

## Creation

The sage spoke:

In the beginning, there was Nothing, and it was everywhere. There was neither light nor darkness, heat nor cold, hatred nor love, triumph nor despair, earth nor air, fire nor water. There was only Nothing, filling the primeval Void.

Nothing was divided into two parts. Below there was an Ocean of Nothing, and above, a Sky of Nothing. The surface of the Ocean of Nothing was still, for there was no wind or tide to disturb it. And on that still surface floated the Seed.

The Seed put forth a root, and a leaf, and finally a bud, and this was the bud of the Blue Lotus. The Lotus bloomed, and from within its petals came the One, whose radiance illumined the Void and the Nothing. The One and the Lotus floated on the Ocean of Nothing.

The One grew restless, and she said: “I am lonely.” But she was alone in the Void, except for the Blue Lotus. So from the Lotus she fashioned a being, and breathed upon it, and it lived. Knowing no other name, she called him Blue Lotus. The One and Blue Lotus looked at one another, and felt joy, and also desire. Their desire led them to the first Act, and their joy was increased.

Then the One gave birth to the Creatures — gods, demons, plants, animals, and men — and so she became the Mother, and Blue Lotus her Consort. All the Creatures floated in the Ocean of Nothing with the Mother and the Consort, but they were unhappy, for they could not comprehend the Void. So the Mother and the Consort together made the world, and filled it with rivers and mountains, deserts and forests, oceans and cities, to please all their Creatures. They put the Creatures into the beautiful, perfect world, where they were never hungry and never ill, and they never hated nor sorrowed. The Creatures, too, were perfectly made and divinely beautiful in their diverse ways, and they were happy in the world that had been made for them, and forgot the terror of the Void. Then the Mother and the Consort were content, and they slept for sixteen thousand years.

When the Mother and the Consort woke, the Creatures were again unhappy, and cried out to them piteously.

“What is the matter with you Creatures?” asked the Mother. “You are perfect Creatures in a perfect world — what could make you unhappy?”

The Elephant was spokesman for the Creatures, and he said, “O Shining One, you put us here, and we were perfect Creatures in a perfect world. We roamed our world freely, never hungering or thirsting, always in harmony as we discovered its delights together. By and by we discovered the chiefest delight of all, that which you and the Consort did which caused us to be born, that which lighted the terrible Void and rippled the serene Ocean of Nothing. And so we, too, felt the joy of Creation, and our children were born, generation upon generation, until we began to feel crowded. Now

there is not enough World for us all, so we quarrel violently. What can we do?"

"Some self-restraint would have been wise, before things came to this pass," murmured the Mother. The Creatures looked abashed, but the Elephant said: "You and the Consort invented this great joy, and it was the first thing two beings ever did together, and it was good. Naturally we wish to imitate you, to feel the pleasure you felt before the beginning of the World."

"And so you have learned," retorted the Mother, "that an excess of pleasure may lead to sorrow. A costly lesson. However, I will see what is to be done." The Mother and the Consort retired to the Void to think. They could not remove the Creatures' desire for pleasure and procreation — that would go against the nature of Creation itself. But the world was crowded, and the Creatures unhappy.

So they Created again, and this time Death was born, the last of their children. Death went among the Creatures, and brought them sickness and sadness and madness and age, and they began to kill and eat one another, and many died. Then the Creatures were afraid, for they could not see or understand Death, so they thought they were being unCreated.

They cried to the Mother: "What have you done to us? We were perfect and beautiful, but now we are decaying and ugly, and you are unCreating us."

The Mother replied: "I have Created Death, the last of my Creatures, and it is he who does these things to you. Each of you will die, at your due and proper time, but that is not unCreation. I have Created this world, and nothing in it can be unCreated. Death is only change. The Wheel of Change is set in motion, and even I cannot stop it. All things which exist will always change."

Then the Creatures understood that, although the world was no longer perfect, it was still very good, and they understood that change is not unCreation. So they were bound to the Wheel of Change, and so they remain.

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The student asked, "Is nothing in Creation immortal, then?"

"Nothing," the sage replied.

"Not even the Mother?"

The sage sighed. "The Mother is in everything, and everything changes and dies, so the Mother experiences death, and is surely not immortal. But nothing can be unCreated, so everything that was Created continues to exist, so the Mother is not mortal either."

The student thought this a highly equivocal answer, but he asked no more.