

## Doing What We Normally Do

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Three green and speckled frogs sat on a speckled log eating the most delicious bugs. One jumped into the pool where it was nice and cool. Spread in the form of a free-fall parachuter, it drifted into the still, sour-green soup and hovered there a moment. It was dead and in pieces after three bites from a species that has never been given a name (especially not a Latin one), or been in a book, or anyone's thoughts. No other species lives as close to the center of the planet. These happenings take place well below sea level. This particular individual has, just now, come closer to the surface than any of her kind in the history of the planet. She is a color darker than black and what a ten-year-old human might call "holographic" but only because there is no word yet that is more accurate. She dived away into opaqueness as one tiny bit of frog flesh continued the frog's journey, down, down to the bottom. It rested again briefly. Another thing without a name ate it but less violently, like a dopey, puffy vacuum just minding its business, doing what it normally does. Now there were two green speckled frogs. On that warm day, they sat there in the sun just doing what they would normally do.

One drop of water from the dead frog's splash rested on the back of the first green and speckled frog. Then it was part of the air. Once it was in a glacier. Once it touched a seal. Now it's in a cloud to be rained on the tongue of a human and peed into the whole ocean.

As he peed he took a watch off his wrist, yelled, "I own this fucking world!" and threw it in the water. And then shot into the water with his gun. And then in went the rest of the drink in his red plastic cup. The cup eventually became part of a floating plastic island utopia in the middle of the ocean. The bullets and watch made their way to the bottom, like the frog chunk had before.

A little while ago, when humans hunted and gathered their food, no one had seen neon colors. A young girl sat restlessly picking at the dirt trying to imagine a new color that she hadn't seen. Every fruit she halved brought hope. Every animal she stabbed did too, until she saw the same repeated red. At the very same time, in the deep ocean, there was a bioluminescent ctenophora, commonly known as a comb jelly. It displayed the rainbow neon of the karaoke signs and highlighter markers to come, just doing what it normally does. The girl thought the sunset through trees looked shockingly beautiful on the day she died as an old woman, but she never did see in a new color, through her eyes or in her head. As she lay dead a mosquito watched the heat leave her.

The watch and bullets passed by some glowing ctenophora and some would call that a beautiful moment. No one saw it. Other things you might call beautiful have happened right here. This one night, after millennia living under the water, something walked up on to the land. It evolved and evolved like a bat out of Hell. One can't deny those fishy feet clumsily crawling up the beach back on that September night really changed the scenery. It was momentous by certain standards, but at the time I don't think there was much excitement. Eventually a bunch of things could live out of the water and it wasn't necessarily special. It's old news now. I personally live outside of the water myself and most of the time I don't think twice about it.

Perhaps that's ignorant. Perhaps it's too important for anything that breathes air not to acknowledge this first act, symbolically. We could arrange a day, a holiday where all species wishing to acknowledge

is moving like it normally does.

On a different evening, one of the descendants of that first wet walker from the beach was a hunched over thing that looked like a human. He was in a cave, where he lived and was making marks on the wall or inventing painting. Earlier in his life his wolf companion had taught him about drawing.

The cave invented sculpture.

A tiny particle was inventing itself.

A piece of ground is displaced by a dung beetle's ball of shit.

The all-lizard dinosaurs we thought we knew begin to grow feathers.

A deer sees a leopard for its first and last time. Somewhere else a plant is slowly eating a bug. It rains.

There's steam.

In a billion years, a gas on Venus becomes bored.

A human kills an ant and two humans. Twenty-seven years ago I was born.

Twenty-eight years ago cells were splitting.

A thing moves like it normally does. Something reacted slowly enough to die. Worms are changing the landscape.

A planet sprouts cities. A star is born.

A young human asks about dead lions turning to grass and antelopes eating them. An antelope eats the grass.

A thing moves like it normally does. There's love.

A meteor's impact kills everything on Earth minus some conveniently designed bacteria that was doing what it normally does. Now there are no green speckled frogs.

A thing moves like it normally does.

It goes like it normally does,

And keeps going like it normally does.