

The Mist People

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On these droopy days, I like to walk through the bush. In fact, most days I walk through the bush hoping for a day, droopy like this one, where things bleed together like a tilted surface of wet, white paint that was meant to dry flat. It is a strange mist that makes this happen, thick enough to blot out all but about a foot in front. The less I can see through the white, the more I can

There is a group, nomadic by nature, who only exist in the mist. They spend their entire lives in it, always chasing it. Not only human forms, as you may think, call the mist home. Rocks, plants, animals, the air, the ground, and everything else is travelling together, staying droopy enough to transform into each other within the mist. Whole ecosystems survive and thrive in it. I don't know the science. The ecosystem and all its things must have learned to evaporate.

Once, in the same setting as this, I saw a human eat a bird right out of the air. I caught the act just on the edge of my peripheral vision about one foot away. On another walk I came across the footprint of a diplodocus like an in-ground kiddie pool. I barely glimpsed what had to have been its tail whipping into the white wash. Extinct species hide in the mist when they feel that the rest of the world does not deserve their presence. This mist is full of them. Many species have never been seen by people like me; the people who live outside of the mist.

The place I arrived at made me bring my hands in front of my face fairly often as a reminder that I was not blind. I was looking hard at my nose, just to ensure that I could and when I uncrossed my eyes I could make something out in front of me similar to a human figure. I said "hello" and walked closer. The figure greyed a little more, but was still mostly a fuzzy mass. As I continued to approach, the figure became two palm trees. I said "hello" in a way more suitable to trees. Even closer, it was a pile of rocks. I apologized for my earlier mistakes and properly greeted it. The rocks said everything it had ever said and was ever going to say all at once, forever. I continued on.

I saw a human, who at the time was definitely human. He was about to evaporate. While I was watching, the mist started to clear. Faint, greyed colors peeked through and he hadn't left.

The mist cleared. He was still there.

He walked by me on his side of the paved path, nodded, and smiled after saying "evening". I noticed a shine of grease on his face and a speck of food like a poppy seed from an everything bagel lodged beside his canine tooth. I continued home.

Maybe the next walk will be the time I learn to evaporate.