



## Take Your Turn

I've been crazy busy these last few days, and had to take a break from the printmaking work this afternoon for a bit of overdue housecleaning. I fired up a load of laundry, ran the vacuum cleaner quickly around the floors, and washed up last night's dishes.

As I did so, I remembered a blog post I had read just the other day, about a man who had a 'problem' with his dishes, and had to smile, because for years now I have had the same problem. It had actually been a bit of a relief for me to read his post, and learn that I wasn't the only person in this situation. What situation? Trying to decide what to do with the dishes *after* washing them.

As regular readers of these stories know, I live alone. There used to be as many as six people in this household, but the older folks passed on and the children flew away, and for years now I have been here by myself. I purchase most of my meals in ready-made form, either from the supermarket or from one of the excellent convenience stores not too far from here. But I have a great dislike of heating food in a plastic container, as it seems to me that the combination of heat and plastic is possibly a bit dangerous when one considers the chemicals that may be released. So I transfer the food to a normal plate (or bowl, as the case may be) before heating it in the microwave.

I thus end up with dishes and utensils to wash. The washing itself is no problem, and is actually a bit pleasant, messing around in warm water (especially in winter!). Drying them is also very easy, as I don't actually do anything beyond letting them drip-dry in the drainer. It's the questions that arise some time later when putting them back into the cupboards that cause anguish.

Anguish? Over re-shelving dishes?

Sure. Can't you see my problem? When I begin to prepare the meal, I reach into the cupboard, take the top dish off the stack, and use it for dinner. Afterwards, when it is dry, I start to put it away, but am always given pause by just how to do that: do I simply put it back on top of the stack, or do I 'rotate' them, putting it at the bottom so that a different plate will be used next time?

Don't laugh - this makes a *big* difference! If I simply put it back, then over time this dish - *and this dish only* - will develop the normal nicks and marks of daily wear, while its partners will remain perfectly bright and fresh looking. The person writing the blog post I read had been thinking about this too, and he felt that it would be unbearably sad to one day see this pile of dishes, with only one of them showing any use and thus telling a silent story.

So although you may think I am a complete fool for doing this, I actually do rotate them - not every time, but now and again. But truly, which of the scenarios is more sad - to think of just one dish becoming worn, or to think of this idiot rotating his dishes to *avoid* that situation? I really can't answer that ...

But to end this story - in accordance with my usual policy of being completely honest and open with my readers - I have to add a small postscript. Just *why* is it that I sometimes rotate the stack of plates?

Simple. When there are no more left in the cupboard, and the sink has become full, it happens automatically!

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