

Apocalypse Diary: Monday, 18th of Oct, 2023

London, a rainy night with a great afternoon dirty orange coloured heavy air light game: ??blame blame Heathrow Airport, ?blame air pollution, ?blame roadworks, ?blame aliens, ???blame humans (ps. this is too beautiful to be frustrated at)

Recommended song for the day: Doomsday by MF DOOM -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gndkFhYh5Mo&ab\\_channel=MFDOOM-Topic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gndkFhYh5Mo&ab_channel=MFDOOM-Topic)

Rain tapped gently against my window tonight, a soothing lullaby for the world outside. I sat alone in my room, my fingers hovering over the book a dear friend had recommended. This friend, well aware of my fascination with apocalyptic and doomsday tales, had suggested N. K. Jemisin's *The City We Became* (2020). I had hoped for a quiet evening with this book, attempting to capture the elusive essence of my thoughts. The words I sought danced just beyond my reach, mingling with the raindrops' soft noise.

In the tranquillity of the night, a peculiar event unfolded before my eyes. My room trembled as if reality itself was shifting. My gaze fixed upon the wall, where, to my astonishment, a portal materialised. The edges shimmered with an otherworldly light, inviting both curiosity and fear. Adorned with digital looking crystals that almost felt like computer game ornaments, the portal took the shape of a ghostly smiley face. There was a chance we might be enveloped in echoes, or this could be a smooth path into *memory*.

Have you ever had that strange feeling while reading, where you imagine yourself within the story, and your perceptions expand until you start sensing things?

For a moment, I believed the book had mesmerised me to a level that transported me alongside Padmini<sup>1</sup> as she revealed the portal. I felt the wind against the wall, a salty sea breeze filling my senses. It felt like the beginning of something profound. "Courage," I told myself, "you've got this!"

Compelled by fascination, cried to fill my mouth with salty water, I approached the portal cautiously, my heart quickening with every step. Without hesitation the writers said, I would say after many hesitations, I stepped through, finding myself in a realm where time's boundaries dissolved into abstract art. Past, present, and future merged into a chaotic dance of existence. The faces of strangers felt oddly familiar, their stories written in the stars adorning this surreal canvas. I became a witness to epochs and eras, overwhelmed by the vastness of our human experience.

In the midst of this surpassing journey, I encountered an entity unlike anything my senses had ever perceived. It defied conventional description – a creature devoid of gender, origin, or familiar form. Instead, it existed as a convergence of existence and nothingness, a portal within a portal. Its presence was both daunting and comforting, embodying cosmic mysteries that elude human comprehension. A profound awe washed over me as I stood

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<sup>1</sup> Padmini Prakash is the name of the the avatar of Queens from the *The City We Became* novel. A 25-year-old Tamil immigrant graduate student living in Queens. Her first name means "she who sits on the lotus". She can use mathematical imagination to change physical reality.

before it. Its essence seemed to ripple through the fabric of reality, transcending physical limitations. It communicated not through words but through a resonance echoing in my consciousness. It was quite slimy, smelled like roots, just as I knew it was a time portal, I knew this was a new beginning for me. This encounter left an indelible mark, reminding me of the layers I needed to explore, the future memories I had to recall, and the discomfort I had to face without causing harm. Forgiveness, I realised, was key; without it, the cycle would never end. We all thought we'd face the apocalypse together, but in truth, we would face it collectively through our individual journeys.

This encounter served as a reminder that the universe weaves a tapestry of infinite possibilities. Even extraordinary encounters can become threads in our narratives. Emerging from the portal, my heart brimmed with wonder. The rain outside seemed to echo the entity's silent wisdom, as if droplets held the universe's secrets. Returning to my room, I carried the memory, a reminder to the wonders awaiting those willing to venture into the unknown. Reality, as I knew it, became a mere fragment of imagination. I, a hungry observer, marvelled at the boundless wonders of the mind. In this odyssey, my words transformed into constellations, weaving tales defying earthly logic. I realised then, I was not merely a writer; I was a funny scribe of the surreal, a trickster poet of the absurd for the other wonderers.

Days passed, yet I remained immersed in that experience, unable to move forward. I wished I could blame the crystals, the conocybe siligineoides, the previous night's drink, daydreaming, lucid dreaming, procrastination, frustration, years of depression or escapism. None of these excuses sufficed. It was unjust to align myself with those who'd comfort me before I entered the portal, urging me to embrace the journey rather than ignore its existence.

To all timeless creatures and tricksters of making-in-worlds...

Mine Kaplangi

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