

Hello, Everyone, and welcome back to an old guy who knows shit. Stluhdog here with another Story from Life. This is

Episode 13

Watchers

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Well, I have to tell you my UFO story. Actually, there are several, but it all adds up to one story. I was never particularly interested in the sky as a child. My entire childhood the only time I remember my parents pointing out something to me in the sky – aside from this or that beautiful sunset, or a particularly full moon – which my mother, god bless her, did appreciate, but only in that aesthetic way a person of beauty appreciates the wonders of nature – so the first time my folks said look at the sky was when I was in first grade, in Lincoln, Nebraska. My dad woke us all up and made us go out in the parking lot to see the northern lights, which are rarely visible that far south. I remember being somewhat impressed, but not that impressed. I think I was too sleepy to really even see what was happening. They looked like clouds. Yeah, big deal, clouds move, too. . . and they have colors, so what? Can I go back to bed now? But by the time I was in college, I had opened my eyes up to see what was around me. My radar was up all the time for anything out of the ordinary.

The sky grabbed my attention the summer after my freshman year in college. I rode a motorcycle double with my best friend from St. Charles, MO, to Boise, ID. It took us six days. And we had no money for motels, so we camped. And as you can probably imagine, we were kids, we had never taken a motorcycle trip before, we had been boy scouts but didn't have our own camping gear; we, in fact, didn't have a clue. We had no tents, and were on the ground between two sheets of plastic every night. The clear nights, of which there were I think three, we just lay on our backs and looked up at the sky and talked until we went to sleep. And lying there, just watching the sky for hours, we learned a lot. First of all, if you watch the sky long enough, you will see something interesting. There's really a lot going on up there, and not just airplanes and stars. In the still category, there are planets, star clusters, galaxies, and fascinating whorls in the rings of the Milky Way. In the moving category there are jets, shooting stars, a gazillion satellites. And there are things that move in a way that is not predictable, making them unidentifiable.

Now just how many of this latter category we saw those three nights I don't think I could estimate. It was a lot. It was several each night. Maybe they were just active that week. Maybe there was a galactic party on our moon. Who knows. So the first night, we're talking, we're watching:

Hey, look there's a shooting star. Dja see that?

Yeah. . . Look, there's a satellite.

Where?

There.

Oh, yeah. . . .
There's another satellite.
Yeah, I see it. . . .
Did that satellite just make a right hand turn?
Did you see that? I thought I was imagining it. . .
Shit. It just turned again. Dja see that?
Yeah! . . .

So that was basically it. They were all the same, those nights on the road. They looked just like satellites. But they didn't go in a straight line. Some made 90 degree turns. Some zig-zagged. They never circled or spiraled, or even really made turns with any kind of curve. They would be going this way . . . and then they'd be going THAT way.

It is interesting to note that since that night, I have seen many more of these, but never like we saw on that trip. I have seen probably as many since as we saw those three nights. But they have evolved somewhat. We have family in rural South Carolina, and I've seen them there a few times. Never on the coast, always inland. And we have spent entire weeks at the beach, where I took my binoculars and sat on the beach and watched the stars for hours. Over the water is the only place I have watched the sky for hours and never seen an unidentifiable flying object. But inland. Inland, only a couple of years ago, we were there on a particularly clear night, and I went out to the yard to scan the sky with my binoculars. I like to use binoculars because they increase the number of stars you can see tenfold, and things like nebulae and star clusters are magnificent through binoculars (if you've never looked at Orion's sword through binoculars, try it the next clear winter night – it is “the Great Nebulae in Orion” and it is spectacular). But they also don't narrow your scope of vision nearly like a telescope does. You can only look at one thing at a time with a telescope. Binoculars let you scan the sky.

So this particular night, I'm scanning the sky, and I pick up something that I at first think is a faint, distant satellite. But as I look at it more closely, I see that it is not a point of light, but a corona of light. As if there is a bright light behind a disk. And I can't see it with my naked eye at all. But I track it with my binoculars, and it doesn't waver, doesn't turn, it just steadily tracks its way up the sky. And when it gets to a point near the zenith, it passes into one of the dense clusters of the Milky Way and I lose it in the cloud of stars for a moment. And then I see it move into a spot not quite as dense. And then it stopped. Just stopped dead. And sat there a moment. And then I realized that it was getting smaller. It got smaller and smaller until it disappeared.

So then I resume scanning the sky, and as I'm passing through one of the more open spots half way down to the horizon, I come upon two of these exact same things. Coronas of light, not visible to the naked eye. They're separating from a single point, going in opposite directions. I had to choose one to follow, so I

picked the one going up, towards the zenith. Well, it slides up and up and up and darned if it doesn't go into the exact same dense cluster of the Milky Way the first one went into. It stops in exactly the same place. And, yes, then it got smaller and smaller until it disappeared.

But those are just teasers. I am among the fortunate – at least I consider it fortunate; there are those who would disagree with me – I am among the fortunate ones who have had a real, bona fide UFO encounter. No, none of us had a camera, so there is no record of this, but there were eight witnesses – at least to its beginning. It went on for hours, all night in fact, and all of us couldn't stay awake for it. But I did. My cousin and I did.

It was my cousin's birthday, July 1974. I was working in Galesburg, IL, second shift in a factory, so we couldn't leave until midnight, and it was a two hour drive, so we're arriving at roughly 2:00 am. I spent that summer with a college sweetheart. We were house-sitting, playing like grownups in this nice suburban middle class three bedroom house. She was very practically minded, organized, and we were madly in love at that time. Oddly enough, we got pulled over on our way. I have been pulled over by Iowa cops ten times as often as I have been pulled by Missouri cops, and I live in Missouri. He checked my thermos, decided I was sober, gave me a warning (I was doing 6mph over the speed limit) and let us go. After what seemed like hours of winding through narrow, two-lane roads – it was an overcast night, and dark as pitch – we finally found the gravel road that led to their new place – a house rental on a farm WAY out in the middle of nowhere. As we pulled into the driveway, the whole party is standing in it, looking up at the sky. It was my cousin and his wife, then two good friends of his and their wives/girlfriends. And they're all in the driveway excited as hell and all talking at once: Oh, MAN, you're not going to BELIEVE what's happening!/There's a light in the sky/It's coming and going and coming back – all of this spoken at once, so I finally just yelled ONE AT A TIME. PLEASE. And my cousin tells me his friend's brother – whom we did not know, so then we do introductions all around – so he and his girlfriend went out in the woods to fool around and she got all paranoid that somebody was watching them and then she saw this light right over them and as soon as she said What's that? It skittered up into the clouds and then they ran back to the house and told us about it and nobody believed them but then we came out and there it was over that meadow over there and as soon as we said Look there it is! It skittered up into the clouds – And along about this time I look up, and to my surprise there was a bright light directly over us. I'd say about ten times as big as Venus on a good night. But if you recall, it was overcast and pitch dark, so there was no missing it. I didn't say anything, because I wanted to be sure, so I listened a minute longer as they continued – how they went back in the house and waited about ten minutes and then went out again and there it fucking WAS only this time it was over there – No, Rick, that time it was over by that tree – oh yeah, it was over that field the next time – And I look up again, and the light is still there – and about this time my cousin's wife says Hey, have you guys been smoking or drinking? And my

cousin says Are you guys straight? You must be, you just drove. No pot and no beers for these guys until they see it so we KNOW we're not hallucinating – and I look up a third time, it's still there, and three being the charm, I looked back at my cousin and said That wouldn't be your UFO would it? And there was the first moment of silence as everybody looked up. And then everybody says at once: THAT'S IT! And it proceeded to skitter up into the clouds. They had called it skittering, and it was a good word for what it did, because it kind of vibrated as it accelerated up.

Once again, everybody's talking at once, the gist of which was that we were going to go back into the house and come back out in ten minutes and it would be somewhere else and as soon as we recognized it, it would do what it just did. And we were not to have any beer or pot until we'd seen it at least three times.

We were, indeed, straight. I don't mix intoxicants and driving. We all saw it that time. We all saw it three more times before my girlfriend and I joined the party with beers and a doobie, so I can say that we saw it four times straight as arrows, and each of those four times it reacted to be being seen by hiding in the clouds. But by the time we had seen it three more times, it was like four in the morning, and the girls were fading, and in spite of the excitement the party dwindled to my cousin and I and his friend Bill. And for that last hour or two before dawn it got a little bizarre, perhaps. Each viewing we would have ten minutes to think of a new way to try to interact with it. We experimented with what would make it move. We determined that we could talk about it, as long as we didn't look at it. It seemed to take its signal from our body language. So then we got more elaborate. We pretended to ignore it while we made big signs inviting them down. But then as soon as we showed it the signs, it hid in the clouds. We made a big bonfire. No matter what we did, as soon as we physically acknowledged it in any way, it skittered up into the clouds. Finally, in the very last moments of darkness, Bill gave out, and my cousin and I just sat as the fire burned down and the day dawned. We surreptitiously watched it and talked about it. We decided that it must be some kind of drone. That we had had actual primitive communication with it, but its response was too robotic, too predictable, to have actual sentient beings actually on board. As dawn approached, the clouds broke up, and as the sky started to glow in the east, it was pretty clear. The object was pretty close to us, but even as the sky lightened, it still just looked like a ball of light. And then the sun's rays hit it, and we could see it very clearly. Oh for a camera when you need one, but those days unlike today pictures were expensive and nobody had a camera. The best I can do is my own very primitive drawing of what it looked like. And here I'll have to ask my listeners to go anoldguywhoknowsshit.com and click the "ufo" link. No it wasn't drawn by a toddler, so just keep yer drawing insults to yerself, somewhere between my brain and my pencil there's a missing link, OK? Point is, you get the idea - this pic is shorter and stubbier, so you can see how it was shaped more clearly, but it was a hollowed out cigar shape, open at one end, with a solid, longer center, a bright white light on its base and small red and green lights opposite each other on its central what looked like antenna.

It rotated constantly but irregularly. It would rotate end over end. Stop. Then just spin. Stop. Then make a figure eight. Stop. Then rotate on an axis ninety degrees opposite the spin. Stop. Now we were pretty much spell bound. Waiting up all night had, in fact, paid off big time. Before the sun broke the horizon for us, it shone on another, identical object, some distance away. We could only see a small silhouette, but it was clearly the same cigar shape, solid at one end, open at the other, and rotated irregularly in exactly the same way. We watched it for a moment, then when we looked back for the first it was gone. We looked back at the second, and it was gone.

So this was a coupla years after the Glass Shard Dream incident, but it was still very fresh. I had just begun working with the first of the enlightened movement teachers. Things were starting to come together for me, in terms of a cosmos taking shape. But up until this time, all of my experiences I would call earth-bound. And while the aberrant satellites were clearly unidentifiable, they weren't 50 ft away and interacting with us. And yes, primitive as it was, it was interaction. If we did not let it see that we saw it, it did not move. And as soon as we acknowledged it in any way, it hid in the clouds. We totally interacted with it, but on a very, very primitive level. But, like the levitation thing, does that really matter? That our interaction was primitive? It was clearly a solid metallic thing created by some very high level technology. It was clearly propelled by technology that we do not possess. It was programmed to hide if its presence was acknowledged. It was a real thing. Not wanting to deduce too much from this, I have ever after referred to it and other unidentified flying objects as my Watchers. That much, I believe, can be deduced: it was watching. Why us? Why then? Why at all?

Why, indeed. Unanswerable as that question is, what is undeniable is that whatever it was, it absolutely existed, in utter defiance of every law of physics I ever heard of. So, it was kinda like the secret knowledge that would come later of a disciplined army of rats under the streets of New York. Only this secret knowledge was that somebody is definitely watching. Somebody. Is watching.

This is an old guy who knows shit signing off till next time.