

Farthest from the Heights

By

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High in the sky the sun lights life below, the clouds playfully obscuring it and dancing in its brilliance between the heights of the mountains. Birds circle both mountain and treetops, gracefully soaring always just out of reach. All this above our heads and still more life and majesty below our feet. We hold sacred the safety offered by the ground below and heights above, giving a little and taking a lot.

Yet, at the fingertips of the ocean's outstretched hand pushing away at the beaches along our dominion's edge lies the boundary of a place we were not meant to go, not meant to take from and assuredly thankful for what bounty it chooses to give us. Here children splash on a playful veneer and our silly machines buzz about, still within sight of the heights we trust. But farther out, and farther down, the footholds we rely upon slip away from under our feet and the dangers become more real, more inviting. Even further out our muscles give way and we plunge

into the abyss of a world not even the sunlight can penetrate, a world of cold and propagating sound where, unlike space, everything for miles around can hear you scream.

And you will scream, and the things will come. Creatures of deadly inquisitiveness to tear at your body until the murky depths are filled with yet another carcass and you are embraced by the forgotten many. Hungry creatures circle wielding a hundred ways to bring death, but they do not need to. Because the air above is gone now and your lungs betray you, ingesting your doom. Further down it becomes darker than night, no moon or star to light the way home. Even the mountains that towered above are drowned here, the same as you, the same as everything from above that ventures to this place. This place is farthest from safety, farthest from the heights.