

Nogdawindamin Anishinaabe Aadziwin Pathways

**Anishinabe Creation Story
Seven Fires of Creation**

Edward Benton-Banai, Sounding Voice Indian Country Press, 1978

Jim Dumont, Reflections on the Ojibway Creation Story, 1993.

PowerPoint Slides inspired by Jim Dumont Presentation

Where did the Creation Story teachings come from?

- Symbolism
- Ancient scrolls of the Anishinabe
- Oral communication and story telling passed on from generation to generation
- James Dumont, Reflections on the Ojibway Creation Story, 1993



Indigenous Astronomy: The Anishinabe of Central North America. www.virtualmuseum.ca

“Is it a Story...Myth...Tale...Legend?”

In the beginning before the beginning, there was only darkness.

Ages and ages ago...beyond memory
Before time was born...It is told
There was no Light
Neither Earth, Sun, Moon, Water nor Life
Only empty, silent Cold.
In and upon the dark vast
Nothing moved; nothing could be heard;
nothing could be seen
Light and Life had not yet been...

Only

Dark

Cold

Silent

Empty

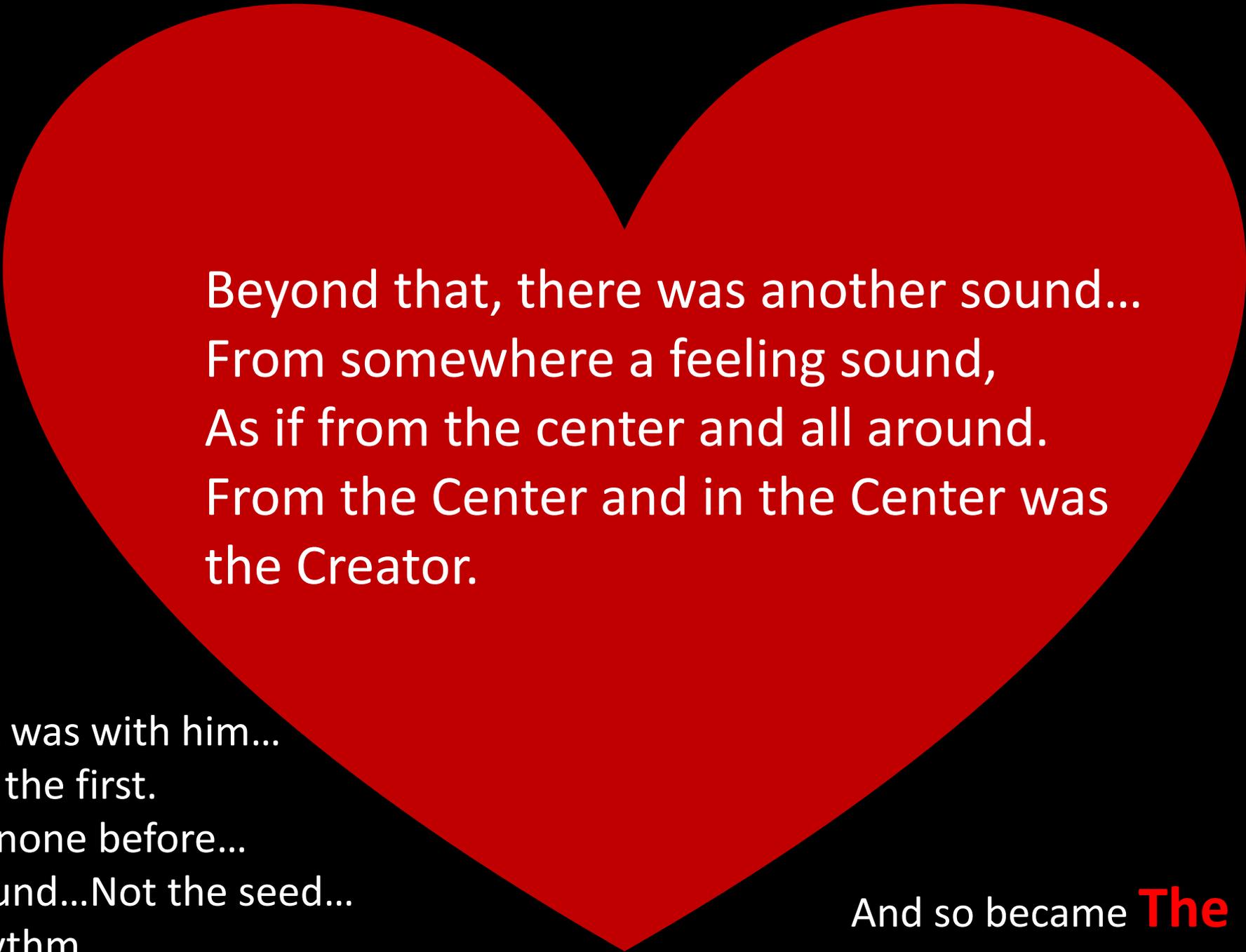
VOID

Then...Out of the silent void there came a soft murmur...faintly at first...then, louder and LOUDER

Suddenly...A loud burst...As like a clap of thunder.
And once again, silence across the vast, lonely emptiness.



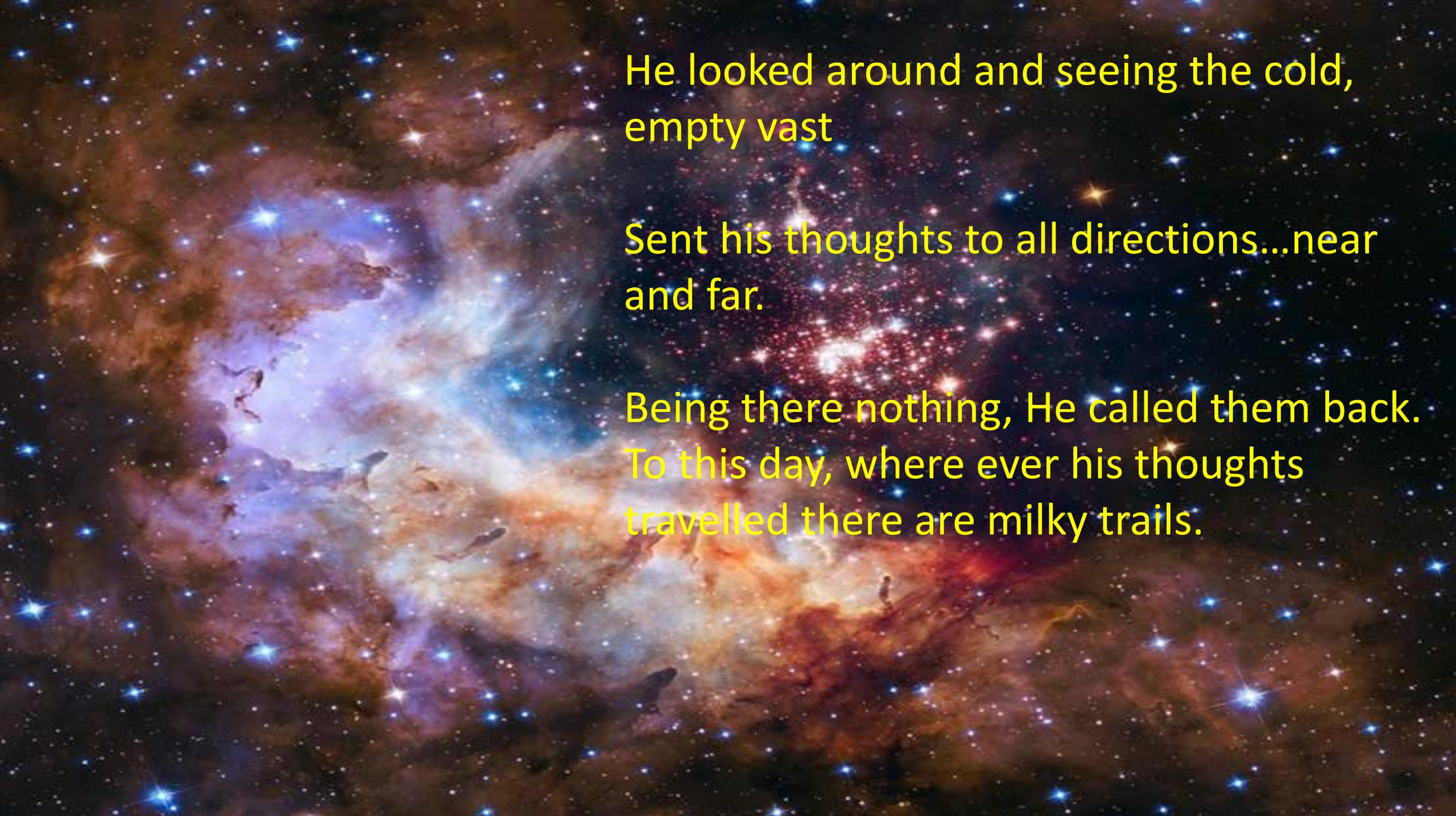
Then, out of the stillness, a soft rustling sound...
A rasping, clicking all around.
It shimmers and shakes...and the sound that it makes, is like,
Like seeds in a gourd...seeds good and pure, we are told.



Beyond that, there was another sound...
From somewhere a feeling sound,
As if from the center and all around.
From the Center and in the Center was
the Creator.

All thought was with him...
For he was the first.
There was none before...
Not the sound...Not the seed...
Not the rhythm.

And so became **The First Fire.**



He looked around and seeing the cold,
empty vast

Sent his thoughts to all directions...near
and far.

Being there nothing, He called them back.
To this day, where ever his thoughts
travelled there are milky trails.

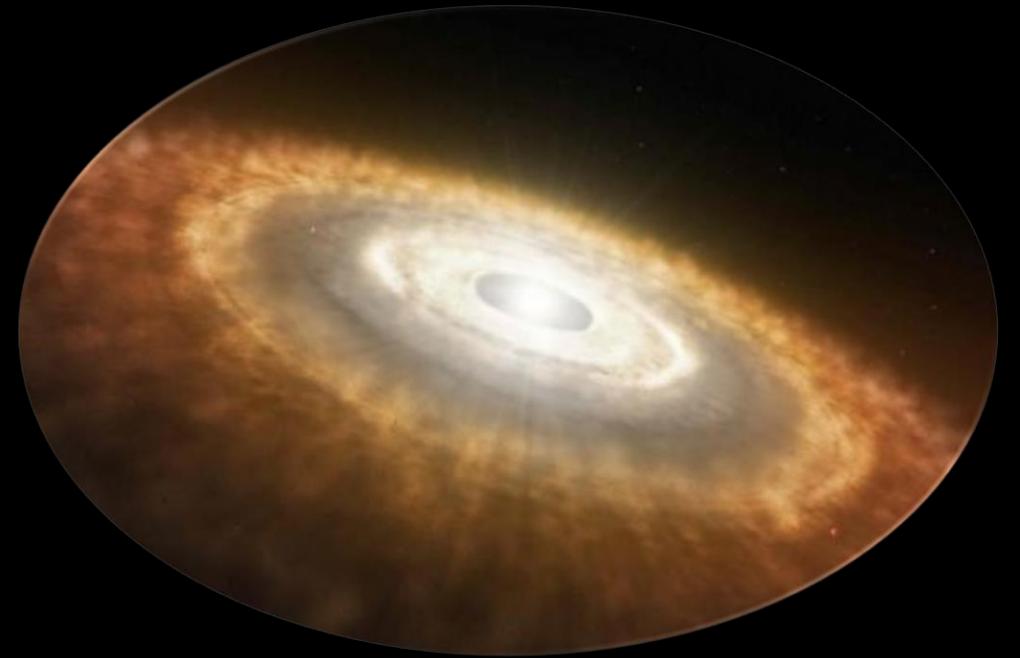
All thought, all light, and all life was with him.
He thought to see, and so a fire he made to be...

The fire being **The Second**, was
sacred.

He sent his fire to travel in a
circle...

And in so doing, created the
Sacred Circle...

The Sacred Fire became the Light by
which to see.



Thought He...To make the Circle in four parts...

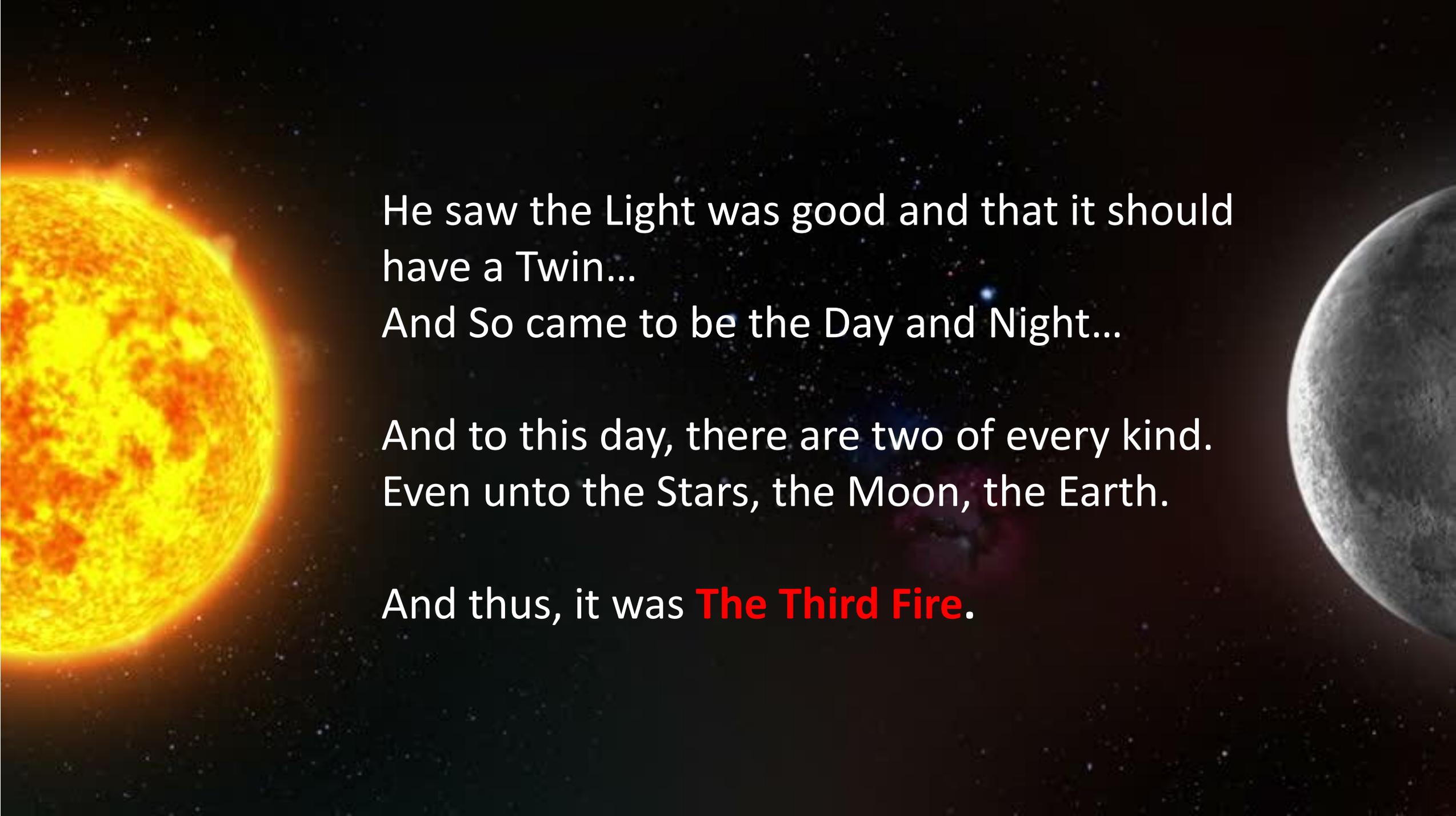
And so it was.

So it is even unto this day.

And as it was given...

There are Four Seasons, Four Directions,
Four Winds, and Four Ways.





He saw the Light was good and that it should
have a Twin...

And So came to be the Day and Night...

And to this day, there are two of every kind.
Even unto the Stars, the Moon, the Earth.

And thus, it was **The Third Fire.**

He set in motion the universe
And seeing the four ways of
his work

He smiled and knew it was
good

And being good, was made
sacred

And there was ...
The Fourth Fire.





He looked about and said,
“Where shall be my seed?”

Who will sing for me?

In so doing, came to be
The birds...of every voice, of
every colour...

Of every song to be heard.

And so it was **The Fifth Fire.**



He thought to make earth upon which to
scatter his seeds...

Earth shall be my companion
And in so doing...Earth was made woman.
And to this day, the Mother of all things.
Raindrops were his tears of joy upon
seeing her.

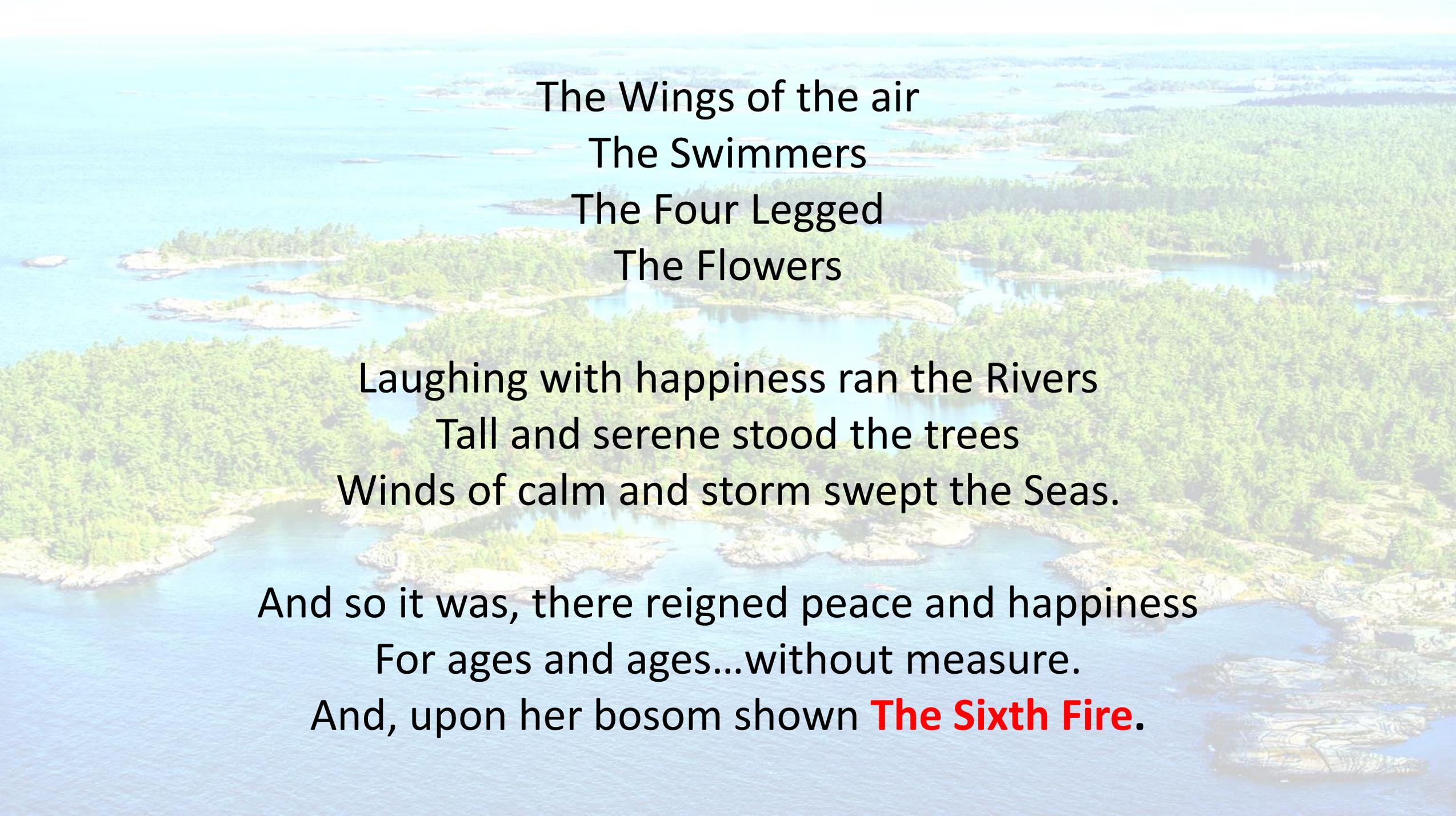
Water is her Life-giving Blood,
The lakes, streams, and rivers her veins.
Both above the ground and below

That this is true we all know.

So, to First Woman came the
birds carrying the seeds...
That were scattered and mated
to the soil, upon her breast.
From her bosom came all there
was...And all that there is.

Of every voice, of every colour, of
every size, of every shape
Came they to take their place in
the circle





The Wings of the air
The Swimmers
The Four Legged
The Flowers

Laughing with happiness ran the Rivers
Tall and serene stood the trees
Winds of calm and storm swept the Seas.

And so it was, there reigned peace and happiness
For ages and ages...without measure.
And, upon her bosom shown **The Sixth Fire.**

Then, took he four
handfuls of earth.

Thru the meegis shell
blew his breath

And, in his own image
was created...Anishinabe.

And thus it was that
Original man came.



From the union of the Four Sacred Elements and his breath, man was created.

It is said the Gitchie Manito then lowered man to the Earth. Thus, man was the last form of life

to be placed on the Earth. From this Original Man came the A-nish-i-na'-be people.

In the Ojibway language if you break down the word Anishinabe, this is what it means:

ANI

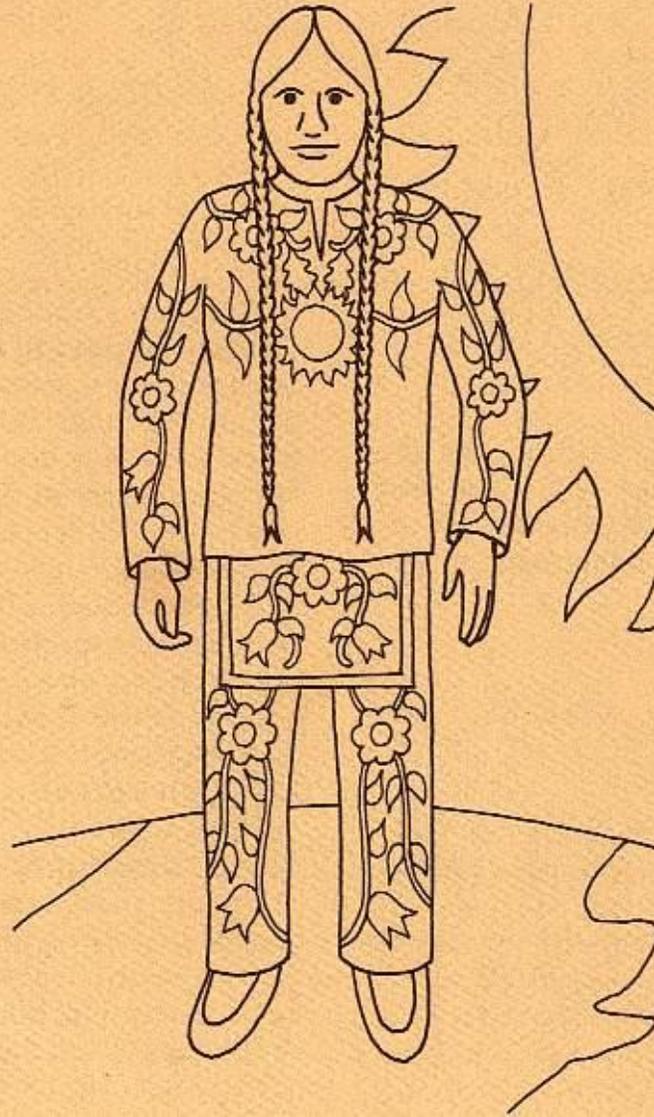
FROM WHENCE

NISHINA

LOWERED

ABE

THE MALE OF THE SPECIES



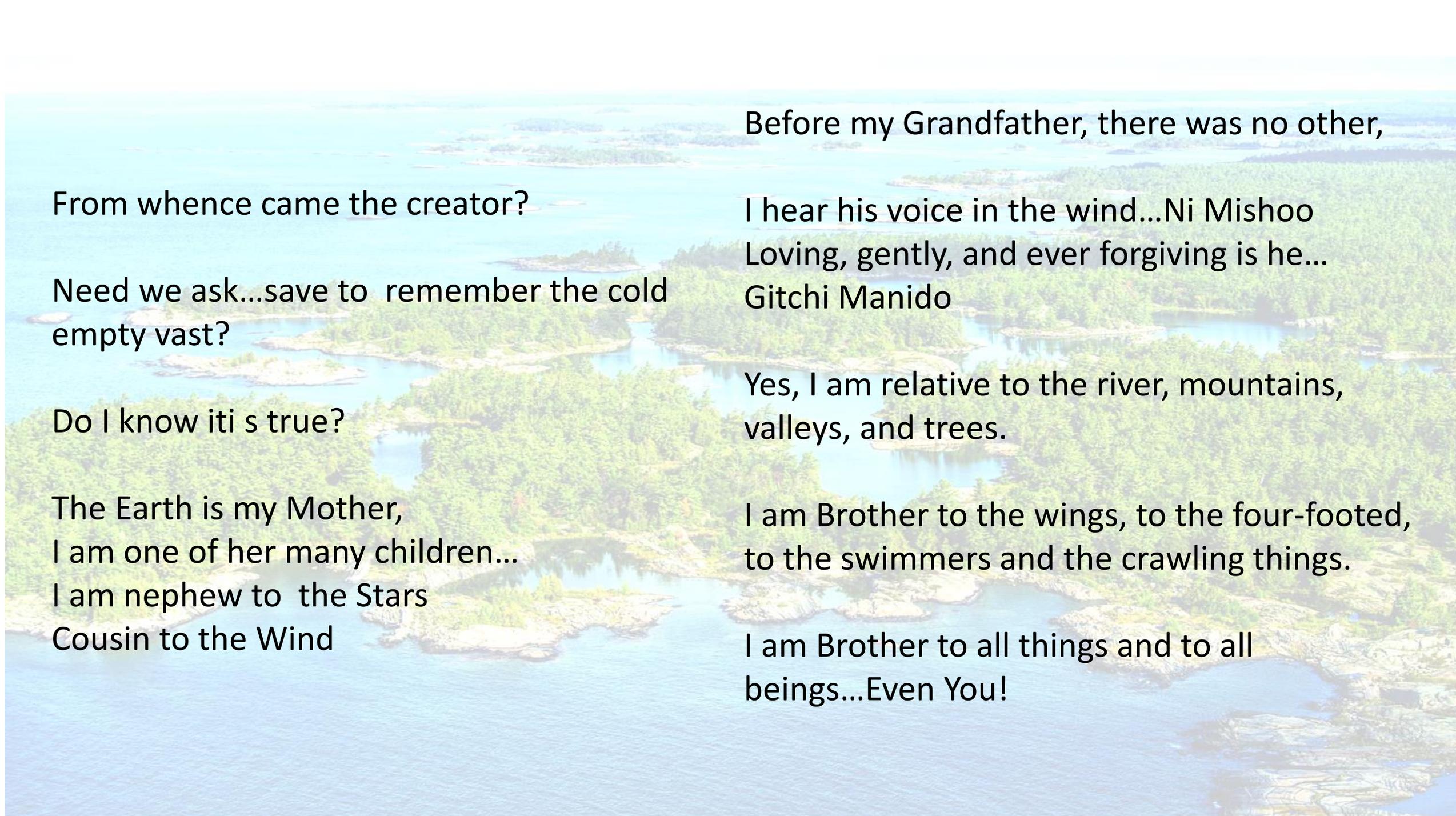
Walked the Earth as he was asked,
Giving names to all the animals, the
plants,

And to the trees, rivers, streams and
ponds. Even the valleys and
mountains, forgetting none...

Not the water-beings, the grass, the
ants, the bees nor the wasp.

Shown then was **The Seventh Fire**, at
last.

This it was, this it is
From the very first, in truth,
It has come to pass.
To Anishinabe...it was given.



From whence came the creator?

Need we ask...save to remember the cold
empty vast?

Do I know it is true?

The Earth is my Mother,
I am one of her many children...
I am nephew to the Stars
Cousin to the Wind

Before my Grandfather, there was no other,

I hear his voice in the wind...Ni Mishoo
Loving, gently, and ever forgiving is he...
Gitchi Manido

Yes, I am relative to the river, mountains,
valleys, and trees.

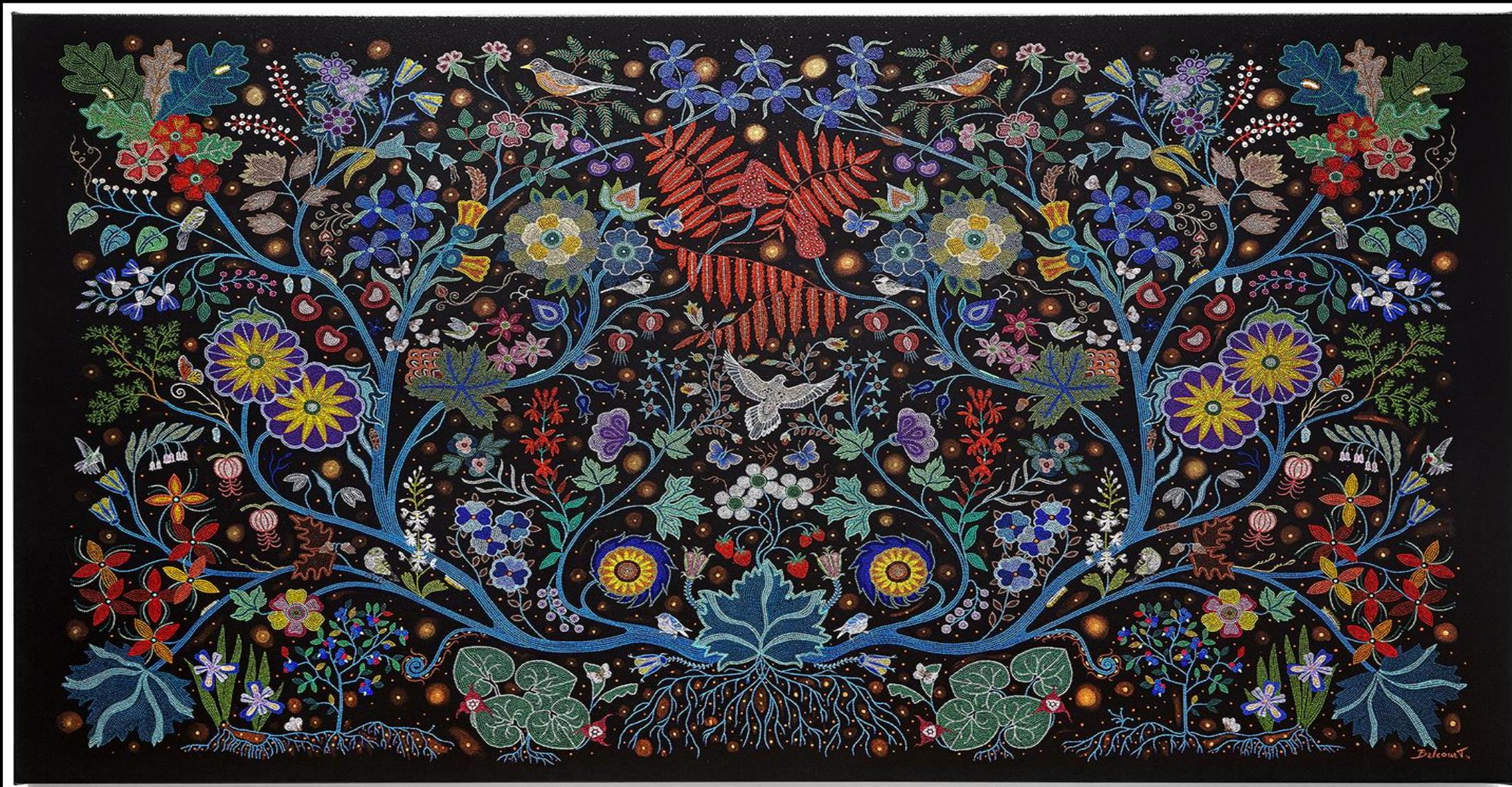
I am Brother to the wings, to the four-footed,
to the swimmers and the crawling things.

I am Brother to all things and to all
beings...Even You!

Anishinabe Creation Story

How to look at the creation story in regards to the intention of engaging with communities.

Pre	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
Energy Source	Shaker	The Sun	The Moon	Movement	Seeds	Mother Earth	Anishinabe	Moving Forward
The Awakening, sending out thoughts	Reception of Thoughts, <i>Receive to perceive</i>	Creation of relationships (circle)	Duality of relationships Give & Receive	Constant of giving & receiving	Identity with Intent Relationships "us" Wholeness vs Separateness	Collective and imperative to the relationship w mother earth communication	Who we are Who we are becoming "The 7 generations to come"	What we manifest, the balance and relationships Reconciliation



Chi Miigwetch

Christi Belcourt

Wisdom of the Universe

Acrylic on Canvas, 171cm x 282cm, 2014

Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario