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Adam and Eve: an Adaptation

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This paper seeks to reject the immutability of the written word for the changeability of oral storytelling by acknowledging that the biblical creation myth of Adam and Eve is itself a product of centuries’ worth of oral adaptation. The paper culminates with the author’s own adaptation of the Adam and Eve myth: this rewriting inhabits a less sexist perspective and deviates from the biblical text by celebrating free will and humankind’s potential for greatness, rather than mourning the loss of the paradisiacal Garden of Eden.
Introduction: Adam and Eve

While the secular study of the Bible is controversial in some circles, the product of this research is essential to understanding the origins of the Judeo-Christian faith as well as its future. Many religious conservatives will argue that Biblical texts should be taken literally. Yet is it proper not to subject scripture written millennia ago to academic criticism when the religious texts of the Greeks and Romans are taken and treated as mythology? Does defining ourselves as Jewish or Christian truly mean that we cannot associate these religious texts with mythology? To answer this question, we must look at the art of storytelling itself for indeed the Bible has its origins in oral storytelling. Transmitted from one person to the next, passed down from generation to generation and modified at each retelling, the religious stories of the early Hebrew people, like all other forms of folklore, are sure to have been adapted repeatedly to fit the attitudes of the changing times before entering the literary world where they suddenly became treated as immutable. In “Folklore and Literature,” Vladimir Propp argues that consciously or unconsciously, oral storytellers are bound to introduce changes into a story. He claims that, “Everything that is out-of-date and incongruous with new attitudes, tastes, and ideology will be discarded. These new tastes will affect not only what will be discarded but also what will be reworked and supplemented.”1 If religious stories were continuously altered over centuries (if not millennia) before being written down and treated as immutable, then shouldn’t the discovery of their origins and any variants of the stories be cherished for providing us with a closer look at the foundations and motivations of a particular faith? Furthermore, if the written stories of at least some of the earlier books in the Old Testament are proven through scholarly research to be the product of epochs of oral storytelling, then what is to keep us from continuing the tradition of reworking religious mythology to suit the times? It is with this thought in mind that I began to write an adaptation of the Adam and Eve creation myth.

Most of us are aware of the Judeo-Christian creation story. According to the story as written in Genesis 1, God creates the universe in six days, constructing man and woman on the last. Eve is created from Adam’s rib to be a helpmate to Adam and the two live together in mutual happiness in the paradisiacal Garden of Eden. Their stay is ruined by the fallen angel Lucifer, who convinces Eve to eat the fruit from the forbidden tree of knowledge. Eve in turn convinces Adam to eat from the tree. As punishment for their disobedience to God, Adam and Eve are cast out from the Garden of Eden and forced to live in the wilderness. The story is memorable in its simplicity. Clear dual oppositions are set throughout the story, good versus evil, God versus Satan and even man versus woman. It is a story that is clearly derived from a culture that relies on order and hierarchical structure.

Now let us take a look at the tale of Enki and Ninhursaja, the Sumerian predecessor of the Adam and Eve myth. Sumerian literature is thought to have influenced the Hebrew people through the Canaanites who lived in Palestine before the Hebrew people. Indeed, there are many parallels between the Sumerian and Judeo-Christian creation myths. In the Sumerian myth, the Goddess Ninhursaja creates a beautiful garden called Edinu in Dilmun, the Sumerian earthly paradise. Ninhursaja then asks her husband Enki to guard her garden against wild animals which might destroy it just as God places Adam in charge of the Garden of Eden. But rather than protecting her Garden, Enki becomes famished and eats eight plants that his wife had planted, thus inciting her fury. Ninhursaja rejects Enki as retaliation for eating the forbidden plants, stating that, “Until his dying day, I will never look upon him with life-giving eye.”2 Her anger at Enki parallels God’s anger when Adam & Eve eat from the forbidden tree of knowledge. Because he ate the forbidden plants, Enki feels pain in eight parts of his body including his ti, a Sumerian word meaning both “rib” and “life.” Here, Enki faces the same punishment as Adam and Eve. For his transgression, he faces losing his immortality. However, unlike God who casts Adam and Eve out into the wilderness with only the distant promise that one day mankind might earn eternal life once again, Ninhursaja is quick to forgive Enki. She heals him by giving birth to eight new goddesses to heal the eight parts of Enki’s body that have been cursed. One of the new goddesses is named Ninti. The etymology of the name Ninti is interesting for Nin means lady and ti means both rib and life. Thus Ninti can be translated as both “Lady of the Living” and “Lady of the Rib.” Consequently, Ninti, who is created to help heal Enki, shares a link with the Eve of the Judeo-Christian creation myth, who is created from Adam’s rib to be his helpmate. While there are many similarities between these two tales, the differences are also thought-provoking. For instance, while the relationship between Enki and Ninhursaja is quarrelsome, it also seems to present a much more realistic depiction of marriage than the seemingly tranquil relationship between Adam and Eve. Furthermore, it is interesting that in the Sumerian tale it is Enki, the husband, and not his wife who eats the forbidden plant. In the Adam and Eve myth, the story of how Eve succumbs to temptation serves to justify the patriarchal order by portraying woman as more weak-minded and fickle than men. What purpose is served by a Sumerian tale about a man’s disobedience to his wife? To answer this question, we
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giving birth to eight goddesses who can heal him. These details of the Sumerian myth suggest that this story is a cautionary tale about the dangers of womb envy and the dire consequences that men risk when they try to usurp women’s reproductive capabilities.

There are also other ways in which this tale emphasizes the importance of respecting women. In the beginning of the tale, Enki disrespects his wife by engaging in an incestuous affair with his daughter that culminates with him abandoning her after she becomes pregnant. To add insult to this injury, Enki then engages in another incestuous affair with his granddaughter, the very product of his affair with his daughter. This process is repeated over and over throughout the tale with Enki consistently choosing to abandon his pregnant daughters, seemingly unconcerned by the anguish he is causing them. Ironically, Enki’s accidental self-impregnation culminates with his wife choosing to abandon him in the same way that he had abandoned his daughters after impregnating them. This situation serves as the perfect revenge for his previous actions against women by reversing the trend and forcing him to live out the pain he caused them. After humbling her husband in this manner, Ninhursaja is quick to forgive and save him. This lack of permanent consequences is a significant difference between the Sumerian myth and the Adam and Eve myth. Adam and Eve must take a closer look at this Sumerian myth. One important detail about the Sumerian myth not yet discussed is that the plants that Enki ate were actually created by Ninhursaja from Enki’s own seed. By consuming his own seed, Enki in effect impregnates himself without having the ability to give birth. Ninhursaja saves Enki by taking his seed into her own body and

creation stories are of a Great Mother because in the early cradles of civilization, the “feminine power to give and sustain life, the power incarnated in the body of woman” was the highest power.4 According to Eisler, the story of the Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden illustrates major shifts in society: from equality of genders in partnership societies to male dominance and from hunting and gathering to agriculture and settlement during the Neolithic Revolution. It marks the end of an era where man and woman lived in harmony with one another and nature and the beginning of an era of warfare and hierarchic social structure.

Yet we must question the extent to which this transition from a female creatrix to a male creator was successful. In her essay “Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation,” Phyllis Trible attempts to reread and translate Biblical faith without the sexism that many assume is inherent within it. By refusing to assume that the Bible is written from a completely patriarchal view, Trible was able to find subversive elements throughout the Old Testament. One of Trible’s most noteworthy findings from her perusal of the Bible is the discovery that while we tend to view the Old Testament God Yahweh as a stern father figure, “feminine imagery for God is more prevalent in the Old Testament than we usually acknowledge.” According to Trible, Yahweh actually “embraces and transcends both sexes” and it is not unusual for him to take up feminine as well as masculine roles.5 Thus it is not atypical for Yahweh to be portrayed as a provider of life sustaining nourishment or as a seamstress who provides clothes for her children. Even gynomorphic speech is associated with Yahweh: he speaks of birth pangs, compares himself to a nursing mother, acts as a comforting maternal presence and is even associated with midwives like many fertility goddesses of the past.
Other subversive elements within the Old Testament also indicate that some of the stories within it did not originate in patriarchal cultures. For example, the creation story itself provides contradictory views of the creation of mankind. The contradiction exists because Genesis actually contains dual versions of the creation of man and woman. In the first version of the creation of mankind, found in Genesis 1, it is stated, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” This version indicates that man and woman were actually created simultaneously. In the second version of the creation of mankind, found in Genesis 2, it is stated, “And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” In contrast to the first version of the creation of mankind, in this second version not only is Eve created from Adam but she is also named by him. Thus she is placed on the same level as the animals of the Garden of Eden who Adam was also responsible for naming. This degrading position indicates her subservience to Adam.

Unsurprisingly, this second version of the creation of mankind which claims that woman was created from man is more widely known because it supports the beliefs of the patriarchal order. What this suggests is that traditional readings of the Bible tend to favor accounts that support patriarchal viewpoints while ignoring accounts that are favorable to woman. Of course the existence of these dual accounts of the creation of mankind could not be ignored. Indeed, the first version of the creation story, which indicates that man and woman were created simultaneously, was simply too dangerous to the patriarchal order to be ignored. In what was probably an attempt to explain away this version, Jewish theologians speculated that Eve was not the first woman. This led to the formation of the myth of Lilith, who is said to have preceded Eve. Unlike Eve, Lilith was not created from Adam’s rib but simultaneously with him. In Jewish folklore, Lilith claims equality with Adam because they were created in the same way. She leaves Adam because she refuses to be subservient to him and obey his commands. For her rejection of the patriarchal order, Lilith is demonized in many tales. She is depicted as a child-killing witch, a female demon, an incarnation of lust who leads men astray, the mother of demonic offspring who spread chaos throughout the world, the serpent who tempted Eve and even the consort of Lucifer. Through Lilith, the first version of the creation of mankind can be interpreted in a way that demonizes women who seek to exist outside the patriarchal order. By stereotyping such women as monstrous and unnatural, the patriarchal order is able to control the behavior of women while also suppressing subversive elements within their sacred texts.

Trible’s discussion of the second version of the creation of mankind where Eve is created from Adam’s rib expounds on other subversive elements within the Adam and Eve myth. For instance, Trible notes that “ambiguity characterizes the meaning of ‘adham in Genesis 2-3.” She questions whether the term ‘adham is a term that stands for male or a term that stands for humankind in general. Trible argues that if ‘adham is a generic term for humankind, then before the differentiation of male and female in Genesis 2: 21-23, ‘adham is androgynous. If Adam really is androgynous until the creation of Eve, then man and woman are created simultaneously in both the first and the second version of the creation of mankind. Thus, neither man nor woman can argue supremacy over the other.

Critical analysis of the Adam and Eve myth reveals subversive elements within this patriarchal tale while critical analysis of its Sumerian predecessor reveals this Judeo-Christian creation story’s non-patriarchal origins. Both sources provide historical justification for a less sexist interpretation of the Adam and Eve myth while also providing interesting material for an adaptation of the myth. Some might argue that adapting this religious myth into a story that more closely reflects my own interpretations about the Fall of Mankind is an exercise in futility, as it fails to disprove the sexism which is inherent within the original myth. But the purpose of this work is not to deny that sexism is inherent within the tale. Rather, this work is simply meant to illustrate that the tale did not always contain sexist elements and that the patriarchal order for all its efforts was not able to completely suppress elements of subversion within the tale. My adaptation of the story has only one other purpose: to reject the immutability of the literary work in favor of the changeability of oral storytelling. After all, the Judeo-Christian faith has its origins in the ever-adaptive art of oral storytelling. Reworking mythology to better suit the beliefs of one’s own setting and time period was a standard religious practice in ancient

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times when literacy levels were low; it was a practice which kept mythologies relevant to the lives of the people who revered them. In my opinion, it is better to adapt our religious myths to our times than to reject them altogether because they no longer reflect our ideals. Thus, my adaptation of the Adam and Eve myth reflects a less sexist relationship between Adam, Lilith and Eve while recognizing the limitations of human relationships. Furthermore, rather than mourning the loss of the paradisiacal Garden of Eden, it celebrates the gift of free will and humankind’s potential for greatness.

“That which is spoken by God-the-Sun is life; that which is spoken by the Devil is death; Abraxas speaketh that hallowed and accursed word, which is life and death at the same time. Abraxas begetteth truth and lying, good and evil, light and darkness in the same word and in the same act. Wherefore is Abraxas terrible.”

—Carl Jung, Seven Sermons to the Dead, 3rd Sermon (1916)

Adam And Eve: An Adaptation
Chapter One: Meeting
As he gazed upon His favorite son with bemusement in His eyes, Elohim wondered what could have prompted Lucifer to come down to the lower realm of all places. Though indulgent with His creations, He could not help but question the inclinations of this particular subject. After all, no other angel left the Heavens unless it was on His orders. None of them seemed to feel any of the fascination that Lucifer held for this world. And why would they when they knew full well that nothing which existed below the heavens could match those things which the Supreme Being deemed worthy to be enshrined within his higher realm.

If Lucifer were any other angel, he would be basking in the glory of God’s Heavenly Realm rather than standing here upon this world that was but a pale reflection of its predecessor. Only Lucifer was unpredictable. Only Lucifer acted on sentiments seemingly uninspired by Divine Will. His Will. True, Lucifer had never been forbidden to enter the lower world. Indeed, none of the angels were forbidden to enter Earth. And yet none of the others ever came down here unbidden. Only Lucifer. Only Lucifer seemed to act on such strange impulses.

And so Elohim was left to wonder once again what it was that inspired Lucifer to act so differently from his compatriots. Not that Lucifer’s actions had ever been the cause of any displeasure. On the contrary, this peculiarity was the very trait which made him Elohim’s favorite and indeed a favorite among all the angels.

Abin, JC Eckstine-Gomez

“The bird fights its way out of the egg. The egg is the world. Who would be born must first destroy a world. The bird flies to God. The God’s name is Abraxas... Our god’s name is Abraxas and he is God and Satan and he contains both the luminous and the dark world.”

—Herman Hesse, Demian (1919)
Most of the time, his originality was an appealing quality. Indeed, his capabilities had wrought such admiration amongst his peers that even his elders amongst the archangels more often than not deferred to him. And yet there were other times as well when it was worrisome to see the individualism that was his most prominent characteristic; times when Elohim feared that this unnatural tendency to act without prompt would drive him too far away from his proper place beside his Father. And as he watched His son now, Elohim felt that this was one of those times. For Lucifer was watching Eden from the peak of Mount Moriah with an emotion akin to jealousy.

Chapter Two: Decay
The lower world created for His lower creations; the corporal world which could only mirror the perfections of the spiritual world above. Everything in this world, though imbued with life from above, was also destined to decay. The beings that were left to this disquieting landscape were His weaker creations, the ones that failed in some way to do what they were intended to do. But Elohim had found that though they failed to meet His expectations, they were simply too beautiful for Him to completely abandon. While He could not in good conscience allow them entrance into his Heavenly Kingdom, neither could He bring Himself to feel nothing for them. Why else would they be so well-cared for? Why else would He have endowed them with the gift of procreation so that even as they died new life would spring up, engulfing them in a cycle of death and renewal that allowed for at least some illusion of permanence even in the ever changing landscape of the Earthly Kingdom? Yes, though He loved His lower progeny and allowed them the ability to procreate as a balm to soothe the bleakness which characterized their existence, Elohim had not given into any of His sentimental desires to place them on equal footing with His elect. No matter how He loved them, He kept them in their place where they belonged.

And yet this was not precisely true. For there was one creation which He could not bear to surrender to such a fate: mankind, the crown of His creation, at least on Earth, made to reflect the corporal image of Elohim and His angels above. Their creation was an endeavor that spanned eons, but the final result proved well worth the effort, so beautiful was the product. And yet for all their external beauty, Elohim was saddened to realize that they were not so perfect as He had first assumed. No, they were not like His perfect angels whom He had based them on, for they did not understand His will.

Mankind had been created, unlike the angels, with a spiritual core that was bonded completely to their corporal bodies rather than to Him. Though still connected to their Maker, the source of their spiritual existence, mankind did not seem to possess that intuitive perception of His desires that all His elect possessed. Consequently, they could not obey for they could not know what He wanted. He had intended them for the Heavenly Kingdom, but with such a flaw, how could He ever allow them right of entry? And yet, He could not bear to resign them to such a thwarted existence as that which existed in the lower realm. And so Elohim made a compromise. While He did not admit these beautifully imperfect creatures to His Heavenly Realm, neither did He place them within the terrestrial sphere. Instead, He created for them the Garden of Eden, a veritable Heaven on Earth. And in this beautiful paradise, they were safe from the deterioration which marred the surface of the rest of the Earth, existing perfectly in a state of eternal childhood.

Chapter Three: Flawed
When He had first gazed upon the final fruition of all His careful planning, Elohim’s face had radiated with victory while the angels watched with astonished eyes the delivery of the first young of their kind. God created his angels in a fully mature state and since they did not reproduce, there had been no youthful progeny of their own kind to grace the halls of Heaven. But now these undeveloped forms lay sleeping contentedly in the arms of their proud creator-mother, looking identical to the corporal forms that their angelic forbears occasionally took save for the reproductive organs which made one male and the other female and set them apart from the androgynous celestial beings on which they had been based.

The years in which their young forms had tottered across the Heavenly Realm had been the most delightful years to ever grace those venerated halls. And the day when Elohim had realized the flaw in what He’d then considered his greatest creation had been the grimmest day to ever mar the Heavens. It was with pain that Elohim made the decision to throw these innocent but imperfect creatures out of His sight. And yet when it came down to it, He could not abandon their infantile forms to the miserable Earth. For only two fates awaited them upon the decaying Earth: to die swiftly from exposure to the elements or to survive only to grow farther and farther away from him. And since He could not decide which of these two destinies was worse, He chose neither.

With great swiftness, Elohim embarked on a journey to Earth with His two sleeping charges and created for them a world so indistinguishable from Heaven that it would forever be remembered as God’s paradise on Earth. He justified Himself with his firm belief that for now the flaw which marred His Adam and Eve was so small as to be unnoticeable. The only measure that needed to be taken to avoid this deterioration and preserve their perfect forms was to prevent their continued...
growth. Only in a state of eternal childhood could they exist in perfection and without risk of endangerment. The angels watched the departure with grief-stricken but determined eyes, their cheeks flush with the same frantic worry that characterized their Lord and creator. Only one angel watched these doings with dawning horror and the beginnings of a newfound anger at His creator.

Chapter Four: Trust
Elohim continued to gaze upon His son. Both were lost in introspection and felt no need to acknowledge one another. He marveled at how similar His favorite son was to the flawed creations enshrined below in the Garden of Eden before firmly crushing the traitorous thought. To say that Lucifer sometimes acted without the inspiration of His Divine Will was not the same as to say that he was not in accordance with that Will. Lucifer was the eighth archangel, the youngest and last of His archangels, and in many ways the best. Practice had only perfected the skill through which Elohim created other beings. God had grown with His creations and so it was only logical that some of His and Eve, there were no outside influences that could corrupt his spiritual core and fracture his connection to His Lord and Master. Any imperfections that marred his existence had to be those arising from God Himself. And God had no imperfections, just as He had no doubts and felt no hesitation. So Elohim turned to face His son with complete trust in His eyes.

Chapter Five: Doubt
Lucifer remembered when he had felt the first stirrings of doubt in his creator. It was probably the first moment that God had felt doubt in Himself. Angels in their most basic forms are but extensions of God’s own will, the embodiment of His own imaginative powers. Though they have consciousness beyond that of God’s will and can make decisions outside of His orders, they exist primarily to enact his desires. Angels lack true identities for they do not have personalities of their own. Instead of an identity composed of actual personality traits, an angel’s identity is equal to its functions. Even the archangels who command the other angels are no different. For though angels might obey the orders of other angels who are higher in the hierarchy, there is no sense of status between angels. Thus, there is also no jealousy among angels nor is there pride within them for their own accomplishments.

Only joy existed. Joy in serving the will of God and meeting His desires. Once upon a time, Lucifer had felt that joy too before his growing cynicism began to slowly whittle away at that simple pleasure.

But don’t think that this was true of all of Elohim’s archangels. Being termed an archangel simply indicates that one has more functions attached to his identity than the other angels. In reality, they had no skills or traits that made them inherently better than the other angels though they were a bit more complex because of the extra functions they served. God created the archangels only sporadically as need arose. So the archangels were neither his oldest nor his youngest creations. Lucifer, however, turned out to be different from his fellow archangels. For as God’s creations become more complex and He incorporated them within Himself, He himself grew more complex.

In the end, perhaps it was Earth that was His undoing. For how could a being so completely devoted to life and creation incorporate that which reeked of death and decay within Himself? It only followed that some great contradiction would arise within His being to mar the simplicity of his prior existence. Lucifer was God’s last archangel, the youngest of the eight, created in the wake of the creation of Earth itself, as if God in His bewilderment at creating something so opposite to Himself had tried to cast out from his sight the paradoxical image of death and renewal which haunted Him with its puzzling existence. Thus, it was only natural that Lucifer, his last creation, born amongst all this self-turmoil, would be the embodiment of this contradiction and a contradiction himself since he, as all the other angels, also embodies God’s will. It was only natural that along with God’s will, Lucifer also attuned with that growing part of God that dissented with Himself, that part which no one else save Lucifer could hear or respond to. And because he holds that part of God which disagrees with Himself, it was inevitable that he would eventually begin to feel complex desires not bound to God’s Divine Will. It was inevitable that he should become the first to practice free will and further that he would appreciate
Adam and Eve not in spite of their imperfection but because of it, for Lucifer was a person who could appreciate the imperfection and contradiction that characterizes humanity.

Chapter Six: Lilith

“Well then… which shall it be?”

Lucifer looked at the young girl before him, a blossoming rose that put the flowers surrounding her in this Edenic paradise to shame. The thought that this rose would never be allowed to come into full bloom was too agonizing to be borne. There was a part of him that wanted to take the apple in his hand and force it down her slender throat. But he wouldn’t. If freedom was to be had, she must choose it herself. He owed her that much at least.

“Will you eat of the apple of the tree of knowledge?”

The brooding girl crinkled her brow in thought.

“Adam will not be pleased,” she muttered under her breath with just a hint of indecision.

No, Adam wouldn’t. Wasn’t that why he’d chosen her in the first place? They were two halves of the same whole, created from the same egg. And so it only followed that they would be polar opposites in behavior. Adam favoring his tie to the living Earth beneath him while Lilith was more inclined towards the mystical aspects of life. She was the one who missed the celestial realm for she possessed the closer tie to the divine aspect of their being while he, who was more closely tied to his corporal form, was happier in this Earthly paradise than in its heavenly counterpart. Adam frolicked merrily in his beautiful new playground as boys are wont to do while Lilith was content to sit motionless. Motionless, except for her eyes, those beautiful green eyes that were forever shifting around so eager to understand the world around her and to solve the mystery of her own existence. How often had he seen her stare at her own reflection for hours upon hours? He knew it was not out of vanity, though she certainly had cause to be vain, but a true desire to comprehend what she was. Some might wonder why Lucifer would find her self-contemplation so arresting. But for a creature who never questioned his own existence, her wonderment made for a beguiling picture that he never quite tired of watching. He had known then that if either of them could comprehend what he was trying to offer them then it would be her. Yes, Adam would be upset. But he would accept it. For first and foremost, he belonged to her as she belonged to him. If
he went, he would follow.

“But he will bear it. For you, he will bear it. And when he sees what the two of you can be together away from this mockery of a paradise, he will not look back.”

With surprisingly steady hands, she grasped the apple firmly with her fingers and ate of the tree of knowledge.

Lucifer smiled.

Chapter Seven: The Prodigal Son
Elohim watched the son He couldn’t understand with sadness in His eyes. He looked past him at the two captives locked in the paradise below only to double back in shock.

“What have you done?”

“Only what you wanted me to do.” Elohim watched the scene playing out in the garden below with mounting horror.

Chapter Eight: The Temptation Of Adam
Eons ago, when Elohim had first left them there, He gave His two children free reign over the Garden to do with it as they pleased. Only one edict did He give them to follow. Only one thing was forbidden to them: the fruit of the tree of knowledge. The fruit that could reverse the halting of their growth, created only to be consumed once the flaw had been eradicated and they could become subservient to His Divine Will like the angels before them.

“Lilith, you cannot truly mean to—”

“It is already done Adam. And now you must choose. Will you eat of the apple of the tree of knowledge? Will you come with me or will you stay here?”

“With you… of course I go with you.”

Adam grasped the apple with trembling hands and ate of the tree of knowledge.

Chapter Nine: Eve
Of course Adam accepted the apple. They were two halves of the same whole, were they not? Where she went, of course he would follow. What she ate, he must eat too. It wasn’t a question of whether or not he would eat of the forbidden tree. The question was whether or not he could live with the consequences.

A scream rose up within him only to die soundlessly within his throat as he was wrenched from the Earth beneath him; the living, breathing Earth that was pulling at something at the very center of his being, refusing to let go. Could he live with it? As it turned out, the question didn’t matter. For as Lilith felt him breaking apart next to her, so close and yet so far away, she found that it was she who couldn’t live with it.

The Earth didn’t pull at her the way it did him, yet she felt his pain nonetheless. And at the same time as she felt it pierce her heart, she also felt herself relented. She felt herself begin to do that which they had always sworn they would never do to each other. She felt herself let go. For one brief moment, she resisted her own impulse and then she realized she had no choice. She couldn’t go back even if she wanted to. And to take him with her would be far crueler than to leave him. So she did the only thing she could do for him. She took the fruit of the tree of knowledge from within him, the very fruit which she had offered him only moment ago, pulling some of his own life essence out with it. To this she added a portion of her own spirit.

When he woke up, a pale beauty lay beside him, a blossoming rose that put the flowers surrounding her in their Edenic paradise to shame. But she wasn’t Lilith.

Chapter Ten: Contradiction
Elohim looks at His son and perhaps it is the first time that He truly sees him. Lucifer is still smiling.

“What was this meant to accomplish? If you had but left them alone in Eden, they would have remained flawless eternally.”

“And that’s precisely why I didn’t leave them alone… couldn’t leave them alone. I couldn’t bear to watch them lead such a futile existence. Could you?”

“And yet they did not do as you wished them. They did not stay together as they should have. You gave them choice and they chose wrong.”

“I will admit this turn of events was most unexpected. But perhaps I should have expected it. They were made to be perfect for each other, to complement each other in every way. And yet how could they truly be together when Lilith’s soul yearns upwards while Adam’s remains below? A contradiction is what they are, for you gave them everything they needed to be together except a world that could encompass both of their desires.”

“Perhaps that is so. But can you truly say that this new path that you have set them on is better than the life that I had planned so carefully for them? Lilith is alone now as she was never meant to be while Adam remains on his beloved Earth where he and his Eve will surely die with the Garden that they have polluted. With Lilith separated from them, the beauty that encompassed humanity will be lost forever.”

“But can you not see? The purpose of life is death. If you cannot die, then you cannot be called living. That is the contradiction of the living Earth beneath us, death and renewal tied so closely that you cannot tell them apart. And that is why humanity will be the envy of even the angels, for they can live in a way that we with our immortal lives cannot. As for Lilith, she is with them even now. For Eve is of both her and Adam, a careful balance of the two. With the death of the Garden also comes the possibility of new life and through Eve the progeny of Adam will never be lost to you. They will always yearn for you even as they cling to earthly life. You will see. They may not do what they were originally intended to do and they may never be able to truly understand you, but they will help you to understand the Earth beneath us, the contradiction of this aberration called life.”