



BACK TO THE GARDEN

Hearing familiar music one Autumn evening transports this man from darkness to the light of the universe and a once unknown clarity.

I turned thirty-three this past October, and, on the eve of my new year on Earth, some strange magic occurred that has catapulted me into the most exquisite inner awakening I have ever experienced. At the risk of sounding totally certifiable, I have decided to share this journey with all of you. Some of you may relate, others may not, but I feel I may burst if I don't give it back to the world.

When I was seven years old one of the students at the college my father worked for came to live with us for a year. This was not uncommon in the close-knit Christian education system we were immersed in at the time, and my parents knew this young man well ... at least they thought they did. Over the months that followed his moving into our home it would become clear that he was not who he seemed to be, as is so often the case with these types of people.

During the year that this man lived with us he molested me countless times and raped me on a number of occasions. I was made to participate in sexual acts that no seven year old should even know about, much less be subject to. He used my fear to keep me quiet, and twisted my young faith up with sexualized violence to the point where I shut down completely. I no longer trusted adults, and the wedge he drove between my family and me would take decades to repair.

By the time I was ten I began looking for escape wherever I could find it, and the burden left by the hurt this man had so thoroughly inflicted seemed to get heavier and heavier with each passing year. Every failed relationship, every broken feeling, all piling on top of the weight of this man who had taken me away from myself, my loved ones, and the world at such an early age. Even in happy times when everything was going well, I was not able to shake it. The inner burden was constant.

At around midnight on my birthday this past October 15th, as I was lying down in bed next to my already sleeping, very supportive, loving partner and our new puppy, I heard music start to play. It was a song I had heard before somewhere long ago, a familiar tune, coming closer with each passing moment. It started soft, but the volume grew and grew until it was all around me, enveloping me, pulling me into its ancient melody. I cannot fully explain what happened next. It was as if the universe peeled back to reveal itself and the dark room filled with the brightest light I have ever seen. I was paralyzed for the moment, then transported from our bedroom to some other place; a place I had been before but can't begin to describe; it just felt like I was home.

In that moment a message was imprinted on me. There was no voice speaking words, yet some grand vision of my entire cosmic journey came rushing back — everything I have ever been, everything I am a part of still, the stardust from which I was formed — and it told me that none of this life has been happening to me, but rather that I have created it all; that these experiences I've been running from my whole life were chosen by me a long time ago, formed in this very place I was now seeing again for the first time; that somewhere along the way I had forgotten I am a teacher, a creator; that nothing is ever as it seems, and that this body is just a tool to get me back to the celestial garden I feel so much a part of. Even the seemingly horrifying bits of my memory were suddenly awash in the light of the universe, shown for what they really are, and put back in their place.

It felt as if I was suddenly let in on the fact that I have spent all of my years in a comatose state, that my entire life up to this point had just been imagined. I don't remember anything after that, nor do I recall falling asleep, but when I woke up the following morning I felt light, free, and at peace for the first time in decades. The weight of this man I have been carrying on my back all of these years was gone, and has not returned since.

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It is my hope that those of you who are suffering will remember that you too are just stardust. You are in control of every breath, every molecule, every moment; they have been yours and yours alone all along. You are all teachers and creators, and nothing is ever as it seems. This life is simply your plan unfolding as you wanted it to long ago, and though you may have forgotten yourself at points along the way, it is not too late to remember that you are perfect just as you are. §

Logan Lynn writes In The Trenches for *Just Out*. He is a Portland based musician, activist, writer, and is a regular contributor to The Huffington Post. Reach him at Logan@JustOut.com