

## Going Cosmic-Magdalena Star Party

Last night I was moved, lifted off earth and transported close to what is far away.

Look up! Cassiopeia hangs in regal suspension upside down in her chair. A scorpion, just the head and the tail, moves serpentine along the horizon. The archer with his bow. The teapot bending, emitting great steam misting into our future. The dark rift suddenly revealed.

Looking into the telescope a fuzzy blur explodes into the Pleiades. After decades of dim encounters, finally I see all of you in brilliant clarity. An open cluster nebula. "Averted vision." Globular cluster nebula. The Northern Cross. The Red Giant Arcturus. Supernovas. Wow! Did the Anazasi gaze, as we do, witness a death, a birth, star bright explosion, and record it here on rock as memory for us? Oh, now look, Antares, the heart of the Scorpion, shines red in the distance.

Shooting stars. Lots of them. A crowd clapping, crowd wowing shooting star. And this spectacle is actually the size of grain of sand or a grain of uncooked rice? Really? So much stillness, so much activity.

The space station races, rips along high above me, then winks out.

In the dark, bright light, clear vision. In the inky dark a connection with this mystical universe and the tender whisper, the felt knowing, 'You are a part.' This breath, this movement, the inhale and exhale riding a chord within you, is embracing you, setting your rhythm. This chord, plucked but once, is vibrating all around you, encompassing and extending out until your vision and your imagination can go no further. And beyond that...

In the dark, the cows bellow nearby. What are they calling for? Announcing their presence, their needs. People like trees glide past me in the night. They feel like spirits flowing around me. Then, a familiar voice. A momentary lag before the voice leads on into full recognition. A sudden hug. We are not alone. Strangers and friends. We are all here, and we are all both all the time.

Bob tells me, "We are on an arm of this galaxy." There's a perspective. A counterpoint to the daily dramas. Look here. Here is Andromeda, the Queen's daughter. M31. Another galaxy altogether. The only other one we can see. But we *can* see it. Looking two and a half million light years backwards. Hard to grok but easy to look and to see. In the blink of an eye I see a world beyond, and worlds that were. The long long long ago is shining before me right now.

Here in a field in the middle of nowhere at the center of everything, we hang poised in the unknown in a magnificent dark bright noisy silence. Our future unknown. That which is to be, unwritten. Silent, awaiting, empty of words, empty of action. It beckons, as we stand still and spin.

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