

THE ONE WHERE ASTRONOMER INSIDE ME BECAME A WRITER

CHAPTER 1

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In the mild rain, I was waiting for the bus outside the university at 5:30 PM. I was a bachelor's student studying astronomy and astrophysics at the time. People in my immediate vicinity raced into the bus as soon as it arrived, leaving me with little choice except to wait for another bus, which was already late. It was a beautiful day. I couldn't resist having a cup of tea from a nearby tea house across the road because it smelled so good. It stopped pouring as I walked towards the tea house, birds flew towards their nests, and the sky was crystal clear with an orange hue as if illuminated by fire. It reminded me of a line from Rabindranath Tagore's book *stray birds*. "Clouds come floating into my life to give colour to my sunset sky, not to carry rain or usher in storms". I was about 10 metres from the bus stop, and it was deserted; no one was waiting for the bus. I was absorbed in the beauty of the sky. When I returned my gaze to the bus stop, I noticed

that the bus had arrived, and if I missed it again, I would have to wait an hour for the next bus. So I ran towards the bus, sat down, and finally drew a breath, only to be astonished to find the bus empty. After an exhausting day at the university, I felt immensely grateful that I had a seat at the next bus stop, where people rushed into the vehicle and there was no seat remaining. I realised I had left my coat on the bus seat after getting off the bus at a bus stop near my house. "There's no way to get it back," I told myself as I went closer to the house. After a few hours, the night sky was clear, so I constructed my telescope and sat on the roof, thinking about space-time curvature and gravitational waves, which eventually led to a very common question, 'What happened before the big bang?' I reasoned that the most reasonable explanation would be that there was no time and thus the question was inaccurate, but my attention was abruptly diverted by an ISS pass (International Space Station pass), which interrupted my cognitive process. After finishing some tutorials given by my college professor, I ate dinner. Around midnight, I sat on my roof again, gazing at the sky and pondering various theories such as "do we live in a simulation?" and "Is time travel possible?" I also thought about different paradoxes, such as "the Fermi paradox," and eventually after getting bored, I considered writing something,

Oh! Arcturus, massive dust and gaseous ball,

You appear to be relaxed from this vantage point.

Everyone refers to you as a twinkling tiny star around here.

However, just a few people are aware of your size.

Many of us are intrigued by the sight of you in the night sky.

We ponder our own lives, as well as larger concerns and mysteries.

You appear to be extremely near to us from this vantage point.

However, you are 36.6 light-years away.

When we gaze at you, you are showing us a brief period in the cosmos. There are billions of you emitting energies throughout the universe.

There's a lot to learn, a lot of complexities to solve, a lot of questions to answer, and a lot of miles to go, yet the sight of the night sky puts us at peace and makes us curious.

This is what I was thinking as I began to fall asleep.

The next day, I went to a guest lecture given by one of the Nobel laureates. After viewing and listening, I felt tremendously inspired and eager. I waited for an hour for a small window to speak with the Nobel Laureate on LIGO's latest finding using GW. I had a wonderful talk with him.

I was about to leave the university. In front of the University's departure gate, a girl walked toward me holding a coat that looked similar to the one I had left on the bus the day before. As she approached me, she questioned, "Hey, is this your coat?" I replied, "Yes, it seems familiar." She explained that I had lost it on the bus, and because she was on the same bus and seated near my seat, she thought it would be nice to give it to me.

However, I had questions that I wanted to ask her but I was nervous as I made contact with her eyes," How did you find me?" I inquired. She mentioned that we are both in the same class and classmates and that she knew me because I worked for the university's astronomy club. "I'll see you around!" "Bye," she said as she walked away. As I stood stunned, a university watchman at the gate told me I needed to get going since it was getting late and they were about to close the University gates.

So, as usual, I walked to the bus stop and was astonished to find the same girl. There was an awkward brief moment of silence between us as we stood close to one other. I was so nervous that I forgot to thank her.

We both took the same bus. I got off the bus before she did.

As time passed, I sat at my desk to complete my thesis report on, 'The Einstein-Rosen bridge '. We continued to cross paths and exchange glances as the days passed, but we never talked. One day in college, there was a debate tournament regarding the existence of God, and I was startled to learn that she and I were on the same team. I began the conversation by saying, "Hello."

"Hey!" she exclaimed. As the conversation with the rest of the team progressed, she and I became close friends, and we began sharing the same bus to college and home. She initially impressed me by explicitly inquiring about my Project work and whether or not General Relativity applied to the galaxy scale. We discussed extrasolar planets and their potential for supporting life. We were immersed in our discussion while riding the same bus. I've never felt so energized in my life. People usually think you're crazy if you're a science nerd, but now that I've found someone who shares my interests, I was finally happy! She resided in a massive tower apartment in New York. Every Saturday, we would walk up to the roof and set up a telescope to observe the moon, and Saturn, and look for the messier objects. We were captivated by each other, having coffee every morning in the University canteen and taking the same bus. I was an immigrant, yet she always helped me. We loved each other, yes, you read it correctly, "loved!"

Despite all of the crazy things we did, our grades in class were fantastic, and we were never derailed from our chosen goals. We both had excellent publications; she concentrated on Galaxy dynamics, but my scientific interests were broad, and I worked on both Cosmology and Coronal mass ejections. I'll never forget a night when the city's electricity went out and all the stars in the sky were crystal clear. The day we expressed at each other. Everything went wrong that day! All of the dust, automobiles, humans, trees, small objects and skyscrapers were pulled at a certain place in space, as though space warped at that point. We were unaffected since we were far from the occurrence. A portal, a large hole, emerged. "How," I said, "this cannot happen, it's impossible." I had gone insane. People were racing around shouting. As I was staring at the occurrence happening I began to hear a low-pitched voice calling out my name, "Jaiden! Jaiden! Jaiden!" "Wake up, son, and respond!" I awoke suddenly as if I were dreaming and retrieving an old memory while I was unconscious. Captain Morrison was urging me to answer as I was in the gravitational pull of a gas giant on a spaceship. "Affirmative captain!" I said over the radio as soon as I regained my composure. I have no choice except to enter interstellar drive mode, even if it means frying my engines in order to escape the pull." We were on a mission to retrieve sensitive information from a spaceship that was out of function. The spaceship was orbiting Saturn and our goal was to retrieve the Black box but we were not alone. We were accompanied

by different species that were at war with us. We lost the battle and had no choice but to retreat. Captain Morrison and I were the sole survivors. This occurred near Saturn. We returned to the artificial house we had made around Jupiter. I was given medicine. The artificial home that Humans developed had an atmosphere identical to Earth and ran on the Sun's energy output. I was then transported to a Mars outpost where they were attempting to build a massive Dyson's sphere around the Sun. It was an incomprehensible mega-structured thing. After a few days of vacation and medication on Mars, I finally drew my breath after inhaling oxygen inside the chamber(MARS BASE) and watched a gorgeous sunset that seemed blue. It was the most gorgeous phenomenon I'd ever seen. I sat down and started thinking about the old days when none of this happened and when I was happy with Emily.