

Functors and lifting

Functors are like cranes lifting a function into a context

class Functor *f* where

fmap :: (a -> b) -> *f* a -> *f* b

It's like function application in the context of *f*:

(\$) :: (a -> b) -> a -> b

(<\$>) :: Functor *f* => (a -> b) -> *f* a -> *f* b

Let's work through an example

let *replace* = const "a" <- function to apply

let value = [Just ["this", "that"]] <- variable to change

replace value <- apply to []

"a"

fmap *replace* value <- lift once - apply to Just

["a"]

(*fmap* . *fmap*) *replace* value <- lift twice - apply to the internal list

[Just "a"]

(*fmap* . *fmap* . *fmap*) *replace* value <- lift thrice - apply to the elements of the internal list

[Just ["a", "a"]]

(*fmap* . *fmap* . *fmap* . *fmap*) *replace* value <- lift one last time - apply to each letter of each string

[Just [["a", "a", "a", "a"], ["a", "a", "a", "a"]]]

