

The Garden

By

???

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FADE IN:

EXT. STONE GAP - NIGHT

A WARRIOR, as old as heaven, stands to attention between two giant boulders. His eyes intense. Before his face he holds a sword with flames etched on the blade.

SERPENT (O.S.)

God is dead.

The Warrior flinches, glances back.

SERPENT (O.S.)

He has been dead and at peace for eons... And still you stand guard for him. Your bones have set hard, your eyes faded, your heart beats no more. The sword holds you, not you it.

The Warrior lowers the sword a little, pained as he moves.

From between the boulders, SERPENT, a hard middle-aged man whose serpentine eyes glare out from the hood of his long cloak, slithers up as close as he dares.

SERPENT

You can have peace. This place is forgotten. Let go of your long ages of agony. Allow your wasted body a second without the burden.

The Warrior lowers the sword tip to the ground, stares at his shaking hand with its rigid grip. He forces a couple of fingers to open.

Serpent attacks, wedges the released fingers away from the handle, SQUEALS at the searing burn the handle gives him.

The Warrior fights to restore his grip. Each clutches the handle as they CLATTER against the boulders.

Serpent gets his body between the Warrior and his sword hand. His hands sizzle as he peels the Warrior's fingers free.

The sword falls to the dirt. The Warrior collapses to dust.

Serpent grins, nurses smoking hands, stares at the sword.

SERPENT

Someone will soon be tempted to bring you to me.

EXT. OREGON ORPHANAGE - DAY

ADAM, 12, an awkward boy just becoming a man, crawls beside a garden wall, glances back at the austere building.

ADAM  
We should tell someone where we're going.

Ahead of him, EVE, 14, a confident girl in a leaf patterned summer dress, leads the way.

EVE  
Who's going to care?

ADAM  
This isn't allowed.

She turns back to smile at him.

EVE  
Lot's of things aren't allowed...  
Over we go.

They jump up to climb onto a low branch and over the wall. Beyond the wall is an endless sweeping forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Eve leads them through the trees, over hills and streams. They move swiftly along, not following a path.

EVE  
Which way do you want to go?

ADAM  
Don't you know the way?

She shakes her head, but carries on anyway.

EVE  
Which way?

ADAM  
We should get back to the house.

She stops and stands close to him.

EVE  
We've come this far, you're free to do whatever you want. Choose.

ADAM  
Which way is back?

EVE  
You always do what you're told. You  
let them push you around.

ADAM  
I don't.

She gives him a joking shove.

EVE  
You're the nicest kid I know, but  
anyone can push you and you'll do  
nothing about it.

She pushes him hard, gets in his face.

EVE  
Come on then!

He threatens to shove her back, but doesn't. She pushes him  
over on his ass.

Irritated, he gets up and stalks away.

EXT. DENSE FOREST - DAY

They walk on, weave around trees. A branch hits Adam's face.

ADAM  
I hate the woods.

EVE  
But the woods are nature. Don't you  
think nature's beautiful?

ADAM  
No.

EVE  
I'll bet I can change your mind.  
What about that?

She points out a tree.

ADAM  
Ugly.

She picks up some moss.

ADAM  
Damp and ugly.

She dashes to a patch of flowers.

ADAM  
Beautiful, if I was a bee.

EVE  
I'll get you with this.

She runs away. After a moment, he realizes he'd better follow.

Around a tree, he finds her dress hanging from a branch.

EVE (O.S.)  
Catch me now and imagine what  
you'll see.

Adam licks his lips, but his eyes betray nervous fear.

ADAM  
I don't want to...

Ahead, he sees Eve's hand pop out from behind a tree.

EVE  
How about now?

She drops first her bra, then her knickers, out from behind the tree. Adam's jaw drops open.

EVE  
Catch me, and I'll let you touch  
me.

She dashes away. He stands frozen for a moment, before he goes after her.

ADAM  
We shouldn't lose each other.

He hurries through the trees, turns this way and that, but loses track of where he is.

ADAM  
Please come out. I don't know the  
way back. Eve? Eve?

A distant SCREAM. Adam runs through the trees.

ADAM  
Eve?! Where are you?! Eve!

Frantic, he searches until he emerges at--

EXT. STONE GAP - DAY

Adam stops cold, spots the sword still on the ground.

He picks it up and it sends an energy pulse up his arm. He studies the etched flames.

SERPENT (O.S.)  
Bring it to me.

Adam stares in alarm through the gap between the boulders.

ADAM  
Have you seen a girl? I need to find her.

SERPENT (O.S.)  
I know where she will go. Bring it to me.

Adam edges forward, sword in hand, through the gap to--

EXT. ANCIENT FOREST - DAY

Every plant is eternally old and withered. Adam examines the still canopy, bark with deep ridges, and creepers that hang heavily on everything.

He studies a lump of fur on the ground. The oldest rabbit imaginable opens one eye to look at him. Its ear peels up.

Adam gazes in sympathy as the rabbit's ear goes back down and its eye closes.

SERPENT (O.S.)  
Eternal life curses those left behind.

Adam spins to see Serpent standing close by, backs off.

ADAM  
Is this yours?

He brandishes the sword. Serpent hisses and shuffles away.

SERPENT  
You will need it, if you accept my offer.

ADAM

Where are we? Where is Eve?

SERPENT

This is the home that was taken  
from you.

ADAM

I never had a home. Not like this.

SERPENT

It was once perfect, but he never  
meant for you to stay. You were  
given freedom and tricked with  
temptation.

ADAM

I've never been here before. No one  
tricked me.

SERPENT

If you had been allowed to stay  
here your father would not have  
raped your mother. Your mother  
wouldn't have given her body to  
provide for you. Here the flames  
that ate that body would have  
caused her no pain.

Adam staggers back in anguish.

SERPENT

You can bring an end to all that.

ADAM

Leave me alone!

He slashes with the sword, hacks his way through creepers.

Adam storms away, swings in rage at the plants around him.

ADAM

Eve?!

An echoing ROAR, from a mighty Lion, shakes the forest.

SERPENT

You have to hurry. He's coming for  
you... and her.

Serpent points. Adam spots Eve, who walks naked through the  
trees. He runs after her.

Eve pauses to stare at something.

Adam hurries her way, hesitates at the sight of her body.

He hacks down a line of leaf covered vines. Holds them out as he approaches her. She's at the edge of--

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Adam reaches Eve. She allows him to put the vines in loops over her head.

ADAM

Eve, please put these on.

EVE

I'm hungry.

Adam looks across the clearing, sees a healthy tree abundant in apples, and a cliff edge to one side.

ADAM

We shouldn't eat from that tree.

EVE

We have to. Look at the fruit. It's ripe and hanging where we can reach.

ADAM

That doesn't mean it's for us.

EVE

That man told me we should have anything we desire.

She points at Serpent, who peers from the trees at them.

ADAM

But it might be forbidden.

EVE

There's no such thing.

She steps toward it. He pulls her back.

EVE

I'm hungry!

ADAM

You can't.

EVE

You're a fucking wimp! It's just fruit on a tree.

He steps into her way. Angry, she shoves him aside.

He moves to push her back, but a sneer from her stops him. He steps aside.

EVE

Like I said, a fucking wimp.

She steps to the tree and pulls down an apple. A ROAR sounds, wind blows.

Eve takes a bite, blinks her eyes, gazes in amazement.

EVE

I... I can see.

The tree withers to dust. Eve's body convulses. Alarmed, she SCREAMS as she falls unconscious.

Adam catches her and lowers her to the ground.

Serpent races over, smiles with glee.

SERPENT

That's it. She's done her part. She has the knowledge of the tree. Now you can take it from her.

ADAM

Is she alive?

SERPENT

She can live forever, if you choose. You mustn't wait too long, the lion comes near. He means to take it for himself. To use it to bully you, to push you around.

ADAM

Why should I believe you?

SERPENT

I'm offering you the chance to be without fear. You'll never back down from anyone ever again.

Adam stands tall in front of Serpent.

ADAM

What do I have to do?

SERPENT

She has the knowledge of God, you have the strength.

(MORE)

SERPENT (CONT'D)

(he waves at the sword)

You must re-merge with her. Restore  
your rib and you'll have the body  
and power of God.

Adam's tempted. A ROAR doesn't distract him. Serpent shudders  
in fear.

SERPENT

Quickly, kill her and eat her  
flesh. Quickly.

Adam grimaces, grips the sword, raises it over Eve.

Serpent sneers with glee, pulls a hand sickle from his cloak.

Adam gazes down at Eve, aims the sword at her neck. He  
studies the shape of her body, licks his lips.

Serpent raises his sickle high over Adam's back.

Eve's face twitches. Adam studies it.

Adam's hand tightens on the sword handle.

He spins around. The sword deflects the swoop of the sickle.

SERPENT

What're you doing? Kill her, you  
puny boy.

Serpent hacks with the sickle. Adam fends off the blows.

ADAM

I don't need the power of God to  
get what I want.

SERPENT

You'll soon beg me to let you kill  
her.

Their blades CLASH. Serpent shoves Adam toward the cliff side  
of the clearing.

Their blades tangle, again Serpent pushes Adam over. Adam  
fumes in rage.

An angry series of blows takes them close to the cliff edge.

The blades tangle. Serpent grins as he moves to shove Adam  
over the edge.

Adam spins down and round, thrusts his sword through Serpent.

ADAM

I'm done being pushed around.

Serpent falls to his knees. Adam stands tall over him.

Serpent, in surprised agony, gazes up at Adam.

SERPENT

You can still choose. Let her live,  
and be pushed around your whole  
life. Kill her, and be a god.

Serpent morphs into a small snake and slithers away.

Adam swooshes the sword through the air and smiles to himself.

He turns to see Eve sit up and smile, in awe of him.

He strides her way, chest out, considers Eve and the sword.

She's attracted, but also afraid, flutters her eyelids,  
arches her back.

He stands tall over her.

EVE

You have to give in to temptation.  
The question is which one?

She snaps the vines she's wearing and lets them fall away.

Adam's captivated by her body. He lifts the sword over his  
head ready to strike.

She stares into his eyes.

He lets the sword fall to the ground.

He leans in and kisses Eve with innocent passion.

They grip each other in an awkward embrace. He loses himself  
in lust.

Her hand reaches across the ground beside them.

EVE

This garden saw the fall of man.  
Now it'll see the triumph of women.

She grips the handle of the sword.

FADE OUT.