

The Fall

Canto One: Paradisum

The Lord:

Let there be light.

The Lord:

This is Eden, My gift to you, My children -
The tendril of My grand imagination.
This is the Orchard, Eternity's brash lover,
The blossom and the fruit of My mind.

The glorious blue of the glowing sky, the mysterious
Blue of the sea, and the fleeting sunset's yellow!
The green of summer leaves, and the red of clay,
For your delight, My clear-eyed mignons. Paradise!

Adam:

High the sky and wide -
White the clouds and bright the stars -
Speak and we adore!

The Lord:

These are the blooms that blow in the verdant spring,
These the tempting fruits that bring the fall.
These are the tickling grasses that stroke your feet
In the mornings and the sweet, gentle nights.

Eve:

Black the earth and rich -
Deep the root and warm the moss -
Speak and we exalt!

The Lord:

Adam, alpha man, My eye's mirror,
The glory of the grove, and Eve his rib,
The Tree of Life and a thousand spreading vines -
All but the Tree of Knowledge are your pleasures.

Adam:

Tallest in the grove -
Enough itself, the Tree of Life
Blossoms in the Lord.

Eve:

Artless is the bloom!
Apples are a shady tree -
Knowing Good and Bad.

The Lord:

These are the creatures of Eden's hills and sky,
Its cool rivers, its muddy, rich plains.
Of its noons and its glittering nights, these are the forms
That I give life – and you the several names.

Adam:

Sing the note, the cry -
Pretty cousin, sing and fly!
Song, I call you Lark!

Eve:

Soft on pads on paws -
Peaceful as an evening's hush -
Tiger is your name.

Adam:

Nearly in the clouds -
Sharp your talons, wide your spread -
Hawk I call you, flight.

Eve:

Teeth and fur and claws!
Lick my face, my playful friend.
Kin, I name you bear!

Adam:

Near beside! Above!
Here and far and back again!
Buzz, I call you bee!

Eve:

Low as soil and quick!
Quiet as a missing moon!
Spy, I name you Snake!

The Lord:

I am in love with the fleeting forms of time
And My pleasure is walking in the garden.
Play, My naked children, these but one
Your toys, your treasures. Joy is now begun!

Eve:

Paradise is joy -
Say you love me, Adam, here,
Heaven be the earth.

Adam:

Timeless is Your Name!
Praise to You, the seed of joy!

Eve:

Speak and we believe!

Canto Two: Temptationem

Snake:

Mother Eve, Oh Mother Eve,
We never know what we believe.

Mother Eve, Oh Mother Eve,
How cool the shadow of these leaves!

Mother promise, Mother Eve,
What suggestive fruits are these?

Eve:

Gifts of His the Lord.
I have heard Him speak my name -
Morning is His word.

Snake:

Mother Joyance, Mother Eve,
Plainly might the Word deceive.

What the secret of this tree?
What the falsehood you believe?

Eve:

Nectar of the bloom
Satisfies the hummingbird.
Still, the handsome snake.

Snake:

Mother Wonder, Mother Eve,
What sweet taste the apple leaves!
What tied powers could it free!
What fleet visions might you see!

Eve:

Adam may be near.
Sounds in Paradise are swift.
Be afraid, the beast.

Snake:

Brave Madonna, Mother Eve,
Man will think what man will please.
I offer so much more than he.
Taste the apple! Set us free!

Eve:

Eden is a dream.
Lest the Sleeper waken, hush!
Go, the snake! Away!

Snake:

Mother Eve, believe in me.
The Lord above will never see.
I love you more than ever He
Who made you loves you, Mother Eve.

Eve:

And do you love me for my thought?

Snake:

For what is thought and what is not.

Eve:

Do you love me for my heart?

Snake:

Thought and heart are not apart.

Eve:

Do you love me for my words?

Snake:

Your words and words I have not heard.

Eve:

Do you love me for my touch?

Snake:

Touch the apple: such is such.

Eve:

Farewell tired happiness.

Adam! Come! Listen! The snake has made me
As wise as the Lord! My sight as keen as His
Who painted Eden! Such tricks He plays! Deceit!
Do not believe! Come to the shadows - and taste!

Adam! Adam! Adam!

Snake:

Mother Sorrow, Mother Eve,
What a stench from core and seed.
As I fell once, so you and he.
Smell the guilt, but taste the grief.

Canto Three: Vision

Eve:

And then that wave of power breaks
So lust is quaked and victory eschewed.
Ecstasy and the cold, timid earth couple
And engender the bliss the greedy angels know.
The heady odors that scent petals in dreams

Are waters - and they rush and churn about,
So what were teasing fragrance once are waves,
And what was coy suggestion made concrete.
Snails, the least creatures, last in class,
That trudged and hauled their heavy, hated shells,
Escape and fly! We never knew this life!
The doubts of accident and nature, the shock
Of incident, decision's dreaded heft,
All the burdens of Paradise weep and flee.
Certitude is laid before you, Adam,
Paradise consumed! I never knew
We were unhappy! Now I know!
Join me beyond His dirty, tawdry plot,
His spiteful guard, His caging envy of us!

Adam

Ave inferne.

Canto Four: Expulsio

The Lord:

I am in love with the fickle forms of time
And My pleasure is walking in the garden.
Adam, I am enjoyed of your presence, life.
Eve, I am Mystery, your Suitor.

Where is My son, My Adam, the master of Eden?

Adam:

Here, Lord.

The Lord:

Where is My Eve, the paragon of Paradise?

Adam:

Here, Lord, next to me.

The Lord:

Why do you hide, My innocents? What your shame?

Adam:

We are naked, Lord.

The Lord:

And do you despise My pride, My incarnation,
The wonder of your bodies, bone and flesh?

Both My rubies, lost among the roses.

In this garden I have grown you, there was
A signal order granting creation's joys.
Now your lives will ever be grief for Eden.
You were at home in Paradise. Now you are lost.

Snake:

Mother Eve, Oh Mother Eve,
We never know what we believe.

The Lord:

Go! Wander homeless! Live bereaved!
Cry, disloyal Adam! Keen, Eve!
Gnash your teeth and tear your burning hair!
Weep, banished Man! Woman, Shriek!

Snake:

What a thought the mind conceives!
What a weight the heart must heave!

Adam:

Pity us, Lord!

The Lord:

You will parent thankless generations
Who will curse you as the birth of death.
Loss will be your life, the grave your goal,
Your lover will be white, brutal fear.

Snake:

What a word the lips might breathe!
What a burn the blossom leaves!

Adam:

Glory to the Lord, Creator of heaven and earth!

The Lord:

East of Eden – and at its barred gates,

A hundred hungry angels with salt on their swords!
Only because you praised Me once, misery,
I leave you a leaf of Eden: each the other.

Adam:

Help us, brother snake!

Eve:

Hush!

Snake:

Father Adam, Father Trust,
Soft the bread beneath the crust!
Have the harlot as you must.
I have conquered through your lust.

The Lord:

Go! Wander helpless! Mourn, bereaved!
Cry, accursed Adam! Keen, Eve!
Wring your hands and tremble! Wail and grieve!
Weep, wretched Adam! Shriek, Eve!

Seducer of children, lecher, lust incarnate,
For spite of Me the race fall? To dirt! To dirt!

Snake:

My curse on the gorgeous two,
The temptress and her master!
Doubly cursed may they wander,
My sorrow and my bane!