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## Part 2: Concerning Aliens or Extra-Terrestrial Life

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In part 1, post #64, I sketched out the plausibility of Alien/E.T. life existing, and why we'd likely be in trouble if they visited us. Hopefully you're not still hiding in your basement with a firearm, eating canned food, trembling with anticipation of imminent probing. Probing — that always seems to be a concern, huh?

As probable as E.T. life is, there are still many reasons that we should not worry about them. But, just to help you distinguish the hallucinations of E.T.s that you may be having (are, by now, if you're still in your basement! Sensory deprivation'll do that) from real E.T.s, at the end of this piece I'll discuss what they might appear as.

### I. Why We Shouldn't Worry

More than just the ozone layer and Earth's magnetic field protect life on Earth from dangers in space. There's also

- a) the atmospheric pressure,
- b) the specific gases constituting the atmosphere,
- c) the force of gravity,
- d) the temperature in various regions.

Even life on Earth, each form, is uniquely adapted so that it can survive in one or more, but not all, of the various forms these aspects of our environment take. A giant squid on dry land would likely crush itself by the weight of its own mass; a person at the top of Mt. Everest needs artificial oxygen, and the weaker atmospheric pressure can cause altitude sickness; a polar bear wouldn't last long in a desert. And if a desert on Earth seems alien to a polar bear, you can guess how alien the various ecological regions of Earth might seem to an E.T. alien (although, yes, we've such variety that some regions might not seem too foreign, although the life in it still might).

Even to life forms on Earth certain elements are toxic to most, if not all, such life. E.g., mercury, lead, arsenic, and nearly every other element in high enough doses, will kill humans. Numerous compounds — e.g. cyanides, carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide, etc., etc. — that occur in nature are toxic to humans. There are thousands of deadly compounds produced by life forms such as reptiles, fishes, insects, even snails and plants. These are just natural chemical hazards

to human life. (and many other life forms on Earth). They might constitute food for E.T. alien life forms, while other chemicals in our environment that we use as food (e.g. starch, sugar, etc.) could be poison to alien life forms.

Look at it like how European settlers of Australia — a land populated by marsupials, platypuses (not only do they have furry bodies, lay eggs, and have duck-like bills, but they have poison barbs in their feet!), etc. — looked <sup>at</sup> Oz. It seemed to those settlers that everything there could kill them, and was... weird. (Don't worry Nicki, if you're weird, it's in a good way 😊). Surely, if E.T. aliens visited us and were conscious in the sense we are (this is a huge "if," as Daniel C. Dennett reveals in his Consciousness Explained, pp. 448-452, where animal and human consciousness is compared), the life forms on Earth encountered by alien visitors would seem still weirder.

This brings up one of the greatest errors in imagining the form E.T. life might consist of, anthropomorphism; we assume E.T. life forms will have human qualities (e.g. speech, two legs, two arms, one head with a brain and ears, eyes, mouth all together (a design with much risk to it!)), in part due to a second great error in our imagination, our species chauvinism and anthropocentrism — we tend to delude ourselves into believing we're grander than we really are, expect other forms of life to "measure up" to us.

Sorry, but I must briefly shatter this potential delusion — Jim Jones, David Koresh, Ted Bundy, Pol Pot, Susan Smith, Barbara Yates (I think her first name is "Barbara" — the woman in Texas who killed her children), the local pimp, crack dealer, dirty cop, and my warden and the guys around me, and me. There's a dark side to humanity's moon. As many writers and philosophers have noted, dogs seem more loyal, honest, and honorable than mankind!

Back to alien life forms. 😊

To escape the trap of imagination noted above, we need to laugh more at Star Wars and Star Trek aliens, aliens with pointy ears, body hair like a bear, bizarrely colored skin, but otherwise very human, even capable of mating with inter-galactic gigolos like Cpt. Kirk. The potential, even probability for far deeper differences is too great! It would be a hell of an unlikely coincidence that



E.T. life forms were based on the same genetic system of reproduction that life on Earth is based on let alone have the same number of <sup>chromosomes</sup> as humans do, which means a Spock (Vulcan - Human hybrid) is unlikely as hell (literally my atheistic sisters and bros), and Cpt. Kirk would get no play.

There's another reason that Cpt. K' would be a lonely Romeo. It's called the speed of light. Long story short, the speed of light is a mere nearly 6,000,000,000,000 miles in one year, a.k.a. a light year. No material particle can travel faster than that. To clarify, if you could make a baseball, bullet, or anything else travel that fast, it would become light/photons, and leave behind any particles that, for any reason, could not turn into photons.\*

We'll sidestep talk of wormholes, warp speed, etc. - for now!

Here's why light speed threatens to break Cpt. Kirk's heart. As I recall,\* the nearest planet astronomers have discovered is at least thousands of light years away. Assuming, dear Trekkies, that there is humanoid life on that planet, with the same type of genetic system of reproduction and same number of chromosomes as us, we must also assume its life span is akin to ours. <sup>Meaning, at the very least, it would take 30-some generations <sup>of travel time</sup> for those aliens and humans to meet ... on some romantic moon far away, if they travelled at the impossibly fast speed of light, which, of course, would turn them into photons and kill them long before they neared that speed.</sup>

So much for Vulcan-like or Klingon-like aliens meeting and mating with us. Bummer, I know.

But there are other planets closer to us that might still harbor life that's less familiar to us than the life we're familiar with. In this case, the problem would be that such life forms would not be compatible with the various components of Earth's environments. One minor (yet major) example would be the effects of gravity - on Earth, terrestrial beings can be no larger than, approximately, the size of an African elephant, then a typical skeleton would be so bulky that the life form would be immobile and would, possibly, crush itself to death. Life forms

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\* As goes for anything I state in this or my other postings, please jump in & correct any misstatements or misunderstanding of physics, etc. I may make.

with exoskeletons (e.g. insects) are likewise limited in the size that gravity allows them to reach, so that the largest land-dwelling creatures on Earth with exoskeletons that I know of are coconut eating crabs that dwell on islands in the western Pacific and Indian oceans. It's possible that alien life may have evolved a wholly unique skeleton (e.g., one based on... titanium vs. ours made of calcium or insects made of chitin), the probability of which can be explored by considering the chemical properties of various elements (e.g. calcium is highly reactive & forms, easily, many compounds, whereas titanium is very stable & forms less compounds - it's far less likely that a life form would have evolved a titanium-based vs. a calcium-based skeleton). A life form of any size would need some type of skeleton if it were to visit us on land.

This leaves open the possibility (rarely explored in sci-fi flicks) that E.T. aliens might visit us through our oceans (they do cover the majority of Earth's surface, and water is a rare compound in our universe) or be very small, even microscopic. Alien life could be both tiny & aquatic.

Referring again back to part 1 on this topic. As I said, any E.T. aliens capable of visiting us must be technologically superior to us, and almost certainly will put their interests before ours. Well, if I can imagine E.T. life beginning an invasion with a tiny, aquatic, biological assassin (à la Europeans and smallpox in the Americas) - I'm sure a superior alien intellect has or will come up with such a simple idea. Forget death rays, etc., just spray some airborne bacteria, virus, or... nanobots programmed to sever our nerves, ravage our organs, then, after we're all carcasses, move on in.

Huh, the "government" is probably already on this nanobot scheme. Got us on a wild-goose chase worrying about being probed, etc.

As for what E.T. aliens might appear as, who cares. If they're smart enough to read my blog, we won't get a chance to see 'em, 'cause their nanobots will get us first! 😞

And you all thought ex-gov. of Wisconsin Tommy Thompson was a 'tard (he was & is, f.y.i.) for asking at a press conference, "I wonder why Al Qaeda hasn't tried poisoning our milk supply?"

Again, no sense in worrying. We won't be able to distinguish a meteorite from an alien missile packed with deadly nanobots. Might as well eat, drink, and be merry my friends! 😊

Thoughts, Criticisms?  
Nate