

# A bite of the big apple

Story by Larry Centor

*"...but from the Tree of Knowing of Good and Evil - you are not to eat from it, for on the day you eat from it, you must die, yes, die." - Genesis 2:17*

Adam was tooling around in the Garden of Eden. It wasn't like he had a lot to do. Oh, he could name things, but who was he kidding, why did anything need a name?

"So when I send you to get something for dinner, I can say, 'Adam, you know where the giraffes gather eating those acacia leaves? Well, there's a nice rhubarb patch just a few yards past the fork in the path, and if you stay to the left, you'll see the rhubarb.'"

"What's a rhubarb? In fact, what's a giraffe, and what are acacia leaves? What are you talking about?"

"A rhubarb is what we're going to have if you don't do something around here. All you do is noodle around doing nothing, while I get acquainted with our neighbors."

"You look lovely when you're naked," smiled Adam.

"What's naked?"

"See," said Adam, now with a huge grin, "I did do something useful."

"What did you do?"

"I invented a word."

"What word?"

"Naked."

"What's naked?"

"You already asked."

Eve was getting madder by the second [a time reference with that neither she nor Adam were as yet acquainted].

Adam noticed that her face was reddening, and the color was slowly spreading down her body as she rhythmically tapped her toe, an obvious sign that Eve was losing her patience.

Adam decided it was in his social interest to try and calm the waters.

"I see naked as being the way we are now, here, at this particular time," explained Adam. "We have nothing to hide, so we hide nothing. We're naked. And, may I add that I have never seen a lovelier naked woman."

"You've never seen another woman. I'm it. You're it. That's it."

"You're forgetting the Big Guy."

Eve smirked. "Well we certainly don't think too much of ourselves, do we?"

"Him!" Adam responded quickly, pointing skyward, "Him. The Big Guy. You know."

"Too bad there aren't two Big Guys around," smirked Eve, even more broadly. "Then maybe we wouldn't be talking. We'd be doing." And with that she turned and started to wander off.

"Doing what?" asked a perplexed Adam.

Eve glanced back, winked and continued on her way.

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Eve was munching on some piece of unnamed fruit or other, and staring at the Tree of Knowing of Good and Evil.

"That's pretty good eating stuff," said a sibilant voice. "Nice and crunchy."

"Can't," said Eve, although she had spotted the speaker.

"Why not?" asked the voice.

"Big Guy said, 'No,' and I'm pretty sure he means it."

"What could possibly happen?"

And now Eve saw a long twisting shape peering at her from the low branches of a fruit tree. The eyes gleamed at her.

"We could die."

"Nah! The Big Guy is always saying things like that. Why would you die? Besides, what's die?"

Eve pondered that for a moment. Big Guy didn't really say," she said.

"There you are. Take a bite. You'll like it. I promise."

"That's what Adam said."

"About the tree?"

"No-o-o. Not about the tree."

"Let me get you a nice piece."

The tree shook gently as the long twisting snake made its way up the branches. Something fell to the ground.

"Take it back to Adam. Have it with dinner. Maybe with the rhubarb Adam went to get for you."

"What's rhubarb?"

"Only one way to find out."

\* \* \* \* \*

Adam was munching on something when Eve found him just past where a group of rather large animals with extremely long necks were contentedly chowing down on leaves from some quite tall trees.

"What's going on?"

"Huh?" replied Adam, brightly.

"What are you doing?"

"I've just invented three words, and I'm about to invent a fourth. Wanna hear it?"

Sure. What's your new word?"

"Nag!"

"Nag?"

"Nag!"

"What does it mean?"

"It doesn't mean. It is."

"Is what?"

"You."

"Ewe?"

"No. Ewe is not you. And we haven't even invented homonyms. Boy, you are a nag."

Eve was bright enough to realize that this conversation was only leading to another solitary walk in the Garden of Eden. She decided to deal from strength. "I brought you a present."

"You brought me a present. Really? What kind of present?"

Where is it?"

Eve drew her hand from behind her back, "Here, take a bite."

"What is it?"

"What do you want it to be?"

"I want it to be an apple," said Adam. "I've decided I'm into naming things."

"Okay! It's an apple."

"Where'd you get it?"

"From a tree," sounding just a tad evasive.

"What tree?" suddenly paying more attention.

"Oh, you know, that Tree of Knowing." Eve's voice trailed off. "This long twisting thing shook it out of the tree for me - for us."

"You do know the Big Guy said we'd die if we ate from that one tree."

"You believe everything you hear?"

"I am short a rib," said Adam thoughtfully.

"The long twisting thing said we wouldn't die if we ate it."

"You believe everything you hear from long twisting things?"

"It's the only thing I've ever heard."

"Could be wrong. Could be a trick. Why take a chance? I got you the rhubarb."

"Bet the apple's better."

"What kind of apple is it?"

"What kind of a question is that?"

"If I'm going to eat an apple I'm not supposed to, I'd at least like to know what kind it is?"

"How can there be more than one kind of a thing?"

"You and I are the same - but different. It has to have a name besides apple. I'm an Adam. You're an Eve. We're alike. We're different. I have one more rib."

Eve was getting red again. "You mean that before you eat the apple, it has to have it's own name."

"Right."

Eve thought a moment. "Okay, it's a Rome."

"I don't like Rome's," said Adam. "I prefer Empires."

"Oh for God's sake," said Eve, taking a big bite. She swallowed, then looked at Adam strangely. "I feel strange."

Eve was starting to fade from existence right before Adam's eyes. He could, quite literally, see right through her.

"Help me. I'm fading. I'm fading."

In a few moments, she had disappeared entirely from the Garden of Eden. Adam stared thoughtfully at the space where Eve had stood. He shook his head slowly, then looked upward.

"Hey, Big Guy," said Adam, "could you use another rib?"

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I've been writing stories for my children for years, several of which have been published by web-zines.

I am a graduate of the Syracuse University School of Journalism [59], own both a small ad agency and retail comic book store.

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