

Jamie Miller
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From Creation to Re-Creation: A Novel Reading of Genesis 1-3

*I knew a woman who became a wife;
These are the very words she uses to describe her life.*
—Paul Simon

Terms that serve your purposes one day will not necessarily do so the next.
—Mark Edmundson

“In the Beginning...”

These are indeed powerful words. Ingrained in our imaginations from childhood on up, they sit tangled amidst our ideas of God and life and the world as we know it. To some of us the words evoke a hallowed feeling, a sense of awe and solemnity, reminiscent of a sacred oath or a family recipe passed with care from one generation to the next. To others of us they might even possess a fantastical quality, a fairytale-like dreaminess comparable to *Once upon a time...*

As the opening to the book of Genesis, the words literally serve as an introduction to the human story. The story is a well-known one. It has been told in front of fireplaces and preached from pulpits. It appears in advertisings. Romance novels. Playground sing-songs. It has been recycled into countless other stories, its themes and elements forever hovering in the subconscious of the western mind. In *Reinventing Eden*, Carolyn Merchant notes: “Narratives form our reality. We become their vessels. Stories find, capture, and holds us... From stories we absorb our goals in life, our morals, and our patterns of behavior,” (3). As the most widely recognized creation myth in the Western World, Genesis 1-3 has greatly influenced the way we relate to one another in our daily lives. Regardless of whether we revere the story as holy narrative or judge it as folklore, whether we approach it as an account of divine creation, or

