

TRUTH OR DIE

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CLIFF OVER THE OCEAN - DAY

BRAD (17) walks to the precipice of the cliff. He's clean-cut teen: dark hair, jeans, white t-shirt and sneakers.

He has a black eye, a fresh one.

He looks beyond to the foamy sea a hundred feet down.

He gets dizzy. Steps a foot back and sits. If he leans over too far, he'll go headfirst over the edge. Good.

He pulls out his cell phone and dials.

BRAD

Mom?

We hear MOM, muffled, say he shouldn't call her at work.

BRAD

It's... important.

We hear her voice go high in an annoyed question, saying something like, "What is it now, Brad?"

BRAD

I just wanna say I'm sorry... for what this'll do to you.

Her voice rises, concerned. It cuts off as the cell loses its signal... beep-beep-beep. Brad stares at the phone.

BRAD

Fffffffuck!

He drops his head. A GIRL's hand extends her cell phone to him.

GEE

I think mine still gets reception up here. Wanna try?

Brad looks up. It's a girl, GEE (17). She's pretty in an indie way, with pierced eyebrow, dyed hair and a black dress. Her long hair blows in her face when the wind catches it.

He grunts as he throws his cell over the edge. They both watch it go down. Gee gets vertigo and steps back.

GEE

On second thought, you have slippery fingers.

BRAD
 Could you... go away?

GEE
 Why? You gonna jump? If you are,
 I wanna watch.

BRAD
 I just want to be left alone.

She sits next to him, a couple feet away. He scowls.

BRAD
 I guess that doesn't matter to you.

GEE
 I can sit here if I want.

BRAD
 That's stupid. It's dangerous up
 here.

GEE
 Very funny, coming from the guy
 ready to swan dive into the Great
 Beyond.

BRAD
 I'm not jumping.

GEE
 Well, maybe I am. So the least you
 could do is leave me alone.

They sit in silence a couple seconds, neither giving up
 ground to the other.

GEE
 Why don't you ask what my name is?

BRAD
 'Cause I couldn't care less.

GEE
 Don't you have any manners at all?

BRAD
 I already know your name. It's...
 Nosey McSmartass.

GEE
 That's the silliest thing I've
 heard all day. Where'd you come up
 with that?

He blushes and scowls again, silent.

GEE
Actually, it's Gina. My friends
call me Gee.

BRAD
My friends call me Brad, so you can
call me--

GEE
--anything but.

BRAD
You got it.

GEE
Wow. Suicidal and surly. What an
attractive combo. Get a lot of
dates with that charm?

BRAD
Nobody asked you to come up here
and hassle me!

He gets fetal, wishing the day and everyone in it would
disappear.

GEE
Sorry. Thought I was helping...
somehow.

BRAD
Leaving me alone would help the
most.

Not going anywhere, Gee gets a little more comfortable.

GEE
Hey. Wanna play a game with me?

He sighs.

BRAD
If I say yes, will you go away?

GEE
It's called "Truth or Lie".

BRAD
Don't you mean "Truth or Dare"?

GEE
Not the way I play. I'll ask you a
question.

(MORE)

GEE (cont'd)

If you lie, you have to take
something off and throw it away.

He looks over the cliff, than back at her. She nods.

BRAD

How will you know if I'm lying?

GEE

It'll be easy to tell. Trust me.

BRAD

And if I tell ya the truth?

GEE

You get to ask me a question. Same
rules apply.

He leans in and nods toward her dress.

BRAD

What are you wearing under that?

GEE

Why don't you find out?

BRAD

Whatever you say.

GEE

I'll start you off easy. Why do
you want to know so bad what it
feels like to die?

BRAD

That's starting me off "easy"? I
don't want to kill myself.

He looks at her, sheepish. She knows. He tugs on his
sneaker, pulls it off. Tosses it off the cliff.

GEE

Both shoes count as one.

BRAD

Who says?

GEE

Official rules. Do it.

He pulls his other sneaker off. He salutes as he lets it go--

BRAD

Goodbye, Air Jordans.

GEE
What's the truth?

BRAD
I did a bad thing. A really awful thing. I didn't know where else to go, so I came up here. I guess jumping crossed my mind.

GEE
What did you do?

BRAD
Uh-uh. It's my turn to ask you a question.

He turns to her.

BRAD
Why do you make yourself look like such a freak? Y'know, with the piercings and the hair. What's up with that?

GEE
I like to look the way I want. I don't give a crap what anyone else thinks.

He gives her a look. She's right; lies are easy to spot. She slips off a sandal.

BRAD
Both shoes--

GEE
--count as one, I know.

She pulls off the other sandal and chucks them both into the abyss. She watches them sail away. He does, too.

BRAD
Now, the truth.

GEE
I do this... so I always know exactly what people are looking at when they stare at me.

She takes a breath.

GEE
It's better than always wondering why.

She tucks a wayward strand of hair behind her ear.

GEE
What's the "really bad thing" you
did? That's my next question.

BRAD
I think... I killed someone.

GEE
Who?

BRAD
Tyler. My best friend.

She laughs.

GEE
Guess you're not his best friend
anymore, are ya?

He looks at her, hurt. Then angry. He stands.

BRAD
Screw you.

He walks away. She stands and follows him.

GEE
Wait. I didn't mean--

Gee reaches out and cups her hand on Brad's shoulder. He stops abruptly and turns, making her almost run into him. He stands defiant, chest out. She feels the warmth of barely an inch between them. It's electric.

GEE
You're serious.

Brad's anger melts. Fear tries to step in, but he won't let it. He looks into her eyes and nods slowly.

GEE
When? Like, today?

He walks past her, back toward the precipice. She follows. He sits closer to the edge than ever.

BRAD
Uh-huh. An hour ago. Maybe less.

Gee sits next to him, but it's just too close to the edge for her. She scoots back a little.

GEE

What did you do to him?

He picks up a dead stick and picks at the bark.

BRAD

Jumping feels like more of an
option than ever right now.

He grits his teeth and breaks the stick in two. She crawls
closer to him -- fuck the edge.

GEE

Take a deep breath. You need it.

She touches him. He closes his eyes and inhales deeply.
Softly, she says:

GEE

Tell me what happened... Brad.

BRAD

We were messing around. Drinking
beer over by the sand dunes down
there.

GEE

Yeah?

BRAD

It's my turn again. Did you ever
wish someone you love... was dead?

She scrunches her face up.

GEE

Huh?

BRAD

Is there someone you really care
about. But... they don't care
back, not the way you do. And it
makes you so crazy, because they
have this control over you...

GEE

...that you wish they'd just die,
even if you had to kill them
yourself.

BRAD

Yeah. You even think about how it
would go down sometimes.

She looks at him. Then at her feet.

GEE

No. I've never wished that.

He waits. When she does nothing:

BRAD

So, what are you gonna take off
now?

She's caught. Thinks a second, gets an idea. Her fingers unhook her bra strap over her dress. She slides the bra out of her sleeve.

He's impressed. She swings the bra dramatically around before letting it flutter down ten stories to the waves.

GEE

My father works 24/7. He's never home. When he is, I'm the last thing on his mind.

BRAD

I guess some Dad is better than none at all. Mine died when I was two.

She flushes and glowers at him.

GEE

You don't know what the hell you're talking about. It is not "better." Nothing's worse than being... ignored. I'd rather he was dead.

BRAD

I'm sorry.

GEE

Don't apologize for me.

She backhands his shoulder, playfully but not.

GEE

Now spill it. What happened to your friend Tyler?

BRAD

I pushed him. Into a ditch.

GEE

For no reason?

BRAD

Yeah. For no reason.

Unable to fake it anymore, Brad pulls off his sock.

GEE

Both socks count as...

BRAD

Okay, okay. I know the drill.

He peels off the other sock, rolls them into a ball and tosses it into the wind. The sock-ball sails off into nothingness.

BRAD

Tyler and I have been best friends since we were six. I'd do anything for that guy. I thought he felt the same way about me.

He starts to rock back and forth a little.

BRAD

We were drinking beer and listening to the radio. Then we started playing our own game of "Truth or Lie". Except... all I was tellin' was the truth.

He stops rocking.

BRAD

He asked me... if I ever thought about having sex... with a guy. He kept pushing me to be honest. He said best friends keep each other's secrets. So I told him I had.

GEE

You did?

BRAD

And it was with him.

GEE

Oh, jeez, Brad.

BRAD

No, it's not what you think. I'm totally straight. I thought about having sex with Tyler one time, that's all. I thought he'd be... flattered.

GEE

He wasn't.

BRAD

Nope. He went ballistic, wailing on me and calling me a fag. I've never seen him so mad.

She gently reaches out to touch his black eye. He lets her.

GEE

He got you good.

When he flinches, she pulls her fingers back.

BRAD

He wasn't fucking around, so I pushed him, hard. He fell backward into the drainage ditch.

GEE

Did he pass out?

BRAD

He was bleeding... bad. Saw it all over his face. He was saying I was gonna pay for this. Then he fell down again and didn't get up. He mighta passed out, I don't know. I just... left and came up here.

GEE

Oh, God. We have to go see what happened to him.

He regains composure.

BRAD

I can't.

GEE

Right now.

BRAD

No!

He stands, towering over her. Gee stands, too, feeling afraid for the first time.

GEE

If we don't...

BRAD

I know.

He maneuvers himself so he is between Gee and the way off the cliff. She's cornered.

BRAD

Last question, Gee. Hope you get this one right. You gonna tell on me?

They stare at each other. She looks behind her, at the edge.

GEE

I have to help that boy down there. No matter what you do.

He steps closer to her.

BRAD

I guess our game's changed a little. Now it's called "Truth... or Die".

GEE

Then here's my last question for you. Is all this worth killing somebody over?

He's quiet. They stare holes in each other.

GEE

Is it, Brad?

After a second, he steps aside.

BRAD

No.

He drops his head. She walks past him, closer to safety.

BRAD

What are you gonna do?

She stops and turns.

GEE

We are gonna go down and get some help for Tyler.

BRAD

What about the rest?

GEE

He's probably still okay.

BRAD

H-He'll tell everyone what I said.

GEE

That's something you and he have to
work out. C'mon.

She starts walking away. He watches her go, then turns and
walks toward the precipice of the cliff. He shakes. Pulls
off his t-shirt. Wads it into a ball.

BRAD

Fuck it.

He throws his t-shirt off the cliff. Watches it flutter in
the wind as it sails downward. As Gee walks away,

GEE

I hope the stuff we threw away
makes it back to shore...

He turns. Grits his teeth. Runs full-speed toward her.

GEE

...'cause I sure loved those
sandals...

Had she caught him in the corner of her eye a moment sooner,
she would have known to run.

He grabs her in a bear hug, pinning her arms to her sides.

Bigger, stronger, he carries her to the edge of the cliff and
hurls them both off it. Gee can't utter a word it happens so
fast.

Holding her tight, he looks down as they plummet to the rocks
and waves a hundred feet below.

As they fall, he sees the greenish sea below gets clearer,
more in focus, gray foam forming jagged peaks.

He catches just a glimpse of Gee's face

her features frozen

scared

The sea quickly rushes to meet them

until finally

FADE OUT: