

RE: DEITY - THE BREATH OF CREATION

1.1 - LET THERE BE LIGHT

In the beginning there was nothing.

Until, suddenly, there was something.

I came to consciousness in the middle of the Eternal Void, a single soul floating in the midst of true nothingness. My mind was sluggish, hints of memory hiding in the fog that clouded my thoughts, yet unreachable all the same. What was left were instincts, indecipherable emotions, and the feeling of raw power bursting forth from some unseen font within myself. My instincts screamed at me to use the power, the itch to do...*something* almost overwhelming. But I resisted.

Instead, I turned my gaze to the only form of substance in the empty Void – myself.

Within the Void there was truly nothing. No distance, no sensation, no sight or touch, not even the passage of time. All of those things existed within the

boundaries of my own soul, however, and I found myself tracing the edges of my very being. I explored the contours and folds of my soul, sifting through the fog of my limited awareness to the very edges of my being. It was odd, to be able to hear the workings of my existence, so dead were my surroundings. It ticked away in an odd harmony, ringing in ears I did not have.

Only once I had sufficiently memorized the shape of myself did the call of instinct become too great to bear, the urge to use that bursting power within me to create returning to the forefront of my thoughts.

Yet, as I sat there in the Void, I came to realize something. Some part of me knew that I should crave sensation, warmth, *substance*. That I should desire a body, or light – anything at all. But that wasn't what I craved. More than anything else, I felt...

LONELY.

The power within me surged, and suddenly I was surrounded by a thousand million tiny specks. Specks that, upon closer inspection, revealed themselves to be tiny souls. Warmth and excitement both blossomed within me as I directed my soul forward, to reach out and touch these tiny souls – only for those that I neared to crumble into nothingness, unable to bear the weight of my existence. All at once I jerked back, watching hesitantly.

The souls danced about me like dust in a sunbeam, existing in a fine line between my soul and the Void. My presence was protecting them from the Void, which, if they neared, would seek to return them to nothingness. But too close, and the weight of my existence would destroy them.

Dissatisfaction rose up within me. I wanted companionship. These souls I had created were still amazing and lovely, but I needed...I wanted...they needed to be...

MORE.

This time the surge of power was greater, rushing out to coalesce into four new souls. They were far larger than the others, though still smaller than myself, and bobbed about curiously as they explored their new surroundings. In the truest sense of the word, these were my children. I could feel bits of my own self sitting within the souls – which was similarly true of all the souls I had created, but doubly so for the larger four – that were rapidly being absorbed and transformed into distinct personalities. They were not aspects of myself, but their own beings, just as I had desired.

I would not surround myself with puppets and robots.

One drifted closer to me, clambering all over me like a child might do to a parent. I chuckled, the other three swiftly following suit, exploring what little of their surroundings they could. Soon they tired of the little game, however, and my own foggy state of mind was of little entertainment for them. In a sudden bout of fearlessness, one soul that was taking on a distinctly sinuous shape darted away from me before I could react, toward the Void.

It blew through the thin veil of tiny souls, rushing out to the Void – only to jerk backward with a yelp, rushing back to my side and safety. The Void had nipped it when it left my protection, eating a tiny portion of its soul that rapidly healed under my influence. Relief flooded through me as my child huddled close, nursing the soreness that came from the Void's sharp bite.

There was a lesson to be learned there, I knew, but...well. It seemed even my children did not have my own ability to survive the Void. They needed something else. Something...safer. They needed a...

HOME.

A veritable explosion of sensation burst out of me in all directions, rapidly expanding as primordial chaos, the raw ingredients of creation, came into being all at once. Sensation came rushing back to me in a blur, sights and

sounds and textures all blurring together in a veritable cocktail. My children flinched at the suddenness of it all, and I reached out to comfort them with little tendrils of power. They huddled into my touch, finding comfort in the familiar.

For a time, we stayed like that. Until, finally, they worked up the courage to explore.

The smallest of the four slowly worked its way out from under my touch, reaching out to play with the primordial chaos, vibrating with excitement at the sensations it brought. Emboldened by their sibling's actions, the other three ventured out as well, swirling in the nebulous energies and matter that was the building blocks of all creation. They giggled and chased each other, their sounds and actions soothing the core of my being. The urge to create was still there, but...for now I felt satisfied. Companionship. Sensation. And my children, still bare souls as they all were, were adorable.

A sudden tug at my existence drew my attention to the side, where two of my children waited eagerly to show me the results of their playing. One had draped itself in a power of white, fierce and demanding attention, forming crude wings that it could control with a thought. The other swirled a nebulous, subtle black around itself like a cloak, quieter in nature yet no less eye-catching than the white. Neither had chosen physical elements, oddly enough, and I watched as the powers started to seep into the core of their beings, becoming one with them. I smiled.

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"That is wonderful," I said, my voice booming and unfamiliar to my own ears as I reached forward to grasp the powers they played with. "May I help you?" The two didn't seem to understand my question, but affirmation radiated from them nonetheless. With my aid the powers of black and white started to form actual shapes rather than simply swirling about my children, condensing into true bodies for the two, guided by memories I could not recall and their own inner desires.

The one of white took on a distinctly feminine form with graceful features, long blonde hair, and six brilliant white-feathered wings sprouting from her back. Her eyes glowed a beautiful white, shining with curiosity and vigor, her arm and leg muscles flexing as she tried out her new limbs with unrestrained curiosity. Two whip-like tails, tipped with feathery fans, lashed at the chaos behind her, her excitement palpable. With but a thought I created white and gold robes that draped themselves about her form, my daughter beaming up at me.

On the other hand, the one of black took on a masculine form. His skin was bronzed and chiseled, black hair falling to his shoulders in waves. Similar to his sister, two wings sprouted from his back, though his were leathery and

black. Grey horns curled from his forehead, and a large, muscular tail, covered in onyx scales, silently curled itself around his feet. He, too, inspected his new form with awe, looking up at me with dark eyes filled with far too much emotion and compassion. I created robes of black and gold for him, which he inspected with as much interest as his new body.

“Go on, have fun,” I urged. The two grinned at me, then at each other, and promptly darted off into the chaos even as I turned to my other two children. They seemed to be watching in fascination, but unsure of how to proceed. “Would you – “ I started, but was cut off by an explosion of *power* behind me. Instinctually I shielded my other two children, as well as the myriad lesser souls still near me, as twin realms of white and black swirled into being in the center of the primordial chaos I had created.

My two children were, of course, at the center. *Take my eyes off of you for a second.* I grumbled good-naturedly, more amused than anything after realizing the powers were anything but harmful. The boy stood in the middle of the black, digging with his hands and cleaving great scoops out of the center. He seemed intent on making the biggest hole he could, while his sister did the exact opposite. She played in the middle of the white, zooming to the edges of it in single beats of her great wings, scooping up great handfuls of the white power and depositing it in the very middle of the new realm. It seemed she wanted to make the biggest “sandcastle” possible, while her brother dug a hole.

Children. Oh, how I envied them.

The problem was the two realms of power seemed...unstable. Unbalanced. White and black clashed, mixing yet not, sending great quakes through each realm and undoing much of the work my children did. Not that they seemed to care much, giggling as they were every time the castle fell, and the hole was filled. For the moment though, all was well, and I turned back to the other two.

One had clad itself – herself, she was trying to mimic her sister with a distinctly feminine form – in what I could only call *physicality*. Elements swirled around her in a chaotic dress, the stuff of life suffusing her form. Her other sibling – brother, I noted – had opted not to follow the footsteps of his siblings. Already his soul had taken on a more sinuous form than the others, but now he had draped himself in *power*. By its own nature it was mysterious, lurking beneath all others, supporting and suffusing all things. It was the stuff of souls and spirits, and made up that overarching realm they inhabited.

I focused on the girl first, forming her body with a thought. The girl was as beautiful as her sister, albeit very different. Her skin was as dark as rich soil, her hair green as fresh moss. Flowers formed a tiny crown on her head and horns, branching like those of an elk, sprouted from her forehead. With a wave of my metaphorical hand a dress of green leaves fell about her form. She opened her eyes – burning with all the colors of the rainbow – and blinked owlishly, glancing down at herself. With a little twirl to swish her dress she giggled, smiled serenely at me, bowed, and promptly dashed off to join her siblings in their game.

I turned to the last of my children, humming a song to myself as I gave the same gift to him as I did the others. The power did not give him a humanoid form, as I had expected. Instead, he was transformed into nothing short of a dragon. His body was clad in scales of white, gold, and silver, his horns long and twisting, his maw great and powerful. His eyes were full of depth and meaning, whiskers twitching from the tip of his great muzzle. Yet despite his fearsome visage, he nuzzled me with raw affection, wrapping his short, draconic arms around my soul in what could pass as a hug.

“Go,” I said with a laugh, and the great beast gave me one last squeeze before darting off to join his siblings, tail thrashing and creating a great wake in the primordial chaos as he went. My second daughter had landed in the middle, between the black and white, creating her own realm of a thousand colors. It was smaller than the others, but no less grand – filled with more, and she seemed to be trying to encourage something to grow of its own accord by feeding it the elements themselves, plucked from the primordial chaos surrounding them.

It acted as a buffer for the other two, no longer clashing so fiercely now they were not directly touching.

But it needed something to bind – ah.

As I watched, my second son, the dragon, swam through all three layers, trailing behind him something akin to thread to tie it all together. Only...it looked almost more like a river and suffused all things, not just where he touched. Something tickled the back of my mind, and I drifted forward. These realms were my children's creations, not my own. But I could still help them. There was something there, but...it needed...

BALANCE.

My own power raced forward, twisting throughout all of creation to bind it together into a cohesive whole. The white and black were largely stabilized, still wanting to clash and mix with each other but unable to do so with the physical elements between them, thriving on the chaos. And the stuff of souls, that raw energy of spirit, draped itself over and through all of them, running through them like a river. And the raw chaos of creation, the primordial stuff? That was pushed back, to the edges, giving space to these new Realms and acting as a barrier to protect them against the all-consuming Void.

Soon, a mountain grew in the white, while a valley dug itself out in the black. A tree grew from the elements, fed by all, and the river of spirits flowed through them, mixing them together without muddying the waters. I smiled, and pushed forward in encouragement, willing my power forth. Almost all of the rest of my power flooded into the realms as I gave one last command, intent

on seeing the visions of my children grow – and give true spaces for the smaller souls to grow as well, within these realms. My command was simple, this time.

GROW.

And when it was done, I was able to sit back with a smile, watching my children as they gaped at what had been made. Now that much of my power had been used, more of myself returned. And all I wanted was to observe and rest. But one last thing remained to be done. Well, two. With a burst of intent, another bit of creation left me to form a sparkling crystal glass, filled with a brilliant amber liquid.

rest.

Spirit whiskey. Booze even my soul could enjoy. I sipped at the liquid, even bodiless as I was, enjoying the burn as it slid down into the core of my being, providing a pleasant buzz. And, finally, I let the last of my instincts free and said the words all beings like myself yearned to say, at some point in their beginning existence.

“LET THERE BE LIGHT.”

And there was light.