

## ***Birds Aren't Real***

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It's been 19 years since I was born, 7 years since I graduated elementary school, 4 years since I dropped out of highschool, 3 years since I witnessed all the birds fall out of the sky and 2 years since everyone but me forgot about it. Or at least no one mentions it anymore, for some reason when I bring it up people just smile at me with pity in their eyes. There is nothing I hate more than that look, I am not a conspiracy theorist. I'm not telling people that the government did 9/11 or that Taylor Swift and Mick Jagger are lizard people, I'm telling people exactly what happened. I am not insane. I spend most of my days wandering the streets of my home town looking up at the *birds* that sit on the telephone wires, they look and act just like they did before they fell, but I know something's different, it has to be.

I have tried on multiple occasions to try and talk to someone about this, the government, the police, anyone. I think people look at me and see a crazy high school drop out, I would probably see myself the same way if I were in their shoes, I just struggle to believe that no one else remembers what happened. I mean one or two birds would have been different, but hundreds that's not someone shooting at birds, that's something bigger, something planned and plotted. The worst part is, I have no theories as to why it happened, or what flies above my head now, because I know it's not a bird. I have been asked by my family

how I know, I once caught a *pigeon* and something behind the eyes was artificial, incorrect, and uncanny. I wanted to kill it, just to prove my point, but when I hit it with the rock nothing but blood came out. It was everything you would expect from a bird, I felt sick afterwards, I almost thought I was wrong. However I don't have school and my job is part time so I have plenty of time to walk and watch study, I proved myself right again very quickly. I have spent 3 years doing nothing but researching online and reading books all about birds. Yet, I have still found no proof of my theory, just my and a few others eye witness accounts.

I sit at work frying *chicken*, the only difference between the chicken here and the chickens in the store is that the chicken here was never actual chicken. It just said "poultry product" on the bag, same thing with the cheese "Dairy Product". It has to be a bad sign that legally the meat can't be called chicken and the cheese can't legally be called cheese. I have thought this since I got the job 5 years ago. It makes me feel bad for all the poor people who eat the *chicken*. They are eating over processed bullshit here and now at the grocery store who know what kind of meat that is, the chickens are gone, the turkeys are gone, fuck even the quail is gone. Not that I was ever the type to eat quail. I used to adore a roast chicken, with mashed potatoes and corn on the cob, a sunday night dinner special at my house, thanksgiving too, it was probably my favorite holiday before 3 years ago, now i can't bring myself to eat anything but the vegetables, even the pies leave a sour taste in my mouth. As i sit here making food for all the

poor poor people who order it I start to wonder to myself, do they know that its not chicken, that it was never chicken, that it was always something else, how to they just accept it if they do, or do they put it in to the back part of their brain ignoring that thought in order to enjoy the food. A self preservation technique so that they don't have to face the truth, that they are eating deep fried cancer with some ketchup on the side.

I am not insane, I am sitting on my bed looking at the wall, I am reliving that moment over and over again, did I miss something? Did it even happen? Like any **sane** person I always allow myself to have doubts, I mean who wouldn't second guess themselves sometimes, the only other people who believe me are nuts. People who believe birds never existed, or that they fell out of the sky for the government to change their batteries. How stupid can someone be? You just need to catch a bird to know that there are no batteries in them and I highly doubt the government can pull off something this elaborate without having the word get out. There is always a leak, always. I stare at my blank wall, it was once covered in posters but I tore them down, I don't have the time to let anything else consume my thoughts. Movies, music, plays, tv shows, friends, these are all pre 3 years ago, things I can no longer enjoy in good conscience. It concerns my mother something horrible but I rarely speak with her, family time is a pre 3 years ago thing as well.

It's dark out now, I think around 2am. I can't be sure though. I threw away my phone and watch last week, too many distractions. I can't let my greed and need for technology get in the way of finding the truth, it wouldn't be fair, I am the one person who can help everyone, the one person who knows the truth in a world full of lies. I get up to leave the house, as I walk down the stairs I see my mother and father are still awake watching tv, they see me as I walk past.

“Do you have your phone with you?” Mother asks concern in her voice.

“No, I threw it away, it became a distraction from the truth, another tool to help the lies.”

I leave before she responds, I don't care to hear about how I need to talk to someone, I am not unwell, I am not insane. I am perfectly healthy, perfectly there and perfectly fine. They simply don't understand what I saw, they choose to ignore it the same way people choose to ignore the fact that their cheese is not always cheese, to protect themselves. I do not need protection. As I wander the street in search of an owl, a *bird* I've seen once since 3 years ago, a bird I used to see all the time when I walked in the early hours of the morning, I notice a van. I had been walking for hours now, though I barely noticed any time pass, the sun is beginning to rise. At first I thought nothing of the van, people have work, people drive vans. As I turn corner after corner the van always appears in my peripheral, they have found me.

I walk into an alley hoping to not cause any suspicion, I do not want to go where they

will take me, I do not want things to change, I am not insane, I am not wrong. I stood in the alleyway for a while

trying to listen for the van but I couldn't hear it over the *birds* singing in the early morning. I wished whatever they were, whatever controlled them would make them shut up. I used to love bird songs, I'd try to learn them but now the song is artificial, unreal, migraine inducing. How could they do this to something that once had so much beauty, it's not right, the people online agree with me. I stand in the alleyway for a few more minutes waiting to be sure the coast is clear before heading in the same direction as before, I need to get to work, today I quit. I have wanted to quit since I witnessed what I witnessed but I wanted to save money first. Now I realize money has no point if I am contributing to the lies. When I got to work, the van was there, they found me.

It's a short ride to the hospital, I try to escape once we arrive but I suppose they are used to that, I don't want to be in here. They take my name, I don't tell them but they already know they ask me questions about how old I am, if I know why I am here. I tell them that I of course know why I am here. For doctors they sure are daft, you don't end up kidnapped to the hospital without knowing why, any sane person would know, it's the insane and unwell they need to ask that question too. They all look at me with sympathy and pity, the same way mother does when I speak to her, the same way father did before he lost hope. They don't believe me. They ask me to elaborate on why I am here so I tell them.

“It's been 19 years since I was born, 4 years since I dropped out of highschool and 3 years since all the birds fell out of the sky and someone replaced them. I am not insane.”