

## Moontides

*By Sheila Johnson*

I was fashioned and formed by God's hands in the shape of an egg. Humans view me as round. Upon my birth, I was tossed into the Universe in perfect moving alignment with the Sun and my Mother, the Earth. I have the distinct honor of being her only child. The umbilical cord we share stretches millions of miles between us, connecting gravity to gravity. I exit without air or water, yet I dictate the movement of the Earth's greatest mixture of hydrogen and oxygen. I powder my face with moon dust to filter the sunrays. I am elliptical and ecliptical. I am the Moon!

The tides are my children. They rise and fall at my command. They regulate the life giving cycles of my universal sisters. Humans call them moon tides. I have secretly named them one by one. Calendars have been built around my children; naming each day of the week, ordering each week of the month, and completing each month of the year. Life begins with me. Every lunar month of twenty-eight days, embryos grow and are complete within ten of my months; two hundred and eighty days to be exact. I am beautiful. I am full. I can be half. I am sometimes quartered. There are days and nights when I am completely dark. I am elliptical and ecliptical. I am the Moon.

Some say I look like cheese. My craters still mystify the world. Astronauts have taken my diamonds and pearls, and called them moon rocks. And although I have never been with a man, everyone has seen the man in the Moon! Secrets and spiritual ceremonies dance before my eyes. My fullness gives birth to sacrilege. Men and women turn into animals—werewolves they're called. Animals are sacrificed under my shadow. Witchcraft is sometimes practiced. Ah! Great lullabies have been written about me. "I see the Moon, the Moon sees me..." Great romances have been spawned underneath my shadow. Many have become moonstruck. I am elliptical and ecliptical. I am the Moon!

When I cry, moon drops roll off my surface causing great tidal waves. It is because my fullness reflects the yellow of the setting sun mixed with the red skin of a massacred nation of people; an Indian Moon for the warriors who spilled their blood! The yellow of the setting sun mixes with the red, warm blood of fallen African nations – a harvest Moon perhaps for those who took the grain from its native soil? The yellow of the setting sun blends with red gas used for the genocide of a Jewish nation. Am I a new Moon for a new nation abandoned by its greatest resources?

But death gives way for new birth in all things: youth, hope, and plentitude. Farmers plant their crops by my light. Turtles lay their eggs in sacred ceremonies at high tide, and only in my moonlight. Lovers create life in the intoxicating splendor of my moon rays.

Because I have been touched and formed by the hands of God Himself, because I reflect the brightness of the Sun, because I control the tides of the universal waters, because I have seen all there is to see, I am magical and mystical. I remain a secret.

I am elliptical and ecliptical. I am the Moon.

