

*Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
Such I created all the ethereal Powers  
And Spirits, both them who stood, and them who  
fail'd;  
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have given  
sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,  
Where only what they would? what praise could they  
receive?  
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
When will and reason (reason also is choice)  
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,  
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity*

*They trespass, authors to themselves in all  
Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so  
I form'd them free: and free they must remain,  
Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change  
Their nature, and revoke the high decree  
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd  
Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.*

*The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,  
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,  
Voluminous and vast - a serpent armed  
With mortal sting. About her middle round  
A cry of Hell-hounds never-ceasing barked  
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung  
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,  
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,  
And kennel there; yet there still barked and  
howled  
Within unseen.*

*Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,  
Total they mix, union of pure with pure  
Desiring, nor restrained conveyance need,  
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.  
But I can now no more*

*I question it; for this fair earth I see,*

*Warmed by the sun, producing every kind;  
Them, nothing: if they all things*

*There gentle sleep  
First found me, and with soft oppression seised  
My droused sense, untroubled, though I thought  
I then was passing to my former state  
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:  
When suddenly stood at me head a dream,  
Whose apparition gently moved  
My fancy to believe I yet had being,  
And lived*

*We know no time when we were not as now*

*All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear;  
All intellect, all sense; and, as they please*

*While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
Between us two let there be peace*

*Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,  
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed  
now*

*for how  
Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve  
Willing or no, who will but what they must  
By destiny*

*up they rose  
As from unrest; and, each the other viewing  
Soon found their eyes how opened, and their  
minds  
How darkened; innocence, that as a veil  
Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;  
Just confidence, and native righteousness,  
And honour, from about them, naked left  
To guilty Shame; he covered, but his robe*

*Uncovered more.*

*From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,  
To fan the earth now waked, and usher in  
The evening cool*

*Tears, such as Angles weep*

*To entertain them fair with open front  
And breast, (what could we more?) propounded  
terms  
Of composition, straight they changed their  
minds,  
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
As they would dance; yet for a dance they  
seemed  
Somewhat extravagant and wild*

*That spot, to which I point, is Paradise*

*'What thou seest,  
'What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;  
'With thee it came and goes: but follow me,  
'And I will bring thee where no shadow stays*

*Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth  
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep*

*Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,  
Shedding sweet influence: Less bright the moon,  
But opposite in levelled west was set,  
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light  
From him, for other light she needed none  
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps  
Till night; then in the east her turn she shines*