

The Virtual Diaries of Adam & Eve

Adapted by Kevin P. Kern & Dan W. Davis

*from Mark Twain's stories, "Eve's Diary" and
"Extracts from Adam's Diary"*

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SYNOPSIS:

Adapted from Mark Twain's short stories. Perfect for online performances, the play is crafted in the style of video diaries kept by Adam and Eve. Along the way, we hear from God who is also online and wants to set the record straight on a few items of potential confusion like the Ark, the Emu, and whether or not the Banana is the perfect fruit. It is a humorous first-person account of the first man and wife, which includes creation, getting to know one another, exploring their new world, and naming the animals. The short play continues after they eat from the forbidden fruit and are exiled from the garden, which Adam wanted to call Eden, but Eve liked the name Niagara Falls instead. Following their departure, Adam and Eve share the many challenges of parenting two teenage boys and growing old. The play ends with the passing of Eve, where Adam proclaims, "Wheresoever Eve was, there was Eden." This play runs about 40 minutes.

CAST:

God

Adam

Eve

NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHTS:

The play is designed to be read at individual computers, as if the characters are typing into their diaries. There should be no attempt to make the computers like foreign objects, let us just accept – and the audience will too – that they have always been there, and that the characters know exactly what they're for.

In the minds' of the playwrights, God has a dry sense of humor; likewise, the God in this play should have one too. It seems as though the God of this play is better played with completely human characteristics, giving God the quality of being approachable and someone with whom you could hang out and talk.

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A caption reads: IN THE GARDEN

GOD: In the beginning I created the heaven and the earth. And I said, "let there be light," and I called the light day. And the darkness I called night. And I created the waters and mountains and the fruit and the fish and the fowl and the cattle. And then I thought for a while, and I felt like something was missing. And so, I created... the majestic emu, which was like a bird *and* like a horse. It couldn't fly, and it was fairly unattractive. In retrospect, I had clearly made a mistake, but since I was the only one around it did not seem to matter. And on the sixth day I decided to take another crack at creating. Not wanting another flightless bird debacle, I settled on the creation of man. So, I created man in my own image. And I saw everything that I had made and, behold, with the exception of the emu, it was very good. And, being fairly pleased with myself, I decided to make a garden and put a big apple tree right smack in the middle. "One little apple tree," I thought, "what could possibly go wrong?"

(GOD's computer screen is shut off. We see ADAM's computer screen turn on, as he hums "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" by the Andrews Sisters. He is sharpening a knife while humming. EVE's computer screen turns on. She watches ADAM by staring into her screen. After a short time, ADAM walks away from his screen. EVE begins speaking.)

EVE: Dear Diary, It is Saturday: I am almost a whole day old. I arrived yesterday. At least, I think that's what happened...I don't have much to go on. As far as I know everything that happened, happened yesterday... since I arrived yesterday. It's important that I get the record straight because something tells me that these details are going to be very important to the folks who write the history books.

I feel like I must be an experiment. And because I *feel* like an experiment, it is reasonable to believe that I *am* an experiment. That's really how things work around here.

Everything looks better today than it did yesterday. Today feels like things have been completed. Apparently, God was in a hurry to finish yesterday because the mountains were left in a ragged condition and some of the plains were cluttered with... *(SHE searches for the word.)* rubbish that just seemed to tumble by.

I have to tell you, there are some strange parts of this place that I would have done differently. There was a green fruit that looked like a pear, but when I bit into it, it was almost entirely "pit." I nibbled around the pit as best I could, but it was very disappointing. And then there's the large bird that doesn't fly, that just walks around pecking things. But, yes, MOST of this place seems nearly perfect.

EVE: *(Cont'd.)* What else? Oh yes. The moon got loose last night and slid down and fell right out of the sky. It breaks my heart to think about it. There is nothing else quite as beautiful as the moon. It should have been attached better. If we can only get it back again. But of course, there is no telling where it went off to. And besides, whoever gets it will hide it. I know I would.

I do love moons. They are so pretty and romantic. I wish we had five or six moons. I would never go to bed. I would never get tired of lying on the water-bank and looking up at them. I feel like the moon is capable of great things, if only it could have stuck around.

Stars are good, too; I wish I could get some to put in my hair. But I suppose I never can. You would be surprised how far away stars really are. They seem close enough to almost touch, but they are very far away from my reach. When they first appeared, I tried to knock some down with a pole, but I couldn't reach them. I threw a green pear with the big pit at them, but that didn't help. Finally, I gave up. I was so tired I couldn't drag my feet another step. But I found some tigers and nestled among them. It was so adorably comfortable. Their breath was sweet because they live on strawberries. I do like them. The tigers, not the strawberries. Although, I also like strawberries.

(ADAM returns to his screen.)

EVE: *(Cont'd.)* Yesterday afternoon, I followed the other experiment around, at a distance. I think it's a man. I've never seen a man, but it looks like one. That's what it has to be. He is neither fast like the cheetah, nor colorful as the peacock, and I am not sure what he's supposed to do. However, I feel more curiosity about it than any of the other reptiles. At least, I think it's a reptile. It has frowzy hair and blue eyes and looks like a reptile.

ADAM: Dear Diary, Sunday: This new creature with the long hair is always in the way. It is constantly hanging around and following me about. I don't like this; I am not used to company. I wish it would stay with the other animals. I like to be alone to think.

(EVE turns off her screen.)

ADAM: *(Cont'd.)* I do some of my best thinking when the creature is not around. I have been tasked with naming everything and let me just say, it's not easy. I was at the stream yesterday, and saw these things swimming around, and so I called them "fish." "Fish." That just sounds right. "Fish." But then, you see, there's different kinds of fish. So, I called a bunch of them "trout." But that's where it gets tricky, there were more than one kind of "trout" fish. One had a rainbow on it, one was sort of brown-- so I go down that rabbit hole. There's another word I had to invent, "rabbit hole." Where does it end? And the creature isn't a bit of help. She just sits there and looks at me.

(A big sigh.) Cloudy to-day, wind in the east; I think we shall have rain.... "Rain." Where did I get that word?... I remember now —the new creature uses it.

ADAM: *(Cont'd. Realizing Eve could be some help.)* Alright, maybe she does help a little. "Rain," big deal. I had to come up with two words that express the difference in speed when your feet move. "Run" and "jog." Let her top that!

EVE: Monday: Nothing but rain and a big boom every so often. I wanted to call it "thunder," but the experiment called it "boomer." He has no imagination.

ADAM: Tuesday: I have been examining the great waterfall. I think it's the finest thing on the estate. The new creature calls it—

EVE: *(Interrupting excitedly.)* Niagara Falls.

ADAM: Why? I don't know. She says it looks like Niagara Falls. That is not a reason; that's just silliness.

The creature is trying to take over the job of naming things and I don't get the chance to name anything myself. The new creature names everything that comes along, before I can get a word in. And always that same explanation is offered—because it looks like the thing. There is the dodo, for instance. The moment she looks at it she blurts out, "It looks like a dodo." Dodo! It looks no more like a dodo than I do.

EVE: The experiment looks like a dodo, but he claims he doesn't see it.

ADAM: Wednesday: Built a shelter against the rain but could not have it to myself in peace. The new creature just barged right in like she belonged there.

EVE: Thursday: I was afraid of the experiment at first, and I started to run every time it turned around because I thought it was going to chase me; but soon I found it was only trying to get away from me. I don't understand why he won't talk to me.

ADAM: The creature seems mad at me, but I've no idea why.

EVE: Friday. He's still in the shelter. Resting, apparently. It looks to me like the creature is more interested in resting than anything else. It would tire me to rest that much. It tires me just to sit around and watch the tree. I do wonder what the tree is for; I never see it do anything.

Oh! They returned the moon last night. Whoever, THEY are. Anyway, I was SO happy! And I think it is very honest of them to return it. I would like to send them some stars. We have more than we can use. I mean I, not we. The reptile doesn't care about the stars. It has no taste.

I went to the pond to get a better look at the moon, and while I was there, I saw a turtle.

ADAM: She called the "rockback" a "turtle." Now the thing is confused. When I called to him, "Rockback! Here Rockback!" it just sat there.

EVE: He was yelling at the turtle last night. Very, very odd.

ADAM: I wish it would not talk. It is always talking. Talk, talk, talk. It never seems to stop talking.

EVE: I feel like I have to talk to him, so he understands my thinking.

ADAM: Friday: The naming goes recklessly on, in spite of anything I do. I had a very good name for the estate, and it was musical and pretty. I wanted to call it "GARDEN-OF-EDEN." Privately, I continue to call it that, but not publicly. The new creature says it is all woods and rocks and scenery, and therefore looks nothing like a garden. She says it looks like a park. Consequently, without consulting me, it has been re-named —

EVE: *(With great joy.)* Niagara Falls Park.

ADAM: This is extremely snooty of her, I must say. And already there is a sign up that says...

(EVE shows a homemade sign: KEEP OFF THE GRASS.)

ADAM: *(Cont'd.)* My life is not as happy as it once was. And what is "grass" anyway? Does she mean "wavysticks?"

EVE: Sunday: All the week I tagged around after him and tried to get acquainted. I had to do all the talking, because he was shy, but I didn't mind it.

ADAM: Sunday: You'll never believe this: This morning I found the new creature trying to pick apples out of that forbidden tree.

EVE: He's noticing me a bit more these days.

EVE: Wednesday. We are getting along very well now and getting better and better acquainted. During the last day or two I have taken over the job of naming all things. And he seems very relieved. Honestly, he wasn't very good at it anyway. He can't think of a rational name to save his life, but I don't let on that I am aware of his shortcomings. Whenever a new creature appears, I simply name it before he has time to say anything. I have saved him many embarrassments.

(ADAM and EVE turn off their screens.)

A caption reads: IN THE GARDEN, THE NEXT WEEK

GOD: Let me take a moment to address something that I'm certain will be a concern at some point in time because it may be a source of confusion. Generally, I like when people pray. It's nice to hear from you, and I am interested in your problems, your concerns, your fears. But please remember to thank me every so often as well. Don't make a huge thing out of it, but a simple "thanks" would be very nice. And it's ok to ask for things as long as it's good for everyone. But don't ask me for things like "Please let the team win today," or "Please let me inherit a pot of money." I am not a bank, and you cannot simply ask me for money or riches.

GOD: *(Cont'd.)* If you want to ask me for something, there's nothing wrong with "world peace." It may seem a little cliché, but it's a nice thing to ask for. One more thing: Stop telling kids to pray to do well on tests. If they want to do well, have them study.

(GOD's computer screen is shut off. EVE turns on her screen.)

EVE: Thursday: My first sad feelings. Yesterday he avoided me. He acted like he didn't want me to talk to him. I couldn't believe it. I thought there was some mistake. I love to be with him. I loved to hear him talk. How could he be unhappy with me when I haven't done anything-- but be perfectly pleasant.

So I went away. I sat alone in the place where I first saw him-- the morning that we were made. When night came, I couldn't stand being alone any more. So, I went to the new shelter he had built, to ask him what I had done? I wanted to fix the problem so we could go back to being kind again. He put me out in the rain. It was my first sad feeling.

(ADAM turns on his screen.)

ADAM: Friday: She is always worried about me. She won't let me climb on rocks, won't let me swim if it's dark, won't let me go over the waterfall. Says it makes her scared. I wonder why? I have always done it—always liked the plunge, and the excitement, and the coolness. It's what the Falls are for. They have no other use that I can see, and they must have been made for something. She says they were only made for scenery—like the rhinoceros and the mastodon. I need a change of scenery.

(EVE exits.)

ADAM: *(Cont'd.)* Saturday: I escaped, and travelled two days, and built me another shelter, in a secluded place, and hid my tracks as well as I could. But she hunted me out by means of a beast which she has tamed and calls "wolf."

This, so-called "wolf" - as she named it - eats grass and flowers. But she claims its teeth are really made for piercing flesh and eating meat, which is impossible.

It's impossible, because to do that would mean the wolf would have to kill another animal, and that would introduce what, as I understand it, is something called "death;" and "death," as I have been told, has not yet entered the Niagara Falls Park.

EVE: *(Enters.)* Sunday: Things are better now. He's back and seems...nicer to me. I tried to get him some of those apples from the tree, but I cannot learn to throw straight. The apples from that tree are forbidden, he says. They will bring pain and sadness to us and the whole Niagara Falls Park.

ADAM: Sunday – pulled through. She said the strangest thing to me today

EVE: My name is Eve.

End of Freeview

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