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My Life  
Among the Electric  
Tower Giants

King Of Frogs

The first thing I recall is sunlight. A single beam, cutting clear through the gold-rust world of roots and leaves and small swimming-dancing water bugs, and shining straight into my newly formed eye.

All around me I saw siblings, brothers and sisters, black-golden teardrops, curled, coiled, dormant in opaque eggs of rubbery protoplasm. My sentience expanded quickly, and as it grew I recall a single feeling that encased my being like the membrane of an egg: contentment.

But now, this swampy water is filled with the blood of mutated tadpoles. They bleed from their pollywog anuses, their malformed lungs, their raw malfunctioning gills, frail leg-stubs, tiny toes that fall from their feet just after they have formed, sprouted.

My kingdom is a wasteland, my sovereignty an illusion; I reign over nothing, except that which is only a small forgotten portion, a pool within some obscure crevasse of some other beings' dominion.

They have claimed it all for themselves, to rape and shit down upon. They shit their own bloody excrement down upon the progeny of my froggy amphibious loins. I have never known my sons or daughters personally. But forever, they have swum past and around me, and it had always filled my heart with joyous rapture: to simply sit upon the muddy leaf-littered banks of this malodorous bog, and see them flipping off branches or stones, splashing down into the water with exclamations of excitement and exuberance and vitality!

O! To sit here among the grasses on warm deep blue summer nights, beneath god's gracious star-filled skies, and merely listen to the sound of their songs and croaks, their humble exhalations to mother nature's fecundity; it had always filled my abdomen with some strange chemical feeling, a stinging and sweet sensation, the connection between my ancient physiology and some abstract notion evolution has not equipped me to decipher.

But I fear I shall feel this never more. My children grow up limbless, or with extra limbs, stumbling and bumbling, teetering, wobbling, rocking their way across the foul polluted mud shores upon their raw and lacerated underbellies.

They cannot sing, because their neck bladders fill with puss and blood, and the swamp has come to reek with the vile scent of their runny yellow feces.

The crawling insects have gone rotten. Their abdomens are swollen with bacteria and shit, and when swallowed the infections fill the bellies of my offspring, and it makes them sick.

If you look at their skin you can see it, the way it creases at the joints, at once bloated and withered. We have been forsaken.

The water once fresh, crisp, clear, deep-red golden, at first grew thick and bubbly-viscous with the metabolic effluence of burgeoning algal colonies, and green pulpy mats of microscopic organism kingdoms.

These microbes invaded my territory, came to enter through the small trickle trough of water that dribbles down the hillside from the concrete pipe at the hilltop tree roots.

I saw my descendants' bodies blanketed in murky mantles of slime and sewage, I watched them struggle to break through the waters' surface fat with muck, gasping for air, push-thrusting through the mire.

Some did not make it. And the bog became rank and vile with the swelling rotting carcasses of my dead children. I sat helpless, watched silently as my bloodline dissolved before my very eyes. And soon, even I, one whose own physiology remained unaffected by the evil which had come to imbue our homeland, had lost the very ability to sing out into the night.

And now the swamp was silent, save the songs of some insects who sat untouched in the leafy balcony above, but soon even their sound, a sound that until then had been music to me because it had symbolized the virility and constancy of life, became like jeers of mockery to my ears. There were insects plenty, but few frogs left to feed upon them.

And then the water level lowered, and soon even our diminished numbers became too great for our small bog to contain. The shore became a rank fetid death field, the corpses of pond snails, dragonfly larvae, and minnow fish littering the plane of sick-green bacterial muck.

The marsh grasses that made the walls of my castle and cathedral soon withered and crumbled away. And then I sat upon the mud at the water's edge, no walls to cover and protect me, and I watched as my children crowded into the putrid pool, clamoring, shoving, writhing for a spot within the water. But it could not hold them all, and those not strong enough to force their way in among the thrashing horde lay down upon the shore and baked beneath the heat of the summer sun.

And then the flies became many, as they feasted upon the sun-roasted bodies of my dead children.

Then all sound was a buzzing, insect wings and electric wire static. They stand there, beyond the trees, the metal electrical towers, their thick black wires bowing down above the remnants of our swampland, humming, humming, humming. Never ceasing their disharmonic dirge.