The Mother of Man

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The Gardener’s angry voice rushed from his throat like the four rivers springing from the earth.
The boy shivered and made a sound like the Squeaking Ones.
The Gardener’s eyes searched the branches of the Crooked Tree.
Come down!
The shivering boy shed the colors of the plants and climbed down, trembling before the Gardener in his own colors.
I stayed cloaked in my leaves.

The Creation/8
Who told you that you could disappear from me? Have you eaten from the Crooked Tree?
His voice shook the boy until words tumbled out.
The girl you gave me for a helper—she gave the fruit to me and I ate it.
The boy turned his face up to my leafy branches. Together, they peered at my colors, trying to see me.
I slid my eye to the Gardener.
What have you done?
His voice was made of thorns.
The Clever One has shown me how to disappear.
I smiled as the leaves spoke my words.
The Gardener’s eyes threw stones in my direction.
Out! You must leave the garden and never eat from the Tree of Life again. Go!
The Gardener’s mouth grew full of curses. His wrath fell loud and heavy, booming through the garden like a great tree crashing to the ground.
But I had stopped listening to the Gardener’s voice. I heard only the song of the Flying, Singing Ones soaring above me.
I rested my hand over the place inside me that the Gardener said belonged to the boy. I would make it mine. So I fashioned it in my own image and I saw that it was good. It grew wings like the Flying, Singing Ones. This is the knowledge the Gardener wanted to keep to himself—that we do not need him.
I returned to my own colors and climbed down from the Crooked Tree, my new knowing shining like all the colors of the garden inside of me.
And there was sleeping and there was waking—the sixth day. And I, mother of the Living Ones, forever blessed that day and made it holy, because on it I left the Slithering Wall of the garden and freed myself from the Gardener.