

Aristaeus
by
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EXT. WASTELAND - DAY

A tiny robotic dog named ARISTAEUS, aka ARIS, leans its head from behind a rock. A stray bullet flies over Aris's head.

Aris flops into a prone position, and another bullet skims over Aris's body. Aris leaps on its feet and runs from the nearby threats.

A group of five mercenaries pursues Aris.

Aris leaps and crawls while it dodges the flurry of bullets. One of the bullets strikes Aris's legs. Aris limps.

Aris leaps into a tall grassy area and activates its cloak ability.

The mercenaries stop.

The armed soldiers investigate the area and walk past Aris.

Aris peaks its head from the bushes and deactivates its cloaking ability.

Aris roams the wasteland and spots a rundown shack from a distance.

INT. JON'S HOUSE - DAY

JON DIXON (55), an older unwashed man, cooks a dead frog. Jon hears a SCRATCH at his door, and he opens the door and looks down.

Aris looks up at Jon.

JON
What the hell?

Jon grabs Aris.

While he holds Aris in one arm, Jon swipes the trash off his table with the other arm.

Jon places Aris on the table.

He walks to his tool cabinet, picks up a toolbox and welder mask, and drops the toolbox on the table next to Aris.

Jon covers his face with the welder mask and works on Aris.

INT. JON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jon stands over Aris and removes his welders mask. He wipes the sweat off his face with his dirty shirt.

Aris's eyes light up.

Jon stares at Aris.

Aris stands on all fours and looks at Jon.

ARIS

Hello, my name is Aristaeus, but you can call me Aris. What is your name?

Jon's eyes widen.

JON

Uhhh...I'm...I'm...Jon

Aris wags its robotic tail.

ARIS

Thank you, Jon, for the structural repair. I need to recharge for a few hours, and then I will be on my way.

Jon packs his tools up.

JON

Do you have a death wish? If you go out at night, you are asking to be killed, and from that bullet hole, I just patched up looks like you already came close.

Aris continues to wag its tail.

JON (CONT'D)

You can stay tonight, and we'll figure it out in the morning.

Aris jumps off the table.

ARIS

Thank you, Jon. It's good to know nice humans still exist.

INT/EXT. ALEX VEHICLE - NIGHT

ALEX MORROW (36), a fashionable man, sits in the backseat. While MATHIAS HAYWARD (43), a rugged arm for hire, sits in the driver's seat inside Alex's off-road vehicle.

ALEX

We need to get that damn weapon back. We risk having a mutiny on our hands if anyone finds out we lost Aris. Nothing is going to stand in my way of controlling the wastelands.

Mathias sips his coffee.

MATHIAS

You need to relax, man. It's under control. You will have your weapon back by the end of the day.

Alex checks his phone.

ALEX

I'll relax when I get Aris back. You better make sure nothing goes wrong.

Mathias stares at the wasteland.

MATHIAS

Nothing will go wrong, I promise.

Alex looks up.

ALEX

This is your last chance. I'm paying you good money to find Aris. I don't take kindly to failure.

Mathias turns to Alex.

MATHIAS

Is that a threat? I've killed men for less. You'll get your weapon. Just make sure you have my money.

INT. JON'S HOUSE - DAY

Jon searches his cabinets for food.

Aris stretches its body.

ARIS

Good morning Jon. Thank you for allowing me to shelter in with you last night. Is there any way I can repay you?

Jon looks at Aris.

JON

Alright, help me look for some food today. I'm not getting any younger, and food's been scarce around here.

Aris sits on the floor.

ARIS

I can help you with that. Hunting is one of my primary features.

Jon picks up his rifle.

JON

Great, let's get started while it's early.

EXT. WASTELAND - DAY

A rifle is over Jon's shoulder while he and Aris roam the wasteland.

JON

Appreciate your help finding food. It's hot as hell out there, not to mention dirty, and not a good combination for these old lungs of mine.

Aris looks up at Jon.

ARIS

I am hopeful that we won't be out here too long.

Aris stops.

ARIS (CONT'D)

Stop. I see something.

Aris uses its telephoto ability to get a better look at a wild boar.

JON

Where is it? I can't see anything.

Aris's eyes turn red.

A laser blasts through Aris's eyes and strikes the boar.

Jon's eyes widen.

JON (CONT'D)

What the hell was that? Did you shoot
that boar with your eyes?

Aris looks down to avoid eye contact with Jon.

ARIS

I apologize, Jon. My primary purpose is
to be used as a weapon. However, I always
desire to be something more than just a
weapon.

Jon holds his face in his palm.

Jon uncovers his face and looks at Aris.

JON

I appreciate you zapping that boar, and
we can get home sooner, but my old man
raise d me that if I hunt somethin', it
should be hunted fairly.

Aris looks at Jon.

JON (CONT'D)

I think that's enough for today. Let's
get that boar and go home. I don't want
to be caught outside after dark.

Aris looks at Jon.

ARIS

Yes, Jon.

EXT. WASTELAND - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS

A CALVARY SCOUT, early 30s, looks through a pair of
binoculars.

Jon Dixon and Aris can be seen from a distance.

The SCOUT takes a photo and leaves the rocky area.

INT. JONS HOUSE - NIGHT

Jon sits in his worn chair while he eats the freshly
cooked boar. Aris sits beside Jon's feet.

JON

I haven't had food this good in a long time.

Jon eats a piece of cooked meat with his hands.

JON (CONT'D)

Listen, Aris. I'm sorry about earlier. I've been alone for a long time, so I am not so good with conversation. You surprised me...

Aris looks at Jon.

ARIS

It's okay, Jon. No need to apologize; I should have told you before I did that.

Jon offers Aris a piece of the cooked boar meat.

ARIS (CONT'D)

Thank you, Jon, but I am not capable of eating anything.

Jon sits his plate on the side table next to him.

JON

Hey, you're welcome to stay a while if you want. Having you around hasn't been terrible.

Aris's tail wags.

JON (CONT'D)

Just promise me you won't use your weapons again. I've survived this long by not bringing attention to myself.

Aris tale wags slower.

ARIS

Sure, Jon, that would be nice. I just --

JON

Enough of that for tonight. Let's get some shut-eye.

INT. JON'S HOUSE - DAY

Aris sees Alex's vehicle from a distance.

Aris sprints to Jon's bed.

ARIS

Jon, you need to wake up. We are both in grave danger.

Jon opens his eyes.

JON

What... what's going on?

Aris looks at Jon.

ARIS

I have been running from my former master's for a while to obtain freedom. However, he spotted us.

Jon walks over to grab his rifle.

Jon picks up his rifle.

JON

Why didn't you tell me?

Aris looks at Jon.

ARIS

I know I should, and I am very sorry, but we must go now.

EXT. JON'S FRONT YARD - DAY

Jon and Aris run out of the house.

The vehicle gets closer to the house.

Aris stops.

JON

Aris, come on, we need to leave now.

ARIS

No, Jon, I can't leave with you. Now please get out of here before it's too late.

Aris stands in a fighter's stance while its eyes turn red.

JON (O.S.)

Aris!