All was darkness in the time before time.

The dark land was called Il-ba-lint-ja, and it possessed nothing save an endlessly tall pole coming out of the ground. It stretched from the barren land to the top of the heavens above.

At the base of the pole, Ka-ro-ra lay in the thick night asleep.

While all around him was deep blackness, his dreams were as bright and colorful as the world we know today.

He was dreaming of Bandicoots; and that the creatures were coming out of his navel, his armpits, his nose and mouth.

Suddenly dawn arose and Il-ba-lint-ja was flooded with light for the first time.

Ka-ro-ra rose from where he had been sleeping. He had been sleeping for a long, long time and he was tired and hungry.

He grabbed two Bandicoots and cooked them in the hot sun. After he had eaten, he realized that he was lonely.

The sun covered itself with necklaces and sunk below the horizon. Ka-ro-ra went back to sleep. This time he dreamed of a Bull-Roarer, which appeared from his armpit. This turned into a young boy, whom he sang to life.

By day father and son hunted for Bandicoots.

By night as they slept, the father dreamed of more and more sons. Each morning he woke up to find twice as many as the night before.

By day Ka-ro-ra and all of his sons ate Bandicoots and cooked them in the sun.

It wasn’t long before the land had run out of Bandicoots.

Ka-ro-ra sent his sons further and further out to hunt, but they only returned hungry in the evenings. The Bandicoots were gone.

One morning they heard a strange noise, and saw a dark animal in the misty light. Thinking it might be a Bandicoot, the sons attacked it.

“I’m no Bandicoot! I am T-jen-ter-ama, a man, just like yourselves. Now you have made me lame!”

T-jen-ter-ama was the first of the kangaroos.

That evening, all of Ka-ro-ra’s sons gathered around him.

From the hole in the ground where Ka-ro-ra slept, there came a flood of honey, which engulfed the entire land of Il-ba-lint-ja.

All at once, Ka-ro-ra’s sons were swept away, along with T-jen-ter-ama the kangaroo. They were all washed underground, and out of sight.

Ka-ro-ra was left standing by the great pole. Ka-ro-ra went back to sleep to dream again.
Before the earth had form, there was Coatlicue, the Earth Mother. She swam in the chaotic waters in the darkness before time.

She created the moon and the stars, called the Centzon Huitznahua.

She had a daughter, the earth goddess Coyolxauhqui. Her children ascended to the heavens to live and rule the sky.

One day Coatlicue found a ball of hummingbird feathers. She tucked them into her dress for safe-keeping.

After a while she discovered that she was pregnant.

Her children in heaven were ashamed of their mother.

“Who is the father of this child?” they demanded.

“It was a ball of hummingbird feathers!”

But no one believed her story. Her children decided to slay their mother, for the great shame and dishonor she brought them.

Coatlicue heard the news that her children were coming to slay her- she was terrified and tried to run.

She could already see them advancing towards her over the hills.

“Do not be afraid. I am ready. “ Came a voice from the unborn child.

It was then that she gave birth to fiery sun god Huitzilopochtli; he emerged fully armed, bearing his burning sword Xiuhcoatl.

With one stroke he slew the angry earth goddess Coyolxauhqui, and sent her body tumbling towards the chaotic seas.

The top half of her body went into the heavens and the lower half crashed into the seas, forming the earth.

After this, Huitzilopochtli went up to the heavens to rule over the moon and the stars, and Coatlicue descended below the earth, to ensure that the earth bore fruit.

It was one of her sons, Quetzacoatl the Feathered Serpent, who created the first humans.

He created a race of men from grey ash.

At first, the earth gave its riches freely for the new race of men. Their lives were easy and they lived without pain and suffering.

After a while however, these men became greedy. They forgot to honor their creators and took the earth’s riches for granted.

Quetzacoatl became enraged and decided to wash them all away in a great flood.

Only one couple was not greedy; a husband and wife named Teta and Nena. Quetzacoatl decided to spare these two and gave them instructions.

“Find the tallest and strongest hollow tree. Hide in it and you shall live. Take only one cob of corn with you, and no more.”
Teta and Nena did as they were told.

Quetzacoatl sent the waters crashing down over his creations. The greedy men and women turned into fish, and are still fish today.

Teta and Nena survived as Quetzacoatl promised. They repopulated the world with a new race of men, humble and always aware of the gods who created them.

But Coatlicue the Earth Mother was no longer as generous with this earth’s riches as before.

She became known as “The Grandmother”; wearing a skirt made of serpents, a necklace made from human hands and hearts and adorned with a skull. Her hands and feet were decorated with animal claws.

She became insatiably hungry for human blood and demanded regular human sacrifice.

Thus humans had to give her one living human heart each year. If they didn’t Coatlicue would withdraw the earth’s gifts and everyone on earth would die of starvation.
Before anything had a name, before there was firm ground or sky or the sun and moon there was Apsu, the sweet water sea and Tiamat, the salt water sea.

When these two seas mingled, they created the gods Lahmu and Lahamu, who rose from the silt at the edge of the water. When Lahmu and Lahamu joined, they created the great gods Anshar, Kishar and Anu. From this generation of gods there arose mighty Ea and his many brothers.

Ea and his brothers were restless - they surged over the waters day and night. Neither Apsu nor Tiamat could get any rest. They tried to plead with the gods to tread softly, but powerful Ea didn’t hear them. Apsu decided the only way to have some peace was to destroy Ea and his brothers. He began to plot their demise with some of the first generation gods. But Ea heard of their plans and struck him down first. This began a war among the gods.

Tiamat was furious that her mate was killed, and she began producing great and ferocious monsters to slay Ea and his brothers. She created poisonous dragons and demons and serpents. She created the Viper, the Sphinx, the Lion, the Mad Dog and Scorpion Man. The chief of them all was called Kingu. He led the army of Tiamat’s monsters into heaven against Ea and his brothers to avenge Apsu’s death.

While Tiamat fashioned her army, Ea and the goddess Damkina created the great god Marduk. Marduk was the most powerful creation ever. He towered over the others. He had four eyes and four ears and could see and hear everything in creation.

His eyes flashed with lightning and when he spoke he breathed fire. He was fearless and radiant. The gods cowered before him. “You are the Great Sun!” they cried.

Ea and the gods told him of the advancing army. They needed his help to defeat them. “I will fight for you but after the war is over I shall rule the universe on high!”

The gods agreed. Marduk made ready for battle. He gathered the four winds to clear the path to Tiamat.

Marduk burst out of the sky in his flaming chariot pulled by his team Killer, Crusher, Unyielder and Fleet. He held the royal scepter and ring, covered in golden armor. He rode into battle bearing his bow and arrows and a mighty thunderbolt. Marduk was glorious to behold. He struck fear in the hearts of all of Tiamat's brood. The sea waters of Tiamat swirled together and formed a vast and fearsome dragon. She opened her mouth wide to scream.

Before she could utter a word, Marduk cast a hurricane into her mouth. She swallowed it and the hurricane almost burst her apart from the inside.

Before she could cast a single spell, Marduk let one of his arrows fly; it cut her neatly in half. Tiamat’s monsters trembled as she died. Marduk raised half of her body to the heavens to form the sky and the other half formed the earth.

Marduk was victorious, and now the undisputed king of the universe. No one ever questioned his rule. He created the days of the year, the planets and their paths in the heavens, the stars and their constellations and the moon and her moods. He became the sun and gave all the gods their responsibilities.

After a time he decided to create a creature that could serve the gods and bear the burden of hard work looking after the earth. Marduk first created a structure from bone, left over from the bones of the dead monsters from the war. Then he formed the flesh around it and breathed life into it.

Man was given his name. He took up residence on the earth while the gods ascended to heaven. Thus the gods were freed from eternal labor.
Long, long ago the great void produced a god and a goddess, named Donn and Danu.

When they looked at each other a sacred flame burned in their hearts. They locked into a loving embrace from which they could not be separated.

After a while, Donn and Danu bore children. The children were caught between their interlocked parents and couldn’t escape.

One of the sons, Briain, decided that he needed to separate his parents or he and his brothers would die.

Danu’s love for her son won over her love for her husband and she allowed Briain to slay his father. Briain’s fury was so great that he cut his father into nine parts.

Danu was horrified by what she had seen and started to cry. Her tears swelled into a great flood that swept away all of her children to earth. This is how Danu became known as the "Waters of Heaven."

The waters also washed away the nine parts of Donn. His head became the skies, his brain the clouds, his face the sun, his mind the moon, his bones the stones and his breath the wind. Donn’s blood mixed with Danu’s tears and became the seas.

Two red acorns fell to the earth. Danu recognized her beloved in one of them. She cried again and her tears soaked into the dry earth and made the seeds grow.

The red acorn took root and grew into a marvelous oak tree. It was the reincarnation of Donn.

The other seed became a priest, brother of Donn. His name was Finn.

Donn saw his beloved Danu up in heaven and stretched out his branches to the skies, trying to dry her tears with his leaves.

Nurtured by the waters of heaven, the oak grew many berries, which fell and grew into the first humans.

The people who grew from these berries were lazy because they couldn’t die. Slowly, they became lazier and lazier until they began to rot from the inside.

Donn asked the advice of his brother Finn.

“What people need is death,” said he. “There must be renewal in the world.”

But Donn didn’t like this idea and the two brothers started to fight. They fought long and hard.

Finally Finn was killed. Seeing his brother dead at his feet, Donn was so overcome with pain that his heart burst apart. Parts of his body fell everywhere and this renewed the world.

But death did come to mankind. When Donn died three mighty roots of the oak grew deep into the ground creating the Otherworld, a place where people go after death.

Donn became the god of the Otherworld while Danu remained the goddess of heaven. To this day their great love continues, even as they are separated by the earth.
In mythical times a god named Ameta went hunting. He found a wild boar that had a coconut speared on one of its tusks.

Ameta had never seen a coconut before. He took it home and hid it safely in his hut.

That night Ameta had a dream; a man came to him and told him to plant the coconut. The next morning Ameta did as he was told.

After three days a magnificent plant appeared with large white blossoms.

Ameta climbed up to cut some flowers and as he did, he accidentally cut his finger. His blood dripped on one of the flowers.

Nine days later Ameta found a baby girl in the flower. He wrapped her in coconut leaves and took her home. Ameta named her Hainuwele, which means coconut branch.

Within three days the baby girl grew into a young woman.

Hainuwele had a special gift; she could produce marvelous objects made of precious materials from nothing. Her father often sold these at the market.

One night there was big festival in town. Hainuwele went to the dance and brought gifts for the people: jewelry, plates, gongs and knives.

The dance lasted nine days and nine nights. Every day, Hainuwele brought more precious objects to the people; including coral necklaces and fine pottery.

The people were immediately jealous of Hainuwele, who was obviously wealthy.

On the last night, a group of male dancers threw Hainuwele into a great hole. They filled it with earth and danced on top of it.

When Ameta discovered that Hainuwele had been killed, he was furious. He dug up her body, cut it into pieces and buried it in several places, except for her arms.

Plants started to grow where Hainuwele’s body parts were buried. These plants were new to the world; most of them were tubers, which became the main source of food for people.

Ameta took Hainuwele’s arms to the goddess Satene and explained what had happened. Satene announced to her people that because of this terrible act, she would leave them.

She made the arms into a gateway through which all her people had to pass.

When the people passed through the gate some remained human beings while those with evil hearts changed into animals such as pigs, birds and fish. Others changed into spirits.

Satene traveled to the Mountain of the Dead, where she became queen. Only the dead could see her after that.
In the beginning, there was an enormous egg containing chaos.

On the inside the chaos raged on and on—both yin and yang were mixed together. All the opposites were writhing together; male and female, cold and hot, wet and dry, dark and light.

Finally the egg burst open, and out leapt the giant dragon Pan-gu. Yin and yang swirled around him and he pushed the two shell halves apart. Thus the opposites were separated and the earth began to take shape.

Every day for 18,000 years Pan-gu grew ten feet—thus the sky was raised a little higher every day. Once the sky was 30,000 miles above the ground, Pan-gu stopped and began to hammer out the mountains and fill the valley with water to form great oceans.

He created rivers with his fingers and stamped the earth down to create flat lands. He gathered raw light and tossed them into the sky to become stars.

After 18,000 years, Pan-gu had grown old and tired. He had made the world with his hands and formed the basic principles of yin and yang. He wanted to lay down and sleep forever. Once he lay down he never rose again.

When Pan-gu died, his body formed huge mountains. His skull formed the top of the sky, his hair formed all flowers and plants, his bones turned to jade and pearl and his arms and legs the four directions.

His blood became the rivers, his breath turned into the wind and his voice to thunder. One eye became the sun and the other the moon.

For many years the world was a very beautiful place but also lonely; there were no people.

The half-dragon goddess Nuwa was born after Pan-gu died, from part of the mixture of yin and yang that he had separated. She decided to create humans to have some other beings to talk to and share ideas with, but mostly just to love.

Nuwa went down to the edge of the Yellow River where there were vast, soft mud banks. She began forming figures out of clay. She decided that it would be much more practical for her creations to have legs instead of a dragon tail, thus her humans were not made in her image.

No sooner did she set the first little mud man on the ground did he start to jump, and dance and sing. He began to speak. “Look at me!”

Nuwa was delighted and began making more and more humans.

She made hundreds and hundreds of mud humans, but soon realized that it would take centuries for her to make enough people to fill the vast earth completely. Nuwa grabbed hold of a muddy stick and flung drops of mud across the land.

As the sun dried each drop, it became a new man or woman. Some say that these humans were the less intelligent ones. Those formed by Nuwa’s own hands became great leaders.

She told them to go and populate the earth. As they grew she loved them and protected them, and was revered as the mother of all humans.
The god Amma was the first being in creation. He began working in clay and created a large, round pot. This he heated to a white-hot temperature and sent it spinning off into the darkness. The heat and light spread deep into the darkness. This became the sun.

Next he created another round pot. This he heated one quarter at a time and sent it off to be the companion to the sun. While the sun shines brightly as long as it is day, the moon shines according to its four phases.

Amma took a third lump of clay and flung it as far as he could. The clay broke off into thousands of pieces and formed a multitude of stars.

He grabbed another large lump of clay and squeezed it into a long and flat object. This he threw as far as he could. It settled to form the earth.

Amma walked down to see his newest creation. He realized that the earth was a beautiful woman.

Amma was lonely and immediately tried to rape her. The earth was protected by a termite hill. Amma cut it down with one stroke and the earth was no longer safe from him.

This violent attack upset the balance of the universe, and it would change the course of things forever. Instead of a set of lucky twins that Amma wanted, the earth gave birth to a single, pale fox. The pale fox became a symbol of God's cruelty and difficulty. He scurried off to the dark corners of the earth to live alone.

The earth became pregnant with more children; this time two sets of twins. Each twin had both male and female elements.

One of the twins broke out of the earth early; he became the male god Yoruga. Since Yoruga was born too early, he and his sister were imperfect. All of mankind is descended from these two beings; and after all the years and many generations of humans, they never became perfect.

The other set of twins were the water spirits, the Nummo.

The Nummo were neither male nor female. They were half human and half fish and had bright red eyes with long green bodies which glistened like water. Their tongues were forked like reptiles and their arms had no joints, so they could move them in any direction.

The Nummo were perfect beings and went straight to heaven. They journeyed to the far away star called Sigi Tolo (Sirius) and settled on its moon, the Po Tolo, or “deep beginning” (Sirius B). Their moon was pure white and heavier than all the lead in the world.

Eventually, the Nummo returned to earth in a vessel and came crashing down with fire and lightning. They created a lake and dove into the water.

The Nummo taught man the sacred revelations that give order to the world. The first revelation is Nature, which speaks through the rustling of grasses that cover the earth.

The second revelation is Order, symbolized by the weavings. Man is meant to live in communities and not live alone like the pale fox.

The third revelation is that of the Granary and the Drum. The drum is to communicate and the granary is what binds man to the earth.

If all of these things are kept alive in man’s thought, Order is preserved and man would flourish.
Nu was the name of the dark, swirling chaos before the beginning of time.

Out of these waters rose Atum; he created himself using his thoughts and the sheer force of his will.

He created a hill, for there was nowhere he could stand.

Atum was alone in the world. He was neither male nor female, and he had one all-seeing eye that could roam the universe. He joined with his shadow to produce a son and a daughter.

Atum gave birth to his son by spitting him out. He named him Shu and made him god of the air.

Atum vomited up his daughter. He named her Tefnut and made her the goddess of mist and moisture.

Shu and Tefnut were given the task of separating the chaos into principles of law, order and stability. The chaos was divided into light and dark and set into place.

This order was called Maat, which formed the principles of life for all time. Maat was a feather; it was light and pure.

Shu and Tefnut produced Geb, the Earth and Nut the Sky. At first these two were tangled together as one.

Shu, god of the air, pushed Nut up into the heavens. There she would remain arched out over Geb, her mate.

They longed to be together, but in the name of Maat they had to be apart, to fulfil their functions.

Nut produced rain for Geb, and Geb made things grow on earth.

As the sky, she gave birth to the sun every night before dawn, and by day it would follow its course over the earth and die at sunset.

Shu and Tefnut produced the other gods. Isis, the queen of the gods, Hathor, the goddess of love and beauty, Osiris the god of wisdom and justice, Seth, the god of evil, Thoth, the god of wisdom and Nephthys the protectress of the dead.

But the chaos was still vast and not yet fully separated into the order of Maat. Shu and Tefnut once got lost in the dark waters of Nu.

Atum was desperate to find his children. He sent his all-seeing eye throughout the heavens and earth to search for them.

In time Shu and Tefnut returned with the eye. When Atum saw them again he was so delighted that he wept tears of joy.

As these tears hit the earth, they became the first men.

As the men populated the earth they had to uphold the truth and balance of Maat. They had the task of tending the earth and worshipping the gods.

The gods, in turn, protected and loved their creations.
Gaia the earth goddess was formed from a raging chaos, which existed before time began. She gave birth to Uranus, the sky, who covered her completely with his starry mantle. The two of them became the first husband and wife.

They bore many children, most of which were terrible monsters; creatures with 100 arms and the Cyclops, mighty giants with one eye each.

Uranus feared these powerful creations and hid them deep in the earth. This caused Gaia great pain, as she loved her children. She became angry and plotted to destroy her husband.

Finally Gaia gave birth to several gods and goddesses who were not fearful monsters. Among them was Kronos who was strong enough to overthrow Uranus. Gaia made him a sickle fashioned from the hardest rock she knew and gave it to her son with instructions.

Kronos hid in his mother’s shadow until night fell, and Uranus the sky came to earth. When Uranus was resting at last, Kronos sprang from his hiding place and killed his father with one stroke.

Thus Kronos became king of the sky in his father’s place. He married Rhea, an earth goddess, and had many more children.

He created the first race of men, made of gold. This was called the Golden Age, when men didn’t have to work, and there was no suffering or death.

But Kronos was also cruel and feared his children. After each was born he ate it whole with the clothes and all, so he would never be overthrown.

Rhea was horrified by this and with the help of her mother Gaia, managed to give birth to her son Zeus in hiding on the island of Crete. She gave her husband a stone wrapped in baby clothes, which he ate in one gulp.

Zeus grew quickly to be the most powerful god ever. When he had grown, he returned with an army of Gaia’s monsters and the rest of the gods to overthrow Kronos.

The war was terrible and went on for years and years and years; all the men of the golden age were killed.

Zeus freed his brothers and sisters and built the palace of Olympus, where he ruled the earth, and all gods and men. He then married his sister Hera and they had many children. Zeus had many other women in secret and they had children too; soon the world was filled with other gods.

Eventually Zeus decided to create a second race of men to worship the Olympians; these were made of silver. The silver men were foolish and had no respect for the gods. This was the Silver Age, in which nothing was sacred - it did not last long.

The irreverent silver men angered Zeus, who hid them away deep in the far corners of the underworld. To replace them, Zeus created a third race of men. They were made of bronze, and this began the Bronze Age.

The bronze men were aggressive and warlike. They destroyed each other with such venom that Zeus quickly hid these away in the underworld too.

Zeus then made a race of heroes, who were the subjects of most of the countless myths in the Hellenic tradition. This was the heroic age, and there were many great men and women born of it. When a hero died, he was given a special place in the underworld, called the Blessed Isles, where it is always light and beautiful.

The men of the heroic age, too, passed away and gave rise to men of today. The race that lives now is the iron race; which is said to be the hardest of all. Men of the Iron Age must toil all their lives and suffer and die. But the iron men are the strongest of all and will survive the Olympian gods.
In the beginning there was only endless darkness.

Out of this darkness, two beings were born; the male Kumulipo, whose name means “The essence of darkness” and the female Po’ele whose name means “darkness itself”.

These two created all the creatures of the total darkness; the shellfish that live at the very bottom of the ocean floor, the plants that grow during the dark of night and the grubs that burrow in the earth.

As these creatures were born the dark became slightly lighter.

The first beings gave birth to the male Pouliuli whose name means “deep darkness” and the female Powehiwehi whose name means “darkness with a little light”.

This couple created all the creatures of the almost-darkness; they created the fish that swim in the deep seas and land creatures that live in almost in darkness.

These dark creatures had offspring, and with every new life, the deep darkness of this world got a little brighter.

The second couple gave birth to a third: the male Po’el’ele, whose name means “night” and the female Pohaha, whose name means “coming into dawn”.

These two created the creatures of the darkness-near-dawn; the insects that fly by night, the caterpillar, the grasshopper and a large egg.

The egg hatched into thousands of birds. These were the birds that fly and sing in the hours just before dawn.

The fish, the birds and the insects all had offspring- each new creature added some light to the darkness, until it was getting closer to the light we have in the hours before dawn.

Next to be born were Popanopano and Polalowwehi who gave birth to sea-turtles, lobsters and other shellfish that live in shallow waters in near-darkness.

They gave birth to the male Po’hiolo and the female Po’ne’a’aku. Their names mean “night ending”. They produced the rat Pilo’l and Kamapua, the pig, both creatures of day and night.

By this time it was almost dawn and the earth was already buzzing with the life from so many creations. These two created the first dawn and light finally came into the world.

The first man, Ki’i and the first woman La’il a’ were born- they were both dark since they were born just at dawn.

The first man and first woman had many children. With each generation, their skins became lighter and lighter until they became the color they are now.
Before there was anything there were the primeval waters. These seas were vast and deep and dark; all that was, was Non Being.

Over time, these waters produced a single golden egg, which floated over the waters for nine months.

After nine months, the egg burst open, and there was Prajapati standing in its shell. Prajapati was neither male nor female, but an all-powerful combination of both. He rested there on the golden shell for almost a year without speaking or moving.

After one year he broke his silence. The first word he spoke - the Word - became the earth. The next Word he uttered became the sky, which he divided into seasons.

Prajapati could see forever; from the beginning of all life and even to his own death, which would be 1,000 years later. Yet Prajapati was lonely and he desired a mate in this vast emptiness.

He divided himself into two beings, a husband and a wife, and together they created the first gods, the elements and mankind. By these acts of creation, time was created; Prajapati became the embodiment of time itself.

The first to be born was Agni, the God of Fire. Once there was fire, there was also light, which Prajapati separated into day and night.

Other gods were born, including the evil Ashuras and beautiful Dawn. Prajapati was sure to separate good from evil, and hid his evil offspring deep into the earth.

However, Prajapati desired his lovely daughter Dawn, and as she was on earth in the form of a doe, he came to her disguised as a stag.

She tried to flee but Prajapati was too fast and powerful. She later gave birth to all the cattle of the world.

The other gods watched, filled with horror- Prajapati’s act was disgraceful, breaking the most profound taboo they could imagine.

In anger they created the monstrous Rudra, who hunted Prajapati down all over the earth. When he found him, he shot him with an arrow and flung him into the dark sky.

Thus Prajapati became the ‘Deer’s Head’ (Capricorn) constellation in the night sky. Dawn returned to the sky but never got too close to the night.
In the beginning, Pachacamac the sun rose slowly from Lake Titicaca.

Pachacamac was so bright that nothing else could be seen in the sky but him. But the night sky was empty; so he made the stars, the planets and the moon.

The beautiful moon, Pachamama, became his wife and together they ruled the heavens and the earth.

Pachacamac fashioned the first humans from the stone of an enormous mountain of rock.

The first humans were pitiful creatures; they knew nothing of the world nor how to survive in it.

The sun and the moon bore a son and a daughter. Out of pity they sent their children to the earth to help them.

The son of Pachacamac taught men how to plow and plant the fields, and how to build houses.

The daughter of the moon approached the women and taught them the art of weaving, and how to prepare food.

“Teach the humans to be kind and fair. I will provide light and warmth, every day without fail; but make sure they never forget their creators.”

Pachacamac’s son became the first Inca; he and his sister-wife ruled the first humans.

After a while, the Inca and his wife took a long journey to find the perfect place to his people to settle. At every stop, they stuck one of their father’s golden rods in the earth. Each golden rod would be a symbol for his people to build a city.

When they reached the valley of Huanacauri, the golden rod sank into the ground and disappeared.

Inca decided that here should be the site of the first temple of the sun, and that here is where he and his people would settle.

Inca and his wife set off to gather his people. He went north and his wife wandered south.

The children of the sun were beautiful and spoke convincingly about Pachacamac and his principles of law.

When they met people in small villages, the people were so moved that they left their homes and followed the Inca and his wife to the valley of Huanacauri.

Soon, they had followers from the entire region.

The followers of Inca’s wife settled with her followers in the south and her city was Hurin-Cuzco, Southern City.

Inca and his followers settled in the northern part of the valley and named their town Hanan-Cuzco, City of the North.

From then on, all Inca cities were divided into northern and southern halves, representing the male and female forces.
Raven made the world and the waters with beats of his wings.

He had the powers of both a man and bird, and could change from one to the other simply by pulling his bead above his head as one lifts up a mask.

His earth was dark and silent. He had created water and mountains, and had filled the land with growing pea-pod plants.

After five days, one of the pea-pods burst open; out popped a fully-grown man, the first to walk on Raven's new earth.

At first the man was dizzy and confused. He drank from a pool of water at his feet, which made him feel a little better.

Raven had been soaring above his earth when he caught sight of the movement below.

For a long time Raven and the man stared at each other without saying a word.

Finally Raven spoke:

“Who are you and where did you come from?”

“I was born from that pea-pod” replied the man, pointing to the plant.

Raven was astonished. He had made the pea plant himself without any idea that something like this would happen. However, he was pleased that his earth would now have inhabitants.

“Have you eaten?” asked Raven.

“I have had a drink of water...” replied the man.

“Wait here for me,” said Raven, who lowered his beak and took the form of a bird. With a flurry of dark feathers, he flew off into the night sky.

The man waited for Raven for four days.

Raven returned carrying two raspberries and two heathberries.

“These are for you. They shall grow all over the earth to feed you.”

Man devoured the berries in one gulp; Raven realized that berries alone wouldn’t be enough to feed his hungry creation.

Raven then began working clay to form two fat mountain sheep. When he waved his black wings over them, the sheep sprang into life and bounded into the hills.

He made more and more sheep. Man looked at them so hungrily that Raven carefully placed them far up in the mountains so that Man wouldn’t eat all of them at once.

Raven went on making fish, birds and other animals, and waved his wings over each one to bring it to life.

Each one he put someplace out of Man’s reach so that he wouldn’t kill them all – the fish in the rivers and the birds in the air. Already Raven could see other men growing in pea-pods, and they were soon going to emerge hungry too.
Raven created a huge bear from the same clay, to make sure Man had something to fear.

After a few days, Raven noticed that Man was lonely.

Raven went off to a quiet corner of the earth where Man couldn’t see what he was doing.

He started building a figure out of clay. It looked like Man but was smaller and softer. Raven brushed his wings over the new figure, and the lovely being sat up and looked at Man.

“This is Woman, your helper and companion,” said Raven.

Man was very pleased. Together they filled the earth with their children and before long Raven’s earth filled with the sound of many voices, and overflowing with many forms of life.
Before this world was created, there was the Sky World, high above the Endless Waters. In this Sky World there lived the Sky Caretaker and his wife, the Sky Woman.

They lived in a lodge by the Great Tree of Light, which illuminated their world through its brightly glowing flowers.

One day a great wind burst through the Sky World and ripped the Tree of Light out of the ground. The light was gone and all that remained was a vast hole.

The Sky Woman accidentally fell through the hole. She fell for miles and miles and was about to plunge into the Endless Waters below, when a fish hawk spotted her, and caught her in his wings.

The woman was too heavy for the hawk, and he started sinking towards the waters. Luckily, a great sea turtle saw the pair faltering towards the water. He offered his back for the woman to live.

But the woman needed earth under her feet, so she asked the animals of the Endless Waters for help. None of the other animals could dive deeper than the muskrat, so he was called on to swim down and find earth.

The muskrat dove deep deep deep down into the Endless Waters. Finally he touched soft mud. He scooped up as much as he could and returned to the surface.

All the animals helped spread the earth onto the turtle’s back. As the animals worked, the Sky Woman began to walk in counterclockwise circles around the turtle’s back.

As she walked, the turtle began to grow. The woman walked in larger and larger circles around the turtle’s back and the turtle grew and grew and grew.

Finally the turtle was the size of the earth we know today. Together the Sky Woman and the animals built lakes and mountains and forests and vast plains.

The woman had a daughter who became the Earth Mother. Earth Mother bore three daughters Corn, Beans and Squash, and twin sons, the evil-minded Flint and the good-minded Sapling.

The good son Sapling created the sun, the moon, plants and other animals; he created all the pleasant things we have on earth. His evil brother Flint destroyed much of Sapling’s work- he created what was unpleasant in the world we know.

When Sapling created fish, Flint gave them hard bones. When Sapling created berry bushes, Flint gave the bushes thorns. When Sapling created summer, Flint made sure there was a winter.

Sapling then created different kinds of humans. He filled their minds with good thoughts, but his brother made sure to give them evil thoughts too.

From yellow bark Sapling created the Asian race. From sea foam he created the Caucasian race. He created Africans from dark clay, and from red clay, he created the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois people.

But these different humans could not live together in the same place; they were constantly at war.

Each race was then separated and put into each of the four corners of the world. The world is still carried by a giant sea turtle over the Endless Waters and the different races still make war to this day.
Before there was heaven and earth, there was darkness. In the midst of this darkness was a swirling mass in the shape of an enormous egg, containing all things.

Slowly over the course of many years, the lighter and purer part drew itself away from the heavier and denser part. The heavy material settled to form the earth; this was IN (yin). The lighter part rose to form the Heavens; this was YO (yang).

IN and YO were opposites, but one could not exist without the other. IN is the feminine and YO is the masculine, and all things in the world have the properties of one of these two forces. From this separation, the first beings appeared. They were Izanagi “Male who Invites” and Izanami, “Female who Invites”.

Izanagi and Izanami found themselves on the floating bridge of heaven and peered down into the darkness below. All they heard was the sound of rushing water.

"Is there no land beneath us?" they asked each other. Izanagi thrust a jeweled-tipped spear into the waters. As he drew it up again, the drips formed the island Onogoro-jima, which means “Spontaneously Created Island”. The two gods descended to this island to live. Izanagi and Izanami decided to become husband and wife and build the land together.

They agreed that each should walk in the opposite direction around the World Axle, and when they meet each other again, they would be married. So they set off to the south and north and walked for days and weeks and months. Finally they met each other in the middle.

Izanami was the first to speak; “What a lovely man I have met!” she exclaimed.

But this distressed Izanagi, who felt that it should have been him, the man, to speak first. He declared this unlucky and determined that they would do this again.

Thus Izanagi and Izagami turned around and walked in opposite directions for days and weeks and months, to meet again on the other side of the World Axle. When they met again, it was Izanagi who spoke first; “What a beautiful maiden I have met!”

Izanami explained that, as the IN force, there was a part of her body which was empty. Izanagi replied as the YO force, that there was a part of his body which was too much; therefore they completed each other and became one as husband and wife.

Their first child was the island of Ahaji. They produced six more islands and declared it the Great Eight Island Country (Japan).

Izanami gave birth to the sun goddess, who was so radiant that they sent her to rule in heaven and called her Ohohiro-me no muchi.

Their next child was to be her consort, the moon. He was called Tsukiyumi no Mikoto and was sent to accompany the sun and rule in heaven at her side.

Izanagi and Izanami produced many more children who became gods or elements.

They were very happy together for many years. Izanami’s last child was the god of fire; she was burned to death during his birth and was whisked away to Yomi, the underworld.

In despair, Izanagi left all of their children and grew old and lonely on the far island of Tsukuji.
In the beginning, there was Te Kore, The Nothing. From Te Kore came Te Pō, The Night. There were many nights. The last Night joined with Space and there came into being two thoughts.

These thoughts were called Rangi, the Sky Father, and Papa, the Earth Mother. They were so much in love that they held each other tightly and refused to let go of each other.

Thus the sky and the earth were joined solidly together. There was no light on the earth as Rangi and Papa’s tight embrace prevented it. There was not even enough room for Time to slip between them.

Papa and Rangi gave birth to over 100 children; some of the children were Tangaroa, god of the sea, Tāne, god of the forests, Tūmātauenga, god of war, Whiro, god of darkness and Tawhirimātea, god of the winds.

They were all trapped between their parents and could hardly move. The children talked about what they should do.

Tāne suggested that he would separate their parents. Whiro, was angry with Tāne, because he was the eldest, and he should be the one to do this. Tawhiri wanted their parents to be left alone. Tūmātauenga thought they should just kill the parents. But in the end, most of the children agreed that Tāne should push them apart.

Tāne, god of the forests, carried four poles with him. He placed one of the poles by his parents’ legs and one by their heads. He then pushed his parents apart. He pushed for years and years and years.

Rangi the Sky and Papa the Earth were separated and became the sky above and earth below as we know them today. The blood from Rangi became the red of the sunset. The blood from Papa became the red clay earth.

Light came into the world at last. The children moved to the four corners. But Tawhiri was very angry at what had been done. The anger grew in him until he couldn’t bear it any more.

Tawhiri ripped out his eyes and threw them into the heavens, where they turned into the first two stars. He then turned his blind fury on all of his brothers. He blew hurricanes, tornadoes, cyclones. He made tsunamis and huge storms. His anger had no end.

Papa and Rangi were unhappy. They missed each other so much that they cried and cried and cried. Rangi’s tears became rivers and oceans and dew on the grass. The mists that rise from the ground are from Papa, sighing with loneliness.
At the beginning of time, the god Chau lived up above with his wife and children. He was the king of sky and earth.

The god Chau had many names. He was also known as Father, the Sun, Antū and Nguenechèn, creator of the world.

The queen was his mother and his wife, all at once. Her name was Kushe, which means witch; but she also had many names; Moon, Blue Queen and Maga.

Chau began creating the sky with all of its clouds and stars, and the earth. He created the rivers and forests and gigantic mountain ranges. By sowing seeds between his great fingers, he brought forth the animals and people, the Mapuches.

From the sky, Chau watched over his creations and gave them light during the day. At night his wife the moon cared for the various creatures on earth.

Chau’s sons grew quickly. They started to question their father’s rule and soon they decided to take over his great power. They planned to rule the earth.

When Chau found out he became so angry that he threw his two sons down to earth.

As their enormous bodies struck the earth, they created two large holes in the ground.

Mother Moon was heartbroken. She started to cry great floods of tears which filled the two holes with water. This is how the lakes Làcar and Lolog were created.

When he saw his wife’s sadness, Chau felt sorry for what he had done.

He took the bodies of his fallen children and made them into a great serpent with wings. He named this creature Kai-Kai Filu.

But Kai-Kai Filu still carried the souls of the two rebellious sons within him. He, too, wanted to overthrow Chau.

Kai-Kai Filu grew angry and from time to time. He bashed his tail and flapped his wings; this created floods and earthquakes.

Chau was worried about this so he made a second, good serpent out of clay. He named him Tren-Tren and sent him down to earth to keep an eye on Kai-Kai Filu. Whenever Kai-Kai Filu got into another evil mood, Tren-Tren would whistle and warn the people.

After many years had passed Chau decided to come down to earth one day to teach people about growing and preserving food, and how to tell time. He came disguised as a man with dark skin, wearing leather.

Chau also gave his people the gift of fire. This is when the Mapuches started calling him: “The Good from the Sky.”

Many years passed and Chau returned to heaven. People started to forget him and his teachings and they started to fight amongst each other. Chau looked on from above and became very bitter.

He decided to ask the angry Kai-Kai Filu for help. He wanted the serpent to scare people a little so that they would remember their creator and start living the right way again.

Tren-Tren overheard Chau talking to Kai-Kai Filu and decided to warn the Mapuches by whistling. When they heard this, the people fled up into the mountains, looking for protection from the rolling boulders, earthquakes and floods created by Kai-Kai Filu’s big tail.
But it was of no use; the earth trembled so hard that all people died except for one boy and one girl, who hid in a cave on the mountain.

The little boy and girl grew up with the help of a vixen and a female puma, who fed them their milk. From these two people came a new population of Mapuches. Chau was satisfied with his new race.

Eventually, Chau stopped worrying about mankind. Harvests are not as plentiful as before, disease is everywhere and children have stopped obeying their parents.

Nowadays Chau doesn’t even listen to the Mapuche people’s prayers. That is why the white men were able to take so much away from them.
Before the world had a true form, there were two gods, Tepeu the Maker and Gucumatz the Feathered Spirit.

While the world around them was dark, these two glittered with brilliant blue and green feathers. They came together to create the world. Whatever they thought came into being. When they thought “Earth”, land formed in the darkness. They thought mountains and valleys, pine trees and water and sky. All of these things appeared the instant they thought them, and thus the earth was formed.

Tepeu and Gucumatz decided they needed beings there to look after their vast creation, and to praise their names as the creators. So they created deer and birds and panthers and serpents, all the creatures that roam the earth today.

“Now, praise us! Say our names!” commanded the creators.

But the animals could only roar or howl, bleat, bark, twitter or moan. They tried as hard as they could to speak, but could not. They chirped and mewed at the top of their lungs until the noise was so deafening, that Tepeu and Gucumatz ordered them to stop.

Disappointed, the makers agreed that they would have to create better beings, ones who would be able to worship them properly. The first race of men was made from wet clay. The creators gave them life, and the first men tried to speak; but they crumbled apart soon after they were made.

The Maker and the Feathered Spirit were determined to create a hardier race of men. The second race of men were carved from wood. These were much stronger, and were able to walk and talk and multiply. But these men had no minds and their hearts were empty. They had no memories of their creation and when they spoke their words were just as empty and meaningless. They could not praise their gods.

Tepeu and Gucumatz sent a great flood down to destroy them. They commanded the animals to attack the survivors and tear them to pieces. The few who managed to escape fled to the woods and became monkeys. The creators left them there as an example to the next race of men. The Maker and the Feathered Spirit thought for a long time about how they should make the race of men they wanted. There seemed to be no perfect material to build them.

Finally some of the animals brought the gods a stack of white corn which grew on the far side of the earth. Tepeu and Gucumatz ground this into a paste and from this formed four individual men. The new beings seemed perfect. They were sturdy enough to last and their minds were rich with thoughts and feelings. Their first act after their own creation was to immediately worship Tepeu and Gucumatz, and thank them for their lives. Tepeu and Gucumatz were pleased.

“What do you see?” they asked the corn men.

“We can see forever, through rocks and trees and mountains and to the edges of the earth. We can see your entire creation, with all of its animals and plants. We can see and understand everything!”

Tepeu and Gucumatz looked at each other.

“Perhaps we made these beings too well...They should not see as well as WE do!”

The makers removed some of the men’s vision. After that they could only see things close to them, and they were no longer able to see through or above things that they should not. Thus their great understanding of the world was weakened. But the men still sang the creators’ praises and settled down to live on the new land. Tepeu and Gucumatz made four women to be their mates.

These eight men and women were the ancestors of all Quiche men and women today. Even today their sight and understanding of the world is not perfect.
Before this world existed, the First World lay in darkness and emptiness with the exception of six beings. They were First Man, First Woman, Salt Woman, Fire God, Coyote and Begochiddy, the child of the Sun.

Begochiddy first created four mountains—white in the east, blue in the south, yellow in the west and black in the north.

But there was still no light. The first beings grew tired of this and decided to leave the First World.

At the center of the First World, Begochiddy planted an enormous seed which grew into a tall, hollow reed. He then gathered all his creations and crawled inside. The reed grew out of the First World and into the Second.

The second world was light and blue.

When the first beings emerged from the reed they found a nicer place to live, but already occupied by the Cat People.

The First Beings and the Cat People fought for years and years.

But in the end they couldn’t overcome their differences. Again Begochiddy collected his Beings and returned to the hollow reed.

The reed grew on and on into the Third World.

The Third World was yellow; beautiful and full of light.

The First Beings rejoiced and built camps and had many children. Begochiddy created rivers and lakes and mountains and all kinds of animals and birds. The First Men and Women lived there happily.

One day as Coyote was walking along the river he found a baby, the child of the Water Monster of the Third World.

Coyote stole the baby and hid him under his blanket.

When the Water Monster discovered his son was missing, he was furious. He sent vast rainstorms from all directions and flooded the Third World.

Begochiddy and his creations ran back to the hollow reed to escape, and forced Coyote to give back the baby. But it was too late. The Third World was entirely flooded.

Finally the waters rose to the base of the Fourth World.

Locust helped carve a hole into the next world and all Begochiddy’s creations crawled out and set up their houses again.

Begochiddy created mountains and set the moon, sun and stars in the sky.

This world was not as beautiful as the Third, but it became the home of the Navajos.

Begochiddy taught men and women the right way to live, how to plant corn, squash and beans and how to give thanks for their harvests.
Ginnungagap was the great emptiness before there was a world, or any living things in it.

Far to the South of the Ginnungagap was the fiery realm of Muspell, with its long, hot rivers full of poison and vast lakes of fire. Nothing could grow in this burning realm.

To the North was the dark and cold realm of Niflheim, where icy fountains spewed forth freezing rivers. Nothing could grow here either, for the sky was always dark and the mountains were blocks of solid ice.

Slowly, over years and years and years, the fiery blasts from Muspell began to melt the icy mountains of Niflheim. Out of the melting ice, the giant Ymir emerged, the first being of the vast Ginnungagap.

Next to him there emerged a cow from the ice. The cow licked the salt from the ice mountains and Ymir drank the cow’s milk. Ymir grew larger and larger.

The cow licked away entire mountains of ice. Slowly she licked the ice from two more beings, this time the god Buri and his goddess wife. They had a son named Bor, and his son was named Odin, who became the king of all the gods.

Ymir was cruel and brutal. Odin and the other gods could no longer abide by his evil acts and together the gods slew him. Ymir’s huge body formed the earth. His blood became the sea, his flesh became the land, his bones the mountains and his hair the trees. Odin and the other gods formed the sky with his skull, held up by four towering pillars.

Odin gathered sparks from the fiery depths of Muspell and created the sun and moon. These he set in the sky.

As the sun and moon shone over the new world in the Ginnungagap, the ice began to melt and plants and trees began to grow.

The greatest tree of all was the Yggdrasil, which grew in the very center of the earth. Its roots penetrated into the bottom of creation and its leaves reached the very top of the sky.

Odin was satisfied with the new world, and named it Midgard, ‘The Middle Land’.

But the world still needed people. On one of his walks, Odin found two fallen trees, an ash and an elm. He lifted them from the mud and formed the first man and woman from them. Odin breathed life into the beings, gave them reason and feelings, hearing and sight.

He named the man Ask and the woman Embla. From these two sprang the entire human race. The humans had the task of looking after Midgard, while the gods ascended to Asgard, their realm in heaven.

However, not everyone was pleased with Odin’s work. Ymir’s giant sisters were still mourning his death and were looking for a way to take their revenge on the gods who killed him.

They gathered at the foot of Yggdrasil and began carving lines into it.

Each line was a human life, filled with twists and turns, beginning with a man’s birth, and ending with his death. At the end of each line they made a deep cut to ensure that humans would never be as powerful as the gods.

These spells were so powerful that not even Odin could do anything to change them. Thus Yggdrasil became known as ‘The Tree of Life’ and humans knew death and suffering in their world.
Before time began there was only darkness and the goddess Nammu, the Primordial Sea.

She gave birth to Anki, the Universe- at first they were Heaven and Earth in one, a vast mountain of soil and sky mixed together.

Anki produced Enlil, the air.

Enlil separated his parents into An, the sky and Ki the mother earth. He pulled his mother down to form solid ground and pushed his father up to form the heavens.

He then created the moon god Nanna, who then created the sun god Utu.

Enlil and Ki, air and earth joined to produce Enki, the god of water, vegetation and wisdom, and the lord of the universe.

Enki gathered together part of the Primordial Sea and squeezed it into rivers Tigris and Euphrates.

He caused there to be cattle on the earth and fish in the rivers.

He built marshland around the rivers and made the soil rich and fertile.

Meanwhile in heaven, the gods were having a large, drunken banquet. They decided to create humans.

The first race was made of clay, and weak in body and mind. At the time everyone was too drunk to see how poorly they were made.

The humans descended to live on Enki’s earth.

Before long it became clear that this race had too many problems to survive and be a credit to the gods who created them.

The gods decided to destroy them all in a great flood.

Only two people were worthy enough to survive- a man named Ziusudra and his wife.

Enki came to them with instructions. They were to build a wooden ark and hide there until the flood waters subsided.

The gods redirected the Tigris and Euphrates and caused a violent flood, washing all the humans to their deaths.

The storms raged day and night until there was no dry land.

Ziusudra and his wife were safe in their wooden ark. They wept at the loss of mankind.

Finally the rivers shrank back and the land around them re-emerged.

Ziusudra and his wife began a new generation of men and women and set up their villages on the shores of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.
Damballa, the father serpent, created all the oceans and seas of the earth.

As he moved through the endless waters, his 7,000 coils formed great valleys and mountains on the new earth.

He brought forth stars and planets in the heavens, and the sun and the moon.

He created different metals from the heat and sent forth lightning bolts which formed sacred rocks.

When all of this was done, Damballa shed his skin.

This caused great flooding on earth, but when it was done, the sun shone brightly over the waters and created the first rainbow.

The rainbow was called Aida-Wedo.

Damballa fell in love with the beautiful rainbow and made her his wife.

Damballa and Aida-Wedo created the first city of Ifé. It was the source of all power, all creations and spirituality. The first of the loa, or gods, descended to Ifé to live.
In the beginning, there was only the sky above and waters below, and this was ruled by the mighty Orisha, the council of gods. Olorun ruled the sky above and Olokun was master of all that was in the waters below.

One day, a god named Obatala decided to create dry land. He asked for permission from Olorun and advice from Orunmila, the wisest of the Orisha.

“You will need a long gold chain, a snail’s shell filled with sand, a white hen, a black cat, and a palm nut,” said Orunmila.

Once he had all of these items in a bag, Obatala hung the gold chain from a corner in the sky and began to climb down, down, down.

He kept climbing down down down for a very long, long time...until he finally reached the bottom of the chain.

Obatala poured the sand from the shell into the mist below, and released the hen.

The hen landed on the sand and immediately began pecking and scratching, scattering the sand into all directions.

The sand soon became vast mountains and valleys.

Obatala planted the palm nut ... and soon stood before an entire palm forest!

Obatala was very pleased with his work. He named the land Ife and settled down with the cat to live on his new land.

But after several months, Obatala became bored. He began shaping figures in clay. As he worked, he drank palm wine.

Obatala kept drinking bowl after bowl after bowl, and kept making more and more figures. When he was finished, he asked Olorun to breathe life into his clay people.

The next day, he saw his living, breathing work and he realized that they were all deformed and ugly! In horror, Obatala swore never to drink again and set to work building new, perfect beings from clay. As soon as Olorun breathed life into them, they immediately began building houses and cities.

Obatala became the patron of mankind, and more specifically, the deformed. All the Orisha were pleased with his work.

All except Olokun, the master of the sea, who was never consulted about the creation of the earth and mankind in the first place.

In anger he caused a great flood, which nearly wiped out all of Obatala’s creations. Once the waters resided, everyone took the very sea seriously from then on.
Long ago, before man or any animals roamed the earth, there was just darkness and one very large seed.

The seed sank into the earth and from it, long reeds began to grow.

They were called “Uthlanga”, which means the source of all things.

Slowly, one reed grew into a man.

It was Unkulunkulu, First Man, and the creator of all things.

The larger he grew the heavier he became. Finally, when he was fully-grown, he broke off from the reed and fell to earth.

As he strolled up and down the earth, he saw other growing reeds forming into men and women.

Unkulunkulu broke off the first men and women; medicine men and their dreams. He pulled off cattle and fish and birds and fierce creatures.

He created streams and mountains, lakes and valleys, wind and rain and the sun and the moon.

Unkulunkulu created everything we see around us today.

He taught the first men and women how to hunt and make fire, how to make clothes and prepare corn. He gave all of the animals their names.

When all of this was done, Unkulunkulu sent the languid chameleon out into the world with the message that his people will never die.

The chameleon plodded on his mission slowly, slowly, slowly.

After several days, Unkulunkulu became impatient and sent a speedy lizard out into the world with the message that Death was on its way.

The swift lizard quickly overtook the chameleon and arrived at the village first.

Once the lizard brought its message to the first people, Death arrived shortly thereafter. It has never left mankind since.