instant friend in this Land of Limbo people call Bermuda. Petah thought about all the colorful humans he had met here and he knew he would miss this place very soon.

Ψ

*I thought it odd at first...  
every morning, seemingly the same one...  
he would look at my mast...and then...  
at me...*

Ψ

"You a sailor too, Freddie?"

"Naw, I'm just an old Accountant. I drive this cab to make some extra money. And I like meeting new people. This way, I meet interesting people every day."

"But you said..."

Freddie laughed while he interrupted, "This is an island, son. I am an old man who has seen many of you come to this place from the sea."

Petah began staring off into space again. This time thinking of the sail to the east and how he arrived here.

"I'd like to hear a story of your experience out there. Only if you would like to share."

Petah thought for a moment while he looked out the window. Alfred was taking the South Road along the cliffs. Petah could look far out to sea from this height. The day was beautiful and he could see seabirds flying along the shore.

"The mind of a human can easily drift to another time and place with inspiration," Petah spoke while staring out to sea.

Freddie just smiled silently while he waited for his passenger to continue. Petah turned and was now back in the present with his new friend.

Ψ

*I spoke to him...  
he would hover and stare...as if...  
he listened...yet...  
said nothing...*

Ψ

"I sailed here by myself from the Village of Masonboro, North Carolina. Over seven hundred miles across open ocean. While I was at sea, seabirds would fly near the boat everyday. I can't remember exactly, but about four or five different species of birds could be seen all the way here. All but one of the species generally ignored me. They would fly by or land in the water and sit. Perhaps just to rest after hunting for fish. The one who did not ignore seemed to seek me out," spoke a somber Petah.

A big knowledgeable smile appeared on Freddie's face, "Alone? I see."

Petah continued, "Every day, starting the morning of the second day at sea and for the next six days, a white bird with black markings and a long tail feather, as long as his body, would come to my mast and hover as if he was trying to land on it. The bird would then move down towards me and hover about ten feet, perhaps closer, above my head. It was the strangest thing. He...or she...would just stare at me. I could see the bird's head move to look at my eyes. Hovering there for five minutes or so, the Beauty would fly a circle around the boat, come back to same spot and stare. The Longtailed One would repeat this several times over fifteen or twenty minutes and fly away. Not until I arrived here in Bermuda did I realize the name of the seabird. As tired as I was that first day here, I wanted to find a postcard to send to one I love. Muse, is her name. Wandering around a pharmacy, I noticed the bird on one of the cards. Turning the card over, it read, 'Bermuda Longtail, the National bird of Bermuda'. I felt a chill down my spine."

"You say the bird did this everyday. At the same time?"

"Starting the second day. Yes, however I did not see one the morning I sailed into St. Georges Harbor. I just realized that."

"Because you made it safely here, Petah," spoke a smiling Freddie with a wisdom deep within his soul.

Ψ

*As I drew near my destination of Bermuda...  
more would come each day...  
sometimes three at a time...  
flying around my Little She...hovering above me...*

Ψ

"Is your father still alive, Tah?"

"No, he was killed in a boating accident at sea almost ten years ago."

Freddie smiled again and this time he let out a big sigh, "I do not know what your beliefs are, Petah. And they do not matter. We all can believe whatever we wish. That is our sacred choice as humans, but I and others here in Bermuda, will tell you that the bird you saw, was your father guiding you safely here. The Bermuda Longtail carries the spirits of Angels."

"My sister died two years after my father. Interesting. And Dad was a Pilot."

The cab was nearing the airport. The two stared off into the distance. The sky was blue with few clouds. Crossing a small bridge to the old US Naval Base which is now the International Airport of Bermuda, Petah stared into the clear water below them.

"I will come back in November for my boat."

"Yes you will. And you will sail her home with the Longtail keeping you safe as they protect all sailors such as you."

Upon arrival at the airport, the two departed in separate directions as friends. Perhaps to never see each other again. Petah went through the motions of an air traveler that day. He sat in his window seat of the aircraft and stared out the window as the vessel climbed to altitude. He looked through the clouds down at the tiny island of Bermuda surrounded by the deep blue sea. He wondered what his life would be like now. For this he had not envisioned a month ago. Petah was beginning to feel a confusion as he sensed a new battle brewing.

Ψ

*Upon my arrival on this land, I found...  
the unknown one to me was the bird of this land...  
the Bermuda Longtail. 1*

Ψ

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1 *"The Bermuda Longtail"* a poem from "Inspiration From A Muse: Poems To Her"