

BUG AND THE FIREFLIES

Written by

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DARKNESS -

We hear the sound of SCRATCHING, followed by a quiet indecipherable EXPLETIVE in bug language, then a quick TAP-TAP-TAP of a bug's finger against plastic.

Fuck it. Imagine bugs have fingers.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

BUG has his head buried in a hole in the ground. Strapped to his back is a rusty metal box with a watch battery embedded in the center.

CURSING some more, he pulls his head from the hole and we see the source of his frustration.

Extending from the backpack, and held in a fixed position just over his head, is a tiny lightbulb.

The fucking thing won't turn on.

He taps it with his forelegs -- TAP-TAP-TAP -- and it lights up.

Back in business, he returns his head to the hole.

INT. HOLE - CONTINUOUS

Bug looks around. With help from the little light, he can now see that the space is dusty, dirty, and empty -- with the exception of an old RUBBER BAND.

Eureka!

Bug stretches out his forelegs and grabs it.

EXT. HOLE - CONTINUOUS

Bug pulls the rubber band out of the hole and drags it behind him as he marches off across the forest floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST FLOOR - EVENING

Bug looks up to the sky, determined.

## BUG'S POV

High above the forest floor, completely out of place, is a human pocket watch, its chain wrapped around the branch of a tree. Its front cover hangs wide open and the face has fallen out, leaving all of its glorious GEARS exposed. And those gears, as if by magic, are still turning.

Who knows how it got there? Who knows how long it's been there? And what the fuck is a human, anyway?

For Bug, this is heaven.

## BACK ON BUG

A look of determination on his face. He will reach that magnificent watch.

A wider shot reveals that Bug has loaded himself into a makeshift slingshot, fashioned by stringing the rubber band between a pair of twigs jutting up from the earth and pulling it taut with a length of thread. He's aimed directly at the watch, high above.

An audience of OTHER BUGS have gathered around to check out the curious spectacle.

Bug doesn't give a shit. Fuck those guys.

He cuts the thread.

THWAANG!

The rubber band shoots him up into the air, his six legs flailing in every direction.

He gets to the top of his ascent and floats, for just a moment, stretching one hand out towards the watch as if to will himself closer, frozen for a moment in glorious SLOW MOTION like an astronaut floating through space...

..before PLUMMETING right back to the earth..

...where he lands, THUD, flat on his back.

The crowd of bugs stare on as he rocks himself back and forth, trying to turn himself over. He flips a switch on his belt, which triggers a kickstand-like device in his backpack that flips him upright.

He then slinks away, humiliated, and for the first time, we see that the forest floor beneath the pocket watch is littered with bolts, springs, and a number of dilapidated variations on the catapult--the sad, broken remains of Bug's previous attempts to reach the watch.

EXT. BUG'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Bug sulks off to his home. It's a faded silver energy drink can turned on its side, which he enters through the mouth. Compared to Bug, it seems like a giant, industrial fortress.

Once inside, he peeks back out, sees the other bugs still gawking at him, then slams the door shut behind him.

EXT. FOREST FLOOR - DUSK

It's the next day.

Bug is dragging some discarded scraps of metal across the forest floor. It's getting dark and he works by the light of his little battery-operated lamp. The light flickers out.

He CURSES to himself and begins tapping on the bulb.

Behind him, there's a bright FLASH of light.

Bug quickly turns, but the light has already disappeared.

With an appropriate sense of timing, his own little light bulb comes back on to reveal...

A STRANGE SMALL BUG, the likes of which he's never seen.  
(This is FIREFLY #1.)

With childlike curiosity, Bug step closer. As he approaches, his shadow falls across the smaller bug, and the little bug's ass suddenly lights up like a bonfire.

Mind. Blown.

After a moment of incredulity, he looks down at his junky homemade headlamp and is mildly embarrassed. This new bug's lamp is way better than his.

He sheepishly considers his lamp, flicking it on and off a couple times.

The flicker startles the firefly and it unfolds its wings and flies up.

Bug's bug jaw drops to the forest floor. He's never seen a bug fly before.

He studies the movement of its wings intently, his engineer's mind breaking them down, analyzing how they work. Elegant lines flow around the wings as they move, showing force, momentum, velocity, working together in a beautiful dancing blueprint of flight.

He follows the firefly through the air, until it finally rests beside a few other FIREFLIES on a small outcropping far above Bug's head.

It takes a second for Bug to register what exactly he's landed on. That little firefly bastard is now sitting comfortably on his watch. HIS. WATCH.

In a fit of rage he hurls his headlamp at the firefly, who lazily dodges before settling back down on the watch. The headlamp lands with a small crash at Bug's feet, its bulb shattered.

Out of the corner of his eye, Bug sees a few of his neighbors watching him make a fool of himself.

Well! This offense will not stand, so Bug gathers his wounded dignity, collects his scavenged things and the ruined headlamp, and marches on home.

He enters his home, peers out for a moment at the nearby gawkers, then slams the door shut behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. BUG'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Bug's hard at work. He's got tools in hands, goggles on his head, and rolled out on a drawing board, the blueprints for an intricate machine and a crude drawing of the firefly.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. BUG'S HOME - THE NEXT DAY

Bug's neighbors listen to the CLANKS, SLAMS, SQUEAKS and ZIPS of manual labor being done inside Bug's fortress.

Bug triumphantly throws open the doors to his fortress and struts outside wearing his latest invention - A cobbled together set of Icarus wings strapped to his back.

He flexes a few times, flaps the wings back and forth, then takes a running start.

After a few bounces and skids, he does it! He's airborne!

He LOOPS and lopes through the air, climbing ever higher.

He scans the floor of the forest, the village is so tiny!

He zooms in on the coveted watch, and his rickety flapping wings startle the bastard fireflies, forcing them to take flight.

He lands on the tree branch and attaches grappling hooks to the watch.

Pulling himself up, the gears spinning beautifully beneath him, he stands like Rocky Balboa on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, triumphant.

He looks down on the other bugs and flips them the bird.

Perched on a nearby branch, the fireflies look on, surprised and maybe a little impressed. What is all that shit he's carrying around?

Bug is flipping them the bird in celebration, when suddenly...

FWPP!!

A glass wall comes down in front of him.

We PULL OUT to reveal that it's an upside-down Mason jar, held by the hands of a HUMAN CHILD.

The child's gleeful face appears in the background.

Bug's hands come up to the glass like a prisoner pleading for help.

His light flashes feebly on and off before the jar is whisked away and we

FADE TO BLACK.