

DARKEST ABYSS

By

Joshua Fernandez

Date: Jan 15, 2024

EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - NIGHT

TRISTAN, a jumbled artist in his mid 20s, slams the exit door and collapses holding his left arm. NIX, a faceless figure in a black cloak, rushes to him.

NIX

(Picking up Tristan)

How hurt are you? Is that blood on you?

TRISTAN

Not blood, ketchup. It's only a scratch, but it kind of stings.

NIX

(Coughing)

Keep the door shut. I'm going to push the dumpster in front.

Tristan nods as Nix darts toward the dumpster several feet from the door. He leans against the door as angry wails fill the air and pounding assaults the door.

NIX

(Grunting) (CONT'D)

How did this happen? Two people was bad enough but you managed to piss off a whole mob!

TRISTAN

Oh, fuck you, you know what happened!

NIX

I warned you not to let ANYTHING slip, and yet you did!

TRISTAN

And I keep telling you not to hide ANYTHING from me, and yet you still do. I'm lucid dreaming right? Why can't I just waltz into a memory and do what I want without everything going to hell?

NIX

I already went through this with you, but everything went out the other ear!

The door hinge breaks as the door cracks open. Tristan tackles the door with all his might

TRISTAN
 (Roaring)
 Hurry up with the dumpster!

NIX
 Pull it, we can close it faster!

Tristan screams as he pulls. The dumpster scrapes across the floor, fully blocking the door. The screams and pounding inside the diner are muffled. Tristan grips his arm and leans against the dumpster.

TRISTAN
 (Confused)
 I thought we were out of the range of the memory, is that supposed to happen?

NIX
 Your body is on adrenaline right now, but you might be under sleep paralysis. Normally you'd wake up, but I need you to breathe and calm down. Clear mind, clear skies.

Tristan closes his eyes to control his breathing. They open in shock as the door forces the dumpster away several inches.

TRISTAN
 What now?

NIX
 (Pointing)
 There's a motorboat near the pier.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Nix and Tristan run through the park on the way to the pier. They constantly look at the diner's exit as rain clouds begin to roll over and thunder fills the air.

NIX
 You couldn't have kept your mouth shut for a few more minutes? You just had to be macho and mighty.

TRISTAN
 What would you have done?

NIX

(Coughing)

Nothing you did! We're here because you overthink way too much. Haven't you noticed every time you're on a power trip, things become worse?

TRISTAN

Maybe I wanted power. Maybe I wanted to have some semblance of control!

NIX

(Sternly)

What actually happened at the diner?

TRISTAN

(Huffing)

Some woman got in my face about an order I brought to her and I pushed her down. Then my manager was trying to take advantage of me and a mob started chasing me!

NIX

I meant in real life.

TRISTAN

Real life?

NIX

Yes damn it. Memories don't go haywire this bad unless you actually assaulted a woman or your trauma is messing with your head. Spill it.

TRISTAN

Fine. What actually happened is after she berated me, she shoved me with my back turned. I knocked over a waitress with a burger in hand and got ketchup on my arm.

The duo slowed to a halt as a loud bang erupted from a distance. Tristan gasps for breath while Nix looks back. He slowly retreats as a mob of diners with pale blue skin haphazardly charge to their location, yelling in a rage.

NIX
(Pulling up Tristan)
Get up, we're almost there!

EXT. SHIP PIER - NIGHT

Nix hops onto the boat to start the engine as Tristan runs around the dock removing the rops from the stumps on the pier.

NIX
(Coughing)
You're not a bad guy. You have done bad things and stupid things, but that doesn't make you a terrible person.

TRISTAN
You good? That cough is getting nasty.

NIX
Yeah, but the idea of being chased down by those freaks at the diner is nastier. Are the ropes off?

TRISTAN
Yeah, let's get out of here.

Tristan hops on the boat as the ship leaves the pier. The diners overcrowd the pier while throwing nearby tools as the sailing ship. It sails away into a nearby fog. Tristan collapses near the railing.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

TRISTAN
Do you have any idea where we're going?

NIX
No, but it beats the Kozy Korner. I'm not sure where we're going, but the fog keeps clearing so we might go to another memory.

TRISTAN
 (Yawning and stretching)
 Thank god.

The fog unveiled a wide body of water with no discernable direction. The clouds that blanketed the skies were dark gray and dispelling rain

TRISTAN
 Is this another memory? I don't recognize this setting.

NIX
 I'm not sure, I can't see anything beyond the fog and nothing but water all around us.

Water splashed heavily in the distance along with an indescribable noise. Tristan stands and glances to the back of the boat in horror to find a wave of diners swimming with ferocity and malice.

TRISTAN
 Is that horde in my head too?!

NIX
 (Worried)
 No, that's real.

TRISTAN
 Holy shit, we're dead!

NIX
 What did I tell you before the diner?

TRISTAN
 (Pacing back and forth)
 That I can't die, I know. That was before the murderous horde that's swimming FASTER than the boat.

The rain falls faster, thunder erupts louder, lightning strikes now illuminate the area, and violent waves fill the waters.

NIX

(Grabs Tristan by his shirt)

Pull your shit together! We don't have much time and they're getting closer by the second. Your nightmare is getting out of control, I need you to focus and clear your mind.

TRISTAN

How do you expect me to be calm at a time like this?!

NIX

I didn't say be calm, I said get your mind right. In the here and now.

Tristan attempts meditating among the chaos with no success. A diner leaps onto the boat and rushes to ambush Nix from behind him and grab him

TRISTAN

Hang on!

Tristan throws a right hook and kicks the diner off the boat. On the opposite side, two more climb on, forcing the duo to recklessly fight. The boat gets impacted from beneath, causing the rotors to slow down.

TRISTAN

Did they turn off the engine? How?

NIX

I think the faster ones swam in the rotors to break or halt it. Either way we're stranded until you can clear the storm.

Three arms emerge to pull Nix overboard. Tristan grabs him and smacks the arms off. Just then, another diner grabs his ankles and pulls him overboard. As Tristan struggles underwater, Nix dives in to fend off the diners and pulls Tristan back to the boat, coughing and throwing up water.

NIX

We can't keep this up, two of them are giving us a hard time and a dozen more are about to come.

TRISTAN

I need time to think, I can't focus.

Tristan struggles to stand as five diners engulf Nix in their arms. Tristan attempts to rush to Nix.

NIX

Don't! Just clear the storm, I'll distract them as long as I can.

Nix tackles the group overboard into the roaring waves. Two more diners arm lock Tristan, scaring him and worsening the storm. He closes his eyes and imagines a leaf. He focuses on his inhaling and exhaling to keep the leaf afloat. The clouds slowly start to clear away, the waves simmer down and the rain becomes lighter. The diners are startled and retreat away from the boat and swim into the distant fog. After a sigh of relief, Tristan looks overboard to see Nix floating still among the waters.

TRISTAN

Nix. Nix!

NIX

Can you stop the yelling please? I just want to rest a moment.

TRISTAN

You're alright, what happened? I thought you drowned.

NIX

Come closer and read my lips when I answer that.

TRISTAN

Well if you're done lounging around, we gotta move on.

NIX

Exactly. No lips, no drowning, but they did rough me up a bit.

TRISTAN

Well if you're done lounging around, we gotta move on.

NIX

Humor me, will you? I almost got mauled by what I thought was a mob of freaks, I think I deserve a break.

TRISTAN

Haha, Fair enough. Come on, let me help you up.

Tristan lifts Nix on the boat and both lay flat on the deck.

TRISTAN

You give pretty solid advice.

NIX

Which piece are you talking about?
I've lost count at this point.

TRISTAN

Clear mind, clear skies right?

The motor of the engine starts up and the boat propels itself forward.

THE END: