

WITCH DOCTOR

Written by

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TEASER

EXT. ATCHAFALAYA BAYOU - NIGHT

Moonlight shines on the Atchafalaya River Basin, the heart of the Arcadia Bayou. Moss-draped cypress and tupelo trees stud the muddy waters of the river basin.

Chestnut and green Wood ducks dip their heads into the murky water. Green tree frogs CROAK and jump around the water's edge. Water moccasins troll the stagnant pools for prey.

An alligator approaches the edge of the water and crawls in without a single ripple. The alligator's eyes and snout float above the water in search of an afternoon snack.

An airboat WHIZZES by an alligator as tourists snap photos. CLICK, CLICK, CLICK. A ripple in the water unearths an old fisherman's trap.

The alligator swims closer. The trap beats against the river bank. The alligator extends its paw and grabs the cage. One crawfish sits inside the cage.

The alligator pries open the cage with a claw. The metal SCREECHES. The metal frame of the cage peels back with ease.

The alligator reaches inside for the crawfish and opens his jaws. The alligator throws the crawfish into the air and catches it in its mouth. The alligator's jaws SNAP shut.

INT. MUD FLAT - BEDROOM - DAY

CRAWDADDY, a 7 year old crawfish with a bright red shell, wakes up in a cold sweat.

CRAWDADDY

No!

RENEE, a 3 year old crawfish with an orangey-red shell, rolls over and faces Crawdaddy in their bed.

RENEE

Are you okay, Dear?

CRAWDADDY

Go back to bed. Just a bad dream.

RENEE

Was it the snake or the gator?

Crawdaddy readjusts himself in the bed.

CRAWDADDY

The gator. Ah-choo. Ah-choo.

Renee reaches along the side of the bed and grabs a tissue and hands it to Crawdaddy.

RENEE

Sounds like you trying to get sick.

CRAWDADDY

I'm fine.

RENEE

You're not fine. You should go to the Doctor.

Crawdaddy blows his nose.

CRAWDADDY

You know how I feel about Doctors.

RENEE

Either you make the appointment, or I will.

Renee pulls back the sheets and stretches her pincers.

CRAWDADDY

(under his breath)

I will go see a Doctor alright, the Witch Doctor that is.

EXT. ATCHAFALAYA BAYOU - DAY

Crawdaddy swims in the muddy waters of the bayou. The sun reflects on his shell. He swims past the moss-draped cypress and tupelo trees.

He swims past the wood ducks. They dip their heads into the murky water. Crawdaddy notices a fisherman's trap near the water's edge.

He swims closer to the trap. Crawfish fill the trap.

A CRAWFISH, with big black eyes, moves his antennae in Crawdaddy's direction. He sticks his pincer through a space in the trap.

CRAWFISH

Help me.

Crawdaddy swims away from the trap.

CRAWDADDY

I can't. I might get caught too and  
that would be no good for the both  
of us.

Crawdaddy swims by a water moccasin. He approaches a  
riverbank where an alligator sunbathes. The alligator  
slathers lotion over his back.

He rolls over onto his backside and slathers lotion on his  
belly. A mosquito lands on the alligator's belly. The  
alligator SMACKS it. He yawns and stretches his paws.

CRAWDADDY (CONT'D)

Ah-choo.

The alligator looks around and puts on a pair of sunshades.  
Crawdaddy shrugs and swims on.

EXT. ATCHAFALAYA BAYOU - WISHBONE'S LILY PAD - DAY

Crawdaddy swims up to a makeshift sign that reads:  
"Wishbone's Lily Pad." A flashing counter reads: "2032."  
Crawdaddy grabs a ticket.

He looks down at his number that reads: "2052."

CRAWDADDY

Ah- choo. Ah-choo.

An OLD CATFISH, with long barbels, turns to Crawdaddy.

OLD CATFISH

First time?

CRAWDADDY

Yeah, you?

OLD CATFISH

Yeah. They say Wishbone's the best  
Doctor pearls can buy.

The counter flashes: "2052."

CRAWDADDY

That's me.

Crawdaddy swims to the center of the pond. WISHBONE, a  
bullfrog with a necklace made of wishbones, hops to the  
center of the lily pad.

Wishbone stretches his tongue and catches a fly. He gulps it  
and wipes his mouth.

WISHBONE

My apologies. I couldn't resist.  
What ails you?

Crawdaddy hops onto the lily pad.

CRAWDADDY

Ah- choo. I think I've got a cold.

Wishbone hands Crawdaddy a tissue. Crawdaddy wipes his nose. Wishbone throws seasonings in a large gumbo pot. He adds a bug and then a dash of powder. He stirs the pot with a large wooden spoon.

The pot BUBBLES over and then BOOM, a bright flash of light. A cloud of smoke covers the pot.

WISHBONE

(coughs)

Voila.

Wishbone scoops the mixture out of the pot and pours it into a small glass bottle. He hands the bottle to Crawdaddy.

WISHBONE (CONT'D)

You be careful with that. This  
elixir will cure any illness this  
side of the bayou with minimal side  
effects.

Crawdaddy hands Wishbone three oyster pearls. Wishbone counts the pearls.

WISHBONE (CONT'D)

One, two, three.

CRAWDADDY

Thank you.

Crawdaddy GULPS the elixir.

WISHBONE

No, Thank you. You come back and  
see me.

Crawdaddy jumps off of the lily pad back into the water. The Old Catfish swims to Wishbone's lily pad.

WISHBONE (CONT'D)

What ails you?

EXT. ATCHAFALAYA BAYOU - DAY

Crawdaddy swims past the alligator near the shore. He notices his pincers swell. Crawdaddy swims to the riverbank.

CRAWDADDY  
(gasps for air)  
Something's not right.

Crawdaddy breaks out in a cold sweat and shivers. He looks at his pincers shrink and swell.

CRAWDADDY (CONT'D)  
Ah-choo. Ah-choo.

Crawdaddy swims past a water moccasin and a fishermen's trap with crawfish inside.

CRAWFISH  
Are you okay? You don't look so good.

CRAWDADDY  
I'm doing better than you. I'll be fine. It's just a side effect.

CRAWFISH  
You should go see a Doctor.

Crawdaddy waves an antenna at the caged crawfish. He swims past the wood ducks and the cypress trees. He swims through the muddy water right up to the water's edge.

Crawdaddy buries himself in the mud near the bank.

EXT. ATCHAFALAYA BAYOU - WATER'S EDGE - DAY

Crawdaddy enters his mud flat at the water's edge.

INT. MUD FLAT - BEDROOM - DAY

Crawdaddy climbs into the bed and scratches his shell. His legs twitch. Renee walks into the room.

RENEE  
(gasps)  
Boudreaux!

CRAWDADDY  
What's wrong?

RENEE

Your shell it's changing colors.

Crawdaddy looks in the mirror.

CRAWDADDY

I'm too old to molt.

He touches his shell as black spots start to appear.

CRAWDADDY (CONT'D)

Oh my God!

Crawdaddy grabs his head and falls out of the bed onto the mud floor. Renee rushes to the bedside and shakes Crawdaddy.

RENEE

Boudreaux, wake up!

She shakes him.

CRAWDADDY

Am I dead?

RENEE

No. You just fainted.

Crawdaddy wipes his brow.

CRAWDADDY

I'm sorry, Baby.

RENEE

What did you do?

Crawdaddy sits up on the floor.

CRAWDADDY

I went to see Wishbone today.

RENEE

The Witch Doctor?

Crawdaddy nods.

CRAWDADDY

He gave me this elixir than can cure any illness on this side of the bayou.

RENEE

Or cause any illness on this side of the bayou. I told you to go to the Doctor.

CRAWDADDY  
I did, but you didn't say which  
Doctor.

Crawdaddy smiles at Renee. Renee grabs the phone and dials.

RENEE  
I have an emergency at thirty-two  
ninety-four Water's Edge. It's my  
husband. Can you get here as fast  
as you can?

Renee slams the phone on the hook.

RENEE (CONT'D)  
I can't believe you. If you don't  
die from this elixir, I might kill  
you myself.

SIRENS blare from outside of the mud flat. Renee helps  
Crawdaddy off of the floor.

EXT. HOSPITAL - ENTRANCE - DAY

The ambulance drives up to: "Atchafalaya River Basin Memorial  
Hospital." The paramedics carry Crawdaddy inside of the  
emergency entrance.

Renee follows the paramedics inside of the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - DAY

Crawdaddy sits next to injured crustaceans and other  
wildlife. Renee fills out paperwork at the counter. The  
NURSE, a river otter, opens a door.

NURSE  
Boudreaux?

Crawdaddy shivers and waves his swollen pincer.

CRAWDADDY  
That's me. Ah- choo.

NURSE  
The Doctor will see you now.

Crawdaddy and Renee follow the nurse.

INT. HOSPITAL - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Crawdaddy sits on a table. Renee sits in a chair. She closes her pincers and crosses her pairs of legs. The DOCTOR, a great white pelican, enters the room.

CRAWDADDY  
EEEEEEEEK!

RENEE  
Oh, hush up.

Renee hits Crawdaddy with her pincer. The Doctor looks at Crawdaddy's swollen pincers.

DOCTOR  
Hmmmnn.

The Doctor grabs a magnifying glass and looks at Crawdaddy's spotted shell.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Ahhhh.

The Doctor plucks each one of Crawdaddy's antennae.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
It appears that you a suffering  
from an adverse reaction to  
something you ingested recently.

CRAWDADDY  
Hanh?

Crawdaddy shrugs.

RENEE  
You're allergic to that elixir!

DOCTOR  
Nurse!

The nurse enters the room with a needle in between her paws. She squirts the liquid in the air.

NURSE  
This will only hurt a little bit.

She sinks the needle into Crawdaddy's tail.

CRAWDADDY  
EEEEEEEEK!

The Doctor rubs Crawdaddy's shell.

DOCTOR  
You'll be fine. Next!

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - LOBBY - DAY

Crawdaddy scans the lobby and notices the Old Catfish from Wishbone's Lily Pad. The Old Catfish's fins swell and his skin changes colors.

Crawdaddy kisses Renee.

CRAWDADDY  
I promise I will never go see the  
Witch Doctor again!