

## PARADISE LOST

### BOOK II.

High on a Throne of Royal State, which far  
Outshon the wealth of ORMUS and of IND,  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Shows on her Kings BARBARIC Pearl & Gold,  
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd  
To that bad eminence; and from despair  
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires  
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
Vain Warr with Heav'n, and by success untaught  
His proud imaginations thus displaid.

Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n,  
For since no deep within her gulf can hold  
Immortal vigor, though opprest and fall'n,  
I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent  
Celestial vertues rising, will appear  
More glorious and more dread then from no fall,  
And trust themselves to fear no second fate:  
Mee though just right, and the fixt Laws of Heav'n  
Did first create your Leader, next, free choice,  
With what besides, in Counsel or in Fight,  
Hath bin achievd of merit, yet this loss

Thus farr at least recover'd, hath much more  
Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne  
Yeilded with full consent. The happier state  
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw  
Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Formost to stand against the Thunderers aime  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
Of endless pain? where there is then no good  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
From Faction; for none sure will claim in hell  
Precedence, none, whose portion is so small  
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind  
Will covet more. With this advantage then  
To union, and firm Faith, and firm accord,  
More then can be in Heav'n, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper then prosperity  
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,  
Whether of open Warr or covert guile,  
We now debate; who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd, and next him MOLOC, Scepter'd King  
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit  
That fought in Heav'n; now fiercer by despair:  
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd

Equal in strength, and rather then be less  
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost  
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse  
He reckd not, and these words thereafter spake.

My sentence is for open Warr: Of Wiles,  
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those  
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.  
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,  
Millions that stand in Arms, and longing wait  
The Signal to ascend, sit lingring here  
Heav'ns fugitives, and for thir dwelling place  
Accept this dark opprobrious Den of shame,  
The Prison of his Tyranny who Reigns  
By our delay? no, let us rather choose  
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury all at once  
O're Heav'ns high Towrs to force resistless way,  
Turning our Tortures into horrid Arms  
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise  
Of his Almighty Engin he shall hear  
Infernal Thunder, and for Lightning see  
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage  
Among his Angels; and his Throne it self  
Mixt with TARTAREAN Sulphur, and strange fire,  
His own invented Torments. But perhaps  
The way seems difficult and steep to scale

With upright wing against a higher foe.  
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench  
Of that forgetful Lake benumme not still,  
That in our proper motion we ascend  
Up to our native seat: descent and fall  
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late  
When the fierce Foe hung on our brok'n Rear  
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the Deep,  
With what compulsion and laborious flight  
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easie then;  
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke  
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find  
To our destruction: if there be in Hell  
Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse  
Then to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd  
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;  
Where pain of unextinguishable fire  
Must exercise us without hope of end  
The Vassals of his anger, when the Scourge  
Inexorably, and the torturing houre  
Calls us to Penance? More destroy'd then thus  
We should be quite abolisht and expire.  
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense  
His utmost ire? which to the highth enrag'd,  
Will either quite consume us, and reduce  
To nothing this essential, happier farr

Then miserable to have eternal being:  
Or if our substance be indeed Divine,  
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst  
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel  
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,  
And with perpetual inrodes to Allarme,  
Though inaccessible, his fatal Throne:  
Which if not Victory is yet Revenge.

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd  
Desperate revenge, and Battel dangerous  
To less then Gods. On th' other side up rose  
BELIAL, in act more graceful and humane;  
A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seemd  
For dignity compos'd and high exploit:  
But all was false and hollow; though his Tongue  
Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear  
The better reason, to perplex and dash  
Maturest Counsels: for his thoughts were low;  
To vice industrious, but to Nobler deeds  
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleas'd the eare,  
And with perswasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open Warr, O Peers,  
As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd  
Main reason to perswade immediate Warr,

Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast  
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:  
When he who most excels in fact of Arms,  
In what he counsels and in what excels  
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
And utter dissolution, as the scope  
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.  
First, what Revenge? the Towers of Heav'n are fill'd  
With Armed watch, that render all access  
Impregnable; oft on the bordering Deep  
Encamp their Legions, or with obscure wing  
Scout far and wide into the Realm of night,  
Scorning surprize. Or could we break our way  
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise  
With blackest Insurrection, to confound  
Heav'n's purest Light, yet our great Enemy  
All incorruptible would on his Throne  
Sit unpolluted, and th' Ethereal mould  
Incapable of stain would soon expel  
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire  
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope  
Is flat despair: we must exasperate  
Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,  
And that must end us, that must be our cure,  
To be no more; sad cure; for who would loose,  
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,

Those thoughts that wander through Eternity,  
To perish rather, swallowd up and lost  
In the wide womb of uncreated night,  
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,  
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe  
Can give it, or will ever? how he can  
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.  
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,  
Belike through impotence, or unaware,  
To give his Enemies thir wish, and end  
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves  
To punish endless? wherefore cease we then?  
Say they who counsel Warr, we are decreed,  
Reserv'd and destin'd to Eternal woe;  
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,  
What can we suffer worse? is this then worst,  
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in Arms?  
What when we fled amain, pursu'd and strook  
With Heav'ns afflicting Thunder, and besought  
The Deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd  
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay  
Chain'd on the burning Lake? that sure was worse.  
What if the breath that kindl'd those grim fires  
Awak'd should blow them into sevenfold rage  
And plunge us in the Flames? or from above  
Should intermitted vengeance Arme again

His red right hand to plague us? what if all  
Her stores were op'n'd, and this Firmament  
Of Hell should spout her Cataracts of Fire,  
Impendent horrors, threatning hideous fall  
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps  
Designing or exhorting glorious Warr,  
Caught in a fierie Tempest shall be hurl'd  
Each on his rock transfixt, the sport and prey  
Of racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk  
Under yon boyling Ocean, wrapt in Chains;  
There to converse with everlasting groans,  
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepreevd,  
Ages of hopeless end; this would be worse.  
Warr therefore, open or conceal'd, alike  
My voice disswades; for what can force or guile  
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye  
Views all things at one view? he from heav'ns highth  
All these our motions vain, sees and derides;  
Not more Almighty to resist our might  
Then wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.  
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heav'n  
Thus trampil'd, thus expell'd to suffer here  
Chains & these Torments? better these then worse  
By my advice; since fate inevitable  
Subdues us, and Omnipotent Decree,  
The Victors will. To suffer, as to doe,



Our strength is equal, nor the Law unjust  
That so ordains: this was at first resolv'd,  
If we were wise, against so great a foe  
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.  
I laugh, when those who at the Spear are bold  
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear  
What yet they know must follow, to endure  
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,  
The sentence of thir Conquerour: This is now  
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,  
Our Supream Foe in time may much remit  
His anger, and perhaps thus farr remov'd  
Not mind us not offending, satisfi'd  
With what is punish't; whence these raging fires  
Will slack'n, if his breath stir not thir flames.  
Our purer essence then will overcome  
Thir noxious vapour, or enur'd not feel,  
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conformd  
In temper and in nature, will receive  
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;  
This horror will grow milde, this darkness light,  
Besides what hope the never-ending flight  
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change  
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears  
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,  
If we procure not to our selves more woe.

Thus BELIAL with words cloath'd in reasons garb  
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloath,  
Not peace: and after him thus MAMMON spake.

Either to disenthroned the King of Heav'n  
We warr, if warr be best, or to regain  
Our own right lost: him to unthroned we then  
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yeild  
To fickle Chance, and CHAOS judge the strife:  
The former vain to hope argues as vain  
The latter: for what place can be for us  
Within Heav'ns bound, unless Heav'ns Lord supream  
We overpower? Suppose he should relent  
And publish Grace to all, on promise made  
Of new Subjection; with what eyes could we  
Stand in his presence humble, and receive  
Strict Laws impos'd, to celebrate his Throne  
With warbl'd Hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
Forc't Halleluiah's; while he Lordly sits  
Our envied Sovran, and his Altar breathes  
Ambrosial Odours and Ambrosial Flowers,  
Our servile offerings. This must be our task  
In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisom  
Eternity so spent in worship paid  
To whom we hate. Let us not then pursue

By force impossible, by leave obtain'd  
Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state  
Of splendid vassalage, but rather seek  
Our own good from our selves, and from our own  
Live to our selves, though in this vast recess,  
Free, and to none accountable, preferring  
Hard liberty before the easie yoke  
Of servile Pomp. Our greatness will appear  
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,  
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse  
We can create, and in what place so e're  
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain  
Through labour and endurance. This deep world  
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst  
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'ns all-ruling Sire  
Choose to reside, his Glory unobscur'd,  
And with the Majesty of darkness round  
Covers his Throne; from whence deep thunders roar  
Must'ring thir rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?  
As he our Darkness, cannot we his Light  
Imitate when we please? This Desart soile  
Wants not her hidden lustre, Gemms and Gold;  
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise  
Magnificence; and what can Heav'n shew more?  
Our torments also may in length of time  
Become our Elements, these piercing Fires

As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd  
Into their temper; which must needs remove  
The sensible of pain. All things invite  
To peaceful Counsels, and the settl'd State  
Of order, how in safety best we may  
Compose our present evils, with regard  
Of what we are and where, dismissing quite  
All thoughts of Warr: ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finisht, when such murmur filld  
Th' Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain  
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long  
Had rous'd the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
Sea-faring men orewatcht, whose Bark by chance  
Or Pinnacle anchors in a craggy Bay  
After the Tempest: Such applause was heard  
As MAMMON ended, and his Sentence pleas'd,  
Advising peace: for such another Field  
They dreaded worse then Hell: so much the fear  
Of Thunder and the Sword of MICHAEL  
Wrought still within them; and no less desire  
To found this nether Empire, which might rise  
By pollicy, and long process of time,  
In emulation opposite to Heav'n.  
Which when BEELZEBUB perceiv'd, then whom,  
SATAN except, none higher sat, with grave

Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd  
A Pillar of State; deep on his Front engraven  
Deliberation sat and publick care;  
And Princely counsel in his face yet shon,  
Majestick though in ruin: sage he stood  
With ATLANTEAN shoulders fit to bear  
The weight of mightiest Monarchies; his look  
Drew audience and attention still as Night  
Or Summers Noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones and imperial Powers, off-spring of heav'n,  
Ethereal Vertues; or these Titles now  
Must we renounce, and changing stile be call'd  
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote  
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here  
A growing Empire; doubtless; while we dream,  
And know not that the King of Heav'n hath doom'd  
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat  
Beyond his Potent arm, to live exempt  
From Heav'ns high jurisdiction, in new League  
Banded against his Throne, but to remaine  
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd,  
Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd  
His captive multitude: For he, be sure,  
In highth or depth, still first and last will Reign  
Sole King, and of his Kingdom loose no part

By our revolt, but over Hell extend  
His Empire, and with Iron Scepter rule  
Us here, as with his Golden those in Heav'n.  
What sit we then projecting Peace and Warr?  
Warr hath determin'd us, and foild with loss  
Irreparable; tearms of peace yet none  
Voutsaft or sought; for what peace will be giv'n  
To us enslav'd, but custody severe,  
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment  
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,  
But to our power hostility and hate,  
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge though slow,  
Yet ever plotting how the Conquerour least  
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoyce  
In doing what we most in suffering feel?  
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need  
With dangerous expedition to invade  
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or Siege,  
Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find  
Some easier enterprize? There is a place  
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n  
Err not) another World, the happy seat  
Of som new Race call'd MAN, about this time  
To be created like to us, though less  
In power and excellence, but favour'd more  
Of him who rules above; so was his will

Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an Oath,  
That shook Heav'ns whol circumference, confirm'd.  
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn  
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould,  
Or substance, how endu'd, and what thir Power,  
And where thir weakness, how attempted best,  
By force or suttlety: Though Heav'n be shut,  
And Heav'ns high Arbitrator sit secure  
In his own strength, this place may lye expos'd  
The utmost border of his Kingdom, left  
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps  
Som advantagious act may be achiev'd  
By sudden onset, either with Hell fire  
To waste his whole Creation, or possess  
All as our own, and drive as we were driven,  
The punie habitants, or if not drive,  
Seduce them to our Party, that thir God  
May prove thir foe, and with repenting hand  
Abolish his own works. This would surpass  
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy  
In our Confusion, and our Joy upraise  
In his disturbance; when his darling Sons  
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse  
Thir frail Originals, and faded bliss,  
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth  
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here

Hatching vain Empires. Thus BEELZEBUB  
Pleaded his devilish Counsel, first devis'd  
By SATAN, and in part propos'd: for whence,  
But from the Author of all ill could Spring  
So deep a malice, to confound the race  
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell  
To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
The great Creatour? But thir spite still serves  
His glory to augment. The bold design  
Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy  
Sparkl'd in all thir eyes; with full assent  
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,  
Synod of Gods, and like to what ye are,  
Great things resolv'd; which from the lowest deep  
Will once more lift us up, in spight of Fate,  
Neerer our ancient Seat; perhaps in view  
Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring Arms  
And opportune excursion we may chance  
Re-enter Heav'n; or else in some milde Zone  
Dwell not unvisited of Heav'ns fair Light  
Secure, and at the brightning Orient beam  
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious Air,  
To heal the scarr of these corrosive Fires  
Shall breath her balme. But first whom shall we send



In search of this new world, whom shall we find  
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandring feet  
The dark unbottom'd infinite Abyss  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way, or spread his aerie flight  
Upborn with indefatigable wings  
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
The happy Ile; what strength, what art can then  
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe  
Through the strict Senteries and Stations thick  
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need  
All circumspection, and we now no less  
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,  
The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held  
His look suspence, awaiting who appeer'd  
To second, or oppose, or undertake  
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,  
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; & each  
In others count'nance red his own dismay  
Astonisht: none among the choice and prime  
Of those Heav'n-warring Champions could be found  
So hardie as to proffer or accept  
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last  
SATAN, whom now transcendent glory rais'd

Above his fellows, with Monarchal pride  
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O Progeny of Heav'n, Empyrean Thrones,  
With reason hath deep silence and demurr  
Seis'd us, though undismaid: long is the way  
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light;  
Our prison strong, this huge convex of Fire,  
Outrageous to devour, immures us round  
Ninefold, and gates of burning Adamant  
Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.  
These past, if any pass, the void profound  
Of unessential Night receives him next  
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being  
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.  
If thence he scape into what ever world,  
Or unknown Region, what remains him less  
Then unknown dangers and as hard escape.  
But I should ill become this Throne, O Peers,  
And this Imperial Sov'ranty, adorn'd  
With splendor, arm'd with power, if aught propos'd  
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape  
Of difficulty or danger could deterre  
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume  
These Royalties, and not refuse to Reign,  
Refusing to accept as great a share

Of hazard as of honour, due alike  
To him who Reigns, and so much to him due  
Of hazard more, as he above the rest  
High honourd sits? Go therefore mighty powers,  
Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,  
While here shall be our home, what best may ease  
The present misery, and render Hell  
More tollerable; if there be cure or charm  
To respite or deceive, or slack the pain  
Of this ill Mansion: intermit no watch  
Against a wakeful Foe, while I abroad  
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek  
Deliverance for us all: this enterprize  
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose  
The Monarch, and prevented all reply,  
Prudent, least from his resolution rais'd  
Others among the chief might offer now  
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they feard;  
And so refus'd might in opinion stand  
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute  
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they  
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice  
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;  
Thir rising all at once was as the sound  
Of Thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend  
With awful reverence prone; and as a God

Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n:  
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,  
That for the general safety he despis'd  
His own: for neither do the Spirits damn'd  
Loose all thir vertue; least bad men should boast  
Thir specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,  
Or close ambition varnisht o're with zeal.  
Thus they thir doubtful consultations dark  
Ended rejoycing in thir matchless Chief:  
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds  
Ascending, while the North wind sleeps, o'respread  
Heav'ns chearful face, the lowring Element  
Scowls ore the dark'nd lantskip Snow, or showre;  
If chance the radiant Sun with farewell sweet  
Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,  
The birds thir notes renew, and bleating herds  
Attest thir joy, that hill and valley rings.  
O shame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd  
Firm concord holds, men onely disagree  
Of Creatures rational, though under hope  
Of heavenly Grace: and God proclaiming peace,  
Yet live in hatred, enmitie, and strife  
Among themselves, and levie cruel warres,  
Wasting the Earth, each other to destroy:  
As if (which might induce us to accord)  
Man had not hellish foes anow besides,

That day and night for his destruction waite.

The STYGIAN Council thus dissolv'd; and forth  
In order came the grand infernal Peers,  
Midst came thir mighty Paramount, and seemd  
Alone th' Antagonist of Heav'n, nor less  
Then Hells dread Emperour with pomp Supream,  
And God-like imitated State; him round  
A Globe of fierie Seraphim inclos'd  
With bright imblazonrie, and horrent Arms.  
Then of thir Session ended they bid cry  
With Trumpets regal sound the great result:  
Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim  
Put to thir mouths the sounding Alchymie  
By Haralds voice explain'd: the hollow Abyss  
Heard farr and wide, and all the host of Hell  
With deafning shout, return'd them loud acclaim.  
Thence more at ease thir minds and somewhat rais'd  
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers  
Disband, and wandring, each his several way  
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice  
Leads him perplext, where he may likeliest find  
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain  
The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.  
Part on the Plain, or in the Air sublime  
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,

As at th' Olympian Games or PYTHIAN fields;  
Part curb thir fierie Steeds, or shun the Goal  
With rapid wheels, or fronted Brigads form.  
As when to warn proud Cities warr appears  
Wag'd in the troubl'd Skie, and Armies rush  
To Battel in the Clouds, before each Van  
Pric forth the Aerie Knights, and couch thir spears  
Till thickest Legions close; with feats of Arms  
From either end of Heav'n the welkin burns.  
Others with vast TYPHOEAN rage more fell  
Rend up both Rocks and Hills, and ride the Air  
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wilde uproar.  
As when ALCIDES from OEALIA Crown'd  
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore  
Through pain up by the roots THESSALIAN Pines,  
And LICHAS from the top of OETA threw  
Into th' EUBOIC Sea. Others more milde,  
Retreated in a silent valley, sing  
With notes Angelical to many a Harp  
Thir own Heroic deeds and hapless fall  
By doom of Battel; and complain that Fate  
Free Vertue should enthrall to Force or Chance.  
Thir song was partial, but the harmony  
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)  
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet

(For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense,)

Others apart sat on a Hill retir'd,  
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high  
Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate,  
Fixt Fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,  
And found no end, in wandring mazes lost.  
Of good and evil much they argu'd then,  
Of happiness and final misery,  
Passion and Apathie, and glory and shame,  
Vain wisdom all, and false Philosophie:  
Yet with a pleasing sorcerie could charm  
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite  
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured brest  
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.  
Another part in Squadrons and gross Bands,  
On bold adventure to discover wide  
That dismal world, if any Clime perhaps  
Might yeild them easier habitation, bend  
Four ways thir flying March, along the Banks  
Of four infernal Rivers that disgorge  
Into the burning Lake thir baleful streams;  
Abhorred STYX the flood of deadly hate,  
Sad ACHERON of sorrow, black and deep;  
COCYTUS, nam'd of lamentation loud  
Heard on the ruful stream; fierce PHLEGETON  
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.

Farr off from these a slow and silent stream,  
LETHE the River of Oblivion rouses  
Her watrie Labyrinth, whereof who drinks,  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,  
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.  
Beyond this flood a frozen Continent  
Lies dark and wilde, beat with perpetual storms  
Of Whirlwind and dire Hail, which on firm land  
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems  
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,  
A gulf profound as that SERBONIAN Bog  
Betwixt DAMIATA and mount CASIUS old,  
Where Armies whole have sunk: the parching Air  
Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of Fire.  
Thither by harpy-footed Furies hail'd,  
At certain revolutions all the damn'd  
Are brought: and feel by turns the bitter change  
Of fierce extreams, extreams by change more fierce,  
From Beds of raging Fire to starve in Ice  
Thir soft Ethereal warmth, and there to pine  
Immovable, infixt, and frozen round,  
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.  
They ferry over this LETHEAN Sound  
Both to and fro, thir sorrow to augment,  
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach  
The tempting stream, with one small drop to loose



In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,  
All in one moment, and so neer the brink;  
But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt  
MEDUSA with GORGONIAN terror guards  
The Ford, and of it self the water flies  
All taste of living wight, as once it fled  
The lip of TANTALUS. Thus roving on  
In confus'd march forlorn, th' adventrous Bands  
With shuddring horror pale, and eyes agast  
View'd first thir lamentable lot, and found  
No rest: through many a dark and drearie Vaile  
They pass'd, and many a Region dolorous,  
O're many a Frozen, many a Fierie Alpe,  
Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of death,  
A Universe of death, which God by curse  
Created evil, for evil only good,  
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,  
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
Then Fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,  
GORGONS and HYDRA'S, and CHIMERA'S dire.

Mean while the Adversary of God and Man,  
SATAN with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,  
Puts on swift wings, and toward the Gates of Hell  
Explores his solitary flight; som times

He scours the right hand coast, som times the left,  
Now shaves with level wing the Deep, then soares  
Up to the fiery concave touring high.  
As when farr off at Sea a Fleet descri'd  
Hangs in the Clouds, by AEQUINOCTIAL Winds  
Close sailing from BENGALA, or the Iles  
Of TERNATE and TIDORE, whence Merchants bring  
Thir spicie Drugs: they on the trading Flood  
Through the wide ETHIOPIAN to the Cape  
Ply stemming nightly toward the Pole. So seem'd  
Farr off the flying Fiend: at last appeer  
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid Roof,  
And thrice threefold the Gates; three folds were Brass  
Three Iron, three of Adamantine Rock,  
Impenitrable, impal'd with circling fire,  
Yet unconsum'd. Before the Gates there sat  
On either side a formidable shape;  
The one seem'd Woman to the waste, and fair,  
But ended foul in many a scaly fould  
Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd  
With mortal sting: about her middle round  
A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd  
With wide CERBEREAN mouths full loud, and rung  
A hideous Peal: yet, when they list, would creep,  
If aught disturb'd thir noyse, into her woomb,  
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd

Within unseen. Farr less abhorrd then these  
Vex'd SCYLLA bathing in the Sea that parts  
CALABRIA from the hoarce TRINACRIAN shore:  
Nor uglier follow the Night-Hag, when call'd  
In secret, riding through the Air she comes  
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
With LAPLAND Witches, while the labouring Moon  
Eclipses at thir charms. The other shape,  
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joynt, or limb,  
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night,  
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
And shook a dreadful Dart; what seem'd his head  
The likeness of a Kingly Crown had on.  
SATAN was now at hand, and from his seat  
The Monster moving onward came as fast,  
With horrid strides, Hell trembled as he strode.  
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,  
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,  
Created thing naught vallu'd he nor shun'd;  
And with disdainful look thus first began.

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,  
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance  
Thy miscreated Front athwart my way

To yonder Gates? through them I mean to pass,  
That be assur'd, without leave askt of thee:  
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,  
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heav'n.

To whom the Goblin full of wrauth reply'd,  
Art thou that Traitor Angel, art thou hee,  
Who first broke peace in Heav'n and Faith, till then  
Unbrok'n, and in proud rebellious Arms  
Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Sons  
Conjur'd against the highest, for which both Thou  
And they outcast from God, are here condemn'd  
To waste Eternal daies in woe and pain?  
And reck'n'st thou thy self with Spirits of Heav'n,  
Hell-doomd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,  
Where I reign King, and to enrage thee more,  
Thy King and Lord? Back to thy punishment,  
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,  
Least with a whip of Scorpions I pursue  
Thy lingring, or with one stroke of this Dart  
Strange horror seise thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grieslie terrour, and in shape,  
So speaking and so threatning, grew ten fold  
More dreadful and deform: on th' other side  
Incenc't with indignation SATAN stood

Unterrifi'd, and like a Comet burn'd,  
That fires the length of OPHIUCUS huge  
In th' Artick Sky, and from his horrid hair  
Shakes Pestilence and Warr. Each at the Head  
Level'd his deadly aime; thir fatall hands  
No second stroke intend, and such a frown  
Each cast at th' other, as when two black Clouds  
With Heav'ns Artillery fraught, come rattling on  
Over the CASPIAN, then stand front to front  
Hov'ring a space, till Winds the signal blow  
To joyn thir dark Encounter in mid air:  
So frownd the mighty Combatants, that Hell  
Grew darker at thir frown, so matcht they stood;  
For never but once more was either like  
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds  
Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,  
Had not the Snakie Sorceress that sat  
Fast by Hell Gate, and kept the fatal Key,  
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,  
Against thy only Son? What fury O Son,  
Possesses thee to bend that mortal Dart  
Against thy Fathers head? and know'st for whom;  
For him who sits above and laughs the while  
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute

What e're his wrath, which he calls Justice, bids,  
His wrath which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest  
Forbore, then these to her SATAN return'd:

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange  
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand  
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds  
What it intends; till first I know of thee,  
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why  
In this infernal Vaile first met thou call'st  
Me Father, and that Fantasm call'st my Son?  
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
Sight more detestable then him and thee.

T' whom thus the Portress of Hell Gate reply'd;  
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem  
Now in thine eye so foul, once deem'd so fair  
In Heav'n, when at th' Assembly, and in sight  
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd  
In bold conspiracy against Heav'ns King,  
All on a sudden miserable pain  
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzie swumm  
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide,

Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,  
Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd  
Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seisd  
All th' Host of Heav'n; back they recoild affraid  
At first, and call'd me SIN, and for a Sign  
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,  
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won  
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft  
Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing  
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st  
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd  
A growing burden. Mean while Warr arose,  
And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remaind  
(For what could else) to our Almighty Foe  
Cler Victory, to our part loss and rout  
Through all the Empyrean: down they fell  
Driv'n headlong from the Pitch of Heaven, down  
Into this Deep, and in the general fall  
I also; at which time this powerful Key  
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep  
These Gates for ever shut, which none can pass  
Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat  
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb  
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown  
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.  
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest

Thine own begotten, breaking violent way  
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain  
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew  
Transform'd: but he my inbred enemie  
Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal Dart  
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out DEATH;  
Hell trembl'd at the hideous Name, and sigh'd  
From all her Caves, and back resounded DEATH.  
I fled, but he pursu'd (though more, it seems,  
Inflam'd with lust then rage) and swifter far,  
Me overtook his mother all dismaid,  
And in embraces forcible and foule  
Ingendring with me, of that rape begot  
These yelling Monsters that with ceaseless cry  
Surround me, as thou sawst, hourly conceiv'd  
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite  
To me, for when they list into the womb  
That bred them they return, and howle and gnaw  
My Bowels, their repast; then bursting forth  
Afresh with conscious terrours vex me round,  
That rest or intermission none I find.  
Before mine eyes in opposition sits  
Grim DEATH my Son and foe, who sets them on,  
And me his Parent would full soon devour  
For want of other prey, but that he knows  
His end with mine involvd; and knows that I



Should prove a bitter Morsel, and his bane,  
When ever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.  
But thou O Father, I forewarn thee, shun  
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope  
To be invulnerable in those bright Arms,  
Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,  
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the suttel Fiend his lore  
Soon learnd, now milder, and thus answerd smooth.  
Dear Daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy Sire,  
And my fair Son here showst me, the dear pledge  
Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys  
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change  
Befalln us unforeseen, unthought of, know  
I come no enemy, but to set free  
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,  
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly Host  
Of Spirits that in our just pretenses arm'd  
Fell with us from on high: from them I go  
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all  
My self expose, with lonely steps to tread  
Th' unfounded deep, & through the void immense  
To search with wandring quest a place foretold  
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now  
Created vast and round, a place of bliss

In the Pourlieues of Heav'n, and therein plac't  
A race of upstart Creatures, to supply  
Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd,  
Least Heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude  
Might hap to move new broiles: Be this or aught  
Then this more secret now design'd, I haste  
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,  
And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death  
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen  
Wing silently the buxom Air, imbalm'd  
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd  
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.  
He ceas'd, for both seemd highly pleas'd, and Death  
Grinnd horrible a gastly smile, to hear  
His famine should be fill'd, and blest his mawe  
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoyc'd  
His mother bad, and thus bespake her Sire.

The key of this infernal Pit by due,  
And by command of Heav'ns all-powerful King  
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock  
These Adamantine Gates; against all force  
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,  
Fearless to be o'rematcht by living might.  
But what ow I to his commands above  
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down

Into this gloom of TARTARUS profound,  
To sit in hateful Office here confin'd,  
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nlie-born,  
Here in perpetual agonie and pain,  
With terrors and with clamors compass'd round  
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed:  
Thou art my Father, thou my Author, thou  
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey  
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon  
To that new world of light and bliss, among  
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall Reign  
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems  
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.

Thus saying, from her side the fatal Key,  
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;  
And towards the Gate rousing her bestial train,  
Forthwith the huge Porcullis high up drew,  
Which but her self not all the STYGIAN powers  
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns  
Th' intricate wards, and every Bolt and Bar  
Of massie Iron or solid Rock with ease  
Unfast'ns: on a sudden op'n flie  
With impetuous recoile and jarring sound  
Th' infernal dores, and on thir hinges great  
Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook

Of EREBUS. She op'nd, but to shut  
Excel'd her power; the Gates wide op'n stood,  
That with extended wings a Bannerd Host  
Under spread Ensigns marching might pass through  
With Horse and Chariots rankt in loose array;  
So wide they stood, and like a Furnace mouth  
Cast forth redounding smoak and ruddy flame.  
Before thir eyes in sudden view appear  
The secrets of the hoarie deep, a dark  
Illimitable Ocean without bound,  
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,  
And time and place are lost; where eldest Night  
And CHAOS, Ancestors of Nature, hold  
Eternal ANARCHIE, amidst the noise  
Of endless warrs and by confusion stand.  
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four Champions fierce  
Strive here for Maistrie, and to Battel bring  
Thir embryon Atoms; they around the flag  
Of each his faction, in thir several Clanns,  
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,  
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the Sands  
Of BARCA or CYRENE'S torrid soil,  
Levied to side with warring Winds, and poise  
Thir lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,  
Hee rules a moment; CHAOS Umpire sits,  
And by decision more imbroiles the fray

By which he Reigns: next him high Arbiter  
CHANCE governs all. Into this wilde Abyss,  
The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,  
Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,  
But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt  
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,  
Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain  
His dark materials to create more Worlds,  
Into this wilde Abyss the warie fiend  
Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,  
Pondering his Voyage; for no narrow frith  
He had to cross. Nor was his eare less peal'd  
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare  
Great things with small) then when BELLONA storms,  
With all her battering Engines bent to rase  
Som Capital City, or less then if this frame  
Of Heav'n were falling, and these Elements  
In mutinie had from her Axle torn  
The stedfast Earth. At last his Sail-broad Vannes  
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak  
Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a League  
As in a cloudy Chair ascending rides  
Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets  
A vast vacuitie: all unawares  
Fluttring his pennons vain plumb down he drops  
Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour

Down had been falling, had not by ill chance  
The strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud  
Instinct with Fire and Nitre hurried him  
As many miles aloft: that furie stay'd,  
Quencht in a Boggie SYRTIS, neither Sea,  
Nor good dry Land: nigh founderd on he fares,  
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,  
Half flying; behoves him now both Oare and Saile.  
As when a Gryfon through the Wilderness  
With winged course ore Hill or moarie Dale,  
Pursues the ARIMASPIAN, who by stelth  
Had from his wakeful custody purloind  
The guarded Gold: So eagerly the fiend  
Ore bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,  
With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,  
And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flyes:  
At length a universal hubbub wilde  
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd  
Born through the hollow dark assaults his eare  
With loudest vehemence: thither he plyes,  
Undaunted to meet there what ever power  
Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss  
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
Which way the neerest coast of darkness lyes  
Bordering on light; when strait behold the Throne  
Of CHAOS, and his dark Pavilion spread

Wide on the wasteful Deep; with him Enthron'd  
Sat Sable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
The consort of his Reign; and by them stood  
ORCUS and ADES, and the dreaded name  
Of DEMOGORGON; Rumor next and Chance,  
And Tumult and Confusion all imbroild,  
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom SATAN turning boldly, thus. Ye Powers  
And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,  
CHAOS and ANCIENT NIGHT, I come no Spie,  
With purpose to explore or to disturb  
The secrets of your Realm, but by constraint  
Wandring this darksome desart, as my way  
Lies through your spacious Empire up to light,  
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek  
What readiest path leads where your gloomie bounds  
Confine with Heav'n; or if som other place  
From your Dominion won, th' Ethereal King  
Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
I travel this profound, direct my course;  
Directed, no mean recompence it brings  
To your behoof, if I that Region lost,  
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce  
To her original darkness and your sway  
(Which is my present journey) and once more

Erect the Standerd there of ANCIENT NIGHT;  
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus SATAN; and him thus the Anarch old  
With faultring speech and visage incompos'd  
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art,  
That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
Made head against Heav'ns King, though overthrown.  
I saw and heard, for such a numerous host  
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep  
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n Gates  
Pourd out by millions her victorious Bands  
Pursuing. I upon my Frontieres here  
Keep residence; if all I can will serve,  
That little which is left so to defend  
Encroacht on still through our intestine broiles  
Weakning the Scepter of old Night: first Hell  
Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;  
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another World  
Hung ore my Realm, link'd in a golden Chain  
To that side Heav'n from whence your Legions fell:  
If that way be your walk, you have not farr;  
So much the neerer danger; goe and speed;  
Havock and spoil and ruin are my gain.



He ceas'd; and SATAN staid not to reply,  
But glad that now his Sea should find a shore,  
With fresh alacritie and force renew'd  
Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire  
Into the wilde expanse, and through the shock  
Of fighting Elements, on all sides round  
Environ'd wins his way; harder beset  
And more endanger'd, then when ARGO pass'd  
Through BOSPORUS betwixt the justling Rocks:  
Or when ULYSSES on the Larbord shunnd  
CHARYBDIS, and by th' other whirlpool steard.  
So he with difficulty and labour hard  
Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour hee;  
But hee once past, soon after when man fell,  
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain  
Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n,  
Pav'd after him a broad and beat'n way  
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling Gulf  
Tamely endur'd a Bridge of wondrous length  
From Hell continu'd reaching th' utmost Orbe  
Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse  
With easie intercourse pass to and fro  
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom  
God and good Angels guard by special grace.  
But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n

Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night  
A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins  
Her fardest verge, and CHAOS to retire  
As from her outmost works a brok'n foe  
With tumult less and with less hostile din,  
That SATAN with less toil, and now with ease  
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light  
And like a weather-beaten Vessel holds  
Gladly the Port, though Shrouds and Tackle torn;  
Or in the emptier waste, resembling Air,  
Weighs his spread wings, at leasure to behold  
Farr off th' Empyrean Heav'n, extended wide  
In circuit, undetermined square or round,  
With Opal Towers and Battlements adorn'd  
Of living Sapphire, once his native Seat;  
And fast by hanging in a golden Chain  
This pendant world, in bigness as a Starr  
Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon.  
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
Accurst, and in a cursed hour he hies.

THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK.