

Wombo

Jester-5  
1<sup>st</sup> Place

Hi! My name is Wombo. I'm a wombat who lives in Florida. Miami, specifically.

I've been living here for a long, long time and as you may know, Miami is a GREAT place for an animal like me to live. Why you ask? Well, wombats like me are nocturnal. And in Miami it's always warm and there are lots of animals up all night having a good time.

Lately though, I've just gotten plain sick of the crazy Miami club scene and the all-night conga lines. And I swear if I have to eat one more Cuban sandwich...I don't think I could eat another one if my life depended on it!

Anyways, here's what has been happening to me lately. Instead of going to sleep all day like a good nocturnal animal, I stay awake dreaming about Alaska. Ahhh, Alaska. The home of igloos and white furry bears – I think they're called Polar Bears – who love to snuggle and cuddle all the livelong day.

Alaska sounds AMAZING. But sadly, I have no idea how to get there. I can't swim. I can't drive. I can't fly. I don't have enough money for a plane ticket. And worst of all, I can't hitchhike because wombats don't have thumbs.

The only thing I do have on my side is a best friend who is a dolphin. His name is Click-Click. Some people say dolphins are almost as smart as humans. I say Click-Click is the best thing a wombat could ever have. I think he is smarter than humans. If humans were so smart they wouldn't stay up all night dancing in conga lines and living the life of the party.

"Click-Click, how will I get to Alaska?" I asked him.

"There's only one way," he said. "You need to go through the Panama Canal."

I told you that dolphin was smart.

“What’s that?” I asked.

“It’s a huge sort of trench thing that boats pass through to get from one ocean to the other,” he replied.

This all was starting to sound kind of scary to me.

“Click-Click, I heard it is cold there. Where will I get a coat? Can I borrow some fur from the Fox?”

Click-Click responded, “Um...I don’t think it works that way Wombo.”

All of a sudden I started to get super nervous. My palms started sweating. My knees started shaking. My teeth started chattering. As a wombat, I was used to using my front teeth and powerful claws to dig holes and burrows. The world had prepared me for chewing through tree bark, but it never prepared me for travelling to Alaska.

Still, I wanted to go there so bad. I don’t know why. I just did.

“Click-Click?” I whispered softly. “What if I don’t make it to Alaska?”

Click-Click paused and then said, “Just think. Think about how badly you want to be in Alaska. Then think about all the people who had dreams, and what would have happened if they did not believe their dreams were possible. Hillary Clinton never would have become the first woman president. Taylor Swift never would have left country music to become a pop star. Helen Keller would never have learned to talk. Jane Goodall would have never met any of her chimpanzees. That’s what the world is all about. It’s about dreaming big dreams and trying to make them happen.”

See. I told you Click-Click was smart.

**ONE YEAR LATER**

Now I am in Alaska. I love it here. There's no nightlife, no crazy conga lines, and best of all, there are NO Cuban Sandwiches. I'm living the dream with Click-Click, snuggling and cuddling with the polar bears, and wearing my brand new jacket which I bought at Target (don't ask). The Panama Canal was amazing – it had sooooo many boats and I got a souvenir toy ship to play with in the bathtub.

This has all been a wonderful dream.

There is ONE downside to being here in Alaska though. During the summer, the sun doesn't completely set for about 82 days, which isn't so great for someone who is nocturnal. That said, here is what I have learned from all this. I've learned that no matter how perfect anything seems, nothing is 100% perfect. But if you get to experience life with your friends, there is nothing better than dreaming the possible dream.

