Belostomatidae

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by DragonWolf

Summary

> Of water that's angry and scared

Notes

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His head was ringing. The noise was constant and slowly building in his brain as he struggled to keep his eyes open.

His body felt numb. From what he remembered that was more of a good thing than a bad one, considering what happened. He distantly felt his feet just barely reaching the ground from where he was hanging off the tall dead stump, the toes of his shoes resting gently against the sand of the river bank.

He stared forward. The ground in front of him was damp, a small shallow puddle sitting still at the center of his vision. He focused on it and out towards it with his hand, though it was a bit too far, his hand just pawing at nothing but empty air.

He struggled to breathe. Noises were filtering into his awareness that were too quiet to fully decipher just then, but sounded like a voice.

They sounded irritated.

Ah yes, the… who was that again? He never learned their name, they were… some old delugionist? or something to that effect.

What were they doing here again? Damn it was hard to think. The ringing in his ears was getting just a tad too loud.He tried to shift his position but a sharp stab of pain through his middle and back stopped that in its tracks.

Ah yes, the dead tree. That went the whole way through huh. He was distantly grateful he couldn’t feel the individual shards of dead wood as his weight sifted around them.

He tasted copper on his tongue. A dead water bug floated belly up on the surface of the puddle. He stared at it mindlessly.

He tried to reach out with his mind, to anyone, asking for help, crying for help, an SOS message made up of nothing but sobbing and incoherent thoughts, but could reach no one. His world was shrinking, slowly but surely.

The river trickled quietly just a few feet away.

He stared at the dead water bug. He didn’t want to be like that. He didn’t want to die like this.

The ex-delugionist was still muttering to themself, closer to him now. He could see their shadow on the ground in front of him.

A subtle poke to the side of his head, almost gentle but without any comfort, told him the person was right next to him. He tried to push them away, with telekinesis or something, anything, but the orange sparks fizzled out as soon as they started appearing in his mind's eye.

He tried to look up at the person. His body wouldn’t cooperate, only allowing him to raise his head slightly before it dropped back down. The tree limb going through his middle jolted

slightly at the movement and his vision filled with static.The pain made his world shrink even more. There was only the riverbank now.

His face was wet, his eyes stung. Small drops of red dripped slowly from his lips, tainting the shallow puddle in front of him a subtle pink. The voice next to him grumbled something before the shadow left his vision. The noises of annoyance faded out to the background where he could barely hear it.

His world shrunk to just what he could see.

The ringing in his ears was deafening now, something building up behind his eyes that made his head hurt.

The puddle rippled, slightly at first, as if a weak wind just bothered its surface for a moment. A thin familiar hand, tinted ever so slightly pink in the dull dusk light, reached up and touched his own glowed hand. He barely felt it.

He reached out to it with his mind. His eyes stung as he pleaded with whatever was listening to help, please help, please help, I don’t want to die here, I don't want to die like this.

More hands reached out from the puddle. A soothing cold caressed his cheek, wiping the stinging tears away. His eyes were barely open, but he could see the river bank rippling over to him, more familiar hands reaching out, holding him tight.

His eyes slid shut. Something that was building up in his mind made his head hurt like it was splitting open.

He hurt. Everything hurt. His head hurt.

The cold numbness was nice though, as he let it wrap him up tight.

He sighed and let himself go limp.

Something exploded.

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They felt the dam break from where they stood.

They initially thought it was the explosion that they’d miscalculated coming back to haunt them. That was a bad move, though so far it seemed no one had noticed. Good for them then.

That kid though. Got thrown right onto a tree. Poor thing really, didn't seem to be awake when they poked him just a few seconds ago.

But whatever. He was with the Psychonauts, it was his mistake he tried to be loyal to those delusional idiots.

Their ears weren't ringing. Also the noise didn't stop and was clearly not just in their head. It was coming from somewhere else.

The ex-delugionist turned around only to be assaulted by screaming in their mind, screaming of pain and anger and confusion and all directed at them and it was too loud and too everywhere and they could no longer see through all the noise, only snippets of blood and water and shredded scenery.

They screamed too, or tried to, though their voice was too seized by paralysis to produce any noise above a whimper. They struggled to breathe and open their eyes, but once they did it was not better.

The… thing, whatever it was, the water that screamed at them, was all over the place and it was loud and angry and sharp all over.

After a few seconds it coalesced into a more condensed shape, something that looked alive and yet completely unnatural.

Its jaws were agape as it charged at them. They let out a scream.

Their scream died abruptly when it reached them.

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