

SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

MOZZY'S CHRISTMAS WISHES

Aedes aegypti

“Whoosh!” An electric racket came swooping towards me. I expertly escaped it.

Phew...What a close shave! Thank goodness for my acute senses. Imagine if I had the same type of eyes as those evil humans. I would have been dead by now. My eyes are my assets—my compound eyes are made up of small lenses that allow me to have a wider range of vision.

PERHAPS, OUR GREATEST FEAR ISN'T
HUMANS.

Oh dear, pardon my forgetfulness, I have yet to introduce myself.

Hi! My name is Mozzy! I am what humans name Mosquitoes, specifically *Aedes aegyptia*. A Greek found out about us and decided to name us *Aedes* because, for some absurd reason, they think that we are unpleasant. Maybe it is because we might be a little noisy. Maybe it's because they itch a little after we have a blood meal. These days, we lay our eggs stagnant water on potted plants, bottles or window ledges

However, we think that it is mainly because these people believe that we are bad omen. For some odd reasons, after a bloodmeal, our hosts always end up ill. Sometimes their bodies turn extremely hot. Sometimes they complain about pain in their body. Sometimes they stop moving and eventually, stop breathing and start to turn cold.

However, all we wanted was just a bit of blood to feed our babies and survive.

We have come a long way and overcome many adversities over generations.

Back in the days, our ancestors resided in West Africa. Later, slave ships began coming to the coast of West Africa and we discovered new sites for us to lay our eggs – tanks full of stagnant water. This has helped us come to a foreign land called America. In 1900 a human named Walter Reed announced that we were the cause of Yellow Fever.

Imagine how wronged my ancestors must have felt! It was obviously the virus's fault! We are merely vectors...

In the 1930s, we started seeing fewer and fewer people falling sick after we have bloodmeals. Apparently, it was because they have had a needle poked into their arms. These humans categorized themselves as “vaccinated”.

Despite knowing that we are not the ultimate culprit, humans find ways to kill us. They spray their bed nets with insecticides to deter us from getting to them. Hah! Foolish beings! They must have mistaken us for *Anopheles gambiae*! We are *Aedes aegypti* and feed in the day.

Over the years, human started building more and more concrete forests. Many of them started living in cities. We love cities! It is where we can feed until our content! However, people started falling ill when we feed on them again. They started putting up signs screaming “Dengue Fever Hotspot”, warning people to get rid of us by clearing stagnant water. We were no longer commonly known as *Aedes* mosquitoes. People called us “Dengue Mosquitoes” even though the true culprit is Dengue Fever Virus. We were once again wrongly accused.

When humans become dangerous, we turn to their pets. About 6 months ago, my grandmother fed from a dog, however just yesterday the dog was put to sleep. I had a peek at its post-mortem examination and to my horror, I saw white long worms entangled within its heart. Ugh, it was disgusting!

These days, when the humans' reflexes cannot out-win our speed, they devise other ways to kill us. They capture us and modified our male counterparts' genes such that we can no longer have children when we mate. They carry out fumigation that instantly kill us. They spray foul scents on themselves to deter us from getting near them.

Life is just unfair, isn't it? Humans took advantage of our saliva and invented anti-clotting medicine for themselves to treat cardiovascular and blood diseases. Yet they are still so bent on killing us.

At a ripe old age of 50 days old, I know that my time is almost up and I cannot help but worry about my future generations. I have heard that over the years, we have been migrating northwards as the temperature rises again. One day, we will reach the limit. Perhaps, our greatest fear isn't human. Our greatest fear is the day when the coldest part of Earth becomes too hot for us to survive. That is the day when we completely cease to exist.

This Christmas, I wish for global warming to end. This Christmas I wish for people to know me as Mozzy, not "Unpleasant" or "Dengue". This Christmas, I wish for the end of our series of unfortunate events.

Will my wishes be fulfilled?

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