



The Weekly Man

Episode 4: Wednesday – Jax

Ratlas. That was its name, the lowest and the highest in its host of forms and meanings. It spoke from wherever it was and Jax listened. The specific words were incomprehensible, possibly even be labeled babble by some, but not to Jax. There was meaning for him in the rhythm of sounds, like a cacophony of disjoint music swinging and swaying through his mind, working its way into his body and soul. There were messages in the disarray of sound, messages of hope and despair—whatever was on Ratlas’ mind today. Each day. Day after day. “All will flush away,” it said.

Beautiful.

“I am the message on your answering machine that burns through the recording time before the meaning is clear.” This was the message he deciphered in the babble of sound.

Wonderful.

“You are my portal into the ears and eyes of humanity.”

Yes...I am.

“You must get my word out before it’s too late. You are the only one who can hear me, the only one who can save my message so that I can save you and the rest of the world.”

I’m going to be saved. We’re all going to be saved.

“You are my prophet.”

I am.

“You are hungry now. Go and eat. Think about my words. Carry my message to all those who are ready to listen. You know what you have to do. Eat now. Relax. And then to work.”

Eat. Relax. Work.

Jax rose slowly from his swivel chair, moving with the fluid certainty of a man with a purpose, a man with a message to spread and a world to save. His apartment was large but the walls were bare and the furniture sparse, a carryover from his childhood. He hadn’t come to the city to live life, he’d come to save life.

He couldn't remember the first time he'd contacted Ratlas. Or was it Ratlas who'd contacted him? It didn't matter. He was the conduit between the message and the world and he wasn't about to fail in his calling. He took a frozen turkey dinner from the freezer, turned on the oven and put the dinner in before the oven had a chance to pre-heat. While the dinner was cooking, he undressed and went into the washroom for his daily healing shower.

He needed the healing. So much of his life was a mystery to him. The context of his life, the orderliness of it. He often wondered about the way he lived. He knew that it wasn't like others, not that he knew much of others and how they lived. He knew these things through the internet, through video sites, his readings, the news sites, the blogs and websites. One thing he was sure of was that the world was a mess, that all of humanity was coming undone and needed to be saved. And he'd known all his life that he would play an important role in saving humanity from itself. It was what he was born for. It was why Ratlas wanted him to carry the message.

He would eat, relax and work.

We're all going to be saved.

As usual, the comments box on his blog, *The Word In Its Forms and Meanings*, was empty. He knew people were reading it. Ratlas had told him so. But they never reacted to his posts, not once, ever. Maybe Ratlas' message was so powerful that his readers were cowed by his words and didn't know how to respond. This is what he told himself and he believed it. He was the one spreading Ratlas' word, saving humanity, making the world a better place to live and it was time to spread today's message. He put his fingers on the keyboard, closed his eyes, blanked out his mind and, as he liked to put it, *blogged from the soul*.

DID YOU USE A PLASTIC BAG TODAY AND IF YOU DID SHAME ON YOU FOR USING A PLASTIC BAG IN A WORLD WHERE PLASTIC IS DESPOILING THE LAND THE AIR AND THE WATER IF FACT GARGANTUAN TRACTS OF OCEAN WATER ARE SO POLLUTED WITH PLASTIC THAT IT SPREADS FROM THE SURFACE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN WTH PLASTIC SO THICK THAT IT CLOGS THE GILLS OF FISH BLOCKS SUNLIGHT TO THE LIFE THAT ONCE LIVED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA AND IS DYING A SLOW DEATH IN THE ABSENCE OF THE LIFE-GIVING SUN AS GARGANTUAN MOUNTAINS OF USED PLASTIC PRODUCTS CONTINUE TO PILE UP OUTSIDE THE CITIES OF THE WORLD WHERE THEY POISON THE HINTERLANDS ONCE RICH IN IDYLIC STREAMS TEEMING WITH TROUT AND SALMON BUT NOW SURROUNDED AND CHOCKED BY LANDFILLS BURSTING WITH PLASTIC DISINTEGRATING INTO ITS CHEMICAL MAKEUP AND THE CHEMICALS LEECHING INTO THE GROUND AND THE GROUNDWATER AND SPREADING INTO MAJOR WATERWAYS AND LAKES AND EVENTUALLY INTO THE SEAS AND THE OCEANS WHERE THEY CHANGE THE CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF THE WATER WHICH EVAPORATES INTO THE AIR AND CHANGES THE CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF THE AIR THAT WE BREATHE AND EVENTUALLY CHANGES OUR VERY OWN CHEMICAL COMPOSITION AND IT'S NO WONDER THAT CONDITIONS LIKE AUTISM AND ADD PLAGUE OUR OFFSPRING WITH CHEMICAL COMPOSITIONS CHANGING OUR VERY MOLECULAR STRUCTURE AND TURNING US INTO THE CHILDREN OF TOMORROW THE BROKEN DOWN GENETICALLY DISINHERITED MUTANTS WE'RE EVOVLVING INTO UNLESS WE STOP USING PLASTIC!

WE NEED TO STOP USING PLASTIC AND IF YOU USED A PLASTIC BAG TODAY THEN SHAME ON YOU AND LET'S HOPE YOU CAN DO BETTER TOMORROW AND IT SENDS THIS MESSAGE OUT TO YOU FROM THE LOWEST AND THE HIGHEST IN ITS HOST OF FORMS AND MEANINGS.

STOP PLASTIC!!!!!!!

He loved posting all caps. So appropriate for spreading Ratlas' word. It was the face force and power, something that would strike the eyes of his readers and bleed into their essence. He imagined the looks of horror, the outrage, the fear, the disgust and, in those rare moments when Ratlas offered hope, the relief and the wonder.

Who could comment from that elevated plane of sudden realization?

He opened his email and there it was, a response from the online learning guy.

Dear Mr. McDonald,

Your business offer sounds intriguing, though I'm not sure if online learning is the right approach to putting out a religious message. But it would certainly be a first. Perhaps if you could give me more specific details we could work something out.

You can find my rates and production information on my website at expertlife.com. If you haven't had a chance to check them out, perhaps you could do so before we discuss things in more detail. Contact through email is my preferred platform.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Jackson Gabriel

"First thing I have to get straightened out, Mr. Gabriel...Ratlas isn't a god. This has nothing to do with religion no matter how mystical Ratlas is." Jax often talked out loud, as though someone or something could hear him. Maybe Ratlas.

But he's wrong about the approach, he thought. What it offers is lessons on how to live that we might survive.

He'd already checked out the pricing and production process on his website.

How does he think I found out about him?

But Jax was excited. He needed to carry the message to the world and no matter how successful his blog was, an educational site produced by an expert in education would be perfect. He could advertise it on his blog and create links from the learning site to important pages on his blog. It was the best of all possible worlds and Jax was beginning to feel a little exuberant.

He would truly be the portal into the ears and eyes of humanity. He settled into the long task of describing what exactly he wanted from Jackson Gabriel.