

God: The Apologies Tour

written by

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SETTING:

*\* Two tables, parallel to the audience, just downstage of center.*

*\* Chairs arranged on all sides.*

*\* Stage boxes arranged placed around the stage wherever remains.*

*The start of show announcement begins. When it is complete, it finishes with:*

THE CREATOR (V.O.)

And now, put your hands together for The Holy of Holies! The Vengeance and the Fury! The Alpha, the Omega and the Infinity! The Lizard, The Eagle, The Wolf and The Greatest Planet in Existence-- THE CREATOR!

*Rock music blasts forth as the lights on stage go full rock concert. The impression should be of a big star about to enter the stage.*

*Instead, THE CREATOR enters, looking haggard. Old. Worn-out. Tired. Exhausted.*

*He grabs a chair and turns it around to sit down on it. He makes a cutting gesture with his hand. The music cuts off mid-song and the lights return to a simple warm wash, with cloud on the screen behind.*

THE CREATOR

So...I'm probably not what you expected, right?

*He chuckles.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

I don't know what I was thinking. I was trying to impress you, but my ideas were so *bad*. First, I thought about being a full-on rock star. Riffing on two Gibson Flying V's at the same time. Belting a perfect mimic of Gaga's "Bad Romance". Or the Eagles' "Hotel California" to prove I know where I am.

*He keeps looking directly into the audience.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

But that was boring. Then I thought--let's do DEAD rockers! Bring in the emotions. I could do The Artist Formally Alive as Prince's take on "Knocking on Heaven's Door". Or Bowie's "Life on Mars 2018 Remix"--but that would let the cat out of the bag and I really want to see the look on Elon's face.

*He shakes his head in ... sadness? Frustration?*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

But in the end I decided, "Honestly, what's the point?" I've done the splashy, neon-lights, burning bush thing so many times. It just doesn't have impact any more.

*He gestures to himself deprecatingly.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Instead, you just get me like I am when I'm at home. Worn out. Completely exhausted. At the tail end of a long tour abroad. In my case, REALLY abroad, something like 2 million universes in 2,000 years. Sure, I can be everywhere at once. Omnipotence. Yay. And I've got wifi, too, so that helps. But being The Creator is still draining. I have to create a world over here, perform a miracle in that dimension over there and respond to so many intelligent creatures' prayers that if I told you the number, your heads would explode. That's not a metaphor. Grey matter everywhere. And my agent keeps demanding I promote my new holy text--Scientology, the Volcano and You--or it's never going to reach the Universal Times Bestsellers List. All of which means if I am really going to talk to you all the way I want to--I'm going to be myself, like when I roll out of the bed in the morning. Not that I have a bed. Or sleep. Or recognize time at all--you get the point. Anyway, here I am, older, fatter, hopefully wiser. And too damn tired to dress up when I visit the kids to say 'Howdy.' Speaking of which, Hello!

*He walks off the stage to shake the hands of some of the audience.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

You're still staring at me. I get it. I wouldn't expect me to look like *me*, either. I don't match any artistic depictions of me--not from any religion, anywhere. But let me ask you a question--yes, you.

*He looks at one audience member directly.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Have I ever told anyone what I actually look like? No! I tend to skirt around it. I'm ineffable. I'm omnipotent. I can hold my liquor. I can actually win at Monopoly. Never an actual physical description. So humans have to imagine how I look. And they do--millions of times over, almost always trying to praise me at the same time. Yes, the images are flattering. But I should have been honest with you long, long ago. I told you all that you were made in my image. That means I am also a reflection of all of you and the state of the universe itself. In the early 21st century, that equates into this.

*He looks down, shakes his head at his own body.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Your scientists have even described what I'm talking about. Everything in existence falls to entropy eventually. It's literally built into the rules I made for this place. What starts as orderly dissolves into a mess of unpredictability. To put it simply, everything in the universe falls apart someday. You're no different. So *why would I be?*

(smiling)

I do hope you're not disappointed.

*He sits, now focused. There is a stronger energy.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

But I didn't come here today to talk about myself. I've rented Studio/Stage and come to Fringe to give you some perspective on My *real nature* and to have a discussion with all of you, in several ways. To do that, I'm going to need some help. From Me.

*He snaps his fingers. POLYTHEISM (POLY) enters.*

## BOTH CHARACTERS

And from Me.

*They snap their fingers. SELF-REFLECTION (SELF) enters from the opposite side of the stage.*

## ALL THREE

And from the most intimate version of Me.

*They all snap their fingers and SPIRITUALISM (SPIRIT) appears from behind the audience.*

## ALL FOUR

We are The Creator. We are all here for you.

*Poly, Self and Spirit each take a seat on a box near their areas as The Creator continues.*

## THE CREATOR

These are reflections of Me. Other ways your kind have seen Me--each one equally legitimate and as real as those who believed in them. I have generated them from Myself so that you may encounter the divine in different ways.

## POLYTHEISM

I am The Creator of the Pantheon. He who fought the Giants and the Norn, the Titans and Those From Beyond. He who pulls order from chaos with violence and war. When humans believed in me, they learned that all who exist struggle and fight. The strife of their existence was reflected in those whose praise and help they begged to gain.

## SELF-REFLECTION

I am The Creator of the Divine Turned Inward. She who recognizes that the spark of The Creator exists in every creature that has ever existed. When humans turned to me, they found that we are all connected, from the littlest insect to the greatest mammal. One can find strength, power and grace from a search inward as well as one external.

## SPIRITUALISM

I am The Creator of the Mystical Power. She who keeps the deepest mysteries of the connection between human beings all the creatures that surround them. When humans come to me, they discover that a direct communion with the world around them is possible. The proper application of knowledge and ritual bridges all living things into a prayer for my help.

## THE CREATOR

Polytheism, Self-Reflection and Spiritualism. Three of the infinite reflections that define Our nature. I am The Creator Infinite. He who breathed life into nothing, who imagined this universe and infinite others. Who built a place where you, my children, could survive. Even thrive. A creation where I gave you the greatest gift possible--the ability to freely choose how you experience everything around you. Free will in all things, at all times, in all situations.

*The Creators all stand.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Here, now, that ability is offered to each of you once more.

## SELF-REFLECTION

This theatre has many spaces.

## POLYTHEISM

And we're going to claim them for conversations with you.

## THE CREATOR

We offer for you to join us in any order you wish.

## SPIRITUALISM

The choice of which Creator you join first is yours.

## THE CREATOR

Follow any of my reflections to converse with them.

## POLYTHEISM

Or stay, and join The Creator on stage to converse with Him.

## SPIRITUALISM

In but a moment, we will ask you to make your first choice.

## SELF-REFLECTION

In ten minutes, when bells rings, you will have a second choice.

## SPIRITUALISM

You may choose to follow one Creator now and a second one later.

## POLYTHEISM

Or you can stand firm with one Creator through both choices.

## SELF-REFLECTION

The important thing is that you understand the choice is yours throughout.

## THE CREATOR

But remember your Free Will. You have only two choices--so you cannot see everything here. Are there any questions?

*The Creators answer anyone who's confused.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Good. Now think of which version of Me you wish to experience. Are we ready? Make your first choice.

## POLYTHEISM

If you wish to join me, the moment is now. We go!

*Poly departs for the lobby area.*

## SELF-REFLECTION

If you wish to ponder with me, follow in my footsteps.

*Self departs for the dressing room.*

## SPIRITUALISM

I will seek out those who wish to speak with me. I will see it in your eyes.

*Spirit returns behind the audience space.*

## THE CREATOR

Use your Free Will. Remember, make one choice now and the second time later when the bell rings. I will speak with those who choose to remain.

*A bell GONG sounds, to signify that it is time for the audience to make their first choice. The audience will separate into whatever division they choose.*

## POLYTHEISM, SCENE ONE

*Poly heads to the front lobby 'studio' area and takes an appropriate space (either a chair at the end or behind the little bar area as appropriate).*

## POLYTHEISM

Now since you choose to come and meet  
 Me here, it's best you claim your seat.  
 For I am not a patient God,  
 Benevolent to all I greet.  
 Instead I shower gifts and nod  
 To those whose boldness can entreat  
 With honor, and with strength endure  
 The terms of life so harsh to all.  
 And die as brave and true and pure  
 That I will bring you to My hall.  
 For in the end, how you live life  
 Determines where you end this game.  
 And when you speak to Gods of strife  
 You'll recognize we are the same.

*He looks around at those who have gathered in front of him and then grins, taking a large sip of the beverage in his mug.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

More than one religion with multiple gods The Creator spoke only in poetry. So for thousands of years, that's what I did. It is *incredibly* draining to remember to speak to everyone-- Gods and humans alike--in riddles and iambic rhyme. But I gritted my teeth and did it because I knew they expected it. It made total sense from their point of view. They were saying their Main Man was different, even from the other Gods around Me. I stood on apart from everything that I'd created. Alone. Unique. Even the other Gods in My Pantheons recognized that their leader was unlike anyone or anything else.

*He laughs heartily.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

They weren't wrong. I *AM* unique. No one else could have chained the Titans forever below the earth with nothing but His bare hands. Or built the world-tree out of formless blocks of undefined space-time. Or defeated the Giants with one hand while crafting a wall to protect Midgard with the other. That takes might and tenacity and a crazy brain that thinks of outside-the-box tactics. And what do you know? That's the definition of Me, right? *RIGHT???*

*He keeps asking until the audience responds.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

You're damn right, it's right! When it comes to war, NO ONE matches me. I leap into any battle like I'm going completely berserk! I approach death's mighty possibility with an equally mighty grin on my face.

*He begins to get more and more emphatic as he speaks, his nostrils flaring, his eyes going feral.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

I make order out of chaos by BEING chaotic myself. I come out swinging, lightning bolts from my hands zapping enemies left and right. I tear their throats out with my bare teeth! I claw them to shreds in my full-blown werewolf transformation. I drive my enemies into the null spaces outside the universe with fists as dense as neutron stars. I cannot be stopped. I WILL NOT be stopped. I win AT ANY COST. I am the LEADER of the Gods! This is MY KINGDOM! And you will REMEMBER that MY MIGHT MAKES ME RIGHT!

*By the end, he is bellowing and practically ready to pounce on his audience. He shakes for a moment, glaring, before he blinks and appears to re-focus.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Sorry. I get a little worked up when I talk about fighting. My believers knew this. They believed I was the most powerful being in existence. Unmatched strength. The best God to have on your side in war. But equally likely to blow My top at the smallest provocation and slaughter you without thinking twice.

*He looks at the faces of those looking back.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

They were right. I did both. The myths about me are surprisingly consistent. The Gods were fickle, and none more so than Me. It's like having an abusive father who's also the greatest fighter in the WWE. You're glad when he's on your side--but you still spend all your time appeasing him so he doesn't beat the shit out of you. And for whole religions, appeasing their Gods' darker sides was just an expected facet of life. Not my best moment.

*He pauses and takes another drink.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

There's a word--"numinous"--that was made popular by a German theologian dude, Otto, in 1917. Numinous means something that is holy or connects with religion in some way, but that also fails to adequately express itself. You can't describe a truly religious moment. You can only experience it. And that experience has some other-worldly aspect that defies any clear description of itself.

(MORE)



## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

If you've ever had a truly "religious" moment, you know what I'm talking about right now. If you haven't...then you can't. But numinous experiences are a new thing.

*He steps forward and reaches out his hand, offering to shake with different audience members until one agrees. As soon as they shake, he locks eyes.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Today, you speak of religion as something that you have or as something you that you do. "I went to church on Sunday." "I found Jesus." "I've been born again." "We just did Passover."

*He continues trying to touch audience members, shaking hands or touching shoulders, always looking at them first to see if they are willing. He is clearly not forcing his touch on any one who does not wish it.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

For those who believed in multiple gods, there was no distinction between their "religion" and their "society". They were one and the same. We were there with them at every moment. Every day. Every night. We fought battles beside them. We helped their plants grow. We blessed their children to survive sickness. We cursed their children and made them die. We were as real to them as you are to the person next to you now. There was nothing numinous about their religion--it was connected to their very heart and soul. They believed we were so real that their are records of the Gods possessing the statues made for them, able to literally speak and judge and offer miracles or curses.

*He stage whispers to one audience member.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Here's a question to really freak you out: If they believed that the Gods appeared that way, what if they were correct? Can belief make you think you see what you believe, whether or not it's there? Even better, can that belief *make* something actually appear? Mind-blowing shit, right?

*He turns back to the rest of the audience.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

There was no distinction between their religion and the universe because they were all part of the same laws, the same natural order. The universe existed because the Gods made it. Equally important, the Gods existed because the universe did. They were one and the same.

*He hits something sharply with his fist, once.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

This is important to understand. If We were part of the world, then We were also beholden to its laws. We were different than humans, of course. We could turn into animals. We could bleed forever and not die. We could remove parts of Ourselves to make other gods. We could drink potions made from the essence of other Gods--like this one.

*He takes another long drink.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

But We were still bound by those laws. Even Me. I created the laws of the universe out of the chaotic nothing that had been there before--and I was still expected to color inside the lines. Ain't that a kick in the pants? The word "outlaw" even originally meant the idea that someone who broke society's rules also broke the universe's rules and stepped "outside" the very "laws" of reality. That made them fair game for every curse, penalty or bad luck that anyone threw at them. I was the greatest outlaw, too. In more than one story, I, The Creator, was exiled because I screwed up. Of course, I proved myself and made it back--almost every time. But just as humans struggled to survive and sometimes made the wrong--or worse, the weak--choice, so did the Gods.

*He drinks, a sad look on his face suddenly. He looks once more at each of the audience members.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

You're here today because I gave you Free Will and you chose to join me. But not every religion understood Free Will. The religions I reflect believed that our endings were written for us, human and God alike. Fates, Norns, Weird Sisters--call them what you will. They spun Our stories before We lived them. All stories, whether happy or sad. What sort of Free Will exists in a world where even the gods have a fated end? If the wolf MUST be freed at the end of the world and I am destined to LOSE my fight with him, is Free Will an illusion? Every single one of you is destined to die, too, no matter the choice. So are you still free to act?

*He looks far away for a moment, thoughts elsewhere.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

I say you still have Free Will--because you can choose HOW you face that end. Other reflections may have a different opinion. All I know is that when my end comes, I intend to meet it fighting and drinking and having the best last day of My existence. Who among you will stand beside me?

*The bell rings the first time, and Poly nods.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Stay or go, as you see fit. But the time has come for another story. I'll be here for whomever comes to hear it.

## POLYTHEISM, SCENE TWO

*As the audience enters/shifts, Poly reaches down to a bag on the ground, pulling small gifts out of it. He hands one to each of the audience as he talks.*

## POLYTHEISM

You've come to hear what I can say  
 About Myself. Let's find a way  
 To open eyes with myths and wise  
 Descriptions, sayings, stories too.  
 And lies and truth and big surprise  
 My contradictions fill me through.  
 For when you deal with Gods most strong  
 Their talents leap beyond their place  
 So listen now. Before too long,  
 Reality will fill this space;  
 For all stories are made to please  
 And less to hold by honest fact.  
 Yet they are keys, if we can tease  
 The history from behind the act.

*Once finished with the gifts, he finds a place where he can see everyone and takes a moment, waiting.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

What does a human do when gifted something by The Creator?

*He waits to see if someone says Thank You. If they do, he smiles before talking. If not, he glares.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

I'll bet most of you believed the answer was, "Say Thank You." Even if you didn't say it. You're right, by today's standards. Your parents raised most of you as good people who follow society's rules. But when people believed in a Creator like Me, you'd have expected to actually *do something tangible* to thank me. It wasn't enough just to believe in Me--that was a given. The Gods weren't something you *chose* to believe in or not. We were simply *there*. It was like seeing the sun rise every morning. It did because I was the sun, or willed the sun into being, or was the father of the sun. The specifics don't matter. Societies simply knew we were real.

*He pounds his fist against something hard.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

We were as real as that sound. As real as the gifts I just gave each of you. Even early philosophers like Plato and Aristotle only debated about *how powerful* We might be. Perhaps We were responsible for the movement of the heavens. Perhaps We could only influence those movements. They were arguing about *degree of strength*, not *odds of Our being here*.

*He locks eyes with one audience member.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

If We gave you a gift, saying "Thanks, Zeus, you're swell," or "Great job, Odin! Just what I wanted!" wasn't enough. You were expected to sacrifice a goat. Or burn something in effigy for three days straight.

*He turns to look at another person, again locking eyes. His voice begins to become more intense.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Or you give Us something valuable that you possessed to please Us. Something special to you, that you *really cared about*, to show Us that you valued Our help.

*He locks eyes with a third audience member.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

I hear your thoughts. What if someone didn't have anything they thought was valuable enough? The poorest people have always been those most likely to ask Us for help and often have the least of value to offer in return. Do you have any idea what they did then?

*If the person answers correctly, he bellows with laughter. Skip to the full paragraph below. If not, he glances back at the others he's already locked eyes with previously.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

How about you?

*If someone answers correctly, same as above-- bellowing laughter, then skip to the next paragraph. If not, he continues, a hint of anger in his voice.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Humanity truly is in an era of self-absorption. It's more than a little dangerous not to remember how to treat the Gods, you know. That's the sort of thing that could sour Them just when you might need Them the most. So I will remind you--you know, just in case.

*He takes a breath and then continues, his voice assertive but no longer anger-laced. (Continue here if you've skipped from earlier on the page).*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

One would offer THEMSELVES to the Gods, that being the one thing of value that every person can give. They would become a soldier. A priest. Whatever the Gods wanted. Whatever they felt would be the best use of Who. They. Were.

*He smiles in a way that's almost predatory.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

That was a hell of a choice. That was the gift We never refused, because offering a human's free will was the greatest potential power that We could be given. It gave us a lot of options. Now, since I've made the old ways clear...

*He takes a long, slow drink out of his mug, drawing the moment out. Then he grins.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Who's going to give Me something valuable in return for these gifts? Anybody got a Rolex? Car keys to their Lexus parked on Western? Nevada Horse-ranch?

*At this point, Poly will talk to the audience for a few moments, trying to get them to offer him something. Or multiple somethings.*

*IF someone offers him something, he will say:*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, here we have someone willing to offer a Gift to Me as is proper. What's your name?

*He gets the name(s).*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Thank you, *name*. Come stand next to me and face the group. Everyone, you should admire *name* immensely. It takes a noble, bold heart to offer a gift to a God on behalf of a group of people they likely don't know.

*He waits a second to see if anyone says thank you. If they do, he nods appreciatively. If not, he sighs once and continues.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Okay, *name*. Repeat after Me.

*(Go to the Poem below at this point.)*

*If NO ONE comes forward, he will say the following:*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Well, well. No one's got anything to give. We know what the other option is, don't we? Anyone willing to pledge themselves to Me? Recognize that this is irrevocable, permanent and final. We aren't terribly fond of those who frivolously take oaths. Anyone?

*If someone offers, he continues.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

What is your name? Everyone, this is *name*. *Name*, this is everyone that you're better than. Come stand beside me, face the rest of them and repeat after me.

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

"All mighty Creator God  
 He Whose Strength Immeasurable  
 Whose Wisdom Shields Us All  
 Whose Gifts Are Great and Durable  
 Whose Honor Stands Us Tall  
 Whose Potency Is Full and Grand  
 Whose Dominion Reaches Infinite  
 Whose Justice Will Forever Stand  
 Whose Love Has Grace and Charm and Wit  
 Whose Dancing is Full Deft And Dope  
 Whose Pie-Eating Can't Be Stopped and Won't be Stopped  
 Whose Playstation 4 Game Skills Are Lit--"

*At this point, Poly cannot contain himself any more and he bellows laughter.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Oh, my Me. The look on your faces! I'm just playing with you! No one owes me anything. I tried to be all intimidating. But seriously, for THOSE Gifts? I got those from the 99 cent store three blocks from here. I didn't even PAY for them. I created everything already, so it's not like it's stealing. The things you all were thinking. It's a good thing people used to expect me to be a lot less omnipotent than later Gods. If I was Jehovah right now there might be some smiting.

*He grins once more, takes a long drink and gets himself under control.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

That's something I want you all to understand today. So many people have this backwards. Even theologians get it wrong most of the time. People think that I tell some group of people "the Truth" at some point and then everyone else's story is some fraudulent piece of crap. But it's exactly the other way around. Each of your societies tell *ME* how they want Me to be. I agree to be that way for them because that is what they've asked for. It's what they want--what they need. As the One who made you all, it's important to Me that I have a good working relationship with you. If you tell stories that make me a carousing warrior God who tends to get romantic as a swan or as a statue or as a wolf, then that's what I become. However you want Me to be, however you expect Me to be, that's how I'm going to arrive when you call.

*He smiles, sincerely. This is important to him.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

To understand what a Polytheism Creator like Me is all about, you need to grasp this idea. The stories--the Myths--humanity writes are the narratives that define how I connect with you. And once I've come to you that way once, *you can reach out to Me that way forever after*. That door is forever open. So if you want to have a drink with me, just ask. I'm pretty easy-going that way.

*He takes one final drink of the cup, finishing off anything left inside it and placing it upside down on somewhere nearby. The bell rings the second time and Poly smiles.*

## POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

The time has come to return to the main stage and The Creator. When you get back there, sit anywhere you want. On the stage, on the floor, in chairs. Anywhere you wish to place yourself is fine. The rest of us will be there shortly.



## SELF-REFLECTION, SCENE ONE

*When the audience arrives, Self stands looking at herself in the mirror. She glances at the audience ONLY through the mirror, never directly at any point.*

*Her movements at all times are gentle, deliberate. Her voice is calm, peaceful. She is reaching through the mirror, urging throughout.*

## SELF-REFLECTION

Welcome, My friends. Please step inside and stand so that you can see Me--and yourself--in the mirrors. Be sure to share so that everyone else can see as well.

*She points behind her to make it clear that the audience should move into the room.*

*If there are too many people to fit, she will add the following, pointing to the second mirror:*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Those of you who cannot enter, stand by the door. That will allow you to see the other reflection.

*Once everyone has arranged themselves, she smiles at them, her eyes moving from face to face.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

I am so glad you chose to come visit me first. While each Reflection has value, I am the very personification of the idea of looking at yourself. Many people never really take a good look at themselves after they stop being children, who examine themselves constantly. Adults often only look when they're faced with their own mortality. While that makes sense...frankly, that's just a tad bit late to do much good.

*She smiles, making it clear that was a soft joke.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

You have chosen differently. It is lovely to see you. I don't mean here, at this theatre. I mean now that you're looking inward, I can get a really good look. That's where I live, you know. Within. From the moment you gain consciousness, I am there. Asking you to always be kind and never cruel. Urging you to risk hurt by loving with an open heart. Whispering to you to think once more before about that poor decision. But now we get to speak like normal individuals. You have no idea how much I have wanted this chance.

*She closes her eyes, breathing deeply in through the nose and out through the mouth three times. Then she opens her eyes, smiling at those in the mirror.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

To have our discussion, we need common ground. First, I want each of you to take a good look at yourselves. Come on. Don't be shy. Take a nice, long look at your face. Think only about what you really see. Don't think about *why* your face looks as it does. Just take the entire image in. Now examine the various pieces. The forehead. The eyes. The nose. The lips. Do they *truly* look like they belong to you? Or do they seem like someone else's? When did you last *really* see your face? Now, look back at me.

*She smiles when people return.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Those who practice self-reflection can do examinations like that for minutes or hours. But for our purpose, all I needed was for you to focus on being right here, right now. Now look at those around you--only in the mirror, remember.

*She gazes from person to person, smiling.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

This time, start with the pieces. Examine their lips, nose, eyes, forehead. Then look at the whole. Do you notice anything interesting? If so, you may speak, one at a time. There is no wrong answer here.

*If someone answers, skip the next paragraph below and then continue. If not, Self nods knowingly.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

You are a group that speaks internally. Perfectly fine. I hear your thoughts just as well inside you. But Self-Reflection respects confidentiality.

*If anyone laughs at the above, she smiles softly in response before continuing.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

You're all beginning to see beyond the image you present to the world. That is the great joy of mirrors. They separate you from your ego as you look. You become more objective. Only then can you truly look at another person and see how each of you is more alike than you are different. An easy statement to make, yes. An even easier statement to ignore as a truism. But it is true.

*She caresses her own face as she speaks about the various pieces in the next paragraph.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

There is actual magic in similarity. Even quantum physics knows that things that are similar physically turn out to be connected on ever smaller levels.

(MORE)

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

When I point out that you all have foreheads, that means you are instantly more connected than any creature that does not. The same is true for your eyes, nose, lips. Each similar thing brings you ever closer to being the same. This similarity of form is not an accident. *It is a rule of the universe.* It's a rule I made for you to find. I spend an amazing amount of time trying to get you all to see it.

*For the only time in this section, her eyes sparkle-- like Willy Wonka when he's about to show them the room he's most excited about.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

But today is special! Would you like me to prove to you how similar you really are? I can show you that you are so intimately connected the universe can barely stand it when you fight one another. All it requires is you to speak two words aloud. I promise the words cannot harm you in any way. So will you let me prove it to you?

*She hopefully gets a positive answer. If few or NONE say yes, continue below. If SOME say yes, skip to the 2nd paragraph. If the group is largely BEHIND it, skip to where she asks for the words.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

It is a sad day when people's distrust in the 21st century spreads that deeply. I was afraid we might run into that fear. Very well. Instead, think of your own name.

*Self skips to the paragraph about names.*

*If SOME people say yes, Self continues here.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

I see a few of you are worried. There is no shame when you look inside yourself, because you cannot know what you will find. Sometimes, what's in there is a frightened, tiny thing that needs more self-love. The rest of you have answered yes, and I am glad.

*She continues. If MOST says yes, she also comes here.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Here we go. Turn to look at yourselves once more.

*She waits until they do.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Take a deep breath and say the following word at normal volume: Your First Name.

*As people speak, she smiles brightly.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Excellent. Now turn to another person in the room and ask them their first name. It doesn't matter who--just make sure you get another first name in your head.

*She waits for that to be done.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Turn back to your reflection once more and say that new name, also at normal volume. Good! Now say it again, slightly softer. Say your own name at that volume. Now whisper your name. Then the other name. Now barely audible, say the other name. Your name. The other name. Your name. The other name. Your name. The other name. Your name. Now at normal volume, say the name in your head!

*Some will say their own. Some will say the other. Or maybe all will say one or the other. It may be dead silent. Any outcome is fine. Self laughs.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

You see? You went back and forth with names until they stopped feeling separate. Both names became familiar on your lips. Your brain began thinking of that other name with the same ease that it thinks of yours.

*She grins. If the proof was skipped go to here.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Do you know *why* the human brain is so good at saying names?

*She looks to see if anyone has an answer. If they do, she truly listens to their answer and then continues.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

The real answer may surprise you, because your species isn't yet even certain of life on other planets.

*She raises her hand to her mouth and speaks in a stage whisper.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

There is, by the way. But I didn't tell you that.

*She returns to normal.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Humans are the only species in all of existence to name themselves as an individual. It's true. No other species anywhere defines itself as a separate entity.

*She smiles.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Dogs hear their names as "packmate wants me". Dolphins use a pod name--your equivalent to a last name--and then associate themselves in spatial relation to each other. Even other primates recognize themselves by sound and smell. You can't even see the right wavelengths to understand the approach of the Frizellians of Garmina 6.

*She points at audience reflections, one at a time.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

You're the only ones who declare that you are unique and separate individuals. That's both true--and wrong. You are also *more similar to each other* than you are to any other creature in existence.

*She begins to look sad--again, as much as she can, as though she is remembering what sadness might be.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

I wish you could all realize this. It would make the divisions of this century seem like the complete and total waste they are. And if you all *truly realized* how different the rest of the universe is from *any* of you, perhaps you'd be more inclined to finally become the home team. But that's the downside of Free Will--if you have the option to turn your back on each other, *you can*. Gosh, life can be so complicated, can't it?

*The first bell rings.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Ah. Our time is finished. If you wish to meet another reflection, depart now. It has been my honor to see you clearly for once. If you are staying, please move in so that others can join us.

## SELF-REFLECTION, SCENE TWO

*Self smiles at those who are joining her.*

## SELF-REFLECTION

Welcome. You are loved. You are respected. Please step inside and stand so that you can see Me--and yourself--in the mirrors. Be sure to share so everyone else can see as well.

*If there are too many people to fit, she will add the following, pointing to the second mirror:*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Those of you who cannot enter, stand by the door. That will allow you to see the other reflection.

*Once everyone has arranged themselves, she smiles at them, her eyes moving from face to face.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

I am so pleased that you've chosen to spend this segment of Our visitation with Me. It's so rare that I can speak to you directly. Most people can only hear Me in the quietest or most stressful times. But I am there all along, helping everywhere I can. And today, if you're willing to trust Me a little bit, I can help you discover a way to reach inside yourself and hear Me, the Creator that lives internally, more frequently. All you need to do is one simple thing:

*She gestures to the mirrors.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Gaze into your own eyes.

*She does the same.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Don't stare. Don't focus on them. Just gaze into your own eyes. Blink whenever you need. Breathe however you wish. Simply look at your eyes and listen to my voice.

*Her voice remains calm and loud enough that it doesn't seem too soft.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Don't worry if your gaze drifts. Just breathe and reset your gaze. Did you know only three primates can recognize themselves in a mirror? Great Apes, chimpanzees and you. You all recognize your own face when you see it. It's like magic, because you aren't actually looking at your own face at all. What you see now, in front of you, is an illusion. It's a virtual version of you, forever flipped from its real face. And yet, all three species can see that the figure they look at...is them. Something to think about, right?

(MORE)

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Now let whatever thoughts you have flow through your head without judgment and continue to look. And to breathe.

*She pauses to take a few deep breaths herself.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

As you look at your eyes, you may see changes happening to your face. If so, do not be afraid. In older days, you would be told you were having a vision of your ancestors or of a loved one you are destined to meet. In the modern era, you get scientifically based answers. The human brain expects changing visual input, so creates hallucinations when faced with a static image. Or the optic nerves are just wearing out. Breathe in. Breathe out. Keep gazing, not staring.

*She takes another deep breath herself.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Which answer feels correct? Does any? Or none? The fact that you can think of *any* answer is, itself, worth contemplating. Just like the image you are looking at is an illusion...so is each thought you have. The brain gathers electrical inputs from its senses and matches that input to memory bank centers generated by previous data. And that is *all the brain does*. And yet, somehow, you can think. Where, exactly, does the "you" that is thinking come from? What makes you...you?

*She smiles.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Close your eyes. Breathe at your own pace. Listen to my voice. Your consciousness is also magic. There is no clear science for its existence. It cannot yet be measured. It does not have a location in the body that can be exercised. Or excised. Through history, your brightest can't even agree what generates it. They have claimed the heart, the lungs, the liver, and in the scientific era, the brain. The very aspect of you that is you eludes coherent description. And yet, every one of you has it. You each realize that you are *YOU* and no one else. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*She opens her eyes.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Now open your eyes and look at someone else's face. It doesn't matter if they look back at you. Take in this new face with the same gaze you gave your own.

*She waits until people have done so. If there is any laughter or other emotional moment, she lets it happen before continuing in that same calm voice.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

The person you are looking at is not you. They will never know your story, what it means to be you, no matter how hard you describe it. They are forever isolated from you greatest joys and deepest fears. You are equally isolated from them. Most people block out that separation. But that is a mistake.

*She smiles brightly and her voice gets as happy.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Look closer at that other face. Look at the story written on it, no matter how old or young. There are secrets written on this other face, a tale only that person can share. You each experience the universe in an *entirely unique* way. That is not something to be afraid of. It is something to be cherished. It is something to be shared at every moment.

*She claps her hands once. The sound is very loud.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Think of how amazing it is that you exist at all. Each and every one of you is the center of an entire universe that revolves around *you and you alone*. Every face you see is a reflection of a person who transforms electrical impulses into an ever-growing version of *their own* universe. So take a moment to recognize exactly how many Creators there are in this room. I promise you--I am not the only one.

*She watches the group's reflection for a moment.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Being able to acknowledge yourself as an individual entity is quite literally magic. While other species recognize their reflections, you are the *only species* that can share what you have seen with each other. You are the only ones who can tell the future about the past. That means you, yourselves, are equally magical.

*She begins looking at each person again, individually, returning a second and third time if necessary through this next paragraph.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

You can share the best part of yourselves and lift those around you up to join a brighter universe. You can share the worst part of yourselves and divide the world into binary moments of us versus them, rich versus poor or any other hell you can imagine. The choice is yours--that is your Free Will. How you blend your universe with those around you determines how the entire thing is going to end.

*She smiles and bows, just once, looking at herself.*



## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

This is what the Creator of Self-Reflection is here to show you. I ask you to see the power enclosed within your very being. I ask you to utilize that power with strength, love and care. Not because you *have to do so*. But because the power within you is immense. It is the true meaning of the phrase uttered by almost all religions in some way: I made you in My image. That means you are all Creators, too. So when you want to speak with Me, you only need to do this:

*She points at her own face in the mirror.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Look at yourself in the mirror and say, "Hello, God. What should We do today?" The answer might surprise you.

*The second bell rings. She becomes neutral.*

## SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

The time has come to return to the main stage and The Creator. When you get back there, sit anywhere you want. On the stage, on the floor, in chairs. Anywhere you wish to place yourself is fine. The rest of us will be there shortly.

*She watches them all leave, curious interest on her face until they are all gone.*

## SPIRITUALISM, SCENE ONE AND TWO

*This is a single-person scene between Spirit and an audience member. It is a ritual that can repeat as many times as she chooses people for it in the twenty minutes of Scene One and Scene Two.*

*As people move from place to place between Scene One and Scene Two, or whenever she wishes during The Creator and Poly's scenes, Spirit will step forward to speak with someone.*

## SPIRITUALISM

You are one of high empathy and strong connections, yes?

*She speaks as though she assumes the audience member will say yes. They almost inevitably will, in which case she says:*

## SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

As I thought. Come with me. There is a place you are needed more than here.

*If they say no, Spirit will shake her head at them with a smile, and say:*

## SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

You cannot hide your true face from the Creator. You have greater strength than you know. Let me help you understand.

*If the person she has spoken to still seems reluctant, Spirit will move on to another person.*

*Once she has someone, she leads them to the back area of the theatre to begin the ritual.*

## THE RITUAL

*When the audience member follows Spirit behind the stage, they find that the means for a ritual have been set up.*

*There is a ritual cloth arranged on the counter, with the following set above it in a pyramid shape:*

*\* Two mugs, one filled with a red wine, one filled with lemon water.*

*\* A wooden box, closed, with dice (gaming dice) inside.*

*\* A mortar/pestle filled with ground charcoal/ashes.*

*\* A dolphin statue*

- \* A bowl filled with smoked sea salt
- \* A deck of cards (tarot or normal, either works)
- \* A bottle of compressed air
- \* A bottle of Tabasco, label removed (small bottle).
- \* A hedgehog sculpture

*Spirit brings the audience member to stand directly beside her so that they can see the items laid out.*

*Spirit speaks in a quiet voice--only loud enough for the person who is part of the ritual to hear. Because of the music playing from the theatre speakers, that may still be loud enough for others to hear her--but that's not her goal.*

#### SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

I am the most ancient and primal of reflections, the God of Mysteries. I have summoned you here today so that you may partake in the powerful tradition of ritual. From the dawn of history, some humans have believed that rituals tap into the very rules of Creation. They believe that by following these rules, they can impose their Will upon Creation itself.

*She leans forward and smiles for the only time she will smile during the ritual.*

#### SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

They are correct. The Creator wrote this place like a web designer writes code language. It only makes sense there are a few back doors.

*She returns to her stoic, cold whisper.*

#### SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

This is your chance to join those who impose their will. Once you do so, your life will change. You will be altered in ways both powerful and beneficial. Nothing here that can harm you in any way. Will you proceed?

*It's possible someone will back down at this moment. If so, that is fine. Spirit says the following:*

#### SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

A wise individual knows when they are not yet ready. You are welcome to return to one of the other Creator reflections. But be aware that you will be asked twice more during your lifetime. If you are not ready by the third time, it will not come again.

*Spirit then helps guide the person back out to the main area.*

*If the person nods or says "Yes," Spirit continues.*

SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

I knew you would accept. Free Will is not entirely free. Probabilities make some choices far more likely. Your scientists are not wrong to study how to impact them.

*Spirit will move so that she stands to the left of the audience member, who should be standing directly in front of the cloth.*

SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

We begin. Focus on what you see before you. Do not look away unless I tell you to do so. I will not speak again until the ritual is complete. Try not to speak either. Words only muddy the rules of the universe.

*From this point onward, Spirit will only speak if the participant asks her a question. Otherwise, silence.*

*Spirit picks up the deck of cards. She shows the deck to the participant and then demonstrates for them to hold out their index finger and choose one card. Once the participant gets it, she starts moving the cards one at a time, top to bottom, until one card is chosen.*

*Spirit places that card face down on the cloth, having shown its face to no one, gestures not to look at it and puts the card deck to the side. She then takes the two mugs (wine/lemon-water) and gestures for the member to first smell each (to sense what they are) and then choose a small sip from either.*

*Once the member has taken a sip, Spirit puts the mugs aside. She places the bowl of smoked salt in front of the member and mimics dipping her fingers inside. Once the member does that, she gestures for THEM to put the bowl on the North side.*

*Then she gives the member the compressed air and gestures to blow the air over the Eastern spot. Then she has them place the bottle on the spot.*

*She places the Tabasco in front and mimics opening the top and CAREFULLY taking a whiff of the pepper spray. Once the audience member does, she has them replace the top, put the bottle on the Southern spot.*

*She gives the member the dolphin statue and has the member place it on the Western side and then run their hands down it like flowing water.*

*Finally, Spirit opens the box of dice and gestures for the member to take ONE die out and roll it. Then she has the member put it directly on top of the card.*

*Spirit looks at the entire cloth, nods and gestures for the member to look directly at the card, no where else. Spirit picks up the Hedgehog statue and places it first North, Then East, Then South, Then West-- each time with the sculpture facing the card. Then she puts the sculpture down and watches the member and for long enough they get antsy. Then she smiles.*

#### SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

You have begun your transformation. Excellent. Do you have any idea what the ritual was about? If so, speak now.

*If the member DOES have an answer, Spirit listens to it quite attentively--as though the information/ideas, whatever they are, are both absolutely correct and surprisingly brand new.*

*Spirit can ask a few follow-up questions if they seem appropriate before moving on beyond the next speech.*

*If the member does NOT have an answer, Spirit nods.*

#### SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

Very, very wise. The most important knowledge is that which you allow to grow inside of you. I respect that.

*Then she moves on to below as well.*

*When the question has been answered or not, Spirit will grab the bowl of ashes.*

#### SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

Your changes will continue from this moment throughout your existence. May I gift you with the sign of the Mysteries?

*Let people agree or not. If they do, Spirit marks them while she says the next speech. If not, put the ashes down and continue after the next paragraph.*

*The true symbol of the sign is simple--it is two dots and a half circle on their side. The classic emoji 'smiley-face'. This is not a joke, although some people may see it and laugh.*

## SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

The Sign of the Mysteries is a symbol that exists through all of recorded human history. From the earliest pictographs to today's self-absorbed youth, this symbol has represented the same thing: Happiness from a Unique Point of View. It may even bring happiness to you this very day.

*When finished with the sign (or if you skip the sign), Spirit continues.*

## SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

Those who have joined the Mysteries will find that life changes around them, as though their body and the universe were one and the same. Because, of course, they are.

*She picks up the playing card, still not looking at it. She places it into a small envelope.*

## SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

This is for you. Do not look at it until you have left this theater. Do not show it to anyone you do not love and trust, What you see on it will reappear throughout your life.

*She hands the envelope to the member and gestures back towards the main area.*

## SPIRITUALISM (CONT'D)

You are welcome to return to one of the other Creator reflections. Remember--today is when everything changes.

*And with that, she leads them back to the mainstage.*

*The envelopes have a message in them which reads:*

## ENVELOPE

Take a good look at your card. Are there numbers? Faces? Which suit is it? This card you have is now a representation of you as far as the universe is concerned. As far as I am concerned. Reflections of that card will appear when you face important decisions. They will help guide you just as reflections of Me have helped guide your brethren throughout history. What happens to you happens to the rest of Creation. But that means it also goes the other way. As for the die roll--that's to remind you that I created chance, as well. Sometimes you just get lucky. Sincerely, The Creator.

## THE CREATOR, SCENE ONE AND SCENE TWO

*Ideally, The Creator will spend all twenty minutes answering questions from people in an improvisational scenario. These can be questions written by audience in line or asked directly.*

*Should there not be enough questions or the improvisation fail to work as planned, there will be stories that The Creator can fall back on.*

*List of Stories:*

*\* Thinking about Time:*

## THE CREATOR

Imagine for a moment a bank that adds \$86,400 to your account every morning. But anything you do not draw out of that account on that day, the bank deletes when the day turns over. No balance is carried from one day to the next. In such a situation, what would you do? I imagine you would withdraw every cent every day, right? Then why aren't you doing so? Every single human actually has that bank--and it's name is the Bank of TIME. Every midnight, you get credited 86,400 seconds. And every midnight, anything you failed to use for a good reason is lost. No balance is carried over. There is no overdraft. When the new day starts, the account is refilled. When it ends, the remains are destroyed forever. There is no going back. You have only one option--live in the present, each day, using as much of today's deposits as you possibly can. Make the most of today. To realize the value of ONE YEAR, ask a student who has to stay back a year to finish a grade. To realize the value of ONE MONTH, ask the mother who gave birth to a premature baby. To realize the value of ONE WEEK, ask the daily news channels. To realize the value of ONE HOUR, ask the lovers who are desperate to meet again. To realize the value of ONE MINUTE, ask the person who missed the train for her job interview. To realize the value of ONE-SECOND, ask the person who just avoided an accident. Every single moment is precious--and none of it can ever be held or saved. You must live in the present on today's deposits. You must spend that daily deposit in the way that gets you the best return on your health, happiness, and success! The clock is running.

*\* The Ripple Effect*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

A wise Master was walking through the fields one day. A young man approached him with a troubled look upon his face. "Such a serious look for such a beautiful day," the Master said. "Is it a beautiful day? I hadn't noticed," the young man said. And although he looked around, nothing seemed to register in his eyes as far as the Master was concerned.

(MORE)

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

His mind was clearly elsewhere. "Join me on my walk," the Master said and led the young man to the edge of a still pond. Sycamore trees with golden orange leaves just about to fall surrounded the pond. "Please sit down," the Master suggested, patting the ground. The young man did so, still clearly thinking of other things. "Now find a small stone, please," the Master instructed. "What?" the young man replied. "Find a small stone," the Master repeated calmly, "and throw it into the pond." Confused, the young man did as he'd been instructed and threw it as far as he could so it fell into the middle of the water. "Now tell me what you see," the Master instructed. The man covered his eyes with his hand to see clearly and said, "I see ripples." "Where did the ripples come from?" "From the pebble I threw into the pond." "Good," said the Master. "Now reach your hand into the water and top the ripples." The young man did as he was instructed, but each time he put his hand into the water, he only made more ripples. Confused, the man finally looked back at the Master. "Were you able to stop the ripples with your hand?" the Master asked calmly. "No, Master." "Could you have stopped the ripples?" "No, Master. I only caused more ripples." "What if you had stopped the pebble from entering the water to begin with?" At the young man's momentary loss for words, the Master smiled a smile of beauty and peace. "The next time you are unhappy with your life, try catching the stone before it hits the water. Do not spend time trying to undo what you have already done. Change what you are going to do before you do it, instead." The young man thought for a moment and then, still puzzled, asked "Master, how will I know what I am going to do before I do it?" "You will have to do something many cannot ever do," the Master replied. "You will take the responsibility for living your own life. If you go to a doctor because you are ill, for instance, ask the doctor to help you understand what caused your illness. Do not simply treat the symptoms. Keep asking questions." The man thought for another moment and --still puzzled--said, "Are you saying that I already know the right answers?" "Of course not. You may not know the answers now, but if you ask the right questions, you will know soon enough." "But what are the right questions, Master?" "There are no wrong questions, only those not asked. We must ask or we will never receive answers. And that is your responsibility. No one else can do it for you."

\* *Creation - A Sioux Tale*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

The Creator gathered all the creatures of his creation and said to them, "I want to hide something from the humans until they are ready for it. It is the realization that they create their own reality. Where shall I put it?" Eagle stepped forward proudly and said, "Give it to me and I will take it to the Moon." The Creator sighed. "No.

(MORE)



## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

One day they will get there and find it." Salmon swam to the edge of the river and gurgled, "Give it to me. I will bury it at the bottom of the ocean." The Creator sighed again. "No. They will get there, too." Buffalo stamped over and said, "I will bury it deep under the Great Plains." The Creator sighed a third time. "They will cut into the skin of the Earth and find it even there." Finally Grandmother Mole, She who lives in the breast of Mother Earth and who has no physical eyes but can see easily with her spiritual ones, rose from the ground and said softly, "Put it inside of them." The Creator smiled. "It is done."

\* *Socrates and the Triple Filter Test*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Socrates the ancient Greek philosopher of high esteem, met a recent acquaintance one day. "Do you know what I just heard about your friend?" the acquaintance asked. "Hold a moment," Socrates replied. "Before telling me what you wish to say, I want you pass a little test I call the Triple Filter. I call it this because I believe that it's worthwhile to take a moment and filter what you are going to say. Will you do this?" The acquaintance, excited about telling Socrates his information, agreed immediately. "Excellent. The First Filter is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?" "Well, no," the acquaintance said, "I just heard about it actually and--" "So you don't know if it's true or not. Excellent. The Second Filter is Goodness. Is what you are going to tell me about my friend something good?" "No, quite the opposite, in fact." "So you wish to tell me something bad about him but are not certain it is true. You might pass the Third Filter, still, which is Usefulness. Is what you wish to me useful to me?" The acquaintance thought for a moment and said, "No, not really." "Well then," concluded Socrates, "if what you want to tell me is neither true nor good nor useful...why tell it to me at all?" To this the acquaintance had no answer.

\* *The Sense of A Goose*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

The next time you see geese heading south or north for the changing seasons, consider what science has discovered about why they fly in that "V" formation. It's quite interesting. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following--meaning that the flock can add as much as 75% more flying range as a group than each goose could do on its own. Humans can do the same. If they share a common direction and community, they get where they are going more quickly and easily because they, too, are traveling on the thrust of one another. When the head goose of the formation gets tired, it rotates back into the wing and another goose takes the point. And why not? It's sensible to take turns when doing a demanding job whether you're a goose or a human.

(MORE)

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Finally--and this is the most important thing science has learned--when a goose gets sick or wounded and falls out of the formation, two other geese will fall out as well and follow it down to lend help and protection. This is completely true. They stay with the goose until it is able to fly again or until it dies. Only then do they launch back into the sky to catch up to their formation or join another. If only humanity had the sense of a goose.

\* *The Beautiful Gift*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

A young man was just about to graduate college. For months, he had wanted a beautiful sports car at a local dealership and--knowing his father could afford the car easily--told his father that was all he wanted for his graduation present. As Graduation Day approached, the young man awaited the signs that his father had purchased the car--but every day it remained in the showroom. On the morning of graduation, his father finally called him into his private study. He told his son how proud he was to have such a fine child and told him how much he loved his only son. Then the father handed the young man a beautifully wrapped gift-box. Curious--and a little disappointed--the man opened the box. Inside was a beautiful, leather-bound Holy Quran. The young man looked up at his father and raised his voice in anger as he yelled, "With all the money you have made in your life, you give me this present? A Holy book??" He stormed out of the house, leaving the present behind. He did not speak to his father for many, many years after that. He became very successful in business, married a beautiful woman. He grew a fine family and they lived in a perfect home. One day, however, he began thinking of how old his father must be and that he should go to visit him, since it had been so many years. But before he could find the time off to go, he received an email that his father had passed away, leaving all of his possessions to his only son. The email requested that he return home immediately and take care of things. The moment he entered his father's house, sadness and regret filled his heart. He began to examine his father's important papers and found, in a safe in his father's office, the Holy Quran--still in its box, still brand new. With tears in his eyes, he opened the Quran and began to turn the pages. As he read those words, a car key dropped from an envelope taped on the back page of the Quran. It had a tag with the dealer of that sports car he'd dreamed of so long ago. On the tag was the date of his graduation and the words PAID IN FULL. How many times do we miss The Creator's blessings because they are not packaged as we expect?

*\* The Sacred Tree*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

A carpenter by the name of Shih and his apprentice were traveling to the Ch'i State. On reaching the place called Shady Circle, Shih saw a sacred Li tree in the temple to the God of Earth. It was so large that its shade covered a herd of 3,000 cattle. It towered eighty feet over the hilltop before it branched out. It was a hundred arm spans in length. A dozen boats could be cut out of it. It was such a beautiful tree that crowds came from all around to gaze at it. But the carpenter took no notice and went on without a backwards glance. His apprentice took a good look at it and then hastened after his master, saying "Ever since I joined as your apprentice, I have never seen such a splendid piece of timber. How is it that you, such a master carpenter, did not care to stop and look at it?" "Forget about it at once," Shih responded. "It's not worth talking about. It's good for nothing at all. If it were made into a boat, it would sink. Into a coffin, it would rot. Into furniture, it would break. Into a door, it would sweat. Into a pillar, it would be eaten through by worms. It is a wood of terrible quality and of no use." "But how do you know?" the apprentice asked. "Because otherwise, it would never have reached that age," Shih replied. When the carpenter returned home, he had a dream of the spirit of the tree appearing to speak to him. "What do you intend to compare me with?" the spirit demanded. "Are you comparing me to fine-grained wood? Look at the cherry-apple, the pear, the orange and other fruit bearing trees? As soon as their fruit ripens, they are stripped bare and treated as nothing more than property. Their boughs are snapped off, the small ones tossed around. They are so valuable that they injure their own lives. They cannot fulfill their allotted life-span, perishing too soon because they destroy themselves to be admired by the world. But me, I have stayed here. Many times I was in danger of being cut down, but at length I succeeded and have, in the end, become exceedingly useful to myself. Had I been of use to others, I would never have grown to this height." "I had not thought of this," Shih replied. "Even more," the spirit continued, "you and I are both part of the same creation. So leave off the criticism of value. Is a good-for-nothing fellow who will likely die long before me the right person to talk about the value of a tree?" Shih awoke right then and told the dream to his apprentice. Confused, the apprentice said, "If the tree tried that hard to be useless, how did it become a sacred tree?" "Quiet" Shih replied. "It took refuge in that temple to escape from the abuse of those who did not appreciate its value. Had it not become sacred, just think about how many would want to cut down a tree of such immense size? It chose to think outside the box of its normal ways to find safety. To criticize it by those standards would be a poor choice, indeed."

## THE FINALE, EVERYONE

*As the second set of bells rings, the various audience members will be sent back to the mainstage.*

## THE CREATOR

Welcome back, everyone! Please feel free to sit anywhere you wish as you come back inside. Here at the table, on the boxes, on the floor, in the seats. Anywhere around the stage--I want to be able to see you all.

*He guides people around, makes sure they're seated and then smiles brightly at all of them.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

I hope you found speaking with Our reflections enjoyable. I certainly did. I feel quite a bit more like Myself after actually speaking to you live. As I said earlier, I've been gone a long time. And while I get your prayers, they come on Mercury Messenger. It's terrible at reading tone or context.

*He begins to stroll through the space, making eye contact with those he passes. Touching them gently on the elbow, or shaking hands if they'll let him. Maybe a pat on the edge of the shoulder as he walks by.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

One thing I did notice when I got back here, however, is that some messages that I gave you that I meant to be one way have gotten twisted. I don't blame you. Your species just tends to turn My words into one big game of telephone. I say, "If you want to give me a great offering, you can't go wrong with Red Velvet cupcakes" and it comes out the other end as "Thou must eat only Gator Jerky between the first day of Spring Break and the last day of Comic-Con." Something always gets lost. So let's sort a few of them out once and for all.

*Behind him on the screen, the clouds finally part to show a simple bottle of wine and bread.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

First off, Communion. The moment where The Jesus Creator suggests a cannibal feast to his followers and they say, "Sounds like fun!" Now believers commemorate the ancient vampire God by drinking wine because blood is illegal and getting paper-thin bread stuck in their throats as a symbol of the everlasting blood lust.

*He looks around.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

That's how it goes, right? I only saw this one today.

*He looks around for someone's answer. If they do answer, he listens to the answer respectfully.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

THANK YOU for clarifying. I thought the blood cult part seemed WAY out there, even for you guys.

*If no one answers, he nods.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

I thought so. Just a thought--the blood cult vibe is going just a tad too far, isn't it?

*He then grins.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Obviously, I knew about this long ago. But what you have now is not how I originally meant it. In Latin, Communion means "to share". And you do share something. Where things went wrong is this idea that it's only one-sided.

*He continues to earnestly speak to people.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Any 5-year-old can tell you that's not what happens when you share. *Both sides* get something cool out of the deal. That is what My communion was meant to represent. I give you love. Peace. Miracles. Knowledge. Mysteries. Good Me, I give you a LOT.

*He smiles at whoever he's currently looking at.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

It's like I think you're special to me. Crazy, huh?

*He turns to another person.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

It's not crazy at all. When we commune, you give me something equally important. You share your view of the universe with Me. How things look from your vantage. Everything you say and don't say. Every emotion. Every thanks. Every plea for assistance. You allow Me to see through your eyes.

*He turns to the next person and stage whispers.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Guess what? That is the whole reason I created you. I'm GREAT at making things. But like any artist, I'm 100% incapable of seeing it with any type of objectivity. I need you to understand whether what I've built is good, evil or--worst of all--derivative. You Hollywood folk know what I mean. Who wants to create a world that doesn't get a full season? I'm not a hack.

*Poly enters the stage from his direction.*

POLYTHEISM

Hey, Creator, come on now. Tell it to them straight.

*Poly starts strutting around.*

POLYTHEISM (CONT'D)

Communion's about way more than that. It really is sharing. You get help, prayers, yadda yadda from Us. In return, We get energy from you. Your belief powers us. It's like clapping to keep Tinker Bell alive. Your communion literally charges us like a battery. Without your belief, We start to run out of juice. Wear down. Fade away. It ain't pretty but it's the damn truth. You want Our help? You got to give a little to get a little. It's the way things work.

*Self enters from her direction.*

SELF-REFLECTION

Polytheism is both right and wrong, which is not unusual.

POLYTHEISM

Hey!

SELF-REFLECTION

No judgment, Poly. Just stating facts. We want them to understand, don't we?

POLYTHEISM

Well. Yeah.

SELF-REFLECTION

Then let Me help, since deep understanding tends to be more My speed than Yours.

*She begins to walk through the crowd, speaking with the same calm and measured voice. She also opens a bag at her side and pulls out Yin-Yang symbols (on pieces of paper or whatever works). She hands the symbols to people as she walks if they'll take them.*

SELF-REFLECTION (CONT'D)

Communion, My friends, is about bringing the uniqueness of humanity and divinity together. It connects us at the most intimate level, understanding that We--You and Us--are the same. As an example, look at the Tao. It is said the Tao was and is the fundamental absolute--the beginning and middle and end of all before it knew what it was. It was Ourselves before We examined Ourselves. When We created everything, there was the first division of Yin into divine and Yang into mortal. Of all the divisions that Yin and Yang represent, this first separation is the most significant. Communion is where We once again reach for Tao.

## THE CREATOR

I never get tired of hearing My reflections' opinions about how the universe works. It's fascinating how people give their own interpretation of your work. Speaking of My work, do any of you have questions you want to ask Me? Any of Me?

*The screen behind will change to a simple question motif. The audience is given a chance to ask a question or two (depending on the time). Self, Poly and The Creator will answer questions as best they can, improvisation-wise. Humor is fine.*

*Then The Creator, Poly and Self all join together to be in the same area of the stage.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Well, Our time is nearly done. But there is one thing We all wanted to talk to you about before We go. Free Will.

## POLYTHEISM

Nope, Boss. You're on Your own for that one.

## SELF-REFLECTION

I need to think on that before speaking out loud.

*Both Reflections bail as fast as possible off-stage in Self's direction. The Creator watches, bemused.*

## THE CREATOR

Spiritualism?

*From the kitchen, Spirit answers without entering.*

## SPIRITUALISM

...What?

## THE CREATOR

You haven't returned to speak to Our guests. The idea of why Free Will has to exist is sacred knowledge. It's right up Your alley. You want to join me and talk to them about it?

*There's a pause.*

## SPIRITUALISM (O.S.)

I think keeping the mystery alive helps inspire people.

## THE CREATOR

So you're not coming out.

## SPIRITUALISM (O.S.)

Maybe. Maybe not. See? Mysterious.

*The Creator shakes his head, chuckling.*

## THE CREATOR

Reflections. They never save you from the monologue.

*He looks around at the audience, seeming visibly nervous. Finally, he gulps.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Okay, here goes. I'm very sorry about giving all of you Free Will. Not because it's a bad thing--it's not. The whole multiverse runs on the concept of you guys being able to choose good or bad. I built it that way and I can't really undo it without blowing the whole place up and starting over. Nobody wants that.

*He looks even more apologetic and nervous.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

I mean I'm really sorry that you all don't know how to use it correctly. I left clear directions, but I think you burned them when you created fire. Now it's just too powerful for you to handle. It makes you do things that are all at the extremes. The Renaissance? Great. World War II? Not so much. Infinity War? Good. Justice League? You get my point.

*He walks through the audience once more.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Even worse, the whole concept was a set-up from the start. You probably know the story of Lucifer, my brightest angel, rebelling against me and getting tossed out of Heaven? A surprising number of religions tell a version of this story.

*He shrugs massively.*

THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

Here's what no one seems to remember: *Angels don't have Free Will*. QED, Lucifer couldn't rebel at all--not in his programming. He was just doing a role. You all were the ones with Free Will. But Adam and Eve kept acting like 1-year-olds unable to defy their 'Father' and touch the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil--even after I'd named it EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS MEANT TO BE THEMATICALLY. I was at my wit's end. My kids had to see they could defy Me if they wanted. So I said, "Hey, Lucy. I need you. You're my best angel. My number one dude. I want humans to understand they can decide their own fates. You up for it?" Lucifer said, "You got it, Boss!" Which I appreciated, even though--like I said--he didn't have a choice. Off he went to be Sith to my Jedi. He told Eve, "You CAN eat that apple. Dad just said you *shouldn't*." Boom, instant teenage rebellion. Boom, knowledge of good and evil. Boom, Free Will achievement unlocked. To make a long story short--

EVERYONE ELSE (O.S.)

Too late!



## THE CREATOR

I walked right into that one. The point was to tell you all that I apologize for giving you such a potent gift and making you to figure out what to do with it. Oh, and I also wanted--

*He points to an audience member.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

--to apologize to the one most harmed by my decision. Honest, Lucy, if I'd had any idea they'd make stupid backwards messages in rock music to summon you, I wouldn't have done it. Do you forgive me?

*He responds to whatever the audience member says, then turns to the rest of the audience.*

## THE CREATOR (CONT'D)

That's it for this tour. I hope you see things at least a little differently. I promise to come back a little more often. Until then, know that I have faith in you. I think sometimes you all forget that all of Our forms want you to win even more than you do. Keep creating and showing me this place. So far, I think I like it.

*The lights go rock crazy once more. There is sudden darkness, the music ends and when the lights come back up, the screen simply says, "God has left the building. Please exit the way you came in." Curtain.*