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[https://www.100test.com/kao\\_ti2020/237/2021\\_2022\\_\\_E5\\_A4\\_A7\\_E5\\_AD\\_A6\\_E8\\_8B\\_B1\\_E8\\_c82\\_237598.htm](https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/237/2021_2022__E5_A4_A7_E5_AD_A6_E8_8B_B1_E8_c82_237598.htm) "Every cloud has a silver lining," says the optimist. It follows naturally, then, that the pessimist must favor "looking for the rusty lining". Just as the optimist can always find reasons for hoping that bad situations can improve, so the best pessimist can always find that in every situation here is something you can worry about. In the essay, the author, a self-proclaimed pessimist, claims to be worried about being swallowed by things from outer space and about much else besides. He certainly seems to be what is known as "a born worrier", though how serious he is about it all you can judge for yourself.

### LOOK FOR THE RUSTY LINING

Ralph Schoenstein

My grandfathers hobby was worrying, and although hobbies are not usually thought of as being inheritable, I am a talented worrier, too. My grandfathers glum genes, which skipped my merry father, have reflowered in me as a major, all-purpose anxiety. A few weeks ago, for example, I learned that collapsing stars called black holes may soon suck up all the matter in the universe. Because I read this in Vogue, I hoped at first that the black holes were some kind of fad -- a celestial pop event like Kohoutek or UFOs -- but then I saw that the author of the article had been twice a visiting member at the Institute for Advanced Study, in Princeton, and I knew that another crisis was at hand. Ominously, the Institute is just down the street from where I do my worrying. The end of the universe should have been a splendid

challenge for a gifted worrier like me, but mostly it upset me in a new and worrisome way, because it made me realize that I was spread too thin. When I found the black-hole story, I hadn't nearly come to the end of an earlier wonderful worry of mine about the polar ice cap melting and raising the level of the Atlantic Ocean enough to submerge the entire East Coast. I had been thinking of moving my family to Saskatchewan, but now that I was falling behind in my worrying, I had to worry if Saskatchewan might be tastier for a black hole than Princeton. On the other hand, Princeton was closer to those African killer bees that have been inexorably moving north from Brazil -- the ones that made me decide not to visit Central America last winter. The bees are getting very close to Central America, and Panama may be the only place where there is a chance to turn them back. Of course, even if it had only butterflies, Panama would still be a worrisome vacation spot for me, because it is said to be riddled with as much anti-American feeling as Boston. In these terrible days, I often think of my grandfather, who was a nervous wreck in a simpler and happier time. His worries were transient and nicely manageable: When would Mel Ott start hitting again? When would Eleanor Roosevelt collapse from too much traveling around? When would the Third Avenue "L" rust away? I miss him, but he is lucky not to be alive and worrying today. I don't think he could have handled all the terrors that keep testing my sanity. He might even have surrendered and become an optimist, thus forfeiting the hobby he loved. He was my inspiration when I was a boy -- a worrier to look up to. He used to visit me in my room, where he would examine my

homework and then shake his head and say, "You'll never get through medical school with spelling like this." "But these are band-new words," I would tell him in a worried way. "Spelling is harder this year than it was in the second grade." He would sigh and say, "I don't know. I'm not even sure you should be a doctor at all. I just read that they have the highest rate for dropping dead." My grandfathers quaint worries about me and Mel Ott and Eleanor Roosevelt are enough to make a contemporary worrier weep with envy. I wonder what he would have done if he had read a recent prediction by Gunnar Myrdal that the American economy could utterly collapse within five years -- just before the Eastern tidal wave but shortly after the arrival of the bees. Probably he would have adopted something like my own advanced worrying posture and learned to make room for each new worry by letting it trump one of the old ones. For example, when I read about the inundation of the East I forgot about my overdue Bloomingdales bill. When I read Gunnar Myrdal's warning I decided to stop worrying about what would happen if Connecticut ever ran out of antiques. When I heard about the bees I eased off my worry about a root canal of mine and let the Panama Canal replace it on the Top Twenty. What a list! Something old and something new, something cosmic yet something trivial too, for the creative worrier must forever blend the pedestrian with the immemorial. If the sun burns out, will the Mets be able to play their entire schedule at night? If cryogenically frozen human beings are ever revived, will they have to re-register to vote? And if the little toe disappears, will field goals play a smaller part in the

National Football League? Actually, I've never had a worry as worrisome as the universe-destroying black holes. I mean, the universe is where I do all my worrying, and if it suddenly disappears I may not be able to relocate. My only hope comes from a first principle of worry that I have learned in a lifetime of anxiety. i.e., some of the biggest problems are half of a self-cancelling pair. A nice example is that dreaded polar ice cap, which some scientists say isn't starting to melt at all but instead will shortly begin to enlarge rapidly, giving birth to a new ice age that soon will cover the entire United States. I worried about this ice layer from last February 9th until about Labor Day, by which time my worry about the price of bottom round had reduced it to the size of a rink. Lately, however, I have turned my mind back to the ice again, and I have been worrying about the fact that you cannot have ice that is growing and melting at the same time. One of these terrors is a dud, and the job of the dedicated worrier is to find out which one it is. Applying this principle to the black holes, I wonder if there may not be some white holes in space as well -- pretty, glowing things that won't digest a universe but may prefer to spit it out again. All I need is a new flash from the Institute about one of these, and then perhaps I will be able to start worrying about chinch bugs and the male menopause and all the other gentle terrors my grandfather could endorse. Is that the right way to spell "chinch bugs"? 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)