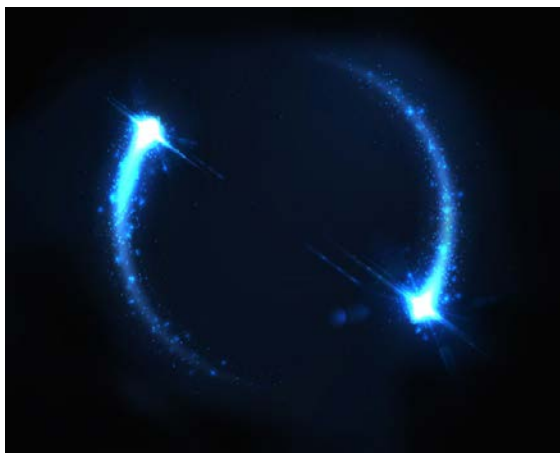


Reflection: The Story of ‘The Old Turtle and the Broken Truth’ i

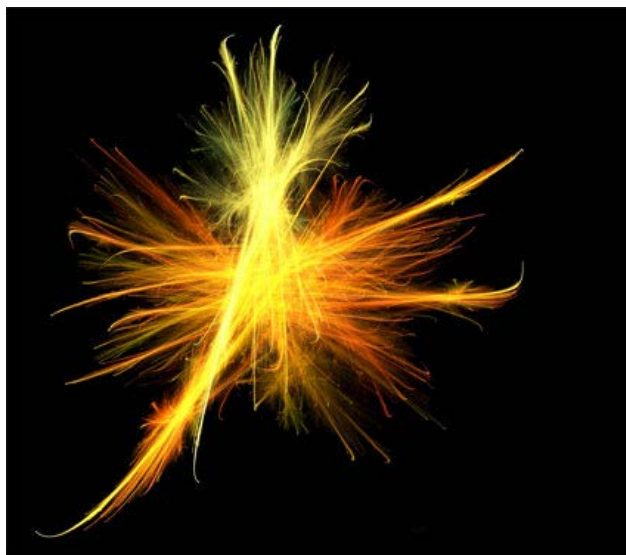
The following story speaks of a fragmented world that yearned for wholeness. I invite you read this tale with the eyes of your own wisdom – the wisdom that has grown through your experiences of life, and then listen deeply to what resonates within you.



“One night, in a far-away land that “is somehow not so far away,” a truth falls from the stars. As it falls, it breaks into two pieces; one piece blazes off through the sky and the other falls straight to the ground. One day, a man stumbles upon the gravity-drawn truth and finds carved on it the words, “You are loved.” It makes him feel good, so he keeps it and shares it with the people in his tribe. The thing sparkles and makes the people who have it feel warm and happy. It becomes their most prized possession, and they call it “The Truth.” Those who have

the truth grow afraid of those who don’t have it, who are different. And those who don’t have it covet it. Soon people are fighting wars over the small truth, trying to capture it for themselves.

A little girl who is troubled by the growing violence, greed, and destruction in her once-peaceful world goes on a journey—through the Mountains of Imagining, the River of Wondering Why, and the Forest of Finding Out—to speak with Old Turtle, the wise counsellor. Old Turtle tells her that the Truth is broken and missing a piece, a piece that shot off in the night sky so long ago. Together they search for it and, when they find it, the little girl puts the jagged piece in her pocket and returns to her people. She tries to explain, but no one will listen or understand. Finally, a raven flies the broken truth to the top of a tower, where the other piece has been ensconced for safety, and the re-joined pieces shine their full message: “You are loved / and so are they.” And the people begin to comprehend. And the earth begins to heal.”



One story can hold a thousand other stories. I am left contemplating how well the story of the Broken Truth speaks to our world today.

As a species we have evolved into the consciousness that we now hold. We see with new eyes, seeing more clearly now what previously was unknown. Our convictions on Life, Love and Suffering continue to evolve as we struggle to take hold of the Truth of All Being that is coming into view. Thus from unknown darkness and mystery, as our consciousness evolves we begin to slowly comprehend more fully the deep yearning for love – the innate ache within us. We are finding the aspect of Truth with its carved words “you are loved”. And O how we treasured it! How we crave for more and fear its loss! Sadly we too have slowly slipped into a protective and righteous individualism, exclusiveness, possessiveness. We have erected walls of protection (my country/my boundary) and we see with eyes of division (us and them), right and wrong (we are right and they are wrong). This has led to misperceptions, judgements and often to uninformed fear. Hence, as in the story, wars have arisen which are causing huge sufferings and injustices.

I cannot help but hold the turmoil in the world today and wonder if all this fighting, all this pain and suffering is due to the reality that we are holding only half of the truth. We yearn for peace, we yearn for love but as yet we struggle to hold the cost that it may entail for us - the cost of a change in lifestyle, the cost of sharing, the cost of risk-taking.



I wonder who the ‘little girl/boy’ symbolizes within us? Children often have an innocence and free creative imagination. They often have clarity of sight in perceiving right, wrong, fair, unfair. They are vulnerable whilst also strong and resilient. They have an inner wisdom- knowing. Like the little girl in the story, they can be troubled by what they see, feel and sense to be ‘not right’. As I watch the daily news and see the devastation of the wars in Syria, Africa, and other parts of our world, I ache at the sight of the faces tortured by a ‘broken truth’.

So I too am called to make an inner journey to the ‘old turtle’ within me, that deep wisdom place that sees beyond, that knows the ‘more’, that hears my heart and feels my gut. The turtle within me

knows the world is fragmented and broken – that the yearning for Wholeness, Oneness, and Love is still a distant hope. The evolutionary journey we are on, our growth into a new consciousness, our vision of a world that can live in union and communion becomes like a magnetic field within that draws us..... We now are the ones who, through conscious awareness, carry the broken pieces within us. We too try to explain but only a few will listen, hear and understand.

It is the raven that finally flies the broken piece to the top of the tower, enabling the fullness of Love to be revealed. The raven is an unusual bird to be the one to complete this task, yet maybe not. The raven has the power and strength of flight. It has scriptural and spiritual significance, and it is also a bird associated with death. Life...Death...Life. The wholeness of Love cannot be without the cost of surrendering to the dying and death of many facets and aspects of our unhealthy selves. This healing which needs to take place comes when ‘the people begin to comprehend’. The call today is one beyond ‘individualism’ towards a greater collective whole – one people, one earth. Only then can our world begin to heal.



As we journey towards this in our intentional contemplative time together, let us hold deep within us the words we all know well:

“I am.....I AM
The Way.....to New Consciousness
The Truth.....of Oneness in Love
The Life.....of Wholeness of Being”

(Tess Veenker msc)

ⁱ Douglas Wood, ‘*The Old Turtle and the Broken Truth*’ (Author), Jon J Muth (Illustrator), Scholastic Press: NY, 2003