



In the beginning

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This piece requires three actors and a reader. One acts the part of a minister/priest and as this doesn't become apparent until well into the conversations wearing of a clerical collar would be appropriate.

Scene is an office with two desks occupied by the other two actors busily working at computers.

Reader:

Reading from Genesis chapter 3

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Brian:

Good morning girls! How are you both today?

They respond simultaneously with different greetings

Helen:

So you're off on holidays today.

Brian:

Yes indeed.....Australia here I come.

Laura:

Off to see your sister, isn't it?

Brian:

Yes.....for a whole month.....and I cant wait!

Now....I'm leaving you two as my personal assistants in charge of church matters here while I'm away. Email me if any major problems.....in particular let me know of any deaths.....and remember to keep the office locked when you're not here – you know I keep confidential files in here.

They get up, say goodbye, give him a hug, wish him well and he exits.

Laura:

I hope he has a good time – he deserves a rest.

They resume their seats

Helen:

So, what are you working on today?

Laura:

Just trying to move this database to the new package.....and you?

Helen:

I need to get this mail merge done.

They both work at computers for a little time – opportunity for the usual complaints about computers not doing what they are asked or 'how on earth did that happen'

Helen: *(stops typing, turns towards Laura who is so engrossed in her work)*

You know, I've been thinking.....

(and still ignored, with a more insistent tone)

I saidI've been thinking

Laura:

Why can I not get this database to export?

Helen:

Would you listen to me for a minute?

Laura: *(without looking away from computer)*

OK....what is it?

Helen:

You know how we are trusted to look after all the admin of the church?

Laura:

Yes *(still not looking)*

Helen:

Did you ever feel that we could be a bit limited in doing our job well?

Laura:

You're not looking for more work for us, are you?

Helen:

No....just we could do it better.....if we had a bit more information

Laura:

What on earth do you mean? *(slowly turning around to her)*

Helen:

Well.....we are dealing with church people day in, day out.....and sometimes we don't know the full picture.....all that stuff in the confidential files

Laura:

You're not suggesting?.....oh no!.....he keeps that private for a reason

Helen:

Yes.....but he doesn't understand.....we could be better equippedlike knowing where we can empathize with people or understand some of the issues people are struggling with

Laura:

You're just nosy!

Helen:

No!.....you just think about it

Laura returns uneasily to typing for a moment, stops and pauses

Laura:

Oh.....I dunno

Helen:

Tell you what....let's look at a little sample and see what we think *(as she stands up to see if Laura will succumb)*

I'm nervous about this.....but maybe a little sample would be ok *(gets up nervously and follows Helen to a filing cabinet – Helen hands her a file and they both start reading)*

Actors freeze – or leaf through files as they read

Reader:

And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he

drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.but the story doesn't end there

Un-freeze and move sombrelly back to desks, one of them bringing one of the files and laying it on her desk. Pregnant pause.

Helen:

That was alright, wasn't it?

Laura:

It's not a question of what is right for you or right for me.....it's simply a question of what is right, full stop. And we have not done right by our boss.

Pause as they reflect and she continues

And look at the consequences.....now we know things about Brian and other people that they think we don't....and shouldn't know about them.....and that's going to damage our relationships with them.....how are we going to have conversations without revealing what we now know and can't tell?

Helen:

Maybe you're right.....it wasn't so smart after all

Pause while they stare into space, reflecting and then enter Brian full of the joys of life but they don't react to him at all

Brian:

Hello girls....it's great to be back.....how have...(stops mid-sentence as he perceives the atmosphere)...what's been going on here?

No response

C'mon girls....what is it?

He spots the personal file on the desk and picks it up and looks

Don't tell me you've been looking at those files.....you know they are confidential?

Laura: *blurts out sheepishly*

It...it was Helen's idea

Brian: *after walking to and fro pensively*

I should sack you both, you know

Both girls: *(said with sincerity)*

We are sorry....we shouldn't have done it

Brian:

Well, I won't sack you.....but there are some inevitable consequences...there always areI will have to keep my office locked and your desks will have to sit outside, open-plan....and your consciences will keep you reminded too.

Laura:

I suppose this is like the story of the apple being a temptation to Adam and Eve

Brian:

Yes, but the problem wasn't an apple at all.....it was the pair on the ground – and that isn't just you two.....it's me and everyone else.

You see, I think that fruit wasn't an apple.....it was a ME fruit.

Helen:

A ME fruit!? What on earth is that?

Brian:

Well, every time we think primarily ME, like my satisfaction, my rights, what is right for me, my comfort, MY everything without reference to Jesus values, it's like picking a bit of ME fruit off that tree. That's you, me, everyone.

Now, that's a bit of a mess to be cleared up.....but thank God he's made provision for that in sending Jesus to rescue usat least those who want to be rescued.

Laura: *(both turning to congregation)*

We've certainly picked plenty of ME-fruit

Helen:

Helen:

Lots of itand not just today.

Brian *(steps forward)*

How about you?

Piece of music to over-play last line – 'Lord I need you'

<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/lord-i-need-you/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rR_Rdb1CTE

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