

# I AM LATE AGAIN.

I am late again. I used to be perpetually prompt. I took great care managing my time efficiently. I would never be late or early. I used to be right on time to the minute. Now I am a late person. Now I am faced with having to walk into the room late and have people turn and stare due to my tardiness. I am queasy and ill and very late

Today I am late because I got lost. I get lost all of the time. I don't know why I am constantly unaware of my global positioning, or why every time I walk out of a door in a hotel I am spun around. I can get lost anywhere, anyway, or anytime. I am usually ok with the lost part, but I am not so ok with the late business. Today I have both the lost and the late. I have a stomach ache, my mouth is dry, and I am afraid.

My knees feel weak as I climb up the steps to the big porch. The ominous old door of the mansion loomed before me. I think the door is mad that I am late, it looks like it is frowning at me. I am trying to give myself the positive reassurance that I need to enter through this threshold. "I am going in, there is nothing to be afraid of!" This is what I am saying to myself as I take a big breath and pull on the door handle. The door does not budge. The door is a push door, not a pull door, and now the door is laughing at me. I don't think anyone saw me do the pull instead of the push on the door, at least I hope not. I quickly pushed the door in. Just as I was through the landing, my purse got hung up on the handle. The stupid door grabbed my purse and flung it on the ground tossing all of my pens and crystal pocket rocks all over the floor. I quickly

bent over to begin to gather my things when the door got the last word in. A large bang from the push door made sure that everyone turned to see who the late person was that was making so much noise. I can feel the heat rising to my head and I know I must look like a raspberry due to my embarrassment.

Every seat was filled in the room. Some kind faces stared back at me and some faces looked blank. No one said a word about my lateness and no one offered to help me find a chair. I quickly went on a hunt for a chair that I can place in the back of the room and possibly disappear. I finally was settled nicely in the last row. I had lots of heads to look at and I could look without anyone knowing that I was looking. I feel better. I

There is some really bad hair in this room filled with women. Hair that needs to go to the salon and have its roots done, and hair that needs to be washed and combed. There were women in sweat pants in this room. I hate sweat pants and I would never be caught dead wearing sweatpants anywhere, but these women didn't seem to care. They don't care about their hair or their frumpy sweatpants, they stopped caring long ago. I am hit with wave of pity slosh around in my gut for the ladies with the yucky hair and sweatpants. I know how they feel, I remember how they feel, and I hurt for them, and for me all over again.

There is one woman sitting by the window and the sun is shining through the curtains framing her face with soft beams of light. The light is as soft as feathers and has an angelic aura that is protecting this woman. . I can see her fear through the beauty of light and angels. Her fear shows in the lines around her mouth and eyes and she looks older than her years. Her shoulders are holding up more than her frame can handle, yet she somehow manages. I bet she doesn't even know that she is surrounded by the gift of angels. I want to tell her and then maybe she can have the angels take some of the weight off of her shoulders. She is beautiful, but I know she doesn't believe that she is. I want to tell her this too.

My throat is closing up and I am fighting back the tears that are applying pressure to my sinuses. I want to run outside and let old faithful spout its geyser of tears. I want to barricade the feelings that are overwhelming me. I want to shop for rugs on kill .com and I long to be numb once again. I have to

feel everything and remember when it is the time for remembering. This is one of those times for the remembering.

I let a few tears fall, just enough to relieve the pressure. I am in the back and no one is watching me. It I feel ill, my stomach is killing me. I feel faint with tummy pain and I am having a hard time focusing on what is being said. I can hear the tone of the speaker, she is self-assured and sounds very smart. She has a story too, just as the rest of us in this room, but I can't hear her details. It should matter what they are but I know it doesn't.

Out of the corner of my eye I found another lady who looks like she doesn't hear what is being said, and she looks like she has the pressure of tears pounding in her sinus just like me. She has better hair and she isn't wearing sweat pants. She looks nervous because she keeps picking at a fingernail and she is not looking up at the speaker, she doesn't like the having to remember. This lady is not very pretty, but there is a lightness about her. Somehow this makes her more attractive. The woman with the angels holding her is much more beautiful but the hurt she is carrying will not let anyone see this.

I am sweating suddenly, my mouth is filled with acid, and I need air. My ears are ringing as I stumble to the door. I am going to throw up, I need to get out. I don't care about the door making a big noise when I leave, I am trying to spare the woman in front of me with the pink hat from a big mess. I am running down the path wearing my cowboy boots and sweating. There is a big tree around the corner that I head towards, I need to get to the tree. I stumbled on one of its roots and I know that it is trying to trip me. I don't care if the tree doesn't want to share its shade, I don't care if the tree wants me to fall down, I am sitting in the shade where no one can see me. I can hide here until I feel better.

The buzzing in my ears is starting to ease up as is the pounding in my chest.

My bearings are returning, slowly. I keep thinking to myself that I had no right to live with the illusion that I was recovered. I am just as stupid I once believed. I cannot live in a dream world, I cannot grasp onto hope and believe that the times of turmoil are behind me. I have to walk in these shoes that were placed on my feet and live within their limits. I was trying to believe in the ideal that anything can be overcome and that unachievable is achievable if you

believe. I was believing this and I was feeling and believing in miracles. I was wrong in this thought.

My good clothes and hair are only a disguise so that no one will believe that I am damaged goods. I am not any different than the lady who wears the fear on her face daily, I just covered up my fears with better outerwear. I feel like a cheat and liar.

I know that I need to go back into that room and hear more sad stories. I am so disappointed in myself for not facing my truths and for being too weak to overcome my own demons. I am at the bottom once again, and the time before today meant absolutely nothing. I can't say that I have nowhere else to go but up any longer, I cannot hope for those days to come. I need to live in this place of hopelessness and deal with the consequences once again. I wish that I could have just stayed in this place instead of dipping my toes into the pool of dreams. I never should have had dreams, for I do not have what it takes to make these dreams reality.

The tree gives some comfort. It is restful and peaceful. I don't want to leave the shade it is providing me, and I don't want to go where it is scary again. I am not able to find my way in this confusing world where things are not as they appear. I appear fine, and I am so far from fine. I pretended to be strong, I thought that if I saw myself that way the universe would grant me this gift. If I could hold my shoulders back and my head high that I would scare the big weight from existing on my shoulders. I thought if I was free from the mean words, the endless disappointment, and the years of living in fear, that I could be fine. I never anticipated lasting damages and side effects.

I can hear those words again, I feel their impact, and I am not free. I feel helpless again, scared again, and lost all over again. The pool of dreams and goals only set me up to fail and fall harder when I realized that it was mocking me. That stupid pool pretended to welcome me, it let me down to fall harder than ever before. This time I am going to be alone for I have lost all I ever loved.

I want to be comforted and cared for, I want someone to understand this mess I am in, and I know that my resources have run dry. I let most of them go voluntarily when I knew that I was fighting a battle of judgments that I would never win. I was fighting for myself and my sons, not my reputation. I didn't want them to all leave but they did.

I don't want to try and fix anything anymore. I have lost all of my fixing power, and I have only made more messes for myself and hurt those that I love when I try and fix. I am not a good fixer, and fixing was once my job. I wonder if other ladies in that hot room failed at their fixing jobs too. I wonder if they lost everything and everyone too. I keep thinking of the land of misfit toys from the Rudolph Christmas show that I used to love as a child. It would be so nice if there could be a land for all of us, even if I have to live in the misfit land. That room is maybe a part of that land, but we still have to go on with life where the "fits" live. I should welcome walking back in that room, but for some reason I do not. I cannot welcome the facing of the hurting again and the having to remember.

I have been under this tree for a long time. The shade is not covering me anymore and the hot sun is starting to make me uncomfortable. Something just fell on my head and it kind of hurt. I looked up through the branches of the tree and a squirrel is looking right down at me. That little jerk threw something at my head and it hit it. The stupid squirrel is smiling at me, he is laughing at me. I get up to brush myself off and I tossed a pebble at the squirrel. I missed by a mile, but he kicked something else at me and hit me in the leg. Now I am pissed and I picked up a twig and tossed it at the jerk again, this time I came close. He scampered down the tree and stood about ten feet away from me looking me straight in the eye. What do you want your little jerk? I yelled at the squirrel.

Now if someone sees me yelling at this pesky rodent I will look as crazy as I feel. This rodent runs up to me, then back to the tree, and back up to me again. This squirrel is smiling again and I think he is challenging me to his game. I grab a handful of leaves and toss it in the direction of the pest, and suddenly a

pile of leaves fall off the upper branch of the tree over my head. I have a head full of leaves. I look up and see another squirrel up in the tree smiling back at me as well. Now I had to laugh. The two of them have ganged up on me and are ready for battle. They think it is funny, and for a minute there so did I. I

Laughed for a minute again.

I waved good bye to my two new friends that made me get up and face the rest of this day. I smiled for a minute as I walked back towards the old house with the door that is a push and not a pull. I looked up at the door and this time it didn't look angry with me, not happy, but not angry. I stuck my tongue out to the door as I pushed the handle to enter the hot room. I was careful with my purse so there was no way the door could toss its contents on the floor again. I let the door slam as loud as it wanted, I didn't want it to think that it got the best of me again.

My stomach is still killing me, I think it is heartburn. I have never really had heartburn but I now see how it got its name. It hurts up high by the heart. I am struggling to sit still and listen to the speaker, her words are muffled and difficult for me to understand. My gut is just killing me. I went to get a cup of tea and hoped that it would help me calm my nerves. It didn't, it has only made it worse. The group has broken for a break and I know I need to try and meet some of these people. I walked up to the lady with the pink hat on, she was talking to another woman who was younger than I. She is doing the pretending to be fine thing too, I can see it in the way she is holding herself. The same way I do, we overcompensate to make sure that we don't look too wounded.

I asked if either one of them has anything for heartburn. The pink hat lady knew exactly what I needed and she took me inside the hot room again. She had a big bunch of pills and she told me that this one pill will help me. She told me how often she has problems with her gut because of stress. I feel bad for her, this is an awful belly ache to have all of the time.

The bell is ringing and the next speaker is going to begin. I like my spot in the back and I have no intention of changing seats. I think it is odd how even as

adults we take our assigned seats even when they are not assigned. Every single person goes right back to the same seat, no one ventures off for a different view or a nicer chair. There is a silent ownership for each chair without ever using nametags. We are all creatures of expectations, routine, and conformity. I find the dichotomy of this interesting. Some of us get good seats and some of us get bad ones, it is all in the luck of the draw. Yet, I could have walked in this room and gone right over to the comfy sofa on left and sat there, for whoever was sitting there before is not back. I could choose better, but I don't.

My belly is still on fire and I am praying for miracle medicine relief. I am trying very hard to pay attention to the speaker, but her words are muffled once they reach my brain. I have a brain that is full of cotton balls, and it is frustrating. I had cotton brain for years at home with my x-husband. I don't understand how this phenomenon happens. How can fear put cotton in someone's brain? I wish I had my computer so I could google this, it is just the kind of thing I love to know. I guess it is useless information, but it would be a good thing to know if someone ever had the cotton brain problem I would have the answer. This could be useful if you had an important job where the cotton brain could be catastrophic. Yup, I would have the answers.

A woman who is sitting three rows up and four chairs over looks like she has the cotton brain too. She is staring right at the speaker with pen and paper in hand looking very intrigued but not writing one thing down. I would go ask her if I didn't think that she would look at me like I was crazy, because for all I know I am the only one who suffers from cotton puff brain. I had been getting over thinking that I was totally crazy these last few months, but it comes right back at the strangest times. I also thought that I was cured from cotton brain and running out of air, and I had both of those things today.

The break time is here already and I didn't hear one word that speaker said. I

Don't want to have to discuss what was said during the break so I get ready to make my break for the mean door and go find my squirrel friends. I am actually looking forward to finding those two rodents, I want to play again.

I want to play. An hour ago I wanted to run and hide under my tree all day. Things can change so quickly I am thinking to myself as I am heading for the big tree and my friends. I need to remember this when I get in the scary place next time. I am going to try and think of my friends the squirrels and their goofy grins smiling at me.

I approached the tree and resumed my position under the tree. I was scanning the area and waiting for the little guys to come out and throw stuff at me again and a bluebird suddenly landed about 8 feet from me on a rock. This bright blue/black bird was staring straight at me. She was the most beautiful blue I have ever seen. I want a jacket that color, it is almost purple. She is looking at me right in the eye with a piercing stare. She is telling me something, but I don't speak bird. I couldn't look away even though she was making me uncomfortable. She had a grandmother like feel to her, a bluebird grandma is telling me something. I am going nuts.

She finally looked away and I could take a breath, I think I was holding my breath the entire time. She turned in a complete circle and fluffed her back feathers. She looked at me again and I swear she winked. I suddenly knew what she was telling me. It wasn't through words, it was more like a strong feeling about what I do next. It wasn't the voice in the back of my head that tells me not to eat so many Doritos, it was a thought that had audio. I am to get up and let myself feel how I feel, speak the truth, and be proud of who I am. I am to help others someday who are afraid of their husbands and feel like they are worthless and crazy.

I got up and hurried back into the hot room. I didn't even look at the door this time because I decided that the door is a jerk and I don't need to be frowned at when I am having a rough day. I take my place in the back behind the lady with the pink hat once again. This time I grab my notebook and pen and I listen. I stopped daydreaming and looking at others in the room and I paid attention. My stomach feels ok now, and I feel at home with a bunch of sisters that have had the same hurt as I have.



I just got back to the hotel and feel so much better. I have this strange buzz of energy, I feel like I could do anything in the entire world. I need to put this energy in a bottle and have carry it around with me so I can have a few nips when the scared worthless feeling comes back again. I don't want to think about feeling bad ever again, but I understand that it is part of growing and healing. I used to love to be numb, to not feel the good or the bad was a comfortable spot for me. I wouldn't get hit out of the blue with a truck of hurt coming out of nowhere unexpectedly when I was in the numb place. I would miss this fun feeling if I was numb, and I think I will continue to let myself feel the pain so I get this awesome buzz. I went over to the computer to check my email and saw a site that is about spirit animal guides. I decided to look up my new friends squirrel and bluebird and see if maybe they were some spirit messages. Here is what they said about the squirrel:

**The gathering power of Squirrel is a great gift.  
It teaches us balance within the circle of gathering and giving out.  
They remind us that in our quest for our goals, it  
is vital to make time for play and socializing.**

**Squirrel teaches us to conserve our energy for times of need.  
If your totem is Squirrel or Squirrel has recently entered your life, lighten  
your load of things that are unnecessary –  
Things that you have gathered in the past and may be cluttering your life –  
thoughts, worries, and stresses.**

**Squirrel is also the totem of action.  
Ask yourself are you too active, not active enough, afraid of enough, hung  
up on accumulating and collecting.  
Squirrel people tend to be a little erratic – trying to do many things at once.  
Take the time to stop and listen to your inner self – and don't forget to play**

The squirrel and I definitely have some similar characteristics, and I know that squirrel today was telling me to relax and stop worrying. There wasn't

anything to be afraid of, and it is time to stop being afraid. It is time to try and get some balance in my life. This is my responsibility and so is finding my own peace and happiness.

The bluebird totem said this:

**Bluebird is a reminder that you are born to happiness and fulfillment, but you can sometimes get so wrapped up in everyday things, that happiness seems rare.**

**Bluebird reminds you to take time to enjoy yourself.**

**Bluebird is associated with the throat chakra and creative expression.**

**Bluebird is symbolic of the need to work hard and play hard. Be careful of shouldering too much responsibility.**

**Bluebirds, and their totem people, are gentle and unaggressive. They do not push or bully, but they are very scrappy if threatened.**

**A Bluebird person should have their front door facing south, the door for awakening their inner child.**

I understand this one as well. I have just begun to believe again that we are all placed on this earth for a specific purpose and to be the person that god intended for us to be. I feel this again. It had been such a long time since I have felt this way or thought these thoughts that I feel whole.

I was not a joke when I dipped my feet into the pool of goals and dreams, I was doing what I was intended and I do not need to doubt this fact. I am so much stronger than I ever thought I was and I can endure the bad times. I love the buzz of the good feeling that has flushed my system with a flood of goodness.

I am lucky that I get to have a chance to feel again, I am lucky that I can live life as I should again. I am grateful for the squirrel, bluebird, god, and all the angels, the lady with the pink hat and tummy pills, and the nice ladies in the hot room today.

Surviving is a good thing.