

BOOK SIX CHAPTER 5 BURGEON

In the darkness, as Shilli, Emilie, Julian, Asha and Lapis sat quietly in their nests, a luminous rainbow, turning in a revolving circle, moved across the sky. As crows flew overhead, five young people appeared from behind the large blue pine, taking their places in the welcoming seats left empty by the Council.

An eighteen year old black female, wearing tan pants, a short sleeved yellow blouse, her right arm cut off at the elbow, was the first to speak. “My name is TACIT. Implied without explanation. We have been on your planet for some time, attempting to learn about you. What the five of you have set in motion is unstoppable.” Shilli replied immediately. “Without Marcus’ inspiration, I doubt any of us would have agreed to take on what we did.” Emilie - “He enraptured us all.” “Your devotion and loyalty to Marcus showed us who you are. You have ignited the interest, passions, and imagination of many of your species, the collective momentum will continue. You were chosen by the Council because you have shown you will stand up for what you believe. Your perseverance will overcome any and all opposition.” Turning to Lapis. “You hear colors. What color is my voice?” Lapis - “Many, one melding into another.”

“We have watched you, your resolve galvanized, staying engaged, not becoming cynical. In the months ahead your relationships with each other might be strained, but will never sever. Your unique and distinguishing personalities will be called into play. Though you may not know, believe or understand it now, you are incorruptible. What you consider normal is audacious for most. When many don’t, you understand trilemmas and triple conclusions. Difficult choices are ahead, unpredictable turmoil, heavy hearts and unimaginable opportunities. The solitude of leadership and decisive action. Negative feelings can cling to you, You will learn how to deal with them. Don’t ever agree to something you are not sure about. Always take the time you need. Many rules you’ve followed your entire life are about to be broken.”

Julian - “We know our species has caused damage. Love, kindness, generosity and compassion are also part of who we are, as are joy, happiness, anger and fear.” As Julian finished, the sound of an antique music box filled the clearing, the melody instantly recognized, the refrain of Lapis’ song, Changes Free the Hearts of You and Me.

A young man with a short beard and dark brown skin was the next to speak. “My name is VERGE. I am a Muslim, currently living in Denmark. Planet earth is in the primitive stages, the human species has yet to come of age. Many of your beliefs are foreign to us. Among other life forms you, with very limited ability to adapt, consider yourself superior to others. Exclusion rather than inclusion. Your unbearable cruelty to one another and your divisions are difficult to witness. Have you considered there is more than one universe? We do not understand the concept of self, profit or money. You relate both to others of your species and to things, measuring them, judging one better than another. What would happen if you saw everyone and everything as having a unique purpose? What you consider destructive about the natural world can be positive.

We have many questions. What you call an automobile, its impact on your planet, is curious, as is what you call a refrigerator. Why do humans want to change how they look? Why do you waste food? Your concept of superiority/inferiority, killing living creatures in the natural world for what you call “sport.” If humans believe they have a moral superiority over other species, they are wrong. You have put not only the natural world but yourselves in peril. Instinct versus data; experience versus analytics. Have you added homo sapiens to your list of threatened species? Do you believe extinction is an inevitable side effect of evolution? It can be reversed. Are you aware how much the human species does that is at the expense of others? Everything is a competition, the deadly sports you play, the structures you build. We understand that humans are a mass of contradictions, loving and benevolent, ruthless and cruel.

Your pattern of self interest is a concern; your indifference to suffering difficult to understand. Many assumptions humans make are incorrect. You do not seem to understand an experience unless it happens to you personally. We don’t understand what it is not to feel something, whether or not it happens to us. Your word empathy doesn’t come close. Your species has to be forced to experience and understand what All of Us means. Have you not wondered why you are overwhelmed with disease? That many in the natural world communicate with certain of your species is not new. A plant can heal what you call illness, a dog can help cure what you call cancer.”

Sitting in the nest to the right of VERGE, A striking young woman with a oval face and dark hair began to speak. “My name is APOLONIA. I was born dead. They revived me. My mother brought me with her from Guatemala to the United States when I was a baby.

Please remember Marcus' advice to ask for help. Understanding and accepting an unfamiliar reality is not easy. Explore your weaknesses and shortcomings, the birthplace of discoveries. You often talk about the word of God, many religions with different beliefs: Buddhism, Christianity, Atheism, Judaism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism. You are drowning in different doctrines and belief systems. Be prepared that what you are now working on, an interspecies corridor, will fuel the ambitions of less than honest people. Restraint will be appropriate in many circumstances.

Because of what is about to happen, you will need to be immediately noticeable to your own species. If you close your eyes for just a moment, it will be taken care of." It happened in an instant. Although their hair was the same shade, their skin color had changed. Shilli was a deep red, Emilie sea green, Julian grayish blue, Asha violet, Lapis indigo. After the initial shock, smiles not fear. "Lapis - Getting used to this may take a little while." With an attitude of unquestionable optimism, Apolonia got out of the nest and walked away, a white crow and mourning dove arriving to take her place.

As a young Asian man carefully left the nest and walked to the center of the circle, the strong smell of sage filled the area. "My name is INKLING. I live in India, working to improve women's rights. Witnessing the ongoing state of your planet, it came to the point where our tolerance could be stretched no further. What happens from this moment forward is not negotiable. Different cultures and their assumptions shape perceptions. Humans must face the facts of what their species has done and continues to do. Not a perception of the facts, but the facts. A very long list. Judged by your own actions. Attempting to justify what has been done serves no purpose. Unless you look at the truth, no change is possible. There will be new protocols for everything. You are not responsible for anyone's feelings or actions except your own.

That money, a source of value and exchange, payment for goods and services, seems to be a driving force, the major preoccupation, of your species is puzzling. It controls your being educated, treated fairly in your justice and medical systems, being heard by governing bodies, who will be chosen to represent others." Shaking his head in disbelief at his own question, "If your species thinks that money can stop the outage, think again. The material world is very seductive. You spend millions of dollars to buy rocks, while those living next to those rocks are starving. When the flow of money stops, many will be angry, the situation becoming volatile immediately. Who or what will be blamed? Blame is not for failure, it is for failing to help or ask for help. Value is not financial."

While things you have always counted on will change, many burdens will be lifted. No one will be able to deny the experience they are having. Each of you will respond differently. Although opening your eyes to new and different experiences will be a challenging adjustment, what you are learning and enjoying for the first time will intrigue and fascinate you. The five of you already understand the importance of not agreeing to something you know is wrong. People can be very persuasive. The project you are working on will not happen quickly. Both misfortunes and opportunities are ahead.”

A young tall white female, wearing a white tunic and navy pants was the last to speak. “My name is NICOLA. I live in Russia. As a lesbian, I am trying to raise awareness about sexual orientation.

What you first experienced in Australia, next in Prague then Amsterdam, will happen again. This time, until your species shows their desire to make appreciable changes, it will continue and alter the world you know, causing no harm to the natural world. Humans will not be able to fix what occurs. If your species thinks electronic sensors can prevent power outages, they must think again. Cyber attacks versus security. Think again. Simple changes in codes will not help. Warehouses storing hard copies and hard drives are vulnerable and can easily be destroyed. Man made weapons of any kind will not function.

During the outage, all illness, cataracts to cancer, anemia to addiction, will end. We will rid humans of their resentments, they will simply not remember. Have you ever considered you might be a contributing factor to your species’ diseases? There will be no need for medicines or medication of any kind. No allergies, no eyeglasses. Your pharmaceutical, insurance and drug industries will not be pleased. Asha - “Does this mean no one will die during the outage?” “Humans will age naturally as in the natural world.”

What human doctors don't know about the human body, genetics and gender, tissue regeneration, would fill what you call libraries. The presumption you give to the importance of certain brain dimensions, sizes and make-up are incorrect. You are now building stars for new sources of energy. We will help you. Your scientists and global ecology experts understand the reasons your climate is shifting. Technology has many positives, but it also has the potential to make you less human. Many humans are free of conscience and believe in their own deceptions. Hopefully, some will begin to understand that development of love and care for one another takes precedent over building more efficient weapons."

Tacit, Verge and Apolonia spoke in unison. "The night before you arrived in Bhutan, you each had a dream." As Shilli talked about the tusk he'd seen, the image appeared on a large flattened rock in the midst of the tree trunks, a light from above highlighting the area. As Emilie, Julian, Asha and Lapis each described their own experience, seeing a finger, a fin, a wing and a paw, each image superimposed on the one before, what appeared wasn't an intersect of art and technology but of dreams and the natural world.

Julian - "I know I don't look like that, but it's as if I'm looking at myself."
Tacit - "You are looking at yourself. That's what we feel every day." Verge - "It's not us versus them. There is no them. Five young adults experienced a never before felt emotion, one words could not adequately express.

Apolonia - "Transformational thinking. We're here to remind your species of the importance of interconnectedness and interdependence. Inkling - "Many humans say *My family is all I have*. Hopefully, your species will begin to understand that everyone is family and learn alternatives to warehousing the elderly. Awareness will begin with a few and grow gradually. As a person (of any age) changes, the effect will be immediate. The work you are doing with the interspecies internet will be there to guide you. Cultures evolve at different times. Be prepared to hear dissenting voices and alternative explanations to your truths, remain open to what you have never yet heard or understood.

The day the outage begins, the natural word will release a statement through our attorneys. Sadly, with your species, justice is often for sale. We leave you with the words of two of your own. Carry these thoughts in your active memory."

“Excessive preoccupation with ourselves does not lead to real knowledge of ourselves. Happiness depends, instead, on gaining freedom from this particular kind of self concern. In our opinion, minimizing of self concern is also an important step in the process of constructing a happier web of human relationships, and of transforming man into a less intrusive and destructive force in our natural and human environments”

1. “Do not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory or ideology. All systems of thought are guiding means; they are not absolute truth.
2. Do not think the knowledge you possess is changeless, absolute truth. Truth is found in life and not merely in conceptual knowledge.
3. Do not force others, including children, by any means whatsoever, to adopt your views.
4. Do not avoid suffering or close your eyes before suffering.
5. Do not accumulate wealth while millions are hungry. Live simply and share time, energy and material resources with those who are in need.
6. Do not maintain anger or hatred.
7. Do not lose yourself in dispersion and in your surroundings. Learn to practice breathing in order to regain composure of body and mind.
8. Do not utter word that can create discord and cause the community to break. Make every effort to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small.
9. Do not say untruthful things. Do not utter words that cause division and hatred. Always speak truth fully and constructively. Have the courage to speak out about situations of injustice even when doing so may threaten your own safety.
10. A religious community should take a clear stand against oppression and injustice and should strive to change the situation without engaging in partisan conflicts.
11. Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and nature. Select a vocation which helps realize your ideal of compassion.
12. Do not kill. Do not let others kill. Find whatever means possible to protect life and prevent war.
13. Possess nothing that should belong to others.
14. Do not mistreat your body. Learn to handle it with respect. ”

As the five left the clearing, Julian said what everyone was thinking “If we weren’t already sure, this confirms what we’re doing. What a coincidence the five of them illuminate a prejudice in each of our countries.”

Walking back to Paro along the banks of a stream, the rich jewel colors of the surroundings never taken for granted, what sounded like a baby crying brought everyone out of their thoughts. Clinging to a branch at the water's edge was a tiny animal. Asha approached slowly, picking up the creature, cradling him and humming softly. Asha - "Do you remember when we met the King? There was a picture in the hallway outside of his office, a pale cream colored, almost yellow, monkey with a black face and a very long tale. When I asked one of the guards, he told me it was a golden Langur, one of the most endangered species." The baby monkey continued to make sounds, not a cry, but a clear communication. "Competition for power is at the heart of violence. Be prepared for the unexpected."

How many years ago was it? Their vulnerability was immediately obvious. Shilli - "Does anyone think this could have been predetermined?" As they continued walking, uncertain and scared, whatever normal behavior the five expected from one other disappeared. Having heard, but never experienced, how fear can change a person into a different being, was now understood. The last words Marcus had communicated before he was murdered - "Competition for power is at the heart of violence. Be prepared for the unexpected."