

Clarion

Written by Julia Hanessian

"I believed that there was a God because I was told it by my grandmother and later by other adults. But when I found that I knew not only that there was God but that I was a child of God... when I internalized that, ingested that, I became courageous.

"Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently."

Written by, The Great Sage, Maya Angelou

Moving in step with death is a powerful experience. Accompanying, moving into and living amongst death; getting to know it, making it a friend. Watching what it takes, what it brings. In witnessing my husband Bruce's death I was often struck silent by awe, awe of the infinite power, swirling within and around us, seeding magic moments of pain and clarity, all while moving the pieces of our lives in ways I couldn't have imagined.

There's a helpless quality one must get used to in this space. Helplessness to a chaotic process, yet a paradoxically, predictable outcome. I set my intention to not just be witness to this movement of spirit, but to experience it fully, and for it to move me. Death, in all its finality, has an enormous, yet surprisingly, grounding energy. I often found myself in stillness, observation.

There were times of feeling quite broken by the stress and chaos, but much of the time, I felt honored, having been entrusted to hold space, and gently as possible guide our family in a sacred time. It was work that I was meant to do. And on the good days I saw opportunity, a chance to partner with this powerful energy beyond me, God, as I watched my earth partner fall away.

New truths.

To face moments such as death you must do your emotional work. I now see with tremendous clarity that it is only through great pain, hard work and true healing that one can face moments like this squarely, day in and out, with love, dignity and integrity; face and be washed in the awesome power of God, without being crippled with fear; allow that awesome power to change you.

In the clearest moments I could see God and this time for the many things it was:

A focused light beaming into an enormous multifaceted crystal, creating millions of fractal rainbows.

An arc point of deep understanding and wisdom.

An experience of natural closeness to God.

A heartbreaking chance to go deeper.

Since I was a child, I have senselessly, with no regard for safety, like a moth to a flame, run to dance and revel in the most violent summer storms. The more violent, the better.

Why? Why would anyone do this? I bring this up in particular, not just for the metaphor, but because this rather risky thing I do feels especially relevant now.

There has always been more behind this urge to experience the awe of this torrential, terrifying beauty. And now I have clarity as to why and how I see storms differently than most.

Choosing to be in the storm is a personal sacrifice, a sacrificial offering to the divine. In this deluge of water, wind and lightening everything stops. I relent to my primal instincts and without thought, offer myself to this power, with trust, curiosity and honestly, irrepressible joy- rebuking all fear, leaching it from my pores and washing it away by rain. Through this process I replenish my humility and authenticity. Feeling our smallness in the face of true greatness is often the best medicine.

Storms are a opportunity to renegotiate peace with the wind and lightening, the unpredictable outcomes, renegotiate ones helplessness, ones burden of character, fate. Storms offer opportunity to attune to the infinite, and the subsequent the responsibility of acting on what that connection delivers to you. And then, there is my favorite part: without fail, the after-storm calm shines clarity on the infinite possibilities within you.

So, I am here, at this spiritual culmination point, a moment that holds both a more profound understanding for all that preceded it, and all that is yet to come.

And in time I am sure the pain of all I know will be balanced by the endless possibilities of the future's blank canvas.

We have now come to the interesting part of my talk in which I will share what I think is a beautiful byproduct of this story. In my stillness with God over the past few months I have been provided a gift. This gift is the sole reason I was moved to share any of this today. In the intensity of the past few months God has intermittently moved through me in thoughts, visions and words. I have had these experiences of what one might call “a vision” or “prophetic connection” with the divine in fits and spurts throughout my life, but I see this recent collection of beautiful God experiences with renewed reverence. I also see themes taking shape. As these God moments aggregate, themes around unselfish universal love, voice, attunement, connection, and amplification are surfacing. These themes remind me of you, this, Eighth Day, which is why I feel compelled to share them with you.

I will share with you two instances of what I experienced recently as very clear God-flow moments. The first is a dream. In this dream, I was walking amongst many of you, on streets we did not know. We were in an expansive mindset, talking to strangers, talking to many people. We had some sort of collective mission. I remember snippets of sitting together on a beach, talking on the streets, going into kitchens and talking more with strangers, connecting effortlessly with different cultures... there was one kitchen in particular in this dream which was really beautiful, there were women in it making Greek food and we were having fun connecting with them, with each other. It was a vivid dream that was to be remembered, filled with connection, light, joy and community inspired by God. A dream of empowering those around us, for we had been so enlightened and empowered ourselves by the spirit. By our way. It was a different view, of ‘this’.

This dream got me wondering— what is ‘this’? What are the unspoken norms of this place that makes it special? What brings you back again, and again?

Is it that we can come late and it’s no big thing? Or that we can drink coffee, or sit on the floor? Or that we joyfully hug when we pass the peace? Or that we introduce and love on strangers? Or that we just seem to effortlessly shower one another with love? What is it?

As someone who is endlessly fascinated by and has studied relationships, for me, it is the attuned connection here.

This place teaches, fosters and practices loving, attuned connection, to God and one another. In my studies I have learned that attuned connection is essential to the experience of emotional safety and wholeness. I would take that thought a step further and say that this attuned connection we experience here, is the practice of divine love. I believe it is the closest, most tangible way we communicate the divine love light within us.

Here is another poem by Ms. Angelo that embodies this shared divinity. It is titled:

Touched by an Angel

We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of loneliness
until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to liberate us into life.

Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.

Do we know and feel how valuable this love and divinity we give each other is?
Are we bringing the wisdom of our value, our truths to this space? Are we being
vulnerable? Are we seizing the opportunity to teach and share our big and little
God, love centered inspirations? The moments that feel real and true?

I want to remind you today, each and every one of you, of how valuable you all
are. Sit in that truth.

It is easy to see how our strength as a community lies in how we value and see
one another, for it results in this amplified love that shines so bright that even
those who normally go unseen may be illuminated.

Sadly, many people in the world don't know this sort of 'connected space'. They
don't know what it is to be heard, seen and held in the light. I'm talking about
regular people- variations of us. They don't know, 'this'. They don't know the

power of their own thoughtfully amplified voice, for their voices have been pushed down, subjugated by culture, organized religion, and hierarchical social norms to the point of apathy and isolation. But, they should know 'this'. There's something to be known here.

Maya Angelo captures the essence of this sentiment in her poem,

Savior

Petulant priests, greedy
centurions, and one million
incensed gestures stand
between your love and me.

Your agape sacrifice
is reduced to colored glass,
vapid penance, and the
tedium of ritual.

Your footprints yet
mark the crest of
billowing seas but
your joy
fades upon the tablets
of ordained prophets.

Visit us again, Savior.
Your children, burdened with
disbelief, blinded by a patina
of wisdom,
carom down this vale of
fear. We cry for you
although we have lost
your name.

Yes, there is definitely something to be known here. Knowing begins with clarity, with naming.

How do we create 'God spaces' within ourselves, and in here, and what do they move in you? How can we amplify other voices, here, and out there?

I will end by sharing one other God flow moment I have had over the past couple months with you, which is in the form of a poem. Although the words of the poem were clearly written by me and are in my 'voice', I truly had the experience of being more of a transcriber than a creator as I received it. The entire thing came all at once with great ease, as if I was tuned in transcribing a narration.

CLARION

finding our most authentic voice

Your Voice

the voice that emerges

in you

when you

are Free

in Thought

in Spirit

in Word

in Deed

we seek our most authentic voice
over and over again
as we evolve
over the undertow
striving to find just one note
if only for a memory of a momentary truth,
a marker along the path
to return to

in the varied spaces of our lives
somewhere between authenticity
and deception
we find refuge in our Faith
faith in our Divine

Divine,
be it God,
be it Love,
be it Humanity

in that faith is a promise
of an authentic future
within ourselves.

to find your voice
you must do your Work
you must explore

all your oppression
your sin
the lifetime of indignities
and pain
which accumulate
stifle who you are
question,
doubt,
pressing
on your voice

we search for our voice
on that shadowed, hallowed ground
where memories bite
tatter our worth
yet,
in spite of this place
we search for the truths buried deep in its shadows,

Truth:

the seed

of Voice.

—

Ephemeral voice
find us in our darkest hour

find us as we heed our instincts

let us hear
the echoes of God's ever present call
to something more
than us

—

in this prayer for truth
the effervescence of the Divine,
the muse of my soul
Surfaced
calling out, "Connection"
like velvet speaks to finger tips

i was there
God was there too
so I said,
"Yes, let's."

then some birds tweeted
outside my window

like Ancient Angel Voices
visiting this place

Divine
Kismet

Boom

ah

Yes

and so

we begin

again

over and over

as Connection

the push and pull of our engagement

with God

the universe

with those here

those not

those who have

hurt us

Loved us

abandoned us

Saved us

we will forever begin

with these unpredictable beginnings

pain

and

sweet elation

in constant conversation.

oh how these beginnings prick us
like little thumb tacks
in all the wrong places

this connection stuff
is tricky.

for God says it is the essence of who we are
the purest instinct of human kind
to connect with thine
the divine

in You

in Me

where Yahweh lives

Yahweh

Yahweh when we are

High

Yahweh when we are

Low

The Way

Yahweh when we

Cry

Yahweh when we

Go

The Way

Yahweh in each other

Yahweh over Fear!

Yahweh for Love!

“Yes!” we all cheer

—

this devotion to Love,

Connection

is an awkward way of life,

a paradox of suffering

and ecstasy

the state of heartache caused by

our heart forward unpredictability

is honestly

quite painful.

for sensitive souls
those who give and long for love the most
the ones who carry the deepest scars
from slings and arrows gone past
to them heartache is death
by a thousand swords

yet, without reason,
love always comes first;
the penultimate goal,
the apex of our existence.

the Irrepressible God in us.

—

and so
as all things end,
we perpetually consider,
how do we begin again?

how do we begin again?

—

i will tell you

we attach to Love
like little love succubi
in search of Spark

something
ALIVE,
BRIGHT
something to pull us along,
give us Song

how we are the most adorable, helpless
worm, urchin, love hungry things!
with creative capacity!
this brain
this... Magic
the Divine has gifted

and amidst our awkward searching
-in all of God's wisdom-
we are provided
Faith
for the darker moments
we are provided
God
for the storms.

—

God watches, amused,
as our over active egos perform,
as our overzealous desire to be loved
devours all the oxygen in the room
so that we may not breath
or move

and then we

stop

for there is

no air

recalibrate

with God

in the light
of the whole

with measured
steps,
refocused intent

we begin,
again

every time
with God
more in mind

but it's hard to avoid that dark
it is persistent

hmm.. no
it ain't good.

for in that void
evil takes root
grows stronger
from the pieces of our unexamined hearts,
leaching on the untested tendrils of our soul

that deep dark place
full of

Space

as if we were swallowed whole

into the loneliest place

where

no one thrives.

and so,
if we are wise
and don't turn a blind eye
we look back,
damaged,
beaten,
torn

Back

to the Light

we re-Attach
to the Light

the distant, dim, diffuse light

the
Forever-Glow
among us

-

God, our Savior

our Faith, Grace Dealer
our stand-in for what we lack

this Seed of God Grace within us
blossoms belief in a
Hyper-Regenerative Love Space
the most fecund of gardens
at the center of the universe

the place where Love Lives,
the place where Love Grows

let us be in this
patient
quiet
slow moving
place

where all color, shape, sound, texture, and emotion
are miraculously
In-Tune,
Sparking Symphony Upon Symphony
Of Unexpected
Joy

as we sit in our imaginations
on the precipice of this brilliant galaxy
let us fall Head Long
into this state of Flow

as the pain of our world
falls away

let us find Story
let us find Song
let us find
Our Voice
in this Pure Space,
where we forfeit our fears,
allow for Grace

let us dance amongst the
Billions Of Billowing Stars
achieving critical mass,
Erupting into new galaxies
at every glance

or in terms of this world,
in terms of tactile play,
let us rage
until we submit to one another under
the Weight Of Our Love,
tactfully placed
in just the right spot

let us remember to attune
to these pressures
on our skin

feel our own pulse
and know
if you need to fight
or if it is right

let us submit
to the instinct to survive
within the Pulsing Divinity
of our
Togetherness

defying the dark place,
and all the heart strings it pulls

—

Wake Up.

See.

Be Here,

Now.

—

as we ride these undulations,
these stories of love and loss

within our little glass bubbles,

our spectral barometers
reacting in constant,
subtle motion,

may we still ourselves
in knowing

that though this life,
this moment,
it may be the squall
it is also,

The Clarion

a distant, hopeful call
the high note
in the most tragic song

The Clarion's God Voice Rings,
Ride My Wings
Don't Fall Away From Me

and though
WE may be the squall,
we are also,

The Clarion.

powerfully possessed
by the distant echo
Of Love:
God's Hypnotic,
Ever-Present
Song

riding the air,
the waves of our collective breath,

We Pray,

Don't Fall Away From Me.

Music that accompanied the creation of this teaching:

Philip Glass, 'Mad Rush'

Alina Baraz & Galimatias, 'Can I'

Stevie Wonder, 'Visions'