

When All Goes Quiet: Visions, Episodes, and Revelations

Augustinus F. Lodewyks

Janet Lodewyks, Illustrator

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“When all goes quiet, I know that Heaven is trying to show me its glory,” Augustinus F. Lodewyks writes in *When All Goes Quiet: Visions, Episodes, and Revelations*. In autobiographical vignettes, he vividly expresses his encounters with the supernatural, particularly with Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and angels, who tend to appear to him in times of crisis and during events of ritual significance like weddings, funerals, and religious pilgrimages.

Lodewyks, a chiropractor, is one of seven sons born to Dutch immigrants to Winnipeg. He attributes his lifelong love of water and his mystical visions to his in utero voyage across the Atlantic. A thrifty Catholic upbringing ingrained the importance of helping others and relying on God. At times of turmoil, background noise often cedes to silence as he welcomes a divine revelation. Sometimes he converses with Mary or St. John; other times he sees angels rescuing family members. A pilgrimage to European holy sites was particularly rich with visions.

The book is composed of stories, each a few pages long, in roughly chronological order so that together they provide a thorough life story. Whatever the subject, whether a child's health problems or a friend's wedding, the focus is always on the otherworldly significance of everyday events. Lodewyks introduces each vision with the helpful signal phrase “all went quiet,” appropriate shorthand for a meditative interlude amid the bustle of normal life. Even in cases where there is a distance of decades, his memory is sharp and he gives detailed yet matter-of-fact descriptions that draw on traditional images of a bearded Jesus, a beatific Mary, and angels as flying babies. Unfortunately, the frequent black-and-white drawings, contributed by the author's niece, aren't of professional quality, which detracts from rather than enhances the text.

Some familiarity with the Bible will aid in understanding the context of the author's visions and in fostering sympathy with his mystical experiences. Lest skeptics write off his visions as the results of a faulty nervous system, Lodewyks mentions that he recently had a brain scan because of persistent headaches and all was found to be normal. Some will still object to the overt proselytizing, especially in the book's last quarter. As well as recounting his own encounters, the author clearly wishes to assure readers that they, too, can experience the divine for themselves. To that end, he includes recommended prayers and urges churchgoing and scripture reading.

This religious memoir should interest those who are curious about how spiritual experience can infiltrate everyday life. Fans of Barbara Ehrenreich's *Living with a Wild God* might find in this book a useful illustration of the confessional perspective—in contrast to Ehrenreich's more detached scientific study.

REBECCA FOSTER (September 25, 2015)

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