

THE WATER THAT SUFFOCATES

You know I wasn't always a fisherman. Before this I was an accountant. Worked for some of the head honchos. The kinda guys that wear hats on their hats. It was a good gig, albeit the kinda good costs your soul in return. A soul that the suits have every right to throw out like last week's tabloid. Unfortunately for me all it took was a misplaced decimal point and suddenly the next document I was signing was a letter of resignation. Bastards took everything. Lost my sweet digs and the corporate cards. Thankfully my ex-brother-in-law still has a heart out for me and offered me a job. Basically I go out on one of their new Void Skippers with a couple guys, grab some fish, and come back. Seemed like some easy scratch to get by so I thought why the hell not.

First day on the job I met a schmuck called Grubby Jim, and before you ask: No I didn't ask why they called him that, I just assumed it was gonna be some goofy ass story that I would have to force a chuckle out just for hearing. Anyway, he introduces me to rest of the crew:

There was McKinney, Jims right hand man and damn good poker player. 'Parently he made a promise to get good at it after he lost his wedding ring on a gambit. Half near lost his ear from the yellin' the misses gave him after she found out. Past him there was Fred-Rick, a pair of blonde haired twins named Fred and Rick respectively that were just treated as if they were one person. Last of the crew was Mudd, not much I can say about how he looked given the fact damn near his entire face was caked in stuff I didn't care to know about. After we got done with pleasantries and hand waggin'', Jim got the boat started and we headed out.

Now - I ain't tellin' you I was scared or nothin', I don't wanna look like a chump, I mean, you hardly know me. But there was somethin'... odd... Like the water was deeper than it should be. I ain't no history buff but I do remember hearing something about the world snappin in more than two places. Thought of was some sort of hokey-pokey story they tell kids to make the world seem bigger than it actually is. Point is, despite my better knowin: the place felt off. Like the water was waitin for you to hop right in.

Anyway we get far enough out to where we can only really make out the port of Helios by the lights through the fog. Damn near the whole city was basically a lighthouse. Despite the distant glow, there was an overwhelming silence. Beyond the rocking and creaking of the boat there wasn't much happening. I was told to manage alongside McKinney as he had been on the boat the longest, all the while Mudd and the

two musketeers were out figurin' who got what side of the boat. Me and him got tongue wagging about how I ended up where I ended up, though I mainly told him about my old boss with the one white eye and the stick up his ass.

By the end of our chat we noticed that Fred-Rick wasn't around. Asked Mudd where the scamps ran off to but he just huffed and kept on bein' Mudd. Eventually me and McKinney went 'round lookin' for the kids and eventually found Rick out by the back of the boat. Staring out like he saw a ghost. Fred was nowhere to be seen though. Tried asking him what happened and the kid was shut like a clam. See now McKinney and I thought that he might have fallen in but when we went to look we didn't see anything to assume he went overboard. After a round of lookin, we decided to go and tell Grubby Jim but his damn door was locked. Figures the guy went for a snooze while we were fishin' and was a damn heavy sleeper but the look on McKinney's face told me that something was wrong. Guy tried bustin' it down with his shoulder for a bit which seemed to eventually do the trick. Room was empty though. Like a phantasm in the night he was gone. Not like there were any secret nappin' spots on the boat he could be hiding.

By this point I was damn near livid. I ran back out to try and muster up the engine again but no dice. Poor girl was dead in the water. But guess what I damn well see? Guy Mudd was still damn fishing through this whole thing. I run up to the fucker and grab him by the scruff askin' about if he was part of this whole deal. Guy just laughed in my face, was damn well bout to sucker the bastard before I heard McKinney Scream bloody murder.

Ran back into the captain's quarters and saw the guy on the ground. Seems he pulled back a curtain and found a wooden statue carved into the wall. Now despite our predicament I laugh up a storm, we are in serious bullshit and he's screaming' at statues. Anyway we back out of there looking for any sign of life but Mudd and we're met with zilch. Now at this point I start to worry a little bit. Not cuz I'm scared but because I start thinking about how we're gonna make it back to shore.

At this point the already foggy shoreline air gets a tad more foggy and a lot more eerie. To be honest I wasn't exactly feeling like I was safe just sitting around here, deciding I gotta get the fuck off this piece of shit rust bucket. I make a b line for the lifeboat but the damn thing is missing. Look out on the water a good 30 some odd feet before I see Mudd making his way back to shore laughing like a banshee. I curse the bastard out a bit before my lungs damn near give out. So's I figure, he aint gonna get far if I have anything to say about it and jump on in after the fucker. Unfortunately for me that waddnt exactly a sound plan. Mudd was already too damn far and my swimming ain't what it used to be.

Eventually though I start hearing shit. Sounded like moaning and groaning. I started to swim back to the boat but it felt farther than before. Eventually I get in eye distance and I see a face sticking out the side of the hull. Looked like Fred but fused to the hull. Damn shit made it look like the poor kid was melting into it. Now at this point I ain't having it, I'm freaking out and before you know it I look down and see... well I don't know. I saw something in the water below me. Looked like a crab or a mantis or... something. Either way it felt like it was looking at me. Anyway I'm telling you about this now because I don't think it's gonna end well. And if I am gonna tell this crap story to anyone it might as well be you. Anyway, fucker - do your worst. Oh and by the way, never be a fucking sailor.