

## **Mei Tehom (Genesis 1:2)**

Ari Yovel, 7/23/17

In the waters of the Galilee, I close my eyes and float. The water is sweet but still stings in my nose when the waves rush over my face, reminding me to breathe, breathe, breathe. Below me, earth and water. Above me, only sky. And I am in between, in both and in neither.

I float, and behind closed eyes I go back

Back to the man who they say walked on this water, fishing for fishers of men. Together they made their first brotherhood aboard that battered boat, those startled sailors and the Son of Man. Could they have caught me in their nets with such terms, swept me up with strong, suntanned arms along with the barbels and sardines? Or would the softness of my skin and the swells and crests of my form cause me to slip through, to fall back under the surface?

There is no room for me there. I will go back, further and deeper

Back to our neighbors to the west, where in Cyprus they say a goddess rose from the foam with the dawn and the tide, a maiden mistress upon a scallop shell. Her grace was from the Graces given, and all who saw her ran to the shore to behold the feminine made flesh. Would her fine, fair fingers take my hand and pull me up to join her flock upon the froth? Or would the broadness of my back and the coarseness in my voice prove that I am too harsh a human to be helped by her, meant to be refused, rejected as refuse among the reeds?

There is no room for me there. I will go back, further and deeper

Back to the most divine of divisions, a nation of nomads moving among walls of water, moving within a miracle, walking in the near-nothing narrow place in between. But even there, as they set foot on land that till then had never seen the sky, they know it is an impossibility, a fleeting phenomenon. They see with their own eyes as their pursuers are from above frowned upon, drowned upon the sea floor. Would they, could they, seek out such middle ground again and see the space as sacred? Or would they abandon the thought, forget it as a fleeting nightmare, and thank their Lord for freeing them from the fear that brought it into being?

There is no room for me there. I will go back, further and deeper

Back, as back as back can go. Or, actually, a little bit before. In the darkness before even being itself had a body; Before we had a world, or words with which to fill it; Before our reality had flesh and faces and figures, there was this and only this. Space and empty space, a vast void through which flowed the first waters of our Creation. G-d was there, so we say. The spirit of our Source was all and was within it all, free and without form, filling the furthest reaches with the wonder of what will come.

And it is there that I find myself,  
at one with the One,  
reflected in Their image  
as we float  
upon the surface  
of the water.