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HOW FRED FLINTSTONE GOT HOME, GOT WILD, AND GOT A STONE AGE LIFE

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A screeching comes across the sky.

Stately, plump Fred Flintstone stood upon the 'saur's head, bearing a boulder of granite, on which a bird perched, its eyes crossed. An orange dressing gown, ungirdled, was sustained gently behind him by the mild Mesozoic air.

He held his shell aloft and intoned:

Yabba dabba doo!

Afoot and lighthearted, he took to the open road, healthy, free, the world before him, the long brown path before him leading back to Bedrock.

Fred repeating to himself, as he ran, the words of an old song:

*Flintstones, meet the Flintstones.*

Fred Flintstone never made a lot of money. His name was never in the tablets. He was not the finest cartoon character ever drawn. But he's a *Homo sapien*.

*They're the modern Stone Age family.*

He is simply a human being, more or less.

*From the town of Bedrock.*

Stonecutter for the world, toolmaker, stacker of meat, player with reptiles and the nation's cave dwellers, balmy, gritty, city of big boulders, Bedrock.

*They're a page right out of history.*

It was the best of times, it was the first of times, it was the age of ice, it was the age of lava, it was the epoch of large sloping foreheads, it was the epoch of dictabirds and monkey traffic signals and woolly-mammoth shower massages. All the modern inconveniences.

He feels the wind on his ears, his heels hitting heavily on the gravel, but with an effortless gathering out of a kind of sweet panic growing lighter and quicker and quieter, he runs. Ah: runs. Keep on truckin'. He outlives this day and comes safe home.

See Dino run. Run, Dino, run.

*Let's ride with the family down the street.*

Let us go then, Hominidae, with the drive-in spread out against the sky, side of piquant bronto ribs from the takeout.

*Through the courtesy of Fred's two feet.*

What makes Fred run? Wilma, light of his life, fire of his loincloth. His sin, his soul. Wil-ma.

*When you're with the Flintstones.*

“Oh, Fred,” Wilma said, “we could have had such a damned good time together.”

*Have a yabba dabba doo time.*

“Some fun!” Barney said.

*A dabba doo time.*

“Shut up, Barney,” Flintstone said.

*You'll have a gay old time.*

Once again at midnight nearly, while Fred pondered weak and weary over many a quaint and chiselled tablet of prehistoric lore, while he nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping, as of something gently scratching, scratching at the cavern door.

*Someday maybe Fred will win the fight.*

Nothing's more determined than a cat of sabre tooth—is there? Is there, baby?

*And that cat will stay out for the night.*

The door was slammed by a thrust of a claw, and then at last all was still. The house was locked, and he thought his stupid cook or the stupid maid must have locked the place up until he remembered the maid was a mastodon and the cook a wacky collection of labor-saurus devices. He pounded on the door, tried to force it with his shoulder, he shouted:

*Willlllll-maaaa!*

And so he beat on, fists against the granite, borne back ceaselessly into the past. †