Paradise Lost BOOK 9  
John Milton (1667)

THE ARGUMENT
Satan having compast the Earth, with meditated guile returns as a mist by Night into Paradise, enters into the Serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the Morning go forth to thir labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alleging the danger, lest that Enemy, of whom they were forewarn’d, should attempt her found alone: Eve loath to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make tryal of her strength; Adam at last yields: The Serpent finds her alone: his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other Creatures. Eve wondring to hear the Serpent speak, asks how he attain’d to human speech and such understanding not till now; the Serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain Tree in the Garden he attain’d both to Speech and Reason, till then void of both: Everrequires him to bring her to that Tree, and finds it to be the Tree of Knowledge forbidden: The Serpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; shepleas’d with the taste deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not, at last brings him of the Fruit, relates what perswaded her to eat thereof: Adam at first amaz’d, but perceiving her lost, resolves through vehemence of love to perish with her; and extenuating the trespass, eats also of the Fruit: The Effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover thir nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

NO more of talk where God or Angel Guest  
With Man, as with his Friend, familiar us’d  
To sit indulgent, and with him partake  
Rural repast, permitting him the while  
Venial discourse unblam’d: I now must change [ 5 ]  
Those Notes to Tragic; foul distrust, and breach  
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,  
And disobedience: On the part of Heav’n  
Now alienated, distance and distaste,  
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement giv’n, [ 10 ]  
That brought into this World a world of woe,  
Sinne and her shadow Death, and Miserie  
Deaths Harbinger: Sad task, yet argument  
Not less but more Heroic then the wrauth  
Of stern Achilles on his Foe pursu’d [ 15 ]  
Thrice Fugitive about Troy Wall; or rage  
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous’d,  
Or Neptun’s ire or Juno’s, that so long  
Perplex’d the Greek and Cytherea’s Son;  
If answerable style I can obtaine [ 20 ]
Of my Celestial Patroness, who deignes
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me slumb'ring, or inspires
Easie my unpremeditated Verse:
Since first this Subject for Heroic Song [ 25 ]
Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;
Not sedulous by Nature to indite
Warrs, hitherto the onely Argument
Heroic deem'd, chief maistrie to dissect
With long and tedious havoc fabl'd Knights [ 30 ]
In Battels feign'd; the better fortitude
Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom
Unsong; or to describe Races and Games,
Or tilting Furniture, emblazon'd Shields,
Impreses quaint, Caparisons and Steeds; [ 35 ]
Bases and tinsel Trappings, gorgious Knights
At Joust and Torneament; then marshal'd Feast
Serv'd up in Hall with Sewers, and Seneshals;
The skill of Artifice or Office mean,
Not that which justly gives Heroic name [ 40 ]
To Person or to Poem. Mee of these
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher Argument
Remaines, sufficient of it self to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climat, or Years damp my intended wing [ 45 ]
Deprest, and much they may, if all be mine,
Not Hers who brings it nightly to my Ear.

The Sun was sunk, and after him the Starr
Of Hesperus, whose Office is to bring
Twilight upon the Earth, short Arbiter [ 50 ]
Twixt Day and Night, and now from end to end
Nights Hemisphere had veild the Horizon round:
When Satan who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent [ 55 ]
On mans destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
By Night he fled, and at Midnight return'd.
From compassing the Earth, cautious of day,
Since Uriel Regent of the Sun descri'd [ 60 ]
His entrance, and forewarnd the Cherubim
That kept thir watch; thence full of anguish driv'n,
The space of seven continu'd Nights he rode
With darkness, thrice the Equinoctial Line
He circ'd, four times cross'd the Carr of Night [ 65 ]
From Pole to Pole, traversing each Colure;
On the eighth return'd, and on the Coast averse
From entrance or Cherubic Watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though Sin, not Time, first wraught the change, [ 70 ]
Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise
Into a Gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a Fountain by the Tree of Life;
In with the River sunk, and with it rose
Satan involv'd in rising Mist, then sought [ 75 ]
Where to lie hid; Sea he had searcht and Land
From Eden over Pontus, and the Poole
Maotis, up beyond the River Ob;
Downward as farr Antarct; and in length
West from Orontes to the Ocean barr'd [ 80 ]
At Darien, thence to the Land where flowes
Ganges and Indus: thus the Orb he roam'd
With narrow search; and with inspection deep
Consider'd every Creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his Wiles, and found [ 85 ]
The Serpent suttles Beast of all the Field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
Fit Vessel, fittest Imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide [ 90 ]
From sharpest sight: for in the wilie Snake,
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native suttletie
Proceeding, which in other Beasts observ'd
Doubt might beget of Diabolic pow'r [ 95 ]
Active within beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward griefe
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd:
O Earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferr'd
More justly, Seat worthier of Gods, as built [ 100 ]
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God after better worse would build?
Terrestrial Heav'n, danc't round by other Heav'ns
That shine, yet bear thir bright officious Lamps,
Light above Light, for thee alone, as seems, [ 105 ]
In thee concentaring all thir precious beams
Of sacred influence: As God in Heav'n
Is Center, yet extends to all, so thou
Centring receav'st from all those Orbs; in thee,
Not in themselves, all thir known vertue appeers [ 110 ]
Productive in Herb, Plant, and nobler birth
Of Creatures animate with gradual life
Of Growth, Sense, Reason, all summ'd up in Man.
With what delight could I have walkt thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange [115]
Of Hill, and Vallie, Rivers, Woods and Plaines,
Now Land, now Sea, and Shores with Forrest crownd,
Rocks, Dens, and Caves; but I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel [120]
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heav'n much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n
To dwell, unless by mastring Heav'n's Supræme; [125]
Nor hope to be my self less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For onely in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroyd, [130]
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him linkt in weal or woe,
In wo then: that destruction wide may range:
To mee shall be the glorie sole among [135]
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marr'd
What he Almightie styl'd, six Nights and Days
Continu'd making, and who knows how long
Before had bin contriving, though perhaps
Not longer then since I in one Night freed [140]
From servitude inglorious welnigh half
Th' Angelic Name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: hee to be aveng'd,
And to repaire his numbers thus impair'd,
Whether such vertue spent of old now faild [145]
More Angels to Create, if they at least
Are his Created, or to spite us more,
Determin'd to advance into our room
A Creature form'd of Earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original, [150]
With Heav'nly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this World, and Earth his seat,
Him Lord pronounc'd, and, O indiginitie!
Subjected to his service Angel wings, [155]
And flaming Ministers to watch and tend
Thir earthy Charge: Of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapor glide obscure, and prie
In every Bush and Brake, where hap may finde [ 160 ]
The Serpent sleeping, in whose mazie foulds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I who erst contended
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constraind
Into a Beast, and mixt with bestial slime, [ 165 ]
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the hight of Deitie aspir'd;
But what will not Ambition and Revenge
Descend to? who aspires must down as low
As high he soard, obnoxious first or last [ 170 ]
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on it self recoiles;
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aim'd,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envie, this new Favorite [ 175 ]
Of Heav'n, this Man of Clay, Son of despite,
Whom us the more to spite his Maker rais'd
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.
   So saying, through each Thicket Danck or Drie,
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on [ 180 ]
His midnight search, where soonest he might finde
The Serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In Labyrinth of many a round self-rowld,
His head the midst, well stor'd with suttle wiles:
Not yet in horrid Shade or dismal Den, [ 185 ]
Nor nocent yet, but on the grassie Herbe
Fearless unfeard he slept: in at his Mouth
The Devil enterd, and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing soon inspir'd
With act intelligent; but his sleep [ 190 ]
Disturb'd not, waiting close th' approach of Morn.
Now when as sacred Light began to dawne
In Eden on the humid Flours, that breathd
Thir morning incense, when all things that breath,
From th' Earths great Altar send up silent praise [ 195 ]
To the Creator, and his Nostrils fill
With grateful Smell, forth came the human pair
And join'd thir vocal Worship to the Quire
Of Creatures wanting voice, that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest Sents and Aires: [ 200 ]
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Thir growing work: for much thir work outgrew
The hands dispatch of two Gardning so wide.
And Eve first to her Husband thus began.

Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This Garden, still to tend Plant, Herb and Flour,
Our pleasant task enjoyn'd, but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides
Tending to wilde. Thou therefore now advise
Or hear what to my minde first thoughts present,
Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The Woodbine round this Arbour, or direct
The clasping Ivie where to climb, while I
In yonder Spring of Roses intermixt
With Myrtle, find what to redress till Noon:
For while so near each other thus all day
Our taske we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
Our dayes work brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of Supper comes unearn'd.

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.
Sole Eve, Associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living Creatures deare,
Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts imployd
How we might best fulfill the work which here
God hath assign'd us, nor of me shalt pass
Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
In Woman, then to studie houshold good,
And good workes in her Husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd
Labour, as to debarr us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles, for smiles from Reason flow,
To brute deni'd, and are of Love the food,
Love not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksom toile, but to delight
He made us, and delight to Reason joyn'd.
These paths & Bowers doubt not but our joynt hands
Will keep from Wilderness with ease, as wide.
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us: But if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield.
For solitude somtimes is best societie,
And short retirement urges sweet returne. [ 250 ]
But other doubt possesses me, least harm
Befall thee sever'd from me; for thou knowst
What hath bin warn'd us, what malicious Foe
Envying our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame [ 255 ]
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
Hopeless to circumvent us joynd, where each
To other speedie aide might lend at need; [ 260 ]
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealtie from God, or to disturb
Conjugal Love, then which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envie more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side [ 265 ]
That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
The Wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her Husband staies,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.
   To whom the Virgin Majestie of Eve, [ 270 ]
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austeer composure thus reply'd,
   Ofspring of Heav'n and Earth, and all Earths Lord,
That such an Enemie we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informd I learne, [ 275 ]
And from the parting Angel over-heard
As in a shadie nook I stood behind,
Just then returnd at shut of Evening Flours.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therfore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe [ 280 ]
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such,
As wee, not capable of death or paine,
Can either not receave, or can repell.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain inferrs [ 285 ]
Thy equal fear that my firm Faith and Love
Can by his fraud be shak'n or seduc't;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy brest
Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?
To whom with healing words Adam replyd. [290]
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve,
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itself, intended by our Foe. [295]
For hee who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd
Not incorruptible of Faith, not proof
Against temptation: thou thy self with scorne
And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong, [300]
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The Enemie, though bold, will hardly dare,
Or daring, first on mee th' assault shall light. [305]
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Suttle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels nor think superfluous others aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receave
Access in every Vertue, in thy sight [310]
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overco me or over-reacht
Would utmost vigor raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel [315]
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy Vertue tri'd.

So spake domestick Adam in his care
And Matrimonial Love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her Faith sincere, [320]
Thus her reply with accent sweet renewd.
If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit strait'nd by a Foe,
Suttle or violent, we not endu'd
Single with like defence, wherever met, [325]
How are we happie, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: onely our Foe
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integritie: his foul esteeme
Sticks no dishonor on our Front, but turns [330]
Foul on himself; then wherefore shund or feard
By us? who rather double honour gaine
From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
Favour from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.
And what is Faith, Love, Vertue unassaid [335]
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
Let us not then suspect our happie State
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Fraile is our happiness, if this be so, [340]
And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.
   To whom thus Adam fervently repli'd.
O Woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them, his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left [345]
Of all that he Created, much less Man,
Or aught that might his happie State secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receave no harme. [350]
But God left free the Will, for what obeyes
Reason, is free, and Reason he made right
But bid her well beware, and still erect,
Least by some faire appearing good surpris'd
She dictate false, and misinforme the Will [355]
To do what God expressly hath forbid,
Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoynes,
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
Since Reason not impossibly may meet [360]
Some specious object by the Foe subornd,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warnd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoide
Were better, and most likelie if from mee [365]
Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.
Wouldst thou approve thy constancie, approve
First thy obedience; th' other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But if thou think, trial unsought may finde [370]
Us both securer then thus warnd thou seemst,
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence, relie
On what thou hast of vertue, summon all,
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine. [375]
   So spake the Patriarch of Mankinde, but Eve
Persisted, yet submiss, though last, repli'd.
   With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touchd onely, that our trial, when least sought, [ 380 ]
May finde us both perhaps farr less prepar'd,
The willinger I goe, nor much expect
A Foe so proud will first the weaker seek,
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.
Thus saying, from her Husbands hand her hand [ 385 ]
Soft she withdrew, and like a Wood-Nymph light
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's Traine,
Betrook her to the Groves, but Delia's self
In gate surpass'd and Goddess-like deport,
Though not as shee with Bow and Quiver armd, [ 390 ]
But with such Gardning Tools as Art yet rude,
Guilless of fire had formd, or Angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona, thus adormd,
Likeliest she seemd, Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her Prime, [ 395 ]
Yet Virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his Eye pursu'd
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick returne
Repeated, shee to him as oft engag'd [ 400 ]
To be return'd by Noon amid the Bowre,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or Afternoons repose.
O much deceav'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presum'd return! event perverse! [ 405 ]
Thou never from that houre in Paradise
Foundst either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush hid among sweet Flours and Shades
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back [ 410 ]
Despoild of Innocence, of Faith, of Bliss.
For now, and since first break of dawne the Fiend,
Meer Serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his Quest, where likeliest he might finde
The onely two of Mankinde, but in them [ 415 ]
The whole included Race, his purposd prey.
In Bowre and Field he sought, where any tuft
Of Grove or Garden-Plot more pleasant lay,
Thir tendance or Plantation for delight,
By Fountain or by shadie Rivulet [ 420 ]
He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate, he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc'd, when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance, where she stood, [ 425 ]
Half spi'd, so thick the Roses bushing round
About her glowd, oft stooping to support
Each Flour of slender stalk, whose head though gay
Carnation, Purple, Azure, or spect with Gold,
Hung drooping unsustain'd, them she upstaises [ 430 ]
Gently with Mirtle band, mindless the while,
Her self, though fairest unsupported Flour,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Neerer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
Of stateliest Covert, Cedar, Pine, or Palme, [ 435 ]
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
Among thick-wov'n Arborets and Flours
Imborderd on each Bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious then those Gardens feign'd
Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd [ 440 ]
Alcinous, host of old Laertes Son,
Or that, not Mystic, where the Sapient King
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian Spouse.
Much hee the Place admir'd, the Person more.
As one who long in populous City pent, [ 445 ]
Where Houses thick and Sewers annoy the Aire,
Forth issuing on a Summers Morn to breathe
Among the pleasant Villages and Farmes
Adjoynd, from each thing met conceaves delight,
The smell of Grain, or tedded Grass, or Kine, [ 450 ]
Or Dairie, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance with Nymphlike step fair Virgin pass,
What pleasing seemd, for her now pleases more,
She most, and in her look summs all Delight.
Such Pleasure took the Serpent to behold [ 455 ]
This Flourie Plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus earlie, thus alone; her Heav'nly forme
Angelic, but more soft, and Feminine,
Her graceful Innocence, her every Aire
Of gesture or lest action overawd [ 460 ]
His Malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
That space the Evil one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remaind
Stupidly good, of enmitie disarm'd, [ 465 ]
Of guile, of hate, of envie, of revenge;
But the hot Hell that alwayes in him burnes,
Though in mid Heav'n, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure not for him ordain'd: then soon [ 470 ]
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.
    Thoughts, whither have ye led me, with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported to forget
What hither brought us, hate, not love, nor hope [ 475 ]
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying, other joy
To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles, behold alone [ 480 ]
The Woman, opportune to all attempts,
Her Husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage hautie, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould, [ 485 ]
Foe not informidable, exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath Hell debas'd, and paine
Infeeb'l'd me, to what I was in Heav'n.
Shee fair, divinely fair, fit Love for Gods,
Not terrible, though terrour be in Love [ 490 ]
And beautie, not approacht by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under shew of Love well feign'd,
The way which to her ruin now I tend.
    So spake the Enemie of Mankind, enclos'd
In Serpent, Inmate bad, and toward Eve [ 495 ]
Address'd his way, not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his reare,
Circular base of rising foulds, that tour'd
Fould above fould a surging Maze, his Head
Crested aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes; [ 500 ]
With burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect
Amidst his circling Spires, that on the grass
Floted redundant: pleasing was his shape,
And lovely, never since of Serpent kind
Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd [ 505 ]
Hermione and Cadmus, or the God
In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen,
Hee with Olympias, this with her who bore
Scipio the highth of Rome. With tract oblique [ 510 ]
At first, as one who sought access, but feard
To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
As when a Ship by skilful Stearsman wrought
Nigh Rivers mouth or Foreland, where the Wind

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Attributed to: [Thomas H. Luxon]
Veres oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her Saile; [ 515 ]
So varied hee, and of his tortuous Traine
Curld many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her Eye; shee busied heard the sound
Of rusling Leaves, but minded not, as us'd
To such dispot before her through the Field, [ 520 ]
From every Beast, more duteous at her call,
Then at Circean call the Herd disguis'd.
Hee boulder now, uncall'd before her stood;
But as in gaze admiring: Oft he bowd
His turret Crest, and sleek enamell'd Neck, [ 525 ]
Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turnd at length
The Eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
Of her attention gaind, with Serpent Tongue
Organic, or impulse of vocal Air, [ 530 ]
His fraudulent temptation thus began.
   Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole Wonder, much less arm
Thy looks, the Heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze [ 535 ]
Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feared
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker faire,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy Celestial Beautie adore [ 540 ]
With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
Where universally admir'd; but here
In this enclosure wild, these Beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discerne
Half what in thee is fair, one man except, [ 545 ]
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
A Goddess among Gods, ador'd and serv'd
By Angels numberless, thy daily Train.
   So gloz'd the Tempter, and his Proem tun'd;
Into the Heart of Eve his words made way, [ 550 ]
Though at the voice much marveling; at length
Not unamaz'd she thus in answer spake.
What may this mean? Language of Man pronounc't
By Tongue of Brute, and human sense exprest?
The first at lest of these I thought deni'd [ 555 ]
To Beasts, whom God on thir Creation-Day
Created mute to all articulat sound;
The latter I demurre, for in thir looks
Much reason, and in thir actions oft appeares.
Thee, Serpent, suttlest beast of all the field [ 560 ]
I knew, but not with human voice endu'd;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight? [ 565 ]
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.
   To whom the guileful Tempter thus reply'd.
Empress of this fair World, resplendent Eve,
Easie to mee it is to tell thee all
What thou commandst and right thou shouldst be obeyd: [ 570 ]
I was at first as other Beasts that graze
The trodden Herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food, nor aught but food discern'd
Or Sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till on a day roaming the field, I chanc'd [ 575 ]
A goodly Tree farr distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixt,
Ruddie and Gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughes a savorie odour blow'n,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense, [ 580 ]
Then smell of sweetest Fenel or the Teats
Of Ewe or Goat dropping with Milk at Eevn,
Unsuckt of Lamb or Kid, that tend thir play.
To satisfie the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair Apples, I resolv'd [ 585 ]
Not to deferr; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful perswaders, quick'nd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keene.
About the mossie Trunk I wound me soon,
For high from ground the branches would require [ 590 ]
Thy utmost reach or Adams: Round the Tree
All other Beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the Tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill [ 595 ]
I spar'd not, for such pleasure till that hour
At Feed or Fountain never had I found.
Sated at lengt, ere long I might perceave
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of Reason in my inward Powers, and Speech [ 600 ]
Wanted not long, though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to Speculations high or deep
I turnd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Considerd all things visible in Heav'n,
Or Earth, or Middle, all things fair and good; [ 605 ]
But all that fair and good in thy Divine
Semblance, and in thy Beauties heav'ny Ray
United I beheld; no Fair to thine
Equivalent or second, which compel'd
Mee thus, though importune perhaps, to come [ 610 ]
And gaze, and worship thee of right decla'r'd
Sovran of Creatures, universal Dame.

So talk'd the spirited sly Snake; and Eve
Yet more amaz'd unwarie thus reply'd.

Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt [ 615 ]
The vertue of that Fruit, in thee first prov'd:
But say, where grows the Tree, from hence how far?
For many are the Trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us, in such abundance lies our choice, [ 620 ]
As leaves a greater store of Fruit untoucht,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to thir provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her Bearth.

To whom the wilie Adder, blithe and glad. [ 625 ]
Empress, the way is readie, and not long,
Beyond a row of Myrtles, on a Flat,
Fast by a Fountain, one small Thicket past
Of blowing Myrrh and Balme; if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon. [ 630 ]

Lead then, said Eve. Hee leading swiftly rowld
In tangles, and made intricate seem strait,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Bright'ns his Crest, as when a wandring Fire
Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night [ 635 ]
Condenses, and the cold invirons round,
Kindl'd through agitation to a Flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends
Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,
Misleads th' amaz'd Night-wanderer from his way [ 640 ]
To Boggs and Mires, and oft through Pond or Poole,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour farr.
So glister'd the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve our credulous Mother, to the Tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe; [ 645 ]
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.

Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
Fruitless to mee, though Fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose vertue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects. [ 650 ]
But of this Tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that Command
Sole Daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to our selves, our Reason is our Law.
   To whom the Tempter guilefully repli’d. [ 655 ]
Indeed? hath God then said that of the Fruit
Of all these Garden Trees ye shall not eate,
Yet Lords declar’d of all in Earth or Aire?
   To whom thus Eve yet sinless. Of the Fruit
Of each Tree in the Garden we may eate, [ 660 ]
But of the Fruit of this fair Tree amidst
The Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eate
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, least ye die.
   She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
The Tempter, but with shew of Zeale and Love [ 665 ]
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on, and as to passion mov’d,
Fluctuats disturb’d, yet comely and in act
Rais’d, as of som great matter to begin.
As when of old som Orator renound [ 670 ]
In Athens or free Rome, where Eloquence
Flourishd, since mute, to som great cause addrest,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,
Somtimes in higth began, as no delay [ 675 ]
Of Preface brooking through his Zeal of Right.
So standing, moving, or to higth upgrown
The Tempter all impassiond thus began.
   O Sacred, Wise, and Wisdom-giving Plant,
Mother of Science, Now I feel thy Power [ 680 ]
Within me cleere, not onely to discerne
Things in thir Causes, but to trace the wayes
Of highest Agents, deemd however wise.
Queen of this Universe, doe not believe
Those rigid threats of Death; ye shall not Die: [ 685 ]
How should ye? by the Fruit? it gives you Life
To Knowledge, By the Threatner, look on mee,
Mee who have touch’d and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfet have attaind then Fate
Meant mee, by ventring higher then my Lot. [ 690 ]
Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty Trespass, and not praise
Rather your dauntless vertue, whom the pain
Of Death denounc't, whatever thing Death be, [695]
Deterrd not from atchieving what might leade
To happier life, knowledge of Good and Evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunnd?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just; [700]
Not just, not God; not feard then, nor obeyd:
Your feare it self of Death removes the feare.
Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,
Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers; he knows that in the day [705]
Ye Eate thereof, your Eyes that seem so cleere,
Yet are but dim, shall perfetly be then
Op'n'd and cleerd, and ye shall be as Gods,
Knowing both Good and Evil as they know.
That ye should be as Gods, since I as Man, [710]
Internal Man, is but proportion meet,
I of brute human, yee of human Gods.
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on Gods, death to be wisht,
Though threat'n'd, which no worse then this can bring. [715]
And what are Gods that Man may not become
As they, participating God-like food?
The Gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds;
I question it, for this fair Earth I see, [720]
Warm'd by the Sun, producing every kind,
Them nothing: If they all things, who enclos'd
Knowledge of Good and Evil in this Tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies [725]
Th' offence, that Man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this Tree
Impart against his will if all be his?
Or is it envie, and can envie dwell
In Heav'nly brests? these, these and many more [730]
Causes import your need of this fair Fruit.
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.

He ended, and his words replete with guile
Into her heart too easie entrance won:
Fixt on the Fruit she gaz'd, which to behold [735]
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his perswasive words, impregn'd
With Reason, to her seeming, and with Truth;
Mean while the hour of Noon drew on, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell
So savourie of that Fruit, which with desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
Sollicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to her self she mus'd.
   Great are thy Vertues, doubtless, best of Fruits.
Though kept from Man, and worthy to be admir'd,
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The Tongue not made for Speech to speak thy praise:
Thy praise hee also who forbids thy use,
Conceales not from us, naming thee the Tree
Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it inferrs the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown, sure is not had, or had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions binde not. But if Death
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eate
Of this fair Fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
How dies the Serpent? hee hath eat'n and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us deni'd
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For Beasts it seems: yet that one Beast which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy
The good befall'n him, Author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then, rather what know to feare
Under this ignorance of good and Evil,
Of God or Death, of Law or Penaltie?
Here grows the Cure of all, this Fruit Divine,
Fair to the Eye, inviting to the Taste,
Of vertue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both Bodie and Mind?
   So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the Fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the Thicket slunk
The guiltie Serpent, and well might, for *Eve* [785]
Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
Regarded, such delight till then, as seemd,
In Fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fansied so, through expectation high
Of knowledg, nor was God-head from her thought. [790]
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating Death: Satiate at length,
And hight'nd as with Wine, jocond and boon,
Thus to her self she pleasingly began.

O Sovran, vertuous, precious of all Trees [795]
In Paradise, of operation blest
To Sapience, hitherto obscur'd, *infam'd*,
And thy fair Fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without Song, each Morning, and due praise [800]
Shall tend thee, and the fertil burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;
Till dieted by thee I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know;
Though others envie what they cannot give; [805]
For had the gift bin theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remaind
In ignorance, thou op'nst Wisdoms way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire. [810]
And I perhaps am secret; Heav'n is high,
High and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his Spies [815]
About him. But to *Adam* in what sort
Shall I appeare? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with mee, or rather not,
But keep the odds of Knowledge in my power [820]
Without Copartner? so to add what wants
In Femal Sex, the more to draw his Love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesireable, somtime
Superior: for inferior who is free? [825]
This may be well: but what if God have seen
And Death ensue? then I shall be no more,
And *Adam* wedded to another *Eve*,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;

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A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve, [ 830 ]  
*Adam* shall share with me in bliss or woe:  
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths  
I could endure, without him live no life.  
So saying, from the Tree her step she turnd,  
But first low Reverence don, as to the power [ 835 ]  
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd  
Into the plant sciential sap, deriv'd  
From Nectar, drink of Gods. *Adam* the while  
Waiting desirous her return, had wove  
Of choicest Flours a Garland to adorne [ 840 ]  
Her Tresses, and her rural labours crown,  
As Reapers oft are wont thir Harvest Queen.  
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new  
Solace in her return, so long delay'd;  
Yet oft his heart, divine of somthing ill, [ 845 ]  
Misgave him; hee the faultring measure felt;  
And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
That Morn when first they parted; by the Tree  
Of Knowledge he must pass, there he her met,  
Scarse from the Tree returning; in her hand [ 850 ]  
A bough of fairest fruit that downie smil'd,  
New gatherd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.  
To him she hasted, in her face excuse  
Came Prologue, and Apologie to prompt,  
Which with bland words at will she thus addrest. [ 855 ]

Hast thou not wonderd, *Adam*, at my stay?  
Thee I have misst, and thought it long, depriv'd  
Thy presence, agonie of love till now  
Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more  
Mean I to trie, what rash untri'd I sought, [ 860 ]  
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange  
Hath bin the cause, and wonderful to heare:  
This Tree is not as we are told, a Tree  
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown  
Op'ning the way, but of Divine effect [ 865 ]  
To open Eyes, and make them Gods who taste;  
And hath bin tasted such: the Serpent wise,  
Or not restraind as wee, or not obeying,  
Hath eat'n of the fruit, and is become,  
Not dead, as we are threatn'd, but thenceforth [ 870 ]  
Endu'd with human voice and human sense,  
Reasoning to admiration, and with mee  
Perswasively hath so prevaiild, that I  
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond, opener mine Eyes [875]
Dimm erst, dilated Spirits, ampler Heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss,
Tedious, unshar’d with thee, and odious soon. [880]
Thou therefore also taste, that equal Lot
May joyne us, equal Joy, as equal Love;
Least thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoyne us, and I then too late renounce
Deitie for thee, when Fate will not permit. [885]

Thus Eve with Countnance blithe her storie told;
But in her Cheek distemper flushing glowed.
On th’ other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal Trespass don by Eve, amaz’d,
Astonied stood and Blank, while horror chill [890]
Ran through his veins, and all his joynts relax’d;
From his slack hand the Garland wreath’d for Eve
Down drop’d, and all the faded Roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke. [895]

O fairest of Creation, last and best
Of all Gods works, Creature in whom excell’d
Whatever can to sight or thought be form’d,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost, [900]
Defac’t, deflourd, and now to Death devote?
Rather how hast thou yeelded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred Fruit forbidd’n! som cursed fraud
Of Enemie hath beguil’d thee, yet unknown, [905]
And mee with thee hath ruind, for with thee
Certain my resolution is to Die;
How can I live without thee, how forgoe
Thy sweet Converse and Love so dearly joyn’d,
To live again in these wilde Woods forlorn? [910]
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another Rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart; no no, I feel
The Link of Nature draw me: Flesh of Flesh,
Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State [915]
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb’d
Submitting to what seemd remediless,
Thus in calm mood his Words to *Eve* he turnd. [920]

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, adventrous *Eve*
And peril great provok't, who thus hath dar'd
Had it been onely coveting to Eye
That sacred Fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under banne to touch. [925]
But past who can recall, or don undoe?
Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate, yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not Die, perhaps the Fact
Is not so hainous now, foretasted Fruit,
Profan'd first by the Serpent, by him first [930]
Made common and unhallowd ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly, he yet lives,
Lives, as thou saidst, and gaines to live as Man
Higher degree of Life, inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attaine [935]
Proportional ascent, which cannot be
But to be Gods, or Angels Demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime Creatures, dignifi'd so high, [940]
Set over all his Works, which in our Fall,
For us created, needs with us must faile,
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour loose,
Not well conceav'd of God, who though his Power [945]
Creation could repeate, yet would be loath
Us to abolish, least the Adversary
Triumph and say; Fickle their State whom God
Most Favors, who can please him long; Mee first
He ruind, now Mankind; whom will he next? [950]
Matter of scorne, not to be given the Foe,
However I with thee have fixt my Lot,
Certain to undergoe like doom, if Death
Consort with thee, Death is to mee as Life;
So forcible within my heart I feel [955]
The Bond of Nature draw me to my owne,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our State cannot be severd, we are one,
One Flesh; to loose thee were to loose my self.
So *Adam*, and thus *Eve* to him repli'd. [960]

O glorious trial of exceeding Love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Ingaging me to emulate, but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attaine,  
*Adam*, from whose deare side I boast me sprung, [ 965 ]  
And gladly of our Union heare thee speak,  
One Heart, one Soul in both; whereof good proof  
This day affords, declaring thee resolvd,  
Rather then Death or aught then Death more dread  
Shall separate us, linkt in Love so deare, [ 970 ]  
To undergoe with mee one Guilt, one Crime,  
If any be, of tasting this fair Fruit,  
Whose vertue, for of good still good proceeds,  
Direct, or by occasion hath presented  
This happie trial of thy Love, which else [ 975 ]  
So eminently never had bin known.  
Were it I thought Death menac't would ensue  
This my attempt, I would sustain alone  
The worst, and not perswade thee, rather die  
Deserted, then oblige thee with a fact [ 980 ]  
Pernicious to thy Peace, chiefely assur'd  
Remarkably so late of thy so true,  
So faithful Love unequald; but I feel  
Farr otherwise th' event, not Death, but Life  
Augmented, op'n'd Eyes, new Hopes, new Joyes, [ 985 ]  
Taste so Divine, that what of sweet before  
Hath toucht my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.  
On my experience, *Adam*, freely taste,  
And fear of Death deliver to the Windes.  
   So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy [ 990 ]  
Tenderly wept, much won that he his Love  
Had so enobl'd, as of choice to incurr  
Divine displeasure for her sake, or Death.  
In recompence (for such compliance bad  
Such recompence best merits) from the bough [ 995 ]  
She gave him of that fair enticing Fruit  
With liberal hand: he scrupl'd not to eat  
Against his better knowledge, not deceav'd,  
But fondly overcome with Femal charm.  
Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again [ 1000 ]  
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan,  
Skie lowr'd, and muttering Thunder, som sad drops  
Wept at compleating of the mortal Sin  
Original; while *Adam* took no thought,  
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate [ 1005 ]  
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to soothe  
Him with her lov'd societie, that now  
As with new Wine intoxicatied both  

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Attributed to: [Thomas H. Luxon]
They swim in mirth, and fansie that they feel
Divinitie within them breeding wings [ 1010 ]
Wherewith to scorne the Earth: but that false Fruit
Farr other operation first displaid,
Carnal desire enflaming, hee on Eve
Began to cast lascivious Eyes, she him
As wantonly repaid; in Lust they **burne:** [ 1015 ]
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move,
   Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of Sapience no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And Palate call judicious; I the praise [ 1020 ]
Yeild thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful Fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wish'd, [ 1025 ]
For this one Tree had bin forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh't, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious Fare;
For never did thy Beautie since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd [ 1030 ]
With all perfections, so enflame my sense
With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now
Then ever, bountie of this vertuous Tree.
   So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent, well understood [ 1035 ]
Of Eve, whose Eye darted contagious Fire.
Her hand he seis'd, and to a shadie bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof imbrow'd
He led her nothing loath; Flours were the Couch,
Pansies, and Violets, and Asphodel, [ 1040 ]
And Hyacinth, Earths freshest softest lap.
There they thir fill of Love and Loves disport
Took largely, of thir mutual guilt the Seale,
The solace of thir sin, till dewie sleep
Oppress'd them, weared with thir amorous play. [ 1045 ]
Soon as the force of that fallacious Fruit,
That with exhilerating vapour bland
About thir spirits had plaid, and inmost powers
Made erre, was now exhal'd, and grosser sleep
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams [ 1050 ]
Encumberd, now had left them, up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found thir Eyes how op'n'd, and thir minds
How dark'nd; innocence, that as a veile
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gon, [ 1055 ]
Just confidence, and native righteousness
And honour from about them, naked left
To guiltie shame hee cover'd, but his Robe
Uncover'd more, so rose the Danite strong
Herculean Samson from the Harlot-lap [ 1060 ]
Of Philistine Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength, They destitute and bare
Of all thir vertue: silent, and in face
Confounded long they sate, as struck'n mute,
Till Adam, though not less then Eve abasht, [ 1065 ]
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd.

O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give eare
To that false Worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfet Mans voice, true in our Fall,
False in our promis'd Rising; since our Eyes [ 1070 ]
Op 'nd we find indeed, and find we know
Both Good and Evil, Good lost, and Evil got,
Bad Fruit of Knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of Honour void,
Of Innocence, of Faith, of Puritie, [ 1075 ]
Our wonted Ornaments now soild and stain'd,
And in our Faces evident the signes
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face [ 1080 ]
Henceforth of God or Angel, earst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes
Will dazle now this earthly, with thir blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here
In solitude live savage, in some glade [ 1085 ]
Obscur'd, where highest Woods impenetrable
To Starr or Sun-light, spread thir umbrage broad,
And brown as Evening: Cover me ye Pines,
Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more. [ 1090 ]
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The Parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen,
Some Tree whose broad smooth Leaves together sow'd, [ 1095 ]
And girded on our loyns, may cover round
Those middle parts, that this new commer, Shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as
So counsel'd hee, and both together went
Into the thickest Wood, there soon they chose [ 1100 ]
The Figtree, not that kind for Fruit renown'd,
But such as at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Decan spreds her Armes
Braunching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended Twigs take root, and Daughters grow [ 1105 ]
About the Mother Tree, a Pillard shade
High overarch't, and echoing Walks between;
There oft the Indian Herdsman shunning heate
Shelters in coole, and tends his pasturing Herds
At Loopholes cut through thickest shade: Those Leaves [ 1110 ]
They gatherd, broad as Amazonian Targe,
And with what skill they had, together sowd,
To gird thir waste, vain Covering if to hide
Thir guilt and dreaded shame; O how unlike
To that first naked Glorie. Such of late [ 1115 ]
Columbus found th' American so girt
With featherd Cincture, naked else and wilde
Among the Trees on Iles and woodie Shores.
Thus fenc't, and as they thought, thir shame in part
Coverd, but not at rest or ease of Mind, [ 1120 ]
They sate them down to weep, nor onely Teares
Raind at thir Eyes, but high Winds worse within
Began to rise, high Passions, Anger, Hate,
Mistrust, Suspicion, Discord, and shook sore
Thir inward State of Mind, calm Region once [ 1125 ]
And full of Peace, now tost and turbulent:
For Understanding rul'd not, and the Will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who from beneathe
Usurping over soyran Reason claimd [ 1130 ]
Superior sway: From thus distemperd brest,
Adam, estrang'd in look and alterd stile,
Speech intermittent thus to Eve renewd.
Would thou hadst heark'nd to my words, and stai'd
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange [ 1135 ]
Desire of wandring this unhappie Morn,
I know not whence possessd thee; we had then
Remaind still happie, not as now, despoild
Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve [ 1140 ]
The Faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to faile.

To whom soon mov'd with touch of blame thus Eve.
What words have past thy Lips, Adam severe,
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will [1145]
Of wandring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
But might as ill have happ'nd thou being by,
Or to thy self perhaps: hadst thou been there,
Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake; [1150]
No ground of enmitie between us known,
Why hee should mean me ill, or seek to harme.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a liveless Rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou the Head [1155]
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger as thou saidst?
Too facil then thou didst not much gainsay,
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou bin firm and fixt in thy dissent, [1160]
Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with mee.

To whom then first incenst Adam repli'd,
Is this the Love, is this the recompence
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, exprest
Immutable when thou wert lost, not I, [1165]
Who might have liv'd and joyd immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather Death with thee:
And am I now upbraided, as the cause
Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more? [1170]
I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking Enemie
That lay in wait; beyond this had bin force,
And force upon free Will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on, secure [1175]
Either to meet no danger, or to finde
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also err'd in overmuch admiring
What seemd in thee so perfet, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue [1180]
That errour now, which is become my crime,
And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in Women overtrusting
Lets her Will rule; restraint she will not brook,
And left to her self, if evil thence ensue, [1185]
Shee first his weak indulgence will accuse.
    Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
And of thir vain contest appe'red no end.

The End of the Ninth Book.

Notes:

*venial*. Mistaken; erroneous without being blameworthy or sinful. For example, in book 8, Raphael tells Adam it is a mistake to be overconcerned with matters of no concern to him, but this mistake is nevertheless blameless (8.65-75 and 167-178). Error, in Paradise, is not equivalent to sin. Sin is disobedience.

*Tragic*. Milton wrote a short essay called "Of that sort of Dramatic Poem which is call'd Tragedy" and printed it with Samson Agonistes in 1671. See also Aristotle's [*Poetics*](https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0059&result-type=doc) 1449b on tragedy.

*into this World a world of woe*. This line echoes the early lines of book 1, which in turn echo fairly closely Virgil's narrative voice in *Aeneid* book 4, announcing that death and woe followed the ersatz nuptials of Aeneas and Dido: To the same cave come Dido and the Trojan chief. Primal earth and nuptial Juno give the sign; fires flashed in heaven, the witness to their bridal, and on the mountain-top screamed the Nymphs. That day was the first day of death, that the first cause of woe. (Trans. H. Rushton Fairclough in *Virgil* vol. 1 [Cambridge, MA: Havard University Press, 1935] 407) See also the Perseus Project edition of this passage.

*argument*. Subject.


*Turnus for Lavinia*. A major theme of Virgil's *Aeneid* is the rage of Turnus for the loss to Aeneas of his beloved Lavinia (*Aeneid* 7).

*the Greek*. Odysseus; his wandering at sea was caused by Neptune's (Poseidon's) anger ( [*Odyssey*](https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0059&result-type=doc) 1.19-20).

*Cytherea's son*. Aeneas; Milton alludes to two classical heroes hated and persecuted by Gods — Odysseus by Neptune and Aeneas by Juno (*Aeneid* 1)
answerable. Appropriate, adequate.

Celestial Patroness. Urania, traditionally the muse of astronomy, but adapted by Milton as a figure for both the Holy Spirit (1.1) and his own spiritual inspiration (7.1).

beginning late. Milton wrote Paradise Lost almost seventeen years after he made his earliest sketches of it, originally intended as part of a drama (Orgel & Goldberg). He probably started the epic form of the poem late in life, perhaps as late as age 59.

sedulous. Eager.

Lines 29-31. Milton once again claims that his epic subject is unlike any before, and is more rather than less heroic than they. This echoes earlier boasts (see 1.16) in which Milton refers to the opening lines of Ariosto’s Orlando Furioso. Milton makes the point repeatedly in Paradise Lost that the true Hero is not the warrior of pagan epics but the warrior who fights by resisting temptation, a sort of "spiritual heroism." See, for example, the angel hero Abdiel in 5.805 and following.

tilting Furniture. Equipment used in jousting (sometimes also called tilting).

Impreses quaint. Imprezas are heraldic symbols on the shields of knights.

Bases. Cloth coverings worn by horses in battle.

Sewers and seneschals. "Sewer" literally means "seater" but also refers to waiter-like servants. A seneschal was the chief steward of a medieval household.

skill of Artifice. Milton implies that his poem is not chiefly a matter of art, but of divine inspiration. Art is a "mean" employment compared to that of divine revelation and prophecy.

cold Climate or Years. Milton refers to the traditional belief that human talents were maimed by cold damp climates and by age. Hughes makes the interesting point that Milton was apparently concerned that "our climate" (Preface to Book 2 of Reason of Church Government) would hinder his ability to write his great epic, an allusion to Aristotle's claim that northern races lacked intelligence (Politics 1327b).

Hesperus. Venus, the evening star.
improv'd. Increased in knowledge; Satan has learned much from spying on Adam and Eve.

*Uriel.* Uriel earlier spotted Satan in Eden and warned the heavenly host of his presence (4.555-576). Uriel was introduced in the Argument to book 3.

*Cherubim.* Plural of cherub, one of the chief ranks of angels. See 1.387.

*Carr of Night.* Night as it moves around the earth. Satan circled the earth at the equator, staying ahead of the sun and therefore staying in night for "The space of seven continu'd nights." He also crossed the entire breadth of night's shadow from "Pole to Pole."

*Colure.* "Each of two great circles which intersect each other at right angles at the poles, and divide the equinoctial and the ecliptic into four equal parts. One passes through the equinoctial points, the other through the solstitial points, of the ecliptic" (*OED2*).

*avere.* Opposite.

*Tigris.* According to Josephus (*Antiquities* 1.1.3) the Tigris is related to the river which "went out of Eden to water the Garden" (Genesis 2:10).

*Pontus.* The Black Sea was named *Pontus Euxinus* on some Latin maps.

*Pool Mæotis.* The Sea of Azov lies just north of the Black Sea.

*River Ob.* A river, the world's fourth largest, in the Siberian arctic.

*Orontes.* River in Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey.

*barr'd.* Bounded; see this use of the term in Job 38:10.

*Darien.* The s, a narrow strip of land linking Central and South America.

*Orb.* The globe of Earth.

*Suttlest beast of all.* "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord made" (Genesis 3:1).

*Doubt.* Suspicion.

*how like to Heav'n.* Satan unintentionally echoes Raphael's observation from 5.574.
second thoughts. The argument that things created second or last must be better or more perfect was a salient feature of the defences of women in popular songs and tracts of the early 17th century. See Esther Sowernam's *Ester Hath Hang'd Haman* (1617) Chapter VIII:

Let no man think much if women compare,
That in their creation they much better are:
More blessings therein to women doe fall,
Then vnto mankinde haue been giuen at all.
Women were the last worke, and therefore the best,
For what was the end, excelleth the rest.
Milton puts this sort of argument in Satan's mouth.

officious. Dutiful.

for thee alone. See Eve's similar supposition and Adam's response in 4.657-77.

welnigh half. Satan appears to exaggerate; he seduced only one third of heaven's host: 2.692.

virtue. Power.

if they at least. Satan stumbles a bit here. Earlier, in argument with Abdiel, he had claimed to be self-created (5.853-63); now he implicitly acknowledges the Father created angels like himself, then he backpedals with this "if" clause. At 4.43 Satan acknowledges in soliloquy that he was created by God.

into our room. Satan meditates on the indignity of earthly creatures taking his place. See2.835; 4.359; and 7.190.

our spoils. The notion of spoils recalls the Israelites' spoliation of Egypt as they fled Pharaoh; see the story in Exodus 3.

incarnate and imbrute. Satan's incarnation as a beast is "in emulation opposite" to the Son's incarnation as a man.

Obnoxious. Exposed, see OED2.

envie. Envy is Satan's motivating force. He begins with envy of the Son (5.783) and concludes with envy of man.

Spite. Satan and Beelzebub pledged to do all they could to "spite/ the great Creator" (2.384-85) "The phrasing here resembles Prometheus's declaration of enmity against Zeus (*Prometheus Bound* [909-926])" (Hughes).

Nor nocent. Innocent, not yet harmful.

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close. Secretly.

whenas. When.

wanting. Lacking.

hear. 1674 has "bear" here; probably a printer's error. 1667 had "hear."

Spring. Grove.

which intermits. Eve's words here stand in sharp contrast to her alleged reasons for leaving Adam and Raphael at the beginning of book 8. There she left the two males in conversation because she preferred (said the narrator) to hear the matter from Adam himself who, unlike Raphael, would intermix his discourse with caresses, kisses, and such (8.50-57). Why now does she want to avoid such conversation with Adam?

unearn'd. Labor is not alien to Milton's Paradise; rather it is considered proper to human dignity and its performance made food, drink and rest more pleasurable (4.328). The notion of earning one's supper by work does, however, seem at odds with paradise; Adam was quite ready to take an afternoon off to entertain Raphael.

motion'd. Suggested.

Wilderness. Wildness.

satiate. The idea that Eve could be satiated with conjugal conversation, the purpose for which she was created (4.440-49), seems odd. For his part, Adam said he could never get enough conversation with Raphael (8.210-16), for it made him feel "in heaven" (see Philippians 3:20).

best societie. A reference to Cicero's comment that Africanus was never so little alone as when he was by himself (Hughes) (De Republica 1.7.27). But we also recall that Eve was created because God knew it was not good for man to be alone (Genesis 2: 18).

Virgin. Innocent of sin? Most readers believe that Milton represents the couple as copulating in book 4.741-749, so Eve would not technically be a virgin, but see Thomas H. Luxon's "Milton's Wedded Love: Not about Sex (as we know it)."

Lines 274-278. These lines indicate that Eve overheard some part of the conversation between Adam and Raphael, most likely from 8.633 forward. This means she has heard Raphael's parting warning to beware of passion's power
over free will. It seems less likely that we are meant to think she overheard Adam confess that the passion prompted by touching Eve's beauty makes him feel that Eve is superior to him (8.530-559), even though he knows she is not (8.540-546), and she has heard Raphael's rebuke to Adam on this score (8.561-575). Perhaps something she heard motivates her desire to prove herself apart from Adam?

missthought. Misjudged.

entire. Entirely free.

Access. Increase. Perhaps a reference to Phaedrus's suggestion in Plato's Symposium 178e that an army of lovers would be invincible since one would never behave shamefully in the sight of one's beloved.

strait'nd. Limited.

Front. Brow.

Vertue unassaid. Eve's question here reminds one of Milton's point about "a fugitive and cloistered virtue" in Areopagitica.

Nothing imperfet. This may be true of Adam only after Eve also was created to mitigate his "single imperfection," loneliness; see 8.422-427.

free the Will. See the Father's discourse on free will in 3.99 and following.

erect. Alert.

specious. OED2: "Having a fair or attractive appearance or character, calculated to make a favourable impression on the mind, but in reality devoid of the qualities apparently possessed." The serpent will be such a creature with Satan inside. What's more, the Serpent will claim he has eaten the forbidden fruit, but he hasn't.

Approve. Prove.

done his part. Adam echoes here Raphael's words to him in 8.561.

though last. That is, having the last word which might appear to us less than "submiss."

the weaker. Eve, though eager throughout this discussion to prove herself constant and capable as Adam to resist the Foe, acknowledges herself "the weaker," echoing 1 Peter 3:7.
from her Husbands hand. In book 4, Adam first teaches Eve to admire "manly grace and wisdom" by seizing her hand (4.488-491).

submiss. Submissively.

Oread or Dryad. Mountain or wood nymph.

Delia. Diana: called Delia from her birthplace, Delos. Her train refers to the nympha who attend her.

Deport. Deporment, bearing.

Pales. Goddess of flocks and pastures.

Pomona. Goddess of orchards or fruit: Ovid tells the story of Pomona being wooed by Vertumnus who eventually succeeds (Metamorphoses 14.628).

Ceres. Ovid says that Ceres was the first to teach men to use the plow before the birth of Proserpina (Metamorphoses 5.341).

desiring more her stay. In book 8, Eve's "winning graces" are said to prompt all to "wish her still in sight" (8.61-63).

Mere serpent. Not a demi-woman as the tempter was sometimes portrayed. It is interesting that Milton chose not to use the popular image of a feminized serpent. It would seem a tempting association to make since submission to bodily desire is characterized by Milton as effeminate, and rational management of such desires is manly.

tendance. Object of attendance and care.

voluable. Rolling upon itself, undulating.

Lines 439-441. Milton implies that Paradise was even more beautiful than the Garden of Adonis, to which it was commonly compared, as well as the gardens of Alcinous and the Hesperides.

Laertes' son. Odysseus, who visited the Garden of Alcinous in Odyssey 7.

not Mystic. The garden of Alcinous is mythological but the garden of the "Sapient King," Solomon, was real. Solomon married an Egyptian princess and brought her back to his garden. See Song of Solomon 6:2.

teded. Cut and scattered in preparation for hay making.
*Plat.* Plot of ground.

*and Feminine.* "Angelic" is here assumed to be a masculine state, though angels, like any spiritual being, may assume any form or sex (1.423-426). See also 10.888-890.

*Stupidly good.* Eve's beauty apparently exercises enormous power. Perhaps there is also a hint here that her beauty is enhanced by the power of chastity, or innocence; compare to *A Mask* 450-52.

*higher intellectual.* Many critics hold this to be only Satan's opinion, but the poem in general supports this notion of male intellectual superiority. See 4.296-99; 4.489-91; and Eve's preference for physical conversation (8.52-57) and Adam's for intellectual or heavenly conversation (8.210-16).

*Exempt from wound.* This contrasts with Satan's discovery of pain during the battle in heaven (6.327).

*tour'd.* Towered.

*Spires.* Loops or coils (Latin). Milton imagines that the serpent, before it is cursed, looked like a serpent but traveled in a more elaborate, and more erect, manner.

*chang'd.* The narrator alludes to Ovid's story of the metamorphosis of Cadmus and Harmonia into serpents (*Metamorphoses* 4.563-603).

*The God.* Æsculapius, the god of healing, appeared in his temple in Epidaurus in the body of a serpent (*Metamorphoses* 15.669-74).

*Lines 507-510.* Macedonian legend held that Olympias, mother of Alexander the Great, was visited by Zeus in the form of a serpent, and thus conceived the hero her son (Pausanius *Description of Greece* 4.14.7). Romans told similar stories about the conception of Scipio Africanus the Elder.

*Lines 510-514.* The first letters of these lines, read vertically from top to bottom (beginning with the italicized S of "Scipio"), spell S A T A N.

*Herd disguis'd.* A reference to Circe's victims (See *Odyssey* 10.238), whom she turned into groveling swine.

*Organic.* Being used as an organ or instrument. Satan, in the serpent's form, was forced to use his tongue as a vocal instrument because snakes lack vocal chords and so have no physical capacity for human speech.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker. See 8.543-545 and Raphael's confirmation that Adam, not Eve, is the closest version of God's image. The serpent, though not Satan, may be presumed not yet to have seen Adam. Also see Eve's remark below at lines 615-616.

gloz'd. Lied.

Proem. Preamble in verse or song.

demurre. Entertain doubts about. God told Adam that beasts "know" and reason "not contemptibly" (_8.373-74_).

apprehended nothing high. Animals (like children) were generally thought incapable of higher pleasures than those of the body (_Nicomachean Ethics_ 1099b and 1100a).

Fennel...teats. Tradition held that fennel and milk sucked directly from the teats of goats and sheep were favorite foods of snakes. Another legend held that lactating livestock that went dry had been sucked by demons.

but could not reach. Birds, squirrels, and chipmunks are just a few animals that certainly could reach any fruit in a tree. We may take this as evidence that the serpent is lying (he never did eat the fruit of that tree) and Eve should (shouldn't she?) notice the deceit.

to degree. Satan implies that the serpent first recieved a degree of mental reason, then the gift of speech. Neither, of course, ever happened. The serpent came by the appearance of reason and speech by, in a sense, swallowing Satan, not the fruit.

Middle. The air between Earth and Heav'n.

spirited. Spirit possessed.

thy overpraising. Is Eve being coyly modest here? Or does she truly recognize that the serpent overpraises her above all creatures in heaven — God, Adam and angels included. If the latter, then why does she not detect deceit? Are we supposed to think her dangerously vain?

thir provision. Meaning that men would grow up in numbers proportional to the plenty provided for them.

Bearth. Birth; a spelling that appears appropriate for describing trees that "bear" fruit.
Blowing. Blooming.

wand'ring Fire. Ignis fatuus or "Foolish Fire," swamp gas which spontaneously combusts. This is possibly a reference to John Swan's Speculum Mundi (1643) 88-89, which refers to the "much terrified, ignorant and stupid people" who mistake such lights for "walking spirits. They are no spirits, and yet lead out of the way, because those who see them are amazed, and look so earnestly after them that they forget their way: and then...wander to and fro...sometimes to waters, pits and other dangerous places" (K. Svendson quoted in Hughes).

Fruitless. An allusion to Spenser's similar pun on fruit and fruitless in the Faerie Queene 2.7.55.

Law to ourselves. Similar to Paul's remark that virtuous Gentiles lived outside Hebrew law but were a "law unto themselves" (Romans 2:14).

som Orator. Satan plays the role of a democratic orator of Athens, whom Milton admired and referred to in Paradise Regain'd 4.269, but abuses the role by using it to deceive. "Free Rome" refers to republican, rather than imperial Rome.

brooking. Not allowing; that is, not waiting for any preface or proem.

Science. Knowledge.

highest Agents. Perhaps a subtly ironic reference to Satan's own act of hubris. "Highest Agents" would be the highest angels or possibly God. This, especially followed by "deem'd however wise," would seem to highlight Satan's aspirations to godhead. Satan here reminds one of the bombastic wizard in The Wizard of Oz, with the addition of malice.

ye shall not Die. Quotes Genesis 3:4-5 " And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die."

to Knowledge. Eventuating in knowledge. 1674 has a question mark after "Knowledge" and a comma after "Threatner;," taking this to be a transposition, I have reveresed them.

removes the feare. Serpentine logic. The poem has a poor opinion of Eve's intellectual acuity, since she falls for this, combined with flattery that she detects but hardly resists. See below: "too easie entrance won" (735-39).

Internal Man. Satan implies that the serpent has become man internally but his physical features remain unchanged. This is, of course, untrue.
participating God-like food. This is, as Raphael suggested (5.496-501), sort of true, but only if they remain "obedient." Eve cannot do that and eat from this tree.

*If they.* "Produced" is understood.

*too easie entrance.* Not unlike Satan's entrance into the garden itself (4.180-92).

*impregn'd.* Impregnated.

*inclinable.* Easily inclined.

*In plain.* In clear language.

*Author unsuspect.* Authority apparently unsuspicious.

*her rash hand.* See William Blake's 1808 watercolor illustration of these lines.

*Knew not eating death.* She did not know she was eating death.

*boon.* Jovial, jolly, convivial; see *OED2.*

*To Sapience.* Able to produce knowledge. There is a pun here on the etymological meaning of sapience, "taste" (Orgel & Goldberg). Eve now addresses the tree in language once reserved for addressing Adam or God.

*Infam'd.* Misreputed, slandered.

*secret.* Hidden, unseen.

*inferior who is free?* This line makes an interesting contrast to 5.792-793. Again Milton puts familiar early feminist discourse into the mouth of a fallen being.

*sciential.* Endowed with knowledge.

*divine.* Foreseeing.

*Came Prologue.* A personified excuse in the role of a prologue. See much the same figure of speech in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* 1.3.

*agonie of love.* Milton anticipates Eve's punishment. According to Genesis 3: 16, Eve’s punishment is twofold: pain in childbirth and simultaneously to desire her husband.

*rash untri’d.* Because she (Eve) was rash and the separation was unfamiliar.
tasted. "If" is understood.

tasted. Proven by tasting.

Not dead. With some of the sense of "un-dead," like Satan who is devoted to death but never dies.

Tedious, unshar'd with thee. Eve apparently experiences the characteristically masculine desire for company for the first time. See Adam's description of this lack in 8.363-366. In Tetrachordon, Milton tries to argue that Adam's desire for companionship is a desire for specifically female companionship, though not principally for sex (Tetrachordon Genesis places).

last and best. Human beings are the "last and best" creation; Adam may refer here to Eve's loss of humanness, the loss of the image of God in her. If we also hear him endorsing the early feminist notion that Eve was superior because created last, then he and the narrator are at odds; see above and Milton's opinion on the matter in Tetrachordon.

devote. Doomed.

bliss or woe. Echoes marriage vows: for better or for worse. Milton makes the point clearly that Adam was not deceived, but instead made a choice in favor of Eve. Augustine outlined this distinction in (City of God 12.11). See also 1 Timothy 2: 14.


Certain. Resolved. The phrase ironically echoes Aeneas's opposite declaration, certus eundi, announcing his intention to leave Carthage and Dido (Aeneid 4.554).

oblige. Keeps its Latin force of "involve in guilt."

fact. Deed, crime.

compliance bad. The narrator's condemnation of Adam's actions here seems clear, though many seasoned readers refuse to see it. Admiring Adam for his love and devotion here is not an inaccurate response, but it is quite beside the point of the poem.

Line 999. This line sums up Adam's fall. He understands reason but turns away from it in favor of the desires of the body, desires that Eve tries to ennoble with a discourse of sacrificial love. What was earlier described as "mysterious" rites (4.741), Adam now refers to as the "Link" or "Bond of Nature"
(above 914 and 956). What was once a spiritual bond is now merely carnal: "Flesh of flesh" without mystery. Milton is not known as a numerologist, but he depicts Adam's fall at line 999, an inversion of 666, the line in book 2 at which Milton introduces the character, Death--2.666.

_in Lust they burne_. As opposed to the rational burning Milton defined in _Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce_ 1.4 and imagined in 4.742-49.

_Line 1019_. 1674 misprints "me" here for 1667's "we".

_Eye darted contagious Fire_. Compare this description to that in 8.61-63.

_he seis'd_. Milton invites us to remember the first time Adam "seis'd" Eve's hand, to what end and with what effect (4.488-491).

_Lines 1037-1045_. Similar to the scene between Zeus and Hera in _Iliad_ 14.292-353.

_bland_. Pleasing to the senses (_OED2_).

_grosser sleep_. We recall Adam's "Aerie" light sleep in 5.4.

_unkindly_. Unnatural.

_conscious_. Guilty; conscious of error and sin.

_hee cover'd_. Echoes Psalm 6:10: "Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame." See also _Samson Agonistes_ 841-42.

_Danite_. Samson (Judges 16) was a Danite who was betrayed by his Philistine lover Delilah when she cut off his hair, the secret source of his strength, and then delivered him to the Philistines. The Samson simile at first invites us to think of Adam as a Samson figure, but the "They" of line 1062 makes both Adam and Eve appear Samson-like as they rise from post-coital sleep. In his tragic drama _Samson Agonistes_ (1671), Milton imagines Dalila and Samson as wife and husband.

_Line 1092_. 1674 switches the "for" of this line with the "fr" of the next line; I have switched them back.

_obnoxious, and unseemliest_. What now seem obnoxious and unseemly were once decribed as "mysterious parts" (4.312). This shift is in perfect analogy to their conjugal conversation, which was once "Rites mysterious" (4.743) and now is "Flesh of flesh."
Line 1098. 1674 misprints a comma at the end of this line; I have changed it to a period.

not that kind for Fruit. The lines appear to describe a banyan tree, but banyan leaves are not nearly large enough to be compared to Amazonian shields as in line 1111. Perhaps banyan gets confused with banana?

Amazonian Targe. Amazons' shields.

th' American so girt. Milton quite expectedly challenges the notion gaining popularity in his day that the New World natives are innocent like Adam in Eden, or noble upright savages. Milton explicitly compares them to the newly-fallen, lust-driven, shameful Adam.

Usurping over sovran Reason. Milton reckons that this interior usurpation accounts for all tyrannous usurpations that follow throughout history. See 12.87-104 and Tenure of Kings and Magistrates.

Head. See 4.443 where Eve refers to Adam as her Head. See also 1 Corinthians 11:3.


Women. The accusatory tone makes this otherwise orthodox antifeminist remark sound mean and cruel, verging on the popular misogynist claim that women first brought sin into the world. When Adam tries a similar line of talk in God's presence, he is rebuked by the more orthodox antifeminism of Milton's God (10.146-156). Adam repeats an even stronger, more clearly misogynistic, version of this remark in conversation with the archangel Michael in book 11 and Michael takes care to distinguish the antifeminist principle of female inferiority from the misogynist slur that blames women in general for the advent of sin (11.632-36). I use the word antifeminist here to mean "a person who is hostile to sexual equality or to the advocacy of women's rights" (OED2) even though it may appear to some an anachronistic usage.
Paradise Lost. I may assert Eternal Providence, And justify the ways of God to men. Say first what cause Moved our grand parents, in that happy state, Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off From their Creator, and transgress his will For one restraint, lords of the World besides. The John Milton Reading Room Paradise Lost. Paradise Lost. Paradise Regain'd. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery Sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking thir Stations to guard the Place. AS one who in his journey bates at Noone, Though bent on speed, so heer the Archangel paus'd Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd, If Adam aught perhaps might interpose; Then with transition sweet new Speech resumes. Paradise Lost: Book I. Milton, John (1608 - 1674). Original Text: John Milton, Paradise Lost. 2nd edn. 1674. Lines 32-41 of Book IV were composed about 1642, and were intended for the opening speech of this drama. After a long interruption he re-commenced the poem in epic form, perhaps about 1657, and completed it by 1663 or 1665. It was published in ten books in 1667; it was subsequently revised and redivided into twelve books for the "Second Edition" published in 1674.