

## The Barns of Earth

A single physical mechanism is responsible for whatever goes on in our life and it is called the galaxy.

It's nice to be here on it in the plains at twilight inside the sky's electric foam mountain, having surmised already that on other islands are different animals climbing in their trees of light, even as a happiness sometimes covers our own trying collection of matter.

One cannot write the political ecology of telescopes without theorizing coziness, which isn't mere comfort. Coziness is part of the intangible heritage of sapience, and one cannot theorize it without considering the treatment of the animal. The octopus its jar and holes arrayed through water, *Homo sapiens's* coat and dwelling as precipitates of the atmosphere, coziness is the amplification of a modest quantity of comfort.<sup>1</sup> We discern hints of cozy ambience at some interstices and abrupt edges, seashores pasted with rotting grasses, ridge dry from altitude and heat and the moving of midges, promontories and escarpments filled with beetles, tired and languorous expanse both of dessication and foliage on the end of some delimiting feature. An experience of a panoramic margin can induce a faith in a threatened but secure interior adjacent a region of indifferent discomfort. We enter PetCo and see ferrets. In a plexiglass box under fluorescent glare, long ataraxics cuddling in a pile, fist of tubes, slow shudders rattling their eyelids and noses. In the attic or basement latitudes closer to the poles we are nearer outer space.

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<sup>1</sup> *The augmentation of comfort into coziness is achieved by the establishment of a barrier whose permeability one can govern. This is a barrier between an immersive realm of hardship and an island of the pleasant. The island itself can be moving. Indeed the island can be piloted as a vehicle. The body itself may with training be its own island vehicle, skin the border. The other important feature of coziness is that it is shared. Either with those grouped inside the island or, if isolated, with those who are, as an archipelago, co-isolated.*

Freckled light skims, slips off the atmosphere, carrying away into varieties of comets the beryl colors of the polar lakes washing upward into a haze of noctiluminescent ice. The parka is a divine garment.

In the winter outside televisions we enter rooms to look at rivers or go out bodily on roads that were spread during the intimacy of countless lunches, and after traveling for a while in our vehicular prosthetic we share with friends the humility of cooperative awe, saying look at these remarkable rivers would you look, except that the comparative size of persons to landscape features mostly renders the average vantage a thing that contains only one river at a time, such that one has occasion rarely to say, "look at these rivers."

And so now we have telescopes that squish rivers into tubes and spray multicolored light down neighborhoods, subbordering it to the skew and flux of people in traffic, slapping it into textiles and ionized gas that slips around our bodies into streets from our blinking things. The telescopic sights are lodged now in the amalgams of percepts that travel to stores and live in houses, and the sights of the stars themselves drag loops of refuse and decay over counties and stick themselves in the form of dendrites and vulcanized elastomers with sharp ergs onto papers and in pathways. The families on their ferrific star, habitable and proximal to salt are also stuck in the same flare that rises in life, and even the turtles are compatriot blossoms on the regolith, everyone's eye a blister in the kilogauss. But it's not, "I am the sun. I fend. I feed. I knock myself through the stars. I walk the world animal-pertinent, blunt, emblazoned with motes." It's, "Who has the programs, in our government, where there is no work or effort or what we call special use of energy, such that finally, in our human systems, a place of rest, and exoneration, may be found where no worry will wake or cost be levied? Of course we laud a wall of cold and the blue translucent saps in the pines, the empurpled bronze of conifer bark from which we make receipts, but the expression of bitter

adhesion that is the boreal forest sends the birds up as soups into the clouds” and it’s this last that feeds our heads at cliffs.

It’s in the cold and at the cliff that sedges and *Silphiums* taste better, mallows and wild onion, for *Allium stellatum*, garlic of the taphonomic soils, when turgid with cold rain, in bottomland, the autumnal blue and sour sunlight jammed on the driftwood, locked over slower oxbows heavy and brown, alone and rootless the old sun partitions the dusk in the *Phragmites*, noonlight slatted through dock wood into beds of *Hydrilla*—the spent salt loose in the ether, the stars are bubbles of iron—oak and dirt scent the winds moving over lakes and the cold cycles itself delicately as if carried on the backs of toads, engines are lost inside the bogs, thus the farm is embedded in cold and wet, and companioned to the bulb mud.

And especially outside a laboratory there is something so calm about sleet. These sheets of watery matter sliding through the atmosphere, undulating over our seasons and the cars striking out from warm hillside nests on their visits through the holidays, dark and red conifers passed as blurs, rosemary thickets huddled in the ends of fields and certain smells in last autumn’s tent canvas, and some upholstery, ripen only in the cold, and at the upper end of dark roads people are welcoming us to cabins at high latitude, the smell inside of wood unprimed for decades both sour and fruity. Crap is clanking in the fireplace because of movements of animals on the roof. And the next day the inhabitants of the cabin invite us to go climbing with a bunch of rams and all of us are again back in one of those primeval small alpine Heimat meadows, the Heimat, clearly, of the rams, we are spread on meadows with the rams across the elevated vistas aware of the vintage clothing store feeling of mountain tops, and, sure, we as hominids do cart rifles up there over the centuries and then patiently ignite bullets and are for a while aware somehow of the delicacy of the living planet and much of its vegetal spicules, and after all that hunting it is terrifying, really, to attend to the telescopes.

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