

Adele's only lifeline had been her father - an all-knowing, transcendent being with the aura of Buddha, a belly laugh, and presence that would light up the room. He had a charisma that was beyond his physical presence - piercing eyes and a warm, enveloping smile. People wanted to be him, be around him, listen to his magic wisdom -and have their lives altered forever – and all that just from first meeting him.

Adele knew that this energy and life force existed within her. But she didn't quite know how to find it. She only existed through him. He was her energy, her protector, and her savior.

She was her father's daughter, after all. That said, she couldn't help that she had this innocence and naïveté that was a little extreme, even by the standards of the small-country Midwestern American town she lived in. Adele desperately wanted to break out of the shell she was in. The shell of her body, her small town, and the constraining, restrictive views of her mother... Above all, she wanted to be free of the mind-altering religious cult that sought to control her every move. She knew she had to be free... She just had to escape somehow.

But now - like quicksand underneath her feet - the hope of escaping was quickly disappearing. Her all-powerful spiritual father was close to his deathbed, with only weeks to live. She was losing all that she thought was life - she was losing her very soul. The soul that she hadn't yet discovered.

Adele had to escape and need some kind of map... some kernels of wisdom. How would she find her way out of here?

She remembered him telling her: 'Adele, you are smart, and you have all the tools and principles I've taught you in life. You already know what you need to know. You are more powerful than you know. I trust you can go into any situation and your principles will guide you to do the right thing, and it will guide your life. Even if I'm not there.'

'Do not be afraid. The only thing you have to fear is fear itself. If you cannot solve a problem – it's only because you haven't lived large enough, you haven't thought large enough. Put yourself out there -and you will always find your way.'

These were his last words. He passed in the middle of that night.

For many nights afterward, Adele would wake in terror. All of a sudden she had become an adult. She had the responsibilities of an adult - but was really still a child. Her father was no longer there to lead her and guide her in the world that she had always been shielded from.

After his death she felt like she was in a fog - unable to see anything around her. Nothing had meaning. Nothing had color. Everything that people said sounded trite and stupid. She couldn't be bothered with every-day, small-minded conversation. Her father was right. She needed to find something bigger. Much bigger.

Her curiosity was beyond insatiable. It meant her very survival. She just needed to not be afraid. She desperately craved everything in life that she was shielded from. She had to bite the apple of good and evil. Otherwise she couldn't imagine living at all. This world was not enough.