

## Eve's P.O.V.

by Marilyn Power Scott 1994

Adam hates it when I dissect our relationship and examine every feeling as it goes by, but I can't help it. Ever since the beginning, I've had the feeling that I wasn't getting the full story, that we were somehow incomplete, and it has nagged me like a hangnail. So I quickly got in the habit of looking wherever I could for clues to solve the puzzle. Which is why, of course, I was so delighted when the snake offered me the apple. Yay! -- A new source of information! Little did I know the joke -- that the answer I was so diligently looking for was embodied in the giver. I've only come to realize this lately. Also, little did I know the trouble I'd get into. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

When I awoke beside the sleeping Adam, I knew that I was made to be his mate and partner and hardly anything else. He was wonderful to my eyes and to my hands moving over him gently, exploring and wondering over our likeness and our differences. I exulted in my own strong and lovely body, in all my lively senses, and in this glorious being beside me. And when he awoke, I could see he was wonderstruck and delighted, too. He had my same first need -- to explore and touch and know me.

He gave me my name, Eve. That's his favorite thing, you know -- naming things. We had a wonderful first few days, him showing me around Eden, introducing me to all the parts of it he'd already named, and I loved it all. It was beautiful, endlessly delightful. Everything one could need was readily at hand; everything one could imagine was there.

It was when I innocently asked what Eden had been like before I got there that Adam got defensive and gave me a curt and off-putting answer. Clearly, there was more here than he was telling me. But the more I asked, no matter how cleverly, the more he got peevish and mean, and he never would tell me there had been another woman before me. I've only recently understood this, and not from him. Whenever I'd broach the subject, he'd get really angry and then want to have sex, and not for the usual amazing pleasure, the way it usually was. No, at these times, it seemed to come from a need for reassurance that I was there for him. All very fine, and indeed I was -- but where was he for me?

I began then to know discontent and unhappiness and to realize I was to be his partner but not his *equal* partner. It's lasted all these millennia and generations, and I'm sick and tired of it. Not of him, mind -- I love him dearly. Even through all our troubles, we've known wonderful times together.

Anyway, after the fiasco over the apple -- a classic case of overreaction, if you ask me -- I found myself branded the original sinner, and we were booted out of Eden. I'm sure you've heard that part of the story. And I feel it's so unjust. Whenever I think about it (and I try not to and have little time for it), there's such anger and such sorrow, I can hardly bear it.

Life became very difficult for me. For Adam, too, of course, but less so for him. We both had to work hard for food and shelter in an unfriendly world, and the children began coming, and that was more than a handful. But I also had to bear the guilt for our expulsion and for all the ills that we and our children have suffered.

I have been punished again and again, in subtle and unsubtle ways, down through these ages, for my audacity in wanting to know the whole story. Can it really have been such a terrible crime? I don't think so.

I've thought it odd and poignant that so often, the punishment has taken the form of bearing children, who I love and cherish -- and who take all my attention and energy and health so there is none left for the music and poems and stories and paintings I ache to give birth to as well. I am so grateful that Adam's cleverness has given me a little respite and choice the past few years, although he's of two minds about allowing me that. He still gets very jealous of any outside interest of mine and still has uncontrollable rages, when he kills and rapes and tortures me. I think he can't believe I still love and cherish him, and sometimes, I wonder why myself. But I know we belong together, and I know our marriage can be better.

Lately -- well, for a long time now -- I've had these dreams where a beautiful, lonely, angry, and anguished woman appears. I'd have glimpses of her watching me, then she'd disappear as soon as she noticed I was aware of her. It was troubling and scary. I mentioned it a few times to Adam, but he got very upset, so I stopped. Sometimes, I would catch hints of her in some of my daughters, which really puzzled me, and so did Adam's reaction to them. He'd really go off the deep end.

So I held my fear to myself and began to watch for her, and in time, the fear lessened. I could see she didn't want to hurt me. And I have been hurt in so many ways and seen my daughters and sons hurt so many times, there is no hurt I don't understand. I could see her pain and her desire for simple human kindness. I think that she, driven away from all companionship and affection, has suffered far more than I.

She continued to watch me in my dreams, and then, I discovered her amazing ability to change shapes. I began to recognize her hungry, angry, sorrowful look in chance-met animals and in the droop and wail of certain trees. I'd stop and spend some tender moments with them and gained a little of her trust.

Unbeknownst to Adam, we've begun to meet face to face -- briefly, tentatively -- to get to know each other. I admire her so, her strength, her beauty, her integrity -- yes, especially her integrity.

She has promised to tell me her story and what happened in Eden before I got there -- and how I happened to get there. Finally, the missing pieces! (I'm pretty sure it was she who gave me the apple, dressed in her snake outfit.)

She's told me her name is Lilith.

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