

A Dark Patch of Sky

by strannikov

In some places it was far too late to guess, in other places guessing would simply require a great long while: in most other places guessing was a useless exercise altogether.

No one, that is, in the domains of cosmology, astronomy, physics, and astrophysics had predicted, or could have predicted, that the Earth would revolve and rotate one Monday morning headlong into a patch of profound temporal anomalies. Time no longer observed a single velocity on the planet, if it ever had. From continent to continent, country to country, city to city, and even within identical rooms, no one on the planet could identify anyone else with the same sense of temporal velocity.

Millions, naturally, found their metabolisms more in tune with those of mayflies than of loggerhead turtles, and so millions the world over succumbed to old age and putrefied into slime only hours after the planet slapped into the dark patch of sky where these temporal anomalies occurred. Millions of others, equally naturally, found their metabolisms slowing to match those (*mutatis mutandis*) of bristlecone pines. Most of the remaining billions experienced only milder forms of faster and slower temporal sensation, often with comical results but almost equally often with tragical results.

Those very few who were least affected or who seemed to escape the pernicious effects altogether were able to observe that the temporal anomalies were not simply afflicting people: climatic, meteorological, oceanic, and geologic processes were also implicated.

Somehow, the collision with the Moon was abrupt.

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