

## Erosion from Dirt

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I remember spending hours and hours playing outside with dirt before I turned a decade old. It was a big thing for me to turn ten. I was becoming numb to life all around me, and it was the last time I ever remembered getting dirty with dirt. My mom bought me a put-together cement glue model of the Apollo Lunar Module spacecraft to play inside so she wouldn't be overwhelmed with my dirty laundry. After putting it together and getting high with the fumes, I learned how it attached to the command modular, landed on the moon, blasted off from the moon to rendezvous with the base modular. I was fascinated by the pictures of how the earth looked from space. Earth's blue ocean and land had an effect on me. Remembering my hours playing outside with dirt gave me such a throwback memory I will never forget, a Monday in February that changed my whole perspective on my life.

Our family trips to see the San Gabriel Mountains constantly pushing upward made me understand the geographic term Pangaea. On trips to the beach, where the ocean's power chewed up those mountain rocks into sand, I learned what ebb and flow meant. Where I was raised in my native Gabrielino-Tongva land, and the connection between the San Gabriel Mountains and the Pacific Ocean was the rivers. When Taloc came to City Terrace and poured its soul out, I saw the hills East of Los Angeles slowly eroding. This erosion fascinated me that I created my model outside our house on a small hillside. One side was the driveway with a cemented open pit in the center. My dad loved it because he could do oil changes on his car. The other side was my favorite. This slope had grass. My version of erosion took place between the grass and cement. There was a water source at the top. I would gently let the water slowly out. The water would eventually end down twenty-five feet to our backyard, creating mud. I had given names to the different types of erosions taking place. The first would be called Top Creek, midway down Root Creek and at the bottom of Mud Town.

I became too impatient to wait for the water to gently come down this time. I turned the water faucet full blast. I pertained to be Taloc in anger to see the results and

the consequences. The Saint Augustine grassroots was exposed quickly, with its roots needing something to grasp at Top Creek. I witness living mayhem in Root Creek, ants scurrying out and rubbing their attention to their peeps. They relayed the news to "get the fuck out' to the next sibling. The 'Rollie Pollies' crawled out, became shell balls, and rolled out with fear. I regret pertaining to be Taloc, that powerful with the water faucet and seeing the too much mud in Mud Town.

I was nine in the fall of 1970 and the last time I remembering playing with dirt. School started, limiting my time outside playing. I would be a decade old next year and began not caring about life anymore. I was going through the routine of waking up and going to school, coming home and watching T.V. I was in the age of telling everyone to "fuck off" to my dad and siblings. On this particular Monday in February, I felt that everything would be the same, nothing would change, and nothing would happen next. I felt total apathy for life. The next day, a magnitude 6.6 Sylmar earthquake shook our house at 6:01 am. I jumped down from my bunk bed and ran outside down and up my earthly, glassy slope, screaming, with my hands waving as the ants did in Root Creek, "We are going to die! We are all going die!" at the top of my lungs until, my dad came and grabbed my right ear and scolded me. Now I know why Rollie Pollies turn into balls and roll out when they sense danger.

The power of such force shook that apathy feeling out of me. From that day on, I look forward to the sun rising and our celestial stars revolving, giving us precious seasons, and getting my hands dirty as I look after my yard. When I wash them, I see the dirt eroding off my hands and this sensational feeling of caring for everything and everyone around me. It's the erosion of all that apathy I had on Monday, February 8, 1971.