

Wurmples slammed her face into the bar.

"Swallow again?" Spinda asked, carefully pushing the coasters and nut bowl away from her face.

"Swallow again." Wurmples sighed. "It's gotten worse again. Swallow says he's preparing a big tasty surprise. I think this is it for me."

"I mean, that could be anything." Spinda tried to reassure her. "What'll ya have?"

Wurmples slammed a stack of Poke on the counter.

"Straight nectar." She said.

"Uh, you sure?" Spinda asked. "That's... That might be a little strong for you."

"I know. I don't care." Wurmples said.

"Your funeral." Spinda shrugged, grabbing bottles from under the counter.

"Oh baby, here we go." Wurmples giggled.

Spinda set down a tall glass of pure nectar.

"Uhh. Good luck?" He smiled.

Wurmples lifted the cup and started downing it.

The rest of the night was a blur.

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Wurmples woke up, wheezing and sputtering.

"Okay, she's awake." Said a warm voice.

"What happened?" Asked a cold voice.

A soft warm paw gently rocked Wurmples.

She opened her eyes and stood up.

"Ah. Hey, guys." Wurmples groaned.

Team River had found her in a bush. As teams go, they were very friendly.

Well, Vulpix and Bidoof were. There was something kind of off about that new yellow Shinx. Something kind of wrong with the way he walked, how he spoke. But he was nice enough, especially when he was with Vulpix.

"Are you okay?" Vulpix asked.

"I'm fine, I'm fine." Wurmples sighed. "Just went a little too hard last night. My head's pounding."

Shinx wordlessly handed Wurmples an orange berry.

"Oh, uh. Thank you?" She said.

Shinx nodded.

Wurmples sat, holding the berry.

"So... you two, uh." Wurmples began to ask. "You're together, right? Dating?"

Vulpix and Shinx blushed.

"Uh... Yeah." She smiled. "For a little while now."

"Figures..." Wurmples sighed. "Everyone else has a special someone but nobody wants a gross little bug like me."

Shinx stood up and Wurmples shook a little.

"Ah, hello?" She said nervously.

"You're not gross, you're fine as you are." He said. "You'll find someone who respects that, and enjoys being around you."

Vulpix smiled, rubbing against Shinx's side.

"Told you he's wonderful." She smiled.

"Yeah, maybe you're right." Wurmple shrugged. "Wish there were more bug guys around, though."

She walked off and heard the two talking behind her, then giggle.

"Blake, stop it!" Vulpix laughed.

"Just telling the truth. Hey, this bush is unoccupied now." Shinx chuckled.

Ugh. Weirdos.

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Wurmples stumbled back home. By then, she was able to walk straight just fine.

It was dark inside. All the curtains were closed for some reason.

She heard breathing. A shadow moved in the darkness.

"H-Hello? Swallow? Is that you?" She asked.

"Yes, Wurmples. It's time." Swallow said.

Oh no. No. No no no no no. NO.

Oh cruel world, why did it have to be this way.

There's no running away from it now.

Time to meet fate bravely, like a real Explorer.

Swallow opened the curtains, flooding the room with light. Green Gummies were piled high on Wurmples's table.

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY!" Swallow cheered.

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Oh right. It was her birthday. She'd completely forgotten.

Swallow tilted his head.

"Is something wrong?" He asked.

"I... I..." Wurmples stuttered.

She shook her head.

No more. No more. Not for one more day.

"I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO EAT ME!" She yelled.

"WHAT?! EAT YOU?!" Swallow squawked.

"YES! YOU'RE ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT HOW TASTY EVERYTHING IS AND EATING WORMS!" Wurmples screamed. "DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW THAT FUCKING FEELS?!"

"Oh... I..." Swallow started.

"I NAMED THE TEAM AFTER THINKING ONE DAY YOU'D EAT ME!" Wurmples kept yelling. "I THOUGHT THIS "TASTY SURPRISE" WAS YOU FINALLY DOING IT!"

Swallow looked down.

"I'VE BEEN LIVING IN CONSTANT FEAR OF YOU!" Wurple shouted. "THINKING THAT I'M ONLY ONE DAY OFF BEING YOUR LUNCH! CAN YOU... Can you... Can you even imagine that?"

"I'm sorry." Sobbed Swellow. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I didn't know. I'm the worst friend ever, I can't believe I was doing that to you."

He sighed, covering his face with his wing, walking to the door.

"W-wait!" Wurple cried out.

"Please, just... Enjoy your birthday present. I need to be alone." Swellow said.

Then he left.

"Swellow, I..." She said softly. "No, I'm the worst friend ever. You did all this for me."

She sat at the table, gazing at the mountain of bug type candy goodness.

She slammed her head on the table and stayed there.

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Wurmple laid her head on the bar, letting the world go by around her. She'd been nursing the same green gummi soda for so long it had gone flat half an hour ago.

She heard talking around her but willingly shut it out.

"She's been here every day for like a week now." Said a cold voice.

"We should do something." Said the warm voice. "Do you think it's wrong to get involved?"

"Too late now." Said the cold voice.

Wurmple shrieked as she felt herself get gently bitten on the back of the neck and carried off.

"W-WAIT, WHAT ABOUT MY TAB?!" She yelped.

"Uh, don't worry about it!" Smiled Spinda. "See you later, Wurmple!"

Wurmple went limp as she was carried away from Spinda's Cafe, through Treasure Town to the clifftop of Sharpedo Bluff. She was dropped onto the dirt and writhed around miserably.

Vulpix sat at her side while Shinx stepped away to look down the cliff.

"Wurmple, we've been worried sick about you." Vulpix said. "You've been on this bender all week. We care about you, please let us help."

Wurmple groaned.

"What's the point? I've driven away someone I really cared about because I snapped at him." Wurmple muttered. "He's never coming back now. Not after what I said to him."

"Don't worry about that." Shinx said. "Focus on yourself first and we'll fix that later."

"I don't deserve it." Wurmple huffed.

"Too bad. It's happening anyway." Vulpix said.

Wurmple flailed in defiance as Vulpix took her downstairs into her home and wet a cloth.

Vulpix cleaned off Wurmple and she laid on the floor with a bowl of water and some berries.

"When was the last time you ate?" Vulpix asked.

"Uh. Day before yesterday, I think." Wurmple answered. "I haven't wanted to eat. It just reminds me of Swellow."

"Ah, right. So you two fell out hard." Vulpix said.

"I really screwed it all up." Wurmple sniffed. "I should have told him off from the start, maybe it wouldn't have gotten so bad."

"Maybe, but it's too late for that now. Do you want to resolve things with him?" Vulpix asked.

"I... I just want everything to be okay again. I haven't seen him, I haven't heard from him, he hasn't even sent any mail. He's gone." Wurmple started to cry.

"Hey, hey. It's ok." Vulpix said softly. "It's not too late. We can figure this all out, okay?"

Shinx came down the stairs.

"Mail for you." He said, opening a letter with his claw and passing it to Wurmple.

She read the front.

"IT'S FROM SWELLOW!" She cried out.

"Read it, read it!" Vulpix gasped.

"Dear Wurmple.

I feel so bad for everything that happened. I had no idea I was upsetting you for so long.

I had to take some time away, but I want to see you.

Included is a key to a resort lodge in Eastern Forest. Let's talk it out.

- Swellow"

Wurmple held the key like it was made of glass.

"Sounds like everything's okay." Vulpix smiled.

"Go to him." Shinx said.

Wurmple jumped to her feet.

"Thanks for everything, I gotta go!" She yelled, rushing out of the room.

"Where did you get it?" Vulpix asked.

"Swellow was outside. I think the two will be fine." Shinx answered.

The two laid together in bed, cuddling and nuzzling.

"You should take me out to a resort sometime." Vulpix smirked.

"No more talking, sweetie." Shinx growled, softly biting her ear to elicit giggles.

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Wurmples shook slightly as she came across the place.

The number on the door of the cabin away from the others matched the key that Wurmples held tightly.

She put the key into the door and turned it. The door opened.

The inside was cozy and well kept. A fireplace lit the room with a warm glow, with comfortable chairs a safe distance away. A huge bed took up much of the space in the cabin, with luxurious soft sheets.

Swallow turned to see the open door, and smiled upon seeing Wurmples.

"Oh! You came!" He said.

"I did, yeah." Wurmples nodded, closing the door behind her.

Swallow stood up and went to go hug Wurmples, but stepped back instead, looking away. Wurmples looked away too.

"It's, uh. Great to see you. I wasn't sure if you'd... you know." Swallow said quietly.

"I get it. I'm not really sure what I feel, but... I wanted to come." Wurmples said.

Wurmples walked past Swallow and sat on one of the chairs, curling up a little on it.

Swallow sat back down, looking into the fire.

"It's a nice place here. There's a few scenic routes and even a nearby Mystery Dungeon if you wanted to go exploring." Swallow suggested. "If not, there's a pool and a sauna and a restaurant..."

"That sounds really nice." Wurmples nodded. "A little vacation, just the two of us."

"Just the two of us. A friend of mine paid for it all, so don't worry about it." Swallow smiled.

"Oh, who?" Wurmples asked.

"I don't think you know him, but he helped me figure out what I wanted to do." Swallow said.

...probably that Shinx, they didn't know a lot of other teams they were allies with that would be famous enough to have the cash to swing for this.

"It doesn't really matter. It was a good idea. Have somewhere nice to relax while we figure us out." Swallow continued.

"Where do we start?" Wurmples asked.

Swallow sighed.



"I'm sorry." He said. "I didn't realise I was tormenting you all this time. You must have been so scared."

"I was always on edge whenever you'd say something, wondering if one day I'd turn my back on you and you'd gobble me up." Wurmple explained. "I was so exhausted every day from dealing with you."

"I didn't even notice. I thought you acted a little weird around me because, well..." Swellow trailed off, blushing.

"Because?" Wurmple interrogated.

"...Because you're a girl, okay? I thought... I thought you were just trying to brush me off so we didn't make it like, weird." Swellow admitted. "So I started getting all jokey, keeping it light to prove to myself that I wasn't... into you. I'm sorry I put you through hell."

"You... You're... into me?" Wurmple gasped.

"Y-yeah. Sorry. I know it's not very professional of me." Swellow turned away guiltily.

"But... I'm a disgusting gross bug." Wurmple sniffled. "Nobody would want me."

"No, Wurmple. You're a beautiful little thing." Swellow smiled. "Your adorable beady eyes, the smile you have and the wiggles you do when we go through dungeons... It's everything to me."

"Oh gosh... Now I don't know what to think." Wurmple blushed. "I didn't know you saw me that way. I thought nobody did."

"It's... embarrassing, and I'm sorry if you can't respect me anymore." Swellow gulped.

"If you could have me now, what would you do?" Wurmple asked.

"Well, Wurmple." Swellow took a deep breath to gather his courage. "I'd hold you, and I'd kiss you, and I'd never let you go."

Wurmple flopped over.

"You really really mean that, don't you?" She said.

"I do. It's the truth." Swellow nodded.

"Honestly, I want to try it." Wurmple said. "If it doesn't work out, we'll just... go back to being friends."

"Y-yeah. Friends." Swellow nervously chirped. "It's-It's... You really want this?"

"Half the town thinks we're dating anyway." Wurmple nervously laughed. "Maybe they're on to something."

"So what do we do now?" Swellow asked.

Wurmple slid off the chair and crept onto the bed, stretching her many legs out in comfort.

"What you said you'd do." Wurmple smiled.

"Oh! Yeah!" Swellow stuttered.

He flew to the bed and carefully slid one wing under Wurmple and drew her in to rest against his chest, resting the other wing atop her.

No more fear, no more worries. Here he was, and he was soft and warm and comfortable. She felt his chest rise and fall, pressed against her. Someone who genuinely wanted her.

"...I love you, Wurmple." Swellow whispered.

"...I love you too, Swellow." Wurmple said.

The two laid against each other and let the comfort of the cabin and the embrace lull them to sleep.

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Wurmples and Swallow walked side by side on the beautiful nature path, both unable to stop smiling.

"It's a beautiful day." Swallow chirped.

"Oh, isn't it? There's so many delicious looking leaves." Wurmples giggled.

"Hey, how bout I fly you up so you can get some?" Swallow asked.

"Wow, really?" Wurmples gasped. "Absolutely!"

Swallow carefully bowed to let Wurmples climb on and flew up to the top of a tree. She carefully crawled off and over to a branch.

"You latched on?" Swallow asked.

"Yep! I'm stuck on, don't you worry." Wurmples smiled.

Swallow flew up, picking berries off the tree while Wurmples ate herself to full on the luscious leaves. Once she was done, Swallow flew her down and landed in a clearing.

The two laid out on the grass on their backs, full and happy.

"I think this might be the best day of my life." Wurmples laughed.

"You know what? Me too." Swallow laughed too.

The two leaned in and nuzzled, then slid closer together to hug.

"I love you, Swallow." Wurmples sighed with relaxation.

"I love you too, Wurmples." Swallow chirped, holding Wurmples.