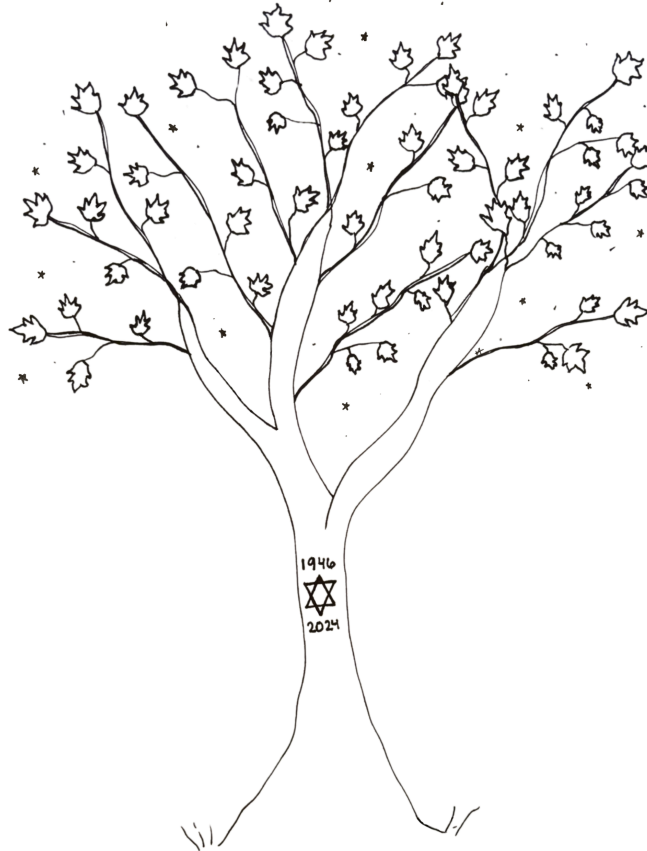


CHAPTER 135

At the Ends of the Earth

The story for the new moon time:

May 7 – May 22



MOON DETAILS

New Moon
18°02' Taurus
May 7, 2024
11:21 PM EST

REFLECTION DATES

Dec. 26 – 31, 2023
Jan. 20 – 25, 2024

11 MINUTE READ

My sister warned me three months earlier: *Don't be scared.*

Her husband's father had just passed away, and she had seen his dead body. *But it wasn't him anymore*, she recalled.

I remembered her words as I entered the house, walked up the stairs, and wrapped my arms around my mother-in-law. Tears coated my cheeks as I hugged the others and sat on the bed, facing my husband's father.

But it wasn't him anymore.

And I wasn't scared. Perhaps because of my sister's warning but mostly, because he looked regal. Lying there. Still as stone. The body presented at the end like some great masterpiece, marked by the life it once held.

I could still see the pain and paralysis of the Parkinson's that slowly scraped at his faculties, but also, I saw joy, laughter, and every softball game. It was as though the whole of his life was radiating through his fallow skin, and there was greatness there — [in the godliness of meanings](#).

After all, as my husband described through tearful eyes, *He was the best father ever*.

And so he lay, like the corpse of a king, reminding me of the pharaohs of Ancient Egypt. And pharaoh, I later learned, means "great house."

Which, I think, is what the body is.

A great, great house.



The night before he died, I dreamt I didn't write this chapter, that I skipped this moon and picked up with the next.

I considered doing just that. The time I'd set aside for writing was soon consumed by casket selection, out-of-town guests, black skirts, and the shoveling of dirt. Exhaustion gripped my body and made my bones ache. A canker sore pierced my mouth as my insides grew dull and numb.

If there was ever a time to take a break, this was it.

But I also couldn't think of anything better to do than to write this story, to try to capture all the beauty and magic surrounding a great man's death.

And so, let me tell it simply and quickly, for the new moon is tomorrow.

Here it goes:

A RECORD OF ALL THE MAGIC

1. **The Wings on the Wood:** On Wednesday, May 1, my husband and I were driving home from his parents' house. We'd been there all morning and were planning to return in just a few hours. We were almost home when I noticed what appeared to be massive wings — many feet wide — emblazoned on the side of a building. Clearly, they were the remnants of a literal sign that had been removed, but it looked as though some divine being had spread its wings and left its mark. An hour later, my father-in-law took his last breath.
2. **The Blackbird:** My husband and I were home when we received the news. We got in the car as quickly as possible to drive back to my in-laws, and the moment we turned out of our neighborhood, a red-winged blackbird flew right in front of us. Maybe it was the grief. Maybe we're always looking for signs in grief, but I couldn't help but think that this particular bird was meaningful. After all, I so rarely see them from the road, and when I first moved to Ohio, I didn't know what they were. I was so curious about these crow-like birds with bright red shoulders. My father-in-law was the one who taught me: *They're red-winged blackbirds.*
3. **The Whiskey:** On our way to the house, we stopped by the liquor store. We made our selections and went to checkout, and right there, on the counter behind the cashier, was one of my husband's favorite whiskeys. It's one that we are never able to buy in Ohio. Instead, my husband regularly buys it in New York and packs it carefully in his checked bag. But on this day, there it was: just sitting on the counter, waiting for him.
4. **The Fortune Cookie:** That night, we ordered P.F. Chang's and my mother-in-law cracked open a thin cookie of sugar, flour, and eggs. Inside, she found a strip of paper that read: *You will soon find more adventure in life.* And while her grief was palpable and she'd surely

exchange it for her husband if she could, she quietly confessed that after spending the last few years as a caregiver, unable to leave the house for even the simplest of tasks on a Saturday afternoon, she was looking forward to having more adventures.

5. **The Cardinals:** The next morning, as my husband and I were driving back to his parents' house — or now, his mother's house — a cardinal landed on the road in front of us, but unlike most birds, it didn't budge. We had to come to nearly a complete stop and look it in the eyes before it eventually flapped its wings and flew away. In that moment, I thought of my father-in-law. I felt like it was a sign, but I also thought, *I'm just reading into things*. Then, the next day, my mother-in-law (knowing nothing of our encounter on the road) told me a cardinal landed in the tree outside her house. She apparently hadn't seen one in forever, and to her, it felt significant. Perhaps we were both searching for something that wasn't there or perhaps, grief cracked us open to see the messages moving through everything.
6. **The Flickering Lights:** The lamps at my mother-in-law's house flickered sporadically in the days following her husband's death. Every time, we looked at each other and took a deep breath.
7. **The Ripped Sleeve:** My husband pulled a suit out of his closet. He hadn't had to wear it in years and was worried it wouldn't fit. It did, but there was a small rip in the sleeve. On any other occasion, this would make him choose against it, but on the day of his father's funeral, it was perfect. Naturally fulfilling the ancient tradition of Kriah, in which one rips their clothes before a funeral — a tear to represent what has been torn from your heart.
8. **The Flights:** My husband's business partner flew in from New York, and his aunt flew in from Florida. They both booked last minute flights and his aunt was afraid she wouldn't even make it on the plane — she was on standby. Thankfully, she made it, and despite no conscious coordination between the two of them, they landed at the airport at the same time, making it easy for my husband's cousin to pick them up and drive them straight to us.
9. **The Dates:** My father-in-law was a Taurus. He died twelve days before his seventy-eighth birthday. The funeral was two days later, and strangely, it fell on the anniversary of his wife's first marriage (May 3 and May 3).

- 10. The Whispers:** After his death, there were times I swore I heard him — as I've often heard the whispers of the dead. Of course, I don't totally trust that my raddled mind wasn't making it all up. Nevertheless, while his body was still lying in the bedroom, I heard him quip: "I'm not going anywhere." I couldn't help but laugh and smile. And the next day, while selecting a casket at the funeral home, my eyes felt glued to an option. My body felt pulled back towards it while walking to see the rest. "That one! Make sure I get that one." And so we did.
- 11. The Gravesite:** My in-laws bought their burial plots years ago. But while their purchase secured them *a* place in the cemetery, it didn't specify the exact plot. My mother-in-law hoped to be near a tree or a bench or something, and she did her best to finalize the selection over the phone. On the day of the funeral, I smiled to see both a tree and a bench nearby, but what was most surprising was when my father-in-law's youngest sister called out, "That's my father!" She walked towards his name, carved in stone on the ground, and that's when we realized that my father-in-law was being buried just a few feet away from his own father.
- 12. The Three:** My mother's cousin died on December 26, 2023. My sister's father-in-law died on January 22, 2024. Afterwards, I couldn't help but think of the old adage: Death comes in threes. I feared my husband's father would be next, and on May 1, 2024, he was. The day before he died, I recorded The Magic Guide [weekly message](#). While recording, I closed my eyes and had a vision of something I'd seen months ago. When was it exactly? I looked it up and realized I'd seen it first during the week of January 20 — just days before the second death. This led me to see a pattern with the dwarf planet Pluto (named after the Roman god of the underworld and known as the planet of death and rebirth). Long story short: It turns out that the three deaths I've experienced over the last four months have been perfectly synched with a Pluto retrograde cycle. The first death (12/26/23) occurred as Pluto entered what's known as its retrograde shadow (the very start of the cycle). The second death (1/22/24) occurred just as Pluto crossed the threshold between Capricorn and Aquarius (a rare and significant feature of this cycle). And the third death, my father-in-law, occurred exactly twenty-four hours before Pluto went retrograde. Pluto will cross back over the Aquarius/Capricorn threshold on September 1, 2024, before crossing it again for the final time on my birthday: November 18, 2024. That final crossing will happen just three days after a Taurus full moon, and this new moon time now (May 7-22) is planting the seeds for whatever's to come with that full moon in November. Afterwards, Pluto will stay in Aquarius for the next twenty years and not cross this particular threshold again for over 200 years.

13. The Myth: Four days before my father-in-law's death, I was guided to the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. In short, the myth tells the story of a husband and wife who loved each other very much. When one of them dies, the other grieves and grieves and grieves. There are many famous details to the story, but that's the gist. It's about loss. It's about wrestling with loss and trying to stop it from even happening only to realize that you can't escape it. The loss is real. After being guided to the myth, I looked up the asteroids named after Orpheus and Eurydice. I saw that they were about to align at the same point in the sky, conjuncting the destiny point, the planet Mercury, and the asteroid Chiron.

All of these cosmic bodies were clustering together, pointing to an ancient story of loss, as my father-in-law died and there was no more bargaining for time, no pill or prop to keep him going, only the searing reality that he was gone.

But with every little sign, I am comforted. I feel, as I long have felt, that there is an invisible world, seen and experienced in a whole new way at the ends of this earthly life.

And sometimes, whether we're happy or sad, it winks in our direction. It places birds in our path. It reminds us not to fall for the trick of matter and to instead, stay open to the possibility of more.



The Wings on the Wood, May 1, 2024

And the words read from the prayer book over the weekend: “God full of compassion, You dwell in the heights and in the depths: grant perfect rest under the wings of Your Presence to our loved one who has entered eternity. Let him find refuge forever in the shadow of Your wings.”



At the end of the last chapter, I wrote these words to describe the period of time that ultimately included the death of my father-in-law:

During this full moon time — April 23 to May 6 — your full wild expression is unlocked. You are called to sit firmly in your own remembrance, for you have reached the end of a road. There is nowhere else to wander from here, so now, you take your seat. You allow the power of your own loving wisdom to ripple through and around your body, forming a protective sphere of golden light that radiates far and wide. It pulses with peace and burns with protection and works magic in the ether that becomes manifest on Earth as wisdom itself moves from mind to matter and a whole new story starts to form. The story of your life from here on out. *Godspeed.*

And I can't help but think that while those words were meant for each of us, they were also absolutely written for him.



To be continued...

LONG STORY SHORT

During this new moon time — May 7 to May 22 — we rest and recover. We look ahead. We plan for what's next. We are reminded that life is long and short. The earth itself a mystery. This is a time for sweetness. Let the sweetness in. Just be slow and sweet. Let yourself find the sweetness in every step. Don't get caught up in the drama. Sink instead into the mystery, the not-knowing, and also, the knowing. The excitement of knowing. Embrace what you know and use this to direct your path forward. This time now is gentle. Be gentle. The full moon on May 23 has more in store — big magic! It's a precursor for what's to come in November. LOOK OUT! It's coming! Arriving like a golden windswept leaf, falling at your feet.

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