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EDGAR ALLEN POE I was forced to leave the room. A deep, undeniable summons disturbed my sleep; something holy called me. The only sound was the rhythmic ticking of the clock on my desk. It seemed vague and unreal, as if he were in a cell submerged under the understandable waters. I have reached the beginning of the edge of sleep, where the line between consciousness and unconscious is blurred. I was suspended at the moment when one was hanging erratically on the edge, the moment when sounds from the outside world continued to invade the silence of his brain, that moment before the surrender of the night occurs. He's asleep, but he's not sleeping yet. Wake up, but don't be on your guard. Still vulnerable to an internal agenda that is said to stand up. Get out of this room. The agenda has become stronger, more urgent, it is impossible to ignore it. The explosion of wakefulness made me jerk upright and swing my legs on the side of the bed and onto the floor. The sleep disappeared in an instant, and my body sprang into decisive action. A few seconds later I was dressed and on the way out of my college dorm. A quick look at the clock registered time in my head. Ten minutes before midnight. The night air was cold, turning the morning snow into a solid blanket. I felt a crunch under my feet as I walked towards the center of the campus. The moon threw a ghostly bucket at the college buildings, whose gutters were decorated with giant icicles - dripping water seized in space, solid daggers of ice resembling frozen fangs. No architect could design these nature gargoyles. The clock gears at the top of the Old Main Tower began to grind, and the hands met and hugged vertically. I heard the dull moan of the car a split second before the chimes started ringing. Four musical tones signaled a full hour. They were followed by a steady, sonorous astounding twelve. I counted them in my head, as I always did, checking for a possible error in their But they never missed. Exactly twelve strokes pealed from the tower like a smear of an angry judge pounding on the metal. The chapel was in the shadow of the Old Main Tower. The door was made of heavy oak with a Gothic arch. I opened it and went into the narthex. The door fell behind me with a clanging sound that reverberated from the stone walls of the nave. The echo struck me. It was a strange contrast with the sounds of the chapel's daily services, where the opening and closing of the doors were muffled by the sounds of students shuffling to their designated places. Now the sound of the door was reinforced into the emptiness of midnight. I waited a moment in the narthex, allowing my eyes a few seconds to adjust to the darkness. The faint glow of the moon seeped through the muted stained glass windows. I could develop the contours of the bench and the central pass that led to the chancel steps. I felt a majestic sense of space accentuated by the vaulted arches of the ceiling. They seemed to draw my soul up, a sense of height that evoked the feeling of a giant hand reaching down to pick me up. I moved slowly and intentionally towards the chancel steps. The sound of my boots on the stone floor evoked horror-filled images of German soldiers marching in hobnailed boots through cobble streets. Each step sounded down the center of the aisle as I reached the carpet-covered chancel. That's where I knelt down. I got to my destination. I was ready to meet with the source of the subpoena that disrupted my vacation. I was in a prayer position, but I had nothing to say. I knelt quietly, allowing the feeling of the presence of the holy God to fill me. Beating my heart was an obvious blow to my chest. The icy cold began at the base of my spine and crept up to my neck. Fear gripped me. I struggled to escape from the foreboding presence that gripped me. Terror passed, but soon another wave followed. That wave was different. It flooded my soul with an unspeakable world, a world that brought instant peace and quiet to my troubled spirit. I immediately felt comfortable. I wanted to stay there. Don't say anything. Don't do anything. Just bask in the presence of God. This moment has been transformed. Something deep in my spirit has been settled once and for all. From now on, there can be no turning back; there can be no erasure of the indelible imprint of his power. I was alone with God. Holy God. An amazing God. A God who can fill me with terror in one second and with the world in the next. At that hour I realized that I had tried the Holy Grail. I had a new thirst that could never be fully satisfied in this world. I decided to learn more, to haunt this God who lived in dark Gothic cathedrals and who invaded my dorm room to wake me up from a smug dream. What makes a college student look for God's presence in the late hours? Something happened in the classroom that day that led me to the chapel. I was new. My appeal was sudden and dramatic, a replica for me of Damascus Road. My life was turned upside down, and I was filled with zeal for the sweetness of Christ. I was consumed with a new passion. To study Scripture. Learn to pray. Defeat the vices that attacked my character. Grow in grace. I desperately wanted my life to count on Christ. My soul sang, Lord, I want to be a Christian. But something was missing in my early Christian life. I had a lot of zeal, but it was marked by shallowness, a kind of simplicity that made me a one-dimensional person. I was a unitary, unitary of the second man of the Trinity. I knew who Jesus was, but God the Father was shrouded in mystery. He was hidden, a mystery, in my opinion, and a stranger to my soul. A dark veil covered his face. My philosophical class changed that. It was a course that didn't have much interest for me. I couldn't wait to get the tedious demand behind me. I opted for a major in the Bible and thought the abstract speculation that went on in the philosophy class was a waste of time. Listening to philosophers quarrel about reason and doubt seemed empty. I found no food for my soul, nothing to ignite my imagination, just boring and difficult intellectual puzzles that left me cold. Until that winter day. The lecture that day was about a Christian philosopher called Aurelius Augustine. In the course of history it was canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. Everyone talked about him as St. Augustine. The professor lectured on Augustine's views on the creation of the world. I was familiar with the biblical story of creation. I knew that the Old Testament began with the words: In the beginning, God created heaven and earth. But I never thought deeply about the original act of creation. Augustine explored this glorious mystery and raised the question, how was it done? In the beginning ... It sounds like the beginning of a fairy tale. Once upon a time. The trouble is that in the beginning there was no time as we understand to be once upon a time. We think of the beginning as a starting point somewhere in the middle of the period of history. Cinderella had a mother and a grandmother. Its history, which began once, did not begin at the beginning. Before Cinderella there were kings and queens, rocks and trees, horses, jackrabbits, daffodils. What happened before Genesis 1? The people God created had no parents or grandparents. They didn't have history books to read because there was no history. Before the creation there were no kings, no queens, no stones, no trees. There was nothing; nothing, of course, except God. That's where I got Excedrin headache in my philosophy class. Before the world started, nothing happened. But what's in the world? Have you ever tried to think about anything? Where can we find him? Obviously nowhere. Why? Because it's nothing and nothing exists. This is exist, because if that were the case, it would be something, not nothing. Do you get a headache like me? Think about it for a second. I can't tell you to think about it because nothing is it. I can only say that it is not. So how can we think about anything? We can't. It's just not possible. If we try to think about anything, we always end up thinking about something. As soon as I try to think about nothing, I start imagining a lot of empty air. But air is something. It has weight and content. I know it's because of what happens if a nail goes through my car's tire. Jonathan Edwards once said that nothing is what sleeping stones dream of. It doesn't help much. My son offered me the best definition of anything. When he was in high school, I asked him when he got home from school, what were you doing today, son? The answer was the same every day: Nuthin'. So the best explanation I can give anything is what my son used to do every day in high school. Our understanding of creativity includes the formation and formation of paint, clay, notes on paper or some other substance. In our experience, we could not find an artist who paints without paint or a writer who writes without words or a composer who composes without notes. Artists need to start with something. Artists form, shape or rebuild other materials. But they never work with anything. St. Augustine taught that God created the world out of nothing. Creation was something of a magician, pulling a rabbit out of a hat. Except that God didn't have a rabbit, and he didn't even have a hat. My neighbor is an experienced cabinetmaker. One of his specialties is the construction of cabinets for professional magicians. He gave me a tour of his workshop and showed me how magician boxes and cabinets are made. The trick is to use mirrors smartly. When a magician comes on stage and shows an empty box or an empty hat, what you see is only half a box or half a hat. Take, for example, an empty hat. The mirror is fixed in the exact middle of the hat. The mirror reflects the empty side of the hat, giving an accurate mirror image. The illusion creates a visual effect of seeing both sides of an empty hat. In fact you only see half the hat. The other half has enough space to hide white pigeons or a chubby rabbit. Not much magic to him, is it? God didn't create a world with mirrors. To do this, it would have taken half a million to start and a giant mirror to hide the other half. Creation included creating everything that is, including mirrors. God created the world out of nothing. Once there was nothing, and suddenly, on god's orders, there was a universe. Again we ask, how did He do it? The only hint that the Bible gives is that God has called the universe to be. Augustine called this act a divine imperative or divine fiat, we all know that the imperative is command. So is fiat. When Augustine talked about he didn't think of a small Italian car. Dictionary de fines Fiat as a team or an act of will that creates something. I am currently writing this book on a computer produced by IBM. It's an amazing piece of technique, quite complex in all its parts. The machine is designed to respond to certain commands. If I make a mistake while I'm typing on a keyboard, I don't have to reach for an eraser. To correct my mistakes, I just kick in the command and the computer corrects it. The computer works on a fiat. But the power of my fiat is limited. The only fiats that work are those that are already programmed into the computer. I would just be able to tell the computer, write this whole book for me, please, while I go out and play golf. My car can't do that. I can scream on the screen with the strongest imperative I know: Write this book! but the case is too stubborn to match. God's fiats are not so limited. He can create by the power of His Divine Team. It can bring something out of nothing, life out of death. He can do it by the sound of his voice. The first sound uttered in the universe was the voice of God, we command, let it be! It is wrong to say that this was the first sound in the universe, because until the sound was made there was no universe in order to be in. God cried out into the void. Perhaps it was a kind of primitive cry directed at the empty darkness. The team created their own molecules to carry the sound waves of God's voice further and further into space. However, sound waves will take too long. The speed of this imperative exceeded the speed of light. As soon as the words left the Creator's mouth, things began to happen. Where his voice reverberated, there were stars glowing in unspeakable brilliance at pace with the songs of angels. The power of divine energy splashed on the sky like a kaleidoscope of color thrown from the palette of a powerful artist. The comet crossed the sky with flashing tails as the Fourth of July skyrockets. The act of creation was the first event in history. It was also the most dazzling. The Supreme Architect looked at his elaborate plan and shouted commands for the boundaries of the world to be set. He spoke, and the seas were closed behind doors, and the clouds were filled with dew. He tied up the Pleiades and fastened Orion's belt. He spoke again, and the ground began to fill with gardens in full bloom. Flowers broke out like spring in Mississippi. Lavender shades of plum trees danced with a gleam of azaleas and forsythia. God spoke again, and the waters are teeming with living things. The snail crept under the dark shape of the stingray, while the great marlin smashed the surface of the water to the promenade on the waves with its tail. Again He spoke, and the roar of the lion and the bleating of the sheep were audible. There were four-legged animals, eight-legged spiders and winged insects. And God said it Then God leaned down on the ground and carefully fashioned a piece of clay. He gently lifted it to his lips and breathed it into it. Clay began to move. He began to think. He began to feel. He began to worship. He was alive and stamped with the image of his Creator. Think of bringing Lazarus out of the dead. How did Jesus do it? He did not enter the tomb where Lazarus's rotting corpse was laid out. He didn't need to resuscitate by word of mouth. He stood behind the grave, in the distance, and cried in a loud voice, Lazarus, to get out. Blood began to flow through Lazarus' veins, and brain waves began to pulsate. In a fit of life, Lazarus left the grave and left. It is a fiat creation, the power of divine imperative. Some modern theorists believe that the world was created by nothing. Notice the difference between the fact that the world was created from nothing and the fact that the universe was created by nothing. In this modern form, the rabbit comes out of the hat without a rabbit, hat or even a magician. The modern look is much more wonderful than the biblical look. It shows that nothing has created anything. What's more, he believes that nothing has created an all-quiet feat indeed! Now, of course, no serious people are running around in this scientific age claiming that the universe was created by nothing, right? Yes. Dozens of them. Of course, they usually say it's not quite like I said, and they'll probably annoy me for stating their views this way. They are undoubtedly protesting against the fact that I have given a distorted caricature of their refined position. Ok. True, they don't say that the universe was created by nothing; they say the universe was created by accident. But chance is not a thing. It has no weight, no measurements, no power. It's just a word we use to describe mathematical possibilities. There's nothing he can do. There's nothing he can do because it's nothing. To say that the universe was created by accident is to say that it came from nothing. It's intellectual madness. What are the chances that the universe was created by accident? St. Augustine understood that the world could not be created by accident. He knew that it needed something or someone with power - the power of creation. He knew something could come from nothing. He understood that somewhere, one way or another, something or someone had to have the power of being. If not, nothing would exist now. The Bible says: In the beginning, God. The God we worship is the God he has always been. He alone can create creatures, because only He has the power of being. He's not nothing. It's no accident. He is a pure Being, a One who has the power to be all Himself. He's the one who's eternal. Only he has power over death. He alone can call the worlds to life by fiat, by the power of his command. Such strength is staggering, huge. She deserves respect, modest adoration. Those were the words. God created the world out of nothing by the power of His voice, which took me to the chapel at midnight. I know what it's like to be converted. I know what it's like to be born again. I also understand that a person can be born again only once. When the Holy Spirit is at the behest of our souls for a new life in Christ, He does not stop his work. He continues to work on us. He keeps changing us. My experience in the classroom, thinking about creating peace, was like being born again a second time. It was like appealing not only to God to the Son, but also to God the Father. Suddenly I had a passion to know god the Father. I wanted to know him in His majesty, Majesty.

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