



Mens Temporum . UK

The Conception of Lucine

"When I was young my mother told me that I was conceived during an eclipse of the moon. She said that when there's an eclipse the moon's children, the moonbeams, arrive as sunbeams on the other side of the world instead and that's why the man in the moon leaves his home for a while to search for his lost children. Therefore she named me Lucine, because I was her sunbeam stolen from the man in the moon while he was on the other side of the world."

In the first full draft of my novel finished towards the end of 2011 Lucine, the girl from the future, told Graham, the engineer in the time warping building, the above story about herself. It was the basic thought that she was conceived during an eclipse of the moon on the other side of the world that had prompted me to write this embellished children's tale, one that I had never actually encountered elsewhere before. As a result it reads like an old folk tale even though it isn't so far as I know. That basic thought was one of those niggling ideas that I felt compelled to include in the novel even though it didn't seem to contribute to the main story in any way. Having found out about the real Yvonne I can now perceive how I may myself have conceived Lucine.

Events in the real Yvonne's life in 2011 had clearly cast a shadow over it, effectively eclipsing it. In 2012 this had changed when Yvonne found a new partner and eventually married him. In the opening chapter of my novel from 2011 Lucine had equally felt the need for a change in her life and coincidentally had then been abducted by the time warping building to meet Graham, whom she eventually married. The idea that Lucine's story reflected the real Yvonne's experiences led me to consider all the events in 2015 collectively as follows.

In May 2015 the real Yvonne posted on the Internet an article about their "bubble of complacency" which had been threatened by events in 2011 and it was reading this first part of the article in 2019 that had strengthened my belief that I had found the right Yvonne. However, later the article mentioned the idea of the good reality and the bad reality, two versions of reality running in parallel, taken from the works of the writer Dona Elena. The idea was that a person could slide between the reality where good things happen and that where bad ones do. The fact that Yvonne had written the article at that time obviously greatly increased the chance of me reading it in the future and discovering what I did about them. Maybe it was just a coincidence that early in September 2015 a reader of my novel suggested that I should revise its first chapter, which I did during that month.

In the original chapter I fleetingly mentioned Lucine looking at herself in her bathroom mirror, but in the rewritten version I substantially expanded on this. She talked to her reflection as though it were a real person, even calling it "Moonlight" to reflect her own name, which means "moon" or "light" in different languages. At some points she almost seemed to flirt with the image, apparently reflecting the real Yvonne's possible proclivities. Eventually she volunteered to change places with the image based on the idea that they were able to lead separate existences when not looking at each other. To my mind this followed the idea of the parallel good and bad realities in Yvonne's article, which I wouldn't read until some four years later. In a sense Lucine had chosen to go through the looking glass into what might be a better reality although she wasn't sure which was actually which. This provided a consistent lead-in to her encounter with Graham immediately after. Together they discovered their own bubble of complacency in the form of another version of the time warping building that was lost in time, so entirely disconnected from any reality, and later in the novel they spent several weeks there building their relationship before returning to their own times.

I finished writing the revised chapter towards the end of September and by coincidence there was a lunar eclipse on the 28th of that month. I am not a regular follower of astronomical events and only found out about it from a television report the day before, but that gave me time to prepare to take photographs of it as I did. Although lunar eclipses are quite common this was a more uncommon type, being a total eclipse of the moon

while at its nearest to the Earth, a so-called supermoon because it looks larger than usual. If I didn't know about the eclipse much earlier in the month and I revised the chapter then on someone else's prompting it seems unlikely that I contrived this fortuitous timing of events myself.

With that additional fact about the eclipse I can now reconsider Lucine's original statement given at the start of this item. Firstly, a fictional character is conceived but never born, so her reference only to her conception is consistent with her fictional status. Secondly, her reference to an eclipse is consistent with the real event directly after I had revised the nature of her character, so had conceived her in a different light. Lastly, her reference to the other side of the world might not refer to the Earth but rather to her world within my mind or rather my entire psyche, the other side then being that part beyond the temporal boundary between my present and future thoughts, the present ones being evident in the full light of consciousness while the future ones are always eclipsed by the shadows within the unconscious. In a draft chapter for inclusion in a future novel I had developed the idea that Lucine in particular had the feeling that their lives were being manipulated by an outside influence that she called "the professor", that being the traditional title given to the puppeteer in a Punch and Judy show. Hence it is reasonable to view her statement about her conception as being a metafictional reference to my activities as the writer rather than events in her fictional world.

While this perception of the way that I developed Lucine's character may seem contrived it is no more contrived than the fiction to which it relates and if instead one were to view the events in their strictly chronological order then the first hurdle to overcome in understanding them would be the one that has haunted me from the outset. How and why did I write that novel if not to make myself aware of the peculiar phenomenon that apparently made it possible? Until I became aware of it I was entirely mystified.
