

## **Brief Beginning of the World (Episode in Three Movements)**

### **I.**

The world had finished taking its place. All was still so new that night has not even fallen. The whole world was one burst of light. The hours passed, but the day remained the same, as if all hours were the same hour, insistently repeating, in the sky and at the edge of the sky. Until the sky began to fade, and its edge turned to the color of flames, the color of forest, the color of a dark sea, and the sky ended up resembling the color of earth. Resembling an anteater. First only at the edges, then the entire sky the color of earth, the color of an anteater. In the beginning a red anteater, a gold anteater, afterward a flash darker and darker and even darker until the sky itself was no longer an anteater, and in its place stars, which were previously the gleam of the anteater's body, and in its place the moon, which used to be the gleam in the anteater's left eye, then just the gleam of the anteater without the anteater. And the moon was not called moon, and the stars were not called stars, and night was not even called night, they were nameless things, as all things existing for the first time are.

And men stayed there, on that first night, along with the gleam of the body and the left eye of an anteater. And the men were very scared, because fear is the second sentiment that accompanies the nameless things, because the first sentiment is a kind of astonishment, which is what emerges when things emerge for the first time and are still neither good nor bad. Because in the instant in which things emerge, they haven't had time yet to be what they are, and they themselves do not even know their own nature. So the night was neither good nor bad in the first moments, and men unfolded strange smiles. But afterward, time continued to pass, and the night continued there with its eye and with its nameless starry gleam. And men began to feel apprehensive because they perceived that the night began to search for something that would sustain it. And they began to hear noises from creatures that until then did not exist. And men did not know that so many two-, four-, or many-legged creatures could exist within the night.

And men felt a fresh fear on that first night, and they spent all the hours that

never ended looking at the gleam and the eye of the anteater. Until at some point the anteater fell asleep and closed its only eye. Until little by little, the anteater's gleam began to dim, and the sky shifted colors, and the anteater disappeared completely. Until it was day again, as it has always been, and men recognized that, and they recognized the sun and its gleam that was very different from the anteater. And the fear dissipated because now the things that emerged were things that had names and creatures that had names, and they could see them with their own eyes and their own astonishment.

## II.

It happened very far away from there. In the beginning, there were not houses, nor huts, nor shacks, nor cabins, nor things that carried those names, and the earth was just earth and a closed forest and a river that ran through it. It was an earth run through by many rivers that went and came in the direction of the north and south, and they made the sounds that rivers are accustomed to making when there is only earth and forest and rivers. And the noise repeats and repeats for days and nights and days, until incorporated into the landscape, until becoming a noise that does not exist, until becoming a kind of silence. Because silence has always been a noise. Because silence is music that never ceases. But once in a while the silence is broken. The music. And there came steps and rhythms and days and nights that passed. Afterward, the steps and everything else went away, following their path, and all returned to the previous moment. The silence of the earth and the forest and the rivers. The music. Until one day, amid the steps and rhythms running through, someone stopped for a few moments and said, surprised—or just with some kind of delight—look, a tree, or a river or a monkey or an anteater. Someone said, look, and everyone was silent, the music was restored, and the one who spoke remained in suspense waiting for the answer, while everyone looked at the tree, or the river or the monkey. Only after a long time, perhaps days and nights and days, someone also stopped and repeated, indeed, a tree, or a river or a monkey—an echo, a second voice, or some sort of response. And that was when something took place, or finished taking place. There, everyone remained still, surprised with what they had seen, the tree, the river or monkey, as if watching for the first time, and unfolded strange smiles, because the tree or the river or the monkey has also remained still, as if they themselves have discovered something. And when night arrived, men built a cot there in order to keep looking at the tree,

or the river or the monkey, and pointing and repeating, look, a tree, or a river or a monkey, turned into rhythm, into music. And the night emerged with its anteater eyes and seemed less frightening to them. For the first time, less frightening. And they slept and dreamt dreams that were strange and similar at the same time, as if they dreamt the same dream, as if they sang the same song. As if they smiled. And when day broke, someone else said, look, a tree, or a river or a monkey, and they continued in that strange surprise, as if “look” were not an imperative, but a question. And they stayed there, waiting, and repeating, and waiting. Until night fell again. And again the anteater and the eye of the anteater, and again they had strange and similar dreams. And many nights passed like this, and things began to transform, as if the body and the name of the things had become more compact, become slower and heavier. And as if the music suddenly were another, and the silence were another. And they decided then to construct a roof that would separate them from the nocturnal birds and the stars, which have also become slower and heavier and other. So the time passed, and time continued, and they discovered that the roof separated them from the night, but also from the day and the rain and the canopy of trees, and created a strange acoustic there. And they remained there, around the cot and the roof and the leaves that have scattered under the roof, always slow and heavy and always other, thinking that tomorrow, tomorrow they will leave.

### III.

First, everything was born: the stars and the planets and the rivers and the sea and the monkeys and the anteaters. And things continued being born and being born and being born and populating the world, which was still very big and never ending. And for a long time things continued being born and populating and never ending, until one day, or one night or one day, the first thing ended. And with it, other things and creatures, four-legged creatures, and two-legged creatures, and even none-legged creatures, until one day, a man, a two-legged creature, unleashed a shriek, which was not the shriek of monkey or bird, it was the shriek of things ending, of a man ending, and since they did not know what was a man ending, they did not know it was a shriek, they did not have a name for the shriek that came from a two-legged creature like them, like so many others of them. A man ending. And for the first time they saw what was a man who was ending and not being born anymore nor populating the world, the world that never ended. For the first time they heard the shriek, which was

a frightening and insistent shriek that insisted for a long time, a long time that never finished passing for the man that shrieked so that other men could hear, and for the shriek itself that for a long time insisted, and insisted, until becoming rhythm, becoming music. Until bit by bit it went dying down, diminishing, diminishing, until transforming into a groan, until transforming into a long and tired groan, until disappearing. And they saw for the first time the first person who stopped being a person. They saw the moment in which he stopped being a person and they did not know what name to give that body that remains and that was nothing, only a two-legged body that no longer stirred nor emitted sounds, nor groans, not even a fright, not even the inconsistency of the music. And so they made a circle around the man who stopped being a person, while outside the circle the children played with the monkeys, which also had two legs and continued existing and stirring and shrieking. And the men and children and monkeys remained there, from outside the circle, for many days and nights, to the side of the man inside the circle, for many days and nights, and the men sang and told stories, and the children played with the monkeys, and the man inside the circle did not do anything. And the time passed, and the children grew, and they also went to keep the man company, inside and outside the circle, and to sing and to tell stories. Inside the circle, where one did not get up. Outside the circle, from where one looked inside the circle with astonishment and fascination. And during this the man inside the circle, who was every time less of a person, his flesh eaten by other creatures of two and four or no legs, and his face eaten by other creatures was that of someone who could never have had a face. Until one day, someone approached and, impatient and cold and scared, threw a fistful of soil over the man's face, because the face of a man who has stopped being a person was a face in silence. The earth that separated him from the days and the nights and the days, made into a roof, house, and the circle disbanded and covered the entire man in earth so that they could finally leave. And so the circle disbanded, and they all left. Meanwhile, under the earth, in place of eyes, there were now two orbits, and in place of mouth, a cavity, and from where there would be gleam and music, now only orbits, cavities, and the creatures that were nestling in them. Until everything became one body and one creature.

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