Naasadiiya Suukta

This is the famous नासदीय सूक्त the 129-th suukta of the 10-th mandala of the Rigveda. It has been translated and discussed by many scholars and there have been volumes dedicated to just this one suukta. The current translation is by A. L. Basham, from his book entitled "The Wonder that was India".

नासदासीन्नोसदासीत्तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमापरो यत् ।
किमावरीवः कुहकस्यशर्मन्नंभः किमासीद्गहनं गभीरं ॥ १ ॥

Then even nothingness was not, nor existence,
There was no air then, nor the heavens beyond it.
What covered it? Where was it? In whose keeping
Was there then cosmic water, in depths unfathomed?

न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्याऽअह्नऽआसीत्प्रकेतः ।
आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्नपरः किञ्चनास ॥ २ ॥

Then there was neither death nor immortality
nor was there then the torch of night and day.
The One breathed windlessly and self-sustaining.
There was that One then, and there was no other.

तमऽआसीत्तमसा गूह्ळमग्रे प्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमाऽइदं ।
तुच्छ्येनाभ्वपिहितं यदासीत्तपसस्तन्महिना जायतैकं ॥ ३ ॥

At first there was only darkness wrapped in darkness.
All this was only unillumined water.
That One which came to be, enclosed in nothing,
arose at last, born of the power of heat.

कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् ।
सतोबन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्हृदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषा ॥ ४ ॥

In the beginning desire descended on it -
that was the primal seed, born of the mind.
The sages who have searched their hearts with wisdom
know that which is is kin to that which is not.

तिरश्चीनो विततो रश्मिरेषामधः स्विदासी ३ दुपरिस्विदासी ३ त् ।
रेतोधाऽआसन्महिमानऽआसन्त्स्वधाऽअवस्तात् प्रयतिः परस्तात् ॥ ५ ॥

And they have stretched their cord across the void,
and know what was above, and what below.
Seminal powers made fertile mighty forces.
Below was strength, and over it was impulse.

कोऽअद्धा वेद कऽइह प्रवोचत् कुतऽआजाता कुतऽइयं विसृष्टिः ।
अर्वाग्देवाऽअस्य विसर्जनेनाथाको वेद यतऽआबभूव ॥ ६ ॥

But, after all, who knows, and who can say
Whence it all came, and how creation happened?
the gods themselves are later than creation,
so who knows truly whence it has arisen?

इयं विसृष्टिर्यतऽआबभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।
योऽअस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन्त्सोऽअंग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥ ७ ॥

Whence all creation had its origin,
he, whether he fashioned it or whether he did not,
he, who surveys it all from highest heaven,
he knows - or maybe even he does not know.