



*Random God*

[Instructions for an imagined solitary journey. Alternate your internal voice between two registers, one reserved for the **bold text** and one for the regular.]

**You are standing on a beach.**

**The sand is coarse, the waves are periodic, the sun is intermittent and the horizon is concave.**

**You face the water.**

**You take a step forwards, towards the water.** The water retreats away from you.

You take another step forwards, towards the water. The water retreats.

You take two steps forwards, towards the water. The water retreats and retreats.

Facing the water, you increase your pace and take three steps forwards, towards the water. The water retreats, matching your pace.

The distance between you and the water is the same as it was seven steps ago.

You are now standing on sand that was underwater seven steps ago. It's dry.

You look left. A line slowly forms at the **water / sand divide which gains definition as it arcs to the right, until it caresses the concave horizon and becomes indistinguishable from it. The horizon is interrupted by protruding peaks of sand dunes that look unclimbable.**

**You look right. A line slowly forms at the water / sand divide which gains definition as it arcs to the left, until it caresses the concave horizon and becomes indistinguishable from it. The horizon is interrupted by protruding peaks of sand dunes that look un-climbable.**

**You look straight ahead, facing the water. The sand is coarse, the waves are periodic, the sun is intermittent, and the horizon is concave.**

You turn and face the sand dunes, turning your back to the water.

You take a step forwards, towards the sand dunes. You turn your head and see the water advance towards you.

You take another step forwards, towards the sand dunes. You turn your head and see the water advance.

You take three steps forwards, towards the sand dunes. You turn your head and see the water advance, matching your pace.

You turn around and face the water.

You run forwards, towards the water. The water retreats, matching your pace.

The distance between you and the water is the same as it was when you last checked.

You look down. The sand is dry. You pinch some sand grains between three of your right-hand fingers and lay them out on the palm of your left hand. You start counting the grains of sand, parsing them with your right thumb and index fingers, tossing the **individual grains back into the**

**mass below as you count. Once you count ten grains of sand, you decide that if the total number will be even, you will walk left along the beach, parallel to the water. Otherwise you will walk right along the beach, parallel to the water.**

**You count a total of thirty-seven grains of sand. You know that this might be inaccurate because you remember feeling what might have been two grains of sand between your right thumb and index finger on two occasions while counting, but thought it wouldn't make a difference since it happened twice and that difference would add up to two, which would negate that difference.** You also acknowledge that there is a possibility that you felt the two grains of sand between your right thumb and index finger only once, not twice, and that there were actually three grains of sand, not two. Both of these potential situations would have skewed your final count, but you decide that it wouldn't make a difference either way.

You proceed to the right along the beach, parallel to the water, counting your steps as you walk. You begin to pay attention to the sand dunes on your right, also running parallel to the water. Their steep incline makes them impossible to scale, effectively making them walls. Their peaks follow a regular irregularity, like an extruded sine wave decorated with deformations. After walking approximately fifty steps, you begin to spot recurring deformations in the peaks and troughs, and notice that the landscape surrounding you hasn't changed. It hasn't changed at all.

You speed up your pace, walking right along the beach, parallel to the water, but stop counting your steps. You spot the same repeating deformations in the peaks and troughs of the sand dunes, and this time see that the sand dunes stretch into the distance **until they become indistinguishable from the concave horizon.**

**You stop walking.**

**You turn and once again face the water.**

**The waves are periodic, the sun is intermittent, the sand is coarse, and the horizon is concave.**

**You listen to the breaking waves, noting their fluctuating tonal frequencies as they approach the shore, crash, recede and repeat.**

**You slowly begin swaying back and forth, moving in and out of sync with the ebb and flow of the water, trying to predict the arrival of every coming wave. As your swaying breaches the critical mass of staying stationary, you put one foot forward in order to leverage your weight.** Your other foot follows and you take a step forwards. Your subsequent six steps arc to the right as if an invisible force swings you along an undefined circumference, before loosening up and swinging you in the other direction. You become aware that you are walking in a loop, tracing a figure-eight in the sand with your steps. It takes twelve steps to complete a single cycle around the figure-eight. You walk three cycles of the figure-eight, giving greater definition to the imprinted path in the sand with each cycle. You stop at the midpoint of the figure-eight – the point where the path intersects with itself.

Facing the water, you make fists with both of your hands.

You count to three and start walking the figure-eight path again. You use the fingers on your left hand to count the number of figure-eight cycles you have walked, using the midpoint as the cyclical marker. You use the fingers on your right hand to count the number of crashing waves that you hear while walking the figure-eight cycle. After completing five figure-eight cycles, you run out of room on your left hand since all of your left-hand fingers are already extended, marking a count of five. As you start walking the sixth figure-eight cycle, you reset your left hand into a fist before quickly extending your index finger, marking a count of one on your left hand, and mentally carrying the five that will need to be added later. Four of your right-hand fingers are extended – you have counted four crashed waves so far.

When you complete twenty figure-eight cycles, you stop at the mid-point. You look down at your hands – five extended fingers on your left hand and three extended fingers on your right hand. Compensating for the mentally carried fives, you count a total of **eighteen crashed waves during twenty cycles around the figure-eight.**

**You decide that you will do the count one more time, this time noting that if the ratio of wave crash to figure-eight cycle will once again be eighteen to twenty, you will proceed walking right along the beach, parallel to the water. If the ratio of wave crash per figure-eight cycle will be greater than eighteen to twenty, then you will walk left along the beach, parallel to the water. And if the ratio of wave crash per figure-eight cycle will be less than eighteen to twenty, you will once again face the water and walk forwards, towards it.**

**You count to three and start walking the figure-eight path again. You do your best trying to remember and match the pace of your initial walk, but then decide that it wouldn't make a difference either way.**

**When you complete the second twenty figure-eight cycle, you look down at your hands – five extended fingers on your left hand and two extended fingers on your right hand. Compensating for the mentally carried fives, you count a total of seventeen crashed waves during the twenty cycles around the figure-eight – a ratio of seventeen to twenty.**

**Instead of following through with the outcome and walking forwards, towards the water, you decide to do the count one more time, and to follow through with the outcome next time, whatever it may be.**

When you complete the third twenty figure-eight cycle, you count a total of sixteen crashed waves during the twenty cycles around the figure-eight – a ratio of sixteen to twenty. You realize that it is likely you didn't manage to match your initial walking pace around the figure-eight because the chances of the ratio of wave crash per figure-eight cycle decreasing by twelve percent over the course of three twenty figure-eight cycles are probably very small. But because you factored in a margin for error, you decide to break from the figure-eight path, follow through with the outcome and face the water.

The sun is intermittent, the sand is coarse, the waves are periodic, and the horizon is concave.

Facing the water, you take a step forwards, towards the water. The water retreats away from you. You take two steps forwards, towards the water. The water retreats, matching your pace.

The distance between you and the water is the same as it was three steps ago.

You have been here before.

You look up. You observe the clouds, spotting the one particular cloud that is currently obscuring the sun.

The left edge of the cloud begins to glow, as the sun emerges out from behind it and begins to fade in, until the sun is completely un-obscured.

**You note an approaching cloud that will obscure the sun once again in three, two, one...now.**

This cloud is smaller than the previous one and you anticipate the sun emerging in three, two, one...**now.**

**You stand facing the water, looking up, noting the intermittent, binary obscuring and emerging of the sun.**

**Three, two, one...obscured.**

Three, two, one...**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

**Emerged.**

Obscured.

You decide to measure the variance of the solar-cloud rhythms. Starting with the next solar emergence, you will walk forwards, towards the water until the sun is obscured, and walk backwards along the same imaginary line until the sun emerges. You will repeat this for ten solar rhythms in order to average out the result. The spot where you will end up, relative to your starting point, will reveal the solar rhythm's dominant predilection. If the dominant predilection will be solar obstruction, you will proceed to walk left along the beach, parallel to the water. Otherwise, you will measure the variance of the solar rhythms again.

Facing the water, you wait for the next cloud to begin the measurement.

Three, two, one... **Emerged.**

**Facing the water, you start walking forwards, towards the water. The water retreats away from you.**

**You keep walking forwards, towards the water. The water keeps retreating, matching your pace.**

Obscured.

You stop walking forwards.

Still facing the water, you start walking backwards, towards the sand dunes. The water still retreats away from you.

You keep walking backwards, towards the sand dunes. The water still retreats, matching your pace.

You stop walking backwards even though the sun hasn't yet emerged, abandoning your measurement of the solar rhythms.

You look at the water.

Something has changed.

For the first time, the distance between you and the water has increased.

Facing the water, you take a step backwards, towards the sand dunes. **The water retreats away from you.**

**You take a step forwards, towards the water. The water retreats.**

**You take a step backwards, towards the sand dunes. The water still retreats.**



**You keep walking backwards, towards the sand dunes until your heels hit the incline of the sand dunes. The water retreats, matching your pace. You have walked backwards, away from the water as far as you can go.**

**The distance between you and the water is now the furthest it has ever been.**

**The retreating water reveals sand that was previously underwater, but nothing else.** Facing the water, you start running forwards, towards it. The water retreats, matching your pace and maintaining the increased distance.

You stop running. You are now standing approximately where you were when you decided to measure the variance of the solar rhythms. You look at the increased distance between you and the water.

The sand is coarse, the waves are periodic, the sun is intermittent and the horizon is concave.

You turn around and face the sand dunes, turning your back towards to the water.

Facing the sand dunes, you take a step forwards, towards the sand dunes. You turn your head and see the water advance towards you.

The distance between you and the water hasn't changed.

Facing the sand dunes, you take two steps forwards, towards the sand dunes. **You turn your head and see the water advance, matching your pace.**

**The distance between you and the water hasn't changed.**

**Facing the sand dunes, you now take a step backwards, towards the water. You turn your head see the water advance towards you.**

**The distance between you and the water has now decreased by two steps.**

**Facing the sand dunes, you take two steps backwards, towards the water. You turn your head and see the water still advance, matching your pace.**

**The distance between you and the water has now decreased by four steps.**

**Facing the sand dunes, you keep walking backwards, towards the water until your heels make contact with it.**

You are at the water.

Facing the sand dunes, you keep walking backwards, into the water.

Your knees are now submerged in the water.

Facing the sand dunes, you keep walking backwards, into the water.

Your hips, waist and chest become submerged in the water.

Facing the sand dunes, you keep walking backwards, into the water.