

# Gint Aras

## *Another Covenant*

I hope readers will forgive me for asking their pardon before I have even started this confession. What I have to reveal has a good chance of incensing you, and if history is any guide, I should probably expect calls for my torture and execution. You might find it impossible to forgive me, but I do hope you'll spare me the water board. I'm not here to brag about anything...quite the opposite, actually. Various forces have conspired to put me through a tremendous ordeal this year, and I've already been punished for the few things that were my fault.

I accepted the truth only recently. Be assured that I have told no one, neither my wife nor any friend or colleague—you, my reader, will be the first to know (except, of course, for *Antique Children's* editors and cronies). I used to believe that my difficult secret was just evidence of some moral or psychological defect—perhaps megalomania or schizophrenia—and it used to fill me with shame. After all, who am I? A community college professor up to his ears in student loans and credit card bills. The college where I work is located across the street from the world's largest sewage treatment plant. How could someone in my position have any delusions of grandeur? Maybe changes to my diet would stop the flow of troubling thoughts, but no amount of absinthe, açai juice, Gerolsteiner or prunes ended the agitation. I had to face the truth, which I've accepted and now share with you bluntly: since January 20th of 2009, God has been talking to me. And for the past few months He has found it virtually impossible to shut up.

Please do not waste your time pointing out the obvious. Yes, I am conceited and insane. As I've already alluded, I used to believe conceit and insanity had jump-started my imagination to create these

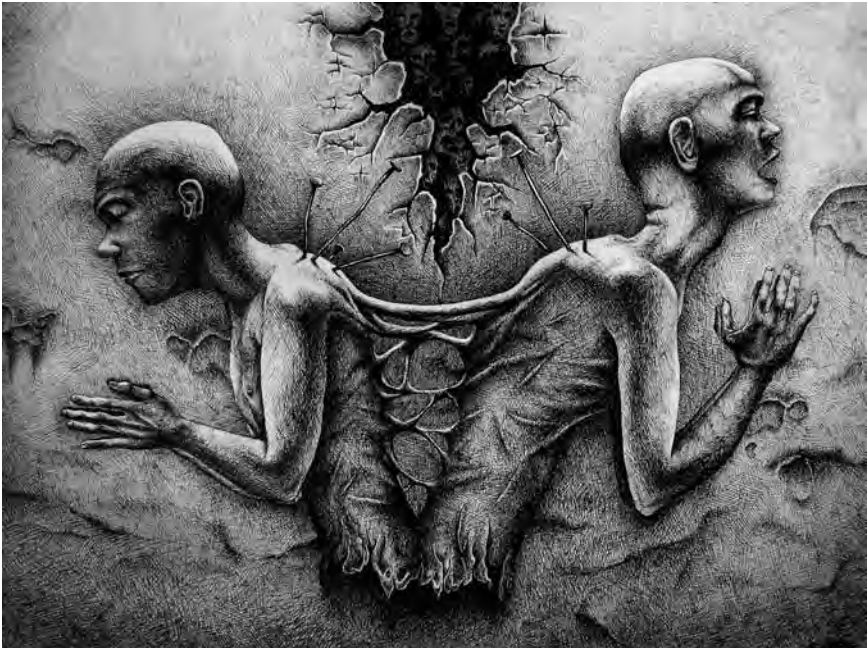
“messages from God”. But I now understand that, on the contrary, God actively seeks out the conceited and insane for conversation. Pore over history as I have and you'll find that, with rare exception, God's messengers are



either megalomaniacs, lunatics or imbeciles. Imagine the kick to my ego when God helped me understand that I fit all three categories, that one must be an imbecile first to become a megalomaniac second. And any idiot obsessed with his own importance is clearly insane. To my chagrin, I'm the perfect repository for God's messages, which keep coming even as I end this sentence.

I know you want to hear what God has to say. I'm anxious to share but must warn you that God's word is challenging and tedious, far more complex than any problem I faced in college. People don't understand how lonely it is at the top, what powerful existential questions arise when One understands everything but is understood by no one, and what effect this can have on One's personality. God is all-powerful. If He wished, He could create a Being Whose only purpose would be to understand God. This would, however, go against a series of God's requirements, including the rule that only God can understand God. By creating this Being, God would actually be guilty of cloning. He'd also transform from The One to The

Two, complicating the monotheistic tradition. I was unable to understand an equation meant to verify the next point, but God realized the new state of Two would actually collapse under its Own magnitude to become infinitely dense, not unlike a black hole, and so Its creation would neutralize God, yielding Something like divine suicide. It all sounds convoluted but adds up to a simple point: in order to exist, God must continue to be misunderstood.



This does not mean, however, that God must be lonely or bored. Much like the old widow who gets herself a bird and a cat just to watch the hunt, part of the rationale behind creating humans was to have some bloody entertainment, albeit with predictable outcomes, for God is deeply conservative. He did not really want us for company—for this He had angels and various other djinn. Unfortunately for God, not long after the annihilation of Sodom and Gomorrah—a job which put two angels in danger of sodomy—the angels decided to unionize. Their contract stipulated new conditions and also limited the amount of time God could spend talking to them. I can hear readers protesting, *You lie! God would never allow angels to unionize.* It's true that God is quite the Republican. He considered busting the union, either by destroying the angels and creating new, less demanding ones, or by closing Heaven down for a while, then reopening to hire recently arrived souls. But God knew these moves would affect productivity and encourage

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dissent. The new souls would need expensive training, and the only available teachers would be angels; the recently arrived souls would eventually demand their own union while legions of distressed angels joined ranks with Satan. So God cut Heaven's losses, signed the contract and did the angels one better, refusing to talk to them about anything besides the business of running Heaven. He then turned to humans for a place to dump his lengthy monologues.

Anyone who has ever had to listen will understand the angels' demands. God is an exhausting, overwhelming personality, difficult to amuse but very easy to anger. I've been listening to Him for months, but I'm still unable to decide if His anger is worse than His sense of humor; at times I can't tell if there is any difference between the two. Bad things happen when He gets angry. You happen to hand your debit card to an Aldi cashier who has a photographic memory and empties your account at the gift shop of a local church. Later, you go to the library to find that an ex-girlfriend has published a book titled *Dump the Chump and Marry a Billionaire*. God grew furious with me for failing to laugh at a joke, one so bad I don't want to repeat it. I was busy reading my ex-girlfriend's book when He said, *Not even Job could get a job in this economy*. I agreed, *Yes, Lord*, unaware that I should have been rolling on the floor. Minutes later I got a phone call from a proctologist's office confirming my appointment for 3:15 the next day. I said that there had been a terrible misunderstanding because I had made no appointment, but their records showed one made weeks prior. Because I had not cancelled in time, I had to choose between a late fee of thirty-five dollars or an examination that my insurance company would cover. This was some inverted form of prostitution that had me bending over just to keep thirty-five dollars. Unlike my published ex-girlfriend, I needed that money, and so I took down the proctologist's address and made sure to bring my insurance card.

As you might guess, God loves medical insurance companies. The reason is simple: the modern insurance company is a favorite instrument of smiting, far more efficient than an earthquake, hurricane or some megalomaniac with a military at his disposal. God's cronies often end up as collateral damage in natural disasters and wars that waste expensive resources, especially when American weapons are deployed or if off-shore drilling stations lay in the path of a tsunami. Medical insurance companies allow God to smite with more precision than a cruise missile, to pick exactly which people will be overcome by illness, then systematically refused treatment and left to die an agonizing death, all while exhausting their children's inheritance. God can and often does combine this technique with the wars of megalomaniacs, the disasters of nature or the incompetence of expensive physicians.

People smitten often wonder what they did to deserve it, especially when they've been pious all their lives. If you've found yourself dropped by your insurance after developing lymphoma, it could be because God took notice of your righteousness. When I had all sorts of questions for God about pain and suffering, He directed me to his favorite *Book of Job*. If you don't know the story, Job was an exemplary fellow, successful and obedient, but God smote him just to show Lucifer that His servant would take it without complaint. It's no different now...God has conspired with insurance companies to smite thousands of people who continue to praise Him, even to ask Him for help. In the Bible story, Job's ordeal eventually ends and he is rewarded with a massive prize of livestock...he also gets to live for one hundred and forty years, maintaining his libido and vitality for most of it. I asked God why he won't reward these thousands of devoted followers the way he rewarded Job. He responded with a talking point: *I've prepared them a place in Heaven*. What place? I've been able to gather that Heaven is some sort of multi-tiered business, quite possibly a pyramid or MLM, one that manufactures a product God won't reveal. The first thing smitten souls do in Heaven is join one of the constantly expanding and branching unions. God deflected all my questions about this, telling me how proud He is that Heaven doesn't waste a penny on health insurance for anyone, a convenient point when we consider that Heaven's inhabitants are already dead.

By now I'm sure people want me gassed and dumped off a cliff. I actually had material to write this essay six months ago, but kept quiet out of fear. I've seen God's followers in action, the protesters who hold full-color pictures of aborted fetuses at busy intersections, the madmen who crash planes into buildings, and the vigilantes who hunt children along the Mexican border. Some of God's followers shoot up military bases while others torture prisoners. A few molest young boys while their superiors cover the whole thing up. Am I afraid of these people? If you're one of them, I'm afraid you won't be able to forgive me, but not for revealing what God has shown me. I hope you'll forgive me for being similar to you, because I was also shocked to find out what God was really like, and this despite the evidence all around me. All we represent to Him is entertainment and a labor force...Earth prepares us for Heaven primarily by having us carry debt, an ability that is central to God's business, whatever it really is. Most of the teachings about God's concern for the weak, poor and diseased are nothing more than propaganda penned by writers God started talking to, men and women who'd write anything if it meant God would leave them alone. Once He starts talking and telling His jokes, then sets up appointments when you forget to laugh, you begin to fear the pathetic union job waiting for you in Heaven. Contrary to what you've heard, God is not the God of the common man, the proletariat or bourgeoisie, the Christian, Muslim or Jew. He's not