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Once upon an API

Even a seemingly simple API can turn out to have complex and surprising behaviors, as I illustrate by telling the story of an API feature that was added to Linux in 1997 and looking how it interacts (and has evolved) with other parts of the Linux API. These kinds of complexities and surprises of course create pain for user-space programmers, and so I also muse about some of the reasons that these API design problems occur and a few things we can do to reduce the likelihood of such problems reoccurring in the future.

I agree to abide by the anti-harassment policy

Yes

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