

Except, inexplicably, the last

by [Stephen Kampa](#) in the [June 30, 2021](#) issue

Nearly all animals produce their own vitamin C, but we can't. We undertake every part of the process except, inexplicably, the last step, the production of a single enzyme. —Bill Bryson

After however
many steps to manufacture
our own vitamin
C, we
stop. I could imagine
in that some
diligent divinity
who, having mostly finished
the delicate design
and straightened
out unexpected kinks, starts
from the workbench
and thinks,
*I bet they'd like
oranges, and arranges*
our one
missing enzyme, a shortfall
that means eons
later some
ballyhooer will stand blossom-besotted
and belly-holler blithely

(if also
somewhat ironically) *By Jove!*
during a jaunt

through those
sweet-scented acres that compose
his citrus grove.