

## A SYNOPSIS OF "OLD TURTLE AND THE BROKEN TRUTH"

One night, in a far-away land that "is somehow not so far away," a **truth** falls from the stars.  
As it falls, it breaks into two pieces; one piece blazes off through the sky  
& the other falls straight to the ground.  
Crow found it, and picked it up, but he and the other animals recognize that it is broken &  
incomplete so they leave it on the ground.

One day, a human being stumbles upon the **truth** lying on the ground & finds  
the words, "**You are loved**" carved on it.  
It makes him feel good, so he keeps it & shares it with the people in his tribe.  
The thing sparkles & makes the people who have it feel *warm & happy*.  
It becomes their *most prized possession*, & they call it "**The Truth**."  
But those who have the **truth** grow afraid of — those who don't have it,  
— those who are different.  
And those who *don't have it want to have it* for themselves.  
Soon people are fighting wars over the little **truth**,  
trying to capture it for themselves.

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A little girl who is troubled by the growing violence, greed, & destruction  
in her once-peaceful world goes on a journey — through  
the **Mountains of Imagining**, the **River of Wondering Why**, & the **Forest of Finding Out** —  
she goes to speak with **Old Turtle**, ancient and wise as the mountains & seas.  
Old Turtle tells her that the **Truth** is broken & missing a piece,  
— the piece that shot off into the night sky so long ago - but most people are not ready to hear that  
fact. She tells the little girl that the broken truth, and life itself, will be mended only when one  
person meets another — someone from a different place or with a different face or different ways —  
and sees and hears ... herself.

Old Turtle sends her back to her people, and gives her a stone. She tries to explain that the  
truth they have is broken & incomplete, but no one will listen or understand. Crow flies to the top  
of a high tower where the broken truth is kept in a place where all could see it, and begins to caw.  
The girl understands, and climbs up to the high place herself, bringing the stone with her.  
When she joins her stone to the broken truth in the tower, the pieces fit together perfectly. The  
rejoined pieces finally shine their full message:

**"You are loved / & so are they."**

And the *people* begin to understand. — And the *earth* begins to heal.

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Adapted from a children's book.

Old Turtle and the Broken Truth by Douglas Wood, illustrated by Jon J Muth (NY: Scholastic, 2003)