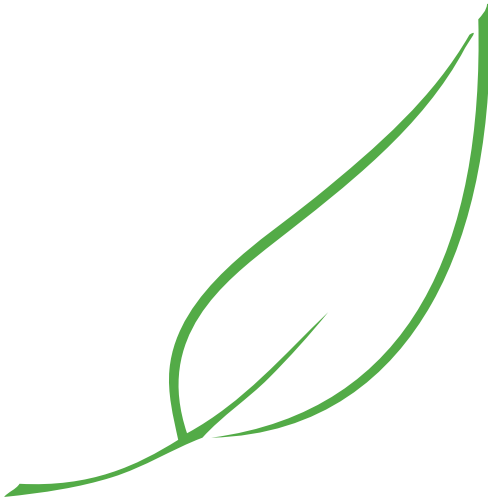


Fables

By Leon Katz



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FABLES

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FABLES

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SYNOPSIS: Fables includes: 1. *Loki Saves the Hammer* - (5M, 1F, 1E) A hilarious farce about a magic hammer which protects Asgard, the home of the Teutonic Gods, from its enemy, the giant Jotuns. 2. *The Myth of Creation* - (13M, 10F) The imaginative and moving story of the creation of the world, as told in Hopi Native American culture. 3. *The Golden Fish* – (10M, 2F, 1E) A comic folk tale with a familiar and worthwhile lesson told by Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, and here turned into a play for children and young adults. A poor fisherman who lives with his wife in an old, broken-down hut catches a remarkable fish – golden, verbal and magical – who promises him anything he desires if he will spare it and throw it back. 4. *The Birth of Rama* - (10M, 3F, 1E) The great Indian epic, the Ramayana, tells the story of the world's creation as the dream of the god Brahma - who exists beyond time and space.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Loki Saves the Hammer</i>	(from the Teutonic myths).....	page 3
<i>The Myth of Creation</i>	(from the Hopi myths).....	page 21
<i>The Golden Fish</i>	(from an Alexander Pushkin fable).....	page 48
<i>The Birth of Rama</i>	(from the Indian Ramayana).....	page 56

LOKI SAVES THE HAMMER

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 5 males, 1 either)

NARRATOR (m/f)	A voice. <i>(41 lines)</i>
LOKI (m)	Comic half-giant, servant to the God Thor; young man. <i>(27 lines)</i>
THOR (m).....	The god of gods; a great giant warrior; the same size around as Freya. <i>(14 lines)</i>
THRYM (m)	King of the Jotuns; a giant warrior. <i>(21 lines)</i>
THRYM'S MEN (m).....	Servants; two young warriors.
FREYA (f)	Chief Goddess; beautiful; very large dimensions. <i>(17 lines)</i>

DURATION: 25 Minutes

SET: Bare Stage

PRODUCTION NOTES

The play can be done on a bare stage, but can also be done with slide projections against the stage's back wall, showing, for example, children's book drawings of: A bright sky with white clouds, Goddess Freya's room, geese flying in air, The Jotun's dining hall, etc. Scene 3a (Loki flying among the angry geese) can be done in one of three ways: 1) On a darkened bare stage, off-stage flashlights swirling light on the backcloth, with Loki miming flying amid the confusion of lights. 2) A fixed picture on backcloth of geese in flight, and Loki on stage miming flight amid offstage flashlights swirling light on him and on stage floor. 3) A film of geese in flight, with image projected onto screen and also onto Loki miming flight in front of screen. The magic hammer should be invisible. When it is thrown and returns, a musical motif substitutes, for the hammer, and no hammer is seen.

COSTUMES

LOKI: Short white tunic, leather belt, sandals; (As Maid:) Long blonde wig, long white dress, veiled head with headband (face exposed), apron. THOR: Red hair and beard; short white tunic, warrior's breastplate, sandals, (optional:) helmet with two metal horns; (As Bride:) Long white dress, veils covering head and face, long blonde tresses peeking through, wedding crown, jewelry. **FREYA:** Long white dress with breastplate, detachable golden wings, long blonde wig, sandals, jewelry. **THRYM:** Short dark tunic with breastplate, sandals. **THRYM'S MEN:** Short dark tunics, sandals.

PROPS

- ☐ Bedding on floor
- ☐ Meal Cart
- ☐ Large food platter
- ☐ 3 Large mugs
- ☐ Clothing chest
- ☐ Dining table
- ☐ 3 seats
- ☐ 1 Roasted steer (miniature, papier mache)
- ☐ 2 Roasted pigs (miniature, papier mache)
- ☐ 1 Tun (small barrel)

SCENE 1

NARRATOR: Thor, the God of War,
With his wild red beard and his eye
As bright and as fierce as fire,
Chortles and laughs and grins
As he tosses his hammer in air.
The gods live snug and secure
In Asgard, heavenly home,
Protected by him, by Thor
And his magic hammer which flies
Over the gates and the walls,
And believe it or not flies back
Of its own accord to the hand
Of merry and terrible Thor.
Each time it flies from his hand
And travels who knows where,
A cry of pain is heard
From the mouths of the enemy.
Jotuns, they're called, the giants
Who in the dead of night
Creep and crawl to the walls,
To the very gates of the gods,
Trying to pillage and burn,
To destroy the heavenly home,
Longing to win for their envious selves
Heavenly majesty.
But the magic hammer of Thor
Unerringly finds each one
Wherever the Jotun is hid
And flies to his hiding place
And neatly chops him in two.
And at every hammer's thud
And at every Jotun's scream,
The mighty God of War
Slaps his thigh with delight
And sends the hammer for more.
And so morning, noon and night,

He gleefully does his chore
Relishing every kill
That keeps gods and heaven secure.
But deep in the night, he yawns,
Fatigued by the fun of the day.
With a belch and contented sigh,
He lies down to sleep and snore.
One beautiful Asgard morn,
Loki as usual comes
To bring him his morning meal -
Loki, half-giant, half-god,
Gnashing his teeth that he,
Of all the demi-gods,
Is chosen to drag the cart
Loaded with pots of mead,
With the carcasses of two cows,
And a giant net full of fish,
To slake the mighty thirst
And bolster the mighty strength
Of the waked-up God of War.
He gingerly taps the arm
Of sleeping, snoring Thor,
Knowing it's wiser by far
To favor the little tasks
That win the friendship and trust
Of Thor and the other gods,
All of whom always, ever,
Despise and are wary of him,
Whose cunning and tricks they like
When they serve, but when they do not,
They give them the godly pip.
So setting the mounds of food,
He wakes the mighty Thor,
Who stretches, belches, and roars,
And grabbing a pot of mead,
He reaches with one hand
For the hammer, his love, his delight.
He reaches, and reaches, but lo!

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It is nowhere; the hammer is gone!

THOR: It's gone!

LOKI: Gone?!

THOR: Gone!

LOKI: Impossible!

THOR: It's gone! Look for yourself! It's gone!

NARRATOR: Gone, the hammer is gone.

But while Thor is tearing his hair
And roaring with pain and chagrin,
Cunning Loki considers:
Who has the skill and the guile
And the dare and the wit to creep
Silently in the night,
And from under the sounding nose
Of terrible Thor, snatch up
The magical hammer and steal
Away, unseen and unheard?
Who? Only one! King Thrym,
The King of the Jotun hoard.

LOKI: He alone has the guile
And the wit to do this thing.

THOR: Who? Never mind! Whoever.
Loki, my friend, my dear!
Find him, find him, before
Those Jotuns, those devils, discover
The magic hammer is lost,
And gather in force to attack,
And destroy our heavenly home.

NARRATOR: And Loki, knowing the gods
Will be grateful to him forever
For saving their heaven and home,
Goes off to recover the hammer.

SCENE 2

NARRATOR: Massively beautiful Freya,
The love and the pride of the gods,
Her beauty outweighing them all,
Wonder of wonders, travels
On golden falcon wings
Which lift her, wonder of wonders,
Into the air at a clip,
And bear her to distant places
In less than the wink of an eye.

FREYA: My wings!

LOKI: Your precious wings.

FREYA: And what will you do with them?

NARRATOR: But Loki, sworn to tell no one
The what and the why of his trip,
Begs the magnificent Freya
To trust in his need and give—

FREYA: Trust? In Loki the liar,
The thief, half-Jotun, half-god?
Madness!

NARRATOR: And laughing and laughing
Her corpulent golden laugh,
She bodily elevates Loki
And pitches him out of the room.
But desperate Loki, needing
Desperately her wings,
Scrambles back to her side,
And ducking the swing of her arm,
Whispers into her ear
The news of the theft of the hammer,
And the danger it holds for the gods.
Virginal Freya, seized
By fear for the ruin of heaven
And the twilight of the gods,
Lets flow from her sky-blue eyes
A stream of golden tears,
Rips the wings from her shoulders,

And claps them onto the back
Of anxious, trembling Loki,
Spins him around to face her,
And whispers urgently:

FREYA: Take these wings and fly
To the land of the Jotun beasts.

NARRATOR: And slipping a golden bracelet
From off her capacious arm,
She adds with a tearful smile:

FREYA: Bring back the magic hammer
And I will reward you with this.
Come back empty handed,
And I will tear you limb from limb.

NARRATOR: Needing no other urging,
Loki takes off on wing.

SCENE 3

NARRATOR: Flying, flying, he skirts
Lightning and thunder clouds,
But flocks of angry geese,
Alarmed and enraged at the sight
Of a demi-god with wings,
Cackle and nip at his heels,
And Loki, in godly terror,
Circles and zooms, and at last
Escapes from the menacing fowl,
And reaching Jotunheim,
There! On the top of the mountain,
He sights the Jotun castle
Where Thrym, the King of the Jotuns,
Lives with his army of giants,
Secure in his castle eyrie,
Impregnable from without.
Loki alights on the ramparts,
And Thrym, half-cousin, half-foe,
Greets the traveler warmly,
Grinning from ear to ear.

‘Why is he grinning?’ thinks Loki.

LOKI: Aha, my suspicion is right!

THRYM: Suspicion? Suspicion? Dear Loki,
What is there to suspect?

LOKI: Hm.

NARRATOR: Says Loki.

THRYM: Come, come, sit!

NARRATOR: Says Thrym with a grin.

They sit, they gorge, they guzzle,
They chat of this and that,
Both thinking nothing but: hammer,
Neither mentioning it.
Loki at last, in a fog,
Crammed full of food and wine,
And ready to fall asleep,
Rouses himself to mention
A tidbit – news of the day –
Something about a hammer,
The hammer of, well, of Thor.

THRYM: Did he happen by chance to lose it?

LOKI: Not exactly to lose.

THRYM: Mislace? Then did he misplace—?

LOKI: No, someone possibly stole
The precious hammer of Thor,
The hammer he loves so dear.

THRYM: How dear?

LOKI: As dear as a casket of gold, perhaps,
A casket too heavy for ten
Of the strongest giants of Jotun
To carry up this hill.

THRYM: Dear Loki, kinsman, friend,
Let me, King Thrym, confide:
It was I and I alone
Who stole from under the nose
Of Thor, the God of War
The precious hammer which splits
The precious heads of the Jotuns
Morning, noon and night.

And now that hammer is hidden
Eight miles underground.
And for that hammer—

LOKI: You'll take—

THRYM: Not one casket of gold.

Not even ten, or a hundred.

LOKI: Then cows. A herd of cows,
A multitude, to feed
The Jotuns for ten years.

THRYM: Not even ten times more.

LOKI: Mares, to fill your stables.

The sleekest, swiftest mares—

THRYM: Freya.

LOKI: Freya!

THRYM: Freya.

Gorgeous, radiant Freya
To have for my ravishing bride.
For her alone did I steal
The deadly, magical hammer,
And for her alone will it be
Returned to that beast, God Thor.

LOKI: A hundred caskets of gold!

THRYM: Freya, only Freya.

LOKI: A thousand caskets, ten thousand!

THRYM: Freya, my idol, my love!

NARRATOR: Mad with a passion for Freya,

Thrym, great King of the Jotuns,
Is deaf to reason and sense.
A Jotun's lust for a goddess,
Loki tries to explain,
Is out of the question, can never
Be satisfied by the gods.

THRYM: No Freya, no hammer!

NARRATOR: Says Thrym,

And bids Loki farewell with a grin.
Loki leaves with foreboding,
Fainting at the thought
Of breaking the news to Freya,

Fearing for life and limb.

SCENE 4

FREYA: Marry a Jotun! I?

NARRATOR: And her limpid, beautiful eyes

Weep their golden tears

As she lunges for hapless Loki,

But luckily Thor steps in.

THOR: No way,

NARRATOR: He says,

THOR: No way,

To keep our virgin Freya

From marrying that beast.

Refuse, and we lose dear Asgard,

Our heavenly, safe home.

Freya, decline these nuptials

And you send us to our doom.

NARRATOR: Hefty Freya leans

On the neck of the God of War

And drops more golden tears.

Staggering backward, Thor

Strokes her ample cheek

And soothes her with these words:

THOR: Seductive beauty, Freya,

Victim of your own charms,

Wed that beast, that Thrym,

And all of us in heaven

Will remember you forever,

Honor you in absence,

And applaud your sacrifice.

NARRATOR: She with a well-aimed blow

Lays low the God of War.

FREYA: I, in hell with Jotuns,

While the rest of you are lolling

In the featherbed of heaven

Swilling pots of mead?

Never!

NARRATOR: And she lifts
A threatening foot to crush
The supine body of
The terrified God of War.
But Loki in compassion
For his helpless, mighty lord,
Leaps below the foot
Of the bent-on-murder maid
And with more than godly effort,
Stays her lowering foot.

LOKI: Precious Freya, wait!
Before you stomp and mangle
The protector of the gods,
Hear how cunning Loki
Preserves you from this marriage
And saves divinity!

NARRATOR: And suffering Freya, holding
A ready foot above
The bodies of the two,
Looks down at both, and, glowering,
Utters one word:

FREYA: Speak!

LOKI: One way, and only one!
Thor himself must go
To Thrym, in Jotunheim,
In Freya's wedding dress,
And play the blushing bride.

NARRATOR: In one bound, Thor is up
And on his feet, and lifts
A quaking Loki by
The throat, and shaking him,
Their noses touching, yells
Into his face:

THOR: WHAT?!

NARRATOR: But Freya, feeling salvation
Coming into view,
Tears Loki from the clutches
Of maddened, mighty Thor,

And presses him robustly
Against her grateful breast.

FREYA: The dear, the wily creature!

Oh, how the gods will thank him
For sparing me the insult
Of Jotun matrimony!
Virgin I am, and virgin
I'll innocently remain
Until a brave, a wise,
And lucky, lucky god
One day will win my hand.
Maiden Freya saved,
Thanks to the craft of Loki
And a bit of a ruse by Thor!

THOR: A bit of a ruse! By thunder,

How will it look for Thor
The manliest of the gods,
To dress in the virgin goddess
Freya's wedding dress?

FREYA: Lovely, it will look lovely!

And I'll give you the very sweetest,
Prettiest wedding dress,
And teach you the pretty ways
Of an innocent virgin maid.

NARRATOR: And she ran to her trousseau cupboard

And grabbed her wedding dress,
And slid it over the brawny frame
Of the warrior god of gods.

FREYA: Wonder of wonders, it fits

As though it were made for him!
A miracle that my dress
Can encompass a bulk like his!

LOKI: The bulk, but not the beard,

And the hair on his manly chest.
We must cover his chest –

FREYA: With jewels,

With my golden necklaces,
And bracelets for his arms,

And bangles for his ears.

LOKI: And what of the face?

FREYA: The face!

We'll cover the face with a veil,
A bridal veil, and a crown,
A wedding crown for his head!

NARRATOR: And with all the garments and jewels

Set on the god and in place,
Loki and Freya step back,
Observe, check, and appraise.

LOKI: Beautiful! Oh, dazzling!

As dazzling as Freya herself!
Now, walk!

NARRATOR: And raising a tree-stump leg,

The god with effort waddles
And trundles about the room.

FREYA: I? I walk like that?!

NO, I will not be seen
Tramping about like a clod!
Grace, the grace of a goddess!
Loki, my darling, show him
The elegance of my walk!

NARRATOR: Loki, fearing the worst,

Takes him by the hand
And sashays and minces about
With his partner, the God of War.
Freya, in stupefied rage,
Watches a moment or two,
Then raises her arm to strike,
To obliterate the sight
Of the mockery of her grace
And her godly daintiness.

FREYA: Take off, take off my gown,

My crown, my veil, my jewels!
Freya will not be mocked
By an oaf, a clod, a bear
Who walks like an ape, not a woman,
And shames the image of me.

NARRATOR: But Loki, not of a mind
To note that the walk of Thor
Is exactly like that of the goddess,
Merely remarks to her:

LOKI: Freya, whatever his walk,
Thor will have to make do.

NARRATOR: And Freya, weeping again
Her stream of golden tears,
Agrees that indeed, for the sake
Of saving the realm of the gods,
Indeed, it will have to do.
She stifles her tears, and commands:

FREYA: Go, then! Go, and be wed,
And try, oh try to be kind
To the image of virgin and maid.

NARRATOR: But before he goes, the god,
Feeling shamed as a man,
Decides not to be shamed alone.

THOR: A bride unattended cannot
Go to her wedding feast
Without a retinue,
Or even so much as a maid,
And Loki, who thought of this ruse,
Must certainly come as—

LOKI: NO!

NARRATOR: In a panic, he leaps for the door,
But the mighty God of War
Seizes him by the throat
And calls to the goddess:

THOR: Freya! Dress him! Dress the maid!

NARRATOR: And Freya, delighted to have
A maid with her at her feast,
Grabs Loki and flies with him
To her trousseau cupboard once more.

LOKI: No! Oh, no! Oh, no!

SCENE 5

NARRATOR: A burst of horns and trumpets,
And Loki, now gowned and aproned,
With borrowed tresses flowing
From under a modest cap,
And Thor, a massive poem
Of jewels and silks and veils,
Is greeted in the festive hall
Of the King of Jotuns, Thrym.
Seeing the wrapped-up maid
He imagines will be his bride,
He is overcome by the vision
Of her currently hidden charms,
And fainting with desire,
He beckons to bride and maid
To come at once to his table,
Then barks at his giant minions
To hurry up with the feast
And waste not a single moment
So that he and his bride may retire
And royally consummate.
Hand in hand, the maid
And the stomping, clumping bride
Move slowly toward their places.
But watching his love, his goddess
Waddling toward her seat,
Thrym is taken aback,
And asks the mincing maid:

THRYM: Is this the gait of a goddess,
Waddling like a clod?

LOKI: It is, great King of Jotuns.
In Asgard, home of the gods,
All the goddesses waddle
As a mark of loveliness,
And of all of Asgard's goddesses,
Your bride waddles best.

THOR: Ah, then I will be

The proudest of all husbands,
For my bride waddles best!
Come, sit beside me, goddess!

NARRATOR: They sit, and Thor, on seeing

The table spread for feast,
Lifts his arm, and reaches
For the whole of a roasted steer.
The steer disappears in a flash
Under the bridal veil,
And soon as it's gone, Thor reaches
For two whole roasted pigs.
Thrym is aghast, and cries:

THRYM: Never in all my days

Did I see such a gluttonous bride!

LOKI: Small wonder, great king, the child

For eight long days has not eaten,
Wasting and pining for you.

NARRATOR: Thrym, overcome, cries out:

THRYM: Oh, let me kiss my bride! The dear child, pining for me!

NARRATOR: And lifting the edge of her veil,

The lightning-beam of the eye
Of the bride of the king strikes fire,
And Thrym reels back, and cries:

THRYM: Why do her eyes glow red

Like the flames of a forest fire?

LOKI: Because the child hasn't slept

For eight long days, while waiting
And longing for her betrothed.

NARRATOR: Thrym is inflamed, and shouts

To his minions, the Jotun giants:

THRYM: Hurry, and bring Thor's hammer

And lay it on Freya's lap,
And quick! Let's proceed at once
To sealing our marriage vows!

NARRATOR: He raises a beaker of mead

And cries for a wedding toast,
And Thor lifts a whole tun of mead
And pours it down at a gulp.

Thrym, in astonishment, gapes:

THRYM: Ah, my darling is parched,
Not having drunk a drop,
For eight days, yearning for me!

NARRATOR: The Jotuns return with the hammer.

Thrym grabs it, and gleefully
Drops it into the lap
Of his imminent bride-to-be.

THRYM: Now the bargain is sealed,
And we, my love, will be joined
Forever in perfect bliss!
Bring the marriage ring!
And darling, we'll make our vows!

THOR: Here is my vow!

NARRATOR: Bellows Thor,
And pulling the veil from his face,
Pitches the magic hammer
Which magically flies through the air,
Parting the heads of Thrym
And the Jotuns in one blow.
As the hammer comes back to his hand,

THOR: Come on, little maid!

NARRATOR: And Loki, following, bleats:

LOKI: Oh, yes, dear bride,

NARRATOR: And they're gone.

SCENE 6

NARRATOR: Now Thor, the God of War,
With his wild red beard and his eye
As bright and as fierce as fire,
Chortles and laughs once more
As he tosses his hammer in air,
And again he hears the thud
And after, the yell of pain,
As the hammer finds in the hills
Surrounding the heavenly home
The heads of the Jotun giants,

For never again did a Jotun
Dare to steal the hammer
Of Thor, the God of War,
Whose breath, rumbling like thunder,
And his eye, flashing like lightning,
And his magic hammer, daily
Splitting the skulls of the Jotuns,
Kept forever the home of the gods
Safe from its enemies.

Blackout.

THE END

THE MYTH OF CREATION

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(10 females, 12 males)

COMPERE (m).....	Narrator; older man; querulous.
TAIOWA (m).....	The god of gods; an echoing, reverberating voice-over.
SOTUKNANG (m).....	Nephew of Taiowa; a young, handsome god.
NORTH POLE (m).....	Young, eager, dominating.
SOUTH POLE (m).....	His twin; young, eager, slightly obtuse.
HUMAN (red) (m).....	Native American.
HUMAN (yellow) (m).....	Chinese.
HUMAN (black) (m).....	African American.
HUMAN (white) (m).....	Caucasian.
LAVAIHOYA (m).....	A mocking-bird; "The Talker;" a loud-mouth.
KATOY'A (m).....	A snake with a man's head; the tempter.
TWO SALESMEN (m).....	Brash, TV paid-program types.
COMMERE (f).....	Narrator; older woman; overbearing.
SPIDER WOMAN (f).....	Young, elegant, beautiful goddess.
HUMAN (red) (f).....	a Native American.
HUMAN (yellow) (f).....	Chinese.
HUMAN (black) (f).....	African American.
HUMAN (white) (f).....	Caucasian.
MOTHER ANT (f).....	A kindly mother, nurse and cook.
HEHERVUTI (f).....	An ant; a weaver.
CHA'KWAINA (f).....	An ant; a sewing machine worker.
DAUGHTER ANT (f).....	Very young, querulous.

DURATION: Approximately 80 Minutes

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PRODUCTION NOTES

The style of the production could aim for the authentic look of Hopi Indian costume and setting, but the tale's universal relevance lends itself also to freer and more original treatment. This version is addressed primarily to children, and so might be designed in a storybook style more familiar to children now.

EPISODE ONE: THE BEGINNING

COMMERE: Forgotten. Forgotten the story.

COMPERE: Sit quietly. It will come back.

COMMERE: How?

COMPERE: Of its own accord.

COMMERE: Foolishness.

COMPERE: I will help.

COMMERE: You! You remember it?

COMPERE: No. I forgot it, too.

COMMERE: Then how in the world. . . ?

COMPERE: Never mind! We'll sit, say nothing, and. . .

COMMERE: What?

COMPERE: From out of the sky, from him. . .

COMMERE: Him?

COMPERE: Taiowa. In his mind

The story's already told.

Silence. A shaft of light from above. Music.

COMMERE: Something. . . something. . .

COMPERE: Sh! Open your mouth. Like this.

COMMERE: To do what?

COMPERE: Let his words come out!

COMMERE: Babble will come, not words.

Another silence. The shaft of light grows brighter.

NARRATOR OF TAIOWA: I, God Taiowa,

See nothing below but void.

But deep, deep in my mind

The world is already in place.

COMMERE: *(Starts.)* Ah!

COMPERE: You see? Now let his words. . .

COMMERE: Be still. Be still. I know. *(Opens her mouth wide, feels the rush of words.)*

Taiowa, father of all,

Creator and shining sun,

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From the beginning held
 The thought of the world complete,
 Whole, complete in his mind
 When there was nothing but void,
 Complete, the mountains, the seas. . .

COMPERE: Complete, the forests, the plains. . .

COMMERE: He is telling the story through me!

COMPERE: And me. And me. And me.

COMMERE: Through a foolish old man like you?

COMPERE: Open your mouth again.

COMMERE: Close yours.

COMPERE: Go on. Go on.

COMPERE and COMMERE: The mountains, the seas, the plains,

COMMERE: *(Throws a withering look at COMPERE and goes on alone.)*

And lodges above the ground,
 And Kivas dug below,
 Tribes of women and men
 Wandering over the earth,
 Settling, building, planting,
 Finding the four directions
 Along the Road of Life.

COMPERE: But in the beginning, he,

Taiowa, God of Gods,
 Conceives in his mind the thought
 Of the beautiful, beautiful one,
 And places him. . .

COMMERE: Where? Where?

COMPERE: In nothing, in endless space,

In void, Topkela, the Void
 Without any life or shape.

SOTUKNANG appears in void, but in dazzling light.

COMPERE: Sotuknang created he him,

And set him down in the void.

COMMERE: Look, look how he stands!

On nothing, in endless space!

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Wondering how? And what?
Bewildered, he looks about
And suddenly finds himself
Enveloped in infinite sound:

TAIOWA: (*Voice.*) I, Taiowa, God,
Create out of nothing, you,
Sotuknang, instrument
To carry out my plan
For life in endless space.
Nephew of my breath,
Go and lay out the nine
Kingdoms for life to come,
One universe for me,
One for yourself alone,
And seven for those who will be.

COMPERE: A sudden silence, and then,
Sotuknang, nephew new-born,
Utterly baffled, cries:

SOTUKNANG: "Uncle! How?"

COMMERE: Not a sound.
He shrugs, and scratches his head;
Then he stoops and spreads his arms,
And gathers from endless space
Whatever was soon to become
The solid substance and form
Of the mighty universe.

COMPERE: He molds, he putters, he pounds
Substances heavy and light,
Some of them hard, some soft,
Arranges them in the void,
In order, according to plan,
And there they circle about
In perfect harmony.

COMMERE: And then he looks up and down,
Calls:

SOTUKNANG: "Taiowa! Uncle, come!
Is this according to plan?"

TAIOWA: (*Voice.*) According to plan, and good.

COMPERE: And he, Sotuknang, leaps
Over the worlds with joy,
And shouts:

SOTUKNANG: It is good! I'm done!
Finished! Finished! I'm done!

TAIOWA: (*Voice.*) Not yet.

SOTUKNANG: Not yet?

TAIOWA: (*Voice.*) Ah, no!
Out of this nothing create
Torrents of water and spread
In each of the kingdoms seas
And rivers and beautiful lakes
So that water will cover half,
And half will be solid earth.

SOTUKNANG: And then it is done?

TAIOWA: (*Voice.*) Almost.
Then mold the mountains and plains
And forests, and finally stars,
And set in motion the winds
To move gently around each world.
Then all will be ordered and formed.

COMMERE: Sighing, but with a will,
He gathers whatever there is
Out of which water can be,
Then magically mountains and plains,
Forests, and finally stars
Are molded and shaped by his hands,
And he sets in motion the air
That gently moves about
Each of the worlds and spheres.
And order and form are set.
The universe is complete

SOTUKNANG: God Taiowa! Is it complete?

TAIOWA: (*Voice.*) No, not yet complete
Until you have added. . .

SOTUKNANG: What?

What else could there possibly be?

TAIOWA: (*Voice.*) Life.

COMPERE: Cried Taiowa.

And the word resounded through all
The spheres of the universe.
Baffled again, again
He scratched his head, and sighed:

SOTUKNANG: Uncle! How?

COMMERE: Not a sound.

He sat, and considered, and said:

SOTUKNANG: I, mere nephew of God,
Cannot do it alone.
I must make one wiser than me
Who will help me create this life.

COMPERE: And he went to the universe where
The first world was to be,
And rummaging through its spheres,
Chose one he called the Earth,
Topkela, Earth, it was called,
And out of it he made
A beautiful one, to be
Its guardian, and she,
The Spider Woman, woke,
And asks in a puzzled voice:

SPIDER WOMAN: Sotuknang, why am I here?

SOTUKNANG: Look about you, look at the earth.
It has shape and substance and time,
But where is the joy in it,
The movement, the sound, the life?
You have been given the power,
The knowledge and wisdom and love,
To bless and create the ones
Who will live on this beautiful earth.
That is why you are here.
Now stoop; take up some earth;
Now water it from your mouth;
Yes - tuchvala - your spit;
Ah, good - enough, enough -
Now mold it into two -
Two beings - and you're done.

SPIDER WOMAN: No, no, not yet!

SOTUKNANG: Not yet?

SPIDER WOMAN: First I must cover them
With a cloak of milky white.

SOTUKNANG: And what is the need of that?

SPIDER WOMAN: For creative wisdom itself.

SOTUKNANG: And why do they need. . .

SPIDER WOMAN: Be still!

It needs only a sweep of my hand,
And they will be ready to be
Creatures living on earth.

COMMERE: With a sweep of her lovely hand
She uncovered the two, the twins
She had made from earth and spit,
And up the two of them sat,
Rubbing their eyes, and cried:

NORTH POLE and SOUTH POLE: Sotuknang!
Why are we here?
And who in the world are we?"

COMPERE: And Spider Woman explained
With an air of making sense:

SPIDER WOMAN: Palongawhoya are you,
And Poquanghoya he.

COMMERE: The two, nonplussed, cried:

NORTH POLE and SOUTH POLE: Who??

SPIDER WOMAN: Twins, first signs of life.

Palongawhoya, you
Will go to the farthest end
Of the axis of this earth
And Poquanghoya, you
Will go to the other end,
And together, will keep this earth
Spinning in regular time.
One, North Pole will be called,
The other, the Pole of the South.

NORTH POLE: I will be North! I'm North,
And you'll be the Pole of the South!

SOUTH POLE: Rather than Poqua – whatever!

But what do we do besides spin?

SPIDER WOMAN: North Pole, first you will go

And stamp over the earth,

Flatten and harden the land,

Make it solid and firm

For the souls who will live on it.

And you, South Pole, you will make

The gentle air carry sound,

The sound the living will make

When they speak and when they sing,

All sound echoing his,

The voice of Creator, of God.

NORTH POLE: Come on, South Pole! Make your sound,

While I stamp over the earth. . .

No, brother! South! Go South!

I'll stamp my way to the North.

COMPERE: And one stamped his way to the North

And the other shouted his shout,

So loud that from Pole to Pole

The whole earth trembled and shook,

And the universe quivered in time

Resounding in praise of God.

SOTUKNANG: (*To SPIDER WOMAN.*) And what are you making now? What are those flying things?

SPIDER WOMAN: Eagles, we'll call them, and chits,

And owls, who will see in the night.

SOTUKNANG: And what are those tiny things?

SPIDER WOMAN: Verminous beasts, and ants,

Scorpions, sludges, and—

SOTUKNANG: Stop! Does Taiowa want those things?

SPIDER WOMAN: They, too, sing the praises of God.

SOTUKNANG: Oh! Oh! Those beautiful – what?

SPIDER WOMAN: Buffalo, deer, and dogs,

And coyotes and horses and such.

SOTUKNANG: And what will we call those kinds?

SPIDER WOMAN: Animals, who will be dearest of all to men.

SOTUKNANG: Men! What are men? Who are they?

SPIDER WOMAN: And women, to people the earth.

SOTUKNANG: No, no! We're finished! We're done!

NARRATOR OF TAIOWA: Not yet!

SOTUKNANG: Not yet??

SPIDER WOMAN: Not yet.

SOTUKNANG: But Taiowa, look! Come see

How beautiful earth is now!

The trees, the animals, birds—

What need is there for men?

NARRATOR OF TAIOWA: Your beautiful earth is now

Ready for human life,

The final touch of my plan.

COMMERE: And Spider Woman was thrilled.

She stooped, and gathered up earth,

Yellow, then black, then red,

Then white, and molded each one,

Adding a little spit,

Then covered them with her cape,

Which gave to each of the forms

Creative wisdom itself.

COMPERE: And pulling aside her cape,

She revealed to Sotuknang

A wonderful miracle.

And he was overwhelmed.

SOTUKNANG: Look, Spider Woman! Four men!

And all of them look like me!

And four more over there!

And those exactly like you!

COMMERE: Four women, four men are born

Out of the earth and spit,

Two of them yellow, two red,

Two black, and the last two, white.

COMPERE: And touching the forehead of one,

Sotuknang cried:

SOTUKNANG: How strange!

Their foreheads are slimy and damp.

There's a soft spot in their heads!

COMMERE: But suddenly, parting the clouds,

The radiant sun appeared,

And dried the slime and the damp,
 And hardened the spot on their heads.
 And Spider Woman speaks
 To the women and men new-born:

SPIDER WOMAN: Women and men, stand proud!

You are meeting your Father, the Sun.
 Now you are fully formed
 With power and wisdom and speech.

SOTUKNANG: Each of the colors of men

Have a language now of their own.
 And best, most blessed of all,
 We give you the world for your home.
 Live, be happy, and love
 The Creator, the Father of All.
 May your love for Him endlessly grow.
 May you use your wisdom and strength.
 For the good of yourselves and earth.
 May you thrive and multiply.

COMPERE: And the people, joyful and proud,

Singing in praise of him,
 Taiowa, Father of All,
 Went off to multiply.

EPISODE TWO: THE GREAT FROST

COMMERE: And oh! How they multiplied,

Spreading over the land
 In villages, houses and fields.
 Humans and animals, too,
 Living in harmony,
 Suckling, both together,
 At the breast of Mother Earth,
 Who gave them her food of grass
 And seeds and fruit and corn.

A HUMAN: Wonderful how we talk,

Babbling in different tongues,
 And yet every word understood
 Whether spoken by beasts or men.

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A HORSE: Henh-h-h. Hen-h-h.

A HUMAN: How true! And what about—?

A DOG: Arf! Arf!

A HUMAN: That's very true. That's so.

COMMERE: And the languages of men

Each had a song of their own.

THE RED WOMAN: (*Singing a Hopi song.*) We we lo lo/ Ah yum tu
wa/ Na san nu eh/ Sa qua ma na/ Kuh yea ve/ Na tuk se na.
(*Translation: We we lo lo/ There at the center of/ The universe/ Blue
Corn Girl came up/ Growing and maturing/ Beautifully.*)

A YELLOW HUMAN: (*In Chinese.*) That is a beautiful song
Fit for our paradise.

A WHITE HUMAN: Paradise it is,
And we'll call it that. Agreed?

HUMANS and BEASTS: (*Exclaim.*) "Agreed! Yes!" (*In their various
tongues, barks and whinneys.*)

COMPERE: But into their Paradise

A mocking creature came,

A mocking Bird, in fact,

Lavaihoya by name,

The Talker, They listened and heard:

THE TALKER: Foolishness to share

With the animals as friends.

They're beasts, not fit to live

With the likes of women and men.

(*To the animals.*) Watch out for those humans who

One day will kill and eat

All of you and your kind;

Kill you for their sport

Whenever they have it in mind.

(*To the WHITE HUMANS.*) Shame on you that you sit

With the Yellows, the Blacks and the Reds!

They're vile, they're dirty, they're low,

And you're the purest, the best!

COMMERE: And to each he poured in the ear

Suspitions, and questions, and doubts,

And the beasts, afraid for their lives,

Drew away from the humans, and they

Looked askance at the color and speech
Of the other humans, and thought:

WHITE HUMANS: We are a race apart!

COMPERE: But among all the women and men
Were those who remembered the plan
Of God, the Creator of All,
And confronting the Mocking Bird,
Cried:

A HUMAN: Lavaihoya, you lie!
God the Creator meant
For all of us, beasts and men,
To share as one in the joy
Of this earth, this Paradise!

COMMERE: But another slithered in,
A snake with a head like a man's,
The Handsome One he was called,
- Katoy'a, his Hopi name -
And he sidled up to the men
And beguiled them with stories of gain:

KATOY'A: What does it matter that you
Have all that you need from the earth
With its seeds and its fruit and its corn.
Be smart! Store up from your fields
More than you need, and keep
From the others the stuff that you hoard;
When they want it, make them pay.

A HUMAN: With what?

KATOY'A: With whatever they hoard.

A HUMAN: But what is the point. . . ?

KATOY'A: The point!

The point is, you barter and sell,
Getting more than you give away
Giving less than they bargained for.

A HUMAN: But God would call that theft!

KATOY'A: Don't say that word again!

A HUMAN: What should we call it then?

KATOY'A: Gain.

COMPERE: And gain was the very thing

They bargained and traded for.

FIRST SALESMAN: Hurr-ry! Hurr-ry! Hurr-ry!

Step right up! Hey, you!

You look like just the man

We made this product for.

SECOND SALESMAN: For me? You really mean. . . ?

FIRST SALESMAN: I mean, it's you! It's you!

SECOND SALESMAN: Gee, I can't believe. . . ! And what does this great thing do?

FIRST SALESMAN: It's called The Gadget, and wait,

Just wait till you get it home!

You spray it, spread it, rub it,

Wear it, wipe it on,

And twice a day you eat it,

And let me tell you, man,

A ten-day trial of this

And your life won't be the same!

SECOND SALESMAN: Gee, sounds great! And, look!

Right here, I've got a thing

Will blow your mind, just like

It's done for thousands of

Our satisfied customers.

FIRST SALESMAN: Wow! What is it? Let's see!

SECOND SALESMAN: It's called The Widget, and man,

The things it does for you!

FIRST SALESMAN: Like what?

SECOND SALESMAN: It whitens teeth,

Gets rid of allergies,

Controls your appetite,

And man, you get it home,

And say goodbye for good

To back and stomach pain!

FIRST SALESMAN: Anything that does all that

Is certainly made for me!

Mister, I tell you what:

Suppose we make a trade—

A sample of your Widget

For a sample of my Gadget.

SECOND SALESMAN: A deal!

They exchange Widget for Gadget.

FIRST and SECOND SALESMEN: (*Aside, in unison.*) Boy, this guy
Is giving away this great,
Terrific thing for that!
Wait'll he sees. . . oh, well,
A jerk is a jerk is a jerk!
Can't wait to see this (Widget/Gadget) Can't wait till I get it home,
And try it on my – (*Aloud.*) HEY! THERE'S NOTHING THERE!

COMPERE: And each man cheated the other,
And was cheated again in turn.

COMMERE: But soon they realized the horror
Of what they had brought about,
Were shocked and outraged that their neighbors
Were playing the very same game.
So village and tribe made weapons
And rode to their neighbors' homes,
And killed, and burned to the ground
The homes of their enemies.
And their neighbors did the same.

COMPERE: But the war games suddenly ended,
With a great great rush of wind
And a mighty mighty roar.
Sotuknang appeared among them
And spoke in a terrible voice:

SOTUKNANG: You who still sorrow and mourn
For these evils done by men,
You who remember the beautiful plan
Of Taiowa, Father of All,
Come and follow that cloud
And that gleaming star overhead,
And you'll find a place that is safe
Where the cloud and the star will lead."

A HUMAN: Safe from what, Sotuknang?

SOTUKNANG: Safe from the work I must do.

A HUMAN: And what is that work, Sotuknang?

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