

# A Stitch in Time

Or: How Certain Epochal Moments Of My Life Would Be Different If The Space-Time Continuum Broke Down When They Occurred

*Birth:* This is my mother's first child and she does not know what to expect. When the time comes it hurts unbearably, because I decide to come out sideways spread-eagle. When it is all over, she is exhausted but content and goes to sleep holding her new baby boy. The next morning she is surprised to discover that none of it actually happened. She gives birth a second time. Every morning thereafter for 282 days, my mother is forced to give birth to me in a grotesque parody of *Groundhog Day*. She is driven insane and tries to drown me in a stream. I escape and grow up living in the forest, where I befriend the bears and later lobby for ursine rights as a non-governmental advisor to the United Nations. Once they have gained power, the bears turn on humanity, impounding the world's honey supply then blasting off to their moon colony.

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*We kill the fat kid and eat him. When I get home my mother is very proud of me, she never liked that fat kid.*

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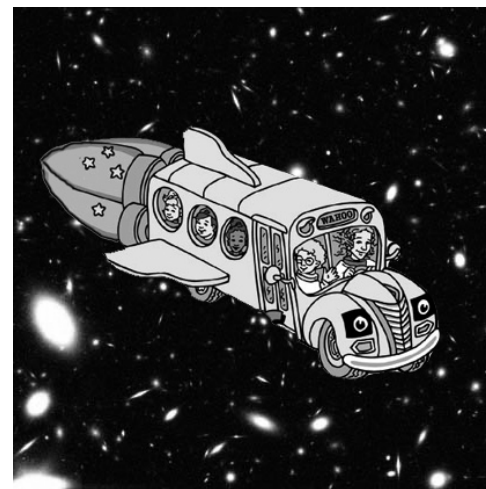
*Getting a puppy:* I am very excited because today I will be getting what I always wanted, other than a race car with guns for wheels: a puppy. I wait eagerly for my mother to return home bearing my little bundle of joy. When the puppy arrives, I am elated and name him Mr. Dancing-Puppy-Thing. I plan to ride him around the house like a stallion, which is possible because I do not eat my protein and weigh approximately 15 lbs. However, when he jumps lovingly into my arms, licking my face as I close my eyes and giggle, he ages several thousand years and disintegrates all over my chest.

*My Grandfather Dies:* I am in fourth grade. I am learning about frogs and I like to wear my cat costume and then rub against my mother's legs when she tries to walk places. Mom tells me the news. Granddad had died. At first I don't know what death is, and my mother has to explain it to me: it is when your Granddad stops loving you because he hates cats and we have to throw out that damn costume, god damn it, then his brain turns off and he doesn't send you Christmas presents any more. We go to the funeral and look at his body. It is so cold and plastic that I begin to cry. Just then, my Granddad's corpse rapidly transforms into a handsome young man. He and my mother fall in love, and my brother is born with Klinefelter's syndrome. I like to play with Timmy's gills and I nickname him "Useless Chromosome McGee".



*Winning State Champs:* We have trained hard all season. Even the fat kid who just plays because his mother makes him is doing his share. It is a tough game, but we pull together and come through as a team, winning with a fourth quarter comeback, and some kind of bizarre-trick play that involves the hokey-pokey and galoshes. We hoist the trophy and climb back onto our bus, headed home, honk-

ing and shaking our right and left arms all about. Suddenly, Aristotle, Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein appear under the tires of our bus, their brilliant minds crushed by several thousand tons of rejoicing 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The foundations of modern society unravel, and we start to wear squirrels and berries for clothing. We kill the fat kid and eat him. When I get home my mother is very proud of me, she never liked that fat kid.



*First Kiss:* It is a special night. My prom date Laura and I have had a wonderful time. I drive her home, even though I am deathly afraid of her house because her father is crazy and has a moat with crocodiles, and likes to shout things at me like, "Broccoli broccoli boy, come scratch my back with tuna-fish!" We get out of the car and bashfully tell each other what a good night it was. I look at her awkwardly and she closes her eyes softly. I gather my courage, lean in, not breathing, and brush my lips against hers. We are frozen in that position for 7 hours, until the next morning when her father comes out, finds us standing there, and shoots me in the stomach with his air rifle. I vomit in Laura's mouth, collapse on the ground, then roll unconscious into the moat, where I am eaten by crocodiles. ☹