

Where Is The Good Life?

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The story of a man who lives off the grid - is his life better or worse than ours?



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There are many ways to define the word "different". You can have a different hairstyle, different clothing. You can have a different personality. There are some things that are easy to change, and make different. A lifestyle is not one of those things. Many people like to claim they have a different lifestyle, but those people are usually lying. They most likely eat the same food, watch the same shows, drive a vehicle, follow the same social norms, pay the same taxes and abide by the same laws as everyone else. Their definition of different is enclosed, because they are brainwashed into believing that in society, certain things have to happen in order for you to be successful. I live without them. I sustain myself. I have no electricity, no running water, not even a fixed shelter. I don't have to spend any money. I don't have a cell phone, I don't have a Facebook account, you won't find my name recorded in any government documents. I don't have a social insurance number because I don't need to work. I don't have a health card number because I don't need health care. I don't have a driver's license because I don't need to drive. It sounds like a hard life, doesn't it? Well, I'll take you through my day and show you just how hard it really is.

Every morning I wake up just before sunrise. My day always starts out with admiring the sunrise. It's a beautiful thing, really. Mesmerizing. It makes me happy to know that such beauty will be there every day. Its vibrant shades of orange and yellow lift my spirits and raise my mood.

After the sun rises, I go for a swim in the lake. The water's cold, but it's invigorating and wakes me up. Coming off the lifting mood of the sunrise, this water sharpens my senses and heightens my mood even more, so that by the time my swim is done, I'm happy and dancing and ready to take on the day.

The leaves around here are really great for making tea. I decide that this morning, I'm going to have some. So I grab some firewood and get the fire going. Once the fire is nice and warm, the logical next step is to boil some water in my specially made pot. It's made out of a beaver skin with leaves lining the inside. Once I prop that over the fire and the water starts heating, I decide to go search for some leaves. Today I find some spruce needles and decide that I'm actually in the mood for spruce tea. As I relax by the fire, with the sound of the water faintly lapping the shore, sipping my tea, I can't help but think to myself that it's already a great day today. It's sunny, the birds are singing, the tea tastes great, and I'm in a fantastic mood.

After the tea's done, I get ready to go for my early afternoon hike to the top of the cliff for my meditation. It's a hard climb but it feels great when you get to the top. Once I'm there, I get a fantastic view overlooking the lake. It's a beautiful lake. Almost like the ocean, it stretches for miles into the distance and meets with the horizon. With a fresh breeze coming off the water and rejuvenating me after the long journey, I sit down, cross my legs, and relax. I love to meditate. I almost become one with my surroundings. I can feel the birds, the trees, the lake, the rock underneath me. It's an out of body experience, of sorts. It's so enthralling that I lose track of the time. By the time I'm done the sun is high in the sky and its heat is getting quite intense, so I decide to retreat back into the forest, and check some of my traps for food.

My traps are set up in many different locations, all of which tend to produce fairly sizable rewards. After checking them today, I find that I managed to trap two rabbits, which isn't bad. I collect them and begin to head back to my camp.

As I walk, I catch a strange scent, accompanied by sounds. I hear people talking, but I can't make out their words. Must be the average ones of society, coming out in an attempt to commune with nature. The scent, however, is a strange one; usually I smell it when I'm cooking my rabbits for dinner. I manage to sneak up

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close to these people to find the source of the smell. They are holding strange looking, cylindrical objects in their hands: there is smoke coming out of one end. To my surprise, they put this flame up to their mouths, and inhale it, and then they breath it out. Now Iâm not sure why somebody would do this, because everybody with a brain knows that fire smoke is not good for your health. Regardless, they drop the smoking objects on the ground and continue on their way, so I shrug it off.

Later in the evening, I cook the rabbits for dinner. Theyâre delicious, and I feel warm and full after eating them. All day Iâve been thinking about how great this day has been. Itâs been nice and sunny, on the hot side, but fairly dry. Meditation was wonderful, the sunset was beautiful, my tea was great, and so were the rabbits. The hike to the hill, as always, was filled with wonderful sights and adventure. All thatâs left for me to do now is relax and admire the sunset. This is my favorite time of the day. The sun is so symbolic. As the sun rises, so do my spirits. Likewise, as the sun sets, I calm down and get ready to sleep for the night. With this wonderful sunset now over, itâs time to go to bed. I drift away with a smile on my face.

Unfortunately, Iâm rudely awaken not much later, because something is amiss. That smell is back, but itâs stronger this time. As I lift my head to look around, I start to cough - thereâs something in the air. My eyes are watering. Itâs too familiar, itâs fire smoke. But where could it be coming from? Itâs blowing in with the wind. I decide to get up and follow its path. I walk, and the further I walk, the more a sound becomes noticeable to me. Itâs a faint rumbling sound, accompanied by the crackling of bushes. It sounds like... a fire. In the forest? How could that be possible? Iâm standing on top of a hill, and looking down I can see the orange glow in the forest below. Panic sets in. Itâs coming, fast. I have to get away. I start running, but itâs moving fast, and the smoke is making it hard to breathe. I keep slowing. I collapse, gasping for air. The heat is building. I canât believe this is happening. What could possible cause such a huge fire in the forest? Then I remember. Those people I saw earlier, and the fire sticks they were carrying. They must have eventually set fire to the ground after they were dropped. There are tears streaming down my face, a combination of smoke getting in my eyes, and the sorrow of wondering how people who have so much, could be so cruel to the very earth that gave it to them.

All I can think now is, if I can get to the lake, Iâll be safe. I start to crawl now because I no longer have the energy to stand. The fire is caught up to me and its blaze is deafening. Realizing I wonât have a chance, I muster all the energy I have left, and, in one last defiant act to the cruelty of the modern day human, I stand up with my arms outstretched, as the blaze consumes me.

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