

All Things are Full of Gods

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May 2, 2014

We flew into Lhasa today. Mom was sick from the altitude, but Dad and I were fine. He says his lungs and blood remember even after all these years, and I'm half him and that's why I'm okay. Never mind that I grew up in Fort Collins, Denver. Mom said that was silly but she didn't laugh. I remember when she used to laugh at all his silly jokes.

The birds here seem upset. In the taxi from the airport I saw lots of bright-colored little flags and some chickens and lots of ravens. One of the ravens tried to tell me something but Mom was watching me so I ignored him.

I've started pretending I can't understand them when Mom is around. She thinks there is something wrong with me. Before we left for Tibet I heard her telling Dad they should send me to a special school for girls like me. He said no way. She said it would make me better but Dad

said there is nothing wrong with me. I'm afraid to tell Dad I can talk to birds because maybe he'll think I'm crazy too and then I won't have anyone who believes in me.

I think I'm the reason Mom and Dad argue all the time now. Maybe that's also why we came to Tibet. That, and the Atishans and the meteor.

I saw Atishans from the taxi, too. They were wearing their white robes and carrying signs about the meteor. They didn't look crazy like they do on the news at home.

Now we're at the hotel. Dad got called right away to go help at the UN and Mom is lying in bed with a washcloth on her forehead so I'm on my own.

I think I'll sneak out so I can find out why the raven was upset.

May 3, 2014

Dad didn't get back until really late last night. Mom was asleep. I was going to tell him what the ravens told me, but then he pulled something from his pocket that was small and round and brownish and he told me exactly the same thing the ravens said! He said the little balls fell from the meteor, thousands of them all over the north part of the city and in the forest and all the way to desert where the meteor crashed.

Dad said no one knew what they were. I said maybe they were eggs, like I was making a guess even though I knew for sure because that's what the ravens said, and birds are usually right about things like that. He said some scientists thought they might be eggs, but everyone else said the scientists were wrong. I wanted to ask if the scientists talked to the birds here, but I didn't. But maybe there are other people like me and maybe I'm not crazy. I wish I could ask Dad.

He put the egg away and said we get to go on a tour of the meteor tomorrow, if Mom is feeling up to it.

May 4, 2014

I'm so upset I can barely write. When Mom woke up this morning she asked me about talking to the ravens and I said no that was silly. But then she asked, do they sound like people? And I thought she really wanted to know so I started to tell her about how they don't talk in words, it's more like little bits of thought that kind of piece together like a jigsaw puzzle and make sense inside my head. And then she said, do the ravens here sound like the ravens at home? I said yes, and then she looked at me like that proved something. She said enough is enough and if I persisted in pretending that I could talk to animals that I would not be allowed to go see the meteor.

I started to cry and I said this is the way I am, I can't help it, and she said I could stay in this stupid hotel room until I came around. She and Dad went out for a while. Then Dad came back to talk to me. He said he would let me go on the tour, but I had to tell Mom that I would stop talking to birds. I asked if he believed me and he said maybe but most people wouldn't understand and it would make my life easier if I just pretended I couldn't. I said like he pretended to love Mom? Then he looked really hurt and I said I was sorry.

May 5, 2014

The stupid tour got delayed anyway. All these Atishans filled up the road with a protest and then a bunch of Chinese soldiers came and tried to get them to move and there were some fights. The UN decided we should just wait until everyone calmed down.

We stayed in the hotel most of the day and Mom wouldn't let me out of her sight except to go to the bathroom. Dad didn't even go to the UN. He told me stories about the gods of Tibet.

Dad said the Atishans believe that the meteor is their god Manjursi. They think that sometimes their gods come down from Heaven and then get stuck here and can't come back. They think another god fell a thousand years ago and his name is Tillet.

I said their gods must be kind of weak. He just smiled and said it's not possible to know what the gods think or why they do what they do. Mom said there is only one god, and then Dad said it can't hurt to learn a little mythology, and Mom said the Atishans are crazy and then they started arguing about Tibet so I went back to my room and turned my ipod up high. The news here shows the same boring photos over and over: the meteor crashing and the Atishans blocking the roads, and the Chinese soldiers guarding the meteor and all the UN people meeting and scientists from all over the world who are waiting to come and study the meteor.

May 6, 2014

The most amazing thing happened. The meteor is a bird and I can talk to her!

What happened was we finally got to go on a tour of the meteor, which obviously isn't a meteor if you know anything at all. .

First off, it didn't crash. It skidded across the ground for miles and miles. I saw the big black streak all the way across the desert from the truck on the way in. The road was filled with

Atishans, but the area around the meteor was all fenced off. I think it's unfair that I can go see the meteor but the Atishans can't. It's their country.

Secondly, it definitely was not a rock. From the outside it maybe looks like a rock, red and brown and shiny. But it has tunnels. We went inside one. At first it was just like a cave, but then the walls turned squishy so we stopped and had to listen to the Chinese ambassador talk for a long time about all the countries working together to understand the meteor.

While he was talking something really strange happened. I leaned against one of the squishy walls and I had my hands behind me and they started to sink into the wall a little. I didn't say anything because then I heard her talking to me. Manjursi has traveled a really long way and she's looking for her mate. She held my hand in a friendly way while she showed me how she swims in the universe like it's a big ocean of stars.

But she got injured before she found her mate. She said something came from the ground and knocked her down and I think it was missiles. So now she's injured and she can't move.

Manjursi said she is really happy that I can hear her. I feel like I finally have a friend who understands me.

May 7, 2014

Mom and Dad had a big argument last night when they thought I was asleep. Mom wants to put me in a school for crazy kids when we get back. Dad said no. But I know he will lose if they get a divorce and she tells the judge that I talk to birds.

I want to tell Dad that Manjursi spoke to me but he might think I'm crazy, too.

I snuck outside when they were asleep and I found an Atishan woman in the all-night grocery. I asked if I could talk to her and she said yes so I told her that I could understand birds and that Manjursi spoke to me.

At first she looked like she didn't believe me and then she did. She took me to a big stone house that looked like a library and there was another Atishan woman there who was really old. She was covered in wrinkles but she was really nice. She talked to me for a long time and then she showed me a map of Tibet. She said one of the Atishans a really long time ago could also understand animals and that it was also a girl. The girl talked to Tillet. Tillet is waiting underground north of here. He's been waiting more than a thousand years for Manjursi to bring him an egg.

I said why don't you just get an egg from the forest and bring it to Tillet? She said because all those eggs are dead. They can't survive if they get cold so they need to get an egg directly from Manjursi. But no one will let them get close to Manjursi and anyway everyone thinks they are crazy. I said I knew what that was like because my Mom thinks I am crazy and maybe my Dad, too, and then I couldn't help it I started crying. The old Atishan woman gave me a big hug and said Mom and Dad will believe me someday and it made me feel better even though I don't know if what she said was true.

May 9, 2014

I didn't write all day yesterday because Mom and Dad dragged me all over the city and when we got back I was so tired I went right to bed. Dad wanted to show me all the places he used to live and some old temples. They're acting all cheerful and friendly with each other and

now I know for sure they are getting a divorce. I'm pretty sure the plan is for Dad to stay in Lhasa and for me to go back home with Mom. No way am I going with her.

Yesterday the birds followed me all over the temples and the roads and it made Mom really angry. There were ravens and little black birds with red on their tails and these pretty golden birds that looked like little flames when they fly. Dad said they were rose finches. Finally Mom got back in the taxi by herself and I had a chance to talk to Dad alone.

I told Dad I really needed to go back and tour the meteor again and he asked me why. I said because it was my destiny to help the Atishans and it was really unfair that nobody was letting them see their god. He said the world is not fair and that learning that is one of the hardest things about growing up. I said in that case maybe my destiny was to never grow up.

He didn't say anything for a little while and then he looked like he was going to cry and he said he would love me and be proud of me no matter what my destiny was.

I asked would he love me even if I could talk to birds, and he said yes. I asked if he would love me if I really couldn't talk to birds but I was crazy so I thought I could, and he said yes.

I almost changed my mind right then. But then I thought about Manjursi searching for thousands of years and Tillet waiting for thousands of years and I decided I have to go ahead with my plan.

May 10, 2014

Dad arranged for another tour. He knows I'm up to something but he hasn't asked me what. He said something funny tonight. He said "all things are full of gods". He said it is from an old Greek philosopher and it is his favorite quote of all time.

He looked at me like he is proud of me and he believes in me. I wish Mom would look at me like that.

I can't write anymore because it's really late I have to get ready. I'm packing some sandwiches and water and a flashlight and the map the Atishan woman gave me and my diary. I have to be really careful that Mom and Dad don't wake up and see me packing.

May 11, 2014

So much has happened I can barely believe it.

I'm writing this from a tiny cave in the ground. It's really cold and my flashlight will probably run out soon but I have to write down what happened in case I don't come back.

What I did was I ran away on the tour. I mean I ran into Manjursi. I ran down the tunnel and I pushed myself against a wall and Manjursi surrounded me like a huge hug, only it was squishy walls all around me. Everyone was looking for me but they couldn't find me because I was hidden inside Manjursi. Then Manjursi put an egg in my hand.

At first I was scared, but then Manjursi started talking to me and I can't even describe how amazing it was. It would take pages and pages and still no one would understand. Dad said everything is filled with gods and now I understand. I saw stars and other planets and other meteors like Manjursi and all the amazing things that live in the universe and I felt like I was all those things, all at once. Then Manjursi stopped talking and I was just me again.

But after that I wasn't angry at Mom anymore. I understand that she can't understand me and it scares her. I know she and Dad are probably really sad and scared right now and I feel bad about that. But I have to do this. I know for sure that I'm not crazy and I feel like I was born to help Manjursi and Tillet and it feels so right.

At first I was going to give the egg to the Atishans, but then I realized I couldn't get back all the way to Lhasa because it's too far. So instead I told Manjursi to let me out away from all the guards and people. She let me out when it was dark and there was no one around and I ran through the desert and found this cave.

The egg is a really pretty golden color. Whenever I let it sit out in the air too long it starts to get a little brownish, so I have to keep it close to my skin to keep it warm. I'm afraid to go to sleep because I might let it roll away and get cold.

I have to stop writing now because I need to go and try to find Tillet.

May 12 or 13, 2014

I think this is going to be the last time I write. I found Tillet. He is underground and I had to follow this small crack in the ground until it widened just large enough to let me in. I had to crawl on my hands and knees a really long way down. It took all night and then I think another day. I ate all my sandwiches and drank all my water already. But at least it is warm underground here with Tillet. He started talking and I almost cried when he showed me how much he loves Manjursi. He took the egg and the baby is growing inside him, just like a seahorse, because with seahorses the males carry the babies. Tillet is a starhorse.

I'm not hungry or lonely when Tillet talks to me. He's going to live long enough to make sure the baby is strong enough to fly fast off the earth before anyone can shoot her down. Maybe if she comes back in a thousand years we'll be ready to talk to her then and people will believe that some people can talk to animals and everyone will believe the amazing things that Manjursi and Tillet can show us.

Mom, if you're reading this I'm sorry I said mean things about you. I know you only want me to be happy and you didn't believe that I could hear animals so you thought it would make me unhappy because other people would think I was crazy. But if you ever read this I want you to know that I am happy now. I am happier than I have ever been because I know I did the right thing and I found my destiny and fulfilled it.

I'm going to sit inside Tillet now and listen to him while I go to sleep.

END