

The Flutterflash Beetle

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The Flutterflash Beetle had a very important task in the forest, even though no one ever really took him seriously because he constantly bumped into leaves, got stuck in tree bark, and sometimes accidentally startled himself with his own shadow.

During the day he slept under a mushroom, snoring with a sound like a squeaky bicycle wheel. But as soon as the sun went down and the forest slowly grew dark, he jumped up, neatly polished his wing tips, and switched his glowing belly to full flash mode.

His official function was:

FOREST LIGHTING AND LOST-AND-FOUND SECURITY.

While other beetles just did ordinary beetle things, the Flutterflash Beetle made sure no one tripped over tree roots, stepped into muddy puddles, or accidentally mistook a sleeping hedgehog for a pillow. He fluttered back and forth like a living lantern, flashing cheerfully along the paths and sometimes creating little light figures in the air — though those were usually accidental, caused by trying to dodge a mosquito.

If an ant lost its way, the Flutterflash Beetle would hover beside it and blink quickly. Flash-flash-flash... this way!

For snails he used extra slow light, because otherwise they would only arrive three days later.

And when it became really dark in the forest, he would proudly call out: "Don't panic! I'm here again! Watch where you put your little feet!"

Sometimes he flashed so enthusiastically that he forgot where he was going and ended up in a blackberry bush — but according to him, that was simply part of professional light work.

Gruddel thought he was wonderful.

"Without you, we would all bump into each other," he once said.

To which the Flutterflash Beetle proudly replied, "Exactly! I'm the only traffic light with wings!"

And so every evening, with wobbly little flights and cheerful flashes, he made sure the forest stayed safe — even though he still regularly bumped into a mushroom along the way.