

The Expulsion from Eden

A 10-minute play by David K. Farkas

Dedicated to Katherine Koller-Diez.

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Characters:

Major roles are indicated in boldface.

Adam, Eve, Raphael, Cain, Enoch, Narrator, Messenger.

Suggested minimal casting:

Adam (young, mature, old)/Enoch.

Eve (young, mature, old).

Raphael/Narrator/Messenger/Cain (young and mature).

OR:

Adam as young man (Scene 1) and mature man (Scene 2)/Enoch (Scene 4).

Eve as young woman (Scene 1) and mature woman (Scene 2).

Adam as old man (Scene 3).

Eve as old women (Scene 3).

Raphael/Narrator/Messenger/Cain as young man (Scene 2)/Cain as mature man (Scene 4).

[Scene 1]

ADAM and EVE enter from opposite sides of the stage and confront each other. RAPHAEL watches from upstage, but gradually steps forward and into their view.

ADAM: Why are you covered?

EVE: I did not want you to see me naked. And you?

ADAM: Yes, the same.

EVE: Everything is changing.

ADAM: Yes . . . Raphael, what do we call these coverings we now wear?

RAPHAEL: You will call them “garments.” Adam, Eve, you will no longer need to ask me such questions. Your minds are now filling with new thoughts and words.

EVE: Like death?

RAPHAEL: Like death. You now know sin, and shame, suspicion, discord, and more. You will soon see death in many forms—including murder. You will know toil, pain, and illness. And you will need to find your own answers, for when you leave Eden, you will see me no more.

ADAM: This will happen soon?

RAPHAEL: Yes, very soon. You have just minutes to absorb the meaning of what has happened and to ready your minds for a world far more complex and threatening than what you have known. Adam, the beasts are no longer your friends, especially at night. You must cut a stout branch and sharpen one end so that you can ward off predators.

ADAM: Woman, you have caused all this woe!

EVE: I did nothing.

ADAM: You ate of the apple. Is that nothing?

EVE: The serpent was subtle. He lied.

ADAM: Why did that matter? We were given one prohibition, just one. “Eat not of the Tree of Good and Evil.” That’s all you needed to know.

EVE: The serpent tempted me. He spoke of knowledge like it was something I should want. The apple had a bright glow like no other fruit I’d ever seen. That glow made me hunger for its taste. Then, after I ate, I was so afraid, and I could not stand to be alone in my fear and dread. So, I offered the apple to you in order to join our fates.

ADAM: Stop! . . . Oh fatal deed! We needed only to obey that one prohibition and Paradise was ours forever. Now we must suffer and die, and our children must suffer and die. They will curse us—especially they will curse you.

EVE: Yes, they will curse me. I have caused great harm, never to be equaled. Adam, do you still love me? Am I not still lovely to look upon?

ADAM: You are less so. You are now mortal, and this can be seen. But that is not the point. Oh, Eve! Mother of sin and sorrow. I hate and despise you for what you have done.

EVE: Adam, I would gladly take the full weight of God’s punishment upon myself alone. *You* might remain in Paradise.

RAPHAEL: No such thing is possible. Adam ate. He could have refused, but he did not.

EVE: *(To RAPHAEL.)* But I brought the temptation to him. I told him how the taste opened my mind, expanded my vision.

RAPHAEL: If Adam had refused, there would have been no Fall, no punishment—just a warning and further instruction. To Fall, you needed to fall together, and you did.

EVE: Adam, though you did eat, it was I that tempted you. And not just with my words. My golden hair, waving softly in the breeze, has led you always to comply with my desires. No different this time. Adam, I would take upon myself the full weight of God’s punishment.

ADAM: *(Softening.)* You would. I know that.

EVE: I would . . . die. I would see *you* still in Paradise with *another* woman—a second Eve, a better Eve. I would have you take her to bed. You would say, “Once I had a woman named Eve, but she was evil.”

ADAM: These thoughts are too terrible to speak of.

RAPHAEL: Is Eve entirely to blame? Think, Adam.

ADAM pauses and is stricken.

ADAM: Eve, I was commanded to watch over you. For our mutual safety, we were not to be long apart, and I let you stray far enough from me that I could not hear the serpent speak to you. I am also at fault for what has happened.

RAPHAEL: Yes, Adam. Yes. Think *further*, Adam.

ADAM: (*Looking closely at EVE.*) I am sorry for casting blame as I did. You are Eve still, and I love you. Whatever may befall us, I will cherish you.

RAPHAEL: Yes, Adam. (*To both ADAM and EVE.*) Time is very short, and I must help you prepare for life outside Eden. Adam, you have learned the most important lesson: Forgiveness. Eve has learned it too. In Eden, before you fell, love was easy. You loved each other, you loved the animals who greeted you each morning. They loved you. But forgiveness is much harder than love. Forgiveness comes after you’ve been hurt, and you *will* hurt each other in word and in deed. So too will the future generations. Therefore, you must always practice forgiveness and teach forgiveness to your children.

ADAM: Forgiveness quells anger. I understand. And I understand more. If I see a young deer caught and sinking in deep mud, and I pull it out, that is kindness. If an animal tries to steal our food, and I set down my spear, that is mercy. But forgiveness is hardest, for it comes when I have been injured.

RAPHAEL: Forgiveness comes hardest. But it heals.

EVE: Adam, I know some things you do not. I tell you that forgiveness comes more easily to women than to men. Someday I will joyfully forgive my new babes for the pain of childbirth. And my daughters will forgive their babes, even as they lie bleeding to death on the bed of childbirth. The woman, in her last moments, will ask to hold her babe. In her last moments she will ask her husband to forgive the child for the loss of his wife. In their last moments together, the woman will instruct her husband to love the babe and teach it well. And men shall heed.

ADAM: Raphael, what more can you tell us in the short time we have left?

RAPHAEL: Evil has been set loose upon the world. There is evil within you, and evil is now part of Nature. Your descendants will know pestilence, wildfire, and floods. They will know envy and cruelty, crime and plunder. The future generations will be born into a battle they can never win—but which they can easily lose—if they succumb to cruelty or despair. But you can push evil backwards and enlarge the precious space in which good flourishes. Adam, Eve, history now begins. The world lies all before you.

ADAM and EVE turn toward RAPHAEL, then toward each other.

RAPHAEL: (*Gesturing.*) You must go now. This way.

ADAM and EVE take each other’s hands. They exit.

Freeze.

[Scene 2]

ADAM, looking older, holds a farming implement. EVE, looking older, carries a basket. CAIN holds a weapon.

Action.

ADAM: Cain, I cannot understand *why* you have killed your brother. Not understanding makes forgiveness much more difficult. But I can do this, must do this. In a world of terrible evil, we are doomed to incinerate ourselves without forgiveness.

CAIN: Father, why was Abel's sacrifice preferred before mine? Why?

ADAM: I do not know.

EVE: But was this cause for murder?

ADAM: It is not enough that we forgive you. You must learn to forgive yourself. You can earn this forgiveness through kindness and generosity and working to heal the world. And by teaching others what you have learned. Teaching, teaching our children, this is our greatest hope. It's our best way to grow the army that fights evil on the battleground of daily living. Do you understand me, Cain?

CAIN: Understanding does me no good, Father. Even now I have a strong impulse to slay you and possess Eve by force. I am deeply evil, so deeply evil! To keep my desires in check, I must run off to the desert and live alone.

ADAM: Then do so. You are evil only if you *carry out* your evil desires. Subduing the evil within you is virtue.

EVE: You have our love, Son.

Freeze.

[Scene 3]

The NARRATOR, reading from a Bible, enters upstage.

NARRATOR: And Cain spoke: "I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth. And anyone who findeth me shall slay me." But the Lord answered, "No" and set a mark upon Cain as a warning to all not to kill him. And Cain went out into the wilderness, and he settled east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And Cain built a city in the desert.

The NARRATOR exits. EVE, now much older, enters. A MESSENGER enters.

MESSENGER: I bear a message from Cain, your son.

EVE: (*Astonished and joyful.*) Adam! Oh, Adam! Come here. Something wondrous. A messenger from Cain. (*To MESSENGER.*) Is he well? Where does he dwell? It has been many years.

ADAM, walking with a cane, joins EVE.

MESSENGER: Yes, Lady. Your son is well. He dwells in Nod, a city that he founded and governs. He is married to Trafelsa. His son is Enoch. I am Meraltic, Cain's trusted advisor and friend. He would have no ordinary messenger speak to you.

ADAM: Founded a city? How could this be?

MESSENGER: After many years of wandering, both through the desert and in his mind, he made peace with himself. Soon after, he found his goodness and his strength. He then gathered many followers. Nod is a populous city that has established many trade routes. It is guarded by walls, high and strong. Cain is much honored. But he has heavy responsibilities, so he could not take time for the long journey from Nod to where you dwell.

EVE: He waited all these years to send us news?

MESSENGER: He waited until he was sure you would be proud of him.

EVE: He was foolish. We would have rejoiced to receive any news—any news other than of his death.

MESSENGER: I understand. But those who've known great shame can be like that. He thanks you deeply for your forgiveness and for everything you taught him. All this he has imparted to his son, Enoch, and to many others. He governs with wisdom and always with mercy. Can you visit him in Nod?

ADAM: Alas, we are too old to travel.

MESSENGER: Perhaps a day will come when he can be absent long enough to visit you.

EVE: If we never see him, this is still a joyous day for us.

MESSENGER: I am very weary. Let me and my attendants withdraw to our tents. We will return in the morning. I will tell you much, and you will tell me much that I can relate to Cain.

ADAM: Yes. Please. Of course. Until tomorrow.

The MESSENGER exits.

EVE: Adam, what will be our last thoughts as we die? What *should* they be?

ADAM: That we have lived well . . . and would have been happy except for the memory of our original sin and of Abel's death. What the world will say of us, we cannot know.

EVE: We will be blamed. I especially.

ADAM: Sometimes I have strange thoughts. Sometimes I think, dare to think, that it was good we left Eden and struck out on our own. A baby sucking at his mother's breast is in Paradise. But is this living? Were we truly living? Perhaps our sin was a kind of birth, a birth into the adventure of life. Perhaps God was in league with the serpent. Perhaps God and the serpent are one and the same. Raphael was our teacher while we lived in Paradise, but the serpent truly opened our eyes. Perhaps this is how life should be lived.

EVE: These are indeed strange thoughts.

Freeze.

[Scene 4]

CAIN is seated on a chair that suggests authority and respect. ENOCH is standing.

Action.

ENOCH: Father, there is unrest. Some say that your mercy toward the Cimmerians is weakness, the softness of a woman, not acceptable in one who governs a city and leads an army.

CAIN: They must learn otherwise, Enoch. We must show mercy. We must forgive the Cimmerians their foolish attempt to conquer Nod. We must teach them to live in peace with us, to join our trading caravans.

ENOCH: Of those who govern cities and nations, few think as you do. Is this because of Abel? Is this your atonement?

CAIN: This is what the angel Raphael taught my parents, it is what my parents taught me—and Abel also. As Abel died from the blow I struck, he forgave me. So, how can I not extend mercy and forgiveness to others? How can I not teach these things?

ENOCH: I understand, Father.

The End

