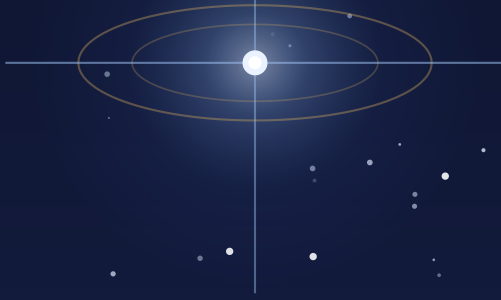


THE ON — ING SERIES

On Arriving



Jamison Johnson

June 2026



To Mom

First and foremost, because people always dedicate something to mom and also because I certainly love mine. She's one of the strongest women I know. I wouldn't be here without you, and I wouldn't have found my God without your prayers. I will forever thank you for having faith in God's plan. You gave me enough time to grow, long after I left home. For that, I will be forever indebted to you. Love you mom.



*Left for whoever finds it,
and faces the same direction.*

On Arriving

a resonance, traced backward

No one can name the hour a life begins. Conception is not a struck bell with a single clean note; it is a span of days, a soft window through which a being slips into the world. Perhaps that imprecision is the point. There was never a clock to match against the sky — only a season, and the question of what that season was doing while it made a person.

What it was doing was learning to look outward.

In the spring of 1983, a small satellite wheeled above the Earth in the cold, watching the heavens in a light no eye can see. It was the first machine to survey the sky in infrared, and among the things it found was a faint ring of dust circling a star called Vega — the brightest blue lantern of the northern summer. Not a planet, not yet. The raw stone and ice from which worlds are quietly assembled. For the first time, there was reason to believe other suns kept gardens of their own.¹

Soon after, a storyteller who loved the sky would choose that same star as the place from which a message arrived across the dark — proof of company, an invitation to listen. The real Vega and the imagined one were waking into human attention in the very seasons a certain life was being made. The dust was being seen as the person was being formed.²

I've considered that the timing means something — and then, more often than not, set the thought back down where I found it, the way you pocket a stone on a walk and leave it on the sill by the door. Let the finder be careful here. A mind casts a net of meaning over a generous, accidental universe and is rarely surprised to haul something up. There is a difference between a pattern found and a pattern laid down, and no proof is offered for the second. The cosmos did not pause to arrange a star and a first step into the void as a gift for one small arrival. That is not the claim.



But my philosophy would tell me that intent is real, even when it belongs to a person and not the sky. We are the part of the universe that asks what it is for. If one life leaned, always, toward the unseen thing just past the edge of the known, it costs nothing — and gives something — to notice it began in the season we first glimpsed the makings of other worlds. No one need be sent to feel summoned. The summons can be the work of attention itself, turned back across the years to say: this. This is the direction always faced.

Vega is twenty-five light-years away.³ The light that one life was born under had left that star a quarter-century before the first breath. I would imagine every arrival has a star like it, for anyone willing to trace the light back. A person can rest quite happily inside that fact — tuned, by nothing more than choice and wonder, to a frequency already on its way.



Notes

1. IRAS, the Infrared Astronomical Satellite, launched in 1983 — the first observatory to survey the whole sky in infrared. Among its findings was an excess of infrared light around Vega, later understood as a circumstellar disk of dust and debris: the raw material from which planetary systems form (the “Vega phenomenon”).
2. Carl Sagan’s novel *Contact* (1985) has its first confirmed signal arrive from the direction of Vega. Sagan’s instinct — that we are a way for the cosmos to know itself — recurs across this series.
3. Vega lies about twenty-five light-years from Earth; the starlight over any newborn’s first night left the star roughly a quarter-century before. The correspondences gathered here are offered as attention turned backward, not as a claim of design — a pattern found, not a pattern laid down.

Resonances

light parallels — voices the piece leans toward, not citations it rests on

Carl Sagan *Contact (1985) · Cosmos*

The signal arriving from Vega, and his sense that we are how the cosmos comes to know itself.

C. G. Jung *Synchronicity (1952)*

The meaningful coincidence that has no cause — a resonance traced backward, and held lightly.

Baruch Spinoza *Ethics, Appendix to Part I*

Final causes as the mind's projection; nature sets no end before itself — the pattern the piece declines to lay down.

John A. Wheeler *the participatory universe*

The observer folded into how the cosmos turns to look at itself; the part that asks what it is for.

Psalms 139 · Jeremiah 1:5 *scripture*

Known and formed in secret, before the first breath — the season that quietly made a person.

Rainer Maria Rilke *Letters to a Young Poet*

The future entering us long before it arrives — a frequency already on its way.



The On — ing Series

twenty meditations

● On Arriving

On Being

On Creating

On Dreaming

On Existing

On Facing

On Feeling

On Finding

On Forgiving

On Growing

On Lasting

On Learning

On Living

On Observing

On Remembering

On Rising

On Searching

On Seeing

On Teaching

On Watching

a numberless library — read in any order



On Arriving

Set under a night sky: deep indigo lifting toward pre-dawn, with a Vega-blue lantern and a faint amber ring of dust — the makings of a world, and the direction always faced.

Jamison Johnson · June 2026

Set in Fraunces & EB Garamond

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