

Endless Dunes

By

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A tribute to Waterworld

EXT. SAND DUNES - DAY

A light wind blows sand across an endless sea of dunes, pushing them like slow-moving waves.

A withered and beaten SLOOP emerges from behind a dune. It crests the dune and then carves downward through the sand.

The sloop is fast. It is steered by a tall, lanky teenager covered in dirty rags - KALIB. Sitting against the rail is his older brother, JAKE - a muscular man with a bushy beard.

JAKE

We can't just go back.

KALIB

What else can we do?

JAKE

We keep looking for a colony. She just wants one kid.

KALIB

We've been doing that for months. There's nothing out here. Pa told us to go home. That was the last thing he said, remember?

JAKE

If we go back, we're just waiting to die. Dammit, for all we know, home might be under the sand by now.

KALIB

Then we find a way to kill her.

JAKE

And end up like Falk? You saw his blade go right through her. You saw what she did to him for it.

The wind pushes the sloop up and over another dune, and again it descends down the face. This time, Jake spots a slow-moving JUNK, over-burdened with salvage, trying to scale its own dune.

JAKE

What's that?

Kalib spots it and steers the sloop toward the junk. As they pull up beside it, Jake tosses a small anchor out behind them to slow down and match the other boat's speed.

A SCAVENGER waves excitedly at Kalib and throws out his own anchor. The two boats slowly slide up next to each other in the sand.

SCAVENGER

Lok'na! Ya be look'n ta trade?

The Scavenger is a goblin. His skin is a moist orange and covered in a layer of oily dirt. He is hunched over and short. His big, black eyes shift endlessly - looking at everything on the sloop except the two men.

KALIB

Wood scraps, nails, rope. Do you have these?

SCAVENGER

Ya! Course, ya. Question I got, is what ya got fa me?

KALIB

We have Fruit, meat, salt...

SCAVENGER

And water?

The Scavenger's eyes lock in on a large glass globe hanging from a rope net just behind Kalib. It's filled to the brim with water.

JAKE

No.

KALIB

(clarifies)

We don't trade water.

Jake notices a nine-year-old boy, BEN, sitting at the bow of the junk. He's dirty, hardly dressed, and covered with bruises. Streaks of dried tears run down his dust-painted cheeks.

JAKE

What about that boy? We'll trade for him.

SCAVENGER

Boy! Scor'ney Krano!

Ben hesitantly walks over to the scavenger. The goblin snatches him by the neck and brings him in close.

SCAVENGER  
Water fa tha boy.

Fresh tears begin to stream down Ben's cheeks.

SCAVENGER  
(laughing)  
Look! Tha boy make his own water.

JAKE  
Four cups for the boy.

The Scavenger gets fidgety. He begins to scratch his face nervously.

SCAVENGER  
Na, I need tha whole thing.

JAKE  
No.

SCAVENGER  
Then, ya get no boy.

Jake picks up a harpoon and holds it threateningly.

JAKE  
Four cups or we'll just take him.  
Your choice.

KALIB  
Jake?

JAKE  
(to Kalib)  
We need that boy, Kalib.

The Scavenger's eyes shoot between the two men menacingly.

SCAVENGER  
(in his native tongue)  
Kor'kra! Skano Fala!

Suddenly, two ATTACKERS emerge from behind piles of salvage. One is another goblin; this one shorter and squatter. The other is a human; he's tall, hairless, and thick. Both are armed with blunt objects and they waste no time jumping onto the sloop.

Jake thrusts the harpoon into the hairless man's chest, pushes him over and then jabs him again and again with the weapon.

The squat goblin goes after Kalib. The teenager tries to pull out his dagger, but the goblin is too fast. He begins beating Kalib with his club.

But before the goblin can get too many hits on Kalib, Jake spears him through the neck with his harpoon.

JAKE  
(to Kalib)  
You okay-

Suddenly, an axe slices into Jake's shoulder. He falls down, revealing the Scavenger behind him.

KALIB  
No!

As the Scavenger tries to pull the axe loose from Jake's shoulder, Kalib jumps up and drives his dagger into the Scavenger's gut. He then pushes the goblin to the edge of the sloop and throws him overboard.

The Scavenger hits the sand and immediately begins to sink.

SCAVENGER  
Krog! Help me!

The Scavenger struggles to grab hold of something, anything, but he just continues to slowly submerge into the hot sand. Kalib watches without pity from aboard the sloop.

SCAVENGER  
Please! Boy! Help!

A second later, the Scavenger's face disappears beneath the sand.

Kalib turns and goes to Jake. He picks up Jake's lifeless body in his arms. Tears drip down his face.

KALIB  
Why did you do that? Dammit!

Kalib wraps Jake up in a tarp and drops him off the side of the sloop. He quickly sinks beneath the sand, following the goblin down into the endless netherworld beneath the surface.

After wiping his tears from his face, Kalib jumps onto the Junk and begins pillaging for anything useful. But there isn't much.

INT. JUNK HULL

Kalib goes down into the hull and finds Ben curled in a ball. He stops in his tracks and stares at the frightened boy.

KALIB  
Were these your people?

The boy answers 'no' with the shake of his head.

KALIB  
Did they hurt you?

The boy doesn't respond.

KALIB  
What is your name?

BEN  
Ben.

KALIB  
Get up, Ben. You'll come with me  
now.

EXT. SAND DUNES

Ben and Kalib are back on board the sloop. Kalib pulls up the anchor and sets the sail.

The sloop slides across the sand with ease. Ben stands up and looks ahead of them with curiosity.

BEN  
Where are we going?

KALIB  
A place far away from here.

MONTAGE:

EXT. SUNKEN RUINS - DUSK

The sloop slowly glides through a sunken city. The tops of ancient, ruined skyscrapers peek out of the sand.

Kalib holds one hand steady on the Scavenger's axe while scanning for potential threats.

From a hole in a building, a pair of hunched-over, scaly humanoids with black bulbous eyes stare down at the passing boat.

EXT. FLAT DUNES - DAY

Ben steers the sloop as Kalib hangs off the side with a harpoon raised over his head. He is watching a snake-like trail pass through the sand next to the boat.

Kalib throws the harpoon into the sand, it immediately twists over and goes under. He grabs a hold of the rope attached to the harpoon and flexes his muscles to pull his catch out from the sand.

EXT. FLAT DUNES - DUSK

Ben and Kalib laugh and smile as they pick apart and eat their catch.

Ben stares off at the horizon, toward a distant wall of sand.

EXT. SANDSTORM - NIGHT

The sloop is beaten up by a powerful sandstorm.

While Kalib struggles to steady the sloop, Ben curls up with a blanket along the ribs of the small boat.

EXT. SMALL SAND DUNES - MORNING

The sandstorm has passed and the sloop is covered in dust.

While Ben is sleeping, Kalib wipes dirt off the side of the water globe. It's very low. He discovers a crack on the side where water has been leaking out.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. SMALL SAND DUNES - SUNSET

Kalib is on his knees at the bow of the sloop. His eyes are closed and his hands are outstretched. He quietly mutters a prayer.

Ben stares at him for a while before growing the courage to ask.

BEN  
What are you doing?

KALIB  
Praying.

BEN  
To who?

KALIB  
The gods.

BEN  
Which gods?

KALIB  
Those of the sun, the sand, and the rain.

BEN  
I don't worship those gods. I was told they were cruel and evil.

KALIB  
I don't worship them either. I beg for their mercy.

BEN  
My people honored the Shipwrights. The ones who saved us from your gods when they cursed the old world.

Kalib turns and looks at Ben with a curious gaze.

KALIB  
You never said where you came from.

BEN  
I was born on an island-ship.

KALIB  
You lie. Those are myths.

BEN  
They're more real than your gods. I grew up on one. The deck was a hundred feet above the hot sand and it was covered in forests and orchards.

KALIB

Yes, yes, I've heard these stories. But tell me, how big were the sails to push such a boat?

BEN

There were no sails. It was a machine built by the Shipwrights long ago. It could push through the sand on its own.

KALIB

Where is it now, then? And why are you not on it?

Ben is silent for a moment, his face is overcome with melancholy.

BEN

It capsized in a sandstorm. After that, the scavengers found us. Luca took me- said he was going to sell me to slavers.

Kalib stares at Ben for a moment.

KALIB

(empathetic)

I'm sorry.

Ben looks away and tries to change the subject.

BEN

Where are we going?

KALIB

My home was a green place. An oasis. There were trees everywhere. More water than a hundred men could drink.

Kalib pauses and looks out at the horizon.

BEN

Are we going there?

KALIB

No. It's no longer as it was. The trees are dying, the water is evaporating, and the sand rises every day. My brothers and sisters are there. My family and everyone, I know. If I don't stop this drought, they will die.

BEN

What then? Are you searching for the god of the rain?

KALIB

No. I've already found her. I left home in a party of ten. My father and brother were among them. We fought scorpion men and harpies to find her. When we finally did, there were only four left.

BEN

Did she grant your wish?

KALIB

The goddess would not hear our plea without payment. Instead, she killed one more of us. My father died soon after, and then my brother... Now, I am the last of that party. It is up to me.

EXT. SCATTERED DUNES - MORNING

Kalib pours the last drops of water from the glass globe into an iron cup. He swirls the water around, judging its amount.

Kalib shoots a glance at Ben. He looks weak.

KALIB

Here. Drink.

He hands the cup to Ben. The boy drinks it down and then holds it over his mouth, trying to get the very last drops.

Ben then looks out at the horizon. He spots a glistening just beyond the sand dunes. He wipes his eyes and tries to focus. It looks like a huge body of water.

BEN

Look! Over there!

Kalib looks out at the water and shoots a smile at Ben. He steers the sloop in that direction.

EXT. SALT LAKE - MORNING

The sloop is anchored in the mud near the body of water. Ben watches nervously as Kalib climbs down onto the mud and then walks up to the water.

Seeing that it is safe, Ben jumps out of the sloop and bolts toward the lake, collapsing into it, and cupping his hands to fill them with water.

KALIB  
Don't drink it!

Ben looks up at Kalib with confusion.

KALIB  
It's poisoned with salt. The more  
you drink, the more you'll thirst.

Embarrassed and confused, Ben stands up and wipes the mud off his hands.

KALIB  
Come. We're almost there.

Kalib walks into the knee-deep lake and continues on toward the horizon. Ben quickly falls in behind him.

EXT. SALT LAKE - DAY

The two continue walking until they reach a dense fog. Kalib looks back at Ben. He is hunched over and out of energy.

KALIB  
Get on my back. I'll carry you the  
rest of the way.

Ben does as he's told and the two enter the fog.

EXT. STONEHENGE

They continue through the fog until they reach an island. It is all mud except for the various stones that shoot out of the ground and form a ceremonial circle. In the center of this circle is an enormous stone well overflowing with clean, clear water.

Ben and Kalib enter the circle and Ben climbs down from Kalib's back. He looks around with a frown on his face.

BEN

This is it?

KALIB

Don't speak.

The two stand in silence for a while; Ben looking around with confusion, Kalib looking for someone.

Out of the well, the GODDESS emerges, slowly ascending submerged steps. The Goddess is beautiful and completely naked. Her hands and mouth are stained in a dried black substance that could be either tar or blood.

GODDESS

You return to me, Kalib.

The Goddess struts up to Kalib and caresses his jawline.

GODDESS

What is it you wish?

KALIB

I wish for rain. An end to this drought- Please.

The Goddess moves gracefully to Ben and strokes his cheek.

GODDESS

You have brought payment for your wish? I trust he is innocent?

Kalib drops to his knees.

KALIB

Please! I beg you for mercy.

The Goddess scowls at Kalib.

GODDESS

Mercy? I have no mercy for you, Kalib. I wasted all my mercy on men a hundred lifetimes ago. Your kind is wicked and evil- as you have always been.

BEN

That's not true!

The Goddess shoots a dark stare at the boy.

BEN

There are good men. Kalib is a good man.

GODDESS

Is he?

BEN

Yes.

The Goddess turns back to Kalib.

GODDESS

(to Kalib)

You have been given your price.  
Water for water. Rain for blood.

Kalib is silent for a moment as he contemplates what she is saying. His eyes fill with tears. He shuts them tight.

KALIB

(to Ben)

Forgive me.

Ben looks at Kalib with confusion.

Suddenly, Kalib is on his feet. In a single motion, he grabs Ben and throws him onto the edge of the well.

Ben looks up in horror as Kalib pulls out his dagger and holds it above Ben's chest.

Kalib hesitates and looks up at the Goddess for a moment, tears stream down his face in a torrent. The Goddess looks back at him with an impatient glare.

Kalib screams out in anger and drives the dagger into Ben's chest. Blood floods out and into the well. Ben stares at Kalib with wide eyes as life leaves him.

He lets go of Ben and watches him sink into the depths of the well. His pained eyes shoot to the Goddess- a wry smirk is painted on her face.

KALIB

You have your blood- Now, grant me rain.

GODDESS

No.

KALIB

No? What do you mean?! I did what  
you asked!

GODDESS

All you have done is proven your  
wickedness.

Without saying another word, the Goddess climbs back into  
the well and descends into its depths.

KALIB

Goddess?! I beg of you!

Kalib is left alone without an answer.

KALIB

Please!

Kalib falls back onto his knees and bursts into an  
uncontrollable sob.

CUT TO BLACK