

Hook

I took a sip of water just before I went to bed. If I drink more, I wake up in the middle of the night for a trip to bathroom and the tormenting insomnia afterward is inevitable. I've learned by experience that water at night epitomizes shattered dreams and painful awakening. I tucked myself in and just before closing my eyes, I glanced at the image of myself victoriously parading my prized catch dangling from the fishing line wrapped around my wrist. That day I skillfully kept my bait just below the water surface and the rod straight up toward the sky making sure the fish doesn't sense its presence. Then I wobbled the pole to bring the bait to life and to lure the fish. From time to time, I sensed a nibbling on my bait but I didn't react, as I knew it was a little one. Patience is the key to success and it paid handsomely. Finally, a huge fish opened its mouth wide to snatch its prey in one swift action and that was the precise moment I hooked it.

Every lasting moment of that accomplishment vividly stayed with me throughout the years and the image of the reward immortalized on my bedroom wall. I even secured the same fishing line tied to the original hook over the picture of the fish's mouth to give my trophy the bitter taste of harsh reality. The superimposition of the real hook on the image was astonishing. The hook in the lifeless creature's mouth sparkled in my dark room for years to come. Since then, its opaque black eyes pieced through me as hard as my solid bronze hook pierced its blood-crusting mouth.

That night I went to sleep and despite all my precautions, I woke in middle of the night. As I barely opened my eyes to check the time, I noticed the glowing 3:00 am on the digital clock dancing in the dark. Then I realized I was floating on rising water. My bed was in water along with everything else in the room. The entire house was flooded. I'd had many bizarre nightmares but this one was unbelievable, it was not one.

Every piece of furniture in the house was either submerged or was floating. I managed to open the window just to witness the entire neighborhood sharing the same destiny. I swam outside and faced a raging river running where the street was yesterday. People, pets and furniture were all afloat. The eerie tranquility hovering over this catastrophe was incomprehensible. Everyone was calm. Most people were still asleep in their beds on the river. I saw a man and a woman making love, babies were in sound sleep in their cradles and I could hear dogs snoring, all on the waves.

The water was washing everyone away, yet no one was alarmed. I could go back to sleep and drift away with the flow but decided to stay home and embrace my new life.

It took me some time but I adapted to my new environment and gradually morphed into an aquatic creature. The only thing water took away from me was my memories. Later, I grew scales on my skin and several sets of fins. Then I developed a new respiratory system that allowed me to immerse in water for as long as I wished.

Now I have a tail to provide thrust and acceleration while I swim. My eyesight evolved to adapt to my marine environment and now I can masterfully dodge the obstacles in my way in the darkness.

I feed on bugs, worms, flies and gnats and occasionally a fish or two if I happen to stumble across one. I freely roam around my natural habitat but I'm not immune to pain. I've scarred myself numerous times when I tried to tunnel through the disintegrating furniture of my house but I always managed to escape dangers throughout my life as a fish.

One day that I was so hungry desperately searching for food, I noticed the shadow of a fish flapping its tail on the water in bedroom. Hysterically, I rushed to snatch my prey, emerged from water, opened my mouth wide and swallowed the fish in one swift action and suddenly a piece of sharp metal ripped my mouth. The more I struggled to free myself, the harder the razor edge barbs on the hook injured my face. Finally I stopped trying as I realized how securely the hook was wedged in my flesh.

From that day on, my entire body flaps in the water while my head is stuck above surface with my mouth wide open. I ingest bugs and flies if they accidentally get trapped in my mouth and that's how I survive. Every night before I go to sleep, I see the victorious look on the man's face holding me by the fishing line wrapped around his wrist parading his prized catch.

Since then, my opaque black eyes pierced through him as hard as his solid bronze hook pierced my blood-crusting mouth.