**Paradise Lost**

**BOOK 9**

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, alledging 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:* Eve *requires 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; she pleas'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.*

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 feard  
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.  
[Fairest resemblance of thy Maker](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#resemblance) 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line549) the Tempter, and his [Proem](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line558), for in thir looks  
Much reason, and in thir actions oft appeers.  
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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line571):  
Till on a day roaving 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line581),  
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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#notreach).  
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 length, ere long I might perceave  
Strange alteration in me, [to degree](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line599)  
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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line605), all things fair and good; [ 605 ]  
But all that fair and good in thy Divine  
Semblance, and in thy Beauties heav'nly 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 declar'd  
Sovran of Creatures, universal Dame.

So talk'd the [spirited](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line613) sly Snake; and *Eve*  
Yet more amaz'd unwarie thus reply'd.

Serpent, [thy overpraising](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#overpraise) 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line623), and more hands  
Help to disburden Nature of her [Bearth](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line624).

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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line629) 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line634)  
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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line648) 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line654), 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 scarse 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 disturbd, yet comely and in act  
Rais'd, as of som great matter to begin.  
As when of old [som Orator](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line670) 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 highth began, as no delay [ 675 ]  
Of Preface [brooking](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line675) through his Zeal of Right.  
So standing, moving, or to highth upgrown  
The Tempter all impassiond thus began.

O Sacred, Wise, and Wisdom-giving Plant,  
Mother of [Science](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line680), 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line683), deemd however wise.  
Queen of this Universe, doe not believe  
Those rigid threats of Death; [ye shall not Die](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line685): [ 685 ]  
How should ye? by the Fruit? it gives you Life  
[To Knowledge](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line686), 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#removes).  
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'nd 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line711), 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'nd, which no worse then this can bring. [ 715 ]  
And what are Gods that Man may not become  
As they, [participating God-like food](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#godfood)?  
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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line722) 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml" \l "easie" \t "notes) 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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line737)  
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 [ 740 ]  
So savorie of that Fruit, which with desire,  
[Inclinable](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line742) 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. [ 745 ]  
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, [ 750 ]  
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: [ 755 ]  
For good unknown, sure is not had, or had  
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
[In plain](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line758) then, what forbids he but to know,  
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?  
Such prohibitions binde not. But if Death [ 760 ]  
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, [ 765 ]  
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 [ 770 ]  
The good befall'n him, [Author unsuspect](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line771),  
Friendly to man, farr 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? [ 775 ]  
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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#rash) in evil hour [ 780 ]  
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](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line792): Satiate at length,  
And hight'nd as with Wine, jocond and [boon](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_9/notes.shtml#line793),  
Thus to her self she pleasingly began.