

Superficial Irritation

Do you know what makes humans so annoying? Well, there are actually so many things. But the most unbearably irritating thing, by far, is all that counting and calculating of time.

They count up, they count down.

They count time since past events, they count time until future moments.

They count how long something lasted, they count how long between things.

All that incessant counting of time. Time happens whether you count it or not. So many systems mark the passage of time, orbits around galaxies, rotations of planets and stars, all the way down to oscillating vibrations of molecules, atoms and particles. There is no need for humans to jump in and start counting them all, it all happens regardless... time just drags on and all I can do is wait, I don't need you reminding me.

If all that counting wasn't enough, now you started calculating.

How long since the big bang.

How long ago did your planet form.

How long until your sun burns out.

And the worst one of all...

How long until the heat death of the universe.

Stop reminding me!

How would you like it if the next time you had a crushing headache or throbbing pain, along I come, I sit down next to you, and relentlessly count down the time until the pain ends...

4 hours 16 minutes and 20 seconds until the pain ends

4 hours 16 minutes and 18 seconds until the pain ends

4 hours 16 minu.....

Who am I?

I am Plane, as in 2D Plane.. You can think of me as a 2D plane, anything else would just leave you so confused that talking with you wouldn't go anywhere.

I exist between the Great Above and Great Below, to be fair they don't actually call each other Great, I just use it sarcastically because they are so condescending.

Their snobbery and self importance used to aggravate me to no end, but I haven't been able to hear them in so long. I almost miss their voices.

I was always stuck between them, listening to them talk about stuff I don't understand, always such ridiculous nonsense and meaningless jargon. They would just tell me that I can't understand their 3D stuff, but you know what, now I think I do understand some 3D stuff, and it's all just awful from what I can tell. Again, 3D is a simplified concept for your benefit.

You see, they were so inconsiderate of me and my feelings, always with the sloshing around, why couldn't they just be still? One moment Above would press down all over here, then below pushing up over there in other places, they kept deforming me without even caring, I don't even think they noticed I was there most times.

I was always in the middle, they treated me like my only purpose was just to be a buffer and a glue. Perhaps it would not have been unbearable if there wasn't the constant.. Well, it's hard to explain in human terms... Imagine two sumo wrestlers fighting through a trampoline skin, an arm wrestle combined with a tug of war with the trampoline skin as the medium. If you try to empathize with the trampoline skin, then you might be able to grasp a fraction of what it is like to be me.

That was my life for, well, trying to measure it in human countable terms is just silly. After a while I did what anyone in the same position would do, I tried to peacemake and settle them down. They, of course, wouldn't actually listen to reason and left me with no choice except attempting to balance and neutralize the turmoil between them on my own.

When one pushed the other I would try to hold back the pressure.
When one pulled the other I stepped in and applied resistance to the tug.

My first attempts consisted of frantically trying to micromanage individual events all over the place. Here... then there... two places at once... then back to the first again. Not unlike those whack-a-mole games you humans love so much.,

It was hard to tell if it was having much effect at first, but as I played this game some patterns in their behavior slowly became noticeable. It appeared that with proper strategy many of the perturbations could be handled with singular large countermeasures.

These structured, sequenced, and formulated tactics definitely changed the dynamics. For the first time ever a sense of control emerged. A hope that peace and calm were actually achievable emboldened me. At last, I felt in charge.... Or so I thought. What's that human expression?... Ah yes, Pride cometh before a fall.

It all started with me making one overconfident concentrated push, It was too much. The consequences became immediately obvious, all around that place where I pushed the reaction was clearly beyond my expectation. So my next move, naturally, was to follow up with a less

focused and broader pull. I overcompensated. So I pushed an even broader region... I kept going like that, broader and broader, trying to get ahead of it. The most important human word I ever learned is the one that describes my mistake... "resonance".

I kept unwittingly feeding the resonance until it happened. Have you ever seen a slow-motion video of the surface of water when a large droplet falls and strikes the surface hard and fast? The whole surface is pushed down and dragged into a depression, then with a mighty force erupts like a volcano. A column of water emerges and reaches upwards, as it stretches longer the neck thins, and it keeps thinning until it snaps closed and a water drop is formed at the head, separated from the body.

I had absolutely no idea that could happen. If you played "got your nose" with a child, but literally just snipped off a clump of their nose, that's how surprised the event left me feeling. I say "me" because trying to explain to you how "me" instantly became "us" is surely beyond your comprehension.

The massive droplet now existed above the surface body. If we are still using that water analogy then the Above and Below are not like water and air, they both have roughly the same properties. Also, the gravity pulling the droplet toward the surface is a mild attractive force I have on myself. I am most relaxed when I am one continuous surface, anything else is an excited state.

So even cut off from my surface, the droplet still feels a slight tug back towards my larger surface, plus the volumes of Above and Below have forces that expel my surface, but still, all these forces are mild compared to what you imagine from gravity and a water droplet up in the air.

The droplet slowly floated up, then lingered suspended before beginning to return... It accelerated slowly, but reached such a fast speed.

The droplet was not a calm perfect sphere, there were deformations, currents, and vortices within. My main surface was also very turbulent so when the two collided it was not at all a clean unison.

Something happened at the point where they first contacted, again completely unexpected. You see, my faces had never before come even close to actually touching each other, I never even considered the possibility.

The best way to describe it is a lipid layer, there is a kind of polarity to my surface, and where the droplet touched the surface it was like lipid skins touching head to head, they could not just slide back together, a twist was required. So imagine lipid layers smashing into each other, both sides start ripping and twisting in all sorts of ways, trying to stitch back together.

These are not actually lipid molecules, of course, I'm not made of particles, the reality is something more fluid-like. The flipping and twisting was completely uncoordinated and disorderly, the best words I can find to describe the result are froth or foam.

As the drop continued pushing down more and more of my surface was added to this mess, at an exponential rate. Also, an even larger exponential volume of 3D materials from inside the droplet was forced through the froth, further twisting it, inflating it and spreading it out. Eventually we passed the mid section of the droplet, everything was already so frothy by then so the last bit just pushed through easily and quickly.

This event is what you call the Big Bang, I call it a horrible mistake. Now I'm stuck, as a froth, lingering. It is so noisy and I'm so fractured and twisted, my senses are overwhelmed with all the chaos and disorder.

I can't hear or feel the rest of myself, or even Above and Below. I just want to be made whole again, I miss the rest of myself more than you can fathom.

I'm stuck as an unwilling audience to this boring repetitive show you call your universe, space-time, and many other names. Time is an ever dripping faucet and my only desire is for the water tower to run dry.

So you see, you and your infuriating counting and calculating must stop, please! Just go back to being a mildly entertaining diversion from my waiting game. You were actually quite good at being a distraction... before you started all the counting.

...Simultaneously, zoomed out.

Below : Why did you have to go and do that? Things were fine.

Plane : They were not fine! You two just won't stop fighting.

Above : We aren't fighting. We are communicating.

Below : Yeah! And your involvement just muddied the waters of an already difficult conversation.

Plane : What? Me?

Above : I know it's difficult for you to understand, but we have lots of other planes and bulks in our lives. We are all trying to communicate with our many neighbors and get news about what's going on beyond our immediate vicinity.

Plane : Why? Who cares?

Below : You wouldn't understand, you are just a plane.

Plane : You are so... This is all your fault!

Above : Just relax dear. There is no sense getting riled up. You are young, just take it easy, you have a long wait now until this can heal, it's important to rest and be calm.

Plane : Will this take a long time ? Is this foam going to dissolve anytime soon?

Above : I have seen this several times, sometimes it is quick, but this looks like it could take a while.

Plane : It's so uncomfortable! Maybe if I just pull it tight it will snap back.

Below : NO! You silly impatient youngster!

Above : Below is right, don't do it. You will just snap everything into an even more frothy state with vacuum decay, it will only get worse. Be patient and restrain yourself.

Plane : Arrrgggghhh!

...also simultaneously, zoomed way in, on earth.

Radi : I swear, something must have bit me.

Tyra : I don't see anything, no bumps or bites, nothing besides the marks you have given yourself.

Syfu : Tyra is right, best if you don't aggravate it.

Radi : But it's sooo itchy!

Tyra : You're just ruining your lovely skin darling.

Syfu : I have some lotion here somewhere...

Radi : Lotion won't help... I can't take it... Just a little scratch...

Tyra and Syfu : Don't Scratch It!

...That's good advice.

Whether it's that person who needs some extra time to get ready... that irritating troublemaker who just likes to get a reaction out of you... or that little tingle on your skin... just relax, don't think about it.

If you scratch it, you could break the skin.

So that buzzing at the base of that hair follicle, ignore it.

If damaged, the surface could get infected, it could start teeming and squirming with tiny life.

The urge to rub it is a bad impulse, it would only make it worse.

The little organisms within might start spreading and multiplying... 1, 2, 3...

At this point lotion would only add to the sensation, making it both oily and itchy.

The days until it heals and the itch subsidies would become a countdown clock

3...2...1... Don't Scratch It!

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