

INTELLIGENT DESIGN

by PAUL RUDNICK

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Day No. 1:

And the Lord God said, “Let there be light,” and lo, there was light. But then the Lord God said, “Wait, what if I make it a sort of rosy, sunset-at-the-beach, filtered half-light, so that everything else I design will look younger?”

“I’m loving that,” said Buddha. “It’s new.”

“You should design a restaurant,” added Allah.

Day No. 2:

“Today,” the Lord God said, “let’s do land.” And lo, there was land.

“Well, it’s really not just land,” noted Vishnu. “You’ve got mountains and valleys and—is that lava?”

“It’s not a single statement,” said the Lord God. “I want it to say, ‘Yes, this is land, but it’s not afraid to ooze.’ ”

“It’s really a backdrop, a sort of blank canvas,” put in Apollo. “It’s, like, minimalism, only with scale.”

“But—brown?” Buddha asked.

“Brown with infinite variations,” said the Lord God. “Taupe, ochre, burnt umber—they’re called earth tones.”

“I wasn’t criticizing,” said Buddha. “I was just noticing.”

Day No. 3:

“Just to make everyone happy,” said the Lord God, “today I’m thinking oceans, for contrast.”

“It’s wet, it’s deep, yet it’s frothy; it’s design without dogma,” said Buddha, approvingly.

“Now, *there’s* movement,” agreed Allah. “It’s not just ‘Hi, I’m a planet—no splashing.’ ”

“But are those ice caps?” inquired Thor. “Is this a coherent vision, or a highball?”

“I can do ice caps if I want to,” sniffed the Lord God.

“It’s about a mood,” said the Angel Moroni, supportively.

“Thank you,” said the Lord God.

Day No. 4:

“One word,” said the Lord God. “Landscaping. But I want it to look natural, as if it all somehow just happened.”

“Do rain forests,” suggested a primitive tribal god, who was known only as a clicking noise.

“Rain forests here,” decreed the Lord God. “And deserts there. For a spa feeling.”

“Which is fresh, but let’s give it glow,” said Buddha. “Polished stones and bamboo, with a soothing trickle of something.”

“I know where you’re going,” said the Lord God. “But why am I seeing scented candles and a signature body wash?”

“Shut up,” said Buddha.

“You shut up,” said the Lord God.

“It’s all about the mix,” Allah declared in a calming voice. “Now let’s look at some swatches.”

Day No. 5:

“I’d like to design some creatures of the sea,” the Lord God said. “Sleek but not slick.”

“Yes, yes, and more yes—it’s a total gills moment,” said Apollo. “But what if you added wings?”

“Fussy,” whispered Buddha to Zeus. “Why not epaulets and a sash?”

“Legs,” said Allah. “Now let’s do legs.”

“Are we already doing dining-room tables?” asked the Lord God, confused.

“No, design some *creatures* with legs,” said Allah. So the Lord God, nodding, designed an ostrich.

“First draft,” everyone agreed, and so the Lord God designed an alligator.

“There’s gonna be a waiting list,” Zeus murmured appreciatively.

“Now do puppies!” pleaded Vishnu. “And kitties!”

“*Ooooo!*” all the gods cooed. Then, feeling a bit embarrassed, Zeus ventured, “Design something more practical, like a horse or a mule.”

“What about a koala?” asked the Lord God.

“Much better,” Zeus declared, cuddling the furry little animal. “I’m going to call him Buttons.”

Day No. 6:

“Today I’m really going out there,” said the Lord God. “And I know it won’t be popular at first, and you’re all gonna be saying, ‘Earth to Lord God,’ but in a few million years it’s going to be timeless. I’m going to design a man.”

And everyone looked upon the man that the Lord God designed.

“It has your eyes,” Zeus told the Lord God.

“Does it stack?” inquired Allah.

“It has a naïve, folk-artsy, I-made-it-myself vibe,” said Buddha. The Inca sun god, however, only scoffed. “Been there. Evolution,” he said. “It’s called a shaved monkey.”

“I like it,” protested Buddha. “But it can’t work a strapless dress.” Everyone agreed on this point, so the Lord God announced, “Well, what if I give it nice round breasts and lose the penis?”

“Yes,” the gods said immediately.

“Now it’s intelligent,” said Aphrodite.

“But what if I made it blond?” giggled the Lord God.

“And what if I made you a booming offscreen voice in a lot of bad movies?” asked Aphrodite.

Day No. 7:

“You know, I’m really feeling good about this whole intelligent-design deal,” said the Lord God. “But do you think that I could redo it, keeping the quality but making it at a price point we could all live with?”

“I’m not sure,” said Buddha. “You mean, what if you designed a really basic, no-frills planet? Like, do the man and the woman really need all those toes?”

“Hello!” said the Lord God. “Clean lines, no moving parts, functional but fun. Three bright, happy, wash ’n’ go colors.”

“Swedish meets Japanese, with maybe a Platinum Collector’s Edition for the geeks,” Buddha decided.

“Done,” said the Lord God. “Now let’s start thinking about Pluto. What if everything on Pluto was brushed aluminum?”

“You mean, let’s do Neptune again?” said Buddha.