

**Where the Map Begins**  
***A Blessing for Epiphany***

This is not  
any map you know.  
Forget longitude.  
Forget latitude.  
Do not think  
of distances  
or of plotting  
the most direct route.  
Astrolabe, sextant, compass:  
these will not help you here.

This is the map  
that begins with a star.  
This is the chart  
that starts with fire,  
with blazing,  
with an ancient light  
that has outlasted  
generations, empires,  
cultures, wars.

Look starward once,  
then look away.  
Close your eyes  
and see how the map  
begins to blossom  
behind your lids,  
how it constellates,  
its lines stretching out  
from where you stand.

You cannot see it all,  
cannot divine the way  
it will turn and spiral,  
cannot perceive how  
the road you walk  
will lead you finally inside,  
through the labyrinth  
of your own heart  
and belly  
and lungs.

But step out  
and you will know  
what the wise who traveled  
this path before you  
knew:  
the treasure in this map  
is buried  
not at journey's end  
but at its beginning.

—Jan Richardson © Jan Richardson. [janrichardson.com](http://janrichardson.com).