

The Land Beyond Land

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By : Mike Stevens

A simple guy's incredible trip abroad!

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It looked like the edge of the world to Herf, a hunter-gatherer from the Blockingsled tribe. He was gathering berries so Mrs. Herf, named Almosta, could whip up some of her famous Gazelle's Head pudding. Herf had never been this far from the security of their village before, and he was scared. The tribe was using up all the berries close to the village, so it had become more and more necessary to range further and further from the village. Herf, carrying the leopard skin sleeping bag which kept him warm in his pack, had set out yesterday morning and started walking in search of the berries, from which the village made everything from berry-flavored wine, to Gazelle's Head pudding. The villagers used their love of Gazelle's Head pudding as a cover, in Herf's opinion, for their crazed addiction to berry-flavored wine.

"Herf, could you go out on a hunting trip for berries so we can have some more of that tasty Gazelle's Head pudding?", which was code for, "Herf, we don't have any 10% alcohol-laced berry wine left to snorkle; and as you're the only dude (dude in blockingsledese, was Oronoscape) who's not lazy in this whole damn village, you have to get us some more dut (s**t)!"

He was expected to answer, "Sure thing, Oronoscapes!"

And so here he was, one day's travel from their village, which doesn't sound like much, but it was further from their village than anyone had ever traveled, staring out at the strange water that suddenly filled his vision. Just look at it! It stretched from horizon to horizon. Herf could go no further, and was turning away from the endless water, when something came stomping through the woods. His escape route was cut off, and it sounded like a Fleshasoris coming through the woods; if he didn't want to be a buffet line for all you can eat Herf Burgers, he had to get out of there. Through the woods was out, so onto the water was his only choice. But Herf couldn't swim (now he sure wished he had of signed up for the swimming lessons offered through the Blockingsled Chamber of Commerce) so the only option was finding something that would do to keep him afloat. But what? Then his desperate eyes spotted a couple of fallen logs floating nearby. He saw some berry vines, the very vines whose berries he had followed here, and he ran to them and quickly cut them into lengths, and plunged into the water and used the lengths to lash the two floating logs together, making a crude, very crude, raft. He managed to scamper aboard, and using his hands to paddle, made his way slowly out into the unknown water.

He'd been floating for hours, and had no idea where he was. Much to his consternation, a swift tide was running, and it caught hold of his makeshift raft, and propelled it wherever it wanted. No longer in danger from the Fleshasoris, now he was at the mercy of the cruel sea. What if he was out here for days? He had no food, no water, and no wiping bark to use when he had to go to the bathroom. What was he going to do?

It was 2 days later, although Herf had no way of knowing this, because he was delirious. He must be, for in the distance were hundreds of tall buildings, bigger by far than anything he'd ever seen. He sure could use some wiping bark right about now! Herf stared in wonder at the sight he was beholding. It was far beyond his comprehension. Just then, a boat of some sort came out of a fog bank, and came barreling towards him. But where were the rowers? Then, a strange voice sounded,

"This is Captain Walker of New York Harbor Water-Taxi's. Are you in need of assistance?"

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It was all foreign to Herf's ears, so he just stood and stared.

"Hey, pal I'm talking to you! Are you having some sort of emergency?"

Still, Herf just stood there staring.

"Alright, you fricking moron, for whatever reason, you're too fricking stupid to answer me, so I'll tell you, get that hunk of s**t out of the sea lanes, you're a fricking hazard to all boats out here! And there's a hurricane headed this way! Seek shelter, moron!"

Herf just stared, and the strange man piloting the strange craft just waved his hand in disgust. "Fricking moron!" he said, and held up one finger, the meaning of which was unclear to him. The strange craft veered away towards the shore, until once again, Herf was alone on the ocean. He briefly wondered what the guy had been babbling about, then looked in wonder again at the incredible sight he was witnessing.

He had soon forgotten about what he saw, because the wind had increased steadily, until it was a steady scream in Herf's ears. With the increased wind gale, the waves were towering over his head. It was all he could do to cling to the fragile raft. He hoped the unstable raft would hold together.

At last the storm that had entrapped Herf's craft in its fury for 2 whole days was abating. Now the only thing left for him to worry about was the fact he had absolutely no idea where he was. The vines which held the two logs bound together, had somehow miraculously held and he was floating helplessly toward he knew not what. Then, a speck on the horizon proved to be land, and the tide was carrying him right towards it. The waves of the surf were pounding all around his tiny raft, as Herf desperately scanned the shoreline for anything familiar. Incredibly, his grateful eyes fell upon the familiar shores of Blockingsled County; he couldn't believe it! What were the odds? He staggered ashore, then started walking into the village. They simply would not believe his incredible tale! Then, he spotted the angry face of Almosta, his wife, stomping her way towards him.

"Hi, Almosta, you're not going to believe where I've been!"

"Out wasting everyone's time, no doubt! We send you out to get berries, and what do you do? Apparently you took a goatskin full of berry wine, and you drank so much of it, you passed out for the last 5 days, because you knew that if you came home, you'd have to help out around the hut!"

"But..."

"But nothing! I see that you couldn't even manage to bring any berries home; I shouldn't be surprised! You're a..."

Herf tuned out her screeching. Maybe he could find some berry wine somehow missed. He sure needed it!

The End

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