

The Evolution of the Man and the Woman

A Modern Parable

by Amy Emil Seely

Long ago, when this old world was in its first infancy, the Great Spirit created and placed upon it a man and a woman. Now the man and the woman had three God-Parents, called Nature, Life and Death.

"Behold," said Nature, "these, my God-children, are very dear to me; I will endow each with the gift of a garden called the mind, which they may cultivate to their own pleasure and profit."

"And I," said Life, "will provide implements known as Love and Reason, wherewith they may obtain from their gardens the fruits of all gratification and happiness."

"Then," said Death, "will I bestow upon them the sweetest of all mercies, the gift of perfect rest after their labors."

So the man and the woman came into their gardens. At first they knew not how they should turn them to account, but as they lingered the possibilities of the fertile soil gradually revealed themselves, and the man and the woman, gathering their implements, set diligently to work.

Now the gardens of the man and the woman were of like proportions and equal fertility, but slightly different in substance, so that some hardy plants, such as courage, endurance, power, ambition and dominion, grew best in the garden of the man, while those known as mercy, purity, constancy, patience and charity were best adapted to the soil of the woman's garden. All other plants, however, including reason, understanding, progress, discovery and invention flourished alike in either garden.

Time passed by, and still the man and the woman labored faithfully and well in their respective gardens. The man cultivated all his plants carefully, but the woman, perceiving that those plants of the most unlovely structure called forth greater effort in cultivation, contented

herself with bestowing all her care upon the more beautiful and fragile. In her garden peace, graciousness, solicitude, tact and unselfishness grew and blossomed till they gladdened the eyes of the man to behold, and he praised the woman for her skill and diligence.

"At length one day a visitor entered the garden of the man:

"I am Experience," said he "and I will reveal many things to thee concerning the better cultivation of these, thine unlovely plants, which as yet have not borne blossoms."

Then the man was exceedingly glad, but he had long cultivated the plants of understanding, so that he knew many things whereof the woman was ignorant, and he besought Experience that he should not disclose these things unto the woman:

"For," said he, "the woman hath so long cultivated patience and constancy that with these things added she will soon outdo me in my endeavor."

Thereafter did Experience reveal many things unto the man, but departed without visiting the garden of the woman. Then did the man turn his attention to the cultivation of those plants which had hitherto not blossomed, toiling incessantly, till at length they burst into a profusion of bloom beautiful and wondrous to behold, and as the man labored among them he beheld in the calices of many a bright glittering substance which he called gold.

Now, it chanced one day, that the woman strolling through the man's garden looked in wonder on three gold laden plants, and she questioned him concerning their cultivation:

"Nay," said he, "vex not thyself with these things; rather be content that thou hast excelled in the cultivating of those plants peculiar to thy garden."

But the woman was not to be discouraged. She had beheld, as in a mirror, the regions of the great possibility opened before her, and her spirit was disquieted within her.

And it came to pass one evening, that the man, weary with the day's toil, walked in the garden of the woman, whom he espied diligently tending the unlovely plants which she had so long neglected.

Then was the man deeply wroth, and returned unto his own garden in great displeasure.

So the ages rolled on, and passed into the great Is To Be. At length the man grown weary in the pursuit of gold came again to the woman's garden, and beheld with amazement and admiration the result of her labours:

"Come," said he, "into my garden, and let us work together, for I perceive that the works of thy hands are even greater than mine. Thou hast developed all thy plants, neither hast thou neglected those peculiar to thy garden, but rather have they grown and borne blossoms more radiant than ever."

Thereafter did the man and the woman labor together, until both gardens were rich with bloom, and the glory thereof reached high unto the heavens, and its fragrance was wafted all over the world. Then hand in hand the man and the woman turned to their third God-parent, and received from his hands the sweetest of all mercies, the gift of perfect rest after their labors.

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