

Tell Me Why

**A Metaphysically Conceited Comedy
In Two Acts**

by
Chuck Puckett

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Chuck Puckett

Puckett Publishing: www.puckettpublishing.com

629 Jackson St. SE, Decatur, AL 35601

Email: puckett_chuck@hotmail.com

Phone: (256) 682-0783

Setting

Just before the Dawn of Creation, and then shortly thereafter in and around the Garden of Eden.

Time

Just before, and then for awhile after, Time begins.

Cast of Characters

Moses. A historian and a prophet, he is writing down everything that happens. Well, almost everything.

God. You know: the Creator. Who wants a universe that contains something other than Himself, and that wouldn't mind praising Him. Volatile, quick to anger, but also compassionate. He is not mean-spirited. God and Adam should look alike as much as possible.

Adam. The first man, childlike at first, but obsessed with questions. Unfortunately, not very good at arriving at answers. Naively trusting, he learns that trust is not always easy.

Lucy. The devillette. Very self-willed, proud as a peacock, sexy and seductive. And the ultimate Nihilist.

Eve. The first woman, she takes free will a bit too much to heart. A loving and sincere woman, capable of absorbing almost everything.

Scene Synopsis

Act I

I-1 The Garden, at the Beginning

I-2 The Garden, a few days later

Act II

II-1 Outside the Garden, 20 years later

II-2 Outside the Garden, a few days later

II-3 Outside the garden, several hundred years later

II-4 Outside the Garden, 100 years after Creation

*Well I gave you everything I had
But you left me sitting on my own
Did you have to treat me oh so bad
All I do is hang my head and moan
If there's something I have said or done
Tell me what and I'll apologise
If you don't I really can't go on
Holding back these tears in my eyes
Well I beg you on my bended knees
If you'll only listen to my pleas
Is there anything I can do
'Cause I really can't stand it, I'm so in love with you
Tell me why you cried, and why you lied to me
Tell me why you cried, and why you lied to me*

Lennon & McCartney

The following songs are suggested as opening music, curtain call music, and music to cover scene changes. These selections are optional, and can be certainly be substituted with other music (or none) as production requirements dictate.

"Tell Me Why", © Lennon & McCartney

Before start of Act I and start of Act II.

"Man Smart/ Women Smarter", © Norman Span & King Radio

Scene Change, Act I, Scene 1 to Scene 2

"Gates of Eden", © Bob Dylan

Scene Change, Act II, Scene 1 to Scene 2

"Sympathy for the Devil", © Jagger & Richards

Scene Change, Act I Scene 2 to Scene 3

"The Hallelujah Chorus", J.F. Handel

As God and Adam exit at the end, continue for Curtain Calls.

Act I

Scene 1

LIGHT: stage is completely dark. A voice speaks out of the darkness.

MOSES

Ahem. It's going to be a little hard to get this written down in the dark. I know "In the beginning" is the usual place to start, but you could roll things forward some. This is tough enough without having to guess at what it is I'm writing. How about jumping right ahead to "Let there be light"? *Fiat lux* and all that.

LIGHT: Lights come halfway, but only on half the stage: the other side is still in blackness. MOSES is seated at a desk, quill in hand, parchment before him. He wears some sort of robe implying Biblical times. Behind him, there is a forest. There is also a gate standing unattached to any wall. The Gate is open.

MOSES (CONT'D)

Oh, that's very nice. A clear separation of light and darkness. I'll just get that down while the image is fresh in my mind. "And the light was separated from the darkness." Listen, if this is as bright as it ever gets, you'll have every single living thing gone completely blind before the week is out.

LIGHT: Lights come up full on the lighted half.

MOSES (CONT'D)

Much better. Okay, here's what I've got so far: First there was Nothing, then there was Something. Then comes Light, and that separation there. The other side is Night of course. Then splitting the firmament. Oh, and there's some water someplace: over, under, it's not clear which.

GOD enters. He is dressed in workman's clothes, and has a tool belt. He holds a tape measure.

GOD

Sounds sort of blasé, Moses. Is that the best you can do?

MOSES

I'll spice up the language later.

GOD hands one end of tape to MOSES.

GOD

Hold this and stand next to the firmament there.

GOD extends tape from edge of light to edge of stage.

GOD (CONT'D)

I don't want it spicy, I want it dignified. And I want you to make sure you get all of it. Very important.

MOSES

For now, I'm just trying to concentrate on the main stuff. That's what you said you wanted.

GOD

(to himself)

Let's see, six hundred billion light years this side. The other side'll be the same. Big enough. If not, I can always expand it. Said I wanted what?

MOSES

For me to describe the Creation.

GOD

Frankly, I was hoping for a better description. The Creation of the Universe should get decent coverage. This is not exactly easy work I'm doing here, Moses. Well, actually, it is pretty easy.

MOSES

You're kidding?

GOD

I do not kid. You see, all I have to do is say a thing, and bingo! There it is. Word equals Thing. The hard part is dreaming up what to say. After that, it's a piece of cake.

MOSES

Just say it and there it is, huh?

GOD

Check this out: "Bacteria."

MOSES coughs.

GOD (CONT'D)

Voila, we've got disease.

MOSES

Nice trick.

GOD

You do have to be God.

MOSES

It couldn't hurt. Anyway, I'd be no good at it. I'm slow of speech and slow of tongue, as you well know.

GOD

Yes, I know. I know everything.

MOSES

If the Creation were up to me, it'd take a lot more than the six days you scheduled for it.

GOD

Six days, eh?

MOSES taps tablet.

MOSES

That's what it says here.

GOD

Actually, I figured in some slop time. I could do the whole thing in four days, five tops.

MOSES

Don't brag. Now go ahead and say whatever it is you're going to say, I'll try to keep up. But I have to tell you: I'm already getting writer's cramp. I hope I don't miss anything.

GOD

Just make sure you get the big stuff. The devil is in the details.

MOSES

What is that, the first joke?

LIGHT: As GOD enumerates the days, lights quickly go down to half and back to full to indicate the passage of days. GOD rubs his hands together.

GOD

Okay, here we go. That first light and dark and the firmament, that's two days already. Now, pile the waters up over there and that'll be the seas, and the dry land will be whatever's left. We'll put grass on the land, and plants and trees. Especially fruit trees.

LIGHTS: come up on the other side of the stage, where we see a large tree and a tall chest. The tree has fruit hanging from its branches and roses around its base.

GOD (CONT'D)

That'll do for a day.

GOD motions and LIGHTS go down almost off.

GOD (CONT'D)

Okay, the night is obviously way too dark, so put up a smaller light to take care of that, keep the big light for the day.

LIGHTS: Back up.

GOD (CONT'D)

Oh, and make the lesser light kind of fluctuate every few days, like a big pendulum.

LIGHTS: On one side of the stage go to full and black a few times.

GOD (CONT'D)

That's right. That way everything will be able to keep up with what time of year it is. That's a day. Big day coming up, it gets interesting here. Put fish in the sea and animals on the land.

SOUND: Animals.

GOD (CONT'D)

Oh, and let there be birds, lots of birds. Over both.

SOUND: Birds.

MOSES

The birds are a nice touch.

GOD

Thanks. But wait till you hear this. I made all of them, fish, birds, whatever, have two sexes, male and female. And that's all I had to do. They'll do all the work, and I sit back and watch them be fruitful and multiply.

MOSES

A peeping tom, that's what you are. But I have to agree that it is clever.

GOD

I am nothing if not clever. Okay, that's a day.

GOD motions with his hand, LIGHTS go down and up.

GOD (CONT'D)

That's five days, right?

MOSES nods.

GOD (CONT'D)

I told you I could do it in less than six. A nice job, if I do say so myself, and I do, and that's that.

MOSES

That's it?

GOD

This is it.

MOSES

You're sure this is it?

GOD

This is definitely it.

MOSES

Oh. So, what about man?

GOD

This is almost it.

MOSES

I thought Man was supposed to be the whole point. Create Creation and then give it to Man.

GOD

It is the whole point. I want to make sure I get it exactly right, that's all.

MOSES

You can get it wrong?

GOD

Let's just say I can get it less right. I am especially hung up on this free will issue. I mean, when a Creator goes to all the trouble of creating the universe, gets it just the way he wants it, he does not have a warm fuzzy feeling when there's a loose cannon like free will charging about the place.

MOSES

But you want Man to admire what you made.

GOD

Yes, and a little praise wouldn't hurt my feelings.

MOSES

All that admiration and praise will be so much empty noise if Man can only act like a parrot. Which is a very nice looking bird, by the way.

GOD

They have their place. But you're right. Without free will, I may as well use the parrot. Still, it is a risk.

MOSES

Who says you have to decide now? Go ahead and make Man, and then see how you like him. If you're satisfied with the way things turn out, give him free will then. Or don't.

GOD

Moses, for someone who is slow of speech, you do occasionally come up with a reasonable notion. Who says I have to decide now, indeed? Nobody but me. Okay, we'll start with mud.

MOSES

Mud? Why mud?

GOD fashions with his hands.

GOD

(building to a pitch)

I made the land and water first, so naturally, those have to be part of him. Then I add a little light, the "light of reason."

LIGHTS: brighten, then back to normal.

GOD (CONT'D)

And to top it all off, I breathe wind into the whole concoction.

GOD breathes into his hands.

MOSES

Why in the world would you want to break wind into him?

GOD

Breathe wind, not break. My breath. It's for his soul.

MOSES

That's a relief. What's he going to look like?

GOD

Why, me of course. Ecce, homo!

ADAM emerges from behind the tree, wearing a bathrobe.

GOD (CONT'D)

Well, what do you think?

MOSES

I'd have used more light and less mud. He has got your nose.

GOD

(to ADAM)

What do *you* think?

ADAM

I don't.

GOD

It's early yet.

MOSES

Does he have a name?

GOD

Let's see. His name should sound like... "Adam".

ADAM

Adam? Yes, that is my name. What's yours?

GOD

I'm God. But you can call me the Lord, if you want to. Or possibly Creator of the Universe. We try not to be too formal here.

ADAM

Nice to meet you, Lord.

GOD

Sooo- how do you feel?

ADAM

I feel great! Just great. Is there some other way I should feel?

GOD

Not at all. I was wondering how you liked all this. I made it for you.

ADAM

Really? Well, it's just great. Really. Looks great.

GOD

I made the whole thing, the entire Universe, just before I made you. It was sort of a big deal.

MOSES

That move from Nothing to Something, Bang! That was impressive.

ADAM

Well, it really is just great. Swell.

(pause)

Is, uh, this all there is?

GOD

All there is? What do you mean, is this all there is? There is a whole bunch of this. This goes way the hell out there, practically forever.

ADAM

Oh. Well, I could only see this part right here, and—

GOD

This is all there is.

(to MOSES)

You see what happens when you stuff an infinite spirit into a finite body? Cosmic myopia.

(to ADAM)

Is there anything you'd like to say? Any small word of appreciation?

ADAM

I said it was great. The, uh, Creation is really great.

GOD waits expectantly, MOSES discretely points to GOD.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Oh, and you. You're great, too. Oh, how great you are!

GOD

Well, thank you. Now it's time for you to get with the program, idle hands are the devil's workshop. Nothing has a name yet, except you, so naming things will be your big responsibility.

ADAM

But—

GOD

Oh, and if you see any odds or ends lying around, I'd appreciate it if you might clean up a little.

ADAM

But—

GOD

I already got rid of the trilobites and the dinosaurs, so it should be mostly okay. There is a lot of comet dust left over from that, but there's a broom around here somewhere.

(MORE)

GOD (CONT'D)

Moses, it's back to the Sinai for you. I've arranged a little meeting between you and Jethro. And his daughter, Zipporah. You're going to like her.

MOSES

I hope she's better looking than Nefertiti. Way too skinny.

GOD gives him a thumbs up and MOSES exits. GOD contemplates Creation one last time, motions for LIGHTS to go down and up (ADAM is awestruck by this), gives an appreciative nod and exits. ADAM watches him go, then drifts around the stage, idly looking up the tree, out over the Creation, examining the Gate. He picks up Moses' book and smells it inquisitively. He hums to himself. He looks at the ground, startled.

ADAM

What the--! What is that?

ADAM picks up something small.

ADAM (CONT'D)

I've never seen one of these. But then I've never seen any of this. I wonder what I should call it? Hmmm. For some reason, "earthworm" sounds right. Earthworm it is.

He sets it back down.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Now how did I know that was an earthworm? Hey, there's a lot of things around there.

He shades his eyes, gazes out.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Let's see. I'm pretty sure that's an oak tree. And that has to be a daisy. That's a, uh, wolf. Or is it a dog? No, it's a wolf. That's a dog. And there's a deer. There's a quail. And a duck. And a wide-mouth bass, and a crappie. And a catfish. Say, a fella could have himself a pretty good time around here.

He picks up another bug.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Now, is this a millipede or a centipede? One, two, three, four, five, six- Oh, what the heck, make it a centipede.

He tosses it carelessly away.

ADAM (CONT'D)

No sense in naming everything all at once. Anyway, I probably got most of the important stuff.

ADAM sits at desk, hums, twiddles thumbs, looks around, then to where God exited, then around again.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Yessir, got the important stuff. Naming the animals, that's what I'm doing.

ADAM looks up.

Uh, God? Lord, sir? Are you up there, God?

GOD (OFFSTAGE)

Yes, I'm up here. I'm trying to rest up here, if you don't mind.

ADAM

Oh. Excuse me, Lord. Sorry about that.

ADAM again sits at desk, hums, twiddles thumbs, etc.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Yessir. Animal namer, that's me. Hmmmm.

He calls up.

ADAM (CONT'D)

God! Hey, God! I'm really sorry to bother you, but, well, doggone it, it's lonely down here. I was wondering, you know, if you're not too busy, maybe you could-

GOD sticks his head out.

GOD

I said I was resting, didn't I? Those to whom I give the gift of language usually understand that resting is the opposite of busy.

ADAM

Sorry. I am kind of new at all this.

GOD climbs down. He is wearing a bathrobe like ADAM'S.

GOD

That's alright, I was only drawing my bath. I hope I didn't leave the water running, I don't want to flood the place. Yet. Now, what's all this about being lonely?

ADAM

Look, you put all this great stuff around here, and I really do appreciate it. But there's nobody to talk to, nobody to play with. I've got all these brand new words in my head, and I'd sort of like to use them. Can't you stay down here with me? We could talk.

GOD

Stay? I can't stay here all the time. This is a big universe, I mean, this thing is huge! Running a universe is a full-time job. And frankly, I don't see where you'd make much of a conversationalist. If you're lonely, I guess I'll have to get someone to stay with you.

He goes to chest, opens it. Red light and steam are seen.

GOD (CONT'D)

I had some earlier designs that didn't exactly work out. I believe I left one of them down here. Might be a nice companion for you. Ahh, yes.

GOD helps LUCY out. She is beautiful and sexy, practically poured, as they say, into a slinky dress. She walks to ADAM.

LUCY

(seductively)

Hello, there, handsome. Where have you been all my life?

ADAM

Right here. Only place I've ever been. My name is Adam. What's yours?

LUCY

For everybody else, I'm Lucy. For you, I can be whatever you want me to be. What do you want me to be, Adam? How about Lilith? Would you like me to be your Lilith?

ADAM

Oh, yeah, I'd like that a lot!

GOD

I'm not getting a good feeling about this. I just remembered why I put you down there. We'll have to come up with something different, Adam.

ADAM

But, I like this one, God. Really, I do!

GOD

Yes, I can see that.

GOD pulls ADAM aside.

GOD (CONT'D)

Listen, Adam, she wouldn't work out. She'd make you do things you wouldn't like.

ADAM

Name one thing I wouldn't like!

GOD

Okay, okay, you'd probably like them. At first. But believe me, you'd never be able to keep up the pace, not with a hot-to-trotter like her. She'd wear you down like sandpaper.

ADAM looks at LUCY.

ADAM

Possibly. Probably. But I'd sure like to give it a try.

GOD

I'll start from scratch and make something that will always be agreeable with you. You'll be much happier. Lucy, thanks for your time. Maybe we'll get back with you, I'll let you know.

LUCY

Are you sure, Adam? We could have a whole lot of fun.

GOD

He's sure. Now off you go.

LUCY blows ADAM a kiss and exits.

GOD (CONT'D)

I've got to stop taking shortcuts. Moses! Come back here. I tell you, a Creator's work is never done. Not if you want to do it right.

MOSES enters, barefooted.

MOSES

What? What's happening? I'm standing there talking to that burning bush of yours, and all of a sudden I'm back here at the dawn of creation. What's the emergency? You could have at least let me get my sandals back on.

GOD

Oh, be quiet and write. And watch where you step. Somebody forgot to clean up after the ducks. All right, Adam, the best thing to do is get something as closely related to you as possible. That way you'll have a lot in common.

ADAM

And don't forget: something that will always be agreeable with me.

GOD

Naturally. Now, what should it be? Chimpanzee? Spider monkey? Gorilla? Oooh, maybe I could use a pig. That would be interesting and the DNA is a pretty close match.

MOSES

Pigs could cause me some heartburn later on. If it's all the same, I'd rather you use something else.

GOD

Oh, that's right. Deuteronomy and all that. Lawyers! Well, the best thing is use the original, then change it up a little. Moses, bring me a table.

MOSES

What table?

GOD

"Table." The one over there.

MOSES looks offstage.

MOSES

Oh, that table.

MOSES exits.

ADAM

What are you going to do?

GOD

Simple. I'll take one of your ribs and use it as the starting point for your companion.

He feels ADAM's ribs.

GOD (CONT'D)

Ooh, that's a good one. Nothing could be simpler.

MOSES, with an intern's scrub shirt over his robe, rolls an operating table on.

ADAM

How do you get the rib? I mean, they're all, you know, inside me.

GOD

Climb on the table. Light, up a notch over here.

LIGHTS: brighten over table. ADAM sits on table and GOD pulls a pocket knife out of his bathrobe pocket.

GOD (CONT'D)

No sweat. All I have to do is cut it out.

ADAM

Cut it out!? Wait a second, let's discuss this. I don't know if I'm all that lonely, come to think of it. Come to think of it, I like the quiet. Quiet is good. I'll be able to think of more animal names in the quiet. Really peaceful, just wait a second, will you—?

GOD

Go to sleep.

ADAM immediately plops back on table, sound asleep.

GOD (CONT'D)

His new friend is never going to get a word in edge-wise.

MOSES

He's a real talker when he gets wound up, that's for sure.

GOD

I'll compensate for that in this new model. I'll make the other one talk even more than he does.

MOSES

So long to peace and quiet. Are you really going to use one of his ribs?

GOD

Certainly. He's got plenty. That's the beauty of a redundant design. Now, if I needed his heart for this, I'd be up a creek.

He holds up a rib.

GOD (CONT'D)

Here's a nice one, he'll never miss it.

MOSE

Nobody's ever going to believe this.

GOD

Believe is *exactly* what they're going to do with it. You know, I think I'll make this one to be like Lilith, at least on the outside. He got pretty tongue-tied looking at her, maybe it will keep him quiet.

MOSES

Who's Lilith?

GOD continues to work on rib.

GOD

An early prototype. Also known as Lucy. Unfortunately, Lucy was a mistake, and I freely admit it.

MOSES

What happened?

GOD

I gave her free will. And a moral sense. Even worse, she's immortal.

MOSES

What could possibly be wrong with having a moral sense?

GOD

She chose the wrong side! Who would have thought it? Well, I suppose I should have. I actually had to throw her out of heaven. By the way, all this stuff about Lilith, or Lucy, or whatever she calls herself, strictly off the record. We'll wait for Milton to come up with that. There, that should just about do it. Here you are, my dear.

GOD assists EVE, who stands up and walks around to the front of the table. She wears a bathrobe like GOD'S. Her eyes are closed. MOSES whistles.

MOSES

Now, this, this is a nice piece of work! Adam should have been so nice.

GOD

I do alright when I put my omniscient mind to it. Open your eyes, my dear, and take a look around. I'd ask how you feel, but I can't imagine that you could feel anything but terrific.

EVE

Oh, I do feel terrific! What a beautiful day. You're the sweetest thing for waking me up, it's such a glorious day. And what an absolutely beautiful place this, everything so fresh and green and clean. Why, it's almost like a garden. Is it a garden? I'll bet it juts goes on and on and on. Say, if you don't mind my saying so, that robe you're wearing is simply darling! Is that thing hard to keep clean? I'll bet it is. Where did you get it? I'd love to have one like it. Well, will you look? I do have one. Just like it. Oh dear, they don't have to be exactly the same, do they? Oooh, what's this thing?

EVE inspects the tree.

MOSES

What a Babylonian! You've got her talker switched on overdrive.

GOD

Maybe she's just excited about coming into being.

EVE notices ADAM.

EVE

Who is this? He is so good-looking! Could you introduce us?

GOD

Sure. Adam, wake up.

ADAM sits straight up.

GOD (CONT'D)

Adam, I am very pleased to introduce you to, uh, "Eve." She'll be staying here with you. Eve, this is Adam.

EVE

It's really nice to meet you, Adam.

ADAM

Likewise, I'm sure.

GOD

Moses, let's leave these two alone so they can get acquainted. We'll be back in bit, you two.

GOD and MOSES exit.

EVE

Could you show me around, do you think? This place is gorgeous, is it yours? I love what you've done with the flowers and all.

ADAM

Actually, I didn't do much- You like the flowers?

EVE

Especially those red ones. What are they called?

ADAM

Those are- roses, yes, that's right. Roses. I worked especially hard on those.

EVE

Well, they're just beautiful. Of course, you might consider, it's only a suggestion, you know, but you might consider putting them together with another color flower, say white.

(MORE)

EVE (CONT'D)

It would just set off the roses so nicely. Say, do you know any games we could play?

ADAM

The only thing I know about is naming things.

EVE

Naming things?

ADAM

Yeah, like the animals. They all have to be named. I'm supposed to invent names for everything. It's a pretty big responsibility.

EVE

But what's the point?

ADAM

Point of what?

EVE

Why play? I mean, who wins the game?

ADAM

I don't know. I suppose it could be whoever names the most animals, I guess—

EVE points at things in rapid-fire succession.

EVE

Rhinoceros, giraffe, orangutan, pekingese, magpie, snapping turtle, chicken, kangaroo—

ADAM

Wait! Wait! You can't just name them, you have to name them correctly.

EVE

So what does that one look like?

ADAM

Well, obviously that's a kangaroo, sure, but—

EVE

Okay?

ADAM

Okay.

EVE

Badger, skunk, mouse, roach, black widow spider— Oh, she's so cute—

ADAM

Look, let's do something else instead.

EVE

Like what?

ADAM

I don't know. We could climb a tree.

EVE

Maple, scotch pine, hackberry, chestnut, red oak—

ADAM

Hey! I already named the oak.

EVE

This is a red oak. You're not very good with colors, are you?

ADAM

We don't have to know what kind of tree it is to climb it. In fact, let's just sit down and rest awhile.

EVE

Well, if you insist.

ADAM

I do.

They sit on chest for a few moments, looking around.

EVE

I am so bored.

ADAM

Me, too.

EVE

Want to do something different? I just had an idea. It has to do with these robes and it might be interesting.

ADAM

What do we do?

EVE

For starters, stand up here and face me. Now we just open them up.

They open their robes toward each other. ADAM stares down at EVE, and she at him. GOD and MOSES enter.

ADAM

Uhng-ng!

GOD and MOSES quickly close their robes.

GOD

That's enough. I can see you're both acquainted now.

MOSES

If they get any more acquainted, he'll get his rib back.

GOD

But notice the lack of talking. Are you satisfied, Adam?

ADAM

Uhng-ng! Uhng!

MOSES

Sounds like he is.

GOD

Then wait over by that tree a minute, I need to settle a few details with Moses.

They stand by tree, ADAM trying to look inside EVE's robe.

GOD (CONT'D)

After I get them properly educated, there should be no problem getting the place all populated up.

MOSES

They definitely seem to like each other.

GOD

A little secret: I told you I fixed it so that all the animals have sex?

He points to ADAM and EVE.

GOD (CONT'D)

Well, I made sure *they* enjoy it. A lot.

MOSES

Is that what you want me to write?

GOD

No, no, no! Definitely not! That part we let them find out for themselves. No, it was something else.

MOSES

Yes?

GOD

Well, I was just thinking that maybe they could start praising me.

MOSES

I don't see why not. You did create them.

GOD hands MOSES a small piece of parchment.

GOD

Here's a little something I worked out, I was hoping they might sing it.

MOSES

Sing?

GOD

It would be best if they would sing it unceasingly.

MOSES

That could be a problem. There's only two of them, they might get tired.

GOD

Like I said, there's going to be more. What do you think?

MOSES

(reading)

"HAAH-lelujah! HAAH-lelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Ha-Lay-Ay-Looo-Yah!". Hmm. Might be a little complicated for them.

GOD

Nothing's firmed up yet, but I do have a little handle on the melody. Here's the middle part.

MOSES

Ha-Lay-Ay-Ay-Lu-yah. Ha-Lay-Ay-Ay-Ay-Ay-Lu-ooo-oooo-Yah. You might consider getting another lyricist.

GOD

Lucy is pretty good at that sort of thing. I always thought "better to reign in hell than serve in heaven" had a certain ring to it. But I really like this.

MOSES

It's fine, it's fine. They'll love it, I'm sure. Listen, have you made up your mind about the other thing? Are you going to give them free will or not?

GOD

I'm glad you brought that up. I afraid I have discovered an ontological imperative that is confronting a teleological necessity, and the implicit paradox has manifested itself in this decision.

MOSES

A simple yes or no will suffice.

GOD

I'm not a simple yes or no God.

MOSES

Yes, you are.

GOD

No, I'm not.

MOSES

Yes, you are.

GOD

No, I'm not.

MOSES

(sing-song)

Yes, you are.

GOD

(shouts)

No, I'm not.

MOSES

(pauses, then very quickly)

Yes you are. So what's the verdict?

GOD

Yes. No. Yes. Maybe? Okay- yes. It really is the only thing that makes sense. And I am nothing if not sensitive. Adam, you and Eve come here. Now, I've made a big decision about you two. It has to do with whether or not you'll be allowed to do whatever you want. I have decided in the affirmative. Here's the way it works. When I say a thing is so, that's it. It becomes reality. And I'm saying this: both of you have "Free Will." But- I am also throwing in "Destiny", just so I can keep my hand in things.

MOSES

Good compromise.

GOD

I do not compromise. I create bilaterally.

ADAM

You just have to say it, and it's so?

GOD

You do have to be God.

MOSES

It doesn't hurt.

EVE

I don't feel any different. Should I?

GOD

It'll grow on you. For instance, later on, you might feel the urge to, oh, I don't know, sing. Well then, you just sing. Do you feel like singing?

EVE

No.

GOD

Oh. Well, give it some time.

EVE

Whatever it is you did to us, thank you, God.

GOD

Call me Lord. Don't mention it. Okay, Moses, time for you to get back to Egypt and start handing out the plagues. You should have everybody on the way to the Promised Land in nothing flat.

MOSES

I'm not so sure. Have you looked at the map? The Red Sea is smack in the way. How am I going to get my people across that?

GOD

Keep your staff handy. We'll work something out.

MOSES nods and exits.

GOD (CONT'D)

And you two, the whole place is yours. Here's the keys, I'm giving you dominion over the plants, the animals, everything! The whole schmeer. Have a nice life.

He starts to exit, then smacks his forehead.

GOD (CONT'D)

Oh, wait. What an idiot, I almost forgot: Don't eat the fruit.

GOD exits.

ADAM

Wow! The whole place is ours. Terrific!

EVE

What's to eat, I'm famished!

ADAM

I don't know, what sounds good?

EVE

For some reason, I could really go for some ribs.

ADAM

I don't have any to spare. Anyway, I haven't invented fire yet.

EVE

Oh. Then how about those over there?

EVE points to fruit in trees.

ADAM

Yeah, that looks good.

They cross to tree and reach for fruit.

ADAM (CONT'D)

By the way, what is this stuff?

LUCY enters from behind tree.

LUCY

It's called fruit.

EVE

Who are you?

ADAM

Eve, this is Lucy.

LUCY

Please to met you.

ADAM

She was here when I got here. Did you say fruit?

LUCY

Yes, fruit. It's called fruit.

EVE

But didn't he say—

ADAM

He did say. I think.

LUCY

Look, you guys are hungry, right? Here's some food, right?
This is absolutely a no-brainer.

ADAM

I don't know- He said not to eat it, didn't he?

LUCY

Great! No-brainer meets no-guts.

(to EVE)

What about you? Weren't you looking for some games to play?

EVE

How'd you know that?

LUCY

One of the birds told me. A little one.

EVE

I'll bet it was a- hummingbird! Or a sparrow. Or maybe a
parakeet.

ADAM

That's amazing. How do you come up with all that?

LUCY

Look, I know lots of games. Games, games, games, I can teach
you games like you wouldn't believe. And how do I know about
all of these games? Because I ate this fruit.

EVE

I not sure I'd like your games.

LUCY

Believe me, sweetie, you'd like them. And they'll drive the
boy here wild!

ADAM

But why did he tell us not to eat the fruit?

LUCY

Why ask why, for God's sake? Why don't you ask "what"? Like,
"What does it taste like?", "What could he do to me even if I
did eat it", "What possible difference would it make?"

EVE

What kind of games?

LUCY

Fun for everybody games, I guarantee it.

EVE

I am awfully hungry. I haven't had a bite to eat since- well, ever! And I would like to learn some new games. Naming the animals is certainly no competition. Let's do it, Adam. Here, I'll try it.

ADAM

No wait, let me go first.

EVE

Why you?

ADAM

Well, I did come first.

LUCY

(shrugs)

You're a man. Besides, I was here before you, and I like her. She's fun. Let her eat first. I promise, it'll make it more interesting for you later.

(whispers)

Plus, it will give you some plausible deniability.

EVE

Here goes.

She eats fruit.

EVE (CONT'D)

Say, that is tasty. You'll love this, Adam.

LUCY

What did I tell you? Here, have a bite.

ADAM

Well, okay.

He eats fruit.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Hey, not bad. In fact, it's good, very, very good. And speaking of good, for some reason, I just had a sudden thought about good. And evil. You know, it's funny, but-

ADAM and EVE slowly look inside their bathrobes, then at each other, then they run off in opposite directions.

LUCY

See, we're already playing our first game. Hide and seek. I'm it, and ready or not, here I come!

She runs after ADAM, then changes her mind and runs after EVE.

BLACKOUT