

There are no fat bugs or anorexic bugs, bugs with last year's hairdos or painted mandibles.

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Raid, states that 98 percent of all bug deaths are the result of moving violations. The first thing a bug should learn is to not move. A stationary bug can easily be mistaken for debris on the floor for maybe a month at our house, but a moving bug is asking for it. He's thinking, I got all these legs, I'm a born locomotor, I gotta move!

So this bug marches toward the baseboard; lefts, rights, lefts, rights, pauses for a few seconds, does a right flank maneuver, reverses himself and then climbs a couple inches up the wall. This would be the human equivalent of scaling a 30-story building without climbing accessories, safety ropes, or a net. If there were a ladybug watching, you might think he was just showing off or performing part of a mating ritual, but he's a loner.

I'm thinking, what's one bug doing in my bathroom? Is he the point man for a whole battalion of invaders lying doggo in the wainscoting, waiting to see if the coast is clear? Or is he lost, a doofus bug that can't distinguish the bathroom from the kitchen and has now concluded that there's nothing here to eat but soap, talcum powder and Neosporin? That's what happens sometimes when one achieves maturity by metamorphosis rather than by direct growth.

Yes, of course, the kitchen! Head for the kitchen, that's where they keep the good stuff, he decides, instinct triumphing over intelligence. And so he gets all his legs operating in the same plane in a proper bug rhythm and I, in my infinite compassion, decide to not squash him — yet.

He aborts his mission to climb to the ceiling, rappels down to floor level again and charges off to ... Whoa! His little

feet dig in as he slides to a halt on the linoleum. He has no idea where the kitchen is, that it's at least four light-years (bug time) from his present position. Makes you wonder, doesn't it, how they're going to survive and we won't? At least I know where the kitchen is, but I wouldn't take any bets that the bug won't find it sooner or later.

In fact, I saw him there subsequently, or one just like him, which opens another mystery. You take 50 sow bugs (which are technically not bugs at all, but animals), for example and every one of them will have perfect little bug bodies and little bug faces, all identical.

How come all bugs of the same species look exactly the same? There are no fat bugs or anorexic bugs, bugs with last year's hairdos or painted mandibles. If a bug looked in a mirror, how would it know it was him? How do bugs recognize their friends without name tags?

"Hi, Joe!"

"I'm not Joe, I'm Kevin."

"Sorry, you look just like Joe. Are you sure you're not Joe?"

"I dunno. I suppose I could be."

I think the reason the invertebrates will triumph over the vertebrates in the final analysis is that in their complex social structures they have no lawyers. Screw up in their society and you're off the team, out of the nest. You're an ex-bug. The ACLU couldn't get you a hearing. Everyone has a job and he or she does it without question. There's no litigation, no appeals, no arbitration.

"I don't wanna be a drone anymore."

"You don't wanna be a drone? It's always about you, innit? Get back in line."

If that's where we're heading and it's inevitable, fine! I don't want to think about it anymore. You can bet though,

when the time comes, they'll take Park Avenue and Boardwalk. Maybe if we're lucky, they'll leave us Baltic Avenue. If we're really lucky, they'll forget who sprayed the Raid. CDA