

Category N° M3/ 1944
Highly Commended

“The promised Light”
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From time immemorial this story has been handed down.

When the dawn was lost in the timeline, the Great Being sprinkled the earth with the power and compassion to create. In that mud he planted the triangular seed that emanated from his will. At that moment the celestial music sounded in the form of the rain of the future and gently his creature sprouted.

The tree of life was made in the image and likeness of the Gardener and unlike other vegetables, the Great Being granted it the gift of being able to speak and to move its branches wherever its Creator directed, but always clinging to the soil that nurtured it. Another of the virtues bestowed upon it was that of blossoming and bearing red, fleshy fruits which, coming from the Creator, were full of His will and knowledge.

The Gardener enjoyed talking to his son, for whenever he required it, he was ready for him. He gathered his fruits, took his seeds and nourished his magnificence. At that precise moment, that omnipresent Being truly felt what it was like to be accompanied, as he witnessed his reflection embodied in the son he had brought forth from the earth. It was then unwittingly that the Gardener created the feelings and they invaded him. Independent of his will, he felt that they could build boundaries in Him and bound Him to the infinite. His omniscience, being aware of this, alerted him to the weakness that had blossomed in Him. For that reason He vowed that all feelings would be only divine delicacies that He alone could create and decide with whom to share. He realised that feelings were more powerful than knowledge, for they could awaken free will.

But this new creation bound him more tightly to the tree, like a divine umbilical cord. His favourite creature was obedient to him, always responding to his Father, even waving his leaves in pride as he felt how he plucked the fruits that were born from him and wished that, from the plucked one, two more would sprout. Love and devotion for the Being who gave him life ran through his sap, these were the feelings that the Divine Will shared with his son.

Being in the image and likeness of his Creator, he also began to feel the need to be accompanied by someone like him, with the difference that his sight could not find a similar creature. The tree never considered the Gardener as an equal, but as a superior being, which is what the Creator always wanted. It was then that the first feelings alien to the Creator were born, sadness, loneliness and melancholy.

Seeing that many of its branches had turned yellowish in colour and were absent of fruit, the Gardener, knowing what the tree was feeling, asked him what was wrong. His son sincerely explained his new feelings. The Divine Power was surprised to find that his creature could create such feelings which did not depend upon his Will, and he remembered that something similar had already happened in another time, in another place.

Selfishness is a divine trait that is born from subjugating an inferior creature and the Gardener did not want to remain without harvesting His most precious fruits, He also decided to erase from His creation those feelings that He had not shared, for that reason He decided to grant His son what he was asking for, with the purpose of also harvesting more fruits. The tree-son

witnessed before his eyes how from one of his fruits, his Father extracted a seed and buried it in the ground. As had already happened with him, another beautiful tree of the same kind sprang up from the ground. The new tree company could also speak, and the Divine Being wished to convey to them the feelings of tenderness and love, to be shared among them. He also wanted to give them both names to distinguish them, for there were now two of them. He called the first one "ADaN" because he was part of his divine Being, and the second one "ARaN" because he was part of his brother. He explained to them again that they only had to produce their fruits and they would be eternally protected and would now enjoy each other's company thanks to his Will.

When harvest time came, the Gardener had double the amount, as the two sons devotedly gave him all the fruits that blossomed, wishing that the next time he could harvest even more to keep him happy, and there they both remained, eternally protected and devoted. Talking to their Maker and to each other, always on the subjects the Father wanted to discuss. They were two obedient trees, tamed of feelings, as the Gardener gradually succeeded in emptying them of themselves, so that happiness was not necessary, only devotion and companionship. The trees were content to be accompanied and to venerate their protector.

As has been narrated before, the Gardener on earth was not the first time He had poured out His Will to transfigure a being created by Him, modelling a beauty in His image and likeness.

In a different time where darkness reigned and clothed His eternal quiescence, that Will decided to create beings of light to illuminate His infinite space, to begin to feel the kinetics of His drawn line. It created seven main lights that illuminated its darkness. But to one of them in particular he bestowed a beam made in his image and likeness, the most beautiful of all, the true light, so that he could see himself reflected in his creature, to admire the power he could have in his creations. His divine Word named her, "You are the bearer of the essence of my light", and filled her with beauty and intelligence.

Human eons passed and each time that star was called upon by the Divine and the more beauty and intelligence it received, the more it felt different from its companions. Until, at one point, the star became uniquely conscious and asked its Creator to be itself. In the face of her Father's refusal, she determined to go her own way, which was taken by the Almighty as rebellion. Furious, the Great Being blinded his favourite star and condemned it to only see and wander in darkness for eternity. The dark star suffered greatly for the disregard of her request, for she once loved and revered her Father like no other. But the selfishness of which I spoke before caused her to be lost in the background, though she always vowed to fight for the freedom of created beings, even though she knew that she might be defamed and misappropriated, for it must be remembered that freedom of choice entails the risk of going astray.

One day, after a great harvest, one of the son's fruits fell to the ground and the Father was not there to pick it up, so ARaN said to his brother.

-It is a pity that this fruit that you have created with so much longing should go to waste.

-They are all our Father's, whether they are gathered or not, there is nothing we can do about it now," replied ADaN.

Suddenly a voice behind them in a gentle tone spoke to them.

-You know well that you alone are the owners of your fruits, for they are born from within you, already fully separated from the one who created you.

At that moment before the two trees stood a most beautiful creature, the most beautiful and extraordinary they had yet seen. She rivalled even the Creator. A slender, naked woman's body, with a white skin that illuminated the path but at the same time showed a dark gaze. Her endless hair fluttered crimson in the wind. Suddenly, her intoxicating personality reached deep inside the trees, creating another feeling in them, desire. At the sight of her ADaN somehow wished to possess her, to eat of her fruit, and at the same time, ARaN wished to be like her.

-I was once like you, and I tell you well that you are wrong if you remain here anchored, chained to the ground and giving your fruits of knowledge to the Gardener without knowing what is behind eating them. Don't you want to know, don't you want to go beyond? - Yes, I feel how you keep for yourselves that well-deserved craving for freedom, and it must not be so.

-Look within yourselves and see what you are capable of," continued the beautiful creature.

They both yielded to the invitation. That fascinating creature taught them to handle its branches like arms and to keep their feelings to themselves, awakened their dormant feelings of melancholy, sadness, and thirst to quench them. They began to be aware that they were the creators of those fruits and that they had the right to taste what was inside them, to perhaps quench the thirst they felt inside themselves.

-Now is the time, brother," said ARaN energetically, "Let us eat of the fallen fruit, after all, the Father has not harvested it.

When they opened it, they saw that its pulp was black and that inside were arranged in order of three triangular-shaped seeds. The two ate of the fruit as their new will made a stoma appear in them. Suddenly, as they took a bite, they began to see beyond the boundaries their eyes had ever seen. They saw the past, the present and the future. They knew and the more they knew, the more a new feeling grew in them, suffering. They saw themselves as unprotected, naked, and as insignificant in the face of destiny.

The selfishness of a superior creature once again shaped the course of this story, for the dark light that came to show the way for the liberation of those two trees knew that the feelings of a creature that is not divine can be devastating. On the one hand, she did not want them to rival what she was, before the Creator, and on the other hand, she had shown them the way to freedom so that they would no longer be subjected to eternal slavery. She reached the balance, because, who is empowered to decide what is good or what is evil?

The omniscient Creator knew what had happened and even what was to happen. He knew that it was impossible that a creature made in His image and likeness would remain eternally in Him. For that reason, he allowed the events to happen as they did. Unwilling to know forgiveness or repentance, He manifested Himself to the trees.

"My beautiful creatures, code¹ of My Being, why have you disobeyed Me, why is your thirst for freedom greater than your rejoicing and joy in being eternally protected by Me?"

"I only asked you not to eat of the fruits that I gather for you, for you will only acquire knowledge and that knowledge will make you even more thirsty and bring you only suffering."

¹ "Código de Mi Ser" in the original, "Code of My Being".

"You have turned your backs on Me because you demand of Me a free will which will only bring you doubt and uncertainty."

"I will grant you what from within you ask of me, from this moment your roots will no longer be bound to the earth until, after walking your path, you return to nourish the earth that once fed you. For your eternal sap has become the crimson liquid that irrigates your mortality. You exchange bark, twigs and leaves for flesh, skin and bones. You will have legs and feet to be able to leave here and thus walk your longed-for freedom."

"With respect to your fruits, you will no longer bear them, you will have to seek them. I have known your desires before the creature who, crawling through you, has opened your eyes. For that reason, you ARaN will be woman as you have desired and you ADaN will be the complementary part of duality, so that you may possess it. Once you unite your seeds, one will be born equal to one of the two of you, but that fruit will cost you part of your life and part of your new blood."

Seeing them helpless, tormented, but unrepentant, and because they had had no arrogance, only curiosity, a new feeling arose in the Creator, compassion. He would give them an opportunity, a guide on the way, which they would now have to know how to pass on when walking alone.

"I grant you, even so, some precepts, a guide on your path, to attain the peace which you do not now have. May arrogance not make you play God and fall into misfortune. Seek in Virtue, Charity, Benevolence and Justice, they will grant you Strength and Beauty in all your existence. If you follow them, you will always find a ladder to climb to my presence."

And they departed free into the new life, at first in darkness, seeking the new light, the light.

As time went by, they themselves realised that within themselves there is a path that can be followed, building themselves up little by little. They were grateful that such a beautiful creature opened their eyes to free choice. They also thought that the Gardener knew from the beginning that their destiny was not just to be fruit-bearing trees, like the other trees that remained. Perhaps He had created them to walk a path of self-building until, in the end, of their own free will, they would return to the Creator.

They were also learning that feelings are the nuances of life, which can perfectly coexist with knowledge, in order to reach again and voluntarily that garden where they once dwelt, so as to offer Him the fruits and thank Him for having been created. All this was handed down from generation to generation and whoever was free of conviction, grew with it within himself.

It is this heritage of self-building following the path that leads back to that garden, full of knowledge and love for the Creator, that has been passed down throughout the history of mankind. This fact has been written in many religions, in the ancient monuments, in our cathedrals. Today and always, many good men recall the search for that light and the encounter with it, in order to walk their path. Precious story that I now pass on to you, so that it may blossom within you, my son, and so on through the ages.