

## Song of Tiamat

### 1. The Creation

Oh Tiamat, I call you from afar, come to me Mother, Creator,  
You whose name I carry within me, a word of a forgotten language,  
Like a handful of dust that knows not the place from which it came.  
Across the void of time I call you; through the tunnel of memory you answer.

Mother of Creation, you who held the world in your womb,  
You whose love gave forth all we know, whose harmony was  
Perfect, and unfathomable, as waves rising and falling on the water,  
Tiamat, I call to you across time and understanding, to tell your tale.

To your people you were Goddess, Protector, Mother of Life.  
Your generosity brought forth the richness of the green earth,  
The rivers were your children, as were the desert sands,  
All rain, wind, storms, and the life of the people your goodness.

You brought forth the grain in its season, and your storehouses  
Overflowed with dates, figs, wheat and barley, earthen jars filled  
With the riches of the land. You were good to your children, and they  
Sang your praises, filling the cities and the fields with the sound of your name.

The egg of the universe you held in your belly, from you the water flowing,  
From you the floods, the moons, the dreams and wisdom of the elders.  
We sang your praises, and the temples rang with thanksgiving,  
We sang your praises, and the wind carried your name across the face of the world.

From the waters above you brought the rains, and the crops grew.  
From the waters below the rivers rose, swelling onto the land.  
The sun and the moon followed your command across the sky,  
And the people prospered, our world held in your gentle embrace.

In the heavens, you reigned among your children, your throne  
First among all the Gods and Goddesses you had brought forth.  
Each with their different orders, and you lit the star of morning and  
Of evening, first and last, your greatness the warp and weft of time.

Of learning, much can be said. Much can be said, but little is remembered,  
As the secrets were passed on from mouth to ear. The language you taught  
Your priestesses, your scribes, was the language of magic, and also that  
Of the moon, the tides, the swelling and ripening of knowledge in its time.

Of the stories committed to memory, of all the clay tablets, what remains today?  
From ancient libraries once full of knowledge, now dust, fragments, empty shelves.  
Will we know you as you were in fullness? Tiamat, Ocean Mother, Giver of Life,  
Your descendents would know your creation, as you know ours.

## 2. The Destruction

We know the tale of the destruction of the Goddess Tiamat. This is a language  
With which we are by now familiar, the tale of conquest, the hero  
Mighty with sword and courage, vanquished foe and fallen Queen,  
Mother of Life now Queen of the Dead, her Time past, her people scattered.

We know this tale because it is our own. Tiamat, yours is the Mother of all  
Tales of woe, it is you whom we remember first when we recall the battles  
Of the past, when we mourn all that was lost. In our imaginings, you are us:  
A grandmother still talking of the old country, her children struggling in a new world.

They say it began with an argument, unruly children Gods staying up late,  
Partying till all hours, and your lover Apsu was annoyed. We think of the low-rent  
Flat with neighbors we can hear always, the Other encroaching on our  
Peace. Who wouldn't be mad? Who wouldn't try to act, especially if one was a God.

He wanted to silence them, and you refused. You could not destroy your own children.  
Ea, master of magic, heard the arguing, killed Apsu, took his crown. Salt water and  
Sweet water must mingle, but it is easy for the salt to overwhelm the sweet.  
Apsu, God of the sweet water, your consort, was made into Ea's temple. You went on.

On the bones of your lover, Ea and his wife made a wondrous child,  
A hero the world yet admires, whose star has not waned. Marduk, granted  
Splendor surpassing all other Gods, had four eyes, four ears, a mouth that blazed forth  
Fire, four winds springing from his every step, and storms that disturbed even you.

I have searched the libraries of my time looking for your voice, wanting  
The secret of how your world changed, how a simple misunderstanding,  
Domestic unrest, could cause such a tidal wave within the egg of the world  
You made. Some speak of invasion, old orders overthrown. I say it was your Time.

Marduk had magic, and as God of Fire, he filled his body with blazing flame.  
He held the hurricane, and the evil sevenfold wind rode before his chariot, harnessed  
With Killer, Relentless, the Trampler, and the Swift, the thunder and the tempest.  
His fierce winds drove deep in your belly, his arrow split your heart, and you fell.

Tiamat, tell me, why did the Goddess' tools undo the Goddess' house?  
If all magic comes from you, why did it destroy you? What role have you played,  
Across the aeons, and was it willing? Tiamat, mother of dragons and serpents,  
Rageful Goddess, in righteous fury you suffered a horrible death; it shocks us still.

You who formed all Creation were dismembered to create it again: the mountains  
Your breasts and buttocks, tears flowing from your two speared eyes forming Tigris and  
Euphrates, public mound supporting the skies. As above, so below, but always the rift  
Between. Oh Tiamat, standing on your carcass, we live in the chasm left by your death.

### 3. The Long Journey

Tiamat, I found your name and entered the abyss of time. From you came  
All things. From your death came the history which scorns creation, the original  
Guilt of all humans, the dreaded scourge of self-doubt and misery we have known  
For so long. There was no good news in your defeat, my Tiamat.

Your son and lover Kingu was murdered to strike fear into the children who survived  
You. Because the Gods wanted worshippers, because things were boring after you  
Died, Marduk made Ea knead clay into the carcass of Kingu, and from clay and blood,  
Humans were formed. Our lives were to serve the Gods, whose loss we could not repay.

I have lived between the belly and the breast, wandering all my life through  
A world which the stories tell is yet half. Ever a half missing, no matter what I see.  
We walk on the earth, pasting back the sky, imagining your head above us bright  
As the heavens. What was the world before the axe? Before that fateful arrow?

Before the girdle, the necktie, the shackle at the waist, before our power was leashed,  
Curtailed, made to bow in obeisance, what was the world, your egg world, like?  
We have remained prisoner to our own victory, oh Great One. Our imaginings created  
The void in which you were no longer whole. What we call whole is forever half.

Tiamat, I traveled to the land of my ancestors, and gazed at the holy book  
Of my father's father's people. And there you were, before any words were written,  
In chains, being ridden across the seas, frothing serpent, away from the holy gates  
Of the saintly, victorious hero on your back. You are the Story before all other stories.

Your sorrow fills the oceans, your blood the Red Sea, your wails the storm which  
Caused the great flood. Oh Tiamat, we see the world, we read our holy books, with  
Two eyes, and our vision is split. We cannot see the cleft in between the words, the  
Empty space caused by your absence, the great void at the center of our belief.

We have grown accustomed to the empty place of longing in our souls. Blood of our  
Father, body of our Mother, all Story rides the endless contours of your severed halves.  
No wonder then that the priests of old have given way to the new, those whose  
Temple is based on careful study of your minutiae, each follicle, each particle classified.

Every classification creating more division, the great cleft grows and permeates all things,  
Until we fall through matter's rabbit hole, and enter a vast world of space! Suddenly,  
We are again swimming in a primal sea, suddenly within our very cells there exist  
Countless universes in which Creation, your story, is played out every moment.

Tiamat, if the best revenge is to live well, you will have yours, because though  
Some would be chagrined to admit it, a world of wholeness has descended onto our  
Stories, unbidden, and we are left wondering whether suddenly the halves have  
Reunited, or whether wholeness was always there, hidden between our eyes.

#### 4. The Completion/Creation

Oh Tiamat, the stars are calling your name  
And what has been the great rift in the world's fabric,  
Your flesh, is now coming to a wholeness your children  
Could not have imagined when first you formed the earth.

For this to be possible, Mother of Time, your egg had to crack, and the world  
As you knew it, as your priestesses conceived it, is no longer.  
We cannot even think of the world, can't speak the word "universe"  
Without conjuring in our minds an image that never existed in your time.

The earth, that platform you made to hold back the waters below, has turned  
Into a ball, and the waters of the world course through her, still dancing to the  
Moon, but sometimes drifting upward to rain down again. The sky, your ceiling  
That once held back the waters above, has blown apart, and there we have found you.

Long before your people ever came to being, before there was salt or sweet water,  
Tiamat, you brought forth our world. In the aeons before there was a Milky Way,  
There were ancient stars. Primal stars, larger than our greatest imagining, whose  
Cataclysmic deaths created the dust out of which our galaxy was formed.

The priests of science, sons of the conqueror, have given your name to this mystery.  
She who burst forth, Mother of our galaxy, in whose furnace was created carbon,  
Sodium, magnesium, setting all the places at the periodic table, everything that was  
Needed to form our sun and its planets, that ancient star is now named Tiamat.

From the dissolution of your world has come the creation of an even larger world  
Of which you are the Creator. From the horror of your death has come  
The realization that you were alive even before your world came to be  
So long ago, in the cradle of civilization. You cradled our very galaxy.

The gate of the sky has been opened, and the light is pouring forth.  
The ancient seas where you swam life into being are once again being called  
Sanctified. The earth, site of your final humiliation, is moving, is demanding  
To be sung back to wholeness; Tiamat, we, your children, are singing you back.

We sing her praises, and the earth hums in gratitude on its axis;  
We sing her praises, and the planets spin their blessings around the sun;  
We sing her praises, and all that stirs in the darkness, all that sends forth light  
And life into the deep night of space is fed by the energy of her name.

Tiamat, Mother of All, the dust of whose feet are indeed the hosts of Heaven,  
We have known you, and forgotten you. We continue to know, and forget,  
And remember just the same. One day maybe we will get it right. One day the healing  
May be complete, and from that day forward we will ever, always, sing your praises.