
Theories of Everything

Also Some Opinions
& A Few Sketchy Facts



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The people in this book, if at one time real, are now entirely fictitious, having been subjected to a combination of a selective memory and a fertile imagination. Any resemblance to real people, or real situations, you may know, is entirely coincidental, and is a reminder that while it may seem real, it's still only your personal theory. As the author is fond of saying, just because you think it, doesn't make it true.

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*To my sons, Matthew & Gabriel, for hours of laughter
& conversation & the endless theories we've shared.
Zombie invasions. Chemtrails. The real purpose of
life & a host of others I can't even begin to remember.
I cannot imagine the world without you in it...*

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Introduction

One day, I was sitting at my drawing table, looking out at the bees in the garden & almost without thinking, I picked up my pen & started to write. Here's the story that showed up:

Once upon a time there was a boy who knew what he was going to be from the very moment he was born. As soon as he was able to talk, he told everyone, I am a builder of dreams. No one in his family had any idea what that meant, except maybe his Aunt Dorothy, who knew about dreams & how they form you into the thing you're going to be, even when you think you have other plans.

The rest of his family did things like work with numbers & fix old cars & bake bread in a bakery. When he first told them what he was going to be, they thought it was cute & then, when it didn't stop, it was something not to be mentioned at family gatherings & finally, it was something that would lead to personal suffering if he didn't start getting his head on straight, by god. So, he stopped saying it out loud, but he never forgot & when he got older, he moved away & his family told the neighbors he was working as a manager & everyone nodded & was pleased that he'd finally come around to viewing life as it was & not how you wish it would be.

But he didn't really care because he was building things of air & sunlight & the laughter of children & the sharp smell of lighter fluid at a summer barbecue & the flash of color on the throat of a hummingbird & all of them were things that had no real name, but people felt them all the same. They felt them all the same...

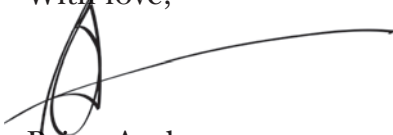
That was my first clue that I was going to do another book.

My second clue was the next night, when the title came to me in a dream: Theories of Everything. There was something instantly satisfying about that. I think it's because that's what we human do, we make up theories about everything. There's very little we really know, so we make it up & then believe it, until reality clearly tells us that our theories aren't working any more. Then we go & make up something new & start the whole game all over again.

One late night while I was working on this, a curious thing happened. All of the pieces that were going into the book, the serious, playful, loving & anxious pieces, were scattered in front of me on the table. I sat there, looking at them, wondering if I'd be able to make sense of it all & just like that, I knew. There was nothing missing. These stories & thoughts & drawings & my life were all the same. I make things up because I'm alive & I like to jump in with both feet & see what I think about things. There's no right theory & no right answer. There's only this moment, fresh & new & what we do with it.

There is no real name for that, though, perhaps, grace comes closest, but we feel it all the same. It's something I wish for each one of you, knowing that there's nothing missing, that we're perfectly at home in our lives any time we're ready to see it...

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'B' followed by 'rian Andreas'. A long, thin horizontal line extends from the end of the signature across the page.

Brian Andreas

Victoria Mews, Santa Barbara
17 September 2012



How To Write Something True



1. Forget everything you know & everything you want to say.
2. Listen to the quiet voices of the world. Start with your heartbeat.
3. Touch the pen to the paper. Feel it, the way it is only at one point all the time. This is the place writing shows up.
4. WRITE ONE WORD AT A TIME. This will take more effort than you think.
5. This kind of writing doesn't care what you know, because you already know it. This kind of writing just wants to see what happens next.
6. When you can do this easily, go back to #1 again. This time no pen, no paper.
7. Live. Now you have something true to write about.

Why do we believe stuff that's not true? he said & I said because it's easier than admitting we don't know. Which is a lot closer to reality.

Free Admission



It's not that I'm not serious, he said. I just don't think of it as a career like the rest of them.

Serious Decision



Do you know that 90%
of your brain works
without using any
words at all? she said.
Just so you know, that
means there's only
a 10% chance of me
making any sense
at all once I start
talking.

Playing the Odds



Just so you're prepared,
he said, I'm going to ask
you a question & I'm
expecting a useful answer.

I nodded & sat up in
my chair.

Let's hope it's something
I can lie convincingly
about then, I said.

Best Shot