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The Alligators' Frozen Snouts

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Once upon a time, in the state of Oklahoma, a group of alligators were preparing to enter their annual state of hibernation. Or how reptiles like to call it, brumation. The alligators enter a period of dormancy where their metabolism is very low and they don't move around a lot. It's a life-saving adaptation that allows the alligators to survive through the cold. But they are aware of their surroundings and will move around if they feel like it. They don't eat during this time, but do drink to stay hydrated.

As the days grew shorter and the water began to cool, the crocodiles knew that it was time to find a suitable spot to spend the winter. They could sense ice was going to form soon. They scoured the riverbank, searching for a place where the water was deep enough to fully submerge their bodies, but shallow enough to allow them to stick their snouts out of the water and breathe.

Finally, after much searching, they found the perfect spot. It was a quiet, sheltered cove, where the water was slow-moving and the banks were soft and muddy.

One by one, the crocodiles slipped into the water and let themselves sink to the bottom. They arranged themselves in a line, with their snouts just breaking the surface of the water.

As the days grew colder and the water began to freeze, they let their snouts freeze in the water, forming a small hole through which they could take in air. Basically using their snouts as snorkels! But one of the alligators wasn't paying attention and forgot to pull his tail into the water, so his tail froze in the water. Half of the tail was in the water and the other half in the air. That alligator was counting down the weeks for the ice to melt, because his tail was freezing and he didn't like it one bit.

For weeks they remained in this frozen state, hibernating and breathing through their icy snouts. And when spring finally arrived, the ice melted away and the sun began to shine, the crocodiles emerged from their long winter's sleep, refreshed and ready to face the world once again. They laid together in a muddy spot in the sun discussing all their plans for spring and summer and of course what their first meal was going to be! Because they were all very, very hungry.

And the alligator with the frozen tail? He was happy his tail was free and made

sure to warm it in the sun. And next winter he would definitely not forget to only leave his snout out.



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