

## THE GREAT STORM

Alida felt that she had a special vision how the animals were responding to their surroundings. Times seemed desperate. And the animals were able to sense something was going on. It was the same power that she endowed on her little menagerie which she had gathered around her. These tiny plastic animals each had a personality. The deceptive wildness and the magical playfulness were combined in her characterizations.

She was on to something deep about nature. Everything was now in flux. It was not simply her observations. On the seasons was imposed another great map which expressed the metamorphosis of all nature. She was observing all these changes which were happening all around her.

With the birds, it was no longer going to be enough to fly. They needed to better understand the changes in the world. They were harbingers of something deep to come. Phenomena were accelerating. The world seemed to be spinning. The migrating flocks were massive. Sometimes their paths seemed confused.

There was a remarkable quality to all these transformations. A single species did not have the resources to adapt. This was the invitation for some kind of massive redirection of nature. These changes only contributed to a desire to humanize this process. It wasn't going to be enough to communicate to the animals. There would have to be a whole set of different changes to take account of this new awareness among all the different species. Alida was getting pulled into the center of this wonder.

Despite the major nature of these shifts, most of the time things continued on as if nothing had changed. There were not fires going off in the air. There seemed to be more storms. Lightening was on the increase. But the ground was not opening up and swallowing communities. There were terrible storms. Rivers were swollen much earlier in the season. Dams would not hold. But life seemed to cohere. And the essential homeostasis held sway.

In her own way, Alida was part of the adaptation which seemed to be affecting the whole world. She was hardly ready for something that radical. She was not going to uproot her life to go along with what was happening around her. In her own way she was tuned in. She had always been aware of this symphony playing in the background. Now it was playing at full volume. She wanted to participate in all the excitement. It was as if she had set the stage, and it was now going on all around her.

In the annals, the Great Storm held a unique power. It brought diverse elements in contact with each other. Ammonia made abrasive contact with phosphorous. A sulfurous fire and tempered brimstone regaled in its own conflict in the midst of sin and political upheaval. The storm had made its own impression. And out of this chaos flew the confident dove. The chemistry of life was well on its way to make its impression. All these tireless forces set their own standards. This deep ripping only made life more vibrant. There was this explosive vitality which released all the vitality of the biological continuum. The freakish mutations responded to the marvel after Eden. It was the twisted variety which gave meaning to the ultimate metamorphosis.

The very instability of the biological meant that only the catastrophic offered the the actual path for development. The individual survived through this mania. The self was outdoing

its own design. This was the intent all along. What was holding together through coming apart. All being was spreading out to fill up the universe. What had been meant was meant to be.

The restless eagle felt privy to a special secret. The devil was in the details. He already owned the expanse of his flight. He was moving on to something more perilous. It was more than living up to his symbolic role. He was finding a perfection beyond what any human could ascribe to him. He knew what was hidden, and he meant to keep it just that way. The monstrous bird would drop turtles from the heights and feast on the sweet meat among the broken shells.

The bird needed to survive. There wasn't always sustenance at the heights. But the smart bird knew how to sift among the delights offered on the ground. That was why he guarded his spot. He made his perch. He perfected his view. Under more ideal circumstances, he would never have to move. He would live on his wonderful will. He would consume himself. There would be a wonderful self-sustaining power in his watching. Under these circumstances, he was less subject to the whims of the world.

Look around, and there were a host of magical forces extending everywhere, If only Alida was a little stronger, she could take part in this. That did not diminish the changes from affecting her on the inside. Her body may have been too weak to benefit from all these circumstances. But she could let the wonder play in her imagination. She sensed that ripple which was extending everywhere.

The will was willing even if the flesh was not. She was developing a new sympathy to accompany her awareness. With this recognition, she was again at the center of a vibrant creativity.

Alida experienced all the demands on her body caused by the events occurring around her. She wanted to be a more active participant. But she felt like more of a spectator.

In her youth she had known this kind of imbalance. But her maturity had made that fear pass. Now she was encountering the same kind of uncertainty. She had all the years to help her through this challenge. But there was something particularly exciting about this new encounter. She felt a special kind of inspiration. She seemed to be rising above it all as if she was watching herself living. This was a little freaky. She wanted to pull back. She needed to protect herself. But she loved the appeals. What was this about?

She wanted to believe that something deeper was going on. She never thought of herself this way. More than ever before, she felt a calling. Where would this take her? She had few people with whom to share her feeling. That made her doubt the importance of what was going on. For the time being, she simply enjoyed the moment. She told herself that it meant so much more; however, she did not have the strength to follow up the sensation. She went along.

Now and then, she felt particularly privileged. A cardinal's flight. A sudden change in temperature. The angle of the sunlight. All these signs provided part of the picture. If it was on a feeling on her part, that itself was a joy. It spoke to all the other experiences in her past. She was exploring deeper. In a sense, it was no longer about the world outside. That gratified her more. All her teaching, all the knowledge, all the personal awareness seemed to amount to something. Occasionally, she would sense the same thing when she was watching the news or hearing an emergency bulletin. That was only a glimpse of a more significant change that was sweeping the planet. And she was feeling the winds pass.

There had been significant events in her life. Many she had experienced on radio and

television. Magazines had done what they could to fill in. The world in crisis. The great leaders. She knew the sweep move past her. She was holding on to the force of history. She was always so close to the pulse. What was there that enabled her to be so in the know. Friends and relatives reminded her of the clues. But she was seeing something else. Perhaps, she had been introduced to this force through an opening in her own history. She had been listening to that narrative. She was sure that she could here the storyteller's voice. What had brought her so close to the action.

She needed to be extra careful. She had encountered too much life in such a short period of time. She felt as if the waves were pulling her under for good. She did what she could to brace herself. This was totally a matter of applying her will. She was being confronted by something so disturbing. The terrible mixture of heaven and hell.

She realized that she had dodged a bullet. It was a sudden revelation. It hit her, then it passed. There were marvelous forces filling the world. She was a chosen witness to these events.

Her sense of relief made her want to share her good cheer. She was hardly going to engage the guy at the meat market. But her eyes reflected a deep change.

Somewhere this tempest in the tea cup found its complement. All the great waters coughed up their fury. And the heavens replied with equal venom. This was a repayment for past offenses. Alida had understood never to cross these forces. There were others who were much more daring. They let their madness blind them to consequences. They would be out of their depths full of a head of steam. And their stubbornness ended in an inevitable punishment. Drowning would be too good for these brazen creatures. This was where punishment made its sting finally felt. It was absurd justice. The marvelously courageous would believe that they finally had a chance to topple the moral order. The gods were not so accommodating. This was not meant as an opportunity. Just as the door opened, it closed with equal bluster. And the stragglers were crushed in the extreme reaction.

Alida did what she could to regain her composure. She had been shaken by all the sparkle around her.

"The lights are doing things to me."

Somewhere outside in the heavens there was a more formidable upset. Time and tides were crisscrossing in magnificent designs. There were more formidable physics in deeper space.

"This is not a denial of human control. It is another layer of the play of the imagination.

"Is there anything behind it?"

"I am concentrating upon what is happening on earth."

There was such concentrated energy in just a few square feet. Behind these surfaces, there were further layers of contentment.

"I need to know it all."

Could there be a knowledge without a more profound commitment of the body?

"I'd like to know the less impactful version of the tale."

A few birds perched uncomfortably on a fence.

"Is this enough of a sign?"

She stared at the birds.

"This will do for the day?"

What more important: to pursue Alida's version of events, or to discover what was behind the Great Storm. Perhaps, Alida's insight was the key. She had been through a similar experience before.

I was touring the ruins of this great event. What had been left in the wake?

A sense of uprooting seemed to be the key. What had held in place was now deeply shaken.

She felt light-headed and short of breath. Her heartbeat was irregular. She was coming out of herself. She was a barometer of a more substantial occurrence. You would have to map the lines of intersection to understand the full nature of the event. It wasn't simply a local disturbance. These were long waves that worked their way around the earth. These effects could be better understood with a knowledge of history. Alida was a witness of the transformation. On the oceans these currents worked from the depths. All the maps would have to be altered to register these changes.

She had been aware of these grand moments in her past. But there was a more developed theory which could explain the full nature of these transformation. The earth had felt a host of these shifts. People had been aware of these deep histories. This was something just as critical in the overall evolution of the planet.

Alida was not a student of these atmospheric changes. But they corresponded with her spirituality. Human beings had unique abilities to participate in these events. The great heroes of time were prophets of such upheavals. This was a more involved theater. Everyone was implicated even though only a few were prepared.

What did it mean to lead the way when Alida could barely follow along with all the changes which were happening? She wanted to influence the great lines of time. She knew that her fate was tied up with the experience. She made her own record of what was going on.

You could track the paths. The lines of energy. There were the physiological responses. The cosmic and the physical. It wasn't easy to explain everything. There wasn't a clear time line. This was the wonder in it all. It was something more than magnificent. Perhaps, she was putting herself at the center of it all. But this seemed like a climax of other sorts of catastrophes which had transpired previously. Her subjectivity was not interfering with the observation. She was chosen to witness the marvel.

"It's not simply something that you see or feel. All that implies something else."

This was all the more remarkable. In the past, the classes of angels had been categorized. Types of ghosts had been described. There were higher and lower orders of spirits.

"Will there be a democratic flavor to the next great tumult?"

"Storms do not choose."

Alida wanted the phenomenon to be more universal like a visit to a museum. Others could participate. They could examine the artifacts.

"Humanity may not be able to survive the next storm."

She did not want to give the weather people that much power.

"From this point on, we may be working at a disadvantage."

Evolution could have stalled on the rocks. The great apes could have resisted the disruptions in their environment. The Iroquois might have degenerated into a more autocratic model.

Alida knew the chances. Many of those opportunities depended on the power of the body. Where the body was weak, the imagination could find its own devices. Books were full of techniques which testified to the power of the will. Alida had a more formal spirituality. Her mysticism was less demanding and very personal.

“I know that there is something unique in the words.”

She wished that she had the motivation to tell the full story. I listened carefully to what she was telling me. I was fulfilling a function for her.

I imagined a book that documented all the great storms. There would be collection of factual detail about the storm's intensity. There would be personal stories. And there would be speculation which tried to explain the deeper purpose behind all these storms. Indeed there was something quite mystical about the record.

What could Alida add to the story? Where was all this leading?

The storms returned mankind to the aftermath. But we now seemed on the verge of something else. The more violent days of the early years on the planet. The terrible firestorms. Lava and volcanic ash. The breakdown of life. A dangerous time.

All day, Alida had felt tense. She had trouble sleeping. Around five in the morning, she woke up for good.

“It is here!”

She could feel it all over her body. This intense feeling. The shaking. The hollowness.

“The storm is here.”

It thundered in the early morning. I slept through it. When I woke up it was dark out. It was already nine. The sun had come up. But it looked dark due to the storm. It was wild,

The flood headed down the hill.

“We're lucky we're not getting it in here.”

I wondered if there was something that I was supposed to do to protect the house. I ate breakfast and walked around.

“We will be good. This will not last.”

“I had been expecting the storm of the century. The rain came, and then it passed. The aftermath was not remarkable. A few branches were tossed here and there. No trees had come down.

“We were lucky!”

“We sure were.”

I went for a walk. The air was fresh.

“I feel better. That really hit me.”

Was this only a preview? The earth escaped unscathed. What was happening elsewhere in the universe? Alida had a lot to teach me. I was only a novice.

“See how the water has collected on the branches.”

I was looking for a pattern. I realized that I was among a bigger happening.

“The Big Bang!”

If I plotted all the lines, could I find a force that was carried space.

“This was a great event.”

I didn't have the skills to do the star map. But Alida knew. She could hold her arms perpendicular to each other.

“This is the basis.”  
 I thought about these lines extending further into space.  
 “Think about how far it goes. It is way out there.”  
 I noticed where paths curved back. Where lines intersected. This was here. This was  
 now. But there was some other story going on in the shadows.  
 “This is where the sun withdraws its light.”  
 It was very cold out there.  
 “I know it from a crossword puzzle.”  
 What was the secret that she knew about Jupiter?  
 “Did it leave its orbit?”  
 “Everything is fine.”  
 How could I describe the event?  
 That night, I looked in the sky. There was nothing unusual. Jupiter remained in the  
 heavens. Or in its place in the darkness.  
 “What do we really know?”  
 “Jupiter yields a lot of mass.”  
 Was she toying with me? What was I supposed to do now?  
 “Stay in. And stay away from the windows.”  
 I was reviewing safety in a tornado.  
 “What is going on?”  
 “You are the scientist, Steven. You know better than I do.”  
 I had made all these diagrams. I was surviving on a pseudo-science.  
 “This is the greatest thing that has ever happened in creation.”  
 Who was telling me this?  
 “You can take a line from here, from this point. It goes all the way to Jupiter. Then  
 another line extends across the galaxy.”  
 I thought about the explorer’s trying to cross the Atlantic. The dangers. The vision.  
 “Are you coming here to destroy our land?”  
 “This is one place that you cannot conquer.”  
 “How is that?”  
 I thought of these cold barren worlds.  
 “They are only crossing points.”  
 An intersection with the stars. This is where we will make our stand. Each point taking  
 me more and more out of myself.  
 I found another point at the other end of the galaxy.  
 “We are getting nowhere.”  
 “This is a far away nowhere. Do you understand now?”  
 Were we even more unable to reach our destination?  
 “Steven, you are home now.”  
 What of those people who saw their home as far out in the reaches of space  
 “They may never get home.”  
 I needed a three-dimensional star chart. Something even further out than where I could  
 point.

“There was an upheaval along these lines. Earth, Jupiter, this remote planet. Then there is this place which remains untouched by it all.”

“We really have been affected.”

I thought that Alida nodded her head. Was she simply following the puzzle.

“There is this place way out there. Once it gets hit. We really are in trouble.”

“We?”

“I am in trouble.”

These planets held the humors for our nature. And way out there, a deeper sympathy held it all together. Alida was not into science fiction.

“What do you want me to say. That this is my home.”

If we could call these places home, it would create a different balance.

“We are all looking for the balance.”

Alida reminded me of the appeal of the imbalance. I was falling over myself to make sense of things.

“I once had all this together. Then I fell apart.”

I was hearing my own echo. She could barely see the stars. And she had these piles of crossword puzzles and names which meant something. There needed to be a pattern here.

“The planet is called Jupiter.”

“I assumed that we had already discussed its significance.”

“What is the order without planets?”

Were these astronomical questions?

“This is cosmology.”

Neither of us could say enough to capture all these events.

“Who is behind all of this?”

“The devil.”

“Something in me.”

The animals were again reacting. All these dogs whimpering at once. The birds screeching in unison. It wasn't just a pattern. It was a kind of interference.

“I can't explain it. They know. They knew on the farm.”

The dog who wail in the night at that one moment.

“He understood that something was happening half-way across the world.”

This was getting even further out.

“Do you have any idea where we are?”

“I gave you the star map.”

I counted up the millions of miles. The extrapolation from Jupiter.

“Something is preventing me from figuring out the rest.”

We both felt incapable.

“Way, way, out there.”

I made some more marks on my page.

“There is the storm. And there is this region which is not affected. No sympathy. No nothing. And this is the region of activity.”

If was occurring in the brain, what would it mean?

“This is the crossroad. You carry on or you give in.”

Neither of us was willing to give in. I was still using Alida as my barometer.

“I wonder if I can really feel!”

I could try to simplify my life. But there was another step.

“That is why the Great Storm did not hit. There is one factor missing.”

We were outside of this world. Outside of the imagination. There were dreams. And all the things that could not be dreamt.”

This was the imposition of the science. Nothing would reveal this connection. But it was right there.

There was a region of nothingness. On another, this place could be full of activity.

“Steven, I do not understand.”

There was no way to understand.

“Are there any stars here?”

“There have never been any stars.”

This final connection was so pure. No intersections. No touching.

“How did I get left here?”

Alida was busy with a puzzle. There was an excitement to each step. The crossing words.

“This is a word which had no equal.”

There was the regular order in the garden. Then there was a serious chaos.

“Alida, I am right here!”

She realized what I was talking about.

“I am not even ready to think about any of that. You have stipulated this point which cannot subsist in space. Like the black hole. Or the worm hole.”

“They are different.”

”I know. But both pose a challenge to these three-dimensional surfaces.”

You could reach in and claim your prize. Or you could hide something in there.

“We will never get to the hiding place.”

Alida was playing with me. I needed to be by myself. I had to sort it all out.

“I am playing three-dimensional chess, and I am losing.”

Today was chilly. After the storm, the temperature had dropped. It was still overcast.

“It may come back.”

Alida was warning me about the storm. Something momentous had occurred. But this was just a hint.

“An omen!”

“Was there a great plan that was being unfolded before our eyes? We were trying to figure out its contours. Or was our great plan now subject to chaos. We were being shaken back and forth by what had happened?”

Was I being told to change my life? Had I become preoccupied with too many distractions? I was seeking special guidance from Alida.

“Do you really think that I know. I follow what I have been taught. I am not here to create a new system of belief.”

Alida seemed to be aware in a profound way. Was the universe to be interpreted as a puzzle?



“I feel as if I am running down. Are you telling me that something is building up to compensate. Is the world constructing my future home.”

I thought about the idea of one consciousness assuming the form of the universe.

“What if I made a mistake?” I wondered.

Alida would be there with her tube of glue joining together the broken parts of the cosmos. I needed to learn more about that glue.

“Just something that I bought at the dollar store.”

There was another glue with more extensive powers. The glue itself was almost a sign of the actual bonding powers. It was as if the glue opened the attractive powers of the object.

“Still the universe seems in flux. It is being pulled in two opposite directions. It is waiting for the bond to break.”

“If the bond is attractive, then it no longer has a break. The whole being can be thought of as a series of breaks. The forces move throughout.”

This gave another view of the chaos. It was the bond that held everything together. We were betting on things to hold. How long would this keep everything right?”

I liked this new cosmology. I imagined Alida leading me through a whole set of principles which helped to explain why everything cohered. This was not a centrifugal force. It was more than that. If there were forces that were pulling the universe together, this movement was pulling it apart. And this very denial, the chaos was being used to create a deeper connection. What could be observed in the mind's eye.

“This is too much to think about it.”

Alida was the maker. She did not think about the principle. She was applying. My desire for a world view seemed almost defeatist to the local application of these powers. Was force so concentrated in any one area that it obviated the need for a universal.

“The world is as it is.”

I needed drama. I was a wonder.

“How are the stars embracing each other? What seems to be pulling them in their very own way?”

Was there a romance in each attraction? The universe was being held together by its own nostalgia.

“If we are pulled apart, we will forever remember the connection that once held us together.”

We had all been endowed a special form of seeing. How was it possible? Each of us was a galaxy.

“Do I have my own star?”

In calculations there was a specific connection. If there were all these stars, and something got misplaced, this would change the balance of the whole universe.

“This is a form which is seeking balance.”

The orbits were impressed with clarity. Larger bodies were able to quell all these masses in an uneasy resolution. Solar systems with two stars. Planets watching their star die out. Asteroids being tossed around the universe. And the great comets with all their expanse.

The cosmos wants to reverse the path. It is contradicting itself. It needs to tell us something else.

Alida was teaching me a new way to calibrate these vibrations. This was other than the frequencies. There was the intensity of these attractions. A sense of remorse about what had been lost.

“When the light goes out, it goes out for good.”

The universe remembered. This was her story. There once was a raging sun. Now darkness predominated. This regret powered a rebirth somewhere. There were the great upheavals. And there was a sense of balance somewhere else.

“We must be on to something greater.”

The glue, the regret, the attractive sources, the sparkling records, and the desire to persevere. These were all characteristics of Alida's universe.

“Does the imagination take us to a place which has nothing to do with the one universe. Is this our accommodation to our ultimate separatism?”

She was blessing the universe with an ideology. This seemed to challenge some other maker.

“Why was I created this way?”

The universe was trying to avenge that ripple in time. It was pulling back that wave that bounded further and further away.

Where did the Great Storm fit in the scheme. In the great heavens, asteroid storms could be observed. Then there were these great movements of energy forces. Something just rolled across the totality. It spoke to the universal.

“We have been liberated!”

Were we all coming to a once and for all?”

“Don't take it from me. It's my old bones, classic romances, and crossword puzzles.”

What was the real news?

“If no one tells you, you may never know.”

A tornado hit a community in eastern Alabama. People were killed. Houses were destroyed. There was an utter ruthlessness in this great storm.

“The poor people.”

This compassion echoed from place to place

Alida had been outside . A cold wind almost knocked her down. She struggled to get in.

The wild wind swirled around us. You could hear it shaking the house. We were not in for a storm. This was only a reminder of all of the power of the wind. The air was all riled up.

“This is where time stops.”

“This is how people make a new life.”

“We need to escape from this!”

We were again back looking at the maps. Maps were never simply two-dimensional pictures. They had volume that came from all the power of time. There were these depression where the tornadoes would find companionship. These tornado alleys were the hang outs for these freaks of the weather.

You couldn't fake any of this. This was not reproduceable on a movie set. This was too big for the handiwork of human hands. It was a major explosion.

“We hope we only see this fury a few times in our life.”

What was the planet encountering?

“You are stepping into space.”

I was again contemplating the energy storms in deep space.

“You feel them in your heart.”

What would you have to do to shake the whole planet into understanding?

“What is another world for catastrophe?”

“I would say an awakening.”

“Or a shutting down.”

How far away was the storm site in Alabama? The changes on Jupiter are much more profound.

“What if I got these charts wrong?”

“It would be as if you said that radio waves were emitted from the middle of space. It would make much more sense if it all occurred on Earth. Or some planet from Alpha Centauri. All these mystery planets. What words were being spoken in this place? This was the source of the shadow play.

There were too many shadows to attain being. Ghosts were getting caught in the edges. These were all ghost planets.

“You will never find life out there. We haven't even explored the life on earth.”

The wind was still shaking the trees.

“It will take on crazy wind to rip through here and more trees will go down.”

“It is all the dry weather. Then this spate of thunder storms.”

What was happening on Planet Earth?

“Nothing could grow if it was being uprooted by these storms. We are lucky that they are not worse.”

When the sun finally quieted things day, Alida felt more comfortable. She was having difficulty making her peace with nature. She had grown up with this understanding. There were times when the petulance was too much to bear. You dealt with it. You protected yourself. That was how it was it had to be. There were moments of planting and moments of harvest. Then there was a much greater time of reckoning!

“Nature does no forgive!”

Sometimes you had to push yourself in the morning because you realized there would be no forgiveness in the afternoon.

“Georgia can kill you in the afternoon. But you can trick the day if you start early. It is cool in the early morning. The sun is hidden by the clouds.”

If you played your cards, you could stay ahead of the weather game. You could even protect yourself against the worst moments.

“My worsts enemies will not destroy me.”

In the early evening, the vibrant sky promised a lovely morning. Alida would make all kinds of plans. The balance would turn her way around eleven. Then she could take her bath and let the rest of the day go its own way. She could find protection inside.

The Great Storm remained a thing of myth. People stayed inside in the hopes that they could avoid its effects.

“It will destroy you if that is its intent.”

I was saying all this to myself. Alida had inspired. Was she a victim of the big change?

Was there so much change surrounding us that we couldn't absorb it. This was the biggest phenomenon that we would ever encounter.

All the big talk sounded right to me. I was seeing Alida as my barometer.

"I need to figure out what is going on."

How was that? What did I need to learn? I was so caught up in this vision. I couldn't do anything else. I needed a science to correspond to these crossword puzzles. Interplanetary expeditions required this much precision. We are leaving the influences that we know all too well.

"The will is the biggest force holding us to the Earth."

"Soon, this will no longer serve us as a home."

I imagined myself in a discussion about the future of the planet."

"Once you start talking about leaving, it is probably time to go."

I had to admit that I felt that my memory was slipping away from me. Could I really imagine leaving earth?

"You are going to a place which is known for its storms."

"There are people who chase tornadoes."

"The lucky ones will get picked up and tossed into Oz."

The writer's job would be to describe Oz in every detail. What did Oz offer to those who had become cynical about the world?

"Oz had grocery delivery."

I wondered if Alida wanted me to take a grocery list.

"I need to go on my own."

Would she be able to find her own place in Oz? It was not meant for those who wanted to remain hands on.

The Grand Storm will offer nothing. It will only result in destruction.

"How can we rebuild from these terrible storms. Katrina took too much of New Orleans. What is coming next? The big one will obliterate the heart."

"It is already happening to me."

There had to be a song which expressed the full nature of this feeling. This was the end of heart.

"How will I ever make it?"

This was Alida's cue to get ready for bed. The balance would again be in her favor in the morning. She could not overcome the darkness. That was why the storm promoted such fear. It brought night in the middle of the day. Sometimes a nap could help you deal with the threat.

"What is that cold draft running through the house?"

"We need to turn on the heat to get rid of the chill in the air."

It was sunny outside. But a quick sun shower swept by.

"We can't escape it. That is just a reminder."

"It was supposed to be nice."

"They tricked us."