

## OVERTURE: THE FIRST CREATION STORY

Before anything that ever was  
there was nothing, only God breathing into the dark.  
It was the deepest darkness ever known  
before or since.

The quiet was the most profound silence that ever was  
before or since.

In all that darkness and silence, God was lonely.  
So God began to spin a web of words carried on God's  
breath.

God said once upon a time there was light.  
As the phosphorescent words rolled out of God's mouth,  
there was light.

There wasn't anything to see yet,  
but when God saw the light standing next to the darkness  
and the darkness standing next to the light,  
God said, "This is great."

But God thought there had to be more to this story  
since every story needs a place to take place in.  
So God said once upon a time there was a large clear bowl  
right in the middle of the light and the darkness,  
and there were waters above the bowl  
and there were waters beneath the bowl

and there were waves above the bowl  
and there were waves beneath the bowl.  
God said the waters above the bowl we shall call sky  
and the waters beneath the bowl we shall call sea  
and the waves above the bowl we shall call clouds  
and the waves beneath the bowl we shall call . . . waves.

Then God spoke forth a stage upon which this story could  
be enacted.

Let there be dry land, God said,  
and sure enough the dry land began to emerge  
from the waters of the deep.  
On the dry land grew grasses and shrubs and trees.  
Now that God had the stage on which the story  
of the beginning of all that is would be played out,  
there was still something missing.

God said there needs to be characters to act out this story,  
so God said once upon a time there was a character  
who travels across the sky during the day  
and another who travels across the sky during the night  
and just so that character who travels at night  
doesn't get too lonely and afraid  
I will give it thousands of companions.  
And the character that travels around during the day God  
called sun.  
And the character that travels around during the night  
God called moon  
and the nighttime companions to moon God called stars.  
And God looked at the great circle dance of the sun and  
moon and stars,  
and God said, "This is great."

Then God said once upon a time there were creatures of  
the water.

And sure enough, as soon as God spoke,  
the waters were filled with minnows and marlin;  
there were bass and catfish in the rivers and creeks and  
seas.

And God said once upon a time there were creatures of  
the air,  
and the sky was aflutter with the wings of robins and  
wrens, eagles and condors.

Then God said once upon a time there were four-legged  
creatures,

and you could hear the mooing of the cattle,  
the barking of the dogs, and the mewling of the cats.

And once upon a time there were six-legged creatures,  
and you could hear the creaking of the crickets,  
accompanied by the buzzing of bees and the clicking of  
beetles.

God said once upon a time there were eight-legged  
creatures

and you could almost feel them crawling up your legs!

When God heard the sounds of all the creatures  
playing the grand overture of creation God said, "This is  
great."

But there still had to be something more.

I would like someone just like me only a little different,  
God said, just different enough to be interesting.

That's when God decided to make human beings.

God said once upon a time there were creatures in the  
divine image

able to tell stories and create worlds and invite others into  
those worlds.

And there were creatures just like God, only a little  
different,  
different enough to be very interesting to God and one  
another.

That was when God said, "This must be the greatest story  
ever told!"

They took that for a movie title later, but God said it first.  
And when this great story was done, it had taken six days  
to tell.

God was having so much fun that the time had flown by,  
but God was tired so on the seventh day God rested  
and said to the humans it's time for you to tell the story  
now.

And sure enough from that time to this, across the globe,  
women and men around the world have set aside a day  
in which the people gather and tell stories, saying,  
before the beginning of the beginning of anything that  
ever was

there was God, they say,  
and every time that happens somewhere in this great,  
many-storied universe

God says, "This is great!"