

REDEMPTION TALES  
★ BOOK ONE ★



THE  
SHADOW  
AND THE  
PROMISE

MARTY MACHOWSKI



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## INTRODUCTION

**W**elcome to the Redemption Tales—a series of Bible stories retold from the perspective of animals who could have witnessed the events firsthand. Follow the conflict between good and evil, the hope of the Promised One, and the long-anticipated return of the King. These books join a rich history of memorable stories that feature talking animals. There is something marvelous about a talking animal that makes for a good tale. While the animals are fictional, the truth behind each of the tales is taken directly from the adventures in the Bible.

Why are the stories of God's work in history so fantastic? For example, why did God use a miraculous staff, numerous plagues, and opening a body of water to deliver his people from Egypt? Why did God go through all that trouble when he could have delivered his people with a single word? He did it to show his mighty power to his people then and to the generations to come (see Exodus 10:1–2). He wanted

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us to know him and his power, holiness, mercy, and most of all, his unfailing love, so that we too might believe. The Redemption Tales are more than fiction—their truth has the power to transform you completely.

This book, *The Shadow and the Promise*, is the first of the Redemption Tales series. Its stories cover the period of the Bible in Genesis and Exodus.

For a deeper study of truth hidden in the tales, go through the Bible study questions at the back of the book.

*Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you great sea creatures and all deeps,  
fire and hail, snow and mist,  
stormy wind fulfilling his word!  
Mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars!  
Beasts and all livestock,  
creeping things and flying birds!*

PSALM 148:7-10







CHAPTER

1

# DRAGON GARDEN

**B**efore sin's curse fell upon earth, two young badgers chased each other through a row of trees. In their excitement to explore their new world, they didn't notice a shadow pass over them. They didn't hear the flap of a dragon's wings overhead. They didn't see the creature descend into a tree above them. The dragon, however, saw the badgers and watched their every move.

"You can't catch me, Badge," shouted Rock playfully.

Rock sped along a path that wound along a ridge. He wove through the trees and over the valley of Eden. Then he crouched between two trees to hide and catch his breath. His heart pounded loudly—so loudly he thought Badge would hear it.



Suddenly, Badge sped past his hiding place, and all at once, stopped. She turned her head this way and that and called out, “Rock? Rock, where are you!”

Rock didn’t make a sound. As he stood still, hidden under a bush, he watched the trees along the border of the garden. He could see them growing. A vine tendril spiraled around a sapling, which pulled the vine skyward. Rock felt the tree behind him expanding. The scratch of the bark on his back felt good as it stretched and cracked. Rock waited, looking for Badge so he could catch her by surprise, but she didn’t come back. He listened closely, but she had run on.

Rock called, “I’m hiding!” But there was silence.

“Badge?” he called again. *Why doesn’t she answer?*

Meanwhile, from above, the dragon watched Badge circle back toward her friend. He noticed her stealthy approach. *A girl after my own heart, hoping to catch him by surprise*, he grinned. A sinister laugh grew from his core. It rumbled from the depths of his belly and up his long throat. It vibrated through the bones of his clenched jaw. But he held it in.

Badge crept quietly and saw Rock behind a tree. She caught the slight movement of his head as he peered toward the path. Then she leapt toward him without warning and shouted, “Gotcha!”

Rock jumped a foot into the air and screamed, “Yeoww.”

Badge fell to the ground, laughing.



Rock looked at her sternly. “Very funny,” he said, while Badge continued rolling on the ground. Then Rock smiled and started laughing, too. “Alright, you got me!”

“I got you to squeal!” she laughed. “You had it coming, trying to trick me first!”

“I guess I did,” Rock laughed.

The badgers loved life. Each day brought delight and discovery. They lived in a perfect world, free from evil. Until today . . .

Today the dragon entered the land, determined to dethrone Adam and take up his crown as the god of this world.

Rock had an idea. He shouted, “Badge, race you to that tree!” He pointed, then took off toward the very tree where the dragon was perched, hidden high in the canopy. The dragon watched as Rock approached, and Badge trailed close behind.

Just as they reached the tree, the dragon dropped from above. Neither badger heard the ripple of dragon wings as he descended legs first, claws spread wide, ready.

The dragon landed with a thud on the ground. The badgers, stunned, looked at the beast who was as tall as Adam. With an outstretched wing, the dragon snatched Badge, gripping her tightly in clasped claws.

“Put her down!” Rock demanded. “Put her down, or I’ll . . .”





The dragon interrupted, “You’ll what, little furball?”

“Put her down, or I will tell Adam! He’s the ruler here.”

The dragon’s chest rumbled in a deep, low mocking groan. “Adam . . . you’re going to tell Adam on me? Funny, I’m actually on my way to see him now. I’ve got something to tell him myself.”

“Who are you, and what do you want with Adam?” Rock asked.

“Call me *Serpent*,” he replied. “And as for Adam, I’ll leave him alone for now; it’s the woman, Eve, I’m after.”

“Leave her alone!” screamed Badge, as she struggled to escape the dragon’s grip.

“Feisty thing,” mocked the dragon. “No need to fight.” The dragon dropped Badge to the ground. “I meant no harm.”

Badge stood tall and demanded, “Why are you after Eve?”

“To introduce her to the forbidden fruit. She’s been told that if she eats it, she will die. But I say, instead, she will become like God! The fruit of that tree looks so good, so ripe and juicy. That my furballs, is a temptation you can sink your teeth into. Now, you’ve delayed me long enough. destiny’s calling!” the dragon sneered as he spread his wings, thrust them downward, and soared over their heads.

As he rose and his shadow fell on the badgers, he hissed, “May the shadows of darkness fill this land!” Two serpent

fangs popped from the front of his upper jaw. The hollow spikes dripped. “The time for death has come!” With a flap of wings, he sped into the center of the garden.

“We must warn Adam and Eve!” Badge shouted.

“Let’s go,” said Rock, plowing ahead.

But soon, the new thick growth of the forest slowed their progress. They fought their way through the tangle of plants and vines. Giant leaves blocked the sunlight. They ran downhill toward the garden’s center, but once the land leveled, they lost their sense of direction. “Which way, Badge?” Rock asked.

“I think we’re lost,” she moaned.

Badge pushed two tall ferns apart, hoping to see the sky above. But the trees hid any hint of the sun’s angle. She could not tell east from west. “Some of these trees were only saplings yesterday. Now everything looks different! We’ll never make it!”

“Perhaps I can help,” a voice called from above.

Badge looked up and saw a white dove perched on a branch. She said, “Hi! My name is Badge, and this is Rock. Who are you?”

“My name is Daniel,” said the dove.

“Daniel,” said Rock. “We’re trying to get to Eden. The serpent is on his way to tempt Eve.”





Badge cried, “Something is terribly wrong. The deceiver has overtaken the serpent! We must stop him!”

“I will show you the way,” said Daniel. “Turn left. Move as quickly as you can.”

The badgers followed Daniel’s lead until they reached a pond surrounded by ferns.

The dove extended a wing and pointed to a tall tree across the pond. He said, “That tree stands on the edge of Eden. In the center of the garden, you’ll find the woman and the serpent. Even as we speak, the serpent is trying to deceive her. He hopes to turn her against the Creator. Only Adam can help her now.”

“How do you know all this?” Badge asked, but the dove was gone.

“Run!” shouted Rock, and they raced past the tree the dove had shown them. Soon they arrived in a vibrant fruit orchard with rows upon rows of trees. They sped past apple and pear, persimmon and plum trees, and then past thick vines with large clusters of grapes. Arriving at the center of the garden, they noticed two trees: the tree of life and the tree that was forbidden—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

But Adam and Eve were nowhere to be seen.

“We’re too late,” Badge said, as the late afternoon breeze stirred her fur. Moving hesitantly ahead, the badgers were startled by a sinister voice coming from the forbidden tree.

“My, my,” gloated the voice. “Did you get lost in the forest?” Then with a crash of branches, the serpent emerged from the tree and perched atop a stout branch.

“Where is Adam?” demanded Badge. “And what have you done with Eve?”

“I only gave them a choice, that’s all,” sneered the serpent. “I like the word choice. It sounds so . . . so independent.”

“Where *are* they?” Rock demanded.

“Probably searching for clothes,” the serpent smirked. “They need a little something to cover their shame.”

The two badgers looked at each other and gulped.



The serpent continued, “When I introduced Woman to the fruit of this tree, she knew her eyes would be opened. Can I interest you in a bite as well?”

“That fruit’s forbidden!” shouted Rock. “Adam told me so when he gave us our names. At this very spot. We were eating grapes when Adam called us over and gave us our names. “From now on you will be called badgers. Badger is your kind.”

“Adam should have listened to his own advice,” sneered the serpent. “Both he and the woman ate from this tree today!”

“That’s impossible!” Rock accused the serpent. “You’re lying!”

“I don’t normally enjoy telling the truth, but on this occasion, it is my pleasure to announce the fall from grace of Adam and his bride. Step up and take a look. The evidence is clear.” The serpent pointed with a boney claw to something lying in the grass to their right. There, on the ground with two bites chunked out, was a single forbidden fruit.

“Do a little forensics, and you’ll discover the smaller bite is that of the female. The larger belongs to Adam. The bitten fruit brings judgment. Death will come!” The serpent cackled wildly.

A voice interrupted the serpent. “Where are you, Adam?” It was the Creator, walking in the cool of the day. The serpent buried himself in the forbidden tree. Then Badge noticed two sets of feet beneath a thicket.

“Look!” she said to Rock. “There they are!”

Adam said to the Creator, “When I heard you in the garden, I hid because I’m naked.”

The Creator replied, “Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the forbidden tree?”

Adam, partially covered by an enormous fig leaf, emerged from the thicket. He pointed at Eve and said, “She gave me the fruit, so I ate it.”

God then asked Eve, “What have you done?”

The woman, also partially covered in fig leaves, pointed toward the forbidden tree and said, “The serpent tricked me. I trusted him and ate.”

The badgers noticed the serpent’s eyes glowing in the tree’s shadow.

Then the Creator said to the serpent, “You did this very bad thing, so bad things will happen to you. It will be worse for you than for any other animal. You must crawl on your belly and eat dust all the days of your life. I will make you and the woman enemies to each other. Your children and her children will be enemies. You will bite her child’s foot, but he will crush your head.”

The serpent fell to the ground, his wings and legs stripped away. Humiliated, the snake slithered through the shadows and fled the garden.



Then God turned to Eve and said, “When you give birth to children, you will have much pain. You will seek your husband’s place, but he will rule over you.”

Then God turned to Adam and said, “I commanded you not to eat from that tree. But you listened to your wife and ate from it. So I will curse the ground because of you. You will have to work hard all your life for the food the ground produces. The ground will grow thorns and weeds for you. And you will have to eat the plants that grow wild in the fields. You will work hard for your food, until your face is covered with sweat. You will work hard until the day you die, and then you will become dust again. I used dust to make you, and when you die, you will become dust again.”

Rock and Badge stood speechless as the Lord clothed the man and woman in animal skins. He then sent them out of the garden, into the forest. God posted an angel guard with a flaming sword to prevent them from returning to the garden. Then the Creator left.

“All is lost,” cried Badge as they stood motionless in shock. “Adam and Eve will die. We all will die!”

Rock longed to comfort Badge, but he also felt afraid.

Badge watched as a green sprout shot up from the ground, and a new vine wrapped itself around some ripe raspberries. The shoot sprouted hundreds of side branches, which immediately turned brown and stiff with thorns. Soon the berries were hidden amid the brambles. The two badgers hung their heads in silence.

“All is not lost,” sounded a familiar voice. It was Daniel. “There is hope. Did you not hear the promise of the Creator? Did you not see him cover their shame?”

“What promise?” Rock asked, “I heard only about a curse.”

The promise is found in Eve’s name,” the dove replied. “Yes, Adam and Eve broke their fellowship with God. And yes, they’ve been barred from the garden. Their bodies, as well as the bodies of all creatures, will grow old and die. For through Adam’s sin death has entered the world. But there is also mercy. The man and woman will bear a son. Through him shall the world be saved from this dreadful curse.”

“What about the serpent?” interrupted Rock. “He will strike the child’s heel. I’ve seen his fangs; they are poisonous!”

“It will be through the Promised Son’s death that he will have victory over the serpent and crush his head.”

“This seems impossible!” said Rock.

“I assure you, it’s not,” said Daniel. “One day, a son will be born. He will live a sinless life and yet be wrongfully put to death on a cross. The thorns that surround us now will form his crown. Today, the Lord sacrificed two animals to cover Adam and Eve’s sin. One day, the future Son will take away the sin of the world.”

“Must we also die?” Badge asked.

“Yes,” said Daniel. “Death is the judgment over every creature. But there is hope: Death will be defeated. The Son will



rise again in victory. Death has no claim over him. By his resurrection, he will crush the head of the serpent.”

“How do you know all this?” Badge asked the dove, but he was gone. “Where’d he go?”

“I don’t know,” answered Rock. “But we should get going if we want to be home before dark.”

The two badgers looked back at the garden one last time. They strained to see the flaming sword now almost hidden behind choking vines and thorns. With a sigh they turned back around, and fought their way through the undergrowth toward the ridge they called home, sorrowful that the joyous purity of the land now gave way to groans and longings to be free of the curse.

Suddenly they heard a laughing hiss from the shadows.

Badge and Rock looked at each other and mouthed simultaneously, “The serpent.”

Then the serpent said, “I am Legion, for we are many!” He rose from the grass and bared his fangs, ready to strike.

“He’s only trying to scare us. C’mon, Rock!” Badge said as they raced ahead, leaving the serpent slithering behind.

That day, the badgers made it safely to the burrow they called home. They continued to live full and adventurous lives. Adam and Eve tended grape vines that sprung up from seeds. As long as they cut out the thorns and weeds the vines

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prospered. Time passed as they waited for the child of the promise to be born.

As for the serpent, he persisted in his plan to rule the earth and thwart God's plan. As people grew in number, so did their wickedness. Ever did he work to tempt the children of man, and by the days of Noah, evil increased so that all the thoughts of people were only wicked all the time. But God had a plan to rid the world of wickedness. He would bring a flood to cleanse the land.

Story from Genesis 2:9; 3:3, 10–19 (ERV), 23–24; 6:5; Numbers 13:23; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2.