Odonata

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by DragonWolf

Summary

Maybe don't hover your jet directly over the water next time

Notes

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"We can still talk about this, Georg"

Hollis really didn't have the time or the energy for what was happening. She's had a stressful week, the budget was still a headache even if it wasn't as much of a problem as it once was, a routine mission three days ago went wrong halfway through (thankfully without any casualties) and now this.

A madman in a stolen jet. Go figure. What else did they all have planned for this afternoon, nothing of course.

"There's nothing left to say, Hollis!" Georg yelled, standing on top of the hovering aircraft. Maybe if they were lucky he'd lose his footing and the whole situation would be over like that "i'll have my revenge on you, on the psychonauts! For putting me into that cage like a rabid animal!" Oh god, he was monologing like he was in a comic book. It was just getting better and better wasn't it.

"You went to jail for aggravated assault, Georg" Yelled someone from the small crowd at the entrance "also for tax fraud"

"Irrelevant! You handed me over to the cops!"

"They literally caught you on camera beating a man half to death"

The man just growled ineffectively.

This whole thing would be a lot less of a problem if they could just pluck him off the jet with TK, but no, the thing was psychonauts property and had shields for that sort of thing.

And while the man was a lousy psychic at best, unless you count being able to levitate pens as anything spectacular, he was a worthy mechanic, and there seemed to be a weapon of some sort mounted on the front of the vehicle.

So really just more and more problems from this man.

"Whatever!" Georg hollered, looking as red as a tomato, unclear from rage or embarrassment "you don't call the shots here, i do! If anyone moves any closer i'll shoot"

Some people made noise like a nervous laugh but no one moved. The weapon, gun or whatever it was, looked legitimate.

There were people moving on the other side of the quarry lake, getting into a position where Georg couldn't see them. Good. If one of them got within the shielded area they would be able to get a clear shot to either TK or Psiblast the man. Hollis moved her gaze away from them to not give them away on the off chance that the man actually noticed that sort of thing.

"You gotta be reasonable, man!" Someone else yelled, she couldn't be sure who, but it came from somewhere around where she knew the Junior agents were clustered together. The jet

was making too much noise to clearly make out a voice but she could bet it was Morris or Adam.

She really had to stop with the thoughts about betting, she was past that.

"I'm reasonable in how mad I am!" he screamed, somehow getting redder in the face “you’re all to blame here, I won’t hesitate to point this thing at any of you” he tapped the gun thing’s barrel with his foot for emphasis.

“Come on, we don’t even know you dude”

He wasn’t listening anymore. Instead he pulled some sort of remove from his jacket pocket. Hollis glanced behind him. No one was close enough yet. Damn.

The powersource, or what she assumed was one, of the gun whirred to life.

Then.

The water underneath the jet burst.

It made a lot of noise, as explosions in water are known to do. It almost seemed like the gun misfired, but she suspected that wasn’t it.

People screamed and staggered back. Georg squealed like a cat caught off guard.

Something came barreling out of the water, never minding the shielding of the jet, and what was clearly jaws seized the vehicle by the sides.

Georg was catapulted off when the thing shook the jet. He landed on an automatic walkway platform with a faint thud.

The creature, the shape of which wasn’t clear, but was about as see-through as rapidly moving water can be, made a noise of anger and crushed the machine in its jaws before retreating back into the water, dragging the broken metal remains with it into the depths.

The splash from its reentry showered everyone close enough.

A heavy silence followed.

Someone to her right whispered “You saw that too right?” in hurried words “I didn’t imagine that?”

“Yeah i saw it too”

“So there is a monster in the water?”

“Why would it go after the jet though?”“Maybe it’s friendly?”“Wait, so it’s actually real then?”

The hushed conversations were coming from all directions now. She had to sigh. Great, that’s what the rumors would be all about for the next month. But ok, she could deal with that.

At least no one got hurt. Except the jet. But who knows what Georg already did to it before that, so probably not a big loss.

She panned her eyes over to where the man landed. He was stirring but laying on his side in a curled up position, seemingly sobbing. At least he didn’t try to run away.

Whatever. She had work to do. More of it now. She could handle it though.

She let her gaze linger over the now calming water. A touch of a smile grazed her expression.

“Thanks” she hummed, seemingly to no one in particular.

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Sasha really wasn't an outdoors-y person.

When he had free time he preferred his lab most of the time. Or his home. Not the woods, and definitely not campgrounds.

His stay at the lab that day was twitchy to say the least, what with the whole fiasco in the morning. He's never met Georg but he's heard of him, he used to work in an office at the Motherlobe before he was arrested. Some small job, barely any ripples.

Though most of the stray thoughts and gossip around the building were not about the madman.

No, the people kept wondering how it could be that the silly monster story of the past few years was actually true.

It made Sasha's chest feel tight, like it was being gently crushed by an ever increasing weight.

He'd known it was real since the beginning, of course he did. He wasn't there when it happened, though maybe things would be different if he was. Maybe he could have helped.

He didn't like to think about it. The past was past.

He ignored the casual, errant, dismissive thoughts about the monster of the quarry lake by burying himself up to his elbows in lab work.

So no. The great green outdoors was not his comfort zone, and not his place to unwind his thoughts.

No. He'd only ever come here of his own accord for one reason the past few years.

The night was clear, the air was chill. The moon shone brightly in the sky, eliminating the need for lampposts to see by, though it wasn't like The Questionable area? had many of those that still worked to begin with.

An errant dragonfly passed way too close from his face. The thing seemed to be chasing some other insect that was just small enough to not see if you didn't know where to look.

The small figure was waiting for him on one of the intact park benches.

Well, it wasn't waiting for him, it wasn't waiting for anyone, it just was. It sat there aimlessly, its goggles glowing a steady red, its legs swinging back and forth every so slightly.

He doubted he would be recognized.

He sat down next to the figure, old oak creaking slightly under his weight. The figure turned to him, just slightly, the red glow spilling over Sasha's clothes.

"Hello, Raz"

The figure just nodded, making no attempt to speak.

"Agent Forsythe sends her thanks for helping out earlier" Sasha continued "you did good out there"

He reached out with his mind, to check if the boy was getting anything he said. He was met with a pond, mostly empty of anything but water, but some stray thoughts still floated through. Happiness. Content. Warmth of being useful, at being thanked. The thoughts jingled pleasantly at his touch, almost like a cat chirps at their human, basking in familiarity.

"How did you know to go after the jet?" He asked, experimentally.

The boy cocked his head to the side in thought for a moment. He opened his mouth to speak.

His voice was river water and buzzing wings, but somewhere underneath all of that there might have been an actual voice, familiar but buried too deep, too faint to be sure it wasn't just the wishful thinking and a product of Sasha's slowly corroding memory of what the boy used to sound like.

"Fri..ends… in danger… could… feel it… wanted to… help" The words were slow, like they took monumental effort to form. Maybe they did.

Sasha put a hand on Raz's shoulder. The water seeped right through his gloves, cold and slightly uncomfortable. He didn't remove his hand "You did help. You resolved the situation. Thank you, Raz"

The boy looked in his direction. The glowing surface of the goggles gave the watery texture of the rest of his body a slight red tint, as well as made it impossible to say whether or not the boy was looking directly at him or past him. After a few moments though the boy turned slightly away and leaned into Sasha's side.

"I'm… glad" He sighed. Sasha patted him on the back softly, creating just a bit of water droplets each time he made contact.

The night had just started. He could take some time to stargaze. He wasn't going anywhere for a while yet.

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