

Gator-Aid!

A story by DARKEST_KNIGHT about a particular character from Tribal Hunter! Started on 6/7/2022 and finished on 6/19/2022.

I laid in bed, eyes shut, listening to the white noise from the fan. It felt like it had been hours since I had first laid down, and no matter how much I shut my eyes, sleep wouldn't come. I sighed and hugged the pillow I wasn't using, something I usually did when I felt lonely. Pretending that it was someone... I could love, and care for, and they'd do the same for me in return. Someone that I could vent about all my troubles too, and hug when I felt down. Someone...

My thoughts trailed off as sleep gently took hold of me. In a blink of an eye, I awoke again, or at least, I thought I did. I heard waves crashing, and I felt warm, not like it was under a blanket warm, but rather a sunlight warm. I slowly opened my eyes, but quickly shielded them when I realized I was staring up at the sun. Wait, the sun? What was I doing outside? I laid there for a moment, and realized that I was laying in sand. Sand? Was I on a beach? I sat up and looked around to confirm, and- yep, I was sitting on a beautiful beach. Complete with a vast ocean with tiny islands spread out in the distance, a comfortable looking beach hut, a hammock, and a chair in which someone very large and verdant sat.

I slowly got to my feet, and scrunched my toes a bit to feel the sand between them. The last time I was at a beach was... years ago. It had been so long, how could I remember this feeling so well? I stepped through the tepid sand, the waves still rhythmically beating against the shore. One step after another took me closer to the peculiar figure sitting in the lone beach chair, and finally, I was standing right next to him. He was a gator with light green on his head, arms, and legs, and beige on his belly, which was sticking out from under a small tank top. Along with the tank top, he wore a cyan button up that was, of course, unbuttoned, pale red swim trunks, and some of the snazziest shades I had ever seen.

"Yo. Are ya ready to go?" he asked in a deep, yet comforting, voice. I was a bit startled by his voice, but still made an effort to say something in return.

"Go where?" I responded. He turned his head at me a bit and raised a brow, before raising his shades to reveal two beady eyes that looked me up and down. He looked somewhat confused.

"Sorry, I was expecting someone else. Speaking of, I don't think I've ever seen your face around here before. You from around these parts?"

"N-no, I was in bed at home trying to fall asleep, and the next thing I know, I woke up laying in the sand over there." The gator looked over his shoulder at where I came and looked back. His expression relaxed and turned into something much more welcoming.

"Well, it's nice to meet you, welcome to Mystic Island. You can call me whatever you'd like, some people call me Gator, others call me Big G, or even just G. At one point, someone even called me "Beached Whale!"" He let out a hearty laugh and grinned, showing off two rows of pearly whites that were extra pointy but only added to his happy-go-lucky aura. **"Sorry for trailing off there, what can I call ya?"**

"I'm Grant."

"Grant! I like that name. Simple, not too cliché, not too alien either. Anything specific you want to do now? We can get something to eat at the village's restaurant, laze around in the water, or just chill out—" His sentence was cut short as I flopped onto his belly, drawn in by just how soft it looked. It certainly was soft, and strangely cool too compared to the heat of the beach. He was taken aback at first, but he simply laughed a bit and patted my back. We remained like that for a good minute before I slowly stood back up.

"Sorry, I couldn't help myself..."

"You're not the first to do that, and certainly not the last, so no worries. Whatcha want to do now?" I glanced at the ocean, the waves still rising and falling.

"How about we swim in the ocean a bit? The water looks nice!"

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The lukewarm ocean water felt as great as it looked, and it helped to cool off from the sun. Gator was also able to find a beach ball next to his shack, and though it was deflated, it regained its spherical shape in one massive breath from Gator.

Now, we were using it to its fullest, bouncing it to one another as water splashed around our waists.

Though we had many short runs, we finally found our rhythm, being able to keep it out of the water and in the air. Even when it looked like it was just about to hit the water, a swift uppercut was able to keep it in play for another several seconds. On our final run, we were able to keep the ball in the air for over a solid minute! When it finally hit the water, we grinned and high-fived each other.

**"Nice going, that was probably one of our best runs! You wanna try for an even longer time?"**

"Nah, I'm getting kinda tired, let's get back to shore. Had a bunch of fun playing with you though!" We waded back to shore, Gator sitting in his massive beach chair and me on top of him. We didn't bother to dry ourselves off since we knew that the sun would do a much better job for us. We laid there, not saying much, as we soaked up the rays and relaxed.

**"Hey, bud, as much as I liked hanging out with you, I think that you're going to have to wake up soon."** Gator eventually said in a somewhat sad tone.

"Aww... can we hang out again tomorrow?"

**"Of course! Just think of me right when you go to bed and you'll be here, with me. Then we can hang out whenever you dream! How's that sound?"**

"That sounds great! I'll see you tomorrow then. Now uh, how exactly do I wake up?"

**"Pinching your arm should do the trick. See you buddy."** I nodded and we said our goodbyes, before reluctantly pinching my arm. He waved goodbye one more time, and as quickly as I found myself there, I left, and was laying back in bed. I glanced over to my window, and through the curtains were closed, I could tell that it was daylight out. I rummaged through my covers for my phone, but found it right next to my head on my pillow. I turned it on, and "8:27" appeared at the top of the screen on top of a beautiful wallpaper I had picked out. Well, he certainly was right, it was just about time to get up. However, I took a minute to lay there and think of my dream, it was something that wasn't extremely complex like my other ones, and I could remember it pretty well.

Hopefully Gator was right, and that I was going to be able to see him again when I went to bed. His cozy embrace was something I'd do anything to feel again.