



My Toes: A Memoir

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Opinion

When I was a baby, my parents played “This Little Piggy” with my toes. That was the beginning of everything. That was the beginning of my understanding of the power of toes. They could go to market; they could wee.

When I was nine years old, on America’s Independence Day, I went running around through the forests of Northern Virginia barefoot with my friends. “Be careful!” my parents warned me. “Don’t step on a sparkler!” I didn’t step on a sparkler. I stepped on a slug. It squished between my toes. It took a long time to wash it off. Slug slime is really sticky. I learned my lesson that day. Wear shoes.

When I was 25, I had a minor athlete’s foot infection. It caused peeling of the skin on my toes. It cleared up without the need for medication. But I probably could have avoided that fungus if I didn’t wear shoes all the time. I learned then the importance of balancing out the risk of slugs and the risk of fungal infections when making footwear decisions.

When I was thirty-five, I read a book about a vampire who had a foot fetish. He liked to suck on toes.