



"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." – William Shakespeare, Hamlet

It's early on a Monday morning and my feet are cold. I've jumped in bed with my daughter – who, at age 10, blessedly, still likes to snuggle – hoping to warm them up and ease us both into the week.

A hint of sunlight flickers through the turquoise curtains – the sheer, sequin-speckled ones Amelia picked out herself to go with the walls we painted lavender when she was eight – and we lie there like spoons, wishing we could stay, and I tell her this is how it felt, over a decade ago, when she was not (quite) yet born.

"I used to lie in my bed just like this, on my left side – doctor's orders – and hug a long, cuddly body pillow just like I'm hugging you now. And I would imagine you all curled up in my humongous tummy, and try to picture your face."

"That's weird, Mom."

"You have no idea. Wait 'til you grow a person in *your* tummy. It *is* weird. Anyway, enough

small talk. Time to get up and get you ready for school.”

“Mom,” she resists, burrowing into the curve of my body. “I wish I were still in kindergarten. School was so much fun back then... and never hard or scary.”

I feel my heart squeeze. Once again, I wonder how many mornings like this I have left with my swiftly-maturing daughter... and why life has to be so hard and scary.

“Did I ever tell you about that dream I had when I was pregnant?” I ask.

“About a hundred times, Mom. Tell me again.” Anything to stay in this drowsy cocoon. And avoid school.

“Everybody told me I was having a boy. All my friends, all the other moms, even my doctor, when she listened to your heartbeat. They all said, ‘I’m just sure it’s a boy! You’ve got all the signs.’ Well, one night, about two months before you were born, I had a dream. I dreamed of a baby girl, lying in a crib, with bushy black hair and a beautiful Eskimo face. In my dream, I picked up this baby girl and held her, and I instantly loved everything about her. Her sweet smell, her soft skin, and especially her face. I loved her face. When I woke up, I knew I had dreamed about my baby. I just *knew* it. And I still felt this overwhelming sense of love.

“But time passed, and everybody kept saying I was having a boy, and I started to lose faith in my dream. I tried to stop thinking about it; to stop thinking about *her*. The baby in the dream. I didn’t want to set myself up for heartbreak. I needed to prepare for my boy. Eventually, I let the dream go.”

“But then I was born!” Amelia interjects.

“Yep. Then you were born. And first I saw your bushy black hair... and then your face.... and you know what? It was exactly the face I’d dreamed about! You were the baby in my dream.

And now you were real. And I was so happy, I cried and cried.”

“That’s so cool, Mom. Almost like a miracle.”

“I know,” I tell her. “That dream is one reason I believe in miracles. Or something *like* miracles, anyway. I believe there are things we can’t understand in this world – wondrous, mysterious things – and that they’re just as real as everything else, even though we can’t explain them.

One day, I think, we

might

be able to explain them. But for now, I just enjoy them. They make life more fun!”

Later the same day, I find myself in a Facebook discussion about Tim Tebow. (If you haven’t had a similar discussion lately, you must hail from another planet.) This was the day after the Broncos’ big overtime victory against the Steelers. You know... the game in which Tebow – once known for etching his favorite bible verse, John 3:16, in his eye black during games – threw 316 yards and 31:6 yards per completion. On a lark, I’d posted these stats, along with a picture of Tebow tebowing, on my FB page. Boy, did that strike up a chat. Some of my FB friends adored the post – “It’s no coincidence!” – while others were exceedingly annoyed.

“Okay, making the correlation between passing stats in a football game and biblical passages is starting to give me the creeps. It’s the sports equivalent of playing a record backwards to hear encoded messages. He’s a fine athlete and I’m sure he’s a sincere upstanding young man. He had a fine game. He didn’t turn Gatorade into wine.”

This from a friend who’s a believing Christian, but not a believing Tebowite.

Another skeptic chimed in to tease: “At some point yesterday day it was 66.6 degrees and the Bowman exit sign at mile marker 66 on I-26 is .6 miles from the exit, not a half a mile. Does Satan live in Bowman, perhaps?”

And on it went. And it didn’t bother me a bit. In fact, I enjoyed the back and forth. It was fun! Here’s the thing: You can tell me all day long that Tebow’s 316 yards was a just a coincidence.

And I can tell you all day long that it was something more. But, in reality, we're both just speculating. Neither of us has a clue. Not even the merest sliver of a clue. Don't you just love it?!

I do. I love the idea of mysterious forces at work in the universe – powerful energies coursing through time and space, and maybe other dimensions too – revealing themselves in glimpses to those who would see... communicating with those who would listen. *"We are here, we are here, we are here, we are here,"*

I imagine them singing, like so many Whos on the head of a Seussian clover. Or, a better metaphor: We're the Whos, with only a vague, shadowy concept of Horton. I love that notion. I really do.

And I even love the fact that I don't know if it's true. The fun is in the *not* knowing, as I told somebody on Facebook. The fun is in the believing.

The thing about miracles is that they might not be "miraculous" at all, by our standard definition. They might be perfectly natural, these things we call "supernatural." We just don't understand them yet. Horton's Whos, after all, were real... they just couldn't be seen or heard by your average jungle animal. Almost every week, I read about some scientific discovery that changes the way *this* average jungle animal perceives the world. (Exploring quantum physics, for instance, has really shifted my vision; and some recent studies of the brain have blown my... mind.) With each discovery comes a whole new batch of mysteries. I can't imagine an end to those mysteries, can you? I can't imagine a time when we look at one another and say, "Well, that's it. We're done. We understand everything, now. Let's call it a day."

As little as I understand, one thing does seem pretty clear to me. The universe reflects an exquisite order, complexity and ingenuity of design that we've only begun to fathom. And we humans have a special place in that design. Despite our imperfect powers of perception – and all our other imperfect powers – we are the fathomers! Among all the jungle animals, we are here to search for clues... to seek understanding... to unravel the mystery. Or just to stand in awe of it. What an honor. What a thrill.

Albert Einstein said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

I highly recommend the latter. It's just more fun.

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