FREE CHAPTERS



Eden Is a Heart & The Two Trees

LUKE QUIGGAN · NARROW ESCAPE

You commented TREE.
So here is the garden, and the two trees in the middle of it.

Two chapters from Movement II of
Adam and Eve: The Ultimate Narrow Escape

CHAPTER FIVE

Eden Is a Heart

Stop looking at the sky. The war up there is finished. The war down here is about to begin, and its battlefield is closer than you think.

Every treasure map in the world is a lie except one, and that one is not drawn on paper.

For centuries men have hunted Eden. They have dragged rivers, translated tablets, argued over Mesopotamia, drawn circles on maps where four rivers might once have met. They have found ruins, pottery, bones. They have never found the garden, and they never will, and the reason is the secret this whole book was written to tell you.

Eden is not a garden on a map. Eden is the heart of man.

You did not read a history when you read Genesis. You read an anatomy. You read the blueprint of your own chest, drawn by the only Architect who has ever seen it from the inside. No archaeologist will ever find Eden because Eden was never lost to geography. It is lost the way keys are lost inside a house. It is lost inside you.

Come and see your garden.

God planted it eastward, the story says, and planted is the right word: hearts are grown things, not built things. Through it He sent rivers, and if you put your fingers to your wrist right now you can feel one of them moving. He filled it with every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, every appetite and affection and longing you carry, each one planted, each one originally good.

And into this garden He put a man. And here the code cracks open, so read slowly.

The man is two.

The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, that is the first half, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, that is the second. Dust and breath. Body and spirit. A creature of the physical plane and a creature of the eternal one, fused into a single being, the only thing in all creation made of both worlds at once. The angels watched Him do it and covered their faces. Even the fallen one, spying from her wilderness, understood she was looking at something new: a spirit that could touch the ground, a body that could touch God.

The breath is Adam. Hear it now and never forget it. Adam is your spirit, the husband of the inner house, formed for communion, made to walk with God in the cool of the day and to lead the garden he was placed in. To dress it and to keep it, the story says. The spirit is not a guest in your life. The spirit is the gardener and the guard.

And the dust is Eve. Your body and your mind, the flesh, the senses, the sweet machinery of appetite and imagination. Taken out of Adam, the story says, bone of his bones, made from and for the spirit, a helper matched to him. She is not an accident and she is not an enemy. She is beautiful. She is the part of you that can taste mangoes and hear mbira and hold another human hand. God looked at her and called her very good.

But she was not made to rule.

That is the order of the inner house, and it is not a small detail; it is the load-bearing wall of your entire existence. The spirit leads, the flesh flourishes under that leadership, and God walks with both in the cool of the day. When that order stands, the garden is paradise. When it flips, the garden becomes everything you currently see on the evening news and everything you are currently hiding in your own chest.

And one thing more, before the trees. Say this part aloud if you are alone.

I am not reading about ancient people. I am the garden. My spirit is Adam. My body and mind are Eve. The marriage is inside me. The serpent, when she comes, is coming here.

She is coming. She is already at the wall, practicing her lullaby, looking for the gate.

But first, God has planted two trees in the middle of your garden, and you need to know what grows on them, because tonight, whether you believe this book or burn it, you will eat from one of the two.

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Narration

Do not rush past what just happened. The book has moved the entire story of Genesis from the ancient east into your chest, and some readers will feel that as a loss, as if the story stopped being real. It is the opposite. A garden in Mesopotamia six thousand years ago demands nothing of you tonight. A garden behind your ribs demands everything. And hear the guardrail once more, plainly: Adam and Eve here are not a doctrine about husbands and wives in a house. They are the anatomy of one heart, yours, whether you are a man or a woman. Every human being alive is carrying a whole marriage, a whole garden, and a whole war inside them. The rest of this book is simply the story of that war.

CHAPTER SIX

The Two Trees

In the middle of your garden, where all the rivers rise and every path eventually leads, stand two trees.

Not at the edges. The middle. God does not hide the great choices of a life in the fine print. He plants them at the center of the chest and lets every road in the garden run past them, because a choice you never see is not a choice, and He is not interested in the obedience of the blind.

The first is the Tree of Life.

It is Adam's tree, the spirit's tree, and its fruit is everything that feeds the breath in you: presence, prayer, the Word, worship, obedience, silence before God, the cool of the day. Its fruit does not glitter. That must be said honestly, here at the start, or this book lies to you. The fruit of Life is quiet fruit. It rarely photographs well. It will not trend. Eaten daily, it does something no other substance in the universe can do: it keeps the connection open, spirit to God, and through that connection flows the thing this book calls the panacea, the medicine that heals both the spirit and the body it leads. One tree, and it cures the whole man.

The second is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Now be careful here, because a thousand lazy sermons have made this tree ugly, and it was not ugly. Nothing in the garden was ugly. The tree of Knowledge glittered. Scripture itself testifies for the defense: the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise. Food, beauty, wisdom. Three true advertisements. This is the tree of everything the flesh can taste, measure, argue, accumulate, scroll, and conquer. Sensation. Information. Stimulation. The endless knowing that never becomes being.

Its only flaw is a small one. It cannot make you alive.

And the law of the garden, the physics that no prayer has ever repealed, is this: whichever tree feeds you, rules you. These two trees are not two snacks. They are two thrones. Eat from Life as your master, and the spirit sits on the throne of the inner house, and the flesh flourishes like a garden under a good king. Eat from Knowledge as your master, and the flesh takes the throne, and the gate to the other tree swings shut.

Hear that again, because your entire life is hiding inside it. The gate shuts on its own. In the day that you eat of it, dying you shall die. Not: in the day you eat of it I will lose My temper. The cutting off is not God's tantrum; it is the garden's wiring. Life and self-rule cannot flow down the same wire. The moment the flesh crowns itself, the connection to Life is severed as automatically as a bulb goes dark when the cord is pulled, and the medicine stops flowing, and the long dying begins.

This is why the modern world is the way it is. Look around you. We have eaten of Knowledge until our bellies split. We hold in our pockets a device containing the sum of human information, we have decoded the genome and photographed black holes, we know everything, and we are dying of everything: anxiety, addiction, loneliness, meaninglessness, diseases of appetite. Knowledge stacked to the ceiling of the sky, and no Life, because the fruit we chose can inform the man but it cannot heal him. We are the richest, smartest, saddest generation of Adams in history, standing in a warehouse of fruit from the wrong tree, starving.

One tree heals the whole man. The other only describes his sickness in greater and greater detail.

And understand, finally, why the garden is arranged this way at all. Why plant the second tree? Why leave the gate where the serpent can knock? Because love that cannot choose is not love; it is programming. God did not want a garden of beautiful machines. The two trees are the terms of a marriage proposal. Every day of your life, the question is planted in the middle of your chest, and every day you answer it with your appetites, your eyes, your hours.

The whisper knows this. The whisper has read the garden's wiring diagram more carefully than any preacher you have ever heard.

And she has found, in the wall of your garden, five gates.

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Narration

A reader may ask: is the book saying knowledge is evil? Should I burn my library and leave school? No. Read the order, not the objects. Knowledge is a magnificent servant and a murderous king. The book you are holding is itself knowledge, and it will bless you only if it drives you to the other tree. Information that becomes transformation has changed masters. The question is never how much you know. The question is which tree owns the throne.

The whisper is already at the wall.

Chapter Seven opens the five gates she uses to enter every heart. Chapter Eight shows what happens when the spirit stays silent. Then the story climbs to a hill outside the city, where the second Adam breaks every lease.

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The wide road leads to destruction. The narrow road leads to life.