

World Peace Cometh

By Lisa Hering

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With music by Stjepan Hauser
Ave Maria, Cello Solo

I'm looking at the sea garden from within the underwater dome of Atlantis through the thick glass that holds the rest of the world out. I have been here for a long time now, living with those whom I have chosen, those I want in my world. They are here. A few Greek gods, an assortment of the greatest intellects of all times, and sprinkle in a few kind villagers and unusually well behaved sailors. But most importantly of all is the child I have been missing, the child who has now grown into a tall and handsome man. Here, I can be a part of his life. Here is peace. But this is not a forever home. All things change. All life changes. And what was once a forever home becomes merely a stage one passes through. And though I may pass back and forth from this world back to the earth, I have chosen to remain here as long as I can.



I have a window onto the sea garden from my room, and each morning, I look out upon it. It is beautiful. The sand is white and there are concrete benches all around a large fountain. The central figure is a serpent who is in love with a water maiden who sits off to the side. There is a large keyboard further on that plays when you swim above it and

funnel the water towards it. A large fish can cause it to strike a note by swimming very close. We have a dear octopus who often meanders across, I believe out of a sense of adventure. I admire the view. We are shallow enough near this coral reef that the sunlight reaches us in plenty. How I used to fear the ocean, and now I love it. Atlantis comforts me in an emotional way. Here, I can operate with wisdom and life takes a steady pace. That was never the case on dry land. It seems there I was a different person, making shallow decisions, always trying to fit in, surviving. It's as though I have two minds. And I've noticed it's that way with everyone. But some people are better at blending them, the conscious and the subconscious. Two masters, and we can love only one. I choose this one, the me I never knew.

Today seems unusually quiet, both inside the dome and out in the courtyard. I look for my son, Angelis, but I don't see him, Several individuals are heading towards the front door to go out. Things look normal, but somehow, it's too quiet. I have a strange feeling, like the calm before the storm. I can't quite put my finger on it.

In the breakfast cafe, there are only a few people. It is usually crowded. Am I late for something? There is much activity outside. As I watch through the thick curved glass of the underwater dome, I see a group of whale sharks come by and swim above the central keyboard in the sea garden. I also see the butterfly and other ocean creatures arriving, schools of fish, sea horses, clams, dolphins, and starfish. This is quite unusual for so many beings to assemble on a week day. I can't account for it. I have nothing on my schedule except "World Peace", but there is no official date attached to it. That hasn't been decided. And surely if it were, I would have been notified. But my heart is taking on a new and faster pace. Could it be today? Everyday, I wonder if it will be today. It could happen anytime. I simply can't predict when Angelis will be ready. He doesn't share everything with me. I don't know many of the details. I know that music will be the driving force. I know it will be the last day I will ever see Atlantis, and I know my son will disappear from this place on that day. Where is he?

I go quickly into the bar where the Greek gods usually sit, Apollo and Zeus, Aphrodite and Gaia and the others. They are not there. I look for the shipwreck that brought my son here in the deep sea distance. I see it, but it is different. The red rainbow bridge sits upon it and leads up and outwards to the surface of the water and beyond. My heart strikes fear. That is a definite sign. It must happening today. Surely he has not

already left! My heart is beating very fast now, as today will bring the greatest change the world has ever known. And I will leave this place, this place that has grown so comforting to me, like a refreshing greenhouse when the climate outside is unforgiving. I'm not ready for the change. But you are, aren't you? You've done your time.

I run to the large wide open front doors and stand square in the center. The water is held at bay and won't come in. I look out now at the sea garden, and a symphony is forming composed of our resident Greek gods, as young and beautiful today as they first day they arrived, the sailors from the ship wreck who are now grown men, and my favorite intellectuals, Einstein, Newton, Plank, Galileo, Aristotle, and da Vinci, who are dead souls reliving their youths and have never been happier. There is even a young woman sitting in the back in a red dress with a violin, with whom I am sisters of the heart. Each is poised, sitting on a stone bench around the underwater fountain seemingly ready to play, but waiting. Waiting for what?

I remember now that I forgot, forgot to ask Angelis if I had a part in today's work, if there was something I was supposed to do. I would so dearly love to participate with everyone and see the earth blanketed in peace. But I forgot to ask, and he never told. I suppose I must not, since I was not aware of this event. I saw him on so many occasions working on the music. He has worked for many years to get it just right. He always assures me he knows what he is doing, and he is glad it is he who had the honor of doing it. It seems I'll just be a bystander and watch it all happen. But I'm now deathly afraid I'll never see him again.

I watch and wait, but nothing happens. Everyone seems to be present and waiting, even poised for action, but there is no conductor. I decide to head for the fountain to sit on the edge and wait where I have sat with him so many times. I breach the watery surface from the glass dome and step into the ocean. It is cool and refreshing. I taste the salt. The water is crystal clear. My hair migrates around my face and I pull it back down. The butterfly sits on my feet and transform them into a mermaid tail so that I can swim and breathe as a sea mammal. I swim towards the fountain, and lo and behold is his silhouette. He has not left. I see him, my son, sitting on the edge of the great fountain dressed in a black suit and white shirt open at the collar, a large cello between his legs. His hands poised on the bow ready to play. I stop, frozen. He is so beautiful. He looks up and sees me. His eyes are black and piercing, just like the raven whom I have always followed and who

has always protected me. And at that moment, some old words I once said vibrated in my head, "I will follow him anywhere". Was I talking about the raven or my son? Since I was a child, it has always been the raven who has been my guardian angel. But I thought I was the angel protecting my son. The raven's silky black feathers always had a metallic iridescence of blue and purple. I look carefully at his black suit, and his black hair. They shimmer in the sea light a nirvana blue and purple, just like the raven's feathers. I look deep into his eyes. They are kind and gentle as they look back at me, intelligent and playful. He is my protector. He has always been my protector. I have not been protecting him. He has been protecting me. All this time. How could I not have known it was him? Those two were the only two I ever followed, my son and the raven, my protectors, one and the same. He taught me to dive. He taught me to fly. He taught me to swim. He taught me to wait. He taught me to listen to the music. And he taught me to conduct a group of musicians.

As these thoughts race in my head, Angelis holds his bow out to the right of the cello and looks at me. I look around at each of the symphony players, and all eyes are on me, waiting. It is time, and I am central stage. I look back at him and nod my head. I raise my arms and softly, I whisper to him, "Let's go."

He begins. And as the first sound emanates from his instrument, unbeknownst to those above, It is the first moment of world peace. He slowly and lovingly pushes his bow and a long, sad cry arises. Then as he pulls, another sound grieves, slightly higher in tone, but just as slow. Then the next two and I recognize Ave Maria. To and fro, to and fro, I hear the sweetest sound I have ever heard coming from his strings. His eyes are closed. He is already gone. His entire body is wrapped up in this song. He is somewhere else in his head. He is in the music. Behind him, the whale sharks swim above the large keyboard and dive towards it to make it sing. And the many whale sharks cause a great diversity in the music. It is time for the rest of the orchestra. I point to the violins and they begin. I point to the harp and the harp begins. One by one, each branch of music plays their part, and then near the end, they softly fade out and he finishes solo. His left hand vibrates on the strings so strongly that all can feel the water move. The sound is penetrating and goes through the hearts of all present. And the melody echoes out from the solid metal string into the life giving liquid water and up to the earth's atmosphere where the rest of humanity lives. Angelis is playing with pure emotion, pounding the instrument with a

force I have never seen. He is putting his soul into the song. His peace is being interjected into his surroundings. And the song ends almost with a question, followed with an answer. Yes, peace has begun today. He stops, exhausted. He pauses a moment with his eyes shut as he comes back into this world.

In a moment, he takes his hand and reaches inside his jacket. When his hand reappears, he holds a white dove. He swings his arm up and sets it free. The dove flies through the water skyward, taking the song with it. Waves of sound follow it, the water unleashing the melody. And everyone who can hear the music looks inside and pulls out a dove. One becomes dozens, and dozens turn into thousands, and thousands turn into millions. And they sway with the current like a great and massive flock, one unit, impenetrable, changing shape to match the current, and carrying song and peace to the world.

Exhausted from the release, he rises, bows to me with thanks, and he turns to the symphony and begins conducting. Ocean waves become sound waves, transferring the peace from him to the world. Once the hearts of those who heard it first turn to love and kindness, the music is carried by the wind on to the next. And a memory befalls me of this scene long ago, the scene that brought me to my son. It went like this:

There is a faint sound in the wind. Then, it gets louder. And it rises above the rustle of the fallen leaves, above the whispers of the birds. And eventually it resonates across the land. A beautiful sound coming from the distance. A sound that fills the air. A sound that people stop for, and look behind them, a song whose source is hidden, a song that draws them, a song that causes them to look inside and lift out a dove, and let the dove rise above, and fly free to distant lands, unburdened, sailing, soaring, banking in the openness, with only the sun and the clouds as partners, compatriots, companions, like kind.¹

It is a full day of music. He plays and conducts and orchestrates. He and I even swim the last song together over the giant keyboard as we have done so many times in the past. And at last, all are exhausted and the time has come to stop. He has set in motion what he intended, and it will either accomplish or not accomplish. Either way, his job is done. We are all finished here.

When the last song has finished its last note, we head back to the dome. I look for him. He was following me from the keyboard area, but when I turn back around to smile at him, he is not there. Things are changing here quickly. The gods have turned to stone

statues, the sea creatures have drifted off, the intellectuals have vanished into their mediums, and the sailors and villagers have gone back into the dome. I go in and pass through the crowd. I have brought them goodness, not bad. But I don't really see them. I walk in a mist seeing only faces. I am looking for my son. Their eyes follow me and they are reverent and respectful.

I pass to the other side of the dome to look out upon the shipwreck, the vessel that brought my boy and the sailors here. I have a crazy thought that maybe I will see him there.

Past the glass windows behind them lies the shipwreck, but the ship is gone. In its place is the wreckage of a large airplane.

I call his name, but there is still no answer. He had not said goodbye. The mist is clearing. One by one, the people leave. Soon, I am completely alone. The dome begins to fill with water through the front doors which are still open. The life giving force that kept the water out is now gone. Without realizing it, I sent him away.

Soon I am under water walking through a strange place alone. I pass by the stage where there is a big disco ball hanging from the ceiling and my image is reflected in it. There are two people sitting at a small table, but I do not know them. They are lovers. They notice no one but themselves. And I laugh because their faces look like two fish kissing. And then I remember seeing this before. It's only a memory, not real.

I put my hand on the glass of the dome. It doesn't hold any resistance for me. I melt through it and find myself on the other side. I swim to the plane wreckage and remember how it brought me here in a stormy downpour. I crashed. I had forgotten. But now I remember that the villagers inside the dome had come here with me on this plane. I was never free from the prism. The prism simply became this watery sugar coated world. The dome itself was a prism. And the one who sees into the prism has had a window into my life the whole time. Call it a prism, call it a glass dome, call it a bubble, call it a box of limitations, it's all the same thing. It's a place far away. It can either be a sanctuary or a prison, or it can start out as one and change into the other. It is a thing that separates a person from the real world. It's withdrawing into the interior. It's an asylum. The boundaries exist in my mind. And if I put those boundaries there, I can take them away. When I see them for what they are, they simply dissolve. I have lived in my subconscious

long enough to not fear what it knows as the truth. I am not stuck in either world. I can go freely between the two. I am in the universe, but just as important, the universe is in me. As is big, so is small. As is small, so is big.

And as I gaze upon the wreckage, I see the red rainbow bridge rising from the craft up and out towards the surface of the water. Life, as I have known it in Atlantis, has come to an end, just as the water filled my living room in Sedona and that life came to an end, it is filling this world as well. Atlantis had been a good home. It served its purpose. It gave me a picture of the truth in various stages that I could accept. I've lived with the sugar coated truth long enough now, I no longer need it. Such a place cannot be a permanent home. We need it as long as we need it. And then it has served its purpose and it is finished. It could never be my home again. The sea continues to fill it up with water. One day, all traces of its existence will be gone. Even the Greek gods themselves, so full of life only moments ago, are now mere stone. I look again at the red rainbow bridge. I hear a door shut and the light from one of the stars above goes out. Angelis has finally made it to the heavens. He has gone from my world to another. He has crossed vast distances of space and time and crossed the boundaries of light and energy. He is a leader. He is my leader. And I promised to follow him anywhere. And I will. The question is when.

From what Angelis set into motion, the people on dry land begin hearing the music, and they are called to peace. They find the dove of peace within their hearts and give it lovingly to a friend who will protect it, and so long as they protect it, it will protect their hearts. It begins on the fishing boats near the reef, then the wind blows it to the sandy shores, and from there it migrates up the hill country and finally to the tops of the snow capped mountains. And they actually accept this gift. The entire world is at peace.

And the people love one another with endless amounts of patience, and they are good and kind to one another and they treat each other as equals as they should and there is never again another thought of war or anger or hardship or hurt. All their prayers are answered with his arrival. It isn't what man expects, no, there is no fear, no chaos, no suffering. My son makes no appearance on dry land and no human sees him. They don't know what caused world peace or even exactly how it happened. But for the first time, there is not a word from anyone. They are listening, listening to the sound of peace throughout the land at the same time Angelis is walking the Red Rainbow Bridge.

I have lived most of an entire life. I have grown up out of touch with myself. I have made mistakes that I wish I could change. But remember, we are formed in a sticky soup of what will become flesh and bones, and we crawl out of a mire called a womb, and we are greeted into this world by a slap on the butt. And it doesn't get much easier after that. Mistakes? If every hundredth thing you do is right, you are of insanely good intelligence. Odds are none of us should live to day two, much less survive the birth canal. A mistake means you tried and you'll have a chance to make another mistake. There isn't much for me here. I've buried myself for the past twenty years in art and literature, a box of limitations, with invisible boundaries I set myself. Why would I want to stay when everyone I love has taken the 3:10 to Sedona?

And I'm almost ready to follow the red rainbow bridge, but there is one side trip I want to make along the way. This life has brought me an entire spectrum of emotions. My basket of emotions is full, from the black to the white endpoints to every half life of gray in between. The stronger colors are beginning to fade like the strong emotions of love and hate that fade into numbness. My canvas is becoming gray. Yet the beauty of the earth is something I never want to forget. If I lose that, how can I keep love alive? I want to go to one place in the world I know I can reinject my canvas with all the colors that ever existed.

I take a step onto the marshmallowy bridge. It feels solid. "Veni vidi vici. Nunc volo ire ad Paris." I came, I saw, I conquered, and now I want to go to Paris. For an artist, Paris is the entrance to heaven. And I call out into a fog, "Anyone know when I can catch the French Express to Gare Saint Lazare in Paris? And a mysterious man who looks surprisingly a lot like Tom Hanks steps down from a train car and says, 3:10. Are you coming?" I pause while I reconsider my options. He repeats the question, "Are you coming or not?" He looks at his watch and exclaims, "Oh, we're going to be late. Well, we've got to go. Come on if you're coming." He walks back inside the train and the train begins to move forward. I jump on.

And I step off at stop number 8,945,672 at the train station Gare Saint Lazare in Paris where I run into Monet painting a series of canvases of the station. I say to him, "Those are a bit on the gray side. Have you ever tried lilies?"

“Lilies?” he muses. “What an idea. I’ve got water lilies in my backyard! Do you paint? Let’s go!”

And my canvas is again filled with bright colors. I stay in Paris with Monet for many years. Together, we paint over 2500 paintings. Then one day, I see the red rainbow bridge looming far away in the distance.

“Claude,” I say, “It’s time for me to go. Keep all of my paintings as I have signed them with your name. See if you can sell them. I bet you can get a good price.”

I leave everything there and start walking towards the Ile de la Cite upon which I will find Notre Dame, a portal to a journey I anxiously await.

Peace. Something so simple. It’s the one thing you can have by doing nothing. The minimalist theory of nothing. You simply don’t hurt anyone. You simply don’t go out on the battlefield. You don’t put on your armor. You don’t sharpen your sword. You don’t stand on the front line and you don’t put yourself through all that misery. You don’t have to witness the horror and bloodshed of war or come back with shell shock or head trauma or PTSD. Peace is so much easier than not-peace. You just stay at home and love your family and your friends, and you widen your circle to include everyone, of every nation, of every language, of every race and every color and every religion and every type of family or sexual orientation or age group or ability or disability. You don’t hate anyone. For any reason. Ever. It follows the rules of physics... low maintenance is the easiest and longest lasting. If you want longevity, then become low maintenance. If you want happiness, stop hating. Start loving. If you want happiness forever, then those two become one and the same message. Love. One word. It doesn’t get much simpler than that. Love. As it turns out, it’s a four letter word that will save us.

Thank you and good night.

