

## Coral Death Ball

One jumps in the water, the fresh sunscreen comes off, another jumps in, his oily fingers touch, waste dumps in and it collides. All of these things touch the precious and beloved coral at the bottom of the water, and all of these things wither away at its life.

Pieces chip off, colors fade, brambles wither, and the sea life is forced to move out of its decaying home. As time passes, faster than humans realize, the once vibrant coral reef, has gone dull and withered. The remnant ashes, of the coral being swept away by the ocean currents out into the grand expanse of the sea. Off the island cliff, falling deeper and deeper into the dark depths.

No one ever knows what's down there. The pressure is too much for life above to reach, and life that lives in this abyss can only stay in this abyss, for the lack of pressure from above would kill it.

But what if something down here didn't have life? What about death? Death surprisingly reaches all. No matter where life is on this plane of existence, death will come for all at one point. In the dark abyss of this ocean, where waters illuminate slightly from the fluorescent fishy inhabitants, death is manifesting.

All the withered parts of coral reefs around the globe have managed to gather here. The deepest part of all the seven seas. The decaying, the withered, the broken, the dead all wound up in this dark abyss, creating a pit of death.

This death, has over time increased its size to unimaginable proportions and has begun to take form. The withered coral moving its branches as tendrils with minds of their own. Unlike other creatures, this ball of death is void of life. The invisible barrier of pressure can do

nothing to stop the death ball from traversing to the world above, and so, with some otherworldly goal in mind, the giant ball of death begins to climb out of the abyss.

As it moves, it disturbs the order of nature. All life nearby run from it, all life nearby awe at it. But why should it care? The ball of death was created because of the disturbance of the natural order. If humans hadn't come and dumped their chemicals on it, their waste on it, then it would never have existed. But it did exist, and it hated that it did. Now it only had one goal in mind. To show the life above the results of their actions.

Now the ball of death has passed the barrier and for the first time in its existence has seen the rays of light from above.

On the surface, sad news breaks. The Coral Reefs are ENDANGERED! Scientists and experts from around the world have discovered that over ninety percent of the coral reefs that existed just five years ago are now gone! Due to the lack of maintenance and safety, bad practices have caused the coral to die across many coastlines. Now a divide was set in motion. How should we save them? What can we do? We must set protection! We must save the wildlife! But why should we care? Corals never made me money! Where else am I supposed to dump my trash!? I'm not going to change the recipe to my sunscreen!!

As expected, when faced with clear evidence of the near-extinction of a species, it's somehow not enough to convince everyone to do the greater good. Well, is it even considered the greater good when the bare minimum would be to just help preserve the life of this species? Nonetheless, the selfishness of mankind has sparked a conflict over the state of the coral reefs moving forward. Very few exist now throughout the planet, and those who care enough have quickly begun to form groups and committees as quickly as possible to sanction these areas

away from public use and corporate meddling until some unanimous rule can be placed to protect the remaining coral reefs. But will this be enough for them to face what the future has in store?

“Oh, um, boss! The new regulations from the state are in,” said a short, stout man as he squeezed his way through the great double wooden doors with a mountain of papers balanced between his arms.

“Is there any good news?” The boss responded at the other side of the great office. He stood there, wine glass in hand, staring out of the great window that seemed to be the entire wall itself, overlooking the great open ocean beyond.

“Uhm, well good news as in?”

“Can I continue to dump my waste where Senator Berdley promised I could, or are those hippies still out there trying to take care of the next ‘species’ of the year?” the boss said, swirling the wine in his glass and turning his head to view the stout man.

“Oh, well, um, not quite sir. Actually, we have been given rules about forming a new way of disposing our waste and-”

“Let me stop you right there!” The boss turned fully to look at the stout man who was frozen in place as he was in the middle of retrieving one of the papers from the giant mountain stack. “Before another word comes out of your mouth, I need to know if this new change is going to cost me money and, if so, how much?”

“Oh, it for sure is sir um...” He froze as he stared at the paper. He did not want to say, but as he looked up and met the gaze of his boss, the horrifying vision of the bright light of the

window behind him had given him a very dark silhouette, and maybe he had imagined it, but he could swear that the red irises of his boss were glowing. “A little over half a... a billion... sir.” He said cowardly, trying his best to raise the paper as a shield to block his gaze. After a while, he realized his boss hadn’t spoken. As a matter of fact, he began to give off a hefty laughter instead as he turned his gaze back toward the window, letting his laughter slowly die out to a light chuckle.

Once he was finished, “Rouxls, do me a favor. Take that paper with you back home. On the way, you can go ahead and burn it. Collect the ashes and make sure to dump them in the closest open water to your house. I’m not going to listen to such ridiculous commands made by absolute nobodies. Tomorrow, I’m going to talk to the Senator myself and figure out what we can do moving forward.” The boss had issued Rouxls a demand, but he was expecting to hear a verbal confirmation. He turned back around to find Rouxls literally shacking in his boots. “What’s the matter with you now? Don’t tell me you’re also worried about this coral reef bullshit. Can they even be considered alive animals?” But as he stared at Rouxls’ eyes through his glasses, he noticed that his gaze didn’t meet his. He followed his gaze behind him, back out the window to see what truly horrified him.

Off into the distance, from the great expanse of the ocean, rising to the surface, was a dark circular mass of greyish-black color rising. Then not far from it, large black tentacles also began to break out of the water. They couldn’t believe what they were seeing. This thing continued to rise higher and higher from the water, at this rate, its size would soon cover the entire horizon line. But something else was off. Just staring at it, the feeling of dread had blanketed them. It weighed heavy on their bodies, practically petrifying them in place.

Is this it?

Is this death?