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ADAM'S OTHER SELF: A READING OF MILTON'S EVE

City University of New York

PH.D.

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ADAM'S OTHER SELF: A READING OF MILTON'S EVE

by

FANNIE PECZENIK

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City  
University of New York.

1981

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

ADAM'S OTHER SELF: A READING OF MILTON'S EVE

by

Fannie Peczenik

Adviser: Professor Samuel I. Mintz

The Eve of Paradise Lost irritates modern sensibilities. On the one hand, it is recognized that Eve's subjugation to Adam is a truth universally acknowledged in the seventeenth century and that there is no reason to expect Milton to differ from his contemporaries. On the other hand, Milton seems to insist on the domestic hierarchy with such a vengeance that many feminist critics, echoing Dr. Johnson's dictum that Milton had a Turkish contempt for women, have singled out Paradise Lost as a particularly virulent example of the patriarchal oppression of the female. A close reading of the poem in the light of both the traditional Genesis commentary and the prevailing opinions on the nature of marriage and the relation between the sexes shows that Milton, rather than repeating the prejudices of his culture, exploits them to create an Eve who sums up all that is female without summing up all that is inferior and secondary. In describing the Fall of man and the loss of innocence, Milton offers an explanation for the historical condition of women.

Rabbinic and Christian commentaries traditionally derive the nature and purpose of the female sex from Eve's creation from the rib of the sleeping Adam. Milton's version of the creation of Eve turns

the cryptic scriptural account, long used as a rationale for the subordination of women, into a love-dream in which the rib becomes an emblem of reciprocity. Milton further subverts the domestic hierarchy by altering the terms of the traditional allegory of the two sexes. In Paradise, male and female do not represent the dichotomy of heaven and earth or spirit and flesh, but, for the sake of the terrestrial Garden which is man's proper home, they represent the two modes of sense perception which are, according to Renaissance theory, capable of inducing love: hearing and sight. In Paradise, the realm of the eye, embodied in the visual beauty of Eve, holds equal dominion with the reasoning words which are the domain of Adam.

The initial description of Adam and Eve in Book IV underscores their differences, which are more than superficial attributes, and seems to assert the marital hierarchy of male domination and female submission. But this first vision of prelapsarian mankind is a tease for the fallen consciousness. The innocent concept of equality is synonymous with the amorous reciprocity revealed to Adam at Eve's creation and is best expressed by Adam's metaphor of musical concord when he begs God for a mate. In Eden, equality is not a measure of one's place in a universal hierarchy, but a measure of the help one creature can afford another. In prelapsarian terms, the first marriage is a thoroughly egalitarian institution.

The theoretical basis for the marriage is tested in the debate prior to Eve's parting to garden separately. This scene is not a disastrous prelude to the Fall but a pragmatic exercise of the fit help God ordained between man and wife. The innocent assumptions made

by both Adam and Eve during this debate cast an ironic light on the conventional wisdom of the contemporary domestic treatises and marriage sermons.

At the Fall, Eve accepts the Satanic belief in female inferiority. She aspires to equal Adam not because the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil has given her the wit to rebel against him, but because she has lost the innocence that obviated the need to question her status. Adam and Eve begin their exile resigned to the familiar seventeenth-century domestic hierarchy, but Milton has revealed that the subjugation of women is a consequence of the corruption of the human mind.

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## INTRODUCTION

Milton's view of women has long been suspect. The Eve of Paradise Lost particularly annoys or confounds modern sensibilities. However charming she may be, she seems so thoroughly subordinate to Adam that it is tempting to agree with Dr. Johnson that Milton had a Turkish contempt of females. Although not all critics have agreed with this assessment, they have found themselves in the position of apologizing for Eve, for her frailties and her subjugation. C. A. Patrides has quite logically defended Milton by reminding us that if he had a grudge against women it was a grudge universally shared.<sup>1</sup> While it is true that a submissive and subjugated Eve accords with the general beliefs of the seventeenth century, Milton does much more than act as a spokesman for his culture. In creating his vision of a perfect past and a world not yet impaired by man's alienation from God, the source of his being, or bounded by death, Milton creates a vision of woman and human love that is fit for that Paradise. A close reading of the poem in light of the traditional Genesis commentary and the prevailing opinions on the nature of marriage and the relation between the sexes reveals that Milton, rather than repeating the prejudices of his time, exploits them to create an Eve who sums up all that is female without summing up all that is inferior and secondary. In the innocence of Eden man and woman live without the domestic hierarchy of male domination and female subjection that was almost universally

acknowledged as a fact of life in the seventeenth century and which we in the present day are still seeking to dissolve or circumvent.

In order to understand the myth of woman that Milton creates for his Garden, it is first necessary to study his version of the creation of Eve, the event which traditionally defines the nature and purpose of the female sex. Milton translates the harsh scriptural account and its frequently no less harsh exegesis into an emblem of erotic love. The sleep of Adam becomes a love-drama and the rib extracted from his side, long a rationale for the subordination of women, becomes the instrument of reciprocity and transformation. Through Eve's creation Adam learns that what might superficially appear to express hierarchy is, in fact, the supreme terrestrial expression of the order of giving and receiving which is the organizing principle of the unfallen cosmos.

Milton further subverts the traditional hierarchy of man and woman by slightly altering the terms of the allegorical division of the two sexes. In Paradise, male and female do not represent the dichotomy of heaven and earth but, for the sake of the terrestrial world which is man's proper home, they represent the two chief modes of sense perception, hearing and sight. Visual beauty, embodied in Eve, is married to reasoning words, the domain of Adam. This division of realms between the human pair is a paradigm for their interdependence because the reality of their innocence lies both in God's word and in the physical beauty of the Garden. Milton dramatizes his figurative scheme of unfallen love and unfallen perception by invoking the myth of Echo and Narcissus in Eve's version of her beginnings. By the clear, smooth

water Adam and Eve replay the pathetic story of the beautiful boy and the unloved nymph as romantic comedy. In the new version of Ovid's myth, the shadow and the broken voice are united to lend each other substantial life and for a while the lovers know what it is to live in Paradise.

Milton's vision of innocence is complex; the Garden is replete with rich ambiguity and the relation of man and woman shares in that profusion of meaning. One must judge carefully. The initial descriptions of Adam and Eve in Book IV, which seem to be simple statements of the traditional marital hierarchy, are actually emblems of the reciprocity revealed to Adam in his dream of her creation. Milton dares, on one hand, to insist that the distinction of sex is not merely a physical attribute for the sake of procreation. On the other hand, though underscoring the differences between male and female and emphasizing their apparent inequality, he makes the marriage of Adam and Eve a thoroughly egalitarian institution. Equality in Paradise is not measured by one's high or low place in a universal hierarchy but by how much help one creature can offer another. Adam and Eve are equal because God created them fit to solace each other's defects; it is meaningless to ask who is superior and who inferior. Heaven may be too high for man, at least for the moment, and the animals unfit companions for him, but there is every reason to believe that this disparity of degree does not exist between man and woman.

The theoretical basis of this equal marriage is tested in the debate prior to Eve's disastrous departure to garden separately. This last scene of innocence is not a prelude to the Fall but a pragmatic

exercise of the fit help God ordained between man and wife. The last prelapsarian conversation is cast in terms familiar to ordinary domestic life and it is here that we may best and most simply see how radically Milton's version of an uncorrupted union of man and wife departs from the conventional assumptions of his contemporaries. Eve's point of view prevails not because Adam is weak but because her reason is strong. Eve's implied subjection and Adam's authority are here made mirror images of each other and both are shown to be born of innocent freedom imparted to man through the image of God.

While man and woman live in their unfallen egalitarian state within the Garden, they are tempted by hierarchical thoughts. Adam, in his long discourse with Raphael on the nature of the universe and woman, reveals his propensity to infer inequality from great and bright, from weight and measure. Though Adam is still innocent, he is approaching the false perceptions of Satan, the arch-believer in hierarchy, if not its inventor. Satan's rebellion began when he divorced himself from the Neoplatonic transmuting love of the Angels and from the apotheosis of reciprocity in Divine Love and deemed himself impaired by the exaltation of the Son of God. Self-deluded, Satan saw only the hierarchy of Heaven, not the love that made the Kingship of Christ an exaltation of the Angels, and set out to win in battle the honor and glory he forfeited by his perversity. When he comes to corrupt mankind he brings his greed and envy and imports hierarchy into the Garden. Satan, the creator of misogyny, whose vision of the female is the half-beautiful and half-monstrous Sin, induces Eve to accept his contempt for females. At the foot of the Forbidden Tree, digesting the demonic world-view, Eve

declares herself inferior to Adam and then dreams of making herself more equal to the superior man. Her desire for equality is not the result of a new consciousness of her own worth brought by her act of disobedience; it is a wilful perversion of the Edenic reciprocity where she found her equality in Adam's answering looks and smiles.

After the Fall, Adam and Eve surrender to the prejudices of history. Woman is subordinated to man as an inferior and occasional creature, made for him and from him. The Eve who leaves the Garden hand in hand with Adam is the exemplary wife familiar to Milton's contemporaries, but the Fall has brought a heavy and radical change. She is not as she was before. Milton makes it quite clear that the subjugation of woman dates from the corruption of mankind by Satan and that the domestic hierarchy is a product of man's infected thinking and his punishment for disobedience to God.

Critics have shown that Milton's descriptions of nature in the prelapsarian Garden are deliberately charged with language that carries the burden of moral connotation after the Fall.<sup>2</sup> The Garden is watered by brooks whose courses run in "mazie error" and Eve's hair is waved in "wanton ringlets." The walks through Eden are full of light and shade and the fruit of Paradise is tempting to the eye. Adam awakes to life in a "Balmy Sweat" long before he is cursed with labor by the sweat of his brow. All of this is innocent until mankind falls under the sway of good and evil and has its reason infected by Satanic logic. The same is true for the domestic hierarchy. Milton teases, as it were, the fallen imagination by attributing "coy submission" to Eve and "absolute rule" to Adam. But these attributes are not what they seem

to be. We know that before Eve was created Adam begged God for a mate who would be equal to partake of the delights of the Garden and we know that God promised him his heart's desire. In the Garden of Eden, far beyond the comprehension of Satan who sees only weakness in Eve and superior strength in Adam, sweet, attractive grace is not despised in favor of contemplation, nor softness in favor of valor. It is part of the innocence of Paradise that man and woman resolve their doubts about equality in a meet and happy conversation, a harmonious concord, which we can envision only if we are willing to forego our customary categories of experience. In order for us to understand the Garden of Eden, Milton asks us to imagine a foreign world in which our values do not pertain. We arrive in Eden with Satan, the inept traveler who might better have stayed at home and who goads us into simple-minded and false perceptions. But if we look beyond his reductive view of Paradise we see that, far from acquiescing to the universal grudge against women, Milton manipulates the old traditions to invent a myth of reciprocity in human love that subsumes all doubts about the worth and status of Eve, Adam's likeness, his fit help, and his other self.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>C. A. Patrides, Milton and the Christian Tradition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p. 180. A fairly recent controversy underlines the position that Milton's Eve forces the critics to adopt. Their view of Eve revolves around their acceptance or rejection of the bounds of the seventeenth-century patriarchal view of women. See Marcia Landy, "Kinship and the Role of Women in Paradise Lost," Milton Studies, 4 (1972), 3-18; Barbara K. Lewalski, "Milton on Women--Yet Once More," Milton Studies, 6 (1974), 3-20; Marcia Landy, "'A Free and Open Encounter': Milton and the Modern Reader," Milton Studies, 9 (1976), 3-36. Landy argues that Eve is a culmination of all the patriarchal ideas about women held in Western culture. Lewalski answers that it is not surprising that Milton shares the beliefs of his contemporaries. She suggests, however, that Milton may have moved beyond the traditional views by educating his Eve and making her equal to Adam in the work of gardening and in the enjoyment of Paradise. Her role in Adam's redemption makes her almost more than equal to him. Lewalski is right here, I believe, in hinting that there may be more than the old patriarchy at work in the poem. It ought also to be remembered that the tradition is large and varied and not quite the monolith it may initially seem to be.

<sup>2</sup>This is dealt with most notably by: Arnold Stein, Answerable Style (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minn. Press, 1953); Christopher Ricks, Milton's Grand Style (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967); Geoffrey Hartman, "Adam on the Grass with Balsamum," Beyond Formalism (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 124-50; Frank Kermode, "Adam Unparadised," The Living Milton (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), pp. 85-123.

## CHAPTER I

THE CREATION OF EVE: THE DREAM OF ADAM  
AND THE HIEROGLYPHIC OF THE RIB

In Book VIII of Paradise Lost Adam, who has heard with wonder of the War in Heaven and how the world was created to fill the vacant space left by the Fall of the rebel Angels, tells his own no less wonderful story. At the center of Adam's experience of Paradise is the creation of Eve: his awakening to consciousness culminates in his request for a mate and his present happiness depends on how well he understands the meaning of her creation. Though it is the focus of his story, Adam's description of the birth of Eve is brief, somewhat less than thirty lines, and ostensibly a slight fleshing out of the bare Genesis account. After the cosmic flights and the novelties of an epic battle fought by incorporeal spirits, it is easy to overlook the complexity of an event that seems familiar and self-evident. Nevertheless, Adam's account of Eve's creation ought to be read in the light of the extensive body of scriptural exegesis and commentary that lies behind it. By examining Milton's use of the various exegetical traditions available to him, we can better understand both his vision of woman and his myth of innocence.

Milton offers both a fallen and unfallen exegesis of the creation of Eve. As the following study of the commentaries on the biblical narrative shows, Adam's prelapsarian version departs radically

from received opinion. His account is astonishingly secular, divinely inspired but thoroughly terrestrial, and, above all, it is devoid of the nearly ubiquitous belief in male superiority and female inferiority. Rather than establishing a sexual hierarchy, the creation of Milton's Eve initiates Adam into an amorous reciprocity. The innocent exegesis turns the potentially ugly Judaeo-Christian myth into an emblem of human love and beauty. Meanwhile, Milton uses the rejected standard exegeses as convenient sources of error. When Adam describes the nature of human life to Raphael, he expresses some of the doubts and misapprehensions which are associated with the traditional readings of the creation of Eve. As long as Adam remains innocent, however, these doubts and errors may come and go without harm. As he falls, Adam surrenders to the prevailing seventeenth-century opinions and adopts his previous misreadings as adequate glosses to Eve's creation. Immediately after the Fall, the harshest interpretations of the creation of Eve, baldly misogynous, find their place in Adam's vituperation of Eve. All these later exegeses that arise from the fallen imagination or innocent error are conspicuously absent from the version of the creation of Eve that Adam narrates to Raphael while man and Angel freely dine together.

The creation of Eve begins with Adam's sleep for which the exegetical tradition offers various interpretations. The sleep in Genesis is rendered by the Hebrew tardemah, or torpor, a state of senselessness. The rabbinic commentators judge that the manner of her creation is unacceptably grotesque, or, at best, embarrassing, and consider the sleep as a device used by God to shield Adam from the unpleasant truth of Eve's origin. The Babylonian Talmud explains

that the sleep prevented Adam from seeing God extract the rib. Had he seen it, he would have found the woman disgusting.<sup>1</sup> Rashi says that Adam was cast into a sleep so that he would not see the piece of flesh from which Eve was created, whereby she would be humiliated in his eyes.<sup>2</sup> Not only does the sleep hide the harm done to Adam's body by Eve's bloody birth, it also makes a secret of their near kinship. The rabbis believe that Adam would not be induced to love Eve if he knew that she was taken out of his own body. On the contrary, God needed to work in secret if Eve was intended as a wife for Adam. As a gloss to God's secrecy, in Midrash Rabbah a woman tells how she was to marry a relative but because they were brought up in the same house he found her unattractive and chose instead to marry another woman who was less beautiful than she.<sup>3</sup> The deep, unconscious sleep shields Adam from disgust and Eve from his contempt.

Christian exegesis transforms Adam's sleep into a vehicle of revelation. Adam awakes to recognize Eve as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; therefore, God must have revealed the truth of her origin to Adam while he slept. His sleep is divine, sent from above, not the natural sleep that arises from the vapors of the stomach in ordinary men. It is like the visionary sleep of the Patriarchs, Abraham and Jacob.<sup>4</sup> Because it is the sleep of prophecy, the Hebrew tardemah, though rendered literally as a "deep sleep," becomes identical with the Greek ecstasis of the Septuagint. John Salkeld easily reconciles the two versions of the sleep:

My opinion is, that seeing that the translation permitteth both, that it is to give us to understand, how it was both a sleepe and an extasis, or an extaticall sleepe or a

sleepe extasis: a sleepe, because the text in rigor doth signifie a sleepe; an extasis, or rapt, because hee had then his minde supernaturally illuminated, and filled with a propheticall spirit, as insomuch that, presently awaking, he said forthwith, this now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: shee shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.<sup>5</sup>

Hieronymus Zanchius specifies the mode of supernatural illumination: when God led Eve to Adam, he understood that she was to be his wife because in his ecstasy he had seen her formed from his rib.<sup>6</sup> Following this line of speculation, Henry More in Conjectura Cabbalistica concludes that in his ecstatic sleep Adam dreamt the creation of Eve described by Moses:

Wherefore the Lord God caus'd a deep sleep to fall upon Adam & lo, as he slept upon the ground, he fell into a dream, how God had put his hand into his side, and pulled out one of his ribs, closing up the flesh instead thereof.<sup>7</sup>

In the Christian tradition the deep sleep does not hide the truth of Eve's creation from Adam; ultimately it becomes the source of his immediate and exact knowledge.

The words with which Adam waking from his sleep recognizes Eve (Gen. 2:23, 24) are a prophecy for both God and man. On the one hand, the birth of Eve from the side of the sleeping Adam, read typologically, foreshadows the birth of the Church from the side of the wounded Christ on the Cross.<sup>8</sup> Because Eph. 5:31 repeats Adam's words of recognition to Eve, St. Augustine concludes that Adam is transported in his trance to the curia, the heavenly meeting place, where he is divinely inspired and wakes to speak of the mystery of the marriage of Christ and His Church.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, with the same words Adam establishes the institution of human marriage. Again he speaks prophecy because as Luther points out: "There were no fathers and mothers yet, and no

children, nevertheless, through the Holy Spirit, Adam prophesies this way about the life of married people . . ."<sup>10</sup> If Adam's body is put to sleep, his mind is awakened not only to knowledge of Eve's creation but of future human history.

Yet while the general opinion is that Adam was cast into the divine sleep of prophecy and through it the manner of Eve's creation was revealed to him, the notion that the sleep served also as a cover for the actual repulsive work of opening Adam's side survives among the Christian exegetes. Calvin, while insisting that Adam must surely know that Eve was created from his rib because if the manner of creation were not significant God would have created her some other way, maintains, nonetheless, that the sleep was sent upon Adam to "exempt him from pain and trouble."<sup>11</sup> Sylvester's Du Bartas, holding the same opinion that the removal of the rib would have been painful, describes God casting sleep over Adam as a form of general anaesthesia:

Through all his bones a deadly chilness strook,  
Siel'd-up his sparkling eyes with Iron bands,  
Led down his feet (almost) to Lethé Sands;  
In brief, so numm'd his Soule's and Bodie's sense,  
That (without pain) opening his side . . .<sup>12</sup>

The expositor, Andrew Willett, explains that while Adam's soul was in an ecstasy his body was bound in a deep sleep so "that neither Adams sight might be offended in seeing his side opened and a ribbe taken forthe, nor yet his sense of feeling oppressed, with the griefe thereof."<sup>13</sup> Although for the Christian exegetes there is no danger that Adam's knowledge of their close physical bond would cause him to reject Eve, the disgust with the extraction of the rib persists. Suffused as it may be with the supernatural that makes it prophetic, the

sleep of Adam remains, in part, a natural means of shielding Adam from a painful act.

This view of Adam's sleep is by no means universal. Luther's exegesis frees the sleep from the harsh naturalism implicit in a creation that requires a remedy for pain. He reads the tardemah as a heavy, dreamless sleep, a sleep not very different from our own, which is a divine and excellent gift. Adam sleeps so soundly that he is unaware that God extracts a rib covered with flesh from his side, but Luther cautions that it is meaningless to speculate on the physical details of the work of God who creates by the Word: "We should not suppose that, like a surgeon, He did some cutting."<sup>14</sup> The sleep hides nothing; it is a benevolent vehicle of transformation such as, in place of death, would have transported Adam to the spiritual life had he remained innocent. The violence done to Adam is mitigated by the ease and majesty of the divine work.

While the majesty of the divine work invests Eve's creation, the sleep serves as a boundary to distinguish the celestial from the terrestrial world, God's work from man's. Matthew Griffith, in his instructions for family life, repeats the saying of St. Ambrose that the sleep of Adam teaches that in seeking a wife a man should be asleep to this world and have his eyes intent only on God.<sup>15</sup> Pareus, replying to those who believe that Adam was cast into a sleep to avoid pain, argues that God does not need such devices. He could have removed the rib without pain even if Adam were awake but he preferred that Adam admire the result rather than scrutinize the process.<sup>16</sup> William Austin, to show the admirable worth of Eve and to curb Adam's pride, says that

he was cast into a sleep so that he would not presume to have had a hand in her creation.<sup>17</sup> The rabbinic belief that Eve is created in secret to save her from Adam's hatred and disgust is recast; she is created in secret to inspire piety, wonder and humility in Adam.

The sleep of Adam in Paradise Lost reveals neither the highest spiritual mysteries nor hides unpalatable physical realities. Adam is cast into a sleep neither to learn of the birth of the Church nor to be shielded from pain. Adam is not drawn into the heavenly meeting place during his trance; he has just come from there. The celestial colloquy sublime that overpowers human sense occurs before he sleeps. His sleep, though a vision, is considered to be a natural act resulting from the fatigue of speaking with Omnipotence:

strain'd to the highth  
 In that celestial Colloquy sublime,  
 As with an object that excels the sense,  
 Dazzl'd and spent, sunk down, and sought repair  
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd  
 By Nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.<sup>18</sup>

Though Adam sleeps naturally from exhaustion, as we do, there is no need to shield him from pain, a condition invented when Satan was cut down by the sword of Michael during the War in Heaven or, perhaps, when Sin was born. In the sleep of Milton's Adam, nature and revelation converge. The glory of God that creates Eve is not impaired because Adam witnesses the process nor is the physical act of extracting the rib harmful or loathsome. Milton follows Henry More and casts Adam into an ecstatic sleep in which he dreams he sees Eve's creation.<sup>19</sup> In fact, strictly speaking, Eve's creation may be said to have occurred as it did only in Adam's dream.

Adam's two dream-visions permit him to desire and choose in sleep God's two gifts of the Garden and of a wife. After the Fall, Adam's vision comes without the aid of sleep. Because in his fatal and fateful choice of disobedience he has forfeited the power to choose well, the vision of history, of both good and evil, in Book XI unfolds itself in its inevitable course without waiting on Adam's desire. Before the Fall, Adam's visions are not of what is necessary and inevitable but of what is possible. In his first dream he sees himself transported to the Garden and feels desire, never felt before, for "fairest fruit, that hung to the Eye / Tempting" (VIII, 307-8). This dream garden is more pleasant than all the world and he wakes to find it real. He is the glad recipient of God's gift but his choice is tacit; as Zanchius argues, since Adam saw Eve created in his ecstasy, his consent to accept her is implicit.<sup>20</sup> If the vision of the Garden stirs his appetite, it "works in the mind no change, / Nor vehement desire" (VIII, 325-26). He does not experience the true desire that is active choice until Eve is created and the vision works a change in his mind. In the momentary loss of Eve between sleep and waking he makes his choice: he wakes to find her or despair. Yet Eve, who is created while Adam's eyes are opened inwardly to the "cell of fancy," is more than freely chosen. Although God sends the dream to Adam, he adopts it as his own. With his inner eye he recognizes that Eve is the creature made to fulfill God's promise of a companion who is his wish and his heart's desire, his own dream. Although he is a dreamer, not a sculptor, Adam resembles Ovid's Pygmalion who creates his Galatea "so graceful in each part, / As women never equall'd it: and stands / Affected to the fabrick of

his hands."<sup>21</sup> Albeit the hands of God form and fashion her, Eve seems half a creature of Adam's fancy.

The sleep sent by nature to aid Adam overcome by the celestial conversation brings him a dream-vision which is more like that of a lover than a patriarch. His dream-vision belongs to a world like ours where men dream of beautiful women and the world of romance where they pursue their visions. The dream is the Edenic version of Milton's "Sonnet XXIII," free of the pitiable condition of fallen man that turns the bright vision into darkness.<sup>22</sup> It is the happier version of Arthur's dream of Gloriana in the Faerie Queene when, wearied by his sport, he sleeps and dreams that "by my side a royal maid / Her dainty limbs full softly down did lay."<sup>23</sup> He is ravished with delight by her beauty and her blandishments but wakes to find "her place devoid, / And nought but pressed grass where she had lyne," (I.ix.14). She disappears but she does not leave him completely forlorn. She leaves the pressed grass as a sign that the dream was no delusion and that Arthur may hope "To seek her out with labor and long tyme" (I.ix.15). Adam does not have far to seek or long to wait. Waking, he sees God leading Eve towards him. In Paradise, love needs no redemptive labors.

Adam's innocent exegesis of his sleep strays neither into naturalism nor supernaturalism, both alien concepts in the Edenic world infused with the Divine, where God and Angels walk and talk with man. He understands his sleep as a balm for his human faculties exhausted by the sublime; it signifies a return to earth, the proper sphere of man. The rib from which Eve is created in his dream is, like the sleep, poised between the visionary and the actual but it demands an even

more subtle exegesis from Adam. Among the traditional exegetes the rib is a potent emblem that reveals the nature of woman and how men and women ought to behave to one another. The standard interpretations are fraught with assumptions of hierarchical worth, assumptions which have no place in Milton's Paradise where "Great / Or Bright infers not Excellence" (VIII, 90-91). Adam's unfallen perception of the rib is bound neither by the physical realities of bone and flesh nor by the typology which looks toward a future redemption as yet unsought and eschews both hierarchy and the great temptation of the exegetical tradition, misogyny.

While Adam derives only his name from his origin in the earth, Eve derives, though not her name, all her essential features from her origin in Adam's rib. According to Midrash Rabbah, because God planned to create a modest woman, he chose the rib which is the "modest part of man, for even when he stands naked, that part is covered."<sup>24</sup> To prove their point, the rabbis enumerate other parts of the human body and show how each one would have caused the woman to be immodest. Aquinas alters the scope of the rabbinic catalogue in order to show that the rib determines the status of woman vis-a-vis her husband:

It was right and proper for the woman to be formed from the man's rib. First, in order to signify the companionship there should be between man and woman; the woman should neither have authority over the man--and therefore she was not formed from his head; nor should she be despised by the man, as though she were merely his slave--and so she was not formed from his feet.<sup>25</sup>

Diodati in his Pious Annotations elucidates and further defines Aquinas' catalogue. Eve was not created

of the forepart, because she must not withstand: nor of the hinder part, because she must not be despised, rejected, nor

forsaken. But from the side, and the middle of the body to shew the moderation which the husband ought to use in his superiority, and the faithfull society they owe to one another.<sup>26</sup>

As the midpoint of the human body, the rib, though never establishing them as equals, sets the limits of the husband's authority and the wife's obedience.<sup>27</sup>

The order and form of the creation traditionally establishes the male-female hierarchy. Adam is superior to Eve because he is created first and, afterwards, she from him: "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (1 Cor. 11:8). Calvin explains that "as the woman derives her origin from the man, she is therefore inferior in rank" and "as the woman was created for the sake of the man, she is therefore subject to him, as the work ultimately produced is to its cause."<sup>28</sup> Since God could easily have created Eve contemporaneously with Adam and without taking his rib, Daniel Rogers argues, by the creation God meant to enoble the male sex and subject the female.<sup>29</sup> A corollary to Eve's subjection implied in her later creation is that woman is less than man because God creates her from only one of Adam's twelve ribs. Woman is as a part is to the whole; she is a diminution of man. Sir Thomas Browne execrates woman whose inherent inequality is expressed in Eve's humble origin: "The whole woman was made for man, but only a twelfth part of the man for the woman."<sup>30</sup> Other commentators hasten to add that while the man is the greater part of the woman and is therefore to be honored by her, by the same token, the man must remember that he supplied only one rib to form Eve and the rest came from God.<sup>31</sup> Adam's authority extends only in so far as Eve is made

from him; in as far as she is God's creature, she must be honored by Adam. The presence of God checks the strict hierarchical ordering of creation, if the location of the rib, midway between the head and foot, were not enough to induce moderation.

While Eve's origin from the rib establishes Adam's preeminence, it also creates a bond of love between man and woman. The rib typically serves among the exegetes as a visible sign of the close conjunction God ordained between husband and wife. Adam and Eve are made of the same substance, from one source, to bind their union more strongly. God revealed the origin of Eve to Adam so that he would recognize their kinship and therefore love her, as St. Paul (Eph. 5:29) later enjoins men to love their wives as their own bodies.<sup>32</sup> Miles Coverdale declares that because the marriage ceremony makes husband and wife one body, as Adam and Eve were, they must live together in unity and mutual love as do the parts of the body.<sup>33</sup> Since love is implicit in Eve's creation, sixteenth and seventeenth century commentators widely speculate that Eve was created from a rib taken from the left side of Adam, close to his heart. Pareus comments: "Probabile multis videtur fuisse ex sinistro latere costam detractam, ubi cor est, ut inter virum & uxorem vigeret cordialis amor & voluntatum intima consensio."<sup>34</sup> Love is not to be inferred from the rib alone. Peter Martyr admonishes husbands to remember that God replaced the hard bone of the rib with flesh and, therefore, men ought to treat their wives not with harshness but with kindness.<sup>35</sup> The rib, furthermore, defines not only the authority and love that the man owes the woman, but also the love and duty that she owes him. Francis Quarles offers a detailed exegesis of the rib as a

hieroglyph for the edification of wives:

Ribs coast the heart, and guard it round about,  
 And like a trusty Watch keepe danger out;  
 So tender Wives should loyally impart  
 Their watchfull care to fence their Spouses' heart:  
 All members else from out their places rove,  
 But Ribs are firmly fixt, and seldome move:  
 Women (like Ribs) must keepe their wonted home,  
 And not (like Dinah that was ravish't) rome:  
 If Ribs be over-bent, or handled rough,  
 They breake: If let alone, they bend enough:  
 Women must (unconstrain'd) be plyent still.  
 And gently bending to their Husband's will.<sup>36</sup>

The origin of woman in the rib of man teaches wives to emulate the rib and mix obedience with love; the rib that guards the husband's heart also bends to his will.

Nevertheless the defects of woman, at the very least, her weakness, can be deduced from that same rib around the heart. God filled the place from which the rib was taken with flesh because, Zanchius explains, flesh means weakness and the woman is called the weaker vessel (Pet. 3:7).<sup>37</sup> To reach the same conclusion, Alexander Ross deduces that Eve is created from the left side of Adam because the left side is weaker than the right.<sup>38</sup> Nicholas Gibbon, on the other hand, argues that the rib is a form of compensation for female defect. Since the rib is nobler matter than earth, it was used to form the baser female sex so that she would be less despised.<sup>39</sup> Among the pious commentators the weakness manifested in the rib, although undeniable, may be a cause for condescension but not for rejection or denunciation. Contemporary misogynists, however, use the rib as a hieroglyphic that defines the despicable nature of woman.<sup>40</sup> The bent shape of the rib does not teach pliancy but

demonstrates the contrary, twisted nature of woman. Sir Thomas Browne, accordingly, calls woman "the rib and crooked piece of man."<sup>41</sup>

Swetnam, in his arraignment of women, argues that Moses says that woman was created from the rib of man because a rib is crooked, good for nothing but its crookedness, and women are crooked by nature, for a small occasion will cause them to be angry.<sup>42</sup> The anonymous Schole house of Women catalogues a series of vile female attributes that are directly traceable to the rib. The rib is stiff, crooked, and unbendable, as women are. Bones are noisy and rattle, as women do, who can be heard, where two or more gather even before they can be seen. The Schole house appends a bit of fanciful, violently misogynous exegesis to Eve's creation from the rib of Adam:

And yet the ryppe, as I suppose  
That god did take, out of the man  
A dogge up caught, and away gose [sic]  
Eate it cleane, so that as than  
The worke to fynyshe, that god began  
Could not be as we have sayde  
By cause the dogge the rybbe conveyed.

A remedy god founde as yet,  
Out of the dogge, he tooke a rybbe  
And woman forthwyth, he made of it  
As to the man, neyther kinne nor sybbe  
Nature she foloweth, and playeth the gybbe  
And at her husband, doth barke and ball  
As doth the curre, for nought at all.<sup>43</sup>

The rib teaches man to scorn woman, even if the satirist has to descend into blasphemy to prove that Eve is not of Adam's flesh and bone and that Adam did in fact find a mate among the animals.

The defenders of woman invert the traditional prejudices of both pious exegetes and railers to find evidence for woman's superiority in her birth from the rib of man. Agrippa von

Nettesheim argues that the order of creation does not express Adam's superiority. Eve cannot be less than Adam because God would not end his creation in imperfection. The creation is not regressive but circular: the last created is the first intended, the sum and best of all. With Eve's creation,

the erthe, and al the goodly ornament of the same were  
perfeited and fully finished. For the maker commynge  
to the creation of woman, rested at her, as havynge  
before his handes nothyng more honorable to be made,  
and in her al the wisdom and power of the creator came  
to conclusion and ende.<sup>44</sup>

The rib also declares the excellence of woman because it is purified, living matter extracted from a reasonable, god-like creature, not like the vile clay or dust used to make man. Furthermore, since man was created of earth, which under certain planetary influences gives birth to all sorts of animals, he is the work of nature, but woman is expressly the work of God, without nature.<sup>45</sup> As for the shape of the rib, Daniel Tuvill calls it not crooked, but an arch, which is the fairest and firmest form in architecture.<sup>46</sup> Ester Sovernam, in her defense against Swetnam, rearranges the argument that claims that woman is only a small fraction of man. Following a philosophic axiom that states that that which gives a quality to something must in itself be more abundant in that quality, she asks if woman is crooked for being made of the rib, how much more crooked is the man who possesses all the rest of them?<sup>47</sup> The defenders of woman find that Adam is the imperfect creation, formed of humble matter and perhaps not even by God, while Eve was formed miraculously of nobler matter. Depending on the imaginative propensity of the interpreter, Eve's creation provides as much ground for praise as blame.

While most commentators are not concerned with setting Eve beneath Adam's feet, as the misogynists do, nor over his head, as do the defenders of women, and perceive the form of Eve's creation primarily as a means of instituting order and establishing a bond of flesh or love between the first pair, a literal exegesis must deal with grotesque possibilities. The removal of Adam's rib, whether the act itself invites disgust or not, creates a logical problem. Either Adam was created with an extra rib or he lost one for Eve's sake; he was either born a monster or he suffered a mutilation. Neither are palatable alternatives for the first of men or the first of marriages. Some Renaissance exegetes solve the problem by declaring that Adam was created with an extra rib which was destined to be the source of Eve and, consequently, of all mankind. Since the rib was specifically destined to fulfill this noble purpose, its removal did not make a monster of Adam. Salkeld gives this common explanation:

Wherefore, though in regard of the particular nature of Adam, as hee was but one particular man, this ribbe was superfluous, and so consequently in another person might be thought monstrous, yet in regard of him, of whom the rest of mankinde was to proceed, it was most naturall.<sup>48</sup>

Rivetus, however, argues that the rib could not have been superfluous or else Adam could not have called Eve bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh and so formed their destined union.<sup>49</sup> Calvin explains that while Adam certainly suffered the loss of a rib, he received due recompense: "He lost, therefore, one of his ribs; but, instead of it, a far richer reward was granted him, since he obtained a faithful associate of life."<sup>50</sup> Luther dismisses the argument entirely as unfit for theological debate:

These questions have their origin in philosophy and in the science of medicine, which discuss the works of God without the Word. Moreover, the result of this procedure is that the glory of Holy Scripture and the majesty of the Creator are lost.<sup>51</sup>

The question of the number of Adam's ribs is superfluous, a reduction of God's creation to the narrow, literal laws of nature, which, according to Luther, is nonsense.

The actual transformation of the rib into a woman leads to speculation, whether figurative or literal, on the purpose of the female sex. The Hebrew text uses the verb wayyiben, to build, to describe the formation of Eve from the rib. Rabbinic commentary offers two explanations why the woman was "built." Either the word "build" simply refers to God adorning Eve, braiding her hair, before He leads her to Adam, or, it refers to the female shape which is like a storehouse, wide below and narrow above, for bearing children.<sup>52</sup> For the Medieval Christian exegetes, the building of the rib, aedificavit reads the Vulgate, inevitably refers to Eve as a type of the Church which is established by the blood and water, the sacraments, that flowed from the side of Christ on the Cross.<sup>53</sup> In fact, St. Augustine defends the typology on the grounds that the text reads that Eve is aedificavit, not formavit or finxit, that is, formed or fashioned.<sup>54</sup> Luther, adamantly denying both Eve's analogy to the Church and the rabbinic exegesis, which he mistakenly believes concerns itself only with the form of the female body and not its childbearing function, argues that in Scripture women are commonly referred to as buildings, not for the sake of allegory, but for the sake of history because they bear and bring up children.<sup>55</sup> Most commentators are content to include

both the historical and typological exegesis. Zanchius, for one, reads that Eve, the Mother of all Living, as both the source of all future generations and as a type of the Church, can properly be said to be "built."<sup>56</sup> Woman is constructed as the physical and spiritual home of man.

Luther enlarges Eve's domestic purpose to make the woman the home of man not only because she carries offspring in her womb, but because she is a companion to her husband: "wives are, as it were, a nest and dwelling place where husbands can go to spend their time and dwell with joy."<sup>57</sup> William Austin maintains, with Agrippa von Nettesheim, that he who has not wife has no house, and, to increase the praise of woman, amplifies the domestic construct to meet with the typological:

No man (saith John) hath seen God at any time. But if we love one another, God dwelleth in us: And that affection of love is principally commended in woman. And therefore they may bee called the Temples of God.<sup>58</sup>

The Geneva Bible offers a gloss to Genesis 2:21 that generalizes the building of the rib to include both man and woman in the edifice: "mankinde was perfit, when e / y womā was created c / w before was like an unperfit buyding."<sup>59</sup> Matthew Griffith makes an inclusive domestic metaphor of the rib. The family, figuratively a house, is established when the rib is built into Eve:

The word which the Holy Ghost doth use in the Hebrew is very emphaticall; hee built the woman; as if the man and his wife made one entire and perfect building; Man being as the foundation, the woman as the roofe; and the children as the joynts to hold the building fast together.<sup>60</sup>

God builds the rib of Adam into a woman with an eye to the future

history of mankind for the sake of procreation and for the sake of the faithful when they shall need a church, and, according to some authorities, for the private contentment of man.

In his first version of Eve's creation from the rib, Adam diverges from the main body of exegetical tradition. His narrative is free both of the precise naturalistic details that burden Divine creation with the laws of physiology and of moral connotation. Adam says simply that the rib was taken from his left side, and, to leave no doubt about what he means by "left," he tells Raphael that the rib was still warm with cordial spirits, spirits drawn from the heart. For the innocent Adam "left" only implies heart and love. "Left" does not yet imply evil or imperfection. The moral connotation is invented by Satan when, at the assembly of rebel Angels, he gives birth to Sin from the left side of his head. The moral distinction between left and right is first invoked by Adam after the Fall when he argues that Eve is evil because the rib was "more to the part sinister from me drawn" (X, 886). Eve is now a left-handed creation. She is a weaker vessel, created from the weaker side of man, and inclined by her nature to sinister deeds: she is a "fair defect / Of Nature" (X, 891-92). Woman may now be defective but, in innocence, Adam felt his own deficiencies and pleaded for a mate who would "solace his defects" (VIII, 419). Adam's impaired reason after the Fall induces him to adopt this bit of standard exegesis of the rib.

Like the misogynists who come after him, the first of men concludes, after the Fall, that the crooked nature of woman may be deduced from her origin in a crooked bone. Eve is false and vain

because she is made from "a Rib / Crooked by nature" (X, 884-85). Adam here hints at atheism; he denies God's omnipotence and limits the Divine powers to effecting only an outward transformation on the rib whose inherent bent form determines the inner characteristics of woman. Incidentally, it is poignant to observe that the now misogynous Adam had in the past been more inclined to the school of the defenders of women. Earlier Adam, like Agrippa von Nettesheim, found that the rib taken from his side was excellent matter, not merely a bone but one enveloped in cordial spirits and living blood. The rib is now a bare bone whose bent shape resembles the mazy folds of the serpent and allies the woman with the demonic world.

Adam's vituperative exegesis makes the creation of Eve resemble the birth of Sin. This might be expected since Adam has chosen to read the creation of woman through standard explications. The birth of Sin may be the parodic, nightmare version of Eve's creation, but it actually contains only the extreme instance of questions which frequently dog the commentators. Sin, as though she witnessed it, tells the story of her own birth:

All on a sudden miserable pain  
 Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum  
 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.

(II, 752-59)

Sin is the woman born from the head, the one that the rabbis warned would be proud.<sup>61</sup> She bursts out like a wilful thought, to surprise even the thinker himself, an unwelcome Athena springing out of Jove's head. Though Adam never doubts that Eve was born from his side, when

he assumes, along with many other commentators, that Eve was created from an extra rib supplied for the express purpose of preventing his mutilation, he comes unwittingly close to being as surprised by her as Satan was by Sin. Adam reviles Eve as an alien creature born of a superfluous rib: "Well if thrown out, as supernumerary / To my just number found" (X, 888-89). Woman is then as uncanny as an extra rib, "a novelty on Earth" (X, 891). For the innocent exegesis whether the rib is supernumerary or not is irrelevant; before the Fall Adam does not count his ribs. Milton takes care to stress that Eve is no surprise to Adam. She is created deliberately and slowly; God does not create her instantaneously by his Word but stoops to form and fashion her with his hands. The care that God takes in the process is reflected in the repetitions in Adam's narrative: "The Rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands; / Under his forming hands a Creature grew" (VIII, (469-70). It is quite clear that the innocent Adam, dreaming of Eve, did not find her uncanny or unexpected.

It is interesting that though Adam's new and fallen exegesis invokes the birth of Sin and, therefore, seems to ally the two females, he omits one crucial element from his new reading. Sin is born in the naturalistic violence of searing pain, but Adam never says that Eve's creation was painful or that he was put to sleep so as not to feel the extraction of the rib. Though the Genesis commentators by and large assume that Eve's birth would have been painful if Adam had not been cast into an anaesthetic sleep, Milton's Adam does not go so far as to impugn God's work. It seems that even when Milton wishes to assign the worst possible reading of the creation of Eve, he stops short of associating it with surgery.

Adam's moral condemnation of Eve ends in his repudiation of both the female sex and human sexuality. He asks why God did not create the world already fully populated, and exclusively by men, adding the surprising new misinformation that in Heaven all Angels are male, or, if procreation proved necessary, why did God not invent a less mischievous way to propagate mankind. The implication here is that Eve was created solely for the purpose of procreation. Earlier, narrating her creation, Adam speaks not of procreating mankind, but of the amorous delight of seeing Eve in his dream. He sees that Eve is beautiful and understands that she is the companion "fit to participate / All rational delight" (VIII, 390-91). He does not cast an eye to the future and say that God built the rib into a woman, prepared her to carry offspring, but that God formed and fashioned her. He chooses these words because, although it is obviously true that Milton's God does not braid Eve's hair, which is unadorned, "Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd" (IV, 306), he accepts the simplest explanation that the rabbis offered for the building of the rib. Eve is braided, adorned as a bride, but the artistry of Milton's God is generalized. With his hands he forms and fashions, braids as it were, Eve entirely into a lovely creature and leads her to Adam "adorn'd / With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow / To make her amiable" (VIII, 483-85). When Eve is created, Adam understands that her purpose is founded on her amiability. The fallen Adam reduces conjugal joy and love to the simple need for reproduction.

As Adam in his innocent exegesis of Eve's birth does not concern himself with future human offspring, he also has no need yet

to concern himself with typology. Formed and fashioned, the words with which he chooses Eve for her beauty and not for the need to propagate mankind, are the same words which St. Augustine declared antithetical to reading Eve's creation as a type of the birth of the Church from Christ, the second Adam. The wound caused by opening Adam's side and the blood that flows from the wound need not be read as a type of the piercing of Christ's side. In the tradition of erotic verse, such wounds are caused by the god of love. Spenser's praise of Cupid's conquests in An Hymne in Honour of Love is similar to the description of the opening of Adam's side, albeit Adam omits the military ferocity in his account:

I meane to sing the praises of thy name,  
 And thy victorious conquests to areed;  
 By which thou madest many harts to bleed  
 Of mighty Victors, with wyde wounds embrewed,  
 And by thy cruell darts to thee subdewed.<sup>62</sup>

Since Adam is narrating his dream of the creation of a beautiful woman and of the beginning of human love, it is not inappropriate to ascribe his wide wound to the arrows of Cupid rather than to the spear of a Roman soldier. It is Adam's heart, not his side, that is truly wounded when Eve is created. Adam perceives the extraction of the rib, an event read throughout the history of exegesis more or less overtly with horror and disgust as a mutilation of the man for the sake of the woman, as nothing other than the piercing of his heart by love. Cupid makes a rapid conquest of him and subdues his heart: "wide was the wound, / But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd (VIII, 467-68). The flesh that fills the place of the rib does not indicate that the new creature will be weak or defective but that the hardness of the

bone has been replaced by flesh, as though the hardness of the heart were removed to prepare it to yield to the influence of love.

The innocent Adam, however, is not immune to the misreadings prevalent among his descendants. Shortly after he describes his dream-vision to Raphael, Adam raises some traditional questions. He wonders if he was weakened by Eve's creation, if, indeed, he has not lost part of his strength along with his rib.

Or Nature fail'd in mee, and left some part  
Not proof enough such Object to sustain,  
Or from my side subducting, took perhaps  
More than enough.

(VIII, 534-37)

He is here giving undue, misplaced value to his rib, though not nearly as much as he will when he chooses to fall. Previously, naming the animals, he had felt that he missed something, however unspecific: "I found not what methought I wanted still" (VIII, 355). When he saw Eve led to him and exclaimed with joy, "This turn hath made amends" (VIII, 491), he was not referring to a just compensation received for the loss of his rib but to his former solitary condition, "in unity defective" (VIII, 426), now properly amended by Eve's creation. The lack of a mate was a want possible in Eden; the want of a rib implies that Eve's creation was accompanied by a mutilation of Adam by a divine surgeon, a bit of naturalism unfit for Paradise. Solitariness is the true defect and the reality of the rib lies in the part it plays in ending Adam's loneliness.

In his conversation with Raphael, Adam wavers between the defenders of women who declare Eve a more excellent and perfect creation than Adam, as she seems from the outside, and the more numerous

commentators who declare Eve a diminution of man, as her inward faculties seem to demonstrate. Adam momentarily yields to the temptation to be overwhelmed by Eve's beauty and, to counteract that power, yields to the opposite temptation to argue that she is inferior because she was created after him. He hesitates between Agrippa's argument that Eve is the end of creation, but first in God's intent and, therefore, best, and the more common notion, originally derived from Aristotle, that woman is an occasional animal created not for herself but for man and, therefore, less than man: "Authority and Reason on her wait / As one intended first, not after made / Occasionally" (VIII, 554-56).

In Paradise both Agrippa and Aristotle are wrong. Adam can deduce neither his superiority nor Eve's from the order of their creation. Whether Eve is first or last means nothing unless one shares the Satanic belief that God's creative powers are necessarily either decreasing or increasing. Satan, confused by his own assumptions, argues that Earth is to be preferred to Heaven because it was "built / With second thoughts, reforming what was old! / For what God after better worse would build?" (IX, 100-02); immediately afterwards he contradicts himself and wonders if God created man instead of Angels to replace the fallen crew because His powers had declined: "Whether such viture spent of old now fail'd / More Angels to Create" (IX, 145-46). Raphael is silent about Adam's doubts concerning priority and the ends of creation because he has already corrected such an error when he answered Adam's question about the distribution of energy in the cosmos:

God to remove his ways from human sense,  
 Plac't Heav'n from Earth so far, that earthly sight,  
 If it presume, might err in things too high,  
 And no advantage gain.

(VIII, 119-22)

As it is useless for Adam to know too many details of astronomy, it is useless for him to wonder if Eve was intended first or made occasionally. Such information would only lead him to invent inaccurate hierarchies of worth.

Whether superior or inferior, Eve is made from Adam's rib to create love between them. Traditional Christian exegesis insists that the knowledge of a link of flesh between them is essential to ensure that love, but Milton recognizes the danger of misreading the connection. Through the dream-vision Milton's Adam knows clearly and surely that he and Eve are made from one body and that on the rib rests their similitude: the rib is formed and fashioned into a creature who is "manlike, but different sex" (VIII, 471). Since Adam had pleaded for one like himself, the physical similarity is hardly insignificant. When he awakes to find Eve as he dreamt her, he thanks the Creator, applauding the link of flesh between himself and the woman:

I now see  
 Bone of my Bone, Flesh of my Flesh, my Self  
 Before me; Woman is her Name, of Man  
 Extracted, for this cause he shall forgo  
 Father and Mother, and to his Wife adhere;  
 And they shall be one Flesh, one Heart, one Soul.  
 (VIII, 494-99)

He implies an etymological connection between the English words man and woman that expresses the birth of the woman from the side of man, as though he were following Peter Comestor who translates the Hebrew ish and isha into Latin as vir and virago, the latter derived from a viro acta.<sup>63</sup> The enjambment emphasizes "extracted"; Adam bases their union

of flesh and heart and soul, their marriage, on Eve's birth from his side. This is the same close conjunction that he denies when he repudiates Eve and declares her the offspring of a supernumerary rib.

The link of flesh with flesh is the beginning of love but the memory of it has disastrous consequences. When the fallen Eve returns to Adam to tempt him to join her in eating the forbidden fruit, his memory of her birth from a rib taken out of his own side becomes decisive. He reasons that he must join with her now because they were originally one body:

How can I live without thee, how forgo  
Thy sweet Converse and Love so dearly join'd,  
To live again in these wild Woods forlorn?  
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  
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.  
(IX, 908-16)

Adam telescopes his union with Eve so that beginning with the sweet conversation he fears to lose, he ends with the fact of her origin from him, which he cannot lose. His first thought of the "sweet Converse and Love" leads him to his heart and there he abandons love for his rib, the "link of Nature." His thoughts move from a general concept of love that spares him the "wild Woods forlorn" to a particular union of flesh, reversing the progressive generalization of a union of "one Flesh, one Heart, one Soul" (VIII, 499) that he proclaimed when she was created. He ends his lament and makes his choice with "bliss or woe," echoing the words of the already corrupted Eve, in line 831, as she prepares to tempt Adam to fall with her, lest he

live to share Paradise with another Eve. The paired and absolute opposites, favorites of Satanic rhetoric, have crept into their language and thought. After the Fall, under the weight of that corrupt logic and full of remorse, Adam rejects the rib with as much ferocity and vehemence as he had clung to it before. Perhaps the rabbinic commentaries were right, after all, in foreseeing disaster if Adam knew of Eve's source. Although the rabbis did not fear that Adam would cling to Eve too fervently for being made of his rib, they foresaw that he might one day despise her for her lowly origin and that familiarity would breed contempt.

Whether clinging to his rib before the Fall or rejecting it afterwards, Adam's memory of Eve's creation is partial. He forgets that she was created in a dream, that he freely chose her and that she is, in part, the creature of his imagination. In order to avoid the responsibility of his free choice, he accuses nature, arguing a necessary bond between them because she was made of his flesh and bone. Moreover, he disregards the second half of his vision, extra-biblical, which transforms the creation of Eve from an aetiological myth into an emblem of love: Milton's version of the prophecy vouchsafed to Adam in his ecstasy. He mistakes the emblem of the rib for a literal fact of nature, like Satan who does not know that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is a sign of obedience to God, not a tree bearing fruit which contains a certain quantity of knowledge that can be consumed. Satan, always seeking not a clearer but a narrower definition, goes so far as to identify the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil as an apple, as though the strict identification of

the fruit revealed its meaning. Adam's last words before the Fall show how far he has joined Satan. To efface all choice, he reduces and narrows his interpretation of his dream of Eve's creation, an event even in Paradise replete with exegetical ambiguity and difficulty, and his perception of Eve herself. He echoes his lament for the fallen Eve but now he completes the identification begun there between his rib and Eve. She is no longer flesh of flesh and bone of his bone, a part of him but one with him:

So forcible within my heart I feel  
The Bond of Nature draw me to my own,  
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;  
Our State cannot be sever'd, we are one,  
One Flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.  
(IX, 955-60)

Adam's echo is partial; he seems to repeat himself but, to let necessity hold greater sway, he changes "link of Nature" to "bond of Nature," a subtle shift to a more absolute union. Adam reclaims his rib. This is the last erring thought he is free to approve. He has followed his own bad logic, successively arguing for more and more necessity as he renders Eve's creation from his side more and more literal, until only their identity of flesh is remembered, and thus he falls with Eve.

The link of flesh, the physical similitude between man and woman that sets them apart from the other animals as the ox is set apart from the ape, is undeniably real, not to be despised or ignored, but Adam at the brink of the Fall denies the greater part of the complex metamorphosis he witnessed at Eve's creation. In his dream Adam sees the rib transformed into the female of the human species but the transformation does not end there. It continues after the woman is formed:

Under his forming hands a Creature grew,  
Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,

That what seem'd fair in all the World, seem'd now  
 Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd  
 And in her looks, which from that time infus'd  
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,  
 And into all things from her Air inspir'd  
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.  
 (VIII, 470-77)

Once adorned with all the beauties of Paradise, Eve promptly effects a change in the Garden and in Adam. She incorporates all that is fair to give it back as love and sweetness, pouring out love and delight to make all things love her and each other. Adam's spirit and blood are transformed and returned to him: Eve infuses his "life-blood streaming fresh," translated as sweetness, back into his heart and diffuses the "cordial spirits warm" as the breath of love over all the world. Eve returns sweetness, an adjective appropriate to all the five senses, for her fairness, and, as it were, brings the Garden as a place of pleasure home to Adam. Adam, put to sleep with the aid of nature, dreams of the terrestrial Garden, as once he dreamt of it when he was transported there, but now the meaning of Eden is fulfilled. Renaissance etymology makes the Hebrew Eden, delight, and the Greek Hedone, pleasure, synonymous, and Adam does not know pleasure, or Eden, until he dreams of Eve.<sup>64</sup> Before she was created God Himself punned with the Greek and Hebrew to underscore Adam's predicament:

A nice and subtle happiness I see  
 Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice  
 Of thy Associates, Adam, and wilt taste  
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.  
 (VIII, 400-403)

Before Adam awakens from his sleep, he takes the identification of Eve with Eden implicit in the Celestial colloquy and in the dream to its logical conclusion: "I wak'd / To find her, or for ever to deplore /

Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure" (VIII, 478-80). Eve sums up and contains all the Garden; Adam will have no Eden without Eve.

In Adam's first dream God appears to guide him to the Garden of Eden: "Call'd by thee I come thy Guide / To the Garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd" (VIII, 298-99). But the Garden of bliss only wakes a vague apprehension of some lack in Adam. His second dream is an intensification and internalization of the first. Eve now appears as his human guide to translate, as it were, the sensual delights of Eden for him. This is the purpose of Eve revealed to Adam in his sleep. Adam is correct to sum up his dream equating Eve with Eden, but he errs later when, in conversation with Raphael, he changes the equation and sets Eve above the Garden. Isolating her from the Garden, he almost abjures all pleasures as though he had waked and not found her:

and must confess to find  
 In all things else delight indeed, but such  
 As us'd or not, works in the mind no change,  
 Nor vehement desire, these delicacies  
 I mean of Taste, Sight, Smell, Herbs, Fruits, and Flow'rs,  
 Walks and the melody of Birds; but here  
 Far otherwise, transported I behold,  
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt,  
 Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else  
 Superior and unmov'd, here only weak  
 Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.  
 (VIII, 523-33)

Although Adam says that he delights in the Garden, it is quite clear that he takes no more pleasure in it than he did before Eve was created. He errs in degree. His exclusive delight in Eve denies her beauty the power to transform the Garden so that it may appear full of love and amorous delight.

Twice before her creation is narrated, Eve's special interdependence with the Garden is emphasized. When Adam enters into an

abstruse conversation with Raphael, Eve leaves to tend to her plants:

With lowliness Majestic from her seat,  
 And Grace that won who saw to wish her stay,  
 Rose, and went forth among her Fruits and Flow'rs,  
 To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,  
 Her Nursery; they at her coming sprung  
 And toucht by her fair tendance gladlier grew.  
 (VIII, 42-47)

The flowers delight in Eve. When the praise of Eve's beauty is repeated, it is more general and stronger:

for on her as Queen  
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,  
 And from about her shot Darts of desire  
 Into all Eyes to wish her still in sight.  
 (VIII, 61-64)

We do not know whose eyes are charmed here. Perhaps the animals delight in her as much as the flowers. In any case, it is clear that Eve's looks are not for Adam alone, but for Eden. Adam's error, soon amended, almost made him a solitary stranger to the Garden again. Satan, the prime solitary stranger, who could not be moved to taste pleasure in Heaven, can surely not taste it in the Garden of Eden. Espying Eve alone among the roses, he parodies Adam's trance at her creation, abstracting himself from his own evil, but there is no danger of sweetness infusing into his heart. Satan is transported only for a moment as Eve steals his anger and mitigates his evil:

her Heavenly form  
 Angelic, but more soft, and Feminine,  
 Her graceful Innocence, her every Air  
 Of gesture or least action overaw'd  
 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 remain'd  
 Stupidly good, of emnity disarm'd,  
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge.  
 (IX, 457-66)

Satan is entranced by her beauty and the airs that inspire love but while they can halt his evil for a brief time they can work no good in him. He begins the temptation promptly.

Though it is no small feat to part Satan from his guile or hate or envy or revenge, even for an instant, it is not surprising that Eve has no real power to work a change in him. He comes to Eden boasting "A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time" (I, 253). Certainly it is not changed by place though it will in time, contracting further and further to end in the narrow body of the serpent. The cessation of malice is the best homage Satan can offer since his obdurate pride has exiled him forever from the reciprocity of love and beauty that Eve brings with her to the Garden. Adam's dream-vision reveals a model of love, inimical to Satan, that is found in Eden, in the unfallen cosmos, and in Heaven. Milton's version of the creation of Eve from the side of the sleeping Adam establishes a reciprocal order of giving and receiving, not the hierarchical one that exegetes almost universally assumed. Adam begins by lending Eve life. Since God does not breathe the breath of life into Eve as he did into Adam, that breath, the vital spirit, presumably must come with the life-blood that flowed with the rib. What was taken from Adam's heart, in itself almost indifferent, Eve returns to his heart as unfallen delight, the Garden of Eden. The life-blood in Adam's heart is like the sunlight which is barren until it finds its purpose in the earth:

the Sun that barren shines,  
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,  
But in the fruitful Earth; there first receiv'd  
His beams, unactive else, thir vigor find.  
(VIII, 94-97)

The answer to Adam's question about astronomy is that it really does not matter whether the sun revolves around the earth or the earth around the sun. The economy of the unfallen cosmos can be explained neither by Ptolemy nor Copernicus because it is determined by exchange and transformation, not quantity.<sup>65</sup>

Satan, who wants no change, has in place of Eve to guide him to Eden, her parody Sin who sits before the gate of Hell to hold the keys. Though not in a dream, Sin, the creature of allegory, appears like a vision to Satan at the start of his journey through the vast expanses of heaven and earth. She lets him out of Hell but his journey leads him nowhere; he leaves his realm but he cannot leave behind the Hell within him. Sin's attributes are proper for her vain and fraudulent purpose. In place of a pomp of winning Graces and airs that inspire amorous delight Sin appears with her son, the shadow Death who sits by her side, and their progeny, the hell hounds, who encircle and torment her. Death's darts make no one wish him still in sight, if he could be seen. However little they please their sire, Sin and her offspring inspire nothing in Satan's heart, not even fear. They lead him nowhere and offer nothing in return for such life as he has lent them.

Milton purges Eve's creation of the fallen implications that would make her an imperfect guide to Eden by translating her creation into a hieroglyphic of love revealed to Adam in his sleep. As though he had fallen under the influence of the exegetes among his descendants, Adam tends to misunderstand his own dream. He never doubts that the sleep was earthbound, sent by nature, but he almost forgets that the transformation of the rib into Eve was primarily a dream image, free of the physical reality of flesh and bone, without ceasing to be

terrestrial. On the other hand, falling under the sway of a different tradition he tends to ascribe too little flesh and blood reality to Eve, forgetting that they are made of one and the same substance. He confesses that he finds her beauty awesome, "as a guard Angelic piac't" (VIII, 559), so that it foreshadows the Cherubic guard that will one day shut him out of the Garden forever. The Archangel reminds him that God had quite the opposite intention when he made Eve beautiful:

Made so adorn for thy delight the more,  
So awful, that with honor thou may'st love  
Thy mate.

(VIII, 576-78)

Eve's beauty is not merely aesthetic, not an end in itself made to be contemplated from afar. If it serves no other purpose than to stay the beholder with wonder, it will prove ultimately illusory, as it does with Satan against whom it is powerless to do more than briefly abstract him from malice without changing his mind. The true purpose of Eve's beauty is to bring love into the world, and her creation, when rightly understood, leads Adam to live in the Garden of Eden which lies before him. Beauty and love and the Garden are inextricably intertwined.

Love is brought into the Garden of Eden when Eve is created: the sum of all beauty appears as the source of all human love. Standard Renaissance theory defines love in terms of beauty, as, for instance, Ficino explains: "When we say love, we mean by that term the desire for beauty, for this is the definition of Love among all the philosophers."<sup>66</sup> Ficino recognizes three possible sources of beauty: the soul, the body, and sound. Beauty of the soul is perceived by the mind; that of the body by the eyes; and that of sound by the ears. Only mind, eye and ear are worthy vehicles of love because they are

composed of a harmony of multiple elements: colors, lines, virtue or tones. The other senses are excluded as too simple for beauty:

Love is always limited to (the pleasures of) the mind, the eyes and the ears. What need is there of the senses of smell, taste and touch? Odors, flavors, heat, cold, softness, hardness, and like qualities are objects of these senses. None of these is human beauty, since these qualities are too simple, and human beauty of the body requires a harmony of various parts . . . but desire which rises from the other senses is called, not love, but lust or madness.<sup>67</sup>

Ficino's catalogue of unworthy qualities is reminiscent of Adam's catalogue of delicacies of smell, sight, taste and melody that do not delight in Eden as Eve delights him. Although the details of the two catalogues are obviously dissimilar, Adam, like Ficino, argues for a hierarchy of the senses, rejecting all but Eve as not truly worthy of beauty or delight. It seems as though Eve might constitute a sixth and higher sense, but, curiously, Adam excludes touch from among the delights which delight not: "transported I behold / Transported touch" (VIII, 529-30). He errs not only in isolating Eve from the Garden to set her in opposition to it, but, reasoning weakly, he seems to have apprehended her beauty through the wrong sense and so is in danger of rendering her unequal to the love she is to bring into the world.

Adam's dream-vision taught him otherwise. Eve, whose chief beauty is her outside formed so fair, brings love through sight, the sense most frequently found to be the cause of love. As Burton notes in the Anatomy of Melancholy: "The most familiar and usual cause of love is that which comes by sight, which conveys those admirable rays of beauty and pleasing graces to the heart."<sup>68</sup> The Renaissance explanation for human love depends on the physiology invented by the

stilnovisti of the trecento who placed the physical process of sight in the service of the exchange of spirits between lover and beloved. In the mutual exchange of spirits, such as Adam dreams of, the eyes act as passageways or vehicles for the spirits traveling between heart and heart.<sup>69</sup> Milton fuses the cryptic Genesis account of the creation of woman with the contemporary physical model of love and the awkward and perplexing manner in which God chose to create Eve is shown to be a version of the genesis of erotic love.

The rib of Adam taken from the side nearest his heart traditionally signifies the love intended between man and woman, yet Milton's Adam begins to love not because of that close conjunction but at the first sight of the fair creation from his rib. The creation of Eve has its true physical reality here, as a model of the mechanism of love arising from the perception of visual beauty. The rib and blood that God extracts from Adam's side are subordinated to or united with the cordial spirits, the distillations of blood neither quite corporeal nor incorporeal. If the cordial spirits of Adam are at first removed through his wound, rather than issuing from his eyes, Eve returns her own spirits through Adam's eyes to find his heart. He does not see the spirits, now invisible, but he feels the effect of their sweetness, as men will hereafter in the presence of a beautiful woman. Castiglione's Bembo describes such power of a beautiful face:

Therefore when an amiable countenance of a beautiful woman commeth in his sight, that is accompanied with noble conditions and honest behaviours, so that as one practised in love, hee woteth well that his hew hath an agreement with hers, as soone as hee is aware that his eyes snatch that image and carrie it to the hart, and that the soule beginneth to beholde it with pleasure, and

feeleth within her selfe the influence that stirreth her,  
and by litle and litle setteth her in heate, and that  
those lively spirits, that twinckle out through the  
eyes, put continually fresh nourishment to the fire.<sup>70</sup>

The physiology of love, the connection between heart and eye is revealed to Adam in his dream and there Eve begins to work a change in his mind. Adam's internal eye is left open while he sleeps so that he partakes of the hieroglyphic of love even as he apprehends it. His dream-vision initiates as it instructs.

The exchange of spirits can lead to lust as well as love. The passage of spirits through the eyes to the heart may be viewed as an act of enchantment or likened to the spread of a contagious disease. The Seventh Speech of Ficino's Commentary on Plato's Symposium describes how the spirits of the lover may invade and infect the heart of the beholder:

The light sent out from the eyes draws with it a spiritual vapor and the vapor draws with it the blood. And the eyes, wide open and intent on somebody, throw missiles of its light into the near-by eyes and with these missiles the bloody vapor called spirit. These virulent missiles (sent from the heart) seek the heart. The vapor is condensed and turned back into blood and infects the wounded man's own blood and hence follows a double bewitchment.<sup>71</sup>

Although these cordial spirits are the most rarefied form of blood, they may compell love with the same laws of necessity that bind all matter. Love as a contagion or enchantment is the fallen version of the sweetness Eve infused into Adam's heart and the delight she inspired in all things. Therefore, as soon as they have eaten the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve abandon the spirits of sweetness and delight for fire, a metaphor for compulsion perhaps even stronger than that exerted by magic or infection. Eve infuses fire into Adam's heart and eyes:

For never did thy Beauty since the day  
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd  
 With all perfection, so inflame my sense  
 With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now  
 Than ever, bounty of this virtuous Tree.

(IX, 1029-34)

In answer to his ardor, Eve's eye darts "contagious fire" (IX, 1036), the fallen form of the darts of the desire which made those who saw her wish her stay. There is no mutual exchange of spirits here, no transformation that delights the heart, but ardor devoid of choice or change. As Adam, half-remembering Eve's creation from his rib when he chose to fall with her, argued for a bond of nature, an undeniable union of flesh between them, so necessity has now infected the cordial spirits. Such contagious fire was used in Spenser's Faerie Queene by Hellenore to answer her suitor Paridell and incite their adulterous love:

But in his eye his meaning wisely red,  
 And with the like him answered evermore:  
 She sent at him one firie dart, whose hed  
 Empoisoned was with privy lust, and gealous dred.<sup>72</sup>

The dart finds its way to Paridell's heart where even the pain is dulled by the long habit of fruitless love. The outcome is the same for Adam and Eve. Although Adam's heart is not quite so jaded, the contagious fire ends with equal vanity in guilt and shame. When Adam first saw Eve, when she did not borrow her beauty from the forbidden tree, and when her looks were gentle airs that inspired without compelling, she returned the blood and spirits from his heart with their meaning fulfilled: his heart became amorous, the seat of Eros, and the cordial spirits became the spirits of love.

Love that is founded on visual perception carries not only the danger of lust but, quite obviously, of delusion. The Neoplatonists

are particularly wary of the superficial beauty perceived by the eyes. Castiglione's Cardinal Bembo warns the courtier not to be overcome by the unwonted sweetness that corporeal beauty inspires in the soul:

When the soule then is taken with coveting to enjoy this beautie as a good thing, in case she suffer her selfe to be guided with the judgement of the sense, she falleth in most deepe errorrs, and judgeth the bodie in which beauty is discerned to be the principall cause thereof: . . .

And therefore who so thinketh in possessing the bodie to enjoy Beautie, he is farre deceived, and is moved to it, not with true knowledge by the choice of reason, but with false opinion by the longing of sense.<sup>73</sup>

Those who follow the false opinion of the senses are deceived by vain lusts and seek wretchedly to unite with a beautiful body. That union is doomed because it can never satisfy the soul's longing for beauty which resides only in incorporeal forms abstracted from matter. Bembo advises the courtier to consign the corporeal beauties of the beloved woman to his imagination and from there to ascend to a love that more than the abstraction of the beauty of a particular woman, is general and universal:

the Courtier by the helpe of reason must fully and wholly call backe againe the coveting of the bodie to beautie alone, and (in what he can) behold it in it self simple and pure, and frame it within his imagination sundred from all matter. . . . if he will goe and consider with himselfe, what a straight bond it is to bee alwaies in the trouble to behold the beautie of one bodie alone. And therefore to come out of this so narrowe a roome, hee shall gather in his thought litle and litle so many ornaments, that meddling all beautie together, he shal make an universall conceite, and bring the multitude of them to the unitie of one alone, that is generally spred over all the nature of man. And thus shall he beholde no more the particular beautie of one woman, but an universall, that decketh out all bodies.<sup>74</sup>

Beyond this universal love that spreads beauty over all the world, there is yet one higher love which arises not from the proper perception of corporeal beauty but from the beauty seen with the eyes of

the mind. The desire for this heavenly beauty refines the soul and cleanses it of all mortality:

And therefore, as common fire tryeth gold and maketh it fine, so this most holy fire in soules destroyeth and consumeth whatsoever there is mortall in them, and relieveth and maketh beautifull the heavenly part, which at the first by reason of the sense was deade and buried in them.<sup>75</sup>

The love of the Heavenly Beauty is as earnestly to be desired and sought after as the desire for corporeal beauty is to be shunned. For those who cannot aspire after the highest love, the proper human love is the middle sort that rests in contemplation of the beloved.

The erring form of human love that seeks corporeal beauty misunderstands the relation of the soul to the visual images transmitted from the external world. The soul can apprehend the corporeal world only if it has first been translated into incorporeal images. How, asks Ficino, could the small pupil of the eye take in all the Heavens if the eye received the external world in corporeal form?<sup>76</sup> He explains that the spirit, a thin, clear vapor, acts as a mediator between the material world and the soul. The spirits receive the images of external bodies and send them indirectly, by reflection, to the soul:

The soul sees the images of bodies shining in the spirit as though in a mirror. While it sees these images, it conceives in itself images like them, but much purer. This is called imagination or fancy; images conceived here are kept in the memory. Through these, the eyes of the soul are awakened to behold the Universal Ideas of things which the soul holds within itself.<sup>77</sup>

The process of sight itself performs that abstraction and rarefaction of matter prescribed for the courtier in order to avoid the deception of vain lusts. The soul of the lover, which still retains some of the

Celestial Beauty, further refines the perceived image. It lends its own light to the corporeal beauty, restoring to it the perfection lost when it entered the material world. Thus, Spenser's An Hymne in

Honour of Beautie:

But they which love indeede, looke otherwise,  
With pure regard and spotlesse true intente,  
Drawing out of the object of their eyes,  
A more refynéd forme, which they present  
Unto their mind, voide of all blemishment;  
Which it reducing to her first perfection,  
Beholdeth free from fleshes frayle infection.

And then conforming it unto the light,  
Which in it selfe it hath remaining still  
Of that first Sunne, yet sparckling in his sight,  
Thereof he fashions in his higher skill,  
An heavenly beautie to his fancies will,  
And it embracing in his mind entyre,  
The mirrour of his owne thought doth admyre.

(211-24)

The lover refashions beauty in his own image and all lovers become somewhat like Pygmalion and love their own creations.

As Adam's dream-vision initiates him into erotic love, it teaches him to properly apprehend the beauty that inspires that love. His first sight of Eve occurs in his "cell of fancy" by which he may know that beauty is not a function of the senses alone but also of imagination. In the dream-vision Eve's beauty is as abstracted from matter as any Neoplatonic treatise could advise. When Adam seems to forget the terms of his vision and fall into awe before Eve's loveliness, Raphael cautions him against the error of believing that her beauty is corporeal and falling from there into lust, which is love abstracted from imagination:

But if the sense of touch whereby mankind  
 Is propagated seem such dear delight  
 Beyond all other, think the same voutsaf't  
 To cattle and each Beast.

(VIII, 579-82)

He advises him to seek, with the help of reason, a more general love than that which is fettered to the body:

What higher in her society thou find'st  
 Attractive, human, rational, love still;  
 In loving thou doest well, in passion not,  
 Wherein true Love consists not; Love refines  
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat  
 In Reason, and is judicious.

(VIII, 586-91)

Adam dreams of such a general love when Eve is created: he sees love diffused over all the Garden as it is infused into his heart.

Raphael does not, however, expect Adam to follow the Neoplatonists completely and rest his love of Eve in contemplation. The standard division between matter and soul, between the celestial and the terrestrial and the frequent rejection of matter as unworthy of the human soul makes Neoplatonism partially untenable in Eden where God invents erotic love. Raphael merely cautions Adam not to exclude the general love that Eve offers for the sake of the specific sexual one, and he promises Adam that, if he persists in loving well, the elusive Celestial Love, won in after times only after arduous contemplation, will be his. If Angels dine on human food, then Adam's human love is "the scale / By which to heav'nly Love thou may'st ascend" (VIII, 592-93). Adam acknowledges that corporeal beauty is not the sole delight of Eve, though he insists that human sexuality is certainly delightful and not at all like the procreation among the animals ("Though higher of the genial Bed by far, / And with mysterious reverence I deem" [VIII, 598-99]). He reiterates his vision of Eve's general beauty, though now

in terms more domesticated and less visionary, more apt for the quotidian life in the Garden and perhaps more accommodating to Raphael's admonitory tone. What truly delights Adam in his wife is not her external loveliness but:

those graceful acts,  
Those thousand decencies that daily flow  
From all her words and actions, mixt with Love  
And sweet compliance.

(VIII, 601-3)

Adam corrects himself and replaces the awesome angelic guard with a thousand decencies, which are tamer than Spenser's thousand graces and less figurative than Adam's own spirit of love and amorous delight. Eve's words and actions are the waking reality of the looks and air of his dream. Having arrived at a definition of human love, which is a mixture of sense and imagination and, though specifically founded on the physical charm of a single beautiful creature, tends toward a general delight and easy companionship, Adam inquires after celestial love and angelic sexuality.

The Heavenly love resembles human love more than is commonly thought on earth. The proximity of the two forms of love can be seen in Adam's dream-vision of Eve. On one hand, his dream is eminently terrestrial; his sleep comes as though nature were bringing him down to his home, the earth, after his upward flight in the divine interview. Yet although Adam calls his sleep natural, it is also a trance that abstracts him from his body and closes his corporeal eyes to open his internal eye, which may be the eye of the mind as well as the cell of fancy. His vision has some interesting parallels with the Neoplatonic furor amatorius which lifts the soul above the mortal world

and translates it to the intelligible spheres where it may apprehend celestial beauty and participate in heavenly love. By closing his eyes to the world and opening them inward to his own soul the Neoplatonic lover turns from human love which, though it rests in imagination, is bounded by the senses to the more perfect heavenly love free of corporeal limits. Castiglione describes the ascent of the lover from the sublunar world to God:

hee may . . . beholde the beautie that is seene with the eyes of the minde, which then begin to be sharpe and throughly seeing, when the eyes of the bodie lose the floure of their sightlinesse. . . .  
Therefore waxed blinde about earthly matters, is made most quicke of sight about heavenly.<sup>78</sup>

The vision of celestial beauty makes all fairness seen with corporeal eyes seem foul. In Spenser's An Hymne to Heavenly Beautie Sapience appears to those whom she finds worthy and her beauty, like Eve's, makes her lovers choose her above all else.

Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense,  
Or idle thought of earthly things remaine:  
But all that earst seem sweet, seemes now offense,  
And all that pleaséd earst, now seemes to paine.  
Their joy, their comfort, their desire, their gaine,  
Is fixed all on that which now they see,  
All other sights but fayné shadows bee.  
(267-73)

Adam rashly compares Eve to wisdom and finds Eve wise and wisdom foolish: "All higher knowledge in her presence falls / Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her / Loses discount'nanc't, and like folly shows" (VIII, 551-53). His error is twofold. There is a hint that Adam has made an untimely leap, forgetting that although his dream-vision shares the form of the quest for the heavenly love, Eve was made to lead him to the terrestrial Garden not to the throne of God. In his untimely

leap he has rejected one beauty for another and has committed an unnecessary and wrong-headed self-denial. In Eden he does not have to choose between Eve and Sapience. In his dream-vision Adam learns the Edenic principle of containment or conflation: when he sees Eve all else seems less than she, "mean," but not foul and the comparative "mean" yields immediately to "or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd" as the better description. Following this principle, his dream conflates the heavenly and earthly beauty so that one incorporates the other and thus verifies Raphael's promise that human love can be translated to Angelic love. After the Fall, when the Satanic opposites have infected the world, if one thing is declared fair, all else must be foul, as for Spenser one taste of the heavenly love makes all other love seem flat and harsh. In Paradise, however, the love of Adam and Eve, if substantially different from the celestial love of Angels, may be compared with it and not be found contemptible.

While beauty is universally acknowledged as a cause of love, Renaissance theory allows the relation between love and beauty to be reversed. As beauty inspires love, love illuminates beauty. Spenser, who in An Hymne in Honour of Beautie declares that lovers refashion corporeal beauty to perfect it, reminds women that love will show their beauty to its best advantage:

But gentle Love, that loiall is and trew,  
 Will more illumine your resplendent ray,  
 And adde more brightnesse to your goodly hew,  
 From light of his pure fire which by like way  
 Kindled of yours, your likeness doth display,  
 Like as two mirrours by opposed reflexion,  
 Doe both expresse the faces first impression.  
 (176-82)

Love cleanses the eyes to make the lover more keen of sight. Although lovers, fashioning the visual image to please their own thoughts, in effect, see what they want to see, paradoxically, they also see more clearly and distinctly than those who do not love:

For lovers eyes more sharply sighted bee  
Then other mens, and in deare loves delight  
See more then any other eyes can see.  
(232-34)

In the exchange of spirits lovers apprehend beauties invisible to other eyes. Spenser's description of the delights apprehended by loving eyes but not by duller, unloving ones is reminiscent of Adam's first vision of Eve in his dream and how she appears to all eyes in the Garden:

Therein they see through amorous eye-glaunces,  
Armies of loves still flying too and fro,  
Which dart at them their litle fierie launces  
Whom having wounded, backe againe they go,  
Carrying compassion to their lovely foe;  
Who seeing her faire eyes so sharpe effect,  
Cures all their sorrowes with one sweete aspect.

In which how many wonders doe they reede  
To their concept, that others never see.  
(239-47)

Like Eve's, the lady's smiles, looks, and words all bring pleasure but Spenser's lady is infinitely more praised for her beauties than Eve. For "A thousand Graces masking in delight" (254) upon her forehead, Eve has a more modest "pomp of winning Graces." Such modesty is appropriate to Paradise because Petrarchan exaggeration is not necessary to prove Eve's worth when she is everywhere perceived by loving eyes.

As terrestrial lovers see wonders ordinarily invisible, so celestial love alone has the power to make the higher beauty accessible to the eyes of the mind. Castiglione describes how the soul must rely

on love to grasp the highest meaning of the heavenly beauty:

And therefore burning in this most happie flame, she  
ariseth to the noblest part of her which is the under-  
standing, and . . . seeth the heavenly beautie: but yet  
doth she not for all that enjoy it altogether perfectly,  
because she beholdeth it onely in her particular under-  
standing, which can not conceive the passing great  
universall beautie.

Whereupon not throughly satisfied with this benefit,  
love giveth unto the soule a greater happinesse. For  
like as through the particular beautie of one bodie hee  
guideth her to the universall beauties of all bodies:  
Even so in the least degree of perfection through par-  
ticular understanding hee guideth her to the universall  
understanding.<sup>79</sup>

The soul so aided by love then takes on the nature of an Angel.

Whether it is for this final transcendence from the material world,  
or for the sight of the particular beauties of a woman, the eyes alone  
are insufficient and wait on love for clearer vision. The eyes, when  
they look inward and when they look outward, remain two small points  
on the human face, whose range is too narrow unless love cleanses them  
and enlarges their scope. The final irony is that love, because it  
has the power, like a telescope, to show beauties invisible to those  
who do not love, appears blind. Sight, by its very nature already  
internalized and almost unfettered from the external world, when  
coupled with love may engender perceptions that seem mad: Helena in  
Midsummer Night's Dream acknowledges the perverse power of love to  
dominate sight:

Things base and vile holding no quantity,  
Love can transpose to form and dignity.  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,  
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.<sup>80</sup>

If love can transform base things to beautiful, it becomes a higher  
form of sight and love that seems to be inspired by a vision of beauty  
has, in fact, created that beauty.

This peculiar dependence of sight upon love is demonstrated to Adam in his dream-vision. It is true that the sight of Eve in his dream engenders love in his heart, but before that sight was possible, God extracted a rib from the side nearest his heart, or, in secular terms, Adam was wounded by the shaft of the blind god, Eros. Beauty, like Milton's poem, must first seek a fit audience though few. The reciprocity that Eve brings to the Garden actually begins with the opening of Adam's side: his heart is prepared for sweetness and delight by its own generosity in offering the rib to Eve. The generous offering is repaid and more; Adam's eyes are twice opened by the vision afforded in his dream. The wide wound opens Adam's eyes so that he may perceive how fair Eve is; his eyes are opened again by her beauty and he sees how fair the Garden is. If Adam persists in loving well and generously, he is promised even greater sight when he comes to participate with the Angels who do not localize their senses: "All heart, they live, all Head, all Eye, all Ear, / All intellect, all Sense" (VI, 350-51). If he loves, he will see well and his sight will grow.

The inadequacy of the eyes alone for full and true perception may explain Satan's shortsightedness. His vision of Eve's beauty is partial; the absence of love seems almost a physical defect that shrinks his erstwhile Angelic eyes to two corporeal eyes only large enough to see beauty as an external form. The effect that beauty seen without love has on Satan is echoed in Adam's confessed misapprehension of Eve. An excessive susceptibility to beauty's powerful glance transports them both, Adam to subjection and Satan to blunted fierceness, and awes them to oblivion. Raphael has good reason for contracting his brow.

Perceived with awe, Eve is doomed to have no more life or worth than a well-made statue. The same type of perception that worships Eve one day will despise her the next and blame rather than thank the God who created her. As Satan's awe and momentarily abstracted malice are coupled with his contempt for Eve whom he is glad to find alone because he considers her weaker and less intelligent than the man, Adam himself cannot express the power of her loveliness without first proclaiming her inferior in mind. The excess of delight may lead Adam to passion, but curiously, it may also lead him to disembody Eve's beauty and find her less fair than her own outside.

Adam makes an obvious and honest mistake. Eve is abundantly adorned with visual beauty to draw love to her and the love is too easily transformed to worship. Castiglione describes the grip that beauty may have over the heart and mind of the lover until he comes to regard the beloved with an awe worthy of a holy object:

The soule taketh a delite, and with a certaine wonder is agast, and yet enjoyeth she it, and . . . astonished together with pleasure, feeleth the fear and reverence that men accustomedly have towards holy matters, and thinketh her selfe to be in Paradise.<sup>81</sup>

The courtier is advised to remember that since beauty is immaterial and resides only in forms, he may happily retain an image of the lady in his imagination where he will no longer be in danger of losing her or of suffering any of the infinite pains that afflict lovers who cannot always have their ladies before them in the flesh. While Castiglione's advice may serve in court, in the Garden of Eden physical beauty is not an illusion that can find its reality only in abstraction. Adam is by right the recipient of such pleasure in corporeal beauty that

makes the beholder feel that he is in Paradise. Raphael tells him quite clearly that Eve's beauty is "worthy well / Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love" (VIII, 658-59). He only forbids subjection to it, but he does not advise distant contemplation as a remedy. Adam has a difficult task. He must perceive Eve's beauty through the cell of fancy, but he must simultaneously value its physical reality. He must see well enough to embrace both the form and flesh of beauty at once.

Adam confesses his excessive delight in sexual passion but he tends far more frequently to turn away from his earthly Garden and interest himself in obscure and subtle matters, the orbits of the sun or earth and their speeds and distances. Eve, on the contrary, prefers the world close at hand and has only a secondary interest in other worlds. She leaves Adam and Raphael to their discourse on astronomy and goes off to tend her fruits and flowers. The dichotomy between horticulture and astronomy, between heaven and earth, is sharply drawn here. Raphael will reveal only so much as Adam needs to know to live well on earth:

To ask and search I blame thee not, for Heav'n  
Is as the Book of God before thee set,  
Wherein to read his wond'rous Works, and learn  
His Seasons, Hours, or Days, or Months, or Years;  
This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth,  
Imports not, if thou reck'n right.

(VIII, 66-71)

Milton has Raphael refuse to answer whether the universe is heliocentric or geocentric for the same reason that other exegetes adduced to Adam's sleep during Eve's creation:

the rest  
 From Man or Angel, the great Architect  
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge  
 His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought  
 Rather admire;

(VIII, 71-75)

Wonder, admiration, and secrecy are reserved for technical knowledge of the mechanics of the universe, a knowledge which is only conducive to pride in human reason. With Raphael's aid Adam abandons his abstruse question which, unchecked will lead to "Fume, or emptiness or fond impertinence" (VIII, 194-95) and leave him "unpractic'd, unprepar'd and still to seek" (VIII, 197) after the daily wisdom of the world which lies before him. As he once returned to earth after the celestial colloquy, Adam turns to tell the story of his own beginning, paying heed to the Archangel's advice:

joy thou  
 In what he gives thee, this Paradise  
 And thy fair Eve: Heav'n is for thee to high  
 (VIII, 170-73)

Adam's curiosity can too easily change his wondering eyes to "wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain" (VIII, 187). Eden and Eve restore his thoughts to their proper human sphere.

It is not surprising that Adam turns toward the heavens and Eve toward the Garden. The allegorical tradition which interprets the two sexes as the two parts of the human soul invariably assigns the material and phenomenal realm to the woman and the intellectual or spiritual to the man. Philo, the first to read Genesis as allegory, interprets the creation of Eve as the activation of sense perception in the soul which occurs while the mind, i.e., Adam, sleeps and the Fall follows shortly thereafter when Adam prophesies that a man must leave mother and father

and cleave to his wife, that is, the mind abandons God for the pleasures of sense perception and the flesh.<sup>82</sup> St. Augustine alters the terms of the allegory so that the creation of Eve does not automatically imply that man abandons God and falls. The serpent signifies sense perception because that is a faculty which man shares with the animals, while the woman signifies that part of the soul which preoccupies itself with the corporeal and temporal world and the man signifies the rational part that concerns itself with truth. There is no doubt that the latter is the ultimate goal of human life, yet life cannot be sustained without engaging oneself in the material world.<sup>84</sup> Each human mind contains both the male and female aspects but they are exhibited as distinct and separate in the two sexes. Because the sexes must play out their allegorical meaning, women ought to be veiled as a token of their subjection to their husbands to signify that as the mind advances to higher, spiritual things, the lower faculty must be curbed.<sup>85</sup> The realm of the woman is not rejected but placed in its subordinate hierarchical position.

The Renaissance Neoplatonists use the legend of an original androgynous ancestor, who was double-bodied, that is, possessed of two heads, four arms and legs, and both male and female genitals, as a convenient allegory for the dual nature of the human soul. Their allegory is based in part on Aristophanes' tale in Plato's Symposium of the birth of love from the division of the aboriginal hermaphrodite and in part on the sometime rabbinic belief that Adam and Eve were originally created as a hermaphrodite because the first chapter of Genesis says that God created man male and female, as though both

sexes were joined together in one body.<sup>85</sup> The splitting of the hermaphrodite into his male and female halves signifies the division of the soul into the faculties of mind and body. Ficino, without invoking human sexuality in his allegory, interprets the myth of Plato's hermaphrodite as an explanation of the division between the natural and supernatural worlds. The original man was equipped with two lights, one natural, by which he beheld inferior and equal things, and the other supernatural, by which he beheld superior things. He reverted to his natural light alone and therefore was cut off from his supernatural half and lost the possibility of perceiving superior things. If mankind, now sundered from his supernatural light, persists in placing too much faith in its natural light, that too will be extinguished.<sup>86</sup> The Fall of man is tacitly present in Ficino's reading of Plato.

According to Leone Ebreo the division of the hermaphrodite was not a punishment for turning to the sensual faculties and neglecting the intellectual. On the contrary, the story that the androgynous ancestor was sundered in two by an angry Jove as a punishment for his pride means that, because the speculative and corporeal faculties were joined together, the latter were neglected and the original man devoted himself completely to contemplation and lived a life more fit for Angels than men. He was in danger of destroying himself and his posterity with his neglect of his body and, therefore, to save him Jove cut him in two, that is, divided the two parts of the soul so that the body would somewhat resist the mind and the mind would be forced to turn its attention to the body:

però che, essendo l'uomo tutto speculativo, veniva ad essere del genere degli angeli e spirituali, fuore de l'intenzione del creatore, che era che fusse uomo con

alternato intelletto e corpo; il quale convertendosi tutto in angelico corrompeva la composizione umana e la conservazione individuale e la successione specifica; . . . Onde le fece dividere, cioè fece che'l corpo fece resistenza alquanto a l'intelletto, e che l'intelletto s'inclinò a le cure necessarie del corpo e sue naturalità, perché la vita fusse più presto umana che angelica.<sup>87</sup>

The female half of the human soul reminds man of his human status, of his material reality that distinguishes him from the Angels.

Henry More applies this figurative tradition to the Genesis creation of man and woman and finds that Eve is made for Adam because the dual nature of mankind demands that he participate in the terrestrial world. Like Philo, More reads the creation of Eve as the birth of sense perception in the soul but he reaches Ebreo's conclusion that the senses are vitally necessary for Adam's well-being. Before Eve is created, More's Adam knows only reason and intellect, and he lacks the capacity to enjoy the external world that God has given him. He

could take no . . . pleasure in the external creation of God, and his various works, without having some Principle of life congruously joyning with, and joyfully activating the like matter themselves consisted of: Wherefore, God indued the soul of man with a faculty of being united with vital joy and complacency to the matter, as well as of aspiring to an union with God himself, whose divine Essence is too highly disproportioned to our poor substances.<sup>88</sup>

When Adam tires himself in his pursuit of things too high for him and falls asleep, God activates sense perception in his soul:

Wherefore, God, to gratifie Adam, made him not indefatigable in his aspirings towards Intellectual things, but . . . brought upon himself remisnesse and drowsiness in such like exercises till by degrees he fell into a more profound sleep. At what time divine Providence . . . that lower vivificative principle of his soul did grow so strong . . . and with such exultant sympathy and joy actuate his Vehicle . . . that . . . this became more dear to him, and of greater contentment, than any thing he had yet experience of.<sup>89</sup>

Sense perception is the vehicle that brings mind in contact with matter: woman joins man to the physical universe. It seems that it is not good for Adam to live alone because solitary he will not partake of his full, twofold nature.

In Tetrachordon Milton follows the outline of this figurative reading of male and female but he replaces More's identification of the woman with a specific delight in the natural and corporeal world for a more general concept of pleasure. For More the contemplative male is joined with the female who brings "that kindly flowring joy or harmlesse delight of the Natural life, and Health of the Body."<sup>90</sup> Milton's words are close to More's but, because Milton speaks of ordinary human life and not of an allegorical abstraction, the contemplation becomes pragmatic and the realm of the woman becomes an alternative to a life too constricted by daily realities:

We cannot therefore alwayes be contemplative, or pragmat-  
call abroad, but have need of som delightful intermissions;  
wherein the enlarg'd soul may leav off a while her severe  
schooling and like a glad youth in wandring vacancy, may  
keep her hollidaies to joy and harmles pastime:<sup>91</sup>

The woman provides rest after labor and a new world for the mind having grown weary and narrow with work. The figurative tradition seems to have come full circle and the woman no longer completes man's human nature by joining him with the material world. Instead she offers him freedom from the restraints of too much worldly reality. She is most like the freedom of imagination, not unlike Schiller's description of the freedom of play as distinct from the necessity of work as it is found not only among men but among the animals and even in vegetable nature:

The animal works when deprivation is the mainspring of its activity, and it plays when the fullness of its strength is this mainspring, when superabundant life is its own stimulus to activity. Even in mindless Nature there is revealed a similar luxury of powers and a laxity of determination which in that natural context might well be called play. The tree puts forth innumerable buds which perish without developing, and stretches out for nourishment many more roots, branches and leaves than are used for the maintenance of itself and its species. What the tree returns from its lavish profusion unused and unenjoyed to the kingdom of the elements, the living creature may squander in joyous movement.<sup>92</sup>

Such a profusion of nature and such freedom from necessity is found in the Garden of Eden where nature "Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will / Her Virgin Fancies, pouring forth more sweet, / Wild above Rule or Art, anormous bliss" (V, 295-97). Fallen man knows such freedom only in the wandering vacancy of imagination or holiday. The terms of the allegory are no longer mind and matter but freedom and necessity and the woman signifies the delight that abstracts man, for a while, from the constraints of necessity. It is the delight of the city-dweller released from the crowds and narrow streets for a morning in the wide spaces of the country.

Milton's Adam and Eve are descended from the allegories of the two sexes as the parts of the human soul. Adam's primary and natural inclination is to speculate and to reason; Eve's to delight in the sensory pleasures of the Garden. Adam awakens, newly created, to gaze first at the sky above him:

Straight toward Heav'n my wond'ring Eye I turn'd,  
And gaz'd a while the ample Sky, till rais'd  
By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,  
As thitherward endeavoring, and upright  
Stood on my feet.

(VIII, 257-60)

Eve's first action is to look down into a pool of clear water to see that same sky reflected on earth: "the clear / Smooth Lake, that to me seem'd another Sky" (IV, 458-59). Adam converses readily with God and Angel and, pleased as he is with the earth about him, his chief contact with it, the naming of the animals, is an exercise in reason rather than delight: "I nam'd them, as they passed, and understood / Thir nature, with such knowledge God endu'd / My sudden apprehension" (VIII, 352-54). Whether the variety of shape, size and color of the animals pleased him he does not say. As Adam understands the intrinsic nature of each animal, Eve understands the fruit that abounds in the Garden, but with sense as well as reason. She names the flowers she tends and, although she retires from conversation with an Angel, she carefully and correctly prepares his banquet:

What choīce to choose for delicacy best,  
 What order, so contriv'd as not to mix  
 Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring  
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;  
 (V, 333-36)

She knows her earthly garden and the good before her, while Adam reasons well enough to please both God and Angel and hold dominion over all the world. This division of realms between Adam and Eve fulfills all expectation. Figuratively, as well as actually, it is agreed that these are the proper spheres of men and woman: "For contemplation hee and valor form'd / For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace" (IV, 297-98).

There is no doubt that Eve leads Adam from his contemplations to his terrestrial domain. If in this Eve seems somewhat like the Eve of the exegetes who provides her husband with a home, it is true only

in the most general sense. Eve, who is not built but adorned, decks her nuptial bed, but the bower itself "was a place / Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd / All things to man's delightful use" (IV, 690-92). The home she brings is, in effect, a Paradise within. With her love and beauty, she opens Adam's eyes, both corporeal and internal, as he knows from his dream, to the beauty of the Garden. In opening his eyes to the world before him she opens his eyes to as vast a world, or vaster, than he might hope to find by looking toward the heavens: "In narrow room Nature's whole wealth, yea more, / A Heav'n on Earth; for blissful Paradise / Of God the Garden was" (IV, 207-9). His celestial speculations will lead to wandering thoughts in the fallen sense, but in the Garden he may wander at large. There is more for the unfallen Adam to see in Paradise than in all the Heaven; Eve leaves him dark when she disappears the moment before he wakes to find her. Eve, like her allegorical antecedents, brings the corporeal world of delight in sense perception to Adam, but in bringing Paradise with her she brings also the more general concept of joy, of freedom from the constraints of necessity, that Milton describes in Tetrachordon. St. Jerome, railing against women and marriage, invokes St. Paul's distinction between marriage and celibacy:

He that is unmarried is careful of the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and is divided.<sup>93</sup>

That is precisely the point in Paradise. So long as God has been pleased with obedience to the interdiction against the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam has been placed in the Garden to be

careful of the things of this world and to please his wife. After the Fall, when Christ comes to judge them, he asks Adam whether Eve was made to be his guide. The irony is terrible. Had they obeyed, she was indeed to open his eyes and guide him to the Garden. She was made to offer him the terrestrial Garden of Eden as she offered the feast of its fruits to the affable Archangel.

Adam, in turn, offers her the fruit of his reason and of his angelic conversations. Eve confines her interest in the heavens to that which she can see on earth before her, and her question why the moon and stars shine at night while all eyes sleep is merely the more direct and more earthbound version of Adam's question about the earth and sun. The final reply to both is almost identical, although Raphael's is more elaborate and indefinite. Adam tells Eve that there may be more eyes to see than we know of:

nor think, though men were none,  
That Heav'n would want spectators, God want praise;  
Millions of spiritual Creatures walk the Earth  
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.  
(IV, 675-80)

Raphael sets forth the possibility that there may be more recipients of the sun's light than Adam knows of. There may, for instance, be life on the moon and to that life the earth may serve as a sun:

What if that light  
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air,  
To the terrestrial Moon be as a Star  
Enlight'ning her by Day, as she by Night  
This Earth: reciprocal, if Land be there,  
Fields and Inhabitants: Her spots thou seest  
As Clouds, and Clouds may rain, and Rain produce  
Fruits in her soft'n'd Soil, for some to eat  
Allotted there;  
(VIII, 140-48)

And not only on the moon. Raphael teases Adam with the possibility

of other suns and other moons and a multitude of other inhabitants. These answers are too distant for Adam and would certainly be so for Eve. She wisely leaves Adam to converse alone with Raphael, knowing that when Adam relates the conversation to her he will add conjugal caresses to his speculations and so make the heavens seem less distant.

The Angel teases Adam in order to check his curiosity about the realms above the earth. Although Adam is obviously more closely allied to the Angelic world than Eve, his proper sphere is the same as hers. The identification of Adam with Raphael is clear from Adam's praise of the Angelic discourse:

For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n,  
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear  
Than Fruits of Palm-tree pleasantest to thirst  
And hunger both, from labor, at the hour  
Of sweet repast.

(VIII, 210-14)

This is an abbreviated version of Eve's extended compliment to Adam in Book IV:

With thee conversing I forget all time,  
All seasons and thir change, all please alike.  
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,  
With charm of earliest Birds; pleasant the Sun  
When first on this delightful Land he spreads  
His orient Beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,  
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth  
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
Of grateful Ev'ning mild, then silent Night  
With this her solemn Bird and this fair Moon,  
And these the Gems of Heav'n, her starry train:  
But neither breath of Morn when she ascends  
With charm of earliest Birds, nor rising Sun  
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flow'r,  
Glist'ring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,  
Nor grateful Ev'ning mild, nor silent Night  
With this her solemn Bird, nor walk by Moon,  
Or glittering Star-light without thee is sweet.

(IV, 639-56)

Eve begins by praising Adam's discourse, which charms like the Archangel's, but ends by identifying Adam with the Garden of Eden. While Raphael's discourse makes Adam believe himself in Heaven, Adam's makes Eve believe herself in Paradise. Although she could not show a greater appreciation for the sensual delights of the Garden, Eve would abjure all its pleasures without Adam. When she was created she brought sweetness to Adam and Eden became pleasure to him. Now the sweetness is brought back to her and Eden would not be Eden without Adam. They have inverted the figurative categories: he is her guide to the delights of the terrestrial Garden.

When Adam becomes Eve's guide to Eden, the process begun at her creation is completed. Eve's creation initiates him into the pleasures of the earthly Paradise and ultimately he becomes its creature. It is obvious that although Milton uses the traditional allegory of the two sexes as the background for his characterization of Adam and Eve, he changes the terms to suit his vision of innocence. For mankind the earth has primacy over the celestial spheres. Adam, who begins life by turning to the sky, is taught that if he seeks the higher realms, he must find them by first engaging the material world. The dream-vision of Eve brings Adam from celestial colloquies to sensual delight. The creation of Eve contains the possibility of a higher order of visual pleasure than Paradise and of a love which is beyond the distinction of male and female, but Adam's dream-vision is primarily earth-bound and erotic and teaches him to live well in his own domain. With a similar intent, the Archangel Raphael warns him that he must use his reason and imagination to apprehend the reality of Eden rather than to indulge

in vain curiosity about distant regions of stars and skies. (In fact, Adam's question about the orbits of the earth and sun is best answered by his vision of Eve's creation which demonstrates the principle of reciprocity that unites the unfallen universe.) In Milton's Paradise, therefore, the sexual division of mankind cannot be a figure for the duality of heaven and earth. In order to accommodate his vision of terrestrial innocence, Milton must eclipse the figurative distance between man and woman and place them both in the region of corporeal reality. The celestial realms belong to the Angels while Adam and Eve belong to the world below.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The Babylonian Talmud, trans. Jacob Schachter, ed. I. Epstein (London: Soncino Press, 1935), V, pt. 4, Sanhedrin 4, 39a. See also J. M. Evans, "Paradise Lost" and the Genesis Tradition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 43-44 and 262-63; and Cheryl H. Fresch, "The Hebraic Influence upon the Creation of Eve in Paradise Lost," Milton Studies, 13 (1979), 189-91.

<sup>2</sup>"Rashi" on the Pentateuch: Genesis, trans. James H. Lowe (London: Hebrew Compendium Publ. Co., 1928), p. 60.

<sup>3</sup>Midrash Rabbah, trans. H. Freedman, ed. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1939), I, Bereshith, XVII, 7.

<sup>4</sup>Hieronymus Zanchius, De Operibus Dei (Hanover, 1597), p. 647: "Nam ait Moses, Deum fecisse cadere hunc somnum super Adamum. Fuit igitur supernaturalis & divinus: id quod etiam confirmatur verbo, cadere fecit super Adamum. Fuit igitur de Caelo & ex alto. Naturalis enim somnus acendit potius ab imo, in altum dum scilicet a vaporibus, qui eventriculo ascendunt ad caput, in capite excitatur." The same supernatural sleep occurs to other Old Testament Patriarchs, p. 649: "Talis fuit somnus, quo correptus Abraham, audivit a Domino, quid futurum esset de suo semine, Genes. 15. Non dissimili somno affectus fuit Iacob, cum vidit scalam e Caelo, in terram usque pertingentem, Genes. 28.

<sup>5</sup>John Salkeld, A Treatise of Paradise (London, 1617), p. 169.

<sup>6</sup>De Operibus Dei, p. 653: "Sicut enim in sua ecstasi, videt mulierē e sua costa formari; sic experrectus a somno, ex adductione huius, faeminae ad se per manum Jehovae, facile intellexit, eam sibi in uxorem offeri."

<sup>7</sup>Henry More, Conjectura Cabbalistica (London, 1653), p. 14.

<sup>8</sup>For a study of the typology of Eve's creation see Mary Christopher Pecheux, "The Second Adam and the Church in Paradise Lost," ELH, 34 (1967), 173-87 and Evans, Genesis Tradition, pp. 100-101.

<sup>9</sup>St. Augustine, De Genesi ad Litteram, ed. Joseph Zycka in Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1894), XXVIII, Bk. 9, 19.

<sup>10</sup> Lectures on Genesis, trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), I, 139.

<sup>11</sup> John Calvin, Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis, trans. John King (1948; rpt. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1963), I, 135.

<sup>12</sup> "The Sixth Day of the First Week," DuBartas, His First Week; or, Birth of the World, in The Complete Works of Joshuah Sylvester, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1880; fasc. rpt. N.Y.: AMS Press, 1967), I, lines 137-41.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Willet, Hexapla in Genesin (Cambridge, 1605), p. 37.

<sup>14</sup> Luther's Works, I, 129.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Griffith, Bethel: or A forme for families (London, 1633), p. 227.

<sup>16</sup> David Pareus, In Genesin Mosis Commentarius (Geneva, 1614), col. 429.

<sup>17</sup> William Austin, Haec Homo, wherein the excellency of the creation of woman is described (London, 1637), pp. 11-12.

<sup>18</sup> Paradise Lost, in Complete Poems and Major Prose, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (N.Y.: Odyssey Press, 1957), Bk. VIII, 449-59. This edition is used throughout and all subsequent references to Milton's verse are cited in the text.

<sup>19</sup> See Evans, Genesis Tradition, p. 263.

<sup>20</sup> See note 6 above. Adam's consent is expressed by his recognition: "Proinde suam voluntatem experimens, suumque consensum, dixit: Hac vice, os ex ossibus meis & c."

<sup>21</sup> George Sandys, Ovid's Metamorphosis: Englished, Mythologized and Represented in Figures, ed. Karl K. Hulley and S. T. Vandersall (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 460.

<sup>22</sup> See Manfred Weidhorn, Dreams in Seventeenth-Century English Literature (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 151-53 for Eve's creation narrated as a love-dream lyric.

<sup>23</sup>Books I and II of "The Faerie Queene," ed. Robert Kellogg and Oliver Steele (N.Y.: Odyssey Press, 1965), Bk. I, ix, 13. All subsequent references are cited in the text.

<sup>24</sup>Midrash Rabbah, Bereshith XVIII, 2. See also Evans, Genesis Tradition, p. 44, for the exegesis of Midrash on the rib.

<sup>25</sup>St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, trans. Edmund Hill (N.Y.: Blackfriars and McGraw Hill; London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964), XIII, 1a, 92, 3.

<sup>26</sup>Giovanni Diodati, Pious Annotations Upon the Holy Bible (London, 1651), sig. D<sup>V</sup>.

<sup>27</sup>See C. A. Patrides, Milton and the Christian Tradition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 180-81 for contemporary opinions on the proper subjection of woman. For the rib as exponent of subjection see John Halkett, Milton and the Idea of Matrimony (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 87-88.

<sup>28</sup>John Calvin, Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, trans. John Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1948), I, 357.

<sup>29</sup>Daniel Rogers, Matrimonial Honour (London, 1642), pp. 254-55. Against the belief that Adam is preeminent simply on the basis of his priority and not on Eve's derivation from him, Matthew Griffith, Bethel, pp. 240-41, notes that priority argues nothing since the animals were created before Adam and they do not hold lordship over him.

<sup>30</sup>Religio Medici, in The Prose of Sir Thomas Browne, ed. Norman Endicott (N.Y.: N.Y.U. Press, 1968), p. 80.

<sup>31</sup>Zanchius, De Operibus Dei, p. 650: "Rursus, unam tantum ab Adamo accepit costam, nō plures: ne plus sibi imperii, quam par sit, in mulierem usurpet vir: quasi tota sit sumta ex viro. Ideo meminisse debet vir, in muliere non esse e suo, nisi coastam una & aliquid carnis: totum reliquum additū illia Deo fuisse."

<sup>32</sup>Pareus, In Genesin, col. 431: "Voluit enim mulierem potius ex viro sumere, quam ex terra condere aut ex nihilo creare, ut non tantum naturae similitudine, sed etiam cognationis affectū primi conjuges arctius inter se devincti essent: idemque affectus mutui amoris in omnes conjuges diffunderetur. Hoc argument Apostulus hortatur viros, ut diligant & foveant uxores suas, sicut sua ipsorum corpora."

<sup>33</sup>Miles Coverdale, The Christen State of Matrimonye (London, 1552), sig. H8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>34</sup>In Genesis, col. 430. Genesis, of course, does not specify to which side the rib belonged. See Mary Irma Corcoran, Milton's Paradise with Reference to the Hexameral Background (Wash., D.C.: Catholic Univ. of Amer. Press, 1945), p. 65 for a discussion of the preference among the commentators for the left or right side of Adam. See also Roland Mushat Frye, Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 260-61 for the choice of left or right side in the pictorial tradition.

<sup>35</sup>Pietro Martire Vermigli, In Primum Librum Mosis (Zurich, 1579), p. 12: "Os auferitur ab Adamo in creatione uxoris & caro repletur, eo quod robustum imperium in eam non sit exercendum, sed politicum & mite: nec viri debent erga uxores esse asperi."

<sup>36</sup>Francis Quarles, Hadassa: or the History of Queene Ester, in Complete Works, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1880; facs. rpt. N.Y.: AMS Press, 1967), II, 50.

<sup>37</sup>De Operibus Dei, p. 651: "Costa, robur significat: caro, infirmitatem. Ut igitur de robore viri communicatum est mulieri; sic decunt virū imbecillitate mulieris, quae nomine carnis significatur, participari: ac proinde fortiorem debere compati imbecilliori; & plus ei tribuere honoris: hoc est, quod I Pet. 3 vers. 7 docet."

<sup>38</sup>Alexander Ross, An Exposition of the Fourteene First Chapters of Genesis (London, 1626), p. 54.

<sup>39</sup>Nicholas Gibbon, Questions and Disputations Concerning the Holy Scripture (London, 1602), I, 97.

<sup>40</sup>For a discussion of the use of the rib in misogynous tracts, see Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1956), pp. 183-84; and Katherine Rogers, The Troublesome Help-mate (Seattle: Univ. of Wash. Press, 1966), pp. 100-142. For a general discussion of the sixteenth-century debates on the worth of women and their background, see Francis Lee Utley, The Crooked Rib (Columbus: Ohio State Univ. Press, 1944), pp. 3-90. For the debates see also Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N. C. Press, 1935), pp. 465-507; and Carroll Camden, The Elizabethan Woman (Houston: Elsevier Press, 1952), pp. 17-30 and 241-63.

<sup>41</sup>Religio Medici, p. 80.

<sup>42</sup> Joseph Swetnam, The araignment of lewd, idle, froward, and unconstant women (London, 1617), p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> The Schole house of Women (London, 1560), sig. B4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> Agrippa von Nettesheim, A Treatise of the Nobilitie and Excellencye of Womankynde, trans. David Clapam (London, 1542), sig. A7<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, sig. B2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> Daniel Tuwill, Asylum Veneris (London, 1616), p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> Ester Sowernam, Ester hath hang'd Haman (London, 1617), p. 3.

<sup>48</sup> A Treatise of Paradise, p. 177.

<sup>49</sup> Andreus Rivetus, Operum Theologicorum (Rotterdam, 1651), I, 100: "Et cerrè non est leve argumentum ad probandum costam illam fuisse unam ex necessariis ad corpus Adamus, quia si fuisset superflua, & extra naturam ejus, verè dici non posset Evam ex Adamo fuisse formatam, nec dixisset Adamus Evam fuisse os ex ossibus suis; quia costa illa non fuisset naturale & proprium ejus os, sed quantum ad eum pertinebat praeter naturam, & per accidens, & ad brevissimum tempus ipsi fuerat indita. Et erat ad significandam conjunctionem arctissimam Adami & Evae, & mulieris ex viro naturalem originem & dependentiam, congruum & conveniens magis, ut formaretur Eva ex aliqua parte necessaria virilis corporis, quam si ex superflua aliqua materia, fuisset constructa."

<sup>50</sup> Commentaries on the First Book of Moses, I, 133.

<sup>51</sup> Luther's Works, I, 130.

<sup>52</sup> The Babylonian Talmud, trans. I. W. Slotki, ed. I. Epstein (London: Soncino Press, 1938), III, pt. 2, 'Erubin 18a-18b.

<sup>53</sup> See p. 11 above.

<sup>54</sup> St. Augustine, The City of God, trans. George G. Walsh and Daniel J. Honan, in The Fathers of the Church, ed. Roy J. Deferrari, et al. (N.Y.: Fathers of the Church, 1951), XXIV, 464.

<sup>55</sup> Luther's Works, I, 132.

<sup>56</sup>De Operibus Dei, p. 651: "Ergo tam si spectes totam humani generis generationem ex Eva: quam totius Ecclesiae propagationem: accomodatissime ulius est verbo aedificandi."

<sup>57</sup>Luther's Works, 1, 134.

<sup>58</sup>Haec Homo, pp. 59-60.

<sup>59</sup>The Geneva Bible, ed. Lloyd E. Berry (1560; facs. rpt.; Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1969), gloss to Gen. 2:21.

<sup>60</sup>Bethel, pp. 240-41.

<sup>61</sup>See the catalogue in Midrash Rabbah of God's choices for the source of Eve, quoted in Evans, Genesis Tradition, p. 44.

<sup>62</sup>Edmund Spenser's Poetry, ed. Hugh Maclean (N.Y.: Norton, 1968), lines 10-14. All references to the Fowre Hymnes are from this edition and hereafter appear in the text.

<sup>63</sup>Evans, Genesis Tradition, p. 169.

<sup>64</sup>The etymology is commonplace. See Henry Reynolds, Mythomystes, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (1632; facs. rpt. Menton, Yorkshire: Scolar Press, 1972), p. 76. It is also used by Luther to gloss Gen. 2:8, Lectures on Genesis, in Luther's Works, 1, p. 87.

<sup>65</sup>For the inadequacy of any known astronomical laws based on calculations made in the fallen world, see Alastair Fowler, The Poems of John Milton, ed. John Carey and Alastair Fowler (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1968), p. 449.

<sup>66</sup>"Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's Symposium," trans. S. R. Jayne, Univ. of Missouri Studies, 19 No. 1 (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri, 1944), 130. For love and beauty used interchangeably among the Neoplatonists, see John Charles Nelson, Renaissance Theory of Love (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1958), p. 80. For a discussion of Neoplatonic love among the philosophers and popularizers in Italy, see Erwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, Icon Edition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1939; N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 141-49.

<sup>67</sup>"Commentary on Plato's Symposium," p. 130.

<sup>68</sup>Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, Everyman (1932; rpt. N.Y.: Dutton; London: Dent, 1964), 111, 65.

<sup>69</sup>For the relation of spirits, heart and eye formulated among the stilnovisti, see Maurice Valency, In Praise of Love (N.Y.: Macmillan, 1958), pp. 218-22.

<sup>70</sup>Baldassare Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby, Everyman (1974; rpt. London: Dent; N.Y.: Dutton, 1975), pp. 312-13.

<sup>71</sup>"Commentary on Plato's Symposium," p. 223.

<sup>72</sup>Edmund Spenser's Poetry, Bk. III, ix, 28.

<sup>73</sup>The Book of the Courtier, pp. 304-305.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., pp. 317-18.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 320.

<sup>76</sup>"Commentary on Plato's Symposium," p. 168.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>78</sup>The Book of the Courtier, pp. 318-19.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 319.

<sup>80</sup>William Shakespeare: The Complete Works, ed. Alfred Harbage, rev. ed. (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969), I, i, 232-35.

<sup>81</sup>The Book of the Courtier, p. 316.

<sup>82</sup>For a study of Philo and the allegorical exegesis of the creation and fall among his Christian followers see Evans, Genesis Tradition, pp. 69-77. For the allegory of the two sexes see Joseph E. Duncan, Milton's Earthly Paradise (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minn. Press, 1972), pp. 44-45, 258-60, 264-66.

<sup>83</sup>St. Augustine, On the Trinity, trans. Arthur West Haddan., rev. William G. T. Shedd, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 1st ser., ed. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1956), III, 162.

<sup>84</sup>St. Augustine, Of the Works of the Monks, trans. H. Browne, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 1st ser., III, 524.

<sup>85</sup>Midrash Rabbah, trans. J. Israelstam, IV, Leviticus XIV, 1. For the Renaissance allegory of the original androgynous man, see Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance (N.Y.: Norton, 1968), pp. 211-15.

<sup>86</sup>"Commentary on Plato's Symposium," p. 155.

<sup>87</sup>Leone Ebreo, Dialoghi d'amore, ed. Santino Caramella (Bari: Gius. Laterza, 1929), pp. 305-306.

<sup>88</sup>Conjectura Cabbalistica, p. 41.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>91</sup>Ed. Ernest Sirluck, in Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959), II, 597.

<sup>92</sup>Friedrich Schiller, On the Aesthetic Education of Man, trans. Reginald Snell (N.Y.: Frederick Ungar, 1965), p. 133.

<sup>93</sup>St. Jerome, Against Jovinianus, trans. W. H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W. G. Martley in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd ser., ed. H. Wace and P. Schaff (N.Y.: Charles Scribner, 1912), VI, 347.

## CHAPTER II

## ECHO AND NARCISSUS: A REPRESENTATION OF UNFALLEN LOVE

In Book VIII, Adam tells how Eve's creation opened his eyes to the delicious phenomenal world about him, a world only half-perceived in solitude. His clearer sight infuses new powers into all his senses so that he delights not only in what he sees but in what he hears, tastes, smells and touches. Eve, for her part, declares Adam her guide to those same delights of Paradise when she praises his conversation which abstracts her from all time and place, as if his words were a microcosm of Eden through which all the rest of the Garden became accessible. In Paradise the allegory of the sexes expresses one dichotomy of terrestrial experience: Adam and Eve divide the rule of the two chief senses which, according to Renaissance theory, are worthy of inspiring human love. Eve, from whom all visual beauty seems to emanate, rules the sense of sight; Adam, who converses freely with God or Angel, rules the sense of hearing. The reality of innocence lies in the consonance of God's word and the palpable beauty of the Garden. Through this schematic representation of erotic love, Milton incorporates the traditional allegories of male and female as spirit and matter or heaven and earth, and, as he did with the creation of Eve, replaces hierarchy with reciprocity. The Fall destroys the consonance of the two senses. The Garden becomes like the dark forest of Comus where an alert ear must serve as guide through the maze of

visual deception. The fortunes of Adam and Eve follow closely the fate of their allegorical spheres as Eve is subjected to her husband.

Milton dramatizes his scheme of male and female as two modes of sense perception through Ovid's myth of Echo and Narcissus. Eve's own story of her beginning and her first meeting with Adam, which has no Biblical precedent, is a comic version of Ovid's tale. Milton's Eve plays an innocent Narcissus persuaded to forego her own reflection in the water for the sake of another and better sort of image. She awakens, newly created, to discover a clear, smooth lake that forms a perfect natural mirror, exactly like the one that ruined Narcissus. Bending down to the water, she perceives an amiable shape there and is charmed by the apparition, as, seeing her own wonderful beauty without recognizing it as a reflection of herself, she might well be. More fortunate and more wise than her mythological predecessor, she escapes his fate by the aid of a timely, unseen voice that warns her of the deception and offers her a true likeness in place of the merely apparent one. She follows the invisible voice and finds Adam under a platan tree, but although he is tall and fair, he is by no means as fair as the image in the water. She turns to go back to that lovely, liquid shadow and is again stopped by a voice, this one not disembodied but belonging to Adam. Yielding to his entreaty, she accepts the evidence of her ears above the evidence of her eyes. Love is born of hearing and Adam, a happier Echo, wins his Narcissus, Eve. Milton's translation into the Garden of the forlorn nymph and the scornful boy, archetypes of the frustrated love or lust that is the lot of Satan and his crew, depends largely on the Medieval and Renaissance moralizations

and redactions of the Metamorphoses, as well as on the separate history of the nymph Echo who is the subject of widespread speculations outside her Ovidian context.<sup>1</sup> After Ovid the myth is remembered as though Narcissus chooses between his reflection in the water and the nymph who repeats his words, and their unrequited loves are made the cruel sport of the irreconcilable difference between eye and ear. Although the morality of the commentaries is not the morality of the Garden, the issues they raise provide ample ground for exploring prelapsarian consciousness.

The commentators almost without exception condemn Narcissus who, after rejecting all proffered love, is deceived by his own reflection and dies in futile longing after his own beauty. He clearly represents excessive self-love, the vice of those who are so inordinately fond of themselves that they are incapable of loving others. Or, because Narcissus falls in love, more precisely, not with himself, but with his shadow, he represents those who devote themselves to life in this world, which is a mere shadow of the eternal life they neglect. The metamorphosis into a flower symbolizes the wasteful preoccupation of Narcissus with all that is vain and ephemeral on earth. If the history of Narcissus presents little moral complexity, Ovid's account of the metamorphosis of Echo leaves unclear whether or not she shares his fate and character. Juno's curse curtails Echo's power to speak. Later the nymph falls in love with Narcissus, and, rejected, ashamed and still pining for him, she hides herself and wastes away with grief. Only her sadly reduced, disembodied voice lives on in desolate caves and forests and hills, obliged to answer all who call her with the

last syllable of their own words. Echo's uncertain moral position is expressed in the two contradictory allegorical traditions developed by the interpreters. Echo represents either trivial noise, fit accompaniment for the foolish Narcissus, or a praiseworthy voice, the sort rejected by a lover of shadows.

The mythographers who disparage Echo, object, like Juno, to her endless chattering for dubious ends and condemn her love for Narcissus. Alexander Neckam, in De Naturis Rerum et De Laudibus Divinae Sapientiae, identifies Echo as the desire for mundana gloria, the desire which destroys Narcissus. Echo represents those garrulous people who must always have the last word. It is no wonder that the talkative Echo loves Narcissus, who is tricked by his own shadow and changed into a flower to signify vainglory.<sup>2</sup> Bersuire's Ovidius Moralizatus considers Echo's voice a great source of mischief. Remembering that the nymph entertained Juno with her stories in order to conceal Jove's adulteries, he identifies Echo with the panderers who promote adulterous affairs by keeping parents and jealous spouses at bay with their lies. Because Echo answers with the same words that are given her, she also represents flatterers.<sup>3</sup> The Echo who does not know how to keep silent, whatever her motives may be, is the model that Chaucer urges on wives in place of the patient, silent Griselda in the envoy of The Clerk's Tale: "Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence, / But evere answereth at the countretaille."<sup>4</sup> Following Echo's prattling example, the wife can hold sway at home and rule her husband. Echo is not morally condemned here but she is proverbial for domestic misrule and woman's love of talk.

The Renaissance mythographers who follow this tradition most commonly condemn Echo not for her excessive talk but for her flattery, empty words that praise self-lovers. In the sixteenth century translation, The Fable of Ovid treting of Narcissus, Echo represents those who flatter powerful rulers:

But by thys fable some there be suppose  
That Ovyd mente to showe the fauinge [sic] sorte  
Of flattringe folke whose usage is to glōse  
With prayers swete, the men of gretiest porte.<sup>5</sup>

Bacon, more generally, finds that Echo signifies the flatterer of those who, like Narcissus, are so preoccupied with themselves that they have no interest in the lives of others or in the public welfare. They do not engage in civil affairs because they do not wish to subject their vanity to the contempt and scorn one necessarily encounters in public life, and, consequently, "they leade for the most part a solitary, private and obscure life, attended on with a few followers, and those such as will adore and admire them, and like an Eccho flatter them in all their sayings, and applaud them in all their words."<sup>6</sup> Nicolas Renouard, in his French prose translation of the Metamorphoses, reads Echo as self-flattery or boasting: "la vanité des discours de ceux qui ne parlent que pour se vanter."<sup>7</sup> Renouard's Narcissus rejects Echo because self-lovers so dislike to hear others praised that they persuade themselves that it is best to even avoid boasting. George Sandys likewise equates Echo with vainglory or boasting, which, when it is rejected, "converts into a sound; that is, into nothing."<sup>8</sup> The talkative Echo of this tradition ends by making the most trivial of noises.

The reading of Echo as vain flattery makes her the counterpart of the deceiving image of Narcissus in the water. In Warner's Albion's



cludes that because the echo is random noise, an inevitable by-product of the propagation of sound, it is a potential source of delusion for susceptible imaginations. Scoffing at the superstitions of the simple country people, he describes how they transform meaningless nighttime echoes, white noise, into fictitious deities:

Such places the neighbors imagine to be haunted by goat-foot satyrs and nymphs, and they say there are fauns, by whose night-wandering noise and jocund play they commonly declare the voiceless silence to be broken, with the sound of strings and sweet plaintive notes, which the pipe sends forth touched by the player's fingers; they tell how the farmers' men all over the countryside listen, while Pan, shaking the pine leaves that cover his half-human head often runs over the open reeds with curved lips, that the panpipes may never slacken in their flood of woodland music. All other signs and wonders of this sort they relate, that they may not perhaps be thought to inhabit a wilderness which even the gods have left.<sup>12</sup>

Robert Burton agrees that echoes are local natural phenomena which derive their significance only from erring human imaginations. He includes the echo among the delusions of the ear to which melancholy men are prone: "Some are deceived by echoes, some by roaring of waters, or concaves or reverberation of air in the ground, hollow places and walls."<sup>13</sup> Burton, however, ascribes the deception to evil spirits rather than despair.

Echo, the nymph and the sound, read in malo, is a type of aural image of Narcissus, no more substantive than the foolish boy or the shadow he loves. In Comus, where the mythography of Echo is central to the temptation, the Lady identifies the noise of Comus's merrymaking as a version of this malevolent echo. The strange noises in the dark forest remind her "Of calling shapes and beck'ning shadows dire / And airy tongues that syllable men's names / On Sands and

Shores and desert Wildernesses" (207-9). The Lady is intuitively right. If she mistakes these unreal noises for realities, she will repeat Narcissus' error and surrender to a shadow, whether menacing or flattering. The Lady shows now how well she can distinguish false noise from true sound, shadow from reality, and looks forward to her trial by Comus whom she will recognize as one of the nymphs and satyrs such as was unmasked by Lucretius as a desperate pastoral fiction. She dismisses these deceiving noises that seem to threaten her and invokes in song the other Echo of the moral tradition, the Echo who is praiseworthy and true.

The mythographers who read Echo in bono remember that the bereaved nymph became a disembodied voice because she was spurned by Narcissus and, therefore, she may signify all that the vain Narcissus despises. The worth of Echo is opposed to the vanity of Narcissus. Her proffered love is the opposite of his self-love and her words are not random, deceptive babblings, endless reflections of nothing, but true. The Medieval mythographer, Arnolphe d'Orléans, reads Narcissus as pride and Echo as good reputation. She is scorned because the proud care nothing for the judgment of others.<sup>14</sup> In the Ovide Moralisé, Echo again is good reputation, bone renomée, rejected by Narcissus who is too concerned with his own beauty to care about the opinion of his fellow men. The Ovide Moralisé does not, however, find Echo unequivocal; good reputation may obviously be used as a pious facade to hide evil.<sup>15</sup> Boccaccio, nonetheless, is certain of Echo's worth. In the Genealogiae Deorum Echo is fame, which is a kind of immortality; Narcissus delights in the "mundanis deliciis," fleeting pleasures, and,

despising Echo, leaves a short-lived memory after him.<sup>16</sup> The Fable of Ovid treting of Narcissus repeats Boccaccio's distinction between fame and fleeting pleasure and adds that Echo represents the virtuous voice of good counsel that attempts to prevent a gifted man such as Narcissus from foolishly squandering the bounty of nature:

And this same one I, Ecco presuppose  
 By whome I gesse that good advice is mente  
 Which is ful lothe a godly witte to lose  
 And sorye moche to se the same ylspeute  
 She foloweth him therfore for this intente  
 To make him marke and well regarde the ende  
 Of everye thinge that he dothe once intende.<sup>17</sup>

Echo, unlike the deceptive shadow that seems to offer pleasure, is a moral voice which warns that the consequences of one's actions must be considered. She ends every sentence in order to teach Narcissus to reflect, as it were, on himself.<sup>18</sup>

The echo in nature is also read in bono: instead of an aural shadow it proves to be a vehicle of aural magnification, strengthening the original sound by repetition and reverberation. Reports of fabulous echoes, one more powerful than the other, abound in the Renaissance. Sandys notes that in the Tuileries there is a device that permits an entire verse to be repeated and at Pavia the echo is not heard less than thirty times.<sup>19</sup> Burton speaks of an echo at Olympus, mentioned by Pliny, which is heard only seven times but, innocent of the second law of thermodynamics, he knows of an echo of unparalleled strength: "At Cadurcum, in Aquitaine, words and sentences are repeated by a strange echo to the full, or whatsoever you shall play upon a musical instrument, more distinctly and louder than they are spoken at first."<sup>20</sup> The echo magnifies sound and with each reverberation or repetition it

augments the life of the sound to imply immortality. In Jonson's Masque of Queens the mechanical property of reverberation is fused with the moralized Echo to make the echo the vehicle by which fame is made immortal:

The voice of Fame should be as loud as thunder.  
Her house is all of echo made  
Where never dies the sound.<sup>21</sup>

In Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas' Divine Weeks and Days the same mechanism allows the birds in Eden, joined in concert by the echo, to make perpetual music:

Th'Air's daughter Eccho, haunting woods among,  
A blab that will not (cannot) keep her tongue,  
Who never asks but onely answers all,  
Who lets not any her in vain to call;  
She bore her part; and full of curious skill,  
They ceasing, sung; they singing, ceased still:  
There Musick raign'd, and ever on the plain,  
A sweet sound rais'd the dead-live voyce again.<sup>22</sup>

Echo's impaired voice is redeemed by harmony in Eden.

The commentators who distinguish between Echo and Narcissus give her back the voice she lost through Juno's curse. The natural echo becomes synonymous with aural power and the nymph's forced repetitions become eloquent answers. The Lady in Comus invokes Echo with the hope that she will carry the song through the distance to her brothers and, perhaps, she hopes that Echo will make a dialogue of her monologue. As Ovid's Echo tried pathetically to converse with Narcissus by giving him back his own words, the Renaissance Echo, no longer helpless, counsels in short syllables those who call her. She is a protean creature, conversant with all circumstances, but her special province is human misery, especially the misery that normally accompanies erotic love: "the love-lorn Nightingale / Nightly to thee her sad Song



to a bronze Echo whom I think you see placing her hand upon her lips, since a bronze vessel has been dedicated to Zeus at Dodona, that resounds most of the day and is not silent till someone takes hold of it.<sup>24</sup>

The prophetic power of the acoustical phenomenon is commonly invoked in Renaissance drama, where an echo heard at some crucial moment clarifies an otherwise dubious future. For instance, in Act V, scene iii of the Duchess of Malfi, the voice of the Duchess, disguised as an echo among the ruins of an ancient abbey, warns Antonio of his impending death. In Il Pastor Fido, Cupid, also disguised as an echo, answers Silvio's denunciation of Venus by transforming his words into a warning that he himself will soon enough fall in love; the prophecy is fulfilled promptly in the next scene. In Comus, the Lady seeks the help of this prescient Echo who apprehends clearly and distinctly, even in the perplexing darkness, what is obscure to her petitioners. If she will grant an answer the Lady promises Echo that a final transformation will raise her from "slow Meander's margent green" (232) and "the violet-embroider'd vale" (233), the haunts of Ovid's nymph, and that she will "be translated to the skies, / And give resounding grace to all Heav'n's Harmonies" (242-43). This new metamorphosis would change her from the earth-bound nymph who is compelled to sing with men and birds in the forest into Macrobius' heavenly Echo who is the beloved of Pan and is, therefore, identified with the Platonic harmony of the spheres:

Echo is believed to be the darling of Inuus and the object of his love--Echo behold by no man's eyes but the symbol of the harmony of the heavens--and this harmony is dear to the sun as the ruler of all the spheres whence the harmony is born--a harmony, however, which can never be perceived by our senses.<sup>25</sup>

If Echo will once use her oracular powers, she may be silent forever and resound with the unheard music of the spheres.

The promise does not elicit a word from Echo who needs no further transformation. The Divine Echo of the heavenly harmony and Ovid's nymph who loves Narcissus and survives as a voice in the forest are one. Through Neoplatonic mythography the heavenly Echo returns to earth as the daughter of the Divine Voice, the vehicle for the spiritual life that God offers the human soul. Henry Reynolds, in Mythomystes, reading the tale of Echo and Narcissus through a Pythagorean dictum told by Iamblichus, establishes the identity of the two Echoes:

While the winds breathe, adore Ecco. This Winde is (as the before-mencioned Iamblicus, by consent of his other fellow-Cabalists sayes) the Symbole of the Breath of God; and Ecco the Reflection of this divine breath, or Spirit upon us; or (as they interpret it)--the daughter of the divine voice; which through the beatifying splendor it sheds & diffuses through the Soule, is justly worthy to be revered and adored by us. This Ecco descending upon a Narcissus, or such a Soule as (impurely and vitiously affected) slights, and stops his eares to the Divine voice, or shutts his harte frō divine Inspirations, through his being enamour'd of not himselfe, but his owne shadow meerely, and (buried in the ordures of the Sence) followes corporall shadowes, and flyes the light and purity of Intellectual Beauty, he becomes thence (being dispoyled, (as the great Iamblicus speakes) of his proper, native, and celestiall vertue, and ability,) an earthy, weake, worthlesse thing, and fit sacrificize for only eternall oblivion, and the dij inferi; to whom the Auncients (as is before noted) bequeathed and dedicated this their lazy, stupid, and for-ever-famelesse Narcissus.<sup>26</sup>

Reynolds' Echo has been translated to the sky to descend again as the intermediary between God and the material world. Narcissus, who does not understand the duality of human nature, chooses his physical being above the breath of divine inspiration, chooses to be a man of clay deprived of the breath of God, and, soulless, dies with his mortal body. Comus, a type of Narcissus, appears in response to the Lady's

invocation to tempt her with corporeal shadows disguised as pleasures. Echo is mute. The pastoral Echo must answer her petitioners with their own words but the higher version of Echo, whether in harmony with the music of the spheres or at the oracle of Zeus where her statue holds its hand to its lips, may answer with silence.<sup>27</sup> In the silence the Lady listens to Comus and learns that corporeal life without the daughter of the Divine Voice is shadow. Echo remains eloquently silent so that the Lady may speak for her and fulfill the promised transformation in herself.

The Lady plays a reluctant Echo to Comus. She defends temperance, the just use of nature and the rule of appetite by reason, against his wasteful self-indulgence but refuses to defend chastity. Instead of attempting to influence the ears of Comus which she knows by his false and easy reasoning must be permanently shut to Intellectual Beauty, she threatens him with extinction. In place of the kindly daughter of the Divine Voice, she assumes the role of the prophet Jeremiah who cries to the earth when its inhabitants prove deaf to him:

the uncontrolled worth  
 Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits  
 To such a flame of sacred vehemence,  
 That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,  
 And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,  
 Till all thy magic structures rear'd so high,  
 Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.  
 (793-99)

Comus's long and elegant attempt to seduce the Lady reveals that he is in love with his own reflection, that his appeal for sensual enjoyment depends on his rejection of the Divine Echo. Comus argues that temperance is peevish self-denial because all nature lives only to end in man's pleasure:

Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth  
 With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,  
 Covering the earth with odors, fruits, and flocks,  
 Thronging the Seas with spawn innumerable,  
 But all to please and sate the curious taste?  
 (710-14)

He turns Nature's abundance into an excuse for his gluttony and proposes that, unless all the fruits of fertile Nature are consumed, she will breed a wasteland. His followers have the heads of savage beasts to signify their intemperate choices. There is more than a hint of Satanic reduction of all experience and all existence to accommodate a narrow purpose in Comus's argument. The terms of the temptation are clear to the Lady; Narcissus will never heed Echo. The Lady chooses not to argue but invoke the higher prophetic power that annihilates.

If the Lady and Comus play out one version of the moralized Echo and Narcissus, Comus tries to reverse their roles and cast the Lady as a Narcissus in need of good advice from Echo's voice. He argues as though he were Echo pleading with Narcissus to forego his chastity which is a form of excessive self-involvement or a fastidious vanity that fears harm by contact with others. Comus seems to speak on the behalf of the Ovide Moralisé, arguing for bone renomee against self-love:

List Lady, be not coy, and be not cozen'd  
 With that same vaunted name Virginitie;  
 Beauty is nature's coin, must not be hoarded,  
 But must be current, and the good thereof  
 Consists in mutual and partak'n bliss,  
 Unsavory in th' enjoyment of itself.  
 (737-42)

His adoption of the role of the mythographer's praiseworthy Echo is, however, as much a disguise as his appearance as a harmless villager. If he is Echo, he is the voice of boasting and flattery that is the

counterpart of the deceiving image of Narcissus in the water. Had the temptation been successful, undoubtedly he would have transformed the Lady into the Echo who is empty noise and stolen her vehement eloquence to replace it with endless, babbling syllables. By refusing to join Comus in his voracious and mindless sensuality, the Lady halts his plans for a metamorphosis downward, a translation into non-being that parodies the translation to the skies she promised Echo in her song. His carpe diem pleas against mortality ("If you let slip time, like a neglected rose / It withers on the stalk with languish't head" [742-43]) are unmasked as a philosophy that leads to the early and fruitless death of Narcissus.

The limits of the moralized Echo and Narcissus are realized in Comus's abortive courtship and temptation of the Lady. The debate over the right use of the bounty of nature ends in a stalemate. Comus immobilizes the Lady in his shadowy realm since his magic holds sway over the material world but his limited sensuality does not invite her to join him; he, for his part, senses her superior power as physical fear, not knowing that her prophetic rage is quite other than the thunder of Jove's wrath. His inability to see beyond corporeal life makes him more a creature of dust than the earth itself which might be made to sympathize and join in the destruction of his magic structures. There can be no dramatic confrontation between an exponent of reality and an exponent of delusion. It does not matter that Comus is driven out unchanged, since the masque is, in any case, a vehicle for the Lady's self-revelation. She chooses Echo as her patroness in the dark forest and Comus, inadvertently, teaches her the meaning of her choice.

Echo's voice remains among the hills and caves and desert places to delude those who choose to fall prey to airy tongues and beckoning shadows or to commiserate with the disconsolate lovers like herself. But to others, Echo may become the voice of good counsel and ascend from her natural landscape to the sky and return to earth as the spirit of God that inspires the brute earth to life.

If the action of the masque is determined by the moralized antecedents of Comus and the Lady, the same cannot be said for Paradise Lost, where in the Garden of Eden Echo and Narcissus must shed their allegorical burdens. The pleasures that Comus espouses are plainly illusory in the fallen world, but in Paradise that luxuriant abundance of all nature is a fact and man's capacity to enjoy it is undiminished. Mortality does not yet exist to make pleasure vanity. Comus cannot be as easily dismissed in Paradise as in the forest near Ludlow Castle. In Paradise, where Nature is extravagantly fruitful, his "dear Wit and gay Rhetoric" (789) are less fantastic, more conversant with reality, although his conclusion is still false. Both Adam and Eve innocently come close to Comus's view of natural economy. They wonder if the great vast universe were not made for their enjoyment alone, though the possibility of other worlds and other inhabitants is sufficient to curb if not an excessive sensual appetite, then an imaginative one. The delight of Comus in the physical world, partial as it is because it is completely earth-bound, is not a bit of magic to be driven out of Paradise or unmasked as a fraud. The pleasing illusions of the wild woods are the bare facts of the Garden. When Ovid's story is retold in Eden, Narcissus is not condemned as weak and foolish, the sort of

man for whom transformation into a short-lived, fruitless flower is an appropriate end; rather he is granted the image he pined for, and Eve's experience by the water is the complement of Adam's dream of her creation. The voice that draws Eve from the smooth lake offers her a substantial image in place of the reflection she contemplates. The flat, two-dimensional picture in the water is transformed to flesh and blood reality, as Adam wakes to find that his dream of Eve is true.

Eve recounts how she awoke to life and found herself on a shaded bed of flowers, wondering how she came to be. She hears the murmuring waters nearby and follows their sound:

Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread  
Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd  
Pure as th'expansive of Heav'n; I thither went  
With unexperient thought, and laid me down  
On the green bank, to look into the clear  
Smooth Lake, that to me seem'd another Sky.

(IV, 453-59)

The sounds come from a cave, the haunt of Echo since the day that Narcissus fled from her and she hid herself in shame. The Echo of the cave is the natural reverberation of sound in hollowed, enclosed spaces. It is the innocent version of the airy tongues that may deceive or frighten a credulous imagination and perhaps lead, as Lucretius notes, to the desperate invention of pastoral deities. A virtuous mind like the Lady's dismisses such empty babble, the counterpart of darkness, in the forest. In the Edenic landscape, however, the natural echo offers no malice but leads Eve to her reflection in the water, where she discovers the delightful play of mirrors, a play she imitates in her narrative:

As I bent down to look, just opposite,  
 A shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd  
 Bending to look on me. I started back,  
 It started back, but pleas'd I soon return'd,  
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answering looks  
 Of sympathy and love.

(IV, 461-65)

Eve appears perilously close to narcissism but she says nothing of her own beauty. She is fascinated and infatuated with her reflection not because it is lovely but because it seems to answer her, to converse by gesture with her. Eve, like Adam, but without saying so, in solitude seeks conversation with another like herself.

She accepts the mimicking answers of the reflection as real until she hears a voice, presumably God's, warning her that she is addressing a shadow and promising her true images for the false one she contemplates:

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  
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, hee  
 Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy  
 Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear  
 Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd  
 Mother of human Race.

(IV, 467-75)

She is offered a true reflection in Adam and endless more in their progeny. The voice that warns her is the original of the Echo of prophecy, the daughter of the Divine Voice that descends upon man to quicken his corporeal being. As an innocent Narcissus, who has so far not chosen shadows over reality but has merely been mistaken, Eve follows the Divine Echo to Adam. Seeing him and finding him "less fair, / less winning soft, less amiably mild" (IV, 478-79) than her own smooth, watery image, she turns from him and the Echo that led her

there. For a moment Eve chooses her own likeness and the natural echo that answers to all exactly as she has been called and rejects the man and the voice of God.

Eve is now in danger of falling prey to her own beauty, of becoming vain, and, like Narcissus, of preferring the beautiful image in the water even above her own best interests. As Adam so nearly does, she is tempted to find herself less fair than her own outside and so render her beauty superficial. She does not, however, return to the flattering image in the water that, innocent before, would now prove pernicious. Adam follows her, pleading that he is the better image:

Return fair Eve,  
 Whom fli'st thou? whom thou fli'st, of him thou art,  
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent  
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart  
 Substantial Life, to have thee by my side  
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;  
 Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
 My other half.

(IV, 481-88)

Adam echoes the warning voice, glossing the promise of a true image unfettered by shadows with their physical identity, her birth from his rib. He encapsules her creation in a sentence: she was taken from the side nearest his heart as a sign of the close bond God intended between them. To make her his companion, he lent her a substantial life which she cannot impart to the image in the water. The choice between shadow and substance, between a true image and a false one, is clearly outlined for Eve. Whereas the disembodied voice she followed to the platan tree worked no change in her mind, Adam's voice and his gentle hand that seizes hers are sufficient persuasion. The Echo who is the daughter of the Divine Voice would have found a Narcissus who stops

his ears to all inspiration, had she not been joined by another voice invested with a corporeal body, as though Echo, whose voice was restored by the mythographers, had also won back her body and was once again free to court Narcissus. The myth of Echo and Narcissus becomes once again a story of male and female sexuality as it was in the Metamorphoses, where the fate of Narcissus is the first prophecy told by Tiresias, the blind seer who, because he had been both male and female, was called to settle a dispute between Juno and Jove whether men or women enjoy sex more. Tiresias declared from his experience that Jove was right in maintaining that women receive more pleasure; for his judgment Juno blinded him but Jove, to compensate for his blindness, made him a prophet. The sex of Echo and Narcissus has been transposed in the Garden, perhaps to suit the common prejudice that women are more beautiful than men, but they have been restored as flesh and blood lovers. Eve, innocent of fallen coyness, chooses Adam deliberately but as freely as he chose her in his dream. The moment of recognition, of choice, is eminently terrestrial despite the presence of God. Adam's dream of Eve brings him back to earth and she, unconvinced by the Divine Voice, yields to the man who, though less fair than the image in the water, proves substantial by taking her hand. Eve accepts him as the more worthy image of herself:

I yielded, and from that time see  
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace  
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.  
 (IV, 489-91)

An analogue of Eve's first meeting with Adam as the substantial version of her own shadow is Britomart's vision of Arthegall in Book

III of the Faerie Queene. Britomart gazes into Merlin's mirror, a mirror more powerful than Eve's clear lake:

It vertue had, to shew in perfect sight,  
 What ever thing was in the world contaynd,  
 Betwixt the lowest earth and heavens hight,  
 So that it to the looker appertaynd.<sup>28</sup>

The mirror reproduces the vast expanse of the world exactly as it is:

"Like to the world it seife, and seemed a world of glas" (III, ii, 19).

The clear and truthful mirror shows her the image of Arthegall and Britomart falls in love but she fears that her love is even more foolish than Narcissus' for his own shadow:

I fonder, then Cephisus foolish child  
 Who having vewed in a fountaine shere  
 His face, was with the love thereof beguild;  
 I fonder love a shade, the bodie farre exild.  
 (III, ii, 44)

Britomart's nurse reasons logically that if there is a reflection, there must be a man to cast it, however far he may be from his image and the two women set off together to inquire from the sage Merlin where the knight may be found. The cave of Merlin is an echo chamber which, like the oracle of Zeus at Dodona described by Philostratus, resounds all day but with infinitely more terrible noise of laboring spirits:

And there such ghastly noise of yron chaines,  
 And brasen Caudrons thou shalt rombling heare,  
 Which thousand sprights with long enduring paines  
 Do tosse, that it will stonne thy feeble braines,  
 And oftentimes great grones, and grievous stounds,  
 When too huge toile and labour them constraines:  
 And oftentimes loud strokes, and ringing sounds  
 From under that deepe Rocke most horribly rebounds.  
 (III, iii, 9)

Britomart and Glauce descend into the cave and Merlin, like Eve's warning voice, substantiates the vision with a prophecy of the line of English kings that are destined from her union with the knight whose

reflection she loves. Arthegall is not close at hand, as Adam is, and Britomart, like Arthur, must set off to pursue her vision with long labor. The schematic design of Britomart's story is the same as Eve's: the image in the glass and the reflection in the water are explicated and substantiated by the prophetic voice of Echo and prove to be no delusion.

Satan, spying on the human pair, overhears Eve narrate her happy version of Ovid's unfortunate lovers and learns how he may tempt mankind and change their comic notes to pathos. He sees Adam and Eve in an embrace while he remains doomed to pine with the vain desire of an Echo or Narcissus:

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two  
 Imparadis't in one another's arms  
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy thir fill  
 Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,  
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,  
 Among our other torments not the least  
 Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.  
 (IV, 505-11)

Satan assuages his envy with mockery. He parodies the Divine Voice which substantiates the Garden of Eden by becoming the false Echo of the mythographers who deceives Narcissus and leads him to a world of shadows and vain desire. As Satan plots the destruction of mankind, he becomes the pastoral Echo who takes special delight in joining the laments of unhappy lovers like herself and in reminding dream-struck lovers of the short-lived happiness they may expect:

Live while ye may,  
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,  
 Short pleasures, for long woes to succeed.  
 (IV, 533-35)

Searching for more information to help him in his plan, Satan disappears

through Echo's customary haunts: "Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale his roam" (IV, 537). Soon those hills and thickets will no longer be echoing the song of the Angels at their midnight watch.

Satan's first attempt on Eve in her dream invites her to a world of shadows which are on the brink of becoming lifeless and empty:

now reigns  
Full Orb'd the Moon, and with more pleasing light  
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,  
If none regard.

(V, 41-44)

Impersonating Adam's voice, Satan seems again to answer Eve's question why the moon and stars shine at night while they sleep.<sup>29</sup> It is a half-echo of Adam's answer, inverted to flatter Eve:

Heav'n wakes with all his eyes,  
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire,  
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment  
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.

(V, 44-47)

The false voice leads her to the interdicted tree and now disguised as an Angel Satan continues his argument, derived from Comus, that all nature must be consumed to save it from extinction born of superfluity:

And O fair Plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,  
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,  
Nor God, nor Man; is Knowledge so despis'd?  
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?  
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold  
Longer thy offer'd good, why else set here?

(V, 58-63)

Satan, in the role of Echo who advises Narcissus not to misuse the bounty of nature, offers his corrupt version of immortal life. As though Eve were confined to an unworthy corporeal world, he promises

her an ascent to heaven where she may be a goddess among gods. In the dream Eve eats the interdicted fruit and begins the false translation to the sky which turns out to be no more than a short flight above the earth, interrupted when the guide disappears. The ascent is halted in mid-flight, no doubt when Satan is discovered by Ithuriel at the ear of Eve. The Echo of Eve's dream leads her back to the image in the water which seems to answer her but which, on inspection, is revealed as a lifeless delusion.

In his next attempt, no longer in a dream, Satan is again the deceiving Echo of the moralized Ovid masquerading as the Echo of good advice who loves Narcissus. He does not appear as Eve's husband nor as an Angel but in the humble garb of a serpent with the gift of human speech. He begins with flattery and a hundred compliments to Eve's godlike beauty, badly echoing Adam's delight and faring no better with his own previous compliments. The ability of a brute animal to speak, even if lamely, excites Eve's curiosity. He tells her a lie about the acquisition of the strange, new power from the fruit of a tree laden with fair and golden apples. She dismisses the flattery but follows the serpent to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, as once she followed the disembodied voice to the platan tree. When they arrive at the forbidden tree, the terms of the temptation become quite clear: Eve must choose between a false voice or a true one. The tree is forbidden to them by the Echo who emanates from God, the daughter of the Divine Voice:

But of this Tree we may not taste nor touch;  
 God so commanded, and left that Command  
 Sole daughter of his voice.

(IX, 651-53)

With the memory of that command Eve knows, or should know, absolutely that the tree, like a false image, can only lead to vain desire and early death. She refuses the fruit and Satan, having failed to deceive her with his false report of the Tree's miraculous properties because Eve remembers a voice stronger than his present flattery, turns to brilliant rhetoric that, ostensibly reverberating, only reflects back on itself so that all his seemingly eloquent logic has no more substance than the reflection of Narcissus.

Satan's lengthy argument on the virtue of eating the fruit is designed to make intricate seem straight. His case is based on the false assumption, which he himself no doubt believes, that the fruit contains the knowledge of good and evil and on the lie that he came to be a speaking serpent by eating that fruit. A benign deity would not forbid such excellent food to his creatures; a malevolent deity cannot be God; therefore, Eve must eat the apple: "Your fear itself of Death removes the fear" (IX, 703). It must be envy that made the gods, who have easily become plural from singular, deny the fruit to mankind. If he, a snake, became manlike then Eve may become a god. Satan's argument lends new significance and new substance to the Tree and persuades Eve that there is new knowledge to be gained from its fruit. Satan is Warner's malicious Echo who uses her voice to trick Narcissus into believing that his reflection is a lovely nymph so that he drowns attempting to embrace it.<sup>30</sup> Because of his "persuasive words, impregn'd / With Reason, to her seeming, and with Truth" (IX, 736-38), Eve begins to long for the fruit. She pauses only a moment to repeat Satan's argument, echoing his infected language and reasoning by opposites:

But his forbidding  
Commends thee more, while it infers 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.

(IX, 753-57)

All of a sudden, Eve finds the fruit savory, inviting, because she does not know that its powers are fraudulent, as Narcissus fell in love with his reflection without knowing that it was a shadow and, worse, his own. Eve seeks knowledge here, not erotic love, but that too may breed a form of narcissism. Alciati's Emblemata explains Philautia, Narcissus, as the scholar who, abandoning old doctrines for new, so falls in love with his own ideas that he despises those of all other men.<sup>31</sup> When she was created Eve was taught by the Echo of good counsel that wisdom excels beauty in true fairness and now, at her second temptation, the demonic Echo guides her to the semblance of godlike knowledge. She chooses to disobey God's express command because the false knowledge of the Forbidden Tree seems to promise even more substantial life than Adam's love.

Choosing the shadow of knowledge and freedom that Satan offers, Eve becomes the mythographers' Narcissus. She eats the fruit and transforms herself and all the material world into the vain, mocking reflection Narcissus saw in the smooth lake. The earth is surrendered to a swift mortality: "Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat / Sighing though all her Works gave signs of woe, / That all was lost" (IX, 782-84). She falls into pride and idolatry, both pernicious forms of self-love that lead to the stupor or early death of Narcissus. She worships the tree that has given her new life and contemplates her superiority over Adam who has not yet tasted the new knowledge:

But keep the odds of Knowledge in my power  
 Without Copartner? so to add what wants  
 In Female Sex, the more to draw his Love,  
 And render me more equal, and perhaps,  
 A thing not undesireable, sometime  
 Superior: for inferior who is free?  
 (IX, 820-25)

Eve has become mundanely selfish and would keep the new-found power for herself. But a greater selfishness intervenes; she fears that if God has seen her eat the fruit, she alone will die and Adam will live in Paradise with another Eve. She envies her own former happiness, without yet knowing how lost it is, and resolves that Adam must share in the knowledge and, perhaps, in the punishment. She is not only like Narcissus in love with a delusion, but she soon becomes the shadow that tempts others to a similar folly.

Eve boasts that she is now equal to Adam, but if she was his image before, she is less now, an impaired and unreal likeness. Following Satan, she has sundered herself from God who is the source of all reality in creation. Abdiel's denunciation of Satan when he leads the legions against God in the War in Heaven is an apt description of the fallen Eve: "that such resemblance of the Highest / Should yet remain, where faith and realty / Remain not" (VI, 114-16). She has not yet lost her outward resemblance to God and man, but, in self-parody, she offers Adam false pleasure for the Paradise she brought with her creation: "opener mine Eyes, / Dim erst, dilated Spirits, ampler Heart, / And growing up to Godhead" (IX, 875-77). Imitating Satan, she plays the demonic Echo to make Adam choose her, now his insubstantial image, above God's command and reality. The temptation of Narcissus which began at Eve's awakening is fulfilled in Adam who chooses to die rather than

abandon Eve, who is now scarcely distinguished from his own rib. If Eve did not know that she was surrendering to a shadow when she ate the fruit and so was like Narcissus when he first had the misfortune to see his own beautiful reflection, Adam is like Narcissus after he has realized that what he loves is not a beautiful boy but his own image in the water. He recognizes his foolishness but he cannot stop loving; he resolves to perish with the beloved shadow.

While Adam and Eve are left to imitate Narcissus, Satan completes his mythological end. He is punished more severely than Echo was punished for her babbling tongue. He vanishes, unseen, disembodied when Eve begins to eat the forbidden fruit. He returns to Hell to announce his triumph but finds that he has lost the voice with which he seduced mankind. He is not obliged to repeat the last syllable of each sentence, which is all that he really does, though he tricks his mocking repetitions out in complex rhetoric, but he is forced to imitate the sound of the serpent whose form he assumed. Satan, the boaster, who hopes to hear his flattering echoes applaud his adventure, hears instead: "On all sides, from innumerable tongues / A dismal universal hiss, the sound / Of public scorn" (X, 507-9). The impotence of Echo is magnified a thousand times in Hell. Echo at least was left free, invisible and disembodied, to roam the natural landscape; Satan and his crew are burdened with a cumbersome animal form to constrict the angelic substances which once could assume all shapes:

His Visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,  
 His Arms clung to his Ribs, his Legs entwining  
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell  
 A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone,  
 Reluctant, but in vain: a greater power

Now rul'd him, punisht in the shape he sinn'd,  
 According to his doom; he would have spoke,  
 But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue  
 To forked tongue, for now were all transform'd  
 Alike to Serpents all as accessories  
 To his bold Riot: dreadful was the din  
 Of hissing through the Hall, thick swarming now  
 With complicated monsters, head and tail.  
 (X, 511-23)

The devils become an infinite variety of serpents whose words all turn to one syllable and who eat what they fed mankind, ash. Pandemonium resounds with formless, derisive echoes, not of fame as Satan hoped but of ignominy. There is even less glorious applause in store for the devils, as is foretold in the simile that accompanies Mammon's speech at the first assembly of fallen angels:

He scarce had finisht, when such murmer fill'd  
 Th'Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain  
 The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long  
 Had rous'd the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
 Sea-faring men o'erwatcht, whose Bark by chance  
 Or Pinnace anchors in a craggy Bay  
 After the Tempest.  
 (11, 284-90)

The sound of the threatening winds trapped in the hollow rocks makes a natural echo, diminished by time and so transformed that it no longer frightens the superstitious mind but calms the weary.<sup>32</sup>

Adam and Eve fare better than their seducers. They awaken to guilty consciousness to find the other a shadow, a despised mocking reflection, as though Eve had made the wrong choice at the clear, smooth lake and then, too late, had seen her error. Perfect images of the same guilt, they seek first to lay the blame on each other:

Thus they in mutual accusation spent  
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,  
 And of thir vain contést appear'd no end.  
 (IX, 1187-89)

From the simple vain longing to disburden themselves of guilt and the useless echoes of accusation, they turn to a figurative narcissism in solipsism and infertility. Adam takes the whole burden of guilt upon himself, acknowledging the justice of God and accepting his own responsibility for the death sentence:

Him after all Disputes  
 Forc't I absolve: all my evasions vain  
 And reasoning, though through Mazes, lead me still  
 But to my own conviction: first and last  
 On mee, mee only, as the source and spring  
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;  
 So might the wrath.

(X, 828-34)

The pride and self-indulgence of the lament can be measured by Christ's simple assumption of the guilt of mankind upon himself even as he judges them. Adam no sooner ostensibly takes the full burden of guilt upon himself, then he denounces Eve as the cause of all their woe and as the traitor who hid her hellish fraud in her heavenly form. They are saved from a Satanic mutually echoing hiss by Eve's repentant entreaty, made in the guise of an Echo giving good counsel to a Narcissus lost in despair. Yet Eve offers Adam celibacy, childlessness, or suicide, all the ultimate ends of excessive self-love:

in thy power  
 It lies, yet ere Conception to prevent  
 The Race unblest, to being yet unbegot.  
 Childless thou art, Childless remain: So Death  
 Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two  
 Be forc'd to satisfy his Rav'nous Maw.  
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,  
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain  
 From Love's due Rites, Nuptial embraces sweet,  
 And with desire to languish without hope,  
 Before the present object languishing  
 With like desire, which would be misery  
 And torment less than none of what we dread,  
 Then both ourselves and Seed at once to free  
 From what we fear for both, let us make short,

Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply  
 With our own hands, his Office on ourselves.  
 (X, 986-1002)

Eve proposes to circumvent the longing and despair that is the lot of those who fall in love with shadows by hastening the end of hopeless desire in an early death. It is no remedy at all. Though the counsel Eve gives is false, Adam, hearing her, remembers the voice of the true Echo in Christ's promised revenge against the serpent through their descendants. The memory of the judgment draws them from their selfish despair to consider the future in which they may find a part of the immortality they have lost and extract justice from their accuser. They turn to repentant prayers and begin to restore their reality.

Adam and Eve in the prelapsarian Garden are poised precipitously over the fallen versions of the tale of Echo and Narcissus. As a consequence of the Fall, the story of the nymph and the beautiful boy will be played out in its pathetic mode among their descendants. Pining and disdain become the established modes of erotic behavior. In the defense of unfallen sexuality, Milton distinguishes the eroticism of the bower in Paradise from its corrupt, later forms, among which is the "Serenate, which the starv'd Lover sings / To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain" (IV, 769-70). The Fall breeds more than a multitude of beautiful Narcissuses who scorn the entreaties of a lyrical Echo; the figurative consequence of the Fall is the influx of deceitful shadows in the world. Hell releases its shade, Death, to transform the corporeal world into the perplexed forest of Comus where the malevolent Echo seeks to deceive a foolish Narcissus.

The myth of Echo and Narcissus is the vehicle by which Adam and Eve enact their figurative dominion over the two chief modes of

sense perception, hearing and sight. Before the Fall the consonance of the two senses forms a paradigm for the reciprocity of male and female. As we have seen, the awakening of Adam and Eve centers on their experience of the complementary form of sense perception. Adam awakens to the realm of sight at the creation of Eve and she awakens to sound when she is brought to Adam. After the Fall, when the demonic shadows have corrupted the natural world, the consonance of sight and sound is destroyed. The two modes of sense perception are consigned to a hierarchy which gives the male realm of hearing rule over the female realm of sight. It is important to understand the prelapsarian relation between sight and sound in order to determine whether Milton asserts a traditional hierarchy in his allegory of the sexes or whether he consistently argues against it.

The relative merits of sight and sound are widely debated in the Renaissance; sight is most often considered the highest sense and hearing is given a secondary, though nearly equal honor.<sup>33</sup> To examine Milton's Paradise, however, it is more useful to study the separate properties and functions of the two senses than to attempt to establish a hierarchy between them. As is made clear in Comus, the ears are best able to guide the traveler in the dark forest of a moral labyrinth. Echo does not answer the Lady's pleas because prior to the invocation the Lady has shown that she knows very well how to proceed through the perplexed forest: "if mine ear be true / My best guide now" (170-71). Her eyes cannot serve her as guides in the forest where there is no moon nor stars and where Comus has the power to "cheat the eye with blar illusion, / And give it false presentments" (155-56). By

invoking Echo, the Lady leaves the confusion of the visual realm for the clarity of the aural where darkness and masquerade can be uncovered. Echo lives unseen, and beyond all the mythology and all the forms she takes to answer her petitioners, she is simply the embodiment of bare sound. The Echo of Ausonius' epigram mocks the painter who would try his art on her: "I am Echo, dwelling in the recesses of your ears; and if thou wouldst paint my likeness paint sound."<sup>34</sup> Echo points to the painter's limitations and her own freedom. The action of Comus and the salvation of the Lady depend on the distinction between the eye and the ear. The Lady proves impervious to Comus's charms and trickery because she understands the proper mode of perception for her trial.

The physical nature of sight makes it unadaptable to the moral labyrinth because light must travel in a straight line while sound moves best through those crooked paths. Lucretius describes the passage of sound without impairment through substances and spaces resistant to light:

There is no need to wonder how voices pass and assail the ears through places through which the eyes cannot see plain objects. We often see a conversation go on behind closed doors, of course because the voice can pass unimpaired through tortuous passages in a substance, while images refuse: for they are split up unless they have straight passages to swim through, . . . Besides a voice is distributed abroad in all directions, since voices beget other voices when one voice uttered has once leapt asunder into many, even as a spark of fire it often went to scatter itself into fires of its own. Therefore, places hidden away from sight are filled with voices, and all boil and stir round about with sound. But all images tend straight forwards when once they are sped; therefore no one can see over a wall, though he can hear voices through it.<sup>35</sup>

Sound is less fragile and less restricted in its movements than sight. It has the peculiar quality of self-expansion, of echoing itself, that

allows it to pass through walls and around corners. Since sound travels as an echo, its natural medium is the maze: Renaissance commentators note that echoes are prevalent in winding, enclosed hills or valleys, where sound can rebound off walls and rocks.<sup>36</sup> The echo moving through the natural labyrinth in the landscape mirrors the passage of sound through the human ear. Joshua Sylvester identifies the ears as "Ecchoe's dainty mazes."<sup>37</sup> Samuel Purchas praises the ear as the perfect labyrinth, better able to carry sound than any formed by the landscape or made by man:

The infinite Meanders and Labyrinthian Mazes, Concha, Cochlea, Puteus, all of them so curiously wrought and framed, that no Mountaines, Valleyes, Vaults, Rivers, Wells, no Musically Instruments, are so fitted for Sounds and Echoes, for Noyses and Voices, in the World, as this of the EARE in the Bodie.<sup>38</sup>

The propagation of sound is an apt metaphor for the Lady's journey through the realm of Comus. She has chosen to match the maze of the tangled woods with the better labyrinth of her own ears where sound, or echo, is a type of Ariadne's thread to guide her through darkness and delusion.

The Lady finds the falsehood hidden in the intoxicating, brilliant rhetoric of Comus because the physical sturdiness of sound is matched by its intellectual capacity to transmit both music and meaning. This dual nature of aural perception is the essential feature, far more important than their diverse propagation, that distinguishes the eye from the ear. Although beauty seems to imply some quality greater than mere sense perception, sight has such dual power only in vision. The twofold nature of sound is demonstrated in the songs and philosophies of the rebel Angels. They suspend all Hell with their

harmonies and hold even sweeter discourses on false notions of fate, free will and foreknowledge, but although they may charm their pain for a while, their songs and discourses are discernibly partial, useless, because they give pleasure divorced from reason.

The dichotomy of sound between aesthetic sensibility and reason or knowledge ultimately wins it, if not absolute ascendancy over sight, at least priority. Although Aristotle prefers sight to sound, he establishes a particular connection between hearing and knowledge because he observes that it is necessary to hear in order to learn: "For the spoken word, which is responsible for all instruction, is heard; . . . Consequently of those who have been deprived of one sense or the other from birth, the blind are more intelligent than the deaf and dumb."<sup>39</sup> Christianity brings an absolute dimension to the ear; hearing is the chief sense by which faith is received.<sup>40</sup> John Donne's sermon on 1 Cor. 3:12 is a gloss on the central importance of the ear to Christian faith:

When S. Paul was carried up in raptu, in an extasie, into Paradise, that which he gained by this powerful way of teaching, is not expressed in a Vidit, but an Audivit, it is not said that he saw, but that he heard unspeakable things . . . the eare is the Holy Ghosts first doore, He assists us with Rituaill and Ceremoniaill things, which we see in the Church; but Ceremonies have their right use, when their right use hath first been taught by preaching. Therefore to hearing does the Apostle apply faith.<sup>41</sup>

Even in ecstasy, preference is given to the ear as the vehicle of faith and in quotidian reality the ear receives the instructions that clarify or illuminate what the eye perceives. Hearing must precede sight: in order to see correctly one must first hear correctly. Samuel Purchas sums up the qualities of sound which make it the vehicle of language

and learning, both secular and religious:

the EARE; which wants not her preeminences, even above the EYE it selfe. The Eye belongs to Man as a living creature; this, as a reasonable: neither can wee communicate the conceits of Reason to others, or receive them from others, but by the Eare. This is therefore called the Sense of Discipline, and the Learning Sense. Man is a learned Man by his EARE; man is a religious and holy Man from hence; For the EYE usually is an impediment (I meane, in this our present corruption) ubi vides non est fides: but Faith . . . comes by hearing; and Christ, which dwells in the heart by faith, enters at the EARE, Moses begins the Law with, Heare, Israel; God promulgates the Gospell with, This is my beloved Sonne, heare him. Even of morall honestie, Plutarch testifieth, Tyrocinium recte vivendi est recte audire; a good life begins at a good EARE, which, with a bad EYE, is usually corrupted. The EYE seeth only things present; the EARE, by Tradition of Fathers to their children, receives the wisdome of our Forefathers, and of those that are furthest remote both in time and place from us; and by Speech, and Writing (a visible Speech) the Learning of the World is continued, from the first Man to the last; and this short age of Man is by the EARE, in manner, made immortall.

Thus Ratio and Oratio (our priviledges above Beasts) Faith, Christian and Civill Vertue, all Arts Liberrall and Divine (whereby Men excell Men) are the fruits of the EARE.<sup>42</sup>

The children in Comus pass through the double dark wood because all knowledge begins with the ear.

The dual nature of sound, as both a vehicle of sense and intellect, makes hearing the pivotal faculty in Comus. Sight is limited to perception of the corporeal world which is in the power of Comus and his magic delusions and it is, therefore, not the sense by which to distinguish true and false or reason and nonsense. Comus rules sight but he only half-hears. While his physical sense is as acute as the Attendant Spirit's when he responds to the aesthetic delight of the Lady's song, he is deaf to the intellectual content of sound. His partial hearing is matched by his confused intuition that something

holy lodges in the breast of a girl of clay. Because Comus fancies that all the world and its living creatures are composed exclusively of material substance, he equates sight with sound and plots to enchant the Lady's ears with "well-plac't words of glozing courtesy, / Baited with reason not unplauble" (161-62). Therein lies the failure of his temptation. His "reasons not implausible" are not the same as his not implausible disguise as a shepherd. To those who listen well, nonsense cannot masquerade as reason. The Lady, who knows the difference between sight and sound and body and mind and who hears the meaning of words as well as their sounds, is not fooled. In her song the Lady invoked Echo's well-known gift for sage and serious discourse as the "Sweet Queen of Parley" (241); now she perceives that Comus's brilliant appeal for the enjoyment of the bounty of nature is merely gluttony, a perversion of nature, masquerading as the Natural. One cannot see through a wall or through a mask but one can surely hear through it. The Lady catches Comus in his mistake: "This Juggler / Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes, / Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb" (757-59). Her true ears serve her as well as haemony against Comus's charms--the charms that would make the ear and reason itself subject to the corporeal world. The Lady listens and saves herself. Sabrina comes to release her after the trial but Sabrina is no more than a graceful counterpart to Comus. Her magic, like his, works only in the corporeal world of sense perception where the Lady has wisely guided herself by Echo, the patroness of sound and speech who may free the mind of her petitioners from the dark perplexity of the material world.

The purpose of the masque is to drive out Comus and his gross sensuality that infects the world and that makes the forest near Ludlow Castle a tangled, threatening maze where shadows lie in wait to seduce the innocent traveler. It is a masque about transformation upward, away from material reality, to the Heavens. Echo is promised a translation from her lonely haunts in the woods to the realm of the music of the spheres where she may join in eternal harmonies. If the Elder Brother's speculations are accurate, the Lady may imitate Echo and shed her corporeal body to become pure soul:

So dear to Heav'n is Saintly chastity,  
 That when a soul is found sincerely so,  
 A thousand liveried Angels lackey her,  
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,  
 And in clear dream and solemn vision  
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,  
 Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants  
 Begin to cast a beam on th'outward shape,  
 The unpolluted temple of the mind,  
 And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,  
 Till all be made immortal.

(453-63)

Disembodiment, escape from the world where flesh may be enchained or enchanted by Comus even while the mind remains free, is the desired transformation. The Attendant Spirit, the masque done, departs

Quickly to the green earth's end,  
 Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend,  
 And from thence can soar as soon  
 To the corners of the Moon.

(1014-17)

The sublunar world is abandoned for higher and better realms. The world of matter, of sight, though not of vision, is defeated by the transcendent world of speech and song, the realm of Echo which spans the distance between earthly shadows and Heavenly harmony. In Paradise, however, the realm of sound, too long fleeing or opposing

palpable reality, gives resounding grace to the sublunar world. The resulting harmony is a metaphor for the human marriage.

In the unfallen Garden, before Satan arrives to corrupt sense perception, there is no dissonance between sight and sound. Hearing, which brings knowledge of God and his one command, precedes sight in order to clarify the lush confusion and extravagant sensual delight of Paradise in the same way that a verbal explanation interprets the visual image of an emblem.<sup>43</sup> Adam's prior creation is expressed in his identification with hearing and Eve's birth from his side as the substantiation, the definition, of visual phenomena by words. If, as Raphael implies, Adam is the acknowledged head of Eve, his preeminence exists precisely in his role as interpreter. When Adam confesses his helplessness before Eve's beauty, the Archangel reminds him of the scene by the water where Eve abandoned her reflection for a better image:

For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,  
An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well  
Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love,  
Not thy subjection: weigh with her thyself;  
Then value: Oft-times nothing profits more  
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right  
Well-managed; of that skill the more thou know'st,  
The more she will acknowledge thee her Head,  
And to realities yield all her shows.

(VIII, 567-75)

Where the warning voice of God almost failed, Adam succeeded in leading Eve from superficial beauty to substantial life. The Archangel's admonition points to the prelapsarian meaning of Adam's authority over Eve. Authority does not give him the power to command Eve but only to explicate and substantiate the beauty she embodies. Raphael admonishes Adam to be the head of Eve but he is, in effect, to serve as a prop.

There is perhaps a bit of irony in Adam's identification with hearing, the sense granted grudging second place to the superior sense of sight in the Renaissance, while no one but the staunchest defenders of woman thought to assign anything but the highest place to man in domestic life.

Adam certainly feels himself at a disadvantage before Eve's beauty and in the period before the Fall that disadvantage must be taken very seriously. Visual beauty has the peculiar quality of appearing self-sufficient. As Adam complains to the Archangel:

yet when I approach  
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
And in herself complete, so well to know  
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.  
(VIII, 546-50)

Eve's beauty seems visionary and for Adam, indeed, all the beauties of Paradise find their source in his eyes opened at her creation. The difficulty for him lies in the apparent superiority of Eve's realm over his own; unfallen sight perceives profound beauties that seem replete with their own explanation and thus border on the visionary, while hearing is overtly an incomplete sense. In Paradise, if nowhere else, words beg a concrete reality, though never the narrow definition Satan consistently proposes. The Garden of Eden is so intensely an external world, eminently enveloping and accessible to unfallen sensibilities, that Adam's view may be adopted and the realm of sight made primary in the Garden. But the self-sufficiency of sight is an illusion; except in divine vision, beauty is prey to impersonation and sight to deception. Narcissus was fooled by the seeming substantiality of his shadow, and Spenser's witch built a snowy Florimell who proved almost

indistinguishable from her original. Even in the sun, in the midst of light, Uriel is deceived by Satan's disguise as a young cherub who seeks to know the way to earth in order to better praise the works of God: "Which now for once beguil'd / Uriel, though Regent of the Sun, and held / The sharpest sighted Spirit of all in Heav'n" (III, 689-91). Certainly Satan's words fool the Angel, too, but only because he manages to keep his false rhetoric at bay for a brief moment. The eyes cannot interpret what they apprehend. Light alone brings no organizing principle; its delicate passage is hazardous. The fragility of sight, especially poignant to the blind poet, is closely linked to the fragility of the Garden and of Eve herself, all so easily lost.

Eden is intensely visual primarily because it is a garden of amorous delight. Adam learns at Eve's birth that the physiology of love and the physiology of sight are identical because there is a direct path from the heart to the eye. The Fall is centered on the loss of sight. Satan promises Eve that if she eats the forbidden fruit: "Your eyes that seem so clear, / Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then / Op'n'd and clear'd and ye shall be as Gods" (IX, 706-9). Their eyes are opened to shame and guilt, which is, in effect, a form of blindness: "Thir Eyes how op'n'd and thir minds / How dark'n'd" (IX, 1053-54). Sight, physically a process of refraction by which the external world is mirrored in the mind, has been sundered by Satan's false promise. The brain does not receive the sense impressions gathered by the eyes. With the contracting of the eyes comes the contracting of the heart. At the moment when their minds are most darkened by the fruit, the Garden is not a place of amorous delight

but of reproach and accusation. It is difficult to say whether the loss of sight occasioned the loss of love, and of Eden, or whether the loss of Eden, the exile of God from the Garden, occasioned the loss of sight.

In the Garden of God all human sense, but chiefly sight, approaches an authority that in later times will be granted only to hearing. The eye that embraces the terrestrial Garden while it receives light from the sun is a metonymy for the Paradise where Heaven and earth are intertwined. The Renaissance defenders of sight intermix its visionary and sensual powers in order to declare it the highest human sense and make it rival hearing in the ability to apprehend intellect. Samuel Purchas details the miraculous properties of the eye:

first, in expressing the conceits & passions of the mind, as the two seeing Glasses of the Soule: first, in beauties, as the two Banketting-houses in this Capitoll, the two great & goodly Lights of this heaven, themselves being as two smaller Heavens and Orbes in our Earth: first, in extent, receiving the most distant objects, the huge huge Heaven, & all those vast Globes of Light in their owne little little Heavens & Globes, whereas other Senses reach not farre: first, in spirituall force, in a moment apprehending the furthest distance: first, in most things which Sense accounts first, whence also all Senses inward and outward are called by the names of Seeing: yea, the understanding it selfe is so called; not that of Nature alone, but Prophets for their Revelations are called seers; the Seraphims are full of eyes; God himselfe . . . is called totus Oculis . . . the Will also and the Affections most desired objects, are called Ocelli; to like or dislike is termed Susplicere; desplicere, and the like; yea this is the plucking out of the right eye, to deme ourselves the neerest and deerest of affections offending: lastly, this is the difference of imperfect grace and perfect glorie, that here wee waike by faith and not by sight; there we shall see face to face, wee shall see him as he is.<sup>44</sup>

The eyes are the windows of the soul and the mirror of the heavens. Their scope is immense, infinitely larger than that afforded by the

ears and their apprehension is wondrously rapid. It is easy to forget how easily those two perfect orbs can be dimmed. For its speed and scope, sight is closely linked to thought itself which frequently appears as intuition, the sudden grasping of an idea that makes it akin to visionary insight. Marino in L'Adone plays with these powers of the eye to make it synonymous with mind and transforms sight into a form of corporeal intelligence:

Perchè senza intervallo o mutar loco  
Giunge in instante ogni lontano oggetto,  
Talchè negli atti suoi si scosta poco  
Da la perfezion dell'intelletto;  
Onde se quel viepiù che vento o foco  
Rapido e vago occhio de l'alma è detto,  
Questo, ch'è di Natura opra si bella,  
Intelletto del corpo anco s'appella.<sup>45</sup>

Marino's praise of the eye may find its fulfillment in the New Testament distinction, noted by Purchas, between the present world in which man walks by faith, that is, by hearing, and the future world where man may walk by sight. All the senses have been diminished by the Fall, and the music of the spheres is no longer heard on earth, but the sense of sight because it is the most cherished and the most richly ambiguous best expresses the lost delight of the Garden and the desire for the Divine presence now hidden from man.

Before the advent of Satan, sight and sound are in perfect concordance in the Garden; one sense validates the other. There is yet no labyrinth or mask to confound the eyes. Sight is virtually revelation. All appearances are true; what is beautiful is also good. Yet the potential for deception exists. Adam and Eve each confront the threat of outward beauty and inward vacancy, if not corruption, but it is averted before a dissonant note is sounded. While sight

is harmoniously answered by hearing, the two senses mirror each other and approach the synesthesia imagined by Coleridge in "The Eolian Harp":

O! the one Life within us and abroad,  
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,  
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light,  
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance every where.<sup>46</sup>

There is a sound-like power in the visual, external Garden, where all is imbued with reason and man's reason is answered by nature's reason. The animals, brute beasts to fallen man and used by Comus's crew to symbolize their divorce from reason and intellect, are credited with prelapsarian reason, once by God and once by Eve. God, debating Adam's need for a mate, reminds him that he has all the animals as his companions:

What call'st thou solitude? is not the Earth  
With various living creatures, and the Air  
Replenisht, and all these at thy command  
To come and play before thee; know'st thou not  
Thir language and thir ways? They also know,  
And reason not contemptibly; with these  
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy Realm is large.  
(VIII, 369-75)

God is teasing Adam here, but if the animals are not found appropriate for man's conversation, it is not because they cannot think. Eve, surprised to find a speaking snake, is not quite so surprised to find one that reasons.

What may this mean? Language of Man pronounc't  
By tongue of Brute, and human sense exprest?  
The first at least of these I thought deni'd  
To Beasts, whom God on thir Creation-Day  
Created mute to all articulate sound;  
The latter I demur, for in thir looks  
Much reason, and in thir actions oft appears.  
(IX, 553-59)

The animals do not become symbols of mindless corporeality until man forfeits his own reason. Inanimate nature, too, participates in its own version of reason. Spring and autumn dance hand in hand and the rose is without the thorn that belies its beauty. In such a landscape of inward and outward reason and true appearances, the eye requires only the most gentle reminder from the ears to perceive fully and rationally, not as in Comus where the ears are the only possible guides. If in the masque the Lady must listen to save herself from the delusions of the wild woods because there is no light, in Paradise Raphael needs only caution Adam against surrender to the awesome splendor, almost the excess of light, of Eve's beauty which is made superficial, and therefore dangerous, only by his own desertion of reason.

With the entrance of Satan into the Garden sight loses its sound-like powers. He brings his crooked arguments to impede clear sight and block the light with his disguise. He invades the visual realm, the one most easily accessible to him, as a prelude to the inward corruption of mankind. The fragility of sight now becomes paramount: beauty is too readily impersonated. Satan chooses the snake as the vehicle for his fraud, matching his guile to its enfolded Body to make it a visual image of the blind labyrinth he will establish on earth:

*Circular base of rising folds, that tow'r'd  
Fold above fold a surging Maze, his Head  
Crested aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes;  
With burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect  
Amidst his circling Spires, that on the grass  
Floated redundant; pleasing was his shape,  
And lovely, never since of Serpent kind  
Lovelier.*

(IX, 498-505)

The serpent's form is intricate and beautiful, dazzling to the eye and now suddenly parodying both Eve's beauty and the Garden's. His neck of "verdant Gold" echoes back to the "vegetable gold" (IV, 220) of the fruit of the Tree of Life and his "circling Spires" that float redundantly are reminiscent of the wanton ringlets of Eve's hair. In this guise Satan is an emblem of the transformation he will effect on earth. He corrupts the self-enclosed form of the serpent to make it the image of his narcissism and the first fraudulent beauty in the Garden. With falser words, he offers Eve a corrupted version of herself and the world over which she holds dominion.

The loss of the sound-like power of light does not, however, constitute the Fall or even imply its inevitability. The eyes may be deceived without blame, as Eve dreams of eating the forbidden fruits and awakes still innocent. Eve is seduced not by the beauty of the serpent, which indeed first attracts her notice, but by his words, by the wonder of a speaking beast, and it is only by his words that she can fall. Once the Garden of Eden has become, at least externally, a tangled wood, mankind must walk by faith that comes through hearing, here expressed as the single prohibition of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The command that mankind recognize God as the source of all creation is an echo of the original Creating Word which brought the heavens and earth into being. Eve is correct in calling the prohibition the Daughter of his Voice, the echo which substantiates the Garden and all its material life.<sup>47</sup> The aural shadow determines the visual reality. Amid all the lush ambiguity of light and shade in Paradise, the command is the one absolute, in which the wrong choice

is irreversible and inevitably disastrous. The eyes perceive the infinite spaces between heaven and earth and the "happy rural seat of various view" (IV, 247), all that is lovely in creation, but the ears receive the echo of the Creating Word upon which the visual delight depends. Here the two senses cease to be equivalent: sound or words carry both sensation and meaning, in Paradise or out of it, and therefore have decisive authority. Eve's task is simple: if she adheres to the strict command then she may assume that what the serpent offers is evil, as the Lady in Comus refuses the potion because "none / But such as are good men can give good things / And that which is not good, is not delicious / To a well-govern'd and wise appetite" (702-5). The Lady suspects Comus because he has tricked her once; Eve's choice might even be simpler because she has an absolute principle by which to judge the serpent's claims, but her realm is visual perception where nothing is absolute and all is left free to interpretation. She falls when she deals with sound as though it were light, when she yields to the nonsense of Satan's lies, even allows that a discussion about the virtue of eating the forbidden fruit is plausible and allows herself to be deluded by his bad logic as she was innocently blinded by his disguise.

Satan's successful temptation is both a brilliant understanding of the division of realms between Adam and Eve and sheer good luck. He knows that Eve is inclined to obey voices and that Adam bases his Paradise on the sight that Eve brings him. Corruption, like creation, must begin with the ear and, however subtle the serpent might be, Adam would not likely be persuaded to forget the awesome command: "which

resounds / Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice / Not to incur" (VIII, 334-36). Only by corrupting Eve first could Satan hope to destroy them both and he is, therefore, very fortunate to find her working alone. He first impersonates Adam, offering her a verbal explanation for a new natural phenomenon. Satan's seduction is intellectual, not sexual, although he plays the courtly lover with his bad Petrarchan compliments: "Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if perhaps / Thou canst, who are sole Wonder" (IX, 532-33). It is Satan's mistaken notion that the temptation must be sexual to succeed, and in as much as it is sexual it is a failure. Eve is not charmed by his praises; it is not the vanity of her own beauty that seduces her. There is no reason to believe that Eve is coy when she answers the serpent's flourish of praise with: "Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt / The virtue of that Fruit, in thee first prov'd" (IX, 615-16). Eve's primary interest is the verbal power of the snake, his new-won eloquence, that seems to separate shadow from substance. When they arrive at the forbidden tree, Satan assumes the role of the voice of God that led her to Adam. Having followed the serpent's logic to arrive at some doubt whether the fruit is truly forbidden, or only apparently so, she partakes of it as the final answer to her dilemma, as she yielded to Adam though perhaps still uncertain how he might truly be her image since he was undeniably less lovely than the reflection. As Adam's voice teaches her not to regard with her eyes alone but to forsake the watery image for his "manly grace / And wisdom, which alone is truly fair," so Satan's voice teaches her that the fruit of the Forbidden Tree, hitherto undescribed and unspecified, is endowed with virtue to

make wise and is, therefore, more beautiful than all other fruit in the Garden:

He ended, and his words replete with guile  
 Into her heart too easy entrance won:  
 Fixt on the Fruit she gaz'd, which to behold  
 Might tempt alone.

(IX, 733-36)

The fruit is beautiful no doubt but until now it was perfectly resistible. It is no small part of Eve's Fall that she replaces her husband with the fruit that suddenly seems "Fair to the Eye, inviting to the Taste" (IX, 777) and hopes to find in a bite of fruit the reason she found in Adam's conversation. She has split intellect from love, whose union was one of the chief delights of Paradise, and has debased both.

Satan is successful because he makes a superficially logical equation between sight and sound and reduces them both to shadows. To the visual perception that seemed to approach the aural in veracity, he brings a sight-like power to deceive in sound. His trick makes the eye and ear synonymous when in fact, beyond all other differences, they are unequal in precisely what Satan is so adept at corrupting both in himself and in others. The visual world, cherished but delicate and dependent on aural clarification, is the realm of freedom, while the natural potency of sound, diffusing intact and unimpaired through all mediums, is emblematically the realm of submission to Divine imperatives. Valeriano's Hieroglyphica explicates the emblem of the ear as the vehicle of strict obedience. When Moses consecrated Aaron and his sons as priests, he touched their right ears with a drop of blood from the sacrificial ram as a sign of their obedience to God.<sup>48</sup> The two types of experience, freedom and obedience, resolved into the two modes of perception are fundamental principles of Milton's Eden. To

eradicate the difference between the two modes is to destroy the Garden and man's innocence which can hold opposing forces in happy equilibrium. Satan, with no talent for diversity, corrupts Eve by approximating the region less well known to her directly, the region of aural obedience, to her own domain of visual freedom. He leads Eve to the Forbidden Tree not as a disembodied voice but as an ignis fatuus:

as when a wand'ring Fire,  
Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night  
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  
To Bogs and Mires, and oft through Pond or Pool,  
There swallow'd up and lost, from succor far.  
So glister'd the dire Snake, and into fraud  
Led Eve our credulous Mother.

(IX, 634-44)

His temptation is actually a visual phenomenon masquerading as spoken language. The night-wandering fires are akin to Lucretius' wandering echoes that confound simple peasant mind and they are both offspring of Narcissus' shadow. Eve is returned, as it were, to the clear, smooth lake and left with no voice to guide or admonish her. The deceptive answering looks of her own reflection and the false knowledge of the fruit are the same.

The apparent self-sufficiency, the completeness, of the visual world is now manifested in its full corrupted form. Eve neither knows nor cares when the guilty snake sneaks away and she is equally ready to dispose of God who is a lesser deity than the Tree of Knowledge and of Adam whose power she now exceeds. At the foot of the Tree, at the height of her Fall, she is completely of the Devil's party and devoted

to mocking shadows: the illusory knowledge, the false perception of the Tree, and her own independent self. Bargaining for new freedoms, she has lost the old. To replace the voice of the Divine Echo and her human interloper, Adam, Eve elevates the sense of taste, which is the material version of hearing as touch is of sight.<sup>49</sup> Eve is opting for freedom from the constraints of obedience but, in unconscious irony, she chooses to free herself through a sense bound by material reality more restrictive than obedience to one Divine command. The taste of the fruit is the parodic reflection of the resounding prohibition. As Adam argues his powerlessness before her awesome beauty and chooses to fall because she was made of his own rib, so Eve surrenders to the strict necessity of the corporeal world, made even less free because she divorces it from the creating Word. When she declares that the fruit will "feed at once both Body and Mind" (IX, 780), Eve splits the realm of matter from the realm of spirit. The new division eclipses sight and makes Paradise a wasteland disguised with unreal, bright beauties. The first effect of the Fall transforms the flowers of the Garden, Eve's special province, into symbols of the new earthly vanity. When she returns to offer Adam the forbidden fruit, his horror and the horror that will pursue their descendants is expressed in the sudden death of the flowers on the garland he made in her absence: "From his slack hand the Garland wreath'd for Eve / Down dropp'd, and all the faded Roses shed" (IX, 892-93). Henceforth flowers will live a brief moment and Eve's beauty will be "female charm" (IX, 999), perhaps magical but more certainly illusory.

Satan has understood well that Adam, whose dominion over sound makes him proof against a serpent's bad arguments, can easily be tempted through Eve, for whose sake he will abandon clear thinking. He does not need to be deceived by fantastic tales of marvelous fruit since Satan may provide him with a false apparition. Eve, who now has no external Garden to lead Adam to, is a mockery of the woman created in the dream, a snowy Florimell. Adam's choice to eat and die with her is an act of despair. He deliberately allows the labyrinthian logic into his thought and uses his ears not to ferret out the truth but to deny it. He surrenders the realm of intellect, reason and obedience, that sense that can discern shadow from substance, to dubious manipulations of language that mimic Satan's own: "If Death / Consort with thee, Death is to me as Life" (IX, 954-55). To convince himself that there is some way the prohibition against the fruit can be suspended or overcome, Adam sets words to mirror each other, as though the mutual reflection would impart the same definition to them. But death does not become life for being in the same sentence, though life may become like death. It is a poor attempt to lend substance to the verbal shadows that have invaded his words and his reason. Adam willingly surrenders his own dominion to Eve and the Garden, both already lost, and the Fall occurs as though a second time:

Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again  
 In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan,  
 Sky lowe'r'd, and muttering Thunder, some sad drops  
 Wept at completing of the mortal Sin  
 Original.

(IX, 1000-1004)

With Adam's desertion of the echo of the Creating Word, all the world is lost, left to be tormented and finally uncreated by Death.

The particular irony of Adam's choice is that while it seems a better one than Eve's because he seems to be abandoning all for love and beauty, he is only choosing the memory of what Eve was and how she was created:

O fairest of Creation, last and best  
Of all God's 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,  
Defac't, deflow'r'd, and now to Death devote?  
(IX, 896-901)

It is beyond his power now to substantiate her image with his words or with his love. Eve is lost for good but he chooses her as she once appeared and, in his way, Adam mistakes sight for sound as Eve did when Satan tempted her. Sound and sight fare differently through time and memory. Sound retains its authenticity, maintaining its force by Echo's answering voice in the labyrinth of the ear, but an image seen in the past and then remembered is merely a shadow. It is all the same whether Adam chooses Eve as she is before him, transformed into a shadow devoted to death, or whether he chooses her for the shadow of his memory. His error stems from Eve's beauty which always implied something of the visionary and from his dream of her birth, half-cast in the form of a trance of Heavenly Love. Satan's success depends on the fortuitous ordering of the temptation, because only here, where the visionary and the visual were so closely linked, could Adam be persuaded to surrender his better knowledge and cease to hear the awful prohibition still resounding in his ears.

Schematically the Fall is an attempt to achieve greater freedom by supplanting the ear, with its stringent discipline, by the eye and

its apparent freedom. Adam and Eve are punished accordingly. For having deliberately stopped their ears, they are punished with a loss of sight so great that to their descendants in the fallen world their lost, unfallen sight seems visionary. Rarely again will the world perceived by the eye be joined in consonance with the sounds heard by the ear. Because Adam and Eve both chose shadows, delusion becomes the prevailing mode of visual perception. The first delusion is the promise of godlike sight. As they reach for higher sight, it becomes more grounded; it becomes a sense wholly derived from the physical world, validated not by sound but by the taste of the forbidden fruit. Consuming the fruit, they fancy they can free themselves from the restraints of their material selves:

They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel  
Divinity within them breeding wings  
Wherewith to scorn the Earth.

(IX, 1009-11)

Their fantasy ends in a contrary reality. Their sight becomes indistinguishable from the sense of touch as their eyes exchange contagious fire. Awakening after his intoxication, Adam recognizes that his eyes have not been opened to new life and joys but closed to the old Garden where God and man conversed:

How shall I behold the face  
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy  
And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes  
Will dazzle now this earthly, with thir blaze  
Insufferably bright.

(IX, 1080-84)

The punishment for abandoning sight for sound, obedience for freedom, is the averted eye of shame. Adam begs the woods to cover him with darkness as a shield against the eyes that will see his disgrace and

the world he can no longer see. He wishes for a release from the physical world of sight that has entrapped him so that, like Echo, he may become invisible and live unseen. Echo's realm of sound suddenly seems like freedom, but here Adam is too hopeful. After the Fall, the ear has more freedom than the eye, but it is not the same imaginative abandon which the realm of sight enjoyed in innocence.

The Fall institutes a new order between sight and sound. Because both the beauty of the material world and man's capacity to perceive it are fundamentally impaired, the sense of hearing acquires a new function. The harmony of eye and ear is lost. Christ finds Adam and Eve hidden among thick trees, afraid of his voice for the first time since their creation. Although his voice is mild, he brings the decree that establishes the hierarchy between the two modes of perception. The aural sense becomes the judge of the visible world. The realm of sight is now condemned as the realm of dust and Death, smelling the new order, hastens there to infect it and make it a colony of his kingdom of shades. Terrestrial beauty will now, in time, be revealed as a fleeting shadow or, worse, hellish falsehood in a heavenly form, like the fair women of the plains in Adam's vision. The most horrific form of beauty's deceit is found in Hell, whose portress, half-woman and half-monster, is at once the embodiment of outward beauty and the revelation of its inner corruption. For the seduction of mankind, the devils are repaid with a parody of the lost harmony of sight and sound on earth. A multitude of trees like the one forbidden in Paradise spring up in Hell and the serpent devils, stricken with hunger and thirst, find their tongues deceived for man's deceived sight. They are punished more severely than the classical Tantalus:

greedily they pluck'd  
 The Fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew  
 Near that bituminous Lake where Sodom flam'd;  
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
 Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay  
 Thir appetite with gust, instead of Fruit  
 Chew'd bitter Ashes, which th'offended taste  
 With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,  
 Hunger and thirst constraining, drugg'd as oft,  
 With hatefulest disrelish, writh'd thir jaws  
 With soot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell  
 Into the same illusion, not as Man  
 Whom they triumph'd, once lapst.  
 (X, 560-71)

They are forced to repeat obsessively the delusion they have unleashed on mankind. The devils' impotent tongues, the "dismall universal Hiss" (X, 508) echoed in the taste of the ashes, are the punishment for seducing mankind to disobey and rendering the world of human sight a maze of dust and lies. The devils, eating ash, taste their false rhetoric, the bitter dregs that are their aural shadows.

For mankind the sense of hearing yet retains enough of its former power to serve as the guide to the new world. Michael's instructions are directed primarily to the ear; the vision of history serves as a tableau which is read by the Angel to Adam, whose understanding is inadequate and frequently incorrect. The visionary realm has been lost with the visual. The Fall has dimmed Adam's eyes and made them so mortal that even the effect of the euphrasy and rue wears off too soon and the vision is replaced by direct narrative. Though the ear is the surer guide through the dark regions of fallen experience, it does not altogether escape corruption. Satan's rhetoric leaves its mark. In place of the one clear prohibition that was the center of aural discipline, there are new constraints brought by new confusions. Adam and Eve escape from the maze of guilt brought by consciousness of

their Fall when Adam finds hope in the sentence pronounced on the serpent at their judgment:

Then let us seek  
Some safer resolution, which methinks  
I have in view, calling to mind with heed  
Part of our Sentence, that thy Seed shall bruise  
The Serpent's head; piteous amends, unless  
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand Foe  
Satan, who in the Serpent hath contriv'd  
Against us this deceit; to crush his head  
Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost  
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days  
Resolv'd, as thou proposest; so our Foe  
Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd, and wee  
Instead shall double ours upon our heads.  
(X, 1029-40)

Adam's tone is cautious, hesitant, as befits his first attempt at scriptural exegesis. The full meaning of the sentence is not made clear until the end of Michael's narrative that foretells the incarnation of Christ whose fulfillment of the Law will destroy the works of Satan in mankind. For Adam's descendants, the sense of hearing will impart knowledge only after long and patient labors of interpretation. Meanwhile, corruption will increase among his sons before any prophecy is fulfilled and they will shortly need another type of interpretation. Like the hissing serpents, they will suffer a painful loss of speech for their attempts to buy immortality with fame:

in derision sets  
Upon thir Tongues a various Spirit to rase  
Quite out thir Native Language, and instead  
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:  
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud  
Among the Builders; each to other calls  
Not understood till hoarse, and all in rage,  
As mockt they storm; great laughter was in Heav'n  
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange  
And hear the din; thus was the building left  
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd.  
(XII, 52-62)

Juno's curse on Echo will become the general curse on mankind punished for pernicious self-love. God will leave the world to its own corrupt devices and to the chosen nation He will give ten prohibitions to replace Adam's one. Closer to Milton's own time, the difficult labor of interpreting "those written Records pure" (XII, 514) inspired by God's word will be made more difficult by "grievous Wolves" (XII, 508) who deliberately misuse and belie those records. The realm of hearing, though not forfeited to the shades of Hell, looks forward to future strictures and future doubts.

Paradise Lost ends with the eclipse of sight. The eyes lose all authority and are subsumed by the ear. Adam and Eve descend into the blind maze of Comus. The Garden, summed up and contained in the sense of sight, is closed to mankind and its destruction by the flood foretold:

then shall this Mount  
Of Paradise by might of Waves be mov'd  
Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,  
With all his verdure spoil'd, and Trees adrift  
Down the great River to the op'ning Gulf,  
And there take root an Island salt and bare,  
The haunt of Seals and Orcs, and Sea-mews clang.  
(XI, 829-35)

The lush Garden of Eden will be turned into a desolate island whose barrenness is authenticated by the inarticulate, lonely call of the sea gulls where once the hills and thickets resounded with

Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
Sole, or responsive each to other's note  
Singing thir great Creator.  
(IV, 682-84)

The transformation of the Garden will be mirrored everywhere in human sight now closed to thoughts of Heaven and opened to desert wastelands,

monstrous deformities and darkness. The ear alone can bring such light as may be found in fallen human history. Adam's vision would be a series of endless horrors, a nightmarish prelude to despair or suicide, if the voice of the Archangel did not intercede to justify the horror or promise release from that history at the end of time. In the worst moments of history, darkness may become so prevalent as to vie with the visible darkness of Hell. A plague of darkness in Egypt will be thick enough to touch: "Darkness must overshadow all his bounds, / Palpable darkness, and blot out three days" (XII, 187-88). In such history, visual beauty will be a very rare and untrustworthy pleasure. The external Paradise where the eye held equal, or perhaps greater, dominion, is replaced by the Paradise within ruled by the faith that comes through hearing.

Eve's fate follows the fate of her realm. If she is spared the worst, and the sterility of the Garden is softened to the pain of childbirth, she does not escape the uprooting. The expulsion from the Garden is primarily Eve's loss. Her lament when she hears the sentence of exile is as heart-felt and heart-broken as Adam's when he knew that Eve was lost. Eve would now cling to her Garden as he clung to the woman formed of his rib:

from thee  
 How shall I part, and with wander down  
 Into a lower World, to this obscure  
 And wild, how shall I breathe in other Air  
 Less pure, accustom'd to immortal Fruits?  
 (XI, 281-85)

She pleads, like Adam, not for the Garden she has but for the Garden she remembers, reduced by her own foolish choice to a shadow. Eve is, however, not set adrift to wander blindly in a second Fall; she is

anchored to Adam's authority. The new order of perception is echoed in the new hierarchy between man and woman. Adam's authority is not now a sign of her birth from his side but an expression of her enforced obedience to him: "to thy Husband's will / Thine shall submit, hee over thee shall rule" (X, 195-96). Eve accepts Adam's authority as her guide to the world which opens before them when she abandons the old Paradise for the new that will come from her promised seed. Meanwhile the Cherubim descend with the blazing sword to shut them out forever and make the realm of visual delight a vision too terrible for mortal eyes. The terrestrial Garden, once lost, becomes a metaphor whose human reality resides only in God's spoken promise.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>For a study of the commentary on the myth of Narcissus, see Louise Vinge, The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature up to the Early Nineteenth Century, trans. R. Dewsnap and N. Reeves (Lund: Gleerups, 1967). For a discussion of the allegorical expositions of Ovid's Metamorphoses, see Don Cameron Allen, Mysteriously Meant (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), pp. 163-99. The moralized Echo has been dealt with briefly in Ernest W. Talbert, "Mythological Allusion and Mythological Moral," Renaissance Papers, 1964, pp. 3-11 and in DeWitt T. Starnes and Ernest W. Talbert, Classical Myth and Legend in Renaissance Dictionaries (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N.C. Press, 1955), pp. 197-99.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander Neckam, De Naturis Rerum, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1863), pp. 66-67: "Per echo autem designantur quidam nimis proni ad loquendum, immo extrema locutione uti desiderant isti nobiles triumphatores. . . . Nec sine causa a poetis dictum, echo amore Narcissi accensam esse. Per Narcissum enim inanis designatur gloria, quae umbra sui ipsius fallitur. . . . Tandem in florem mutatur, quia evanescit mundana gloria, et ipsum nomen solum superest."

<sup>3</sup>"L'Ovidius Moralizatus di Pierre Bersuire," ed. Fausto Ghisalberti, Studj romanzi, 23 (1933), 114: "Ista possunt historaliter allegari contra lenones et lenas et vetulas rufianas que adulteriis favent et dum su opera lubrica faciunt, lunomen i. zelotipes et parentes iuvenularum in verbis tenent . . . Echo signat adultores."

<sup>4</sup>The Canterbury Tales in The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. R. N. Robinson, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), lines 1189-90. All references to The Canterbury Tales are to this edition and are hereafter cited in the text.

<sup>5</sup>T. H., The fable of Ovid treting of Narcissus (London, 1560), sig. C1<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>6</sup>Francis Bacon, The Wisdome of the ancients, trans. Sir Arthur Gorges (London, 1622), p. 13.

<sup>7</sup>Nicolas Renouard, Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide (Paris, 1618), p. 44.

<sup>8</sup>George Sandys, Ovid's Metamorphosis: Englished, Mythologized and Represented in Figures, ed. Karl K. Hulley and S. T. Vandersall (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 160.

<sup>9</sup>William Warner, Albion's England (London, 1597), p. 217 (Ch. XLVI, Bk. ix).

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 218-19 (Ch. XLVI, Bk. ix).

<sup>11</sup>Ovid's Metamorphosis, p. 157.

<sup>12</sup>Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, trans. W.H.D. Rouse, 3rd ed., rev. Martin Ferguson Smith, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1975), IV, 580-92.

<sup>13</sup>Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, Everyman (1932; rpt. London: Dent; N.Y.: Dutton, 1964), I, 428 (Part I, Sect. 3, Member 3).

<sup>14</sup>"Arnolfo d'Orléans. Un Cultore di Ovidio nel Secolo XII," ed. F. Ghisalberti, Memorie del Reale Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere, 24, No. 4 (1932), p. 209 (Lib. III, 5-6): "Per Echo hominis bonam famam que arrogantem amaret et benedicendo extolleret nisi ipse se eunetis preferendo bonam famam contempneret."

<sup>15</sup>"Ovide Moralisé," ed. C. de Boer, Verhandelingen de Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam, Afdeeling Letterkunde, new ser., 15 (1915), Bk. III, lines 1493-94: "Quar lor bons renons coile et coeuvre / Toute lor malisse et lor oeuvre." Fame is a social phenomenon and invisible like Echo. Bk. III, lines 1517-19: "Nulz ne puet veoir bon renon, / Quar ce n'est se parole non, / Qui par la gent est puepliee."

<sup>16</sup>Giovanni Boccaccio, Genealogiae Deorum Gentilium Libri, ed. Vincenzo Romano (Bari: Guis. Laterza & Figli, 1951), I, 381 (Bk. VII, Ch. lix): "Nam per Echo . . . famam ego intelligo . . . Hanc multi fugiunt et parvi pendunt, et in aquis, id est in mundanis deliciis . . . intuentur et adeo a suis voluptatibus capiuntur, ut spreta fama post paululum tamquam non fuissent, moriuntur; et si forsitan aliquid nominis superest, in florem vertitur . . . et in nichilum solvitur."

<sup>17</sup>Fable of Ovid, sig. C3<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>18</sup>The advice-giving Echo who instills morality in Narcissus survives until the twentieth century and reappears unnamed in Freud's essay on narcissism. The ego ideal that guarantees narcissistic satisfaction for the adult is an internalized Echo: "For what prompted the subject to form an ego ideal, on whose behalf his conscience acts as watchman, arose from the critical influence of his parents (conveyed to him by the medium of the voice), to whom were added, as time went on,

those who trained and taught him and the innumerable and indefinable host of all the other people in his environment--his fellowmen and public opinion." The adult abandons Narcissus, his infantile ego, for Echo, the ego ideal based on the judgment of others. Sigmund Freud, On Narcissism: An Introduction, in The Complete Psychological Works, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1957), XIV, 96.

<sup>19</sup>Ovid's Metamorphosis, p. 156.

<sup>20</sup>Anatomy of Melancholy, I, 428 (Part I, Sect. 3, Member 3).

<sup>21</sup>Ben Jonson, The Complete Masques, ed. Stephen Orgel (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), lines 482-84.

<sup>22</sup>"The First Day of the Second Week. Eden," Du Bartas. His Second Weeke, in The Complete Works of Joshua Sylvester, ed. Alexander Grosart (1880; facs. rpt. N.Y.: AMS Press, 1967), I, lines 132-39.

<sup>23</sup>Sir Philip Sidney, The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 161.

<sup>24</sup>Philostratus, Imagines, trans. Arthur Fairbanks, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann; N.Y.: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), p. 269 (Bk. II, Ch. xxxiii).

<sup>25</sup>Macrobius, The Saturnalia, trans. Percival Vaughn Davies (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1969), p. 418 (Bk. I, Ch. xxii).

<sup>26</sup>Henry Reynolds, "The Tale of Narcissus briefly Mythologized," Mythomystes, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (1632; facs. rpt. Menston, Yorkshire: Scolar Press, 1972), pp. 110-11.

<sup>27</sup>The Echo in George Herbert's "Heaven" is poised between the earth-bound nymph and the prophetic voice. She is not silent but shows her petitioner, by her own example, how he may seek the reflection of Heaven on earth:

O who will show me those delights on high?

Echo.

I

Thou Echo, thou art mortal, all men know.

Echo.

No.

Wert thou not born among the trees and leaves?

Echo.

Leaves.

Are there any leaves, that still abide?

Echo.

Bide.

What leaves are they? impart the matter wholly.

Echo.

Holy.

Are holy leaves the Echo then of blisse?

Echo

Yes.

The English Poems of George Herbert, ed. C. A. Patrides (London: Dent, 1975), p. 191.

<sup>28</sup>Edmund Spenser's Poetry, ed. Hugh Maclean (N.Y.: Norton, 1968), III, ii, 19. All subsequent references appear in the text.

<sup>29</sup>See Arnold Stein, Answerable Style (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minn. Press, 1953), p. 86 for the suggestion that the voice Eve hears in her dream, though she calls it Adam's, is actually her own.

<sup>30</sup>See p. 84 above.

<sup>31</sup>Omnia Andrea Alciati Emblemata, cum commentariis per Claudium Minoem (Antwerp, 1577), p. 261:

Quod nimium tua forma a tibi Narcisse placebat,  
In florem, & noti est versa stuporis olus.  
Ingenue est marcor cladesq, φιλαυτία, doctos.  
Quae pessum plures datq. deditq viros:  
Qui veterum abiecta methodo, nova dogmata quaerunt,  
Nilq suas praeter tradere phantasias.

<sup>32</sup>For the structure of this simile see Geoffrey Hartman, "Milton's Counterplot," Beyond Formalism (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 113-23.

<sup>33</sup>For the Renaissance disagreement over the hierarchy of the senses see Erwin Panofsky, Problems in Titian, Mostly Iconographic (N.Y.: N.Y.U. Press, 1969), pp. 120-25; the classical preference for sight over sound is discussed in Stein, Answerable Style, pp. 139-50.

<sup>34</sup>Ausonius, "Epigrams on Various Matters," Opuscula, trans. Hugh G. Evelyn White, Loeb Classical Library (1921; rpt. London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1949), No. 32.

<sup>35</sup>De Rerum Natura, IV, 595-615.

<sup>36</sup>Ambrosius Calepine, Linguae Latinae Dictionarium (Basel, 1555), p. 369: "Fit praecipue in convallibus & locis concameratis. Ubi scinditur resultans aer, & acceptae voces numerosiore repercussu multiplicatur: nonemq; echo eius modi voci à Graecis datum est, ut Plinius scribit, quoniam non est vagandi liberrimus campus, sed obiectu reflectitur."

<sup>37</sup>"The Wood-Man's Bear," The Complete Works of Joshuah Sylvester, II, verse 47.

<sup>38</sup>Samuel Purchas, Microcosmus, or the historie of man (London, 1619), pp. 100-101.

<sup>39</sup>Aristotle, "On Sense and Sensible Objects," On the Soul, Parva Naturalia, On Breath, trans. W. S. Hett, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1935), I, 437a.

<sup>40</sup>For Christian attitudes toward hearing, especially in the Reformation, see U. Milo Kaufmann, "The Pilgrim's Progress" and Traditions in Puritan Meditation (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 233-44; William Madsen, From Shadowy Types to Truth (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 145-80; Angus Fletcher, The Prophetic Moment (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 4-5.

<sup>41</sup>"Preached at S. Paul's, for Easter-Day 1628," The Sermons of John Donne, ed. Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1956), III, 228.

<sup>42</sup>Microcosmus, or the historie of man, pp. 92-94.

<sup>43</sup>See Geoffrey Hartman, "Adam on the Grass with Balsamum," Beyond Formalism, p. 143ff. for a discussion of the emblematic nature of Milton's images.

<sup>44</sup>Microcosmus, or the historie of man, pp. 84-87.

<sup>45</sup>Giovanni Battista Marino, L'Adone, ed. Gilberto Becarri (Florence: Casa Editrice Nerbini, 1922), canto VI, 27.

<sup>46</sup>Selected Poetry and Prose of Coleridge, ed. Donald A. Stauffer, The Modern Library (N.Y.: Random House, 1951), p. 57.

<sup>47</sup>William Hunter, "Prophetic Dreams and Visions in Paradise Lost," Modern Language Quarterly, 9 (1948), 277-85, argues that Eve reduces the absolute and unalterable command of God into one of the lowest forms of prophecy, the filia vocis, which is a mere directive of action and thus shows her readiness to fall. The command, however, is accommodated to earth in the form of Reynolds' Daughter of the Divine Voice without losing any of its authority. Eve indicates that the express command, once stated, was transformed into its terrestrial form, as is all else in the Garden.

<sup>48</sup>Johannes Piero Valeriano, Hieroglyphica (Frankfurt, 1614), p. 400: "Sed ad aurem potius transeamus, quae isidem in sacris literis hieroglyphicum est Obedientiae, ubi praecipue Moyses, secundo immolato

ariete, sacrificio quod Explicationis LXX dixerunt, alii Consummationis, vel, ut vulgata habet editio, in consecratione sacerdotum: aliis rite factis, insuper de hostiae huiusmodi sanguine extremum dexteræ auriculæ tum Aaronis, tum filiorum eius tetigit: quod ut interpretantur Theologi, ad obedientiam refertur, quam præstare debemus domino . . ."

<sup>49</sup>Milton aligns the sense of hearing with the sense of taste in the work of renovation: "As the change is by way of being an effect produced in man, and as it happens in answer to the call, it is sometimes called a hearing or a listening, though it is usually understood that the ability to hear or listen is itself a gift from God. It is also sometimes called a taste." Christian Doctrine, trans. John Carey, ed. Maurice Kelley, in Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1973), VI, 457.

## CHAPTER III

## FIT HELP: RESEMBLING UNLIKENESS AND UNLIKE RESEMBLANCE

The marriage of Adam and Eve in the Garden is an eminently egalitarian institution and a powerful argument against the suspicion that Milton had a contempt for women. The troublesome questions of domestic hierarchy are dissolved by the higher order of reciprocal love which begins when Adam dreams of Eve's creation. The cordial spirits taken from his side return to him transformed into the spirits of love and make his heart amorous, the seat of Eros, and Eden becomes the garden of pleasure. Adam dreams of the reciprocal transformation that lies at the heart of the unfallen cosmos and wakes to act out that relation as the mutual exchange between husband and wife. When Eve eats the forbidden fruit she demands equality with Adam, not because the knowledge of good and evil gives her the wit to realize that she has been living under an unjust hierarchical order, but because the Fall has changed the meaning of equality. In Paradise, our fallen concept of equality as a measure of individual worth is meaningless. The potency of sunlight is discovered in the fruits that it bears on earth; alone, it is barren, its worth unknown and unexpressed. Eve's worth, then, is measured by how well she awakens Adam to the visual splendor of the Garden. We know that she is equal to that task and that he is equal to substantiating the beauty of Eden with his words. Adam and Eve both partake completely of the sensual delights of Eden and it would be foolish to ask who enjoys them more.

The reciprocity of Adam and Eve is easily seen in the allegorical division of the two sexes as the twin senses of sight and sound. The full meaning of each sense is expressed only in conjunction with the other; Adam and Eve hold dominion over separate realms through each other and for each other. Though Eve reigns over sight and all the beauties of the phenomenal world, she is in herself no more terrestrial nor sharp of sight than her husband. The temptation at the pool of Narcissus shows that she is as likely as he to misapprehend visual phenomena. Adam, who wakes to study the sky and converse with God and Angel, is neither inherently more spiritual nor more rational than his wife. His dialogue with Raphael shows him liable to a multitude of errors in reason. Adam and Eve know their realms only when they guide each other to them and, exchanging powers, find new delights. In the same fashion, they understand the meanings of their names, discover their identities, as it were, through their marriage. Adam, whose name means earth, from which he was created and over which he rules, is led to the terrestrial Garden by Eve. She, for all the care she gives her fruits and flowers, fulfills her name, becomes the mother of all living, only when she forsakes her shadow and makes her beauty the reality of Eden for Adam. The first pair experience their figurative categories, the schematic substitute for the individual personalities mankind is still too new to possess, as neither limiting nor exclusive but as an excellent occasion to exercise their equal powers of giving and receiving. Coleridge cryptically illuminates the reciprocity that defines the union of Adam and Eve:

The love of Adam and Eve in Paradise is of the highest merit--not phantomatic, and yet removed from anything

degrading. It is the sentiment of one rational being towards another made tender by a specific difference in that which is essentially the same in both; it is a union of opposites, a giving and receiving mutually of the permanent in either, a completion of each in the other.<sup>1</sup>

As Satan learned when he spied on the pair imparadised in each other's arms, any statement about Adam or Eve must be made in the light of this reciprocal union which is no more than a phantasm in after times, as irrecoverable to mankind as the Garden of Eden.

Satan perceives correctly, for his own bad purposes, that the human pair, easily distinguished from the multitude of creatures in Eden by their "nobler shape erect and tall" (IV, 287) are also quite different from each other. While the tedious self-sufficiency of Hell always offers more of the same, "And in the lowest deep a lower deep / Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide" (IV, 76-77), the marriage in Eden, imitating the Garden, offers infinite variety in return for dependence. Both Adam and Eve are created "Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" (III, 99); yet neither they, nor their divided realms, are self-sufficient in the exercise of the delights of Paradise.<sup>2</sup> As we have seen, Eve is created in response to Adam's recognition that he is not comfortable alone and that Paradise is not yet the pleasure it might be. If dependence is most easily seen in Adam's solitary state, diversity is most easily seen in Eve's awakening at the clear, smooth lake. Her lesson there is to accept an image at first somewhat displeasing in its foreign aspect and less well-endowed with the beauty she has already come to value. Great as the difference initially seems to Eve, it is equalled by Adam's recognition of their similitude and his knowledge that he saw no such similarity between himself and the

animals. God Himself outlines the extent of difference and similitude proper for human love when he promises Adam that he will create "Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self" (VIII, 450). Milton's exposition of Gen. 2:18 defines the helper created for man because it is not good for him to live alone as the middle term of a triad flanked on either side by "likeness" and "other self," the two terms earlier described in Tetrachordon as "most resembling unlikenes, and most unlike resemblance."<sup>3</sup> Man and woman resemble each other without becoming such perfect, flattering images as they might find in a mirror or in clear, smooth water. Adam has asked God for a solace for his human, solitary defects. If He truly grants Adam "Thy wish, exactly to thy heart's desire" (VIII, 451) then He creates a woman both like and unlike Adam; Eve shares his humanity but she also brings a new world with her.

It is easy enough to see that Eve is a likeness of Adam. She is created in God's image as a rational creature who can hold conversations with Adam that satisfy him more than naming animals and yet are less strenuous than celestial colloquies. The physical resemblance between man and woman, secured by the shared rib that provides the link of flesh which makes mankind a species distinct from lions, elephants, apes or serpents, is obvious enough. Eve's unlikeness is more troublesome because it is not limited to the physical distinction of male and female. Adam's initial vision of Eve as "manlike but different sex" indicates a difference of heart and soul as well as flesh. If Eve is to be a fit help for Adam she must offer him a disparate image of himself as he offered her an unlike resemblance of her own

reflection in the water.<sup>4</sup> To assume that Eve is like Adam in all except body is to risk engaging in a fallen dichotomy between body and soul and of advocating a narcissism of the imagination that demands only like-minded companions who flatter with their concurring opinions. Satan, who does not allow for minds other than his own, finds a "perfect image" in Sin, the offspring of his corrupt thoughts. The difference in sex allows them to procreate but does not offer a convincing distinction between father and daughter. Although she is female, Sin offers such companionship to Satan as the watery image would have offered to Eve. Satan gives birth to Sin, a reduced image of himself, and the proper fruit of the union of this perfect image with its author is Death, a yet more insubstantial shadow who breeds half-born monsters with his mother. The cycle of incestuous desire and ceaseless abortive births at the Gate of Hell is a physical representation of Satan's solipsism, his failure to acknowledge unlikeness in another. Eve, the daughter of God as well as man, is a true image who offers her companion what he does not find in himself.

If Adam and Eve are to engage in a union of mutual exchange they must possess complementary qualities and they must consciously comprehend their mutual otherness. The first sight of the human pair in the Garden underlines their differences in body and soul. They appear hand in hand, shining with the image of their Creator:

though both  
 Not equal, as thir sex not equal seem'd;  
 For contemplation hee and valor form'd,  
 For softness shee, and sweet attractive Grace.  
 (IV, 295-98)

As has been pointed out, "not equal" here means not identical rather

than of greater or lesser worth.<sup>5</sup> Yet, perhaps, because we are side by side with Satan when we first see them, the meaning of equal is best left somewhat ambiguous; Satan makes no observation that does not involve a quantitative judgment of greater and smaller or less and more or higher and lower. Satan's notion of equality is belied here, however, by Edenic paradox. Lines 297 and 298 form a complete, enclosed unit in which one set of terms supplies the missing element of the other. Sweet, attractive grace seems an unequal match for contemplation, but that is a limitation of fallen sensibilities and it is their burden to imagine a world in which grace is a match for contemplation. It must always be remembered that Adam's contemplation threatens to lead him to insubstantial vapors and that Raphael strongly advises that he concern himself with the grace of Eve and the Garden. The description of Adam and Eve is made all the more forcefully innocent by paralleling the physical qualities to the intellectual or spiritual. The two sets of terms mirror each other: the intellectual contemplation of Adam reflects the softness, the physical delicacy of Eve and the strength of Adam reflects her attractive grace, the Edenic beauty that is freely offered to all and seems almost to converse with the beholder. The qualities of Adam and Eve, their gifts really, are not unbalanced until Satan, setting out to tempt mankind, declares himself pleased to find Eve alone because he has determined that the female is the less equal sex, Adam having the sharper intellect and, most important, greater physical prowess. With his failing strength, Satan does not want to risk a battle:

Her Husband, for I view far round, not nigh,  
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,

And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb  
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould,  
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,  
 I not; so much hath Hell debas'd, and pain  
 Infeebld me, to what I was in Heav'n.

(IX, 482-88)

The Edenic paradox causes confusion for Satan who decides that the temptation might end in physical combat rather than in intellectual debate. In a battle, Eve would surely be the easier prey. The temptation never becomes a test of physical prowess but there is more than a hint here that Satan misunderstands his own victory.

The following line rounds out the innocent values that are so abhorred and misunderstood in later times: "Hee for God only, shee for God in him" (IV, 299). Eve is made in the image of Adam and derives the Divine image through him. Here she seems unequal indeed, except that it is Satanic logic that assumes that the Divine image is impaired or lessened because it is received secondarily; it is the same logic that leads Satan to ask if God was not forced to create man instead of Angels because he had spent his erstwhile powers on the creation of Heaven. If the potency of the Divine image is lost, Eve becomes the shadow of Adam and her birth from his side becomes analogous to Sin's birth from Satan. Moreover, it would bode extremely ill for the descendants of Adam and Eve if the Divine image suffered impairment in the process of transference. The Divine image would be lost through time and overuse and mankind would find itself exiled from God even without disobedience.<sup>6</sup> Eve is, then, not a lesser creation because she is made for Adam and from the Divine image in him. She is not unequal to Adam until she accepts the forbidden fruit whose rumored god-like virtues promise to rectify the inherently unfair order of creation that

makes her less in the image of God than Adam. Wanting to become more equal, she becomes the occasion of Adam's narcissism when he chooses to fall with her by incorporating her back into his side as his extracted rib. The fallen Eve concurs with Adam's prior misreading, and that of a host of other exegetes, that her creation declares her a secondary being, an afterthought made to serve the moment but not intended in the original Divine plan. The innocent meaning of Eve's creation for the sake of the Divine in Adam rather than directly for God, however, refers to the human marriage which is based in part on the identity of body and mind. The shared image of God in man and woman is included as a pivotal resemblance in the midst of a detailed description of Adam and Eve which dwells on their separate and unlike natures and forms.

Moreover, the shared image of God in both Adam and Eve is a reminder that she was created in response to Adam's particular human loneliness; it does not establish Adam's dominion over her in the Garden. Implicit in the observation that Adam was made for God only and Eve for God in him is 1 Cor. 1:7: "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, for as much as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man." In Tetrachordon, arguing against the notion of a hermaphroditic original ancestor of mankind, Milton invokes this passage of St. Paul to establish that "in the image of God created he him" of Gen. 1.27 does not mean that Adam was both male and female but that the woman is not primarily and immediately made in the image of God; Adam alone is made directly in the Divine image. Here Milton perforce concludes that St. Paul mandates a domestic hierarchy, although he also insists that

concord and love must coexist with that hierarchy in every true marriage:

Moreover, if man be the image of God, which consists in holines, and woman ought in the same respect to be the image and companion of man, in such wise to be lov'd, as the Church is belov'd of Christ, and if, as God is the head of Christ, and Christ the head of man, so man is the head of woman; I cannot see by this golden dependence of headship and subjection, but that Piety and Religion is the main tye of Christian Matrimony.<sup>7</sup>

The analogy of husband and wife as Christ and the Church is the commonplace reason given for the belief that authority must be tempered with love in marriage.<sup>8</sup> The golden dependence of marriage is reminiscent of St. Augustine's prescription for a marriage as a sentimental union between man and woman: "a kind of friendly and genuine union of the one ruling and the other obeying."<sup>9</sup> St. Augustine, arguing that sexual intercourse must serve for procreation only but that marriage might have another basis, and Milton, altogether disregarding the marriage bed as a reason God instituted wedlock, arrive at the same notion of a special case of friendship among unequals that allows them a continual exercise of charity. While in the *Divorce Tracts* Milton bases marital concord on the hierarchy between man and wife, in *Paradise Lost* he envisions a concord based wholly on reciprocity. Rather than establishing female inferiority, the image of God in man becomes the cause for the particular human intimacy of Adam and Eve.

Eve derives her image of God because, second created, she did not experience the initial solitude that made Adam wish for another like himself. Though Eve's close ties with the Garden make her fragility obvious to us, her need for a human paradise is expressed

chiefly in her reliance upon Adam to organize her phenomenal experience in his role of human counterpart to the invisible Divine Voice. Without the sense of inadequacy, an awareness of the limits of self-sufficiency, such as Eve intuits when she discovers the difference between her lovely but two-dimensional reflection in the water and the flesh and blood hand of Adam that seizes hers, there can be no love. At least since Plato's Symposium it is axiomatic that love is a desire to possess a beauty that the lover lacks. Socrates' Diotima describes Love as the son of Poverty and Plenty who is conceived at the feast held on Aphrodite's birthday. Love, a mediating spirit, neither mortal nor immortal, inherits the characteristics of both his parents and, consequently, flourishes in plenty one moment and suffers in want the next. Aristophanes' grotesque tale of the origin of love from the sorry plight of the hermaphrodite split by the anger of Zeus and then allowed to reunite with his lost half when the god relented is a comic, physical version of the same theme of love as the desire to possess what one lacks.<sup>10</sup>

Leone Ebreo further argues that a conscious recognition of the lack of beauty, not the beauty itself or merely the lack of it, is the universal cause of love in all beings except God, who is perfect and lacks nothing:

il mancamento senza cognizione nissuno amore o desiderio induce di cosa buona e bella (vedrai gli uomini che son nudì d'ingegno e cognizione esser privi de l'amore de la sapienzia e del desiderio de la dottrina); ma quando sopravviene al mancamento conoscimento del bello o buono che manca, quel conoscimento è quello che principalmente induce l'amore e il desiderio de la cosa bella. Adunque ove questo conoscimento si truova accompagnato di mancamento

di qualche grado di bellezza (come nel mondo angelico), ivi l'amore nacque e non ne l'inferiore, ove il mancamento abbonda e il conoscimento manca.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, Ebreo reinterprets the Platonic story of the birth of Love so that the father is beauty and the mother the knowledge of the lack of beauty: "te dico che 'l comune padre d'ogni amore è il bello, e la madre comune è la cognizione del bello, mista di carenza."<sup>12</sup> Milton, retelling Diotima's myth once again in The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce changes Ebreo's conscious knowledge of the lack of beauty into a more specifically human concern and fuses the Platonic story with the Mosaic account of the birth of Love:

But all ingenuous men will see that the dignity & blessing of marriage is plac't rather in the mutual enjoyment of that which the wanting soul needfully seeks, than of that which the plenteous body would jollily give away. Hence it is that Plato in his festivall discours brings in Socrates relating what he fain'd to have learned from the Prophetesse Diotima, how Love was the Sonne of Penury, begot of Plenty, in the garden of Jupiter. Which divinely sorts with that which in effect Moses tells us; that Love was the Son of Loneliness, begot in Paradise by that sociable & helpfull aptitude which God implanted between man and woman toward each other.<sup>13</sup>

Here Milton offers a domesticated version of the myth that looks toward Paradise Lost. In light of the myth of poverty and plenty as the parents of love in the Garden of Eden or of Aphrodite, the "other self" which God promises Adam is not synonymous with the promised "likeness" but an apparent contradiction of it. The meaning of other self is clarified in the subsequent line in which God proclaims that the new creation will fulfill the desire of Adam's heart. The heart of a lover does not desire what it already knows and possesses but what it lacks; it seeks what is alien.

Adam becomes conscious of his loneliness when he names the animals and sees that they all have mates while he has none and that they cannot supply him with appropriate companionship. At first he feels the vague dissatisfaction of need in the midst of plenty and yearns after something other than dominion over birds and beasts: "in these / I found not what methought I wanted still." (VIII, 355). He recognizes his own circumscribed being in the terrestrial world he was created to rule and finds himself peculiarly homeless despite his lordship over the Garden. He complains to his Creator:

how may I  
 Adore thee, Author of this Universe,  
 And all this good to man, for whose well being  
 So amply, and with hands so liberal  
 Thou hast provided all things: but with mee  
 I see not who partakes. In solitude  
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone,  
 Or all enjoying, what contentment find?  
 (VIII, 359-66)

Adam intuits correctly that the creation of mankind is not yet complete. Led by God's argument that He too has no companion, Adam sees the difference between his solitary humanity and the self-sufficiency of the Deity. The need for a mate makes the difference between God and man absolute and Adam, feeling his solitary discomfort, knows that as a solitary he is an imperfect reflection of the Divine image. He argues that in order to reflect the Divine infinitude and self-containment on earth, he needs a companion both for procreation and conversation:

Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee  
 Is no deficiency found; not so is Man,  
 But in degree, the cause of his desire  
 By conversation with his like to help  
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou

Shouldst propagate, already infinite;  
 And through all numbers absolute, though One;  
 But Man by number is to manifest  
 His single imperfection, and beget  
 Like of his like, his Image multipli'd,  
 In unity defective, which requires  
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.  
 (VIII, 415-26)

His as-yet-undefined want becomes the Neoplatonic lover's desire for a beauty that he himself does not possess when he dreams of the creation of Eve.

The necessity for recognition of one's own imperfection, distinct from Divine perfection, explains why Satanic longing remains an unsatisfied and unending, fierce desire. Satan, doubting that he was created by God and attempting to make himself completely self-contained, forfeits the knowledge of his own singular angelic imperfection. The particular torment of Hell, the region built as a monument to the denial of imperfection, is that it leaves the devils free from the service of God, or so they think, but also with no means to satisfy their lusts.<sup>14</sup> Although the Angels who prefer to serve in Heaven engage in a love-making that is substantially different from the human, Raphael cannot speak of it to Adam without a blush, "a smile that glow'd / Celestial rosy red, Love's proper hue" (VIII, 618-19). Empson comments that "even an angel may feel a noble sense of doubt whether he is perfect enough for the scrutiny of the beloved."<sup>15</sup> Without that sense of doubt he would, in fact, not be able to love at all. Adam and Eve as lovers express a mutual diffidence as long as they remain innocent. They incline, indeed, to doubt their own perfections too much. Adam, as we have seen, confesses his awe of Eve's beauty and his fear that he may not have the power to withstand it. Eve, who correctly understands

man's place before God, agrees with Adam when he reiterates the goodness of the Creator who gave them the ample world as their domain and left it free except for one easy prohibition, but she finds more self-doubt vis-a-vis Adam than her innocence warrants. She errs when she claims that she owes God more thanks for creating Adam whose worth exceeds her own by far:

I chiefly who enjoy  
So far the happier Lot, enjoying thee  
Preeminent by so much odds, while thou  
Like consort to thyself canst nowhere find  
(IV, 445-48)

Eve's humility is dangerous, as events later prove. If the want of a sense of solitary imperfection damns Satan to unending lust, he uses that same sense to damn mankind.

Adam pleads with God for a mate on two counts which make him imperfect even in Paradise: on the immediate need for a companion as a counterpart to God's self-sufficiency that seeks no communication, or, if He should, could raise "thy Creature / To what highth thou wilt / Of union or communion, deifi'd" (VIII, 430-31); and on the need for progeny whose numbers would be the limited human counterpart of God's infinity. Adam's solitary imperfection in both senses is well-documented in the commentaries on Genesis. Philo Judaeus, speaking of the domestic purpose of the two sexes and the "building" of Eve, finds that "everything which is without a woman is imperfect and homeless."<sup>16</sup> Later exegetes, likewise, find that the Latin aedificavit used for the creation of Eve refers to the completion of the human family, which they liken to a house and which is not fully constructed until the woman is created.<sup>17</sup> For less immediately practical purposes,

the Zohar denies the existence of the male principle without the female and denies the presence of God to those places where man and woman are not found together. Rabbi Simeon, commenting on Gen. 1:27, "Male and female created he them," says:

From this we learn that every figure which does not comprise male and female elements is not a true and proper figure . . . Observe this. God does not place His abode in any place where male and female are not found together, nor are blessings found save in such a place, as it is written, AND HE BLESSED THEM AND CALLED THEIR NAME MAN ON THE DAY THAT THEY WERE CREATED: note that it says them and their name, and not him or his name. The male is not even called man till he is united with the female.<sup>18</sup>

The same opinion is found in Castiglione's Book of the Courtier where it is used to argue against the belief that woman is a defect of nature:

Truth it is, that Nature entendeth alwaies to bring forth matter most perfect, and therefore meaneth to bring forth the man in his kind, but no more male than female. Yea were it so that she alwaies brought forth male, then should it without peradventure bee an unperfectnesse for like as of the bodie and of the soule there ariseth a cōpound more nobler than his partes, which is man: Even so of the fellowship of male and female there ariseth a compound preserving mankind, without which the partes were to decay, and therefore male and female by nature are alwaies together, neither can the one be without the other: right so he ought not to bee called the male, that hath not a female (according to the definition of both the one and the other) nor she the female that hath not a male.<sup>19</sup>

Castiglione's Lord Julian argues that the two sexes are created by nature for the purpose of procreation and it then follows logically that imperfection lies neither in men nor in women but in their separation. Calvin, commenting on the same passage as Rabbi Simeon, invokes the allegory of man and woman as head and body to establish their interdependence, even without referring to procreation: "The man has no standing without the woman, for that would be the head severed from

the body; nor has the woman without the man, for that were a body without a head."<sup>20</sup> The Adam of Paradise Lost is fully aware of the imperfection of man without woman though there is as yet no such creature. Adam, lonely and understanding that neither God nor nature nor his own happiness is served by solitude, implicitly asks for a female when he pleads for a companion. When he speaks of propagating his like, the need is obvious. For the less well-defined yearning, for Adam's longing for an essential part of himself that he finds absent, God understands that he requires a female in the figurative sense, a mate who differs in mind as well as body, with whom to share his Paradise.

In Adam's dream-vision of the creation of Eve, God reveals how he has fulfilled his promise to create a help fit for Adam who is both his likeness and his other self. Her creation from his rib establishes their similarity beyond doubt, but the dream does not dwell long on Eve's similitude. The power of the dream for Adam lies in the revelation of Eve's schematic role as the personification of sight and of the love born of visual beauty. The qualities of Eve that are unlike his own infuse sweetness into his heart and for their sake Adam would abandon Paradise. When Adam wakes from his vision, however, his initial delight and recognition stems from the fact that Eve resembles him in most aspects because she is created from his own flesh and blood. He sees "my Self / Before me" and names her woman, after himself, as it were. But neither the delight nor the recognition are mutual; Eve, led to him by God, turns away. There is a gentle irony in Adam's version of the courtship. He misunderstands Eve's initial hesitation and

ascribes her turning away to shyness and inexperience:

Yet Innocence and Virgin Modesty,  
Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,  
That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,  
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,  
The more desirable, or to say all,  
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,  
Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd.  
(VIII, 501-7)

Through Eve's narrative of their first meeting and courtship we know that it was not shyness but a misplaced "conscience of her worth," an innocent overvaluing of her own "outside formed so fair," that caused her to turn away from Adam. Eve has misunderstood God's promise that He will bring her to the man whose image she is as a promise for a simple likeness. She, like Adam, dwells initially too much on the desire for similarity in a fruitful companionship. As she is wooed by Adam she learns that her image may also be comprised of that which does not immediately resemble her. Adam, who knows that God's promise is complex, easily surrenders his awakening perception that in Eve he sees himself, though she is of different sex. The change from desiring a resemblance to accepting an unlike self is subtle and rapid for Adam. God aids him in the transition, without which the courtship would prove unsuccessful, by addressing Eve, smiling at her own reflection, not as "woman" but as "Mother of human race"; Adam, as though now again inspired by the Divine spirit that moved him to name the animals and understand their natures, repeats after God, calling the woman "Eve," which means mother of all living. He follows the Divine hint and gives her a name quite unlike his own to acknowledge their disparate natures. She is no longer merely "woman, of man / Extracted," a Papagena for Papageno, but an individual solace dear with a name of her own. He

claims her as his other half, a part of his soul which he seeks, not a duplication of what he already is.

The courtship of Adam and Eve depends on their abandonment of the narcissism that seeks after a mirror image, whether it is Eve's reflection in the lake or a living being who is the offspring of Adam's own body and bears an uncanny resemblance to her original. There is no self-duplication in Paradise nor in Heaven among the Angels nor in Hell, try as the demons might. Only the Divine image may be reflected perfectly and God alone images himself completely in His Son:

Divine Similitude,  
 In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud  
 Made visible, th'Almighty Father shines,  
 Whom else no Creature can behold; on thee  
 Impresst th'effulgence of his Glory abides,  
 Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.  
 (III, 384-89)

The Son is the visible manifestation of the invisible Father; God's love for himself does not depend on solitary imperfection. All the visible realm of Angels and men, however, thrives on the diversity of unlike reflections. Satan's attempt to mimic God's perfect imaging of himself results in the unwanted birth of Sin and their progressively more insubstantial progeny. If Eve were merely the likeness of Adam, albeit a female likeness, he would fare no better. He would fall into a delusion of self-sufficiency and, unconscious of his wants, he would breed empty shadows. Adam's innocence depends on recognizing the difference, the otherness, of the creature who is created in his own image.

Milton's God, promising a fit help who is both a likeness and another self, employs the ambiguity inherent in the Hebrew ezer kenegdo

of Gen. 2:18, translated in the King James version as "an meet help." Because the Hebrew kenegdo literally means against, the exegetes face the task of explaining just how a woman may at once be a helper to a man and yet against him. Midrash Rabbah accepts the contradiction as a reflection of man's uncertain fate in choosing a wife and reads the promise as a caution: if a man is fortunate, his wife is his helper; if he is not, she is against him. As an example of the latter possibility, a story is told of a rabbi who had to suffer the insolence of his contrary wife until his students took pity on him and raised enough money to secure him a divorce from her.<sup>21</sup> The Vulgate circumvents the ambiguity by rendering the promise simply as adiutorem similem sui, a helper like him, but the similarity does not prove satisfying to the Renaissance exegetes who are confronted with and confused by the Hebrew contradiction when they seek a more concrete notion of the help that a woman affords a man. The Protestant commentators prefer to translate kenegdo as coram eo or penes ipsum to read Eve as a helper who is before Adam or near him. From this they argue that a wife is to remain with her husband at all times and is to be a help to him in all the facets of domestic life, not merely in procreation. Fagius, for instance, reads that God promises Adam "sustenaculum quod sit penes eum" because he deduces that while the Hebrew neged means opposition, the letter kaph which precedes it in kenegdo denotes nearness and therefore Eve is a helper, a prop, who is always in the presence of Adam. Fagius finds that the contradiction of help and opposition is obviated even further by the same kaph that as a prefix also denotes verification or confirmation. God intends a true help for Adam, not

a false one.<sup>22</sup> Calvin, trying to reconcile the Hebrew, Greek and Latin texts arrives at a concord of similitude and difference that resembles Milton's triad of likeness, fit help and other self:

In the Hebrew it is כנגדו (kenegedo,) "as if opposite to," or "over against him." כ (caph) in that language is a note of similitude. But although some of the Rabbies think it is here put as an affirmative, yet I take it in its general sense, as though it were said that she is a kind of counterpart . . . for the woman is said to be opposite to or over against the man, because she responds to him. But the particle of similitude seems to me to be added because it is a form of speech taken from the common usage. The Greek translators have faithfully rendered the sense, Κατ' αὐτόν, and Jerome, "Which may be like him," for Moses intended to note some equality. And hence is refuted the error of some, who think that the woman was formed only for the sake of propagation, and who restrict the word "good," which had been lately mentioned, to the production of offspring. They do not think that a wife was personally necessary for Adam, because he was hitherto free from lust; as if she had been given to him only for the companion of his chamber, and not rather that she might be the inseparable association of his life. Wherefore the particle כ (caph) is of importance, as intimating that marriage extends to all parts and usages of life.<sup>23</sup>

Since Calvin is interested in extending the definition of marriage beyond the need for procreation, he assumes that the similarity between man and woman implies marital companionship of the most general sort rather than merely the physical resemblance of the male and female of the same species. But rather than using that similarity to negate the sense of opposition found in the Hebrew text, Calvin merges opposition and similitude to declare husbands and wives counterparts, answering images of each other.

Calvin's exegesis avoids the tendency among the commentators who, wishing to make the wife the constant and perpetual prop of her husband's life, come close to rendering Adam and Eve perfect images

of each other differing only in sex. Luther reads Gen. 2:18 as the establishment of human marriage which as a form of mating is unique among living creatures:

the woman was so created that she should everywhere and always be about her husband. Thus imperial law also calls the life of married people an inseparable relationship. The female of the brutes has a desire for the male only once in a whole year. But after she has become pregnant, she returns to her home and takes care of herself. For her young born at another time she has no concern, and she does not always live with her mate.

But among men the nature of marriage is different. There the wife so binds herself to a man that she will be about him and will live together with him as one flesh.<sup>24</sup>

Although Luther bases the constant presence of the wife before the husband on the need for procreation and the raising of children, he has no doubt that she is a sharer of his whole life. Discussing the Hebrew name for woman, isha, as a form of "she-man," a female of the male, he declares husbands and wives equal partners in marriage and men and woman identical in all respects but in body. In a marriage

whatever the husband has, this the wife has and possesses in its entirety. Their partnership involves not only their means but children, food, bed, and dwelling; their purposes, too, are the same. The result is that the husband differs from his wife in no other respect than in sex; otherwise the woman is altogether a man.<sup>25</sup>

The essential identity of man and woman, which Luther here derives from the name of woman, is used by later exegetes to gloss God's promise of a helper for Adam. Andrew Willett, for example, finds only similitude in this passage:

Therefore shee is called a helpe like to man, . . . both because shee was made like unto man, as well in proportion of bodie, as in the qualities of the mind, beeing created according to the image of God; as also for that shee was meete for man, necessarie for the procreation and education of children and profitable for the disposing of household affaires.<sup>26</sup>

The shared nature of man and woman does necessarily make them equals. Nicholas Gibbon argues that though the wife is baser than her husband, nevertheless, Eve is created a help meet before Adam because "her nature is to be like unto the man in soule and in bodie, to differ in sex."<sup>27</sup> By exegetic tradition, Eve can become the likeness of Adam, his self before him, without becoming his equal, though she cannot become his equal without becoming indistinguishable from him in all but sex.

The seventeenth century treatises on marriage which seek to establish the family as a self-sufficient economic and social unit, though they do not abandon the authority of the husband over the wife, argue for the wife's share in ruling the household on the basis of that likeness between man and woman. Matthew Griffith in Bethel, reasons that because friendship depends on a likeness of disposition, God created Eve as much like Adam as possible:

in whom as in a true glasse he might behold his owne Image, having one and the selfe-same flesh, one and the selfe-same spirit to informe that flesh, one and the selfe-same reason to rule that spirit; one and the selfe-same religion to rectifie that reason. . . . Then the woman for her comfort, may justly challenge, (though not (with Iesabel) the sole rule in Ahab's house; yet (with Sarah) in Abraham's house) such authority that she be not despised in the eyes of her servants. That which Plutarch observes to be in use among the Heathens, namely, that on the day wherein the marriage was solemnized, the Bride challenged of the Bridegroom, Ubi tu Cajus, ego Caja; why should it not bee granted among Christians?<sup>28</sup>

The wife's domestic equality, her ability to bear her share of the household management, as well as deserving her husband's love, depends on Adam's recognition of himself in Eve who is his mirror image, differing only as Caja from Cajus. An even stronger argument for male and female resemblance is made by the treatises which defend and praise

women. William Austin, for instance, has no reservations about substituting domestic equality in place of the traditional hierarchy and in denying all but the most obvious physical difference between men and women:

In the sexe, is all the difference; which is but onely in the body. For she hath the same reasonable soule; and in that, there is neither hees, nor shees, neither excellencie, nor superiority; she hath the same soule, the same mind; the same understanding; and tends to the same end of eternall salvation that he doth In which, there is no exception of sexe, persons, or nation: But (in the resurrection) she shall, (without exception of sexe) obtaine like body with him; according to the similitude of Angels: For they were brought at the same price and shall dwell in the same glory.<sup>29</sup>

A glance toward the end of time dissolves the differences which are merely superficial attributes of the body.

These arguments for male and female equality are made through the sacrifice of any real differentiation between the two sexes and, whether they intend to or not, ultimately declare along with St. Thomas Aquinas, that woman was created only for the sake of procreation because in all other sorts of work Adam would have found another man more useful:

It was absolutely necessary to make woman, for the reason the Scripture mentions, as a help for man; not indeed to help him in any other work, as some have maintained, because where most work is concerned man can get help more conveniently from another man than from a woman; but to help him in the work of procreation.<sup>30</sup>

Certainly Luther and, to a lesser extent, other commentators who argue for equality or near equality of man and woman on the basis of their essential identity are very close to declaring that Adam is given a helper so like himself, except in the matter of procreation, that it is as if two Adams were created. Milton, however, insists that the

male need for a female has nothing to do with procreation. It is a need of the imagination, the heart and the mind for someone who is not like oneself, for the female as an embodiment of otherness. In Tetrachordon, explaining in what manner Adam was alone before Eve was created, Milton replies to both Aquinas and Luther:

And heer alone is meant alone without woman; otherwise Adam had the company of God himself; and Angels to convers with; all creatures to delight him seriously, or to make him sport. God could have created him out of the same mould a thousand friends and brother Adams to have bin his consorts, yet for all this till Eve was giv'n him, God reckn'd him to be alone.<sup>31</sup>

Women were not only created to be helpers in work, Milton continues, but in the no less important activity of recreation, which depends on a diversity of body and soul that two men together cannot achieve.

The full figurative distinction between male and female is worked out in Paradise Lost in the paired senses of sight and sound which approach a visionary consonance, complementing and completing each other, in the Garden. The two chief senses, experienced as categorically different but apprehending the same phenomenal world, express the dependence and diversity which is essential to Milton's concept of human love before the Fall. Equality of sight and sound or of man and woman is not a viable issue in the Garden; it suffices that they can help one another. Equality, in as much as it seems always to imply identity, would in fact be undesirable. The concept of male and female domestic equality in the sharing of household property and authority that seems so enlightened in a marriage treatise is merely the fallen version of the mutual exchange, the concordance, of Adam and Eve. The idea of equality, of a weighed and measured quantity of power or

worth, does not exist until Satan invents it when God declares Christ his only begotten Son. At that moment Satan first feels envy and embarks on his labyrinthian journey to re-establish his place in Heaven and falls into the endless confusion that a quest for equality brings in a universe based on reciprocity and transformation.

As though there were a limited supply of glory or strength in Heaven, Satan imagines that Christ's elevation robs him of his own rightful power and debases him:

yet fraught  
 With envy against the Son of God, that day  
 Honor'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd  
Messiah King anointed, could not bear  
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.  
 (V, 661-65)

The satanic envy gives birth to the concepts of inferior and superior based on might and initiates a host of tedious comparisons. Satan's first speech to his legions is replete with injured pride but still half clings to claims of an equality enjoyed by the Angels in return for their obedience:

Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend  
 The supple knee? ye will not, if I trust  
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves  
 Natives and Sons of Heav'n possess before  
 By none, and if not equal all, yet free,  
 Equally free; for Orders and Degrees  
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.  
 Who can in reason then or right assume  
 Monarchy over such as live by right  
 His equals, if in power and splendor less,  
 In freedom equal?

(V, 787-97)

Satan argues that they are all equal in freedom and declares that they will lose it to the monarchy of Christ. It is essentially a meaningless complaint, as Abdiel retorts, since Satan himself occupies a high

place in the orders of Angels and God has not been known to diminish his Angels but exalt them. As Christ becomes King of the Angels "all honor to him done / Returns our own" (V, 844-45). Satan's response is to question his former premise that the Angels are unequal in all but liberty. As though making a new measurement, he discovers that he and his crew may be thoroughly equal to God:

Our puissance is our own, our own right hand  
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try  
 Who is our equal.

(V, 864-66)

From his initial position as an envious underling Satan comes to believe that he is the equal of God or perhaps even the superior. He misses the point of the celestial hierarchy and convinces himself that it is a vertical ordering of creation where the highest place is won in open competition. He sets out to prove his own powers in order to replace the love that bound him to God and which would have made the test of equality unnecessary.

Eve follows Satan's pattern of replacing love with envy and with obsessive comparisons when she accepts the bad logic along with the forbidden fruit. Satan teaches her to envy godlike knowledge, although his premise is that the gods, or God (the number of deities varies throughout the serpent's discourse), will not envy her their sacred tree:

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,  
 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 who so eats thereof, forthwith attains  
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies  
 Th'offense, 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 envy, and can envy dwell  
 In heav'nly breasts?

(IX, 716-30)

Eve learns first to despise her humanity, as though she had been created so that God might hold her lesser, terrestrial powers in contempt. With self-contempt comes the fear that, because of an unequal distribution of godlike powers in creation, all the differences that arise from the world's infinite variety are threats against her own worth. Difference, once a source of pleasure, is now a source of envy, if it is perceived as superior, or of scorn, if inferior. Eve mistakes the otherness of Adam for superiority and her own for inferiority. She perverts the sense of wonder that made her declare that female beauty is excelled by manly grace into envy and now wants to make herself more equal to Adam. In effect, she turns misogynist and finds the female sex wanting in knowledge but has high hopes that the forbidden fruit will repair her defects. With perfect Satanic understanding of the universal economy she believes that if she shares her new-won powers they will be lessened because they exist in finite qualities. Envy, even of the power found in deceptive fruits, stems ultimately from an atheism which denies the existence of a God who can supply enough for all his creatures or which fears a God who would not do so out of Divine stinginess. Eve is, however, quite willing to share the threatened punishment with Adam and returns to him, by her own admission, as a fair defect of nature, though bent on self-improvement.

Adam does not need to envy Eve. He accepts her as his inferior and, following her lead, perverts the sense of her otherness. After his initial horror, he forgets all that made Eve unlike him, even the remarkable beauty that made him so uneasy because it seemed like nothing else in all of Eden. He remembers only that she was made from him and tries again to declare her "my Self / Before me," but if previously that waking perception was enlarged to teach him that she was another self before him, now he reasons that she is his own rib before him. As he falls, Adam repudiates all that is unlike in Eve and afterwards repudiates all likeness to her. To fall and feel remorse requires no concord or conversation with a fit help; shadows are companions enough. The perfect marriage in the Garden of Eden collapses under the weight of false equality and identity manifested in Eve's envy and Adam's longing for his image.

Before the Fall, the marriage of Adam and Eve is based on conversation, not comparison. The question of equality or inequality, as a measure of worth, arises only when their innocent testing of various possibilities chances upon what will become their fallen convictions. The two narratives of their first meeting contain some doubts about status. Eve briefly declares Adam preeminent and much too superior for her, and Adam, at greater length, confesses his doubts about female beauty. Perhaps the memory of the first sight of each other, filled with wonder, reminds them most strongly of the inadequacy that a lover feels before his beloved. Adam's confession to Raphael is, in fact, a full rehearsal of his fallen choices as Eve's Satanic dream is of her temptation, and the confession also looks toward Eve's

own fallen preoccupation with her place in the domestic hierarchy. Adam wavers between declaring Eve inferior in mind and superior in beauty and soul. He comes very close to envying Eve her creation which may have stolen a portion of his strength and made him unequal to her adornments. Raphael's answer seems to point to Adam's superiority over his wife. He urges Adam to "weigh with her thyself / Then value" and reminds him of his own worth. The tone and the content of the admonition are almost out of place in the innocent Garden but it is the only possible answer to Adam's doubts. Raphael does not say whether Adam will outweigh Eve; Adam will have to judge that for himself. The Angel is interested in teaching Adam to live and love well and so turns easily from weighings and comparisons to the mutual exchange of gifts that God has instituted among man and woman. Even if Eve's beauty were less excellent than Adam's wisdom, it would still amend such defects as human wisdom may have:

Made so adorn for thy delight the more,  
 So awful, that with honor thou may'st love  
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.  
 (VIII, 576-79)

Adam's imperfections are made the occasion of Eve's adornment and Raphael ends his lecture from Eve's point of view because her answering love settles the question of marital hierarchy.

The question of equality, settled for the moment, reappears as soon as Eve has eaten the forbidden fruit. The fruit seems to make her aware of her inferior position and this new consciousness, coming so soon after Adam's confession, indeed appears to be a direct response to his doubts. Eve gives the fallen answer to Adam's dilemma.

She answers that she is a superficial creature less well-endowed than he with the inner qualities of mind. It is too late for her to realize that he is contemplative for her sake rather than his own. Because she has surrendered by her own free choice to demonic hierarchy, Christ makes the judgment in that same language that Eve learned so readily from Satan:

Was shee thy God, that her thou didst obey  
 Before his voice, or was shee made thy guide,  
 Superior, or but equal, that to her  
 Thou didst resign thy Manhood, and the Place  
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,  
 And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd  
 Hers in all real dignity.

(X, 145-51)

Superior or equal are the fallen terms that God now applies to the human marriage; the new terms are part of the punishment. In effect, God mocks the human pair by echoing Eve's desire for equality in His condemnation of Adam for his pathetic attempt to blame Eve for the Fall. Adam now outweighs Eve but he has won his superiority at the cost of his innocence. Eve, who has sacrificed her own gifts for the sake of the promise of a false superiority, is now a derivative creature, less than Adam, her original.

However right Eve's fallen awareness of her inferiority may seem in the light of Adam's previous doubts and of contemporary opinion on the subjection of women, it is a painful, distortion of the human marriage outlined in Adam's plea for a mate and God's promise to him. Adam argues that the animals are not fit companions because they are too different and, although made of the same earth as he, not enough like him. They are his inferiors and therefore cannot consort with him:

Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,  
 Among these inferior far beneath me set?  
 Among unequals what society  
 Can sort, what harmony or true delight?  
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due  
 Giv'n and receiv'd; but in disparity  
 The one intense, the other still remiss  
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove  
 Tedious alike.

(VIII, 381-89)

Adam's musical metaphor, his own exposition of Gen. 2:18 is based, like God's answering promise, on Calvin's explication of kenegdo which, rather than arguing for spatial proximity or mere similarity, uses the more general concept of counterpart to reconcile the contradictions of similitude and opposition found in the Hebrew text. The counterpart, or response, of the man to the woman is compared by Adam to two notes sounded on a well-tuned stringed instrument.<sup>32</sup> Behind his metaphor is, no doubt, the emblem of the lyre of marital concord found in Valeriano's Hieroglyphica which explains that to dream of a lyre during a wedding prophesies concord between husband and wife.<sup>33</sup> That this proves a false prophecy for Adam's marriage is beside the point. Endowed with more than ordinary human understanding during his celestial colloquy, in terms fit for his own realm of aural perception, in the language of music, Adam expounds what he experiences subsequently in the dream-vision. The harmonious response of two notes is later revealed as the exchange of spirits postulated by the Renaissance theory of love. Adam's metaphor is closer to the actual fact of his married life than the vision. Harmony is the more restrained version of the transformation of the rib and the cordial spirits. The notes in due proportion may unite to make a delightful sound but they do not lose their discrete identity through giving

and receiving. Music expresses more exactly the quotidian reality of the fit help who is both a likeness and another self while the vision of love and beauty promises, along with the daily delight of the Garden, a self-transcendence which is the property of a love higher than the human. The equality that Adam desires in his companion is, again, not an absolute measure of worth but the relative quantity of a note on a musical scale. It is interesting to consider that not only the hierarchy of man and woman but also that between man and the animals is subsumed by a scale where "Great / Or Bright infers not Excellence" but tone.

As love may descend to lust when the spirits of the heart and eye become agents of physical compulsion that denies choice, so the musical metaphor has its Satanic equivalent. Satan and Sin are united in a secret harmony by which she divines his success among mankind and so builds the bridge over chaos to span the distance between Hell and earth and ease his triumphant return home:

O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,  
 Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own,  
 Thou art thir Author and prime Architect:  
 For I no sooner in my Heart divin'd,  
 My heart, which by a secret harmony  
 Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,  
 That thou on Earth hadst prosper'd, which they looks  
 Now also evidence, but straight I felt  
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt  
 That I must after thee with this thy Son;  
 Such fatal consequence unites us three.

(X, 354-64)

Sin, mocking Eve, implies she too may have been born from the side of her lover rather than from his head. The secret harmony of Satan and his offspring is the incorporeal version, because spirits are not

restricted by their shapes, of the bond of flesh that unites Adam and Eve at their Fall. Sin adds the necessary demonic coercion to her musical metaphor: the harmony that unites them is not the sweet and proportionate response of two agreeable notes but the sympathetic vibrations caused when two strings are tuned to the same frequency and placed a certain distance from each other.<sup>34</sup> The physics of sound replaces choice. On close examination this musical harmony turns out to bear a strong resemblance to sympathetic magic. Sin explains to her Shade how she knows of Satan's success:

Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,  
Wings growing, and Dominion giv'n me large  
Beyond this Deep; whatever draws me on,  
Or sympathy, or some connatural force  
Powerful at greatest distance to unite  
With secret amity things of like kind  
By secretest conveyance.

(X, 243-49)

To her Son she reveals that the secret harmony is more magical than musical; she and Satan are leagued by some covert law of nature undoubtedly less attractive than the notes sounded on a well-tuned lyre. Sin reiterates in either case her resemblance to her progenitor: sympathetic vibration and the strange force that binds them depend wholly on their likeness. The "secret amity" of "like kind" may not be very different from the play of mirrors that Eve found at the clear, smooth lake. The musical harmony that incorporates both likeness and unlikeness has no place in the hellish family where self-love and shadows reign supreme.

The marriage of Adam and Eve in the Garden exists within the limitations set by the metaphor of harmony, unaided by magical resonances or responses. Although the unfallen universe tends toward self-

transformation, the particular place of man in the creation dictates that he remain bound by his own body and soul, and, therefore, while human love shares some of the characteristics of the heavenly love of the Angels, it is also akin to the mating of the animals.<sup>35</sup> As the nature of human sexual intercourse plainly shows, the union of lovers on earth is more in metaphor than in experience. Adam and Eve can never relinquish their individual selves with the easy transmutation of an Angel or a Neoplatonic lover. Raphael, with a blush, distinguishes between human and angelic sexuality:

Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st  
 (And pure thou wert created) we enjoy  
 In eminence, and obstacle find none  
 Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars:  
 Easier than Air with Air, if Spirits embrace,  
 Total they mix, Union of Pure with Pure  
 Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need  
 As Flesh to mix with Flesh, or Soul with Soul.  
 (VIII, 623-29)

Though Raphael is condescending about the sense of touch whereby mankind is propagated, he reveals that the Angels experience an enhanced form of that very sense. Unbounded by their forms, they experience a generalized sexuality that is not limited to specific regions, just as their other senses and vital functions are not confined to eye or ear or heart or liver. The Angels obviously experience more pleasure but the real distinction between the two modes of love-making is that the Angels can merge with one another and lose themselves in their union while man and woman, encumbered by solid flesh, can join neither their bodies nor their souls. Ficino, citing Lucretius, warns that sexual love is a madness, a ridiculous quest for the union of two bodies that is doomed to failure:

For since the seminal fluid flows down from the whole body, the lovers think (according to Lucretius) that by ejaculation or reception of it alone, they can give up their whole body to each other and receive a whole body in return.<sup>36</sup>

Milton argues that human souls fare no better in ecstatic union than bodies. The "restrain'd conveyance" is an obstacle to rational human love as well as to the sense by which man is propagated.

Though Milton uses various Neoplatonic elements in his depiction of human love, here he dissents radically from the commonplace belief espoused by the Renaissance love treatises that two friends, or lovers, divorcing themselves from their bodies, can join in a mutual exchange of identities until one becomes the other. Leone Ebreo describes such a spiritual flight of lovers and their mutual transformation as a gloss on Cicero's definition of a friend as an alter ego, another self:

E il Filosofo diffinisce tali amicizie dicendo che 'l vero amico è un altro se medesimo, per denotare che chi è ne la vera amicizia ha doppia vita costituita in due persone, ne la sua e in quella dell'amico; talche l'amico suo è un altro se medesimo; e ciascuno di loro abbraccia in sé due vite insieme, la propria sua e quella de l'amico; e con eguale amore ama tutte due le persone, e parimente conserva tutte due le vite. . . . E la causa di tale unione e colligazione è la reciproca virtù o sapienza di tutti due gli amici. La quale, per la sua spiritualità e alienazione da materia e astrazione de la condizioni corporee, rimuove la diversità de le persone a l'individuazione corporale; e genera ne gli amici una essenza mentale, conservata con sapere e con amore e volontà comune a tutti due, così privata di diversità e discrepanza come se veramente il soggetto de l'amore fusse una sola anima ed essenza, conservata in due persone e non moltiplicata in quelle. E in ultimo dico questo, che l'amicizia onesta fa d'una persona due, e di due una.<sup>37</sup>

The communion of true friends rises above their corporeal diversity and they become indistinguishable, as totally mixed as Miltonic Angels.

But while the Angels can unite completely without doing violence to their forms, Adam and Eve would have to sunder themselves from their bodies and deny the terrestrial Garden prepared as their dominion. The practice of heavenly love, though the Archangel's promise is sincere, is patently absurd in Eden. The union of friends or lovers which forsakes the earth bears, in fact, an uncomfortable resemblance to Eve's dream flight with Satan that makes her for the moment a "fair Angelic Eve," a "goddess among gods." Raphael contracts his brow at the thought that human love might grow to resemble the mating for procreation that is common to all the cattle and the beasts of the field, but there is equally as much danger in a spiritual union that makes an untimely leap from earth to Heaven. When Adam rightly acknowledges that it is neither Eve's beauty nor the delights of sexual intercourse that bind him most to his wife, he explains to Raphael that his love for Eve is as fundamentally different from Angelic love as the random mating of the animals. He cherishes above all else Eve's compliant words and actions, "those thousand daily decencies," her response to him which declares

Union of mind, or in us both one Soul;  
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair  
 More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.  
 (VIII, 604-6)

The union of mind and soul is not the Neoplatonic transformation of two into one. Adam, continuing the musical metaphor begun in the celestial colloquy, takes care to define the limits of the human marriage: it is like the concert of two different, though proportionate, notes making one harmonious sound together. Though the notion of love as harmony seems to imply a marriage of mind and soul of angelic

proportions, a careful ear may discern the individual parts that compose the music. Adam's restrained love ends in the response, the answering words and actions between man and wife, not in the loss of one in the other.

The full force of Neoplatonic love would require angelic substance to withstand the threat of spiritual narcissism that accompanies a complete self-transformation. Ebreo's definition of the transmutation of true friendship, quoted above, is mild, almost mundane, and in its restraint close to Raphael's description of heavenly love. The schematic definition offered by Ficino makes the possible excesses and dangers of such love more apparent. He argues that to fall in love is to die because the lover surrenders his soul completely to his beloved and ceases to be conscious of himself. Since the task of the soul is to maintain consciousness, the lover's soul no longer lives nor functions in him. If the love is not returned, the lover is by definition dead. If the love is reciprocated, however, the lover is revived in a mutual exchange of souls:

A has himself, but in B; and B also has himself, but in A. When you love me, you contemplate me, and as I love you, I find myself in your contemplation of me; I recover myself, lost in the first place by my own neglect of myself, in you, who preserve me. You do exactly the same in me . . . I am therefore closer to you than I am to myself, since I keep a grasp on myself only through you as a mediary . . . the lover takes possession of himself through another, and the farther each of the lovers is from himself, the nearer he is to the other, and though he is dead in himself, he comes to life again in the other. In fact, there is only one death in mutual love, but there are two resurrections, for a lover dies within himself the moment he forgets about himself, but he returns to life immediately in his loved one as soon as the loved one embraces him in loving contemplation. He is resurrected once more when he finally recognizes himself in his beloved and no longer doubts that he is loved.<sup>38</sup>

Although the scheme of reciprocal love bears some resemblance to the order of giving and receiving which is the natural law of the unfallen cosmos, the self-surrender of the lover, his abstraction and distraction from himself, seems less like generosity and more like the slavish awe of Satan in the presence of Eve. Even the mutual exchange of requited love, of which Satan has no hope, does not truly free the Neoplatonic lovers from themselves but makes them all the more perfect images of each other. Ficino delineates the connection between self-surrender, self-transference and self-contemplation:

A lover imprints a likeness of the loved one upon his soul, and so the soul of the lover becomes a mirror in which is reflected the image of the loved one. Thereupon, when the loved one recognizes himself in the lover, he is forced to love him.<sup>39</sup>

For all except transpiercing Angels, who easily pass beyond the definition of self and other in intercourse, such reciprocal love is no different from self-love.

While Plato's legend of the hermaphrodite argues for the lover's perception of a defect that can be remedied only by a union with the beloved, it can also be used to turn love of another into a disguised self-love, much as Ficino's self-denying lover is revealed to be indistinguishable from Narcissus. In Bembo's Gli Asolani Perottino accuses love of being nothing but the cause of sorrow and bitterness because it involves the desire for something which is outside oneself and therefore can never truly be possessed:

a man cannot completely enjoy what is not wholly part of himself; for external things are always subject to fortune and to change, and not to us, while the very word another betrays that its subject is external.<sup>40</sup>

Gismondo's defense of love against this accusation that its risks are too great cites the genesis of love in the splitting of the hermaphrodite into his male and female halves. He proves that, in fact, that love is not the desire for another but for one's own lost half:

But what would you say if, granting all these propositions out of friendship and accepting your very argument that no one can love another without grief, I should yet say that this love which we men make to the ladies and they to us is love, not of another, but of a part of one's self or, to put it better, of one's other half? For haven't you read that in the beginning men had two faces, four hands, four feet and their other members similarly doubled? Then Jove, from whom men wished to steal his sovereignty, divided them through middle and made them such as they are now. But because they would willingly have returned to their first perfection, in which they could do twice as much and had been twice as strong as they were since, each one, as he reached maturity, sought out his other half; and so all other men have done from time to time, and this is what we today call love or loving another. Thus, whoever loves his lady seeks his other half, and the ladies do likewise when they love their lords.<sup>41</sup>

Though Gismondo speaks of the help that men and women provide each other, the doctrine of self-love through one's mate is apparent. The other self sought by the lover, defined as one's own image or a half of the whole self, is too restricted to suit the Edenic marriage which requires variety. When God promises Adam another self he offers him neither the easy transposition of his soul nor a lost part of it. Adam's first appeal to Eve as "Part of my Soul" and "My other half" is indeed based on the legend of the androgynous ancestor of love, but his plea is only for their similitude expressed in her birth from his side. Adam, competing with the image in the water, is arguing his own claim as a likeness of Eve; it is already too obvious to her that he is unlike her. In Book IV, long after their initial meeting, Adam addresses Eve as "Sole partner and sole part of all these joys" (410).

Their mutual unlikeness now also firmly established, Eve has become, through the pun on soul, a partaker with Adam of the joys of Eden, not a lost part of his aboriginal soul.

Adam and Eve partake of the joys of Eden in so far as they are willing to risk their happiness on things outside themselves. The two sexes seem to be created in Paradise, at least on the figurative level, primarily for the sake of mediating the two realms of experience, the phenomenal and the intellectual. The passage of spirits from Adam's heart to Eve and back into his eyes and heart or, in a more quotidian sense, the metaphor of the well-tuned instrument, gives them a model for their mutual help. Therefore they do not fear what is outside themselves nor experience their own figurative categories as exclusive or restrictive. They adhere to them almost as a courtesy to each other, though there is nothing trivial about their good manners. Eve leaves the abstruse conversation of Adam and the Archangel by her own choice:

Yet went she not, as not with such discourse  
 Delighted, or not capable her ear  
 Of what was high; such pleasure she reserv'd,  
 Adam relating, she sole Auditress;  
 Her husband the Relater, she preferr'd  
 Before the Angel, and of him to ask  
 Chose rather: hee, she knew, would intermix  
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute  
 With conjugal Caresses, from his Lip  
 Not Words alone pleas'd her.

(VIII, 48-57)

Adam and Eve are interested in the same subjects and they are similar enough to be equally capable of understanding them, but, as Eve knows, the help, or courtesy, of mediation is mixed with erotic pleasure. For Adam the two are perhaps synonymous. His dream of Eve's creation

is above all an erotic dream that incorporates the Garden into his pleasure. Her creation eroticizes Eden in much the same way that his abstruse discourse, rather than Raphael's, will eroticize astronomy. The realms of heaven and earth now seem to be divided by a generous God merely in order to provide a new source of pleasure to the man and woman. The Garden is all before them so long as they do not succumb to the self-surrender and self-imaging that makes Neoplatonic love more fit for Angels than flesh and blood men and women.

The difficult task of innocence is to maintain the sense of opposition between man and wife in the midst of their collateral love. Lovers too easily fall into the delusion that they have transcended the obstacles of joints and limbs and membranes for an orgiastic union of body or soul. But for Milton, as we have seen, love allows neither bodies nor souls to conveniently change places or merge into one. Wedded love in Paradise must content itself with the "meet and happy conversation" of the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce.<sup>42</sup> For the sake of the conjugal conversation Eve is created from the side of Adam to be his collateral love and, though side by side with him, she opposes him as a responsive other self. The ambiguous Hebrew kenegdo is at the root of the human marriage, though Edenic opposition is devoid of antagonism and knows nothing of rabbinic warnings of obstinate and contrary wives who make domestic woe for their long-suffering husbands. At the Fall, the concept of opposition surrenders to the Satanic principle that contraries must obliterate each other and becomes an impediment to domestic peace. Yet in Paradise even the sexual love of Adam and Eve is free of the sweet enmity that is a cliché of erotic verse

where the arrows of Cupid are indistinguishable from the weapons of war. The opening of Adam's heart at Eve's creation is not a battle wound, not even a pleasurable one, as love too often is for his descendants. A useful parallel to the "collateral love and dearest emity" of Adam and Eve may be found in the dance of the three Graces in Botticelli's Primavera. The Graces, personifications of reciprocity, are engaged in a dance of initiation that places them at once side by side and against, that is, facing, each other. As Edgar Wind points out, their clasped hands, palm placed against palm, suggest opposition, but their fingers are interlocked without conflict.<sup>43</sup> Adam and Eve, walking hand in hand through the Garden, are not likely to imitate the posture of the Graces, but their mutual help which combines similitude and opposition, or difference, leads to reciprocal transformation and education.

The descriptions of Adam and Eve before the Fall center on their transforming reciprocity; they seem to self-consciously adopt emblematic stances whose meaning will be misunderstood by less innocent future spectators. For instance, as we follow them through the Garden of Eden on Satan's first visit and hear Eve narrate her beginnings, they are sitting in the shade by a fountain in a perfect attitude of unfallen submission and authority:

So spake our general Mother, and with eyes  
Of Conjugal attraction unprov'd,  
And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd  
On our first Father, half her swelling Breast  
Naked met his under the flowing Gold  
Of her loose tresses hid; hee in delight  
Both of her Beauty and submissive Charms  
Smiled with superior Love, as Jupiter

On Juno smiles, when he impregns the Clouds  
 That shed May flowers; and press'd her Matron lip  
 With kisses pure; aside the Devil turn'd  
 For envy, yet with jealous leer malign  
 Ey'd them askance.

(IV, 492-504)

As Eve leans on Adam in this highly erotic scene, almost calculated to cause unendurable envy in Satan, the two sexes now seem thoroughly unequal, not merely in the sense of "not identical" as before. They appear to form an emblem of male dominance and female subjection. But the fear that Adam and Eve may indeed be inferior or superior in Satan's sense of master and servant is dispelled by the simile that sums up the description and reveals, once again, the transformation that lies at the heart of creation. The spring rains, caused by the coupling of Juno and Jove, are proleptically the flowers they will bring forth on earth. Like the sun, the rains are barren without the earth and the fact that they come from above gives them no higher dignity over the ground where they flourish. The sun and rain and earth are knit in a relation of mutual exchange whose emblem is the barren elm united with the fruitful vine:

or they led the Vine  
 To wed her Elm; she spous'd about him twines  
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings  
 Her dow'r th'adopted Clusters, to adorn  
 His barren leaves.

(V, 215-19)

Adam and Eve, seated in the shade, are figures of the fruitful love of Jove and Juno and complete the comparison, begun previously, of Eve's hair to the tendrils of a vine. In the first description of Eve we learn that her curling hair implies subjection but that comparison points to the fruitful union of the elm and vine rather than to subordination: Eve yields to Adam as the vine does to the elm tree that

supports it.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, their embrace is not an emblem of male and female hierarchy, as no doubt Satan hidden among the herd of animals assumes, but of Edenic marital equality which, as in vegetable nature, lies in the proportionate giving and receiving that bears fruit, either in offspring or companionship. Adam's superior love and Eve's submissive charms must be read at their most literal level devoid of the figurative implications of rank and status. Milton strips both words to their Latin roots to suit them to the unfallen world where they denote a spatial configuration: Eve, leaning on Adam, offers, or submits, her face to him; he smiles, superior because he looks down from above at her. Submissive and superior love, full of insinuations of rank and power in aftertimes, are here left to tease the fallen consciousness out of its facile perceptions.<sup>45</sup>

The emblematic subtleties of the marriage in Eden are clarified by the linked hands of Adam and Eve, their most characteristic gesture as they walk through Paradise. Hand in hand they demonstrate one of the glosses to the "help meet" of Gen. 2:18. Paulus Fagius reads that the wife is a helper, a prop who is present before her husband to lend her hands in bearing burdens.<sup>46</sup> But Milton makes Adam the prop of the vine-like Eve and, having told why it was also not good for woman to live alone, a subject on which Genesis is silent, makes the man a fit help of his wife also. Their joined hands are really more in the democratic spirit of Valeriano's emblem of "officia mutua," mutual help.<sup>47</sup> The reciprocity of help, and, consequently, the unfallen equality, that Adam and Eve embody as they walk hand in hand may perhaps best be explicated by William Austin's quasi-cabbalistic exegesis of the letter H, which he claims is the most perfect letter

of the Roman alphabet. All letters, as all geometrical figures and proportions, are derived from some action or dimension of the human body, but the perfect letter H is the hardest for a man or woman alone to imitate:

For it consists of two severall disjunct, parts of letters: that is to say of two I I: both of which are signes of the singular and first person; and are of themselves, both good formes of building too, but unles there be some-what, that . . . may joyne them together, they both still remaine singular and alone; and the building can never come to its desired and beautifull forme.

Wherefore, if either man or woman . . . doe desire to change for a better: there is no better way to establish and make them most firmly grow into this well approv'd forme, then . . . to reach each other their hands in direct sinceritie, thus I - I: And let the even and straight course of marriage, fully and firmly establish them in one letter, H, which not only by uniting of two bodies, makes them eaven: but by bringing them into the forme of this letter H, makes their eaven, Heaven: if they continue in the love, which first joyned them: which is, indeed Heaven upon earth.<sup>48</sup>

Austin's graphic praise of matrimony, though fanciful, is an interesting gloss on the joined hands of Adam and Eve which, if they alone do not make a heaven on earth, are at least synonymous with God's terrestrial Garden. Hand in hand Adam and Eve make a forceful argument against measuring their equality in terms of fallen connotations of superior and submissive love.

The embrace of Adam and Eve by the fountain demonstrates quite literally the collateral and opposing love upon which their Edenic equality depends. Eve half-embraces Adam; they are joined near the heart, but she also perforce half turns from him. An illustrative contrast to the half-embrace of Adam and Eve is the reunion of Spenser's Amoret and Scudamor in the 1590 version of the end of Book III of The

Faerie Queene. Britomart brings Amoret out of the house of Busirane, the house of lust, to the despairing Scudamor:

Lightly he clipt her twixt his armes twaine,  
 And streightly did embrace her body bright,  
 Her body, late the prison of sad paine,  
 Now the sweet lodge of love and deare delight:  
 But she faire Lady overcommen quight  
 Of huge affection, did in pleasure melt,  
 And in sweete ravishment poud out her spright:  
 No word they spake, nor earthly thing they felt,  
 But like two senceles stocks in long embracement dwelt.

Had ye them seene, ye would have surely thought,  
 That they had beene that faire Hermaphrodite,  
 Which that rich Romane of white marble wrought,  
 And in his costly Bath causd to bee site:  
 So seemed those two, as growne together quite,  
 That Britomart halfe envying their blesse,  
 Was much empassiond in her gentle sprite,  
 And to her selfe oft wisht like happinesse,  
 In vaine she wisht, that fate n'ould let her yet possesse.

The embrace of Amoret and Scudamor is all-encompassing; it begins in sexual, earthly love and ends with their souls abstracted from their bodies. The lovers resemble the image of Ovid's Hermaphroditus, the fair boy whose body merged with that of the rapacious nymph Salmacis, but they achieve a Neoplatonic union that makes one of two. They form a picture of sexual passion yet the joyous rapture of their reunion robs them of all physical sensation; in their spiritual ecstasy they are like marble. The reunion of Amoret and Scudamor transcends Adam's metaphor of musical harmony and the marital conversation of Eden for the sake of a higher realm. Adam and Eve, the inhabitants of earth, only half embrace because like the vine entwined around its elm, they never quite grow together but lend each other their perfections. They remain in perpetual conversation, interrupted only by conjugal caresses. In fact, only in the privacy of their bower, in love-making

do they turn completely to each other, but of love submissive or superior we are told nothing more:

into thir inmost bower  
 Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off  
 These troublesome disguises which wee wear,  
 Straight side by side were laid, nor turn'd I ween  
Adam from his fair Spouse, nor Eve the Rites  
 Mysterious of connubial love refus'd.  
 (IV, 739-43)

In the bower collateral love may not need to be qualified by opposition or perhaps there unlikeness is apparent enough. In Eden, where the living embrace of lovers is preferred above the marble, there is no danger of delusion or madness in the physical union of bodies, as the Neoplatonists feared. The true danger lies in the loss of the innocent imagination that can comprehend both likeness and unlikeness in the beloved and without scorn or envy of either.

The Edenic marriage, defined by the triad of likeness, fit help, and other self, is upheld by the triad of Adam, God and Eve. The delicate balance of similarity and difference which makes man and woman fit to help each other relies on the presence of God. "Hee for God only, shee for God in him" is not only a reminder of the shared image of God in mankind but a way to include God in the human marriage. It is a commonplace of Renaissance exegesis that the name of God is found in the Hebrew words for man and woman, ish and isha, because these words contain two of the letters of the holy tetragrammaton, Yod and He. If a man and woman live together in a good marriage, God is with them. If they live together impurely, however, God takes away his two letters from their names and all that remains is esh, which means fire and ash and strife.<sup>49</sup> Milton here translates the exegesis into English

and places God between "hee" and "shee." The warning given by the exegetes is fulfilled at the Fall when Adam and Eve remove God from their names by their disobedience. The balance of likeness and other self collapses and the two terms become irreconcilable opposites which hold sway over the marriage by turns. Adam first declares that he will die for his indivisible love of Eve and later turns vehement misogynist; Eve begins by declaring Adam superior and, envious, tries to equal him until a greater envy forces her to decide that he must equal her and die as she dies. But here, as in Adam's sentence to eat bread by the sweat of his brow, "the Curse aslope / Glanc'd on the ground" (X, 1054). Fiery lusts beset Adam and Eve once they have eaten the forbidden fruit, but the ashes are largely relegated to Hell for the devils' perpetual punishment. While the descendants of Adam and Eve will find enough fire, ash and strife to rack their marriages, they themselves are securely restored as fit helpers by the Archangel Michael who comes between them for a moment as they prepare to set out on their exile. The sword of God begins to blaze and scorch the earth

whereat  
 In either hand the hast'ning Angel caught  
 Our ling'ring Parents, and to the Eastern Gate  
 Led them direct, and down the Cliff as fast  
 To the subjected Plain; then disappear'd.  
 (XII, 636-40)

As if taking a cue from the Angel, Adam and Eve once again join hands to signify the mutual help of husband and wife, though of a different order than in Paradise: "They hand in hand with wand'ring steps and slow / Through Eden took thir solitary way" (XII, 468-69).

The mutual help of husband and wife before the Fall is so curiously egalitarian that even the hierarchy that might result from the allegory of male and female as two modes of sense perception is shown to be false. In fact, if after the Fall Eve seems more imbued with Christian Grace, as though the grace that won all who saw her wish her still in sight had become a spiritual adornment because she brings the self-loathing and self-pitying Adam to repentance, there is nothing new here. She has not been elevated by her Fall to dominion over a new realm. Her beauty and submissive charms, now humble pleading, move Adam's obdurate heart to pity her as once they moved him to desire:

She ended weeping, and her lowly plight,  
 Immovable till peace obtain'd from fault  
 Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought  
 Commiseration; soon his heart relented  
 Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,  
 Now at his feet submissive in distress,  
 Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,  
 His counsel whom she had displeas'd, his aid;  
 As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,  
 And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.  
 (X, 937-46)

Adam's superior love is now corrupted with vanity, demonic self-esteem; he seems to be pleased that such a pretty woman is asking for his advice and he condescends to give it. The full figurative meaning of Eve's submission, prostrate at his feet, causes him to turn back to her and seek reconciliation with her and the God they have offended. Eve seems to have become, at least for the moment, Adam's intercessor to Heaven as he was hers before, but she is only fulfilling, though ironically because too late, the promise Raphael made to Adam. Raphael foresaw that love, with its well-known powers of transformation, would

be the vehicle by which the human race might grow and change to angelic: "the scale / By which to Heav'nly Love thou may'st ascend" (VIII, 591-92). Eve is undoubtedly Adam's guide to the terrestrial Garden while they remain there, but by the natural laws of reciprocity in unfallen creation she is also Adam's guide to the celestial world. Raphael teaches that Eve, so easily recognizable as the earthly Venus who presides over the world of the sense and seems the source and sum of all beauty in the Garden, is also the Celestial Venus who draws men to the higher forms of love.<sup>50</sup> There the union of mind and soul would be changed to the union of pure with pure. As Adam proves to be Eve's guide to the terrestrial world as he mediates the realm of angelic discourse and human reason, so, likewise, Eve proves to be Adam's guide to Heaven through the beauty of Paradise.

The realms of spirit and matter, or of sight and sound, are united in mankind and Adam and Eve partake equally of both. It does not matter whether their experience is direct or derived because human love, though it does not lead to the self-transcendence of the Angels, leads to self-knowledge. In their reciprocal exchange, Adam and Eve uncover what is other in themselves. They are not two halves of a lost unity but contain both realms within themselves. Both man and woman, created separately, know their solitary deficiency and the perfection they achieve in union is their own. Adam knows at first sight that the Garden of Eden is delightful, more beautiful than the world outside it where he was created:

A circuit wide, enclos'd, with goodliest Trees  
Planted, with Walks, and Bowers, that what I saw  
Of Earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree

Load'n with fairest Fruit, that hung to the Eye  
 Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite  
 To pluck and eat.

(VIII, 304-9)

He appreciates the beauties of the new landscape even if they do not seize hold of his imagination; Eve, as we have seen, appreciates abstruse angelic discourse on astronomy even if it does not arouse insatiable curiosity in her. But with human mediation the new world and astronomy become very dear. Through the giving and receiving of wedded love, through their meet and happy conversation, as they offer their own realms to one another, they discover new realms of sense and imagination, possessed but unknown in solitude. It is a perfect and equal exchange, the fruits of which are love and self-knowledge. There is no place in this union for the hierarchy of subjection and domination or for comparative individual equality. St. Paul's injunction that a man should love his wife as his own flesh finds a place in the Garden, but not, as is common, in order to read Eve's creation as an excuse for self-love. Nicholas Gibbon, for instance, says:

he made her of the substance of the man, whereby man in loving his wife, he doth but love himselfe, the wife in honoring her husband as her head receiveth what she giveth, because they are not two, but one flesh.<sup>51</sup>

By tradition the common origin of man and woman creates and verifies a comforting bond of similitude. Milton, however, uses the Apostle's injunction of one and the same love for oneself and one's spouse to establish a complex conjugal reciprocity in which self-love is replaced by self-knowledge. Adam and Eve receive both what they gave and what they did not give and, acknowledging their solitary defects, come to know their mutual perfections.

In Milton's Paradise there is no preeminence of nobility between man and woman and their equality is measured by their meet and happy exchange. To modern feminist sensibilities, nevertheless, Eve seems to be the prime victim of patriarchal subjugation of and contempt for women. We know Eve in large part only as Adam's other self and in his narrative she is distant from the reader, as she is sometimes uncomfortably distant and unfamiliar to her husband. Eve is manifestly vulnerable and dependent, requiring Adam as a prop even as the vine that clings to its elm. She seems to be a lesser creation than he; she is created only for his sake and from him. She is the first to fall and imitates the Satanic posture so well that Adam joins her in disobedience. It is easy enough to conclude that she was of the devil's party from the beginning or that she should have been, had she understood her circumstances correctly. Sandra Gilbert, using Harold Bloom's terminology in her study of the responses of major female writers to Paradise Lost, details precisely the modern rejection of Milton's Eve:

The story that Milton, the first of the masculinists, most notably tells to women is of course the story of woman's secondness, her otherness, and how that otherness leads inexorably to her demonic anger, her sin, her fall, and her exclusion from the garden of God which is also, for her, the garden of poetry. . . . For whatever Milton is to the male imagination, to the female imagination Milton and the inhibiting Father--the Patriarch of patriarchs--are one.<sup>52</sup>

Gilbert finds that Eve shares the lot of Satan in her relation of the patriarchal structure which subjects her and that Milton has taken great pains to emphasize the parallels: "Significantly, Eve is the only character in Paradise Lost for whom a rebellion against the hierarchical status quo is as necessary as it is for Satan."<sup>53</sup> A more vehement

case against Milton's depiction of the first marriage from Eve's point of view is made by Jackie DiSalvo:

This is the hidden contradiction in Edenic love. Eve's love for Adam is a mixture of dependency and self-hatred; Adam's love for Eve is perverted by superiority and arrogance . . . Her fall, therefore, is an attempt both to restore her own injured self-love, "so, to add what wants / In Femal Sex" and "the more to draw his Love" (IX, 821-22). Like so many women after her, Eve finds herself in an inferior position that renders her dependent on Adam for her very identity, at the same time that it makes her feel unworthy and insecure in his love. Caught in this double bind she has to destroy the relationship in order to save it.<sup>54</sup>

These indictments of Milton's Eve as the embodiment of female inferiority, while adequate descriptions of Eve's own thoughts when she is drunk with disobedience and delusions of new god-like powers, completely ignore the heavy change that the Fall brings into the Garden.

Eve's otherness, her creation from man and her dependence on him cause Satan to reason that she is Adam's inferior, but perfect mirroring, priority and independence are not terms around which innocence is organized. Eve is not inferior to Adam until she chooses to import Satanic hierarchy into the Garden. She does not suddenly become conscious of the lowly status that an unjust Creator has allotted her. She invents that lowly status when she accepts Satan's judgment of her and of the Garden, and, disobeying God and renouncing her single imperfection, forsakes the reciprocity of marriage with Adam that obviated the question of female status. Before the Fall, her otherness, her postponed creation and her dependence are precisely the qualities that make her a fit help for Adam who, if created first, is also other, from Eve's point of view, and dependent on her by his own admission before God and Raphael. Eve's subjection, her yielding

to Adam before the Fall is as innocent of our fallen assumptions as the mazy folds of the serpent before Satan's incarnation. Even priority in the Fall does not argue that she is allied to Satan and Sin from the beginning. The female realm of visual beauty is corrupted first by Satan's disguise because the eye does not have the interpretative faculties of the ear, but Eve herself is corrupted by the serpent's speech, not his visual trickery. Here also the priority argues nothing because Adam shows himself as capable of Satanic rhetoric and bad logic as Eve. Eve, like her Garden, is undoubtedly more fragile than Adam but that is not a defect until the Fall, when strength becomes a virtue and vulnerability is despised.

The conjugal reciprocity of Adam and Eve, the Eden within Eden (to borrow from Satan) is lost and the attributes of Eve, softness and the secular grace of beauty, do not fare well in the new world order. In postlapsarian experience Eve's gifts are trifles not to be weighed with Adam's contemplation and valor which, although impaired, still prove more valuable for life in exile. Eve becomes the other self to the fallen reader who is wont to understand what is unlike or unknown as inferior. From this perspective God's promise of another self for Adam does not define one aspect of fit help but rather declares the husband's superiority over his wife. Fallen consciousness glosses Adam's other self with Simone de Beauvoir's famous indictment of woman subjected and defined by a masculine world:

She is defined and differentiated with reference to the man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject; he is the Absolute--she is the Other.<sup>55</sup>

This alienation of the other from the self and the concomitant loss of a serious belief in companionship between man and woman is first seen when Adam stands before God to receive his sentence. The triad of likeness, fit help, and other self has vanished from Adam's understanding to be replaced by a vague and bitter sense that Eve is now merely his blameworthy other:

O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand  
 Before my Judge, either to undergo  
 Myself the total Crime, or to accuse  
 My other self, the partner of my life.  
 (X, 125-28)

The words "other self" and "partner" are used in the most trivial sense and the opposition of man and woman is no longer tempered by collateral love. Adam finds Eve a convenient way to evade his own guilt by claiming, curiously enough, that he was only her other self, object to her subject, and therefore did as she commanded:

This Woman whom thou mad'st to be my help,  
 And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,  
 So fit, so acceptable, so Divine,  
 That from her hand I could suspect no ill,  
 And what she did, whatever in itself,  
 Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;  
 Shee gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.  
 (X, 137-43)

He claims her as the Absolute, as he once confessed that her beauty made her seem. But if the power of beauty was a serious temptation then, it is not a convincing excuse now. Adam's self-rejection does not last long and is merely a prelude to his vituperation of women and his violent accusation of Eve as a temptress leagued with the serpent for his destruction. Woman is ultimately made the outcast other by the despair of man. Eve will no longer be the vehicle of Adam's self-knowledge; in the future the discovery of delight in softness and sweet attractive

grace will be "effeminate slackness" (XI, 634), as Michael cautions, unless promptly subordinated to his superior manly wisdom. In a sense, misogyny and female subjection are born in Paradise Lost out of the anger of the male, the stranger and latecomer to the Garden of Eden who, having lost his other, female self, can never hope to return.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lecture of Milton and the Paradise Lost, March 4, 1819, The Romantics on Milton, ed. Joseph A. Wittreich, Jr. (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve Univ. Press, 1970), p. 245.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph H. Summers, "The Two Great Sexes in Paradise Lost," SEL, 2, No. 1 (1962), 9-10, notes that our modern perception of Paradise is complicated by the fact that we demand self-sufficiency in every ideal creature, but nothing is self-sufficient in Milton's Paradise.

<sup>3</sup>Ed. Ernest Sirluck in Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959), II, 597.

<sup>4</sup>See Albert C. Labriola, "The Aesthetics of Self-Diminution in Christian Iconography and Paradise Lost," Milton Studies, 7 (1975), p. 275 for a discussion of the word adhere in "to his wife adhere" (VIII, 498) as a seventeenth-century botanical term for the joining of two unlike plants.

<sup>5</sup>The word "equal" does not necessarily denote a comparison of degree or rank. The OED includes the following among the definitions of "equal": "Uniform throughout in appearance, dimensions, or properties." It cites an example contemporary with Paradise Lost: "1663. Gerbier Counsel 50 A roof covered with them is of an equal colour." The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, 1971 ed., s.v. "equal." Henry Blamires, Milton's Creation: A Guide Through "Paradise Lost" (London: Methuen, 1971), p. 100 notes that, "Milton's connotative use of the word 'equal' required him to say that 'both' are 'not equal' which shows that the usage is nearer to our usage of identical. Indeed he seems to be saying little more than that the two differ."

<sup>6</sup>In Christian Doctrine, Bk. I, vii, Milton argues that the soul is generated through the parents, not created by God for each new-born child, and points out realistically that the constant creation of souls would be a slavish task for the Deity. Trans. John Carey, ed. Maurice Kelley, in Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1973), VI, 319-20.

- <sup>7</sup>Complete Prose Works, 11, 591.
- <sup>8</sup>C. A. Patrides, Milton and the Christian Tradition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 181-82.
- <sup>9</sup>St. Augustine, The Good of Marriage, trans. Charles T. Wilcox, in Fathers of the Church, ed. Roy J. Deferrari et al. (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1955), XV, 9.
- <sup>10</sup>Dialogues of Plato, trans. Jowett, ed. J. D. Kaplan (1951; rpt. N.Y.: Washington Square Press, 1963), 188-93 and 207-8.
- <sup>11</sup>Leone Ebreo, Dialoghi d'amore, ed. Santino Caramella (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1929), pp. 261-62.
- <sup>12</sup>*ibid.*, p. 312.
- <sup>13</sup>Complete Prose Works, 11, 252.
- <sup>14</sup>Frank Kermode, "Adam Unparadised," The Living Milton, ed. Frank Kermode (1960; rpt. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 114, describes the devil's predicament: "the price of warring against omnipotence is impotence--there is no love-making in Hell."
- <sup>15</sup>William Empson, Milton's God, rev. ed. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), p. 104.
- <sup>16</sup>Philo Judaeus, Questions and Answers on Genesis, trans. Ralph Marcus, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1953), Supplement 1, Bk. 1, 26.
- <sup>17</sup>See Chapter 1, pp. 24-26 above.
- <sup>18</sup>The Zohar, trans. Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1949), 1, Bereshith, 556.
- <sup>19</sup>Baldassare Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby, Everyman (1974; rpt. London: Dent; N.Y.: Dutton, 1975), p. 199.
- <sup>20</sup>John Calvin, Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, trans. John Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1948), 1, Chap. XI, 11, p. 360.

<sup>21</sup> Midrash Rabbah, trans. H. Freedman, ed. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1939), I, Bereshith, xvii, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Paulus Fagius, in Critici Sacri: sive Doctissimorum Virorum in SS Biblia, I (London, 1660), cols. 50-51: " תא enim Hebraeis quod oppositum, coram & è region est & propter adjectam literam Caph, quod proxime adest, cujus contrarium est, תא quod procul abest. Omnino enim Caph praefixum eam vim hic habet, quam apud Latinos praepositio secundum, propinquitatem & approximationem significans; Germanicè bey, nach; . . . Caph veritatis, hoc est, confirmativum & veritatis expressivum; ut sit sensus; Faciam ei adjutorium quod sit vere coram eo, vel penes eum; hoc est, quod verum sit auxilium non vanum."

<sup>23</sup> John Calvin, Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis, trans. John King (1948; rpt. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1963), I, 130-31.

<sup>24</sup> Lectures on Genesis, trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), I, 117.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>26</sup> Andrew Willett, Hexapla in Genesin (Cambridge, 1605), pp. 35-36.

<sup>27</sup> Nicholas Gibbon, Questions and Disputations Concerning the Holy Scripture (London, 1602), I, 93.

<sup>28</sup> Matthew Griffith, Bethel: or A forme for families (London, 1633), pp. 240-41.

<sup>29</sup> William Austin, Haec Homo, wherein the excellency of the creation of woman is described (London, 1637), pp. 5-6.

<sup>30</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, trans. Edmund Hill (N.Y.: Blackfriars and McGraw Hill; London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964), XIII 1a, 92, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Complete Prose Works, II, 595.

<sup>32</sup> For the symbolism of the stringed instrument in the Renaissance, see John Hollander, The Untuning of the Sky (N.Y.: Norton, 1970), pp. 43-51 and 122-45.

<sup>33</sup>Johannes Piero Valeriano, Hieroglyphica (Frankfurt, 1614), p. 592: "Sed nos ut ad concordiae significata redeamus, illud ex onirocritarium disciplina deprompsimus, ut si quis nuptiarum tempore Lyram per somnium videre imaginatus fuerit, concordiam, id inter maritum & uxorem futuram significare."

<sup>34</sup>For the sympathetic vibrations of two strings as an image of familial concord, see Hollander, The Untuning of the Sky, pp. 136-38.

<sup>35</sup>For a discussion of Milton's view of sexuality in the Garden, see Peter Lindenbaum, "Lovemaking in Milton's Paradise," Milton Studies, 6 (1974), 277-306.

<sup>36</sup>"Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's Symposium," trans. S. R. Jayne, Univ. of Missouri Studies, 19, No. 1 (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri, 1944), 225.

<sup>37</sup>Dialoghi d'amore, pp. 29-30.

<sup>38</sup>"Commentary on Plato's Symposium," p. 145.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>40</sup>Pietro Bembo, Gli Asolani, trans. Rudolf B. Gottfried (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1954), p. 43.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>42</sup>Complete Prose Works, II, 246.

<sup>43</sup>Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance (N.Y.: Norton, 1968), pp. 118-19.

<sup>44</sup>For a discussion of the vine and elm see Peter Demetz, "The Elm and the Vine: Notes Toward the History of a Marriage Topos," PMLA, 73 (1958), 421-32.

<sup>45</sup>In a recent article, David Aers and Bob Hodge, "Rational Burning: Milton on Sex and Marriage," Milton Studies, 13 (1979), 3-34, find this scene replete with Milton's idea of male supremacy and find the submissive female sexuality repellent. They argue that Milton is ambivalent in his view of women and marriage: the radical Milton knows that woman must be equal but the orthodox bourgeois Milton will not allow such equality. I think that, rather than merely manifesting his indecision, Milton is working with a different concept of equality in

Paradise Lost in order to reconcile his vision of a prelapsarian world without hierarchy and the several thousands year old custom or doctrine that subordinated women to their husbands.

<sup>46</sup>Critic Sacri, col. 37: "Sustenaculum quod sit penes eum. . . . Alluditur enim ad eos qui in sublevandis oneribus sibi mutuas manus porrigunt auxiliatrices. Tale sustenaculum & vicarium auxilium Deus vult esse uxorem marito: in hunc usum maximè condita est mulier. . . . Ad manum sit uxor marito, ut adjuvet eum, auxilietur, consoletur, ac subleuet laboribus."

<sup>47</sup>Hieroglyphica, p. 426: "Cessit & in proverbium mutui beneficii officiique ab officio provocati, Manus manum scabit."

<sup>48</sup>Haec Homo, pp. 82-83.

<sup>49</sup>See, for instance, Fagius, in Critici Sacri, col. 54: "Philosophantur porro Hebraei in voce אִשָּׁה & אִשָּׁה hunc in modum, quod si maritus & uxor caste & innocenter vixerint, fidemque matrimonii sanctam servaverint, Deus illis adest, atque inter eos habitare, quod significatur per Jod literam, quae una est ex nomina tetragrammato יהוה, atque media est in voce אִשָּׁה, quam si iterum demas, ut sit in אִשָּׁה, manet אִשָּׁה, quod ignem significat. Quo innui dicunt, quod si conjuges non sancta vixerint, Deum illos destituere, quo facto, omnia replentur jurgis, rixis, & altercationibus." For other examples, see Mary Irma Corcoran, Milton's Paradise with Reference to the Hexamerical Background (Wash., D.C.: Catholic Univ. of Amer. Press, 1945), pp. 70-71.

<sup>50</sup>For the two Venuses in Renaissance thought, see Erwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, Icon Edition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1939; N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 142-45 and Wind, Pagan Mysteries, pp. 141-51. For the iconographical conflation of Eve and Venus, see Roland M. Frye, Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 276-77.

<sup>51</sup>Questions and Disputations, I, 97.

<sup>52</sup>Sandra Gilbert, "Patriarchal Poetry and Women Readers: Reflections on Milton's Bogey," PMLA, 93, No. 3 (May 1978), 370.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 375.

<sup>54</sup>Jackie DiSalvo, "Blake Encountering Milton: Politics and the Family in Paradise Lost and The Four Zoas," Milton and the Line

of Vision, ed. Joseph A. Wittreich, Jr. (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1975), p. 152.

<sup>55</sup>Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley (N.Y.: Bantam, 1961), p. xvi.

## CHAPTER IV

## PRIVATE LIVES: THE DOMESTIC GARDEN

In Book IX Milton sketches the prelapsarian life of Adam and Eve at its most familiar and ordinary. The last morning of their innocence is suffused with a new realism while the allegory of sex and sense perception and the emblematic or mythographic origins of human love are relegated to the background. Adam and Eve, as the progenitors of all husbands and wives, ponder the practical domestic questions of the division of labor and the meaning of their mutual dependence. Their debate, free of the enmity of dispute or quarrel, is a pragmatic exercise of the fit help effected by the resemblance and unlikeness, the corresponding images, of male and female. Here for the first time they attempt to define the nature of their Paradise, and, consequently, of their marriage, through rational human conversation unaided by celestial visitors or voices.<sup>1</sup> The conversation anticipates the conventional wisdom of their descendants, but the domestic order of middle-class life advocated by the seventeenth century marriage treatises and sermons proves inadequate, if not risible. In the prelapsarian household, domestic peace does not depend on male authority and female obedience and the commonplace strictures that confine the wife to her house or to her husband's side are absurd. Eve's argument prevails and she leaves Adam to garden separately. The result is disastrous. Afterwards, they conclude that their separation

caused the Fall, and, though they are wrong, under the new order female submission and the restriction of the wife's activity to household matters no longer seems unreasonable. The Edenic marriage falls from the amiable reciprocity of friendship into the conventional hierarchy of seventeenth century domestic life. The contemporary prejudices win out, but only as the responses of the fallen imagination to the loss of Eden.

Eve begins the last innocent morning's work by questioning, like Adam in his recent discourse with the Angel Raphael, the prelapsarian economy. She fears that the Garden may be too fruitful, too much like a jungle in its luxurious growth, for them to manage properly alone:

the work under our labor 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 wild.

(IX, 208-12)

She is correct in perceiving the fertility of the Garden, which the narrator, too, notes: "for much thir work outgrew / The hands' dispatch of two Gard'ning so wide" (IX, 202-3). But she errs in concluding that the profusion of Paradise is a threat, that she inhabits a region of "waste fertility," as Comus might call such abundance. Eve's fears are the reverse side of the false and recurring belief that the end of all nature is human consumption: if they do not see the moonlight it is wasted in vain, and it is cumbersome for the sun and stars to revolve around the earth since they seem to shine only to bring light to man's small sphere. This error is among the first that Eve employs in her praise of the forbidden fruit: had she not eaten it, it would

have hung obscure and useless "as to no end / Created" (IX, 798-99). The error is a genuine Satanic belief, not mere rhetoric. All nature seeks its definition in human terms, Satan reasons to himself when he declares both heaven and earth summed up and subservient to man:

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,  
In thee concentring all thir precious beams  
Of sacred influence: As God in Heav'n  
Is Centre, yet extends to all, so thou  
Centring receiv'st from all those Orbs; in thee,  
Not in themselves, all thir known virtue appears  
Productive in Herb, Plant, and nobler birth  
Of Creatures animate with gradual life  
Of Growth, Sense, Reason, all summ'd up in Man.  
(IX, 103-13)

Satan, who fears to serve in Heaven, makes the heavens serve earth by incorporating a measure of necessity and hierarchy into the reciprocity that links the two realms. Adam comprehends Eve's error. As he knows that there may be more eyes than man's to see the moonlight, so he also knows that the luxurious vegetable growth of Paradise does not exact man's labors. He reminds Eve that Paradise is sustained by God, not by the labor of their two human hands. What they do is enough; they need not measure too closely their work against the production of nature:

These paths and Bowers doubt not but our joint hands  
Will keep from Wilderness with ease, as wide  
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long  
Assist us.

(IX, 244-47)

Adam corrects Eve as before. The Garden is both larger and more populated than they know but not so abundant that it will suffocate them.

Adam has learned well from the Archangel the true nature of his Garden's economy but he intersperses his higher knowledge with

lapses into the homely wisdom of his sons. He is "domestic Adam in his care / And Matrimonial Love" (IX, 318-19) and the prime advocate of a conventional marriage. He begins his argument against their separation with praise of Eve's concern for household management:

for nothing lovelier can be found  
In Woman, than to study household good,  
And good works, in her husband to promote.  
(IX, 232-34)

Certainly a prudent wife is a gift from the Lord, but the praise sounds somewhat pompous in Adam's mouth and, considering Eve's visionary origins, much too worldly and unimaginative. He seems to have been reading some marriage treatise from which he has garnered the notion that domestic work properly pertains to the woman and that a virtuous wife will, therefore, keep to her house.<sup>2</sup> For instance, Miles Coverdales' translation of Heinrich Bullinger, The Christen State of Matrimonye, argues that:

The wyves workyng place is within her house, there to oversee and set al thinges in good ordre, and to beware that nothyng be loste, seldome to go forth, but when urgent causes call her forth. And therefore Phidias that ingenouse workeman, intendynge to descrybe an honest faythful housewyfe, did set her ymage under the shel of a snayle sygnifying that she should evermore kepe her owne house.<sup>3</sup>

The honest and frugal housewife with the shell is Aphrodite, the sea-born goddess, who through an iconographical sleight-of-hand has become domesticated.<sup>4</sup> The conditions of Paradise, however, render the iconography imprecise: while it is easy to locate the domain of the goddess in her shell, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact home of Eve, if it is not the entire Garden. Adam's sermon-like praise of Eve's prudent housewifery is mocked by the wide-ranging prelapsarian

home of man; in this case household care would call the tamed goddess out of her shell to go abroad.

Adam, perhaps perceiving that domestic duty will not serve to keep Eve with him, finds a finer reason. He argues that Eden is the Garden of Pleasure and, therefore, in Paradise there is no higher purpose of marriage than the marriage itself:

Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd  
Labor, as to debar 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.

(IX, 235-41)

Love, in fact, is the scale by which man may ascend to Heaven and it is certainly not incompatible with the terrestrial Garden, as Eve has implied in her objection that they cannot get their work done because they interrupt it with caresses and conversation. Adam's answer is a radical dissent from the seventeenth century opinions he follows elsewhere in this scene. He opposes the public work of gardening assigned to the married pair with their more private need for companionship in looks and smiles, and, were he to compare the two ends of marriage, he would no doubt declare, as Milton did, that companionship and love are the chief ends of marriage.<sup>5</sup> In the Christian Doctrine Milton argues that the "sweet intercourse of looks and smiles" is the definition of marriage. They are both its form and its function:

The form of marriage consists in the mutuell goodwill, love, help and solace of husband and wife, as the institution itself, or its definition shows.

The end of marriage is almost the same as the form.<sup>6</sup>

He concludes here, as he did in the *Divorce Tracts*, that God did not institute marriage for the sake of mere reproduction but as a remedy for Adam's very human loneliness:

But the prime end and form of marriage is not the bed, but conjugal love and mutual assistance in life; nearly everyone admits that this is so. For the prime end and form of marriage can only be what is mentioned in the original institution, and mention there is made of pleasant companionship (a thing which ceases to exist if someone is left by himself), and of the mutual assistance of the married couple (a thing which thrives only where there is love). No mention is made of the bed or of procreation, which can take place even where there is hatred. It follows that wedded love is older and more important than the mere marriage bed, and far more worthy to be considered as the prime end and form of marriage.<sup>7</sup>

Adam, who does not need to draw sharp distinctions between the form and end of marriage, substitutes the work of gardening for the work of procreation in Milton's argument to conclude that companionship at least holds equal sway with work. The question of procreation, which appears in Eve's anxiety that they cannot restrain the fruitfulness of the Garden "till more hands / Aid us" (IX, 207-8), is answered by Adam's knowledge that they do not need to fear that the Garden will become a jungle and his certainty that the fertility of the Garden will in time be matched by the fertility of mankind.

Behind Adam's easy reconciliation of work and procreation and love in Paradise lies the Reformation controversy about the purpose of the creation of woman and the institution of marriage. Milton is singular in denying procreation as an end of marriage and in resting the marriage solely on the conjugal affections of the man and woman, but many Protestant exegetes, if they never arrive at the conclusion that a marriage or a divorce is a wholly private affair in which the

magistrates or priests have no right to interfere, regard companionship of husband and wife as the prime marital consideration. Nicholas Gibbon, for example, glosses Gen. 2.18 with the following catalogue of the forms of help that woman affords man:

The end of her creation was to be a help to man. To be an helper: first for the societie of life, to increase his joy, she was made to be alwaies his delight. Secondlie, to obtaine the blessing, Increase and multiplie, she was made to be an help for procreation. Thirdlie, to help him in bringing up children and governing the familie. Fourthlie, was added after sinne was entred, that she should be a help in sicknes and infirmitie. Fiftlie, a help against incontinence and a remedie against sin: that men having the benefit of marriage bed might thereby restraints their thoughts, their eyes, their bodies from following strange flesh.<sup>8</sup>

Calvin's gloss to the same passage explains that the need for companionship and the need for progeny are answered perfectly and at once by God's creation of Eve for Adam:

Moses now explains the design of God in creating the woman; namely that there should be human beings on the earth who might cultivate mutual society between themselves. Yet a doubt may arise whether this design ought to be extended to progeny, for the words simply mean that since it was not expedient for man to be alone, a wife must be created, who might be his helper. I, however, take the meaning to be this, that God begins, indeed, at the first step of human society, yet designs to include others, each in its proper place. The commencement, therefore, involves a general principle, that man was formed to be a social animal. Now, the human race could not exist without the woman; and, therefore, in the conjunction of human beings, that sacred bond is especially conspicuous by which the husband and wife are combined in one body, and soul.<sup>9</sup>

Marriage is a special case of man's need for society and friendship as well as the means of populating the earth. The two purposes work harmoniously except that, since procreation serves the purpose of providing man with more society, Calvin implicitly gives priority to the social needs before the reproductive.

The Catholic exegetes, however, always claim procreation as the chief, not the second, end of marriage. The aedificavit used by the Vulgate to denote the forming and fashioning of Eve establishes the woman as the bearer of children and of the Promised Seed, and Aquinas argues conclusively that the female was created only for this purpose since that sex is unequal to the male as a helper in other forms of work.<sup>10</sup> Pererius, for instance, mentions, along with Calvin, that man is meant to be a social animal, but he is primarily concerned with the propagation of mankind that begins with Adam and Eve.<sup>11</sup> The choice of chief purpose for the creation of woman is not, however, clearly divided between Protestant and Catholic. Luther, glossing the same passage as Calvin above, makes a quite contradictory argument. He explains why even the innocent Adam could not live alone:

My answer is that God is speaking of the common good or that of the species, not of personal good. The personal good is the fact that Adam had innocence. But he was not yet in possession of the common good which the rest of the living beings who propagated their kind through procreation had. For so far Adam was alone; he still had no partner for that magnificent work of begetting and preserving his kind. Therefore "good" in this passage denotes the increase of the human race. . . . Hence the meaning is that Adam as the most beautiful creature is well provided for so far as his own person is concerned but still lacks something, namely, the gift of the increase and the blessing--because he is alone.<sup>12</sup>

Luther contends that woman is needed as a companion as well as a remedy against concupiscence and as an assistant in domestic matters only after the Fall. The innocent Adam was not lonely; God created a mate for him only to serve the common good of mankind. In any case, the two motives for the creation of woman are closely linked among the exegetes and the choice of companionship or the continuation of the species as the prior cause is generally a matter of emphasis rather

than exclusive statement. Only Milton, arguing the case for divorce against the canon law, must exclude procreation from marriage for the sake of establishing the claims of spiritual and psychological comfort in the companionship between man and wife.

Luther's distinction between the public and private good in the creation of Eve is transformed and incorporated into Milton's Paradise as the divergent perspectives of God and man on human marriage. Eve is created to fulfill two promises: she is to be Adam's other self, his fit help and his likeness, and she is to be the Mother of Mankind, as her name attests. Both aspects of Eve are contained in Adam's plea for a mate to perfect mankind's solitary defects but Adam subsumes the need to "beget / Like of his like" under the need for "conversation with his like." Lest God provide him with a mate merely for the sake of the common good of mankind, Adam insists that procreation "requires / - Collateral love, and dearest amity." The narrating poet agrees with Adam when, as the pair retire to their bower, he praises wedded love as the "true source / Of human offspring" (IV, 750-51), as though the generation of mankind depended on love rather than merely on sexual intercourse. Adam, as long as he remains innocent, regards Eve only as his companion in the private good of partaking of the delights and pleasures of Eden. Though in the Divorce Tracts Milton all but disregards sexuality in marriage, here it is coupled with companionship rather than with procreation and serves the private ends of marriage, which are Adam's chief concern. God and the Angels, however, regard Eve from the public perspective as the Mother of Mankind. While Adam addresses Eve as "Sole partner" (IV, 411) and "Fair Consort" (IV, 610),

God's voice at the clear, smooth lake calls her "Mother of human Race" (IV, 475) and Raphael likewise greets her as "Mother of Mankind" (V, 388). The narrator, excluded from the human garden along with Angel or demon, describes Eve as "our general Mother" (IV, 492). Satan, the better to imitate Adam, perceives Eve as the partner in delight precisely because such joy is denied to him. The perspective of God, Angel and poet is historical, scanning past, present and future; Adam in Eden concerns himself only with the present, "that which before us lies in daily life," and so much of past history that will help him to live well. Pleasure, not procreation, is the chief end of marriage in his innocent view.

While she frets about their duty as gardeners neglected for the sake of love, Adam reassures Eve that their marriage needs no justification other than itself. In Eden, as Milton would have had it in his own time, marriage is beyond doubt a private bond best understood by Adam and Eve alone. God Himself instituted the privacy of marriage at the creation when He provided them with a secluded blissful bower:

it was a place  
 Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd  
 All things to Man's delightful use; the roof  
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade  
 Laurel and Myrtle, and what higher grew  
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub  
 Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flow'r,  
Iris all hues, Roses, and Jessamin  
 Rear'd high thir flourisht heads between, and wrought  
 Mosaic; underfoot the Violet,  
 Crocus, and Hyacinth with rich inlay  
 Broider'd the ground, more color'd than with stone  
 Of costliest Emblem; other Creatures here

Beast, Bird, Insect, or Worm durst enter none;  
Such was thir awe of Man.

(IV, 690-705)

The bower is more sequestered than the fabled haunts of Faunus or nymphs or Pan or Sylvanus, all pastoral deities. Eve, who chooses Adam over the Angel, understands the particularly human nature of the institution, though she now needs to be reminded of it. And Adam, though he is delighted to converse with Raphael and learn about Heaven and earth, contradicts the Angel when he equates human sexuality with animal as a means of reproduction.<sup>13</sup> Certainly mankind has this in common with the beasts of the field, but human sexuality is not merely procreative mating. In fact, though corporeal, it is not vastly different from the angelic love of incorporeal substances. The peculiar nature of human love is beyond the easy comprehension of the affable Archangel. The marriage is the "sole propriety / In Paradise of all things common else" (IV, 751-52). Wedded love is a "mysterious Law" (IV, 750) in Eden because it is a private human contract, secret and sequestered from the opinions and proscriptions of all but the wedded pair. Eve greatly undervalues what God has specifically created and ordained for man when she places her domestic duties above and at odds with wedded love. The Garden of Eden is sustained by the bower as certainly as it is by the actual physical work among the vines and shrubs.

But the public perspective invades the blissful bower at the Fall. The private bond of man and wife is lost and the purpose of Eve's creation turns from Adam's loneliness to historical necessity. As soon as they awaken from their intoxicated sleep they make a pitiful

attempt to restore that privacy by clothing themselves with the leaves of the Indian fig tree:

But now let us, 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 sew'd,  
 And girded on our loins, may cover round  
 Those middle parts, that this new comer, Shame,  
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

(IX, 1091-98)

Adam's counsel is useless; where they needed no clothing before, clothes are not enough now to cover the lost union of mind and soul. The pleasure of wedded love is lost in the lust brought with the forbidden fruit. Adam and Eve turn their attention to the future and, after the Judgment, their nakedness becomes doubly shameful when they consider the death they have brought into the world for their descendants. The view of God and Angel that sexuality must exclusively serve the ends of procreation replaces the erotic love defended by the innocent Adam. Attacking all women as the cause of woe to man, Adam ceases altogether to regard Eve as his companion and wonders why God did not invent an easier way to procreate mankind than in conjunction with females, who as a sex are prone to mischief. Human sexuality is now solely for the purpose of procreation and it would be a better world if one could avoid intercourse entirely. Adam shares Sir Thomas Browne's disgust at the unpleasant means to the necessary end:

I would be content that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction, or that there were any way to perpetuate the world without this triviall and vulgar way of coition; It is the foolishhest act a wise man commits in all his life, nor is there any thing that will more deject his coold imagination, when he shall consider what an odde and unworthy piece of folly hee hath committed.<sup>14</sup>

Although Adam reconciles himself to procreating like neither tree nor Angel, the unfallen union is never restored. Adam never again addresses Eve as "fair consort" or "sole partner." When the work of prevenient grace begins in man, Adam adopts the address of the Angels:

Whence Hail to thee,  
Eve rightly call'd, Mother of all Mankind  
 Mother of all things living, since by thee  
 Man is to live and all things live for Man.  
 (XI, 158-61)

It is the beginning of man's renewal, but it is also the end of the bond of reciprocal human pleasure promised at Eve's creation and sacrificed for false knowledge. After the Fall man's greater wisdom no longer lies with what is daily before him. Adam turns to history, which promises redemption and restoration. His sons will scan the Heavens with Galileo's telescope on Fiesole and for them looks and smiles will interfere with work and duty.

No sooner has Adam argued his case for the private value of marriage and reassured Eve that they do not live in an impending wilderness, than he leaves his radical opinions and returns to the platitudes of the marriage sermons and treatises. As when he conversed with the Archangel, Adam once again shows his potential for fallen, hierarchical beliefs. He would be willing to part with Eve for a while, "short retirement urges sweet return" (XI, 250), if he had not been warned that their enemy is loose in the Garden and bent on their destruction. He has been advised to "warn / Thy weaker" (VI, 908-9) and this he interprets as an admonition that he protect Eve by his presence. Adam, who knows the worth of his marriage, now, however, circumscribes it as though its reality lay more in spatial proximity

than in the heart and mind. Like Satan, who hopes to find them apart, he surmises that Eve is too weak to stand alone:

for thou know'st  
 What hath been warn'd us, what malicious Foe  
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own  
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame  
 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 join'd, where each  
 To other speedy aid might lend at need;  
 Whether his first design be to withdraw  
 Our fealty from God, or to disturb  
 Conjugal Love, than which perhaps no bliss  
 Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;  
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side  
 That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects,  
 The Wife, where danger or dishonor lurks,  
 Safest and seemliest by her Husband stays  
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.  
 (IX, 252-69)

Adam perfectly understands Satan's motive and his envy, but not the form that the feared temptation might take. He argues that they may best withstand their enemy together, and, if it were physical combat that threatened them, he would certainly be right. But they both know that they need not fear corporeal violence: "being such / As wee not capable of death or pain / Can either not receive, or can repel" (IX, 282-84). In the case of a "sly assault" by fraud, Adam's protection is a more complicated matter which questions the limits of dependence of man and wife upon each other and, finally, the essential nature of Paradise itself: is it found in the external, terrestrial Garden or in the innocent mind of its inhabitants?

Adam sums up his appeal that Eve stay by his side with a standard exegesis of her birth which is more suited to the fallen world than to Eden. In a world fraught with dangers and temptations,

the exegetes, like Adam, argue that the best protection is the undivided society of man and wife and it is this constancy of the wife that distinguishes human marriage from the mating of the animals. Woman is created from the rib and side of man, as we have seen, so that she may remain near his heart. The stationary rib and the shell of the domesticated Venus both argue that the wife is created before her husband, coram eo, to remain in his presence.<sup>15</sup> Here Adam, having previously eschewed the universal opinion of the public good of marriage, now accepts the popular and narrow exegesis of Eve's creation that belies God's promise and his own dream-vision. He argues that Eve is insufficient to stand alone, as if man and wife were two parts of some androgynous ancestor and together, presumably, they would have double strength to resist their adversary. Yet Milton's allegory of male and female in Paradise is based on self-knowledge and pleasure, on reciprocity, not necessity. Adam so possessively identifies Eve with his rib that he comes dangerously close to narcissism: the faithful side that shades and protects her also makes her his shadow. Adam, who has argued the case for an Edenic marriage whose end is pleasure, an Eden within Eden, now argues for a marriage whose end is protection. Ultimately Adam contradicts himself and claims that Paradise is, in effect, merely an external garden of delight where innocence may be helpless in its own defense. He forgets that the dream-vision of Eve's creation taught him that beauty is half imagination and half sense perception and that Eden lies somewhere between the perceptions of an innocent and loving mind and the visual rays sent out by the uncorrupted beauty of Eve or of the landscape. The errors of his logic are

summed up in his final, rather chilling, statement that if the husband cannot protect his wife, he will endure the worst with her. That is indeed what he does when Eve returns to him.

Eve argues the case for the internal garden where an innocent mind need fear no harm. Eve answers Adam's fear of an assault by Satan with the observation that, living in fear, they are, in effect, already losing their innocence and their Paradise:

If this be our condition, thus to dwell  
In narrow circuit strait'n'd by a Foe,  
Subtle or violent, we not endu'd  
Single with like defense, wherever met,  
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?

. . .  
Let us not then suspect our happy State  
Left so imperfet by the Maker wise,  
As not secure to single or combin'd.  
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,  
And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.  
(IX, 322-26, 336-41)

It is curious that Eve, the guide to the visual, external and palpable Garden, should undertake the defense of the Paradise of the mind which trusts in its own innocent obedience and falls more directly within Adam's realm of aural perception. It seems perhaps that here Eve is usurping Adam's role and seeking to overthrow the domestic harmony of reciprocal mediation of the two modes of sense perception. Since the discussion centers on dependence and self-sufficiency, however, it is quite logical for Eve to advocate the inner Paradise. The realm of sight, we have seen, inclines to self-completion and its dangers are explored in Eve's awakening by the pool of Narcissus. Adam, who has spent time in loneliness before her creation, knows the value of dependence and seeks the human Paradise because he has tasted self-

sufficiency and found it wanting. Yet Eve, who has already experienced the terrors of the mind assaulted by a foe in her demonic dream while Eden yet was Eden, knows the limits of companionship. She knows that Adam's presence, even in the recess of their blissful bower, was no guarantee of freedom from the fallen thoughts and fears that caused her to awaken one morning "with Tresses discompos'd and glowing Cheek / As through unquiet rest" (V, 10-11). The discussion begins with Eve greatly misapprehending the nature of her terrestrial domain, but here she corrects Adam's misunderstanding of his own, intellectual one.

Eve errs, nevertheless, in placing too much importance on her solitary security. If Adam approaches narcissism in wishing to keep his wife in the shadow of his side, Eve does likewise in opposing solitude to companionship and concluding that the true Paradise lies in a lone struggle against their adversary. She is near to loosening the reciprocal bonds, of which the human marriage is one example, that support the unfallen world. In that near-exile she approaches the Satanic egotism that desires self-creation and self-sustenance. She asks; "What is Faith, Love, Virtue unassay'd / Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?" (IX, 335-36). Eve is right in arguing that faith, love and virtue must be tested. The conditions of Paradise support her argument absolutely: the Garden of Eden is as rich in confusing ambiguity as it is in vegetation. Adam and Eve are continually tempted by false opinions and, as they do now in their debate, they make serious errors or only half-comprehend a truth. All thoughts may come and go without blame so long as they do not violate their one clear law to abstain from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. There

is no reason to suspect that Eve is interested in embarking upon the sort of heroic exploit Satan fancies he undertakes when he sets out to find and corrupt the newly created world:

whom shall we send  
 In search of this new world, whom shall we find  
 Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet  
 The dark unbottom'd infinite Abyss  
 And through the palpable obscure find out  
 His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight  
 Upborne with indefatigable wings  
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
 The happy Isle; 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 wee now no less  
 Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,  
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.  
 (II, 403-16)

Satan leaves the other demons to tend to Hell domestically while he sallies forth to win himself glory and revenge. Eve seeks only to "find peace within" (IX, 333), which was never part of the Satanic quest. That mankind will also "double honor gain / From his surmise prov'd false" (IX, 332-33) does not imply that Eve dreams of glorious conquests and explorations but rather that she seeks "the better Fortitude / Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom" (IX, 31-32). Nevertheless, Eve makes a mistake when she appends "alone" to "assayed." It might be asked whether Adam's help is merely exterior when he mediates the realm of aural perception, the realm that binds her most directly to God and half of Eden. She has placed Paradise deep within the human brain and, like Adam, misunderstands its true and dual location. Her argument looks forward to the temptations in the fallen world, of Samson or the Lady of Comus, when there will be only the solitary human mind tried in a prison or a wilderness.

Adam and Eve are both half right and half wrong in their perceptions of the nature of Paradise. They follow the limits of their reason to arrive at some understanding of their labyrinthian world which has been shown to clarify itself by conversation. Addison in the Spectator aptly describes the quality of the discourse:

It proceeds from a difference of judgment, not of Passion and is managed with Reason, not with Heat; it is such a Dispute as we may suppose might have happened in Paradise, had Man continued Happy and Innocent.<sup>16</sup>

It is unlikely that such a difference of judgment could proceed without anger in the fallen world, but here it is free of disturbing emotions. Adam makes "mild answer" (IX, 226); Eve speaks with "sweet accent" (IX, 321). Their dispassion is no mere rhetorical trick. The false reserve in speech belongs to Satan who, at the temptation of Eve, speaks with feigned restraint of passion:

As when of old some Orator renown'd  
In Athens or free Rome, where Eloquence  
Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address,  
Stood in himself collected, while each part,  
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,  
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay  
Of Preface brooking through his Zeal of Right.  
(IX, 670-76)

Unlike the orator, Adam and Eve are as eager to be proven wrong as they are to state their respective cases. They do not argue with the intent to win the debate but to find out what to do about the enemy loose in the Garden. The Fall does not begin here, though the opinions of neither husband nor wife are perfect: Adam does not abdicate his authority nor Eve usurp it. It is certainly surprising to find Eve matching Adam's reason with her own when she has been more inclined to question and to listen and has previously joyed in yielding to Adam's authority. When he suggested that they retire to the bower at

nightfall because they must be up early the next morning to tend to their gardening, Eve praised female domestic obedience in words reminiscent of a sermon or treatise:

My Author and Disposer, what thou bidd'st  
Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains,  
God is thy Law, thou mine: to know no more  
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.  
(IV, 635-38)

While Eve could obey without question when Adam reminded her of the work that the fertile Garden required, she cannot agree with him now when he declares that they will somehow be able to avoid temptation by their enemy if they are together, or that at least she will be protected by his presence. Eve argues with Adam because she finds him in error and as his helper she must correct him, if she is not to become a flattering Echo to a deceived Narcissus.

Eve, debating the authority and wisdom of her husband, questions the inferiority of woman which is expressed in the universally acknowledged, sacrosanct obedience of the wife. The basic premise of every contemporary marriage treatise is that the wife's first duty and her foremost virtue is obedience.<sup>17</sup> Even there where an attempt is made to raise the status of the wife to near equality with her husband, any flaw in her obedience to his authority is seen as the gravest threat to order and harmony within the family. Daniel Rogers, for instance, notes that St. Paul, who frequently enjoins men to love their wives, enjoins women only once to love their husbands while constantly urging them to be obedient, as though their love is subsumed and expressed by their willing subjection:

Noting, that although the married state, be an equal estate,  
yet the carriage of both must not be the same; but the love

of the one must be conveyed with royalness without tirrany,  
the other in loyall sweet subjection, without slavery.<sup>18</sup>

Rogers, in fact, finds no finer quality than obedience in a woman:

This duty then of subjection, is the womans great and  
cheefe commandement: . . . she who hath learned to be  
subject . . . is a perfect woman. That, which was wont  
to be said of pronounciation in Rhetorique, and of humility  
in Divinity, that may be said of Subjection in this busi-  
ness the wife. Its breadth, and length, it fills up all,  
yea, its all in all the whole duty of the womā: all other  
sticke at this, grant this, and all other follow of them-  
selves.<sup>19</sup>

A good wife is a crown of subjection upon her husband's head. Rogers' extravagant praise of wifely submission leads him to make a triad of help, subjection, and gracefulness, with the middle term as the focal point on which all else depends:

No, if thou wert never so huswifelike, fruitfull in  
children, rich in gold or jewells, except thou adde  
Subjection, all will not amount to the making of a crowne,  
except this make it, nothing else will. All thy jewells  
may be stollen out of thy boxe, thy mony out of thy purse,  
clothes out of thy wardrobe, thy backe may be stript of thy  
costly attyre, thy beauty blasted with age, thy body  
weakened with sicknes, sorrow: thy name sullied with infamy,  
thy partes may decay: But thy subjection, no man shall rob  
thee of, nor thine husband of that crowne; . . . Subjection  
is the true mother of love, sister of consent, root of all  
other Matrimonial service, helpfulness . . . gracefulness  
. . . attend it, as precious handmaydes. And shee her selfe  
in the middle shall walke honorably, and honour marriage  
above all other vertues.<sup>20</sup>

The doctrine of the subjection of women, argued with conviction both from the manner of their creation and the explicit curse at the Fall, as well as from the customs of all nations of all times and from nature itself, nevertheless, easily falls into contradictions. The difficulty of declaring universal female subjection is explored in Book V of the Faerie Queene. Britomart, who seems an unlikely advocate of female submission, must defeat the Amazon Queen Radigund who holds

Arthegall captive and emasculates her male prisoners by forcing them to wear female attire. Britomart restores the hierarchical order of male domination to the perverted realm and returns the proper knightly costume to her Arthegall:

Thenceforth she streight into a bowre him brought,  
 And causd him those uncomely weedes undight;  
 And in their steede for other rayment sought,  
 Whereof there was great store, and armors bright,  
 Which had bene reft from many a noble Knight,  
 Whom that proud Amazon subdewed had,  
 Whilest Fortune favoured her successe in fight:  
 In which when as she him anew had clad,  
 She was reviv'd, and joyd much in his semblance glad.

So there a while they afterwards remained,  
 Him to refresh, and her late wounds to heale:  
 During which space she there as Princess rained,  
 And changing all that forme of common-weale  
 The liberty of women did repeale,  
 Which they had long usurpt; and, them restoring  
 To mens subjection, did true Justice deale,  
 That all they, as a Goddess her adoring,  
 Her wisdom did admire, and hearkned to her loring.<sup>21</sup>

As Britomart reinstitutes female subjection she argues against her own case and becomes the active instrument of female passivity. She makes herself the agent of male envy that, according to Spenser in Book III, has rewritten history to obscure the heroic and chivalric exploits of women:

Here have I cause, in men just blame to find,  
 That in their proper prayse too partiall bee,  
 And not indifferent to woman kind,  
 To whom no share in armes and chevalrie  
 They do impart, ne maken memorie  
 Of their brave gestes and prowesse martiall;  
 Scarse do they spare to one or two or three,  
 Rowme in their writs; yet the same writing small  
 Does all their deeds deface, and dims their glories all.

But by record of antique times I find,  
 That women wont in warres to beare most sway,  
 And to all great exploits them selves inclind:  
 Of which they still the girlond bore away,

Till envious Men fearing their rules decay,  
 Gan coyne streight lawes to curb their liberty;  
 Yet sith they warlike armes have layd away,  
 They have exceld in artes and pollicy,  
 That now we foolish men that prayse gin eke t'envy.  
 (III, ii, 1-2)

Having defended his fiction of a wise and warlike maid, Spenser proceeds to praise Queen Elizabeth, whose reign severely qualifies the belief that women are by nature incapable of governing men. It would seem that though, on one hand, Radigund's reign is usurpation and Arthegall in female dress is a shame that forces Britomart to avert her loving eyes, on the other hand, Britomart may travel disguised as a knight and engage in battle with no impairment of her feminine nature. Spenser, curiously enough, declares the justice of Britomart's and Elizabeth's female rule, while denouncing the Amazon's subjugation of man to woman.

To resolve the contradiction between a female monarch and the universal order that ordains female subjection, Spenser implicitly distinguishes between woman's political rule and her household rule. Radigund, though a political ruler, imprisons Arthegall with a more private, amorous intent and the work she assigns her captives is the domestic labor of wives: carding, weaving and washing. She is somewhat more the domineering wife than the political tyrant and, therefore, her overthrow insures domestic tranquility without upsetting the political order of a female monarch:

Such is the crueltie of womenkynd,  
 When they have shaken off the shamefast band,  
 With which wise Nature did them strongly bynd  
 T'obay the heasts of mans well-ruling hand,  
 That then all rule and reason they withstand  
 To purchase a licentious libertie:

But vertuous women wisely understand,  
 That they were borne to base humilitie,  
 Unlesse the heavens them lift to lawfull soveraintie.  
 (V, v, 25)

Britomart defeats the licentious liberty of female rule in Radigund and in herself; she may rule and govern over man but never subject him within his own household. John Aylmer, replying to Knox's First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, makes the same distinction when he argues that the subjection of the wife to the husband decreed after the Fall does not preclude political rule by women:

Yea say you, God hath apoynted her to be subiect to her husband. Ad virum erit conversio tua, therefore she may not be the head, I graunte that, so farre as pertaineth to the bands of mariage, and the office of a wife, she must be a subiect: but as a Magistrate she maye be her husbands head. For the Scripture saithe not, thine eye must be to the man, but ad virum tuum to thy husbände.<sup>22</sup>

The law of male rule, obviously not universally suitable to politics, is not even suitable to all marriages at all times. Even the domestic obedience of the wife to her husband ultimately finds its limits in the treatises and sermons that ordain it the pillar of household peace. There are particular instances in which a woman must disobey her husband.<sup>23</sup> William Gouge, who mandates that the wife's acknowledgement of her husband's superiority is the foundation of all her duty, admits two circumstances in which a wife ought not to be obedient:

If God expressly command the wife any duty, and her husband will not by any meanes give consent that she shall doe it, but forbid her, she may and ought to doe it without, or against his consent. . . . If an husband require his wife to doe that which God hath forbidden she ought not to doe it.<sup>24</sup>

Religious duty holds greater authority than a husband, and a wife need not wait on his consent. For more pragmatic purposes, Gouge finds that a wise, virtuous and gracious woman married to a hopelessly stupid man may also rule over the household: "in such a case the whole government lieth upon the wife, so as her husbands consent is not to be expected."<sup>25</sup> For the same reason, in Tetrachordon, though declaring with St. Paul that the woman is the glory of the man and made in his image, Milton sets the limits of the wife's obedience and her husband's authority:

Not but that particular exceptions may have place, if she exceed her husband in prudence and dexterity, and he contentedly yeeld, for then a superior and more naturall law comes in, that the wiser should govern the lesse wise, whether male or female.<sup>26</sup>

The domestic hierarchy, validated by analogy to God, Christ and Church, is invalidated by the particular case in which the wife, by chance, is more intelligent than the husband and more fit to head the household. This one case, though it would seem the obvious conclusion of common sense and hardly worth noting, is still dependent on the husband's recognition of his wife's superior gifts and his amiable agreement to the unorthodox arrangement. Though the general obedience of the wife to her husband is not absolute, the domestic conduct books and Milton himself in the Divorce Tracts treat the exceptions with great care because their greatest fear is the wife's insubordination that might destroy the household peace, if not go against the express commands of God, who has created women to be subjected, and of St. Paul, who admonishes them to remember their inferiority.

Eve, challenging Adam's authority and his perceptions of Paradise, with no fear of domestic warfare, is exercising the rights that even contemporary opinion might grant her. Since Paradise is both state and household, she is at once the female monarch who may rule over man and the wife who finds herself wed to a man who is not her intellectual equal. If it is agreed that Adam has greatly erred in allowing terror into the Garden and in doubting their ability to resist their enemy, then Eve's actions are sanctioned by the seventeenth century marriage treatises. Adam, of course, is not hopelessly stupid, but Eve, who has not yet been punished with subjection, enlarges a female role that even her daughters may hope to enjoy. In Paradise a wife may disagree wherever she finds her husband lost in error. Eve knows that excessive fear of their enemy would rob them of their innocence as surely as the enemy himself: she has already had a nightmare. Adam's desire to protect her from the affront of an attack by their foe is, therefore, kind but useless. She does not know that the nightmare was caused by the same adversary whose temptation Adam fears, but she knows that the foe has entered the Garden somehow, despite the Angelic Guard, and the Garden, though under siege, remains their Paradise. Adam is concerned with the fragility of innocence and its easy contamination by corruption:

For hee who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses  
 The tempted with dishonor foul, suppos'd  
 Not incorruptible of Faith, not proof  
 Against temptation; thou thyself with scorn  
 And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong,  
 Though ineffectual found.

(IX, 296-301)

Eve knows, however, that innocence is not so helpless that the mere

presence of evil destroys it. The attempt proves nothing but the dishonor of the tempter who fails:

only our Foe  
 Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem  
 Of our integrity: his foul esteem  
 Sticks no dishonor on our Front, but turns  
 Foul on himself: then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd  
 By us?

(IX, 327-32)

Eve argues that though the Garden is vulnerable, man's reason is not so weak that it need fear the pollution of sinful disobedience it has not fully approved.

Through Eve, Milton argues the case for the wife who, whatever the general rule of domestic conduct may be, finds herself more fit to head the household than her husband. She shows Adam that he misunderstands the Garden, and if she is right, then the law or custom which confines a woman within her house or by her husband's side is a limitation which has no place in Paradise. In any case, Eve has been separated from Adam before. She left the Angelic discourse without his objection. When Satan finds her alone, he is elated but not totally astonished, as he would be if this were the first time she has ever been seen without Adam:

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.

(IX, 421-23)

Though the separations are rare, Satan evidently has cause to even consider the possibility of finding her alone. Adam himself has seen the absurdity of the housewifely domesticity that would confine Aphrodite to the shell of a snail, but he is less willing to forego the

narrow exegesis that confines a woman to the presence of her husband, though in this he is quite egalitarian and declares that he relies on her protection as much as she relies on his:

I from the influence of thy looks receive  
 Access in every Virtue, in thy sight  
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were  
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,  
 Shame to be overcome or over-reacht  
 Would utmost vigor raise, and rais'd unite.  
 Why shouldst thou not like sense within thee feel  
 When I am present, and thy trial choose  
 With me, best witness of thy Virtue tri'd.  
 (IX, 309-17)

Adam is optimistic here. He has also confessed to acting silly in Eve's presence; he is also unreasonable when he would make a public display of virtue, as though virtue unwitnessed were no virtue at all. Adam is far too literal here and Eve counters him by foregoing the literal altogether. She concludes that their love can survive a brief separation and that help does not depend on the immediate, physical presence of the other. She reasons like Donne in "A Valediction: forbidding mourning."

Dull sublunary lovers love  
 (Whose soule is sense) cannot admit  
 Absence, because it doth remove  
 Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love, so much refin'd,  
 That our selves known not what it is,  
 Inter-assured of the mind,  
 Care lesse, eyes, lips, and hands to misse.<sup>27</sup>

Eyes, lips, and hands are not so easily dismissed and abandoned in Paradise where human love has not yet achieved the incorporeal union of Milton's Angels or Donne's lovers. Yet, though Eve is not completely correct, Adam must finally agree with her or sink Paradise

under the weight of sense perception devoid of imagination: corporeal beauty seen without the eye of the mind.

Adam realizes that if Eve is to remain at his side as an immobile rib, it may be only as the leg of Donne's compass, firm in loyalty, whatever outward motion may or may not be seen. He concludes that Paradise is the region found in the innocent mind and that they must be as circumspect with their reason as with their separate wanderings. The mind, not the Garden, is vulnerable to fraud and when least expected man's right reason may be foiled:

his creating hand  
 Nothing imperfet or deficient left  
 Of all that he Created, much less Man,  
 Or aught that might his happy State secure,  
 Secure from outward force; within himself  
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:  
 Against his Will he can receive no harm.  
 But God left free the Will, for what obeys  
 Reason, is free, and Reason he made right,  
 But bid her well beware, and still erect,  
 Lest by some fair appearing good surpris'd  
 She dictate false, and misinform the Will  
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.

(IX, 344-56)

Adam still maintains that they are safer together, but once he has understood that the danger lies within their minds, his argument against the separation dissolves. He cannot prevent Eve from parting from him on the basis of the lurking foe because he now understands that they can be attacked anywhere and anytime by a foe masquerading as a friend. Once the struggle has been shifted from the external Garden and located in the internal Paradise of the innocent mind, then Adam cannot reasonably persist in arguing that there is safety in his physical presence. He cannot protect Eve from the real danger of an imagination infected by demonic reason.

Though both Adam and Eve dissent from the assumptions of the domestic treatises during their debate, they seem to be conducting themselves within the framework of wifely obedience to the husband's authority. Eve certainly would not leave without Adam's permission. Adam, after warning Eve once more of the danger that may lurk and take her reason by surprise, attempts to settle the issue by invoking his conjugal authority: "Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve / First thy obedience; th'other who can know, / Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?" (IX, 367-69). Thinking that Eve merely wishes to prove her loyalty and firmness of faith, he offers her the possibility of a less dangerous proof of virtue. But Adam sees that his attempt is useless and consents to their separation, however sadly, because the central issue is the freedom of the will and in that matter, even in Paradise where man and woman are bound in collateral love and dearest amity, he cannot answer for Eve. She freely chose him once by the pool of Narcissus and now must freely choose if she is to remain at his side or tend to another part of the Garden:

But if thou think, trial unsought may find  
 Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,  
 Go: for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;  
 Go in thy native innocence, rely  
 On what thou hast of virtue, summon all  
 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.  
 (IX, 370-75)

Adam fulfills the duty enjoined him by Raphael and warns Eve, his weaker, who has helped him to understand the Garden and its vulnerability. They part in mutual agreement, both fancying that she is safe against their foe because she knows that a trial by deception may await her before she returns to Adam at their appointed hour at noon.

Their innocence permits them to stay within the bounds of the domestic hierarchy here: Eve cannot yet imagine what it is to be forbidden to go, nor Adam what it is to forbid.

Moreover, some of the contemporary definitions of authority and subjection actually make it possible for Adam and Eve to act within that form without abandoning their Edenic reciprocity. However central the wife's obedience is to a true marriage, contemporary opinion grants the wife a free conscience. If the primary duty of the wife is to acknowledge her husband's superiority, then the duty of the husband is to be worthy of that opinion and make his authority an instrument of reason. Torquato Tasso in The Householders Philosophie argues, for instance, that the obedience of the wife ought not to come through constraint but through her own reasonable and free acquiescence to male authority:

It is then a vertue in a woman, to know howe to honor and obey her Husband, not as a Servant doth his Maister, or the bodye the minde, but civilly and in such sort, as we see the Cittizens in wel governed Citties obey the Lawes, and reverence their Magistrates, or so as in our soules, wherein as wel the well dysposed powers as the orders of the Cittizens within their Citties, compell affections to be subiect unto reason.<sup>28</sup>

William Whately, who, on one hand, allows wife-beating as a last resort if a woman will not be ruled in any other fashion, on the other, admonishes the husband to persuade his wife to do his bidding rather than to command her:

it must not be, imperiously prescribed, in the heate and extremetie of charging and inforcing words, but with a sweete instinct of kindnesse (as the head doth move the members of the body), with loving perswasions and familiar requests. . . . Authoritie is like to the Arte of Logicke and Rhetorike, which prevaile most, when they are in such

sort used, as they be least discerned; and therefore in speaking, they must be carefull to conceale themselves; for it is delivered as a great part of Art, to hide Art.<sup>29</sup>

The husband is to use the tact of a diplomat or courtier to rule his wife and so let her see for herself how reasonable his commands are. Whately, in fact, so softens the authority of the husband that it becomes almost part of a conversation or discussion between the married pair, though always with the understanding that the husband is the head of the household and the wife his subordinate. Daniel Rogers who, as we have seen above, bases marriage on the wife's subjection, nevertheless, ultimately defines that subjection as a wife's willingness to be persuaded by the higher argument of the wiser husband:

Shee is not so to be subject as if in all cases, she ought alike to stand or fall at the barre and prerogative of her husbands will . . . headship is not given the husband to destroy, but to helpe and edifye. She hath a judgment to inform as well as he & must see her groundes cleare as well as he: she must have leasure & tyme, to deliberate of it, as well as he till she be resolved, that she may do that in faith, which shee doth. Meanwhile, the husband is not to insult, threaten, and domineer over her as a Lord, who had his wives will captivated to his owne: neither to desert and depart from her in a desperate way, but by all loving waies tenderly to draw her, and convince her by the strength of reason, and the bowells of compassion.<sup>30</sup>

The domestic order depends on the patience and the wisdom of the husband as well as on the obedience of the wife and, by obeying only when she becomes convinced that his demand is reasonable, she becomes the measure of his wisdom.

The role of teacher or guide that the most liberal of the treatises seek to assign to the husband is subsumed by Adam's figurative rule over the sense of hearing. He is the teacher and guide of Eve because he apprehends directly from God and Angel such knowledge

as they need to live well in their Garden. He clarifies and defines the visual Garden of Eve, but there is no sense of command in his authority because the uncorrupted will does not seek to dominate, in Satanic fashion, over other minds and wills. Satan makes a show of holding a council with free debate but the outcome is a foregone conclusion; Satan learns nothing from listening to the advice of his chief demons. Adam's rule is also absolute: "His fair large Front and Eye sublime declar'd / Absolute rule" (IV, 300-1). But Adam is not an absolute ruler because he knows no limits to his power and brooks no opposition; he is absolute because he is free. The Latin root again defines the unfallen sense of a word whose meaning will greatly alter with the Fall to connote hierarchy. At the first sight of the human pair, when the image of God in man is described, the original meaning of authority is revealed:

for in thir looks Divine  
The image of thir glorious Maker shone,  
Truth, Wisdom, Sanctitude, severe and pure,  
Severe, but in true filial freedom plac't;  
Whence true authority in men;  
(IV, 291-95)

Adam's absolute rule is derived from the Divine image in man that sets him free to stand or fall and live by his own choices. Eve's subjection, implied by the tendrils of her hair, is, incidentally, derived from the same true filial freedom that they derive from God. Obedience is free in Paradise and, like reason, it is the fruit of choice. Adam and Eve may then foreshadow the domestic hierarchy of their descendants without impairing their innocence because rule and obedience, so interpreted, do not destroy their liberty.

Rule and obedience in Eden are resolved as dialogue; the debate in Book IX is one form of conversation between the married pair. Eve, Adam's other self, does not offer him a shadow of his reason but its contrary or complement. If, in the study of astronomy, Eve is content to let Adam learn from the Angel and teach her afterwards, in the domestic management of the Garden, Eve's authority answers Adam's. In the vital questions of the nature of innocence and the grave threat from their adversary, she may not obey without argument. The full extent of Eve's obedience is not merely to listen to her husband's words and take her time to be persuaded by their reason, but to offer her own reasons and correct him if he errs. Therefore, while she acts within the form of the domestic hierarchy of the seventeenth century, her actions, in effect, argue against it. She invokes all the cases that exempt the wife from simple subjection and extends them, so that obedience and authority are made mirror images of each other. Eve's obedience was not docile and unquestioning when the Voice of God called her from her own reflection in the clear, smooth lake, though the authority that directed her was infinitely greater than Adam's. Her obedience is not passive and humble when Adam's logic threatens to circumscribe their Paradise and make them live in fear, not of God, but of the exiled rebel Angel. Raphael has implied that Eve's love will solace Adam's defects when he seems least wise, and now her reason solaces his defects in wisdom. Adam also knows that Edenic obedience and authority are not forms set to enslave the wife to her husband: "tender love enjoins / That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me" (IX, 357-58). Why else does Adam

need a wife, if not for such reasonable conversations that clarify what is obscure to him? What is the harmony of mind and soul but the conversation of man and wife? The value of Eve's choice to debate with Adam rather than to obey without argument may be seen in William Whately's admonition that husbands mitigate their absolute authority at home and make no requests that would force an obedient wife to break a law or commandment: "If Adam were guiltie for hearkning to the voyce of his wife, contrary to Gods voyce; doubtlesse she should have been punished also, for hearkning to his voyce against Gods.<sup>31</sup> The debate is not about the voice of God and Eve is not wholly correct in her reasoning but she would be wholly incorrect in silent subjection. In fact, Eve does not play the subjected housewife of the domestic treatises until she allows the serpent's reasoning to persuade her; there she is too passive and all too willing to yield to an apparent higher and better authority than her own conscience and reason. She obeys with too little argument and too little knowledge of her own worth.

The separation of Adam and Eve in Book IX finds its demonic parody in the parting of Sin and Death from Satan as they set out to create an empire for him on earth. The three false answering images, Father, Daughter and Son, have their magical correspondences to unite them, to make them strong, and to give them an air of self-reliance:

My substitutes I send ye, and Create  
 Plenipotent on Earth, of matchless might  
 Issuing from mee: on your joint vigor now  
 My hold of this new Kingdom all depends.  
 Through Sin and Death expos'd by my exploit.  
 If your joint power prevail, th'affairs of Hell  
 No detriment need fear, go and be strong.

(X, 403-9)

In Hell there is both unargued strict obedience and the constant presence of the paramour, whether it is Sin and Death together on their journey, or Satan and Sin through their quasi-physical secret sympathy. Sin and Death set out gladly, voraciously, on their delegated mission. Eve leaves Adam, however, with less certainty but not as the doubled shadow of his dark mind. She parts his equal in reality, not for the sake of some presumed empire, but for the sake of peace of mind. Their terrestrial Garden does not stand or fall by the vigor and efficiency of their gardening, as Satan's conquest depends on the vigor of his two emissaries. The separation of Adam and Eve is not dictated by reasons of state or empire or horticulture. It is a purely human consideration and based on a human understanding of the Garden. God would have no opinion on the matter so long as they each remember the prohibition against the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Though the parting is in itself neither good nor evil, the result is so thoroughly disastrous that it is difficult to comprehend how truly innocent it is. It is stark and surprising to hear Eve address Adam without epithet when she first asks to part from him for a while and to hear him answer in the same fashion. They have lost some of their remoteness to become, simply and familiarly, any woman speaking to any man. If, in light of the inevitable tragedy, this change seems chilling, the dramatic irony of their final farewell is so full of human pathos that it seems to be a part of the Fall itself: "from her Husband's hand her hand / Soft she withdrew" (IX, 386). From a fallen viewpoint, Adam is abandoned and bereaved and on the verge of experiencing emotions unfit for a state of pleasure and

innocence. The unclasping hands make a delicately erotic and doomed gesture in a world about to be sacrificed to death and woe. The narrator's voice breaks in to echo the pathos of loss:

O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,  
 Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!  
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise  
 Found'st either sweet repast or sound repose.  
 (IX, 404-7)

Though Eve's return is perverted irrevocably and sweet repast and sound repose are blasted by her disregard of God's prohibition, it is extremely important to distinguish between her last moment of innocence and her guilty return. Adam's fears for Eve's safety and his sense of impending loss seem prescient and his argument so closely predicts the disaster that it seems as though woman's first disobedience is to her husband's better knowledge. But neither Adam nor Eve, when they part, has any sense of disobedience or flouted authority. They have no such notion of authority and obedience that they need fear any impairment of their domestic peace brought about because the wife, having persuaded her husband to her point of view, has the last word.

The innocent assumptions of both Adam and Eve in the debate cast an ironic light on the common seventeenth century views of marriage. Adam argues, along with Milton in the *Divorce Tracts*, that marriage is a private contract between husband and wife and that both its form and end are companionship and conversation. Eve's departure is no less radical. She argues against the domestication of women that requires them to remain at home or in their husbands' sight and never risk going abroad. She argues against passive obedience to the husband's greater authority for the sake of marital peace and as a

sign that God and nature created her his inferior. As we have seen, by the counsel of the marriage treatises the obedience of the wife is not total nor the authority of the husband absolute, but Eve transforms the obedience into a serious and active debate. She opposes Adam in the free exercise of their right reason and, like Shakespeare's Portia, helps her lover see beyond the outward ornament of gold and choose the leaden casket that may bring them happiness. Eve fulfills, finally, in this last scene of their innocence, the promise of her creation: she is the helper who opens Adam's eyes to the pleasures of Eden. In the dream-vision she opened his corporeal eyes to the external beauties of Paradise and now she opens the eyes of his mind to the internal Paradise which cannot be circumscribed by fear of an enemy lurking among the roses. She does not initiate Adam into a new world as she did before; there is no vision, only conversation and rational discourse, because Milton here depicts the quotidian marriage before the Fall, not the genesis of erotic love. When Eve returns to Adam to finish the destruction of the Garden and the innocent mind, the seventeenth century views of marriage, contemptible or worthless in Paradise, prevail. The private delight of marriage in looks and smiles is sacrificed to make the institution primarily an instrument of history while Eve, to further the transformation, accepts her new role as the obedient and subservient, domesticated wife. The questions raised by her departure are given new answers which deprive Eve of her Edenic equality and Adam of her companionship.

The reciprocity of transformation which is the modus vivendi of the unfallen cosmos is perverted by the Fall into the Satanic

hierarchy where great and bright infer power and, therefore, excellence. The earth must now revolve around the sun or mankind will invent the Ptolemaic system of epicycles to explain the apparent illogic:

how they will wield  
 The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive  
 To save appearances, how gird the Sphere  
 With Centric and Eccentric scribbl'd o'er,  
 Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb:  
 Already by thy reasoning this I guess,  
 Who are to lead thy offspring, and supposest  
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve  
 The less not bright, nor Heav'n such journeys run,  
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives  
 The benefit.

(VIII, 80-90)

Nature will appear unfrugal unless the smaller and less powerful pay servile homage to the larger orbs. Satan's weighing and measuring infects the human marriage, likewise: authority and obedience are altered from the Edenic harmony of giving and receiving to the domestic hierarchy of male rule and female subjection. Eve's subjection before the Fall, derived from the analogy of her curling hair to the vine that requires a prop for sustenance, is infected with constraint as the wife becomes the subordinate of the husband. Eve's fruitful vulnerability is seen in Edenic freedom for the last time as the serpent approaches:

Veil'd in a Cloud of Fragrance, where she stood,  
 Half spi'd, so thick the Roses bushing round  
 About her glow'd, oft stooping to support  
 Each Flow'r of slender stalk, whose head though gay  
 Carnation, Purple, Azure, or speckt with Gold,  
 Hung drooping unsustain'd, then she upstays  
 Gently with Myrtle band, mindless the while,  
 Herself, though fairest unsupported Flow'r,  
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.

(IX, 425-34)

In a short while her absent husband will no longer be her best prop but her master. Her disobedience to God rebounds doubled upon her head and where she needed to serve God before, she and her daughters will also serve man. The loss of freedom is incalculable, no matter how golden or genuinely friendly that subjection becomes in time.

Satan leads Eve's argument for a short separation from Adam through his perverted logic and she mistakes the trial of faith and virtue contained in every free choice made by man's reason for the forbidden fruit, which presumably contains the essence of all choice between good and evil, and the desire to live freely without fear of harm from their enemy, for the demonic need to live free of the Creating Deity. Her argument, so transformed through labyrinthian paths, makes her seem predisposed to devilish sentiments and incapable of rational thought. Her own fallen opinions declare her unequal to Adam and her disobedient act in face of a clear and simple prohibition makes her seem foolish. Her folly and her erring self-image, invented by her newly corrupted mind, become the truth. Female inferiority is among the first fruits of the Fall and it becomes a basic fact of the new, infected nature. Eve was vulnerable before, inclined to allow herself to listen and be edified by God or man and, finally, serpent, but now that it is miserable to be weak, as Satan declares, the woman is a lesser creature than the man. Eve, after a brief elevation of her hopes that she will surpass Adam in intellect, accepts her subjugation as an inferior being who must be ruled by the superior. As readily as Eve yields to the assumption of male authority, she yields to Adam's previous fears for her safety, though too late, and accepts the narrow,

literal exegesis of her creation before him. Henceforth she, and all women, must stay constantly by their husbands' side in order to distinguish human marriage from the random matings of the animals.

When the effects of the fruit have worn off sufficiently to allow Adam and Eve to contemplate their altered state, they deduce that it was their parting that caused the Fall. Rehearsing the recent past, Adam condemns Eve for leaving his side with a new bitterness in his words:

Would thou hadst heark'n'd to my words, and stay'd  
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange  
Desire of wand'ring this unhappy Morn,  
I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then  
Remain'd still happy, not as now, despoil'd  
Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.  
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve  
The Faith they owe; when earnestly they seek  
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fall.

(IX, 1134-42)

Adam reiterates his preference for a cloistered virtue and finds Eve guilty of having protested her innocence too much. He ascribes her desire to work alone not to the very real difficulty of solving such a dilemma in Paradise, but to a whim. He is anticipating his descent into a misogyny far worse than that which tempted him in his discourse with Raphael. Eve, no less quarrelsome now, bitterly accuses Adam of having failed in his duty as her guide and head because he did not stop her, which he could have done only at the cost of her freedom, as she acknowledges from the first:

Was I to have never parted from thy side?  
As good have grown there still a lifeless Rib.  
Being as I am, why didst not thou the Head  
Command me absolutely not to go,  
Going into such danger as thou said'st?

Too facile then thou didst not much gainsay,  
 Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.  
 Hadst thou been firm and fixt in thy dissent,  
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with mee.  
 (IX, 1153-61)

She blames Adam for having accepted her logic and her argument, as though it were a weakness in him. In retrospect, Eve decides that their last innocent conversation was the first case of a man swayed by female wiles, even before she cajoled him with tears and blandishments to join her in death. She forgets that her discourse was rational and assumes that the very fact that she is a female created from the rib of man should have been enough to prevent her view from prevailing. Adam is quick to agree to his new dominion over Eve, annoying though she is. He now speaks as a husband from a marriage treatise who may command his wife, but not force her to do anything against her conscience. He excuses himself on the basis of his liberal temperament:

not enough severe,  
 It seems, in thy restraint; what could I more?  
 I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold  
 The danger, and the lurking Enemy  
 That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,  
 And force upon free Will hath here no place.  
 (IX, 1169-74)

He comes fully around to Eve's definition of herself and, with a growing sense of desperate contempt for all females, declares them unmanageable, unless totally subjugated.

The first argument after the Fall is cast in the familiar terms of domestic strife and blame and recrimination. The contrast between this new form of conjugal conversation and the old innocent form reveals how unconcerned prelapsarian marriage was with the

hierarchy of obedience and authority. While Adam and Eve both occasionally suffered innocent doubts about superiority and inferiority, those thoughts were banished in favor of the love that equalized their differences. It would not have occurred to Adam to forbid Eve to go, nor would it have occurred to her to expect him to exercise such restraints. Prohibitions of that sort were a Divine prerogative. It was not obedience that Adam required of Eve but her presence. Like all the fruits, flowers, trees and animals of the Garden, Adam wished to have her in his sight: "Her long and ardent look his Eye pursu'd / Delighted, but desiring more her stay" (IX, 397-98); Adam's desire as she left to garden alone echoed the desire of all eyes that watched her earlier departure to care for her flowers while he engaged the Angel in abstruse discourses. However much Adam spoke of domestic care and household good and a husband's protection, he was speaking primarily as a lover who cherishes the sight of his mistress. Now that the sight of Eve is neither desirable nor delightful to him, they quarrel not about separation but about domestic authority and obedience. The Fall makes marriage a contest of wills between man and wife. Adam is most interested in establishing that any blame due him results from his overtrusting Eve's perfections. The latter is a lie but of less consequence than his conclusion that he indulged her foolish whim when he let her go. Eve, to lay the blame on him, scolds him for his lack of authority, too. It proves convenient to both man and woman to declare Eve a rebellious wife and sacrifice the sense of her prelapsarian compliance as a scapegoat for all their misery. When Adam, expounding on the nature of human love for the Archangel, praised Eve's

"sweet compliance" he did not praise her easy acquiescence to his demands but the waking reality of Eve's visionary looks and airs that showed him the reciprocity of love in his dream of her creation. Eve's compliance was not found in subordination to Adam's superiority but in her graceful giving and receiving of looks and smiles and conversation. Compliance under the new order is simply the wife's yielding without question to the husband's greater authority and strength.

In the depiction of authority and obedience in the prelapsarian marriage, Milton greatly diverges from the traditional commentators and exegetes who, while acknowledging that woman was, of course, cursed with subjection after the Fall, argue that Eve was also subjected in innocence. As we have seen, the manner of Eve's creation is largely read in terms of female inferiority and male superiority. The two forms of Eve's subjection are distinguished primarily by their severity. Rivetus, for instance, argues that the prelapsarian obedience of woman was not burdensome, just as childbirth would not have been painful had there been no transgression against the Divine law. In innocence woman would have been gladly subjected to her husband and willing to obey him.<sup>32</sup> If afterwards the subjection becomes harsh, it is largely the fault of woman who has become proud and quarrelsome where she once was meek and gentle.<sup>33</sup>

But though Milton's Eve is proud and rancorous after the Fall, she is not gifted with humble obedience in Eden. Her prelapsarian freedom is more like that described by Luther who argues that woman was not created subject to man and that her creation shows her equality with her husband. Though Luther's grounds for Eve's equality are not

the same as Milton's, the result is the same:

But Moses wanted to point out in a special way that the other part of humanity, the woman, was created by a unique counsel of God in order to show that this sex, too, is suited for the kind of life which Adam was expecting and that this sex was to be useful for procreation. Hence it follows that if the woman had not been deceived by the serpent and had not sinned, she would have been the equal of Adam in all respects. For the punishment, that she is now subjected to the man, was imposed on her after sin and because of sin, just as the other hardships and dangers were: travail, pain, and countless other vexations. Therefore Eve was not like the women of today; her state was far better and more excellent, and she was in no respect inferior to Adam, whether you count the qualities of the body or those of the mind.<sup>34</sup>

As far as Milton is concerned, had there been no transgression the issue of equality would never have been raised, but Milton's unfallen Eve is no more subjected than Luther's.

Luther argues further that dominion over the earth was originally divided between man and woman and that woman lost her share only with the Fall. She became at once circumscribed by her husband's authority and by the confines of her house:

The rule remains with the husband, and the wife is compelled to obey him by God's command. He rules the home and the state, wages wars, defends his possessions, tills the soil, builds, plants, etc. The woman, on the other hand, is like a nail driven into the wall. She sits at home . . . as one who has been deprived of the ability of administering those affairs that are outside and that concern the state. She does not go beyond her most personal duties.

If Eve had persisted in the truth, she would not only not have been subjected to the rule of her husband, but she herself would also have been a partner in the rule which is now entirely the concern of males.<sup>35</sup>

Milton's Eve, likewise, shares the dominion over Eden with Adam and their partnership is most clearly seen in their figurative rule over the paired senses of sight and sound. Satan corrupts Eve's realm

with his lies and she loses it in her failed attempt to enlarge it. The diminution of the female visual perception and its subordination under the male sense of hearing is a direct result of the Fall and argues for its equal, or unmeasured, worth before. In fact, to heighten the tragedy of the Fall, by setting off on her disastrous journey, Eve shows more than ever that she is Adam's sole partner in the delights of Eden and in the work of rational choice. If anything, the debate reveals not Eve's incipient pride and propensity for fallen thinking, but how much authority born of filial freedom she stands to lose by her disobedience to God and her abandonment of Adam for the false fruit of new powers and new realms.

As soon as man has incorporated authority and obedience into marriage, God, accommodating himself to the terms chosen by his creatures, institutes the hierarchy by decree. At the Judgment Eve is subordinated to Adam: "to thy Husband's will / Thine shall submit, hee over thee shall rule" (X, 194-95). The subjugation of Eve is a punishment for both man and woman. It is God's reply to Eve's chosen inferiority when she paid heed to the serpent, and it is His reply to Adam's sorry attempt to excuse himself by invoking the greater authority of Eve's beauty and perfections. This is the first stage in the transformation of marriage from a private human concern into a public institution. It is the first time that God has made any statement about the proper relation of man and woman, other than enjoining them to be fruitful and multiply, which was, in fact, more blessing than command. Eve was created in a dream-vision so that Adam might read the hieroglyphic of love for himself, though aided and advised by the Archangel Raphael. Eve, promised by the voice of God a better image

of herself than the shadow in the water, was left free to deduce what she would about superiority and inferiority. It is now decreed that Adam witnessed the creation of a lesser creature made to serve him and that Eve surrendered, not her liquid reflection, but herself to the better and wiser man. As in Eden they established the terms of their human union, in effect, they have again proposed the new order which is their punishment. God reprimands Adam for obeying the voice of his wife, weighing man and woman in the new fallen terms of rule and subjection mankind has borrowed from Satan:

Adorn'd  
 She was indeed, and lovely to attract  
 Thy Love, not thy Subjection, and her Gifts  
 Were such as under Government well seem'd,  
 Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part  
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.  
 (X, 151-56)

God conflates the fallen and unfallen senses of rule. The rule that Adam bore over Eve was not the rule that is instituted now. He was her guide to the celestial realm of astronomy or intellect and it was his place to clarify or explicate her realm of the terrestrial Garden. Adam brought obedience to the freedom of visual perception, and, paradoxically, both man and woman won greater liberty from that prelapsarian subjection and obedience. They are both shackled by the new decree. Eve's subjection is merely the reverse of Adam's presumed subjection to her will at the Fall and the reversal bears the taint of its original.

The Fall brings more than one reversal. The parts taken by Adam and Eve before they separate are now turned upside down. Adam, the advocate of the delights of marriage and the primacy of love in

the Garden, loses interest in his wife. She is relegated to a secondary position in his house and in his mind. At his worst he returns to his bachelorhood as the man who delights in the things of Heaven and not of the earth. He laments his estrangement from God brought by his new shame and his new mortality: "hide me from the face / Of God, whom to behold was then my highth / Of happiness" (X, 723-25). He ponders Divine Judgment, the ways of God with man, and laments the horror he has brought upon his progeny:

O voice once heard  
 Delightfully, Increase and multiply,  
 Now death to hear! for what can I increase  
 Or multiply, but curses on my head?  
 Who of all Ages to succeed, but feeling  
 The evil on him brought by me, will curse  
 My Head.

(X, 729-35)

Paradise becomes a mere moment of joy and he laments that he purchased its delights with his everlasting misery: "O fleeting joys / Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!" (X, 741-42). Surely the loss of the face of God and the curse of death Adam has brought on his descendants are horrors to be lamented but it is significant that Eve is absent from the catalogue of remorse and sorrow. If she is remembered at all, she is anonymously summed up in the fleeting joys of Paradise. Adam dismisses the conjugal love and its loss from his mind. He repudiates Eve without lamenting for her.

Eve, on the other hand, who argued for the internal Paradise and a marriage unaltered by a brief separation, approaches Adam to plead for his aid because she has found out that it is not possible for woman to live alone:

bereave me not,  
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,  
 Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,  
 My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,  
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
 (X, 918-22)

She now argues the case for the primacy of marriage and for the looks and smiles of love, or what is left of them, as their sole delight. She is willing to sacrifice the remainder of her life not only for the erring altruism of preventing the conception of a doomed race but, what concerns her most, to avoid foregoing the sexual pleasure of married life. Marriage has become the woman's province and its joys and sorrows woman's work. Furthermore, Eve, who would not be circumscribed by the presence of Adam in Paradise nor by the fear of their enemy, vows to cleave to her husband's side forever:

I never from thy side henceforth to stray,  
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoin'd  
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,  
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant Walks?  
 Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content.  
 (XI, 176-80)

She promises to become a meek and humble housewife, living in the shadow of her husband and sharing his domestic labor. Meanwhile, because Adam becomes her ordained and necessary mediator to Heaven, she is contrite before man as well as God. When she hears the new meaning of her name, Mother of all Mankind, she replies to Adam with a sad reverberation of her delighted humility when she learned at the pool of Narcissus that manly wisdom is more fair than female beauty:

Ill worthy I such title should belong  
 To me transgressor, who for thee ordain'd  
 A help, became thy snare; to mee reproach  
 Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise.  
 (XL, 162-66)

"Hee for God only, shee for God in him" acquires a new meaning. Adam advises Eve to retire when Michael arrives to speak of serious and sublime matters because religious doctrine is now too high for female ear: "whom not to offend / With reverence I must meet, and thou retire" (XI, 236-37). The Fall has rendered the woman a terrestrial creature, the sight of whom would offend their celestial visitor.

The news that Michael brings completes the curse of subjection of the wife. It is not enough that Eve has promised to stay by Adam's side and never part from him again. She will lose her Garden, too, and lose what remains of their equal dominion. Woman is assigned the private domain of the home under the absolute rule of her husband who determines where and how she shall live:

Thy going is not lonely, with thee goes  
Thy Husband, him to follow thou art bound;  
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.  
(XI, 290-92)

In a final, ironic sense Eve has won the internal Garden she argued for but at the cost of her innocence and of Eden. She is allied now with the wandering Satanic world where the mind is its own place, though she has a surer promise that she may raise a heaven in the wilderness, if not in Hell. Eve sleeps and dreams gentle portends of good while Adam is shown the harsh reality of their fate. Woman is too weak for the public life of history. Eve wakes resigned to her new life and her farewell to the Garden sums up the subjection and domestication of woman caused by the corruption of human reason:

but now lead on;  
In mee is no delay, with thee to go,  
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,

Is to go hence unwillingly, thou to mee  
 Art all things under Heav'n, all places thou  
 Who for my wilful crime art banisht hence.  
 (XII, 614-19)

Eve resigns all claim to her own dominion in order to become the domesticated Venus who, like a snail or tortoise, carries a shell about her to signify that a woman must abide at home and study household good. At home woman lives in the shadow of her husband who rules over her and protects her. Adam and Eve take comfort in the Promised Seed that shall restore Paradise on earth at the end of time and leave quickly and quietly. They leave hand in hand once more, though not as an emblem of conjugal equality but as an emblem of the husband and wife who help each other to bear the onerous burdens of sorrow in childbirth and labor by the sweat of the brow.<sup>36</sup> In the delightful Garden of God planted for man's pleasure they leave behind the marriage that knew no end but itself and knew no hierarchy between man and woman. In the subjected plain below they enter the world of the domestic treatises and sermons.

Milton is by no means unaware of the price paid by both husband and wife when hierarchy is incorporated into the marriage. He labors to create a vision of a marriage which is free of the female subjection and male authority that is accepted as a natural and Divine law by his contemporaries and he makes the institution of that hierarchy the invention of the corrupted minds of man and woman and their fit punishment. Milton's Adam declares authority and his Eve implies subjection before the Fall but neither one nor the other is constrained by hierarchy. The debate in Book IX is a dramatic rendition of the emblematic descriptions of Adam and Eve in Book IV that, though poised

dangerously and deliberately over the abyss of demonic hierarchy, declare the graceful harmony of giving and receiving between man and woman. The debate is not Eve's first rebellion against Adam nor his first compliance with her bad, female advice. It is a meet and equal conversation between the "Daughter of God and Man" (IX, 291) and the "Offspring of Heav'n and Earth" (IX, 274); the mixed resemblance and unlikeness of man and woman may be found in these epithets. Once Adam and Eve have been stripped of their native honor and their nakedness revealed, the innocent authority and subjection assume the form familiar to the fallen world. At the same time, the marriage collapses and changes from the highest pleasure to a practical institution for the rearing of children and the managing of a household. Adam's fears that Satan would seek to disturb their conjugal love out of envy are realized. Adam, who knew the worth of their marriage best and feared most to lose its joys, has won little by the hierarchy that elevates him over his wife. His lament for Eve "defac't, deflow'r'd, and now to Death devote" (IX, 901) is his last encomium to conjugal happiness. However much commentators and even Milton himself when he argued for divorce may speak of love despite authority and obedience between man and wife, in Paradise Lost the hierarchy alters the marriage almost beyond recognition as a bond of love. The Fall leaves Eve submissive and subordinate and Adam is left lonely by her lowered status. He loses a companion, though he gains an obedient wife.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Critics have, for the most part, considered the discussion that leads to the separation of Adam and Eve as a prelude to the Fall, if not actually its beginning. This scene is traditionally viewed as the first instance of Adam's submission to female charm and Eve's usurpation of his authority. For a review of the critical opinions on the relation between the Fall and the separation of Adam and Eve, see Diane K. McColley, "'Daughter of God and Man': The Callings of Eve in Paradise Lost," Diss. Univ. of Illinois, 1974, pp. 41-46. McColley, pp. 207-31, argues that the separation is not a part of the Fall and that the scene shows Eve's developing sense of self-reliance. Although I agree that Eve's point of view ultimately is more rational than Adam's, I believe his argument against their separation holds almost equal validity. McColley places too much value on individuality and the work of gardening in Eden.

<sup>2</sup>For Milton's relation to the Puritan sermon and domestic conduct book see, John Halkett, Milton and the Idea of Matrimony (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1970) and William and Malleville Haller, "The Puritan Art of Love," The Huntington Library Quarterly, 5, No. 2 (1942), 235-72. For a general study of the domestic treatises see Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N. C. Press, 1935), pp. 202-291.

<sup>3</sup>Miles Coverdale, The Christen State of Matrimonye (London, 1552), sig. K3<sup>r</sup>. For a discussion of the domestic duties enjoined to the wife see Ruth Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1956), pp. 111-14.

<sup>4</sup>Johannes Piscator, Commentarii in Omnes Libros Veteris Testamenti (Herborn, 1646), p. 20, is more precise in identifying the frugal housewife with the shell: "Item ad officium uxorem pertinet, domi se continere in conspectu maritorum, non autem temere hinc inde vagari. . . . Atque hoc ipsum significatum fuit a pictore, qui Venerem testudini insistentem pinxit. Etenim testudo in sua testa se continet, eamque nusquam deserit."

<sup>5</sup>See Chapter III, p. 156 above, for Milton's myth of the birth of love in Eden from loneliness and fit help.

<sup>6</sup>Trans. John Carey, ed. Maurice Kelley, Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1973), VI, 370.

<sup>7</sup> ibid., 381.

<sup>8</sup> Nicholas Gibbon, Questions and Disputations Concerning the Holy Scriptures (London, 1602), I, 93.

<sup>9</sup> John Calvin, Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis, trans. John King (1948; rpt. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1963), I, 128.

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter I, pp. 24-25 and Chapter III, p. 168 above.

<sup>11</sup> Benedictus Pererius, Commentariorum et Disputationum in Genesin (Cologne, 1601), p. 202: "Sed quam habent illa Domini verba sententiā: Non est bonum hominem esse solum? hanc nimirum; cum homo sua natura sit animal cōgregabile & sociabile, non erat bonum esse ipsum solitarium & absque consortio aliorum hominum: . . . Verum haec ratio probat Adamum sine consortio aliorum hominum esse nō debuisse: quod autem sine consortio mulieris esse non debuerit, ex eo manifestum est, quod Adam erat velut caput & seminarium humani generis, ex quo scilicet omne genus hominum propagandum & multiplicandum erat: nec multiplicatio autem hominum sine generatione, nec generatio sine mulieris societate & coniunctione fieri poterat."

<sup>12</sup> Lectures on Genesis, trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), I, 115-16.

<sup>13</sup> See Peter Lindenbaum, "Lovemaking in Milton's Paradise," Milton Studies, 6 (1974), pp. 291ff. for the discourse on human love between Adam and the Angel. Lindenbaum points out that Raphael does not have the final say about Adam's feelings toward Eve.

<sup>14</sup> Religio Medici, in The Prose of Sir Thomas Browne, ed. Norman Endicott (N.Y.: N.Y.U. Press, 1968), p. 80.

<sup>15</sup> See Chapter I, p. 20, above, for Quarles' reading of the hieroglyphic of the rib and Chapter III, pp. 163-65 for the exegesis of ezer kenegdo.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Addison, The Spectator, No. 35 (12 April 1712), ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), III, 308.

<sup>17</sup> For the central place of wifely obedience in a household, see Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady, pp. 95-97 and Halkett, Idea of Matrimony, pp. 82-88.

- <sup>18</sup> Daniel Rogers, Matrimoniall Honour (London, 1642), p. 153.
- <sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 253-54.
- <sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, p. 282.
- <sup>21</sup> Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene, Everyman (1910; rpt. London: Dent; N.Y.: Dutton, 1969), II, canto vii, 41 and 42. All references to Book V of the Faerie Queene are to this edition and are hereafter cited in the text.
- <sup>22</sup> John Aylmer, An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subiectes (London, 1559), sig. C4<sup>v</sup>.
- <sup>23</sup> See Haller, "The Puritan Art of Love," pp. 251-52 for a discussion of the cases in which the wife's obedience may be abrogated.
- <sup>24</sup> William Gouge, Of Domesticall Duties (London, 1622), pp. 327-28.
- <sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, p. 287.
- <sup>26</sup> Ed. Ernest Sirluck, in Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959), II, 589.
- <sup>27</sup> John Donne, Poetical Works, ed. Herbert J. C. Grierson (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), pp. 44-45.
- <sup>28</sup> Torquato Tasso, The Householders Philosophie, trans. T. K. (1588; facs. rpt. Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum; Norwood, N.J.: Walter J. Johnson, 1975), sig. C2<sup>v</sup>.
- <sup>29</sup> William Whately, A Bride-bush, or, A Direction for Married Persons (London, 1623), pp. 161-62.
- <sup>30</sup> Matrimoniall Honour, pp. 264-65.
- <sup>31</sup> A Bride-bush, p. 116.
- <sup>32</sup> Andreus Rivetus, Operum Theologicorum (Rotterdam, 1651), I, 108: "Quod ergo post peccatum, videtur Deus primum subjecisse mulierem dominationi viri, ad absolutè non est intelligendum, quasi antea nullum fuisset imperium, sed comparate: id est, ratione potestatis durae,

onorosae, & molestae: quae talis facta est, postquam peccando poenam sibi attraxit, in eo quod alioqui gratam & amabile ipsi fuisset, si peccati corruptio non intervenisset, quod etiam in partu ipsi accidit. Sicut enim nunc parit mulier cum dolore, sine quo alioqui paritura fuisset: ita nunc viro subjicitur cum molestia, quae libenter alioqui, viri supra se potestatem fuisset admissura."

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156: "Jam, cum peccato, accessit mulieribus ingenii levitas & vanitas, cum animi superbia, qua mulier iniquo animo plerumque fert, maritum sibi praecisse, quia etiam eandem ob culpam, tales sunt plerique viri, ut suas uxores superbe, iracunde & aspere tractent; atque ita imperium suum onerosum, & invisum reddunt."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Luther's Works, I, 115.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 202-3.

<sup>36</sup> See above, Chapter III, p. 189, n. 46.

## CHAPTER V

DISTANCE AND DISTASTE: THE STARVED LOVER  
AND THE SPECTRE OF LILITH

The distance and distaste that alienates God and the Angels from man silences the meet and happy conversation of man and wife. Erotic love, once the best expression of humanity, becomes scarcely distinguishable from lust, the fierce and insatiable desire of the fallen Angels. The despairing Adam, frustrated by unrequited love and his lost hopes, adds misogyny to his woes. Man's unreasoning hatred for the female completes the corruption of the marriage begun when Eve succumbed to Satan's hierarchical logic and strove to make herself equal or superior to Adam. Lilith, the first and false wife of Adam in rabbinic legend, casts her shadow over Eve and the figure of the rebellious and intractable wife is left to haunt all men who contemplate marriage. Adam foresees that Eve's daughters will play the adversary to their husbands and refuse them the obedience instituted by God to ensure a semblance of domestic peace where love may, perhaps, not reign. Adam's prophecy of bad marriages and the poet's denunciation of false eroticism, the foils to wedded love in the Bower, reveal the work of the Fall which induces man to prefer his own shadow over another self. The Fall undoes God's careful work of fashioning a mate for Adam and guiding the man and woman to see that they are fit to help each other.

Though the worst defects of fallen love are overcome and Adam and Eve are eventually reconciled, the concord between man and wife is irrevocably damaged and the importance of human love is diminished. Celestial love replaces the earthly love of Adam's dream-vision in Book VIII. Curiously, mankind becomes religious, heaven-centered, only after the breach between man and God has occurred. Because man sought god-like powers, the terrestrial world must surrender to the celestial. From the new perspective of Books XI and XII, Adam's version of Eve's creation as an earthly dream that initiated him into the love born of visual beauty is insufficient. The creation of the woman must now also be glossed by the typology of Christian redemption that dominates the new vision of human life. As Adam and Eve prepare for their exile, her creation is completed, reread, as it were, to conform more closely with the exegetical tradition. But the transformation of Adam's dream-vision from secular to typological, like the reduction of Eve to a country maid at the approach of Satan, is a measure of the loss of Eden, the Garden of human pleasure and earthly love.

Lust enters the human marriage when Eve destroys the reciprocity of love by paying heed to the false counsel of the serpent; and Adam, in order to follow her, substitutes sentimentality for the union of mind and soul and body. Both Adam and Eve conspire to transform human love into an emotional state which, on close examination, is nothing more than self-love, and from there the descent into frustrated Satanic desire is swift and easy. Eve returns from her strange adventure by the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil bent on corrupting

Adam and armed with a new weapon to win him to her cause. In the debate before her departure, she countered Adam's reasonings with her own, but now she dispenses with rational discourse. To show the worth of her altered state she addresses herself to Adam's heart, using flattery and lies of love with which he cannot argue:

Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?  
Thee I have misst, and thought it long, depriv'd  
Thy presence, agony of love till now  
Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more  
Mean I to try, what rash untri'd I sought,  
The pain of absence from thy sight.  
(IX, 856-61)

Love has become bitter-sweet, tinged with Satan's hateful siege of contraries. Eve, parodying Edenic love, concludes that "bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss, / Tedious unshar'd with thee, and odious soon" (IX, 879-80). As once before, she says that Eden would be no Eden without Adam, but now she has lost her superb lyricism and deeply felt sensuality. She praises only by blaming: tedious follows closely after bliss. She claims that she ate the forbidden fruit solely for his sake, so that they might grow to godhead together; for herself alone she would not aspire to such honors. Eve's boast of a desperate and self-sacrificing attachment to Adam introduces a new element of jealous possession into human love and Adam is not slow to respond in kind. Eve has chanced upon a powerful persuasion for Adam since, remembering his initial solitude, he was always inclined to fear her loss or absence.

Guided by Eve's emotional appeal, her protestations of a grand love, Adam contracts his vision of the hieroglyphic of human love revealed at her creation into a perverse literal reality. Adam's

choice, thinly veiled as self-sacrifice, is guided by self-love; he chooses to die rather than to abandon his own rib. He willingly closes his internal eye to all that is rational and imaginative in love and obeys only the emotional impulses embodied in the bone and blood taken from his heart. Though it may seem that Adam falls for a higher reason than Eve, human love against pride and the desire for forbidden knowledge, Milton quite clearly exposes the sacrifice of Adam for what it is: an exalted sense of himself that turns his emotions into the absolute measure of worth and meaning. Adam deifies his heart as Eve deifies the forbidden Tree. Adam dies neither for Eve, who has already irrevocably forfeited her immortality, nor for their Edenic love which has effectively ceased to exist with Eve's desertion of God and disobedience to his command. Eve is no longer the meet help to lead Adam to the terrestrial delights of the Garden, nor can she offer the means by which he may ascend to Heavenly love. The hope for a meet and happy conversation between them is vain. Adam knows that Eve is lost and dies for nothing but his own jealousy that seeks to possess her despite consequence or circumstance.

Milton's myth of the birth of Love in the Garden of Eden from Adam's loneliness and the fit help and society of man and woman elucidates Adam's unhappy choice.<sup>1</sup> Love is the offspring of help against solitude; it is the solace of man's solitary defects. Where there is no help, there is no love, only its false semblance. There is no room for unrequited love in Milton's myth and what is true in the Forest of Arden is true in Paradise:

The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person,

videlicet, in a love cause. Troilus had his brains dashed out with a Grecian club; yet he did what he could to die before, and his is one of the patterns of love. Leander, he would have lived many a fair year though Hero had turned nun, if it had not been for a hot midsummer night; for, good youth, he went but forth to wash him in the Hellespont, and being taken with the cramp, was drowned; and the foolish chroniclers of that age found it was 'Hero of Sestos.' But these are all lies. Men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them but not for love.

(As you Like It, IV, i, 85-99)

Rosalind's comic taunt may seem inappropriate for Adam's tragic dilemma but once he has made his choice he may be included among the list of those who did not die for love but acquired the reputation of it in fictions.

Adam, imitating Eve's trivialization of their love, lapses into sentimentality. Satan fools Eve by a false appearance and bad reasoning cloaked in a semblance of logic and, as he divided appearance from reality for the woman, he divides reason from emotion for the man to force him to choose by his heart, where he is most susceptible to fraud. Satan plays Adam a devilish trick indeed. Though Adam's choice is irrational, it is emotionally correct. It is difficult to imagine what else he might do. To suffer the loss of Eve would bring him such pain that would make Eden more Hell than Paradise. Under the new order established by Satan one can live with bad logic but heartache is intolerable, a death to think.

The self-love that is at the root of Adam's choice to die with Eve has hideous consequences for him and his descendants. Self-love, as the myth of Narcissus amply illustrates, is doomed to remain unrequited, and unfulfilled desire becomes infected and harmful. For Milton self-love is therefore synonymous with lust. Adam and Eve

first absorb themselves in mindless sentimentality, the courteous form of lust. When he resolves to die, Eve

embrac'd him, and for joy  
Tenderly wept, much won that he his Love  
Had so ennobl'd, as of choice to incur  
Divine displeasure for her sake, or Death.  
(IX, 990-93)

In truth, far from ennobling it, Adam has brutalized his love. The outpouring of tender emotions yields to untender, mechanical lust. While nature weeps and groans, Adam and Eve gorge on their stolen fruit and imagine that they have found a better paradise, one more ethereal and less corporeal than the Garden given them by God. But as they eat they are dragged further down to earth:

but that false Fruit  
Far other operation first display'd,  
Carnal desire inflaming, hee on Eve  
Began to cast lascivious Eyes, she him  
As wantonly repaid; in Lust they burn.  
(IX, 1011-15)

The corporeal love of Adam and Eve is turned to blind touch, desire devoid of imagination. As Ficino warned, such love is doomed to failure because all lovers seek to unite with the beloved but bodies of impenetrable flesh cannot achieve true union.<sup>2</sup> The new eroticism is perforce insatiable; for a brief moment it may be wondered if it will not become as insatiable as the ravenous maw of Death:

There they thir fill of Love and Love's disport  
Took largely, of thir mutual guilt the Seal,  
The solace of thir sin, till dewy sleep  
Oppress'd them, wearied with thir amorous play.  
(IX, 1042-45)

It is their good fortune that their bodies tire before their lust abates or they might be condemned forever to ceaseless love-making. Meanwhile Satan's impotence infects human love and perverse longing

where there is no hope of reciprocity becomes the normal lot of mankind. Milton contrasts the gratified sexual desire in the Bower with its later, bad imitations:

Here Love his golden shafts imployes, here lights  
 His constant Lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
 Reigns here and revels, not in the bought smile  
 Of Harlots, loveless, joyless, unindear'd,  
 Casual fruition, nor in Court Amours,  
 Mixt Dance, or wanton Mask, or Midnight Ball,  
 Or Serenate, which the starv'd Lover sings  
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.  
 (IV, 763-70)

The affectations of the court and the feigned love of the prostitute, the hollow shells of wedded love that solace human loneliness, are the direct results of Adam's choice to play the sentimental hero. The starved lover, like Adam, admires his emotions more than the lady and seeks after substance from a shadow of himself. He remains fixed in loneliness.

The immediate effects of Adam's lust are no less disastrous for human history. As soon as the initial intoxication has worn off, a sobered Adam invents misogyny. Once before, when he confessed his awe of Eve's beauty to the frowning Archangel, Adam was tempted by misogyny. As he set himself off at a distance to idolize Eve's beauty, his admiration, rather than leading him to the Garden, threatened to shut him out of Paradise forever. He felt himself unequal to the power of female beauty and, as compensation, argued that woman must lack some inner worth, that God, having so perfected her outside, must have made a less careful job of her spiritual and mental faculties:

on her bestow'd  
 Too much of Ornament, in outward show  
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.  
 For well I understand in the prime end  
 Of Nature her th'inferior, in the mind  
 And inward Faculties, which most excel,  
 In outward also her resembling less  
 His Image who made both, and less expressing  
 The character of that Dominion giv'n  
 O'er other Creatures.

(VIII, 537-46)

Adam was here gravely mistaken; he misunderstood the nature of Edenic authority and subjection and concluded falsely that Eve was less in the image of God than he. He amended his errors when he recognized that Eve was, in fact, perfected by her union with him. Now when the desire to blame Eve for their disobedience sets an unbridgeable distance between them, he returns to his contempt for women, declaring Eve a delusion, a snare and a hollow form devoid of any internal worth. Woman becomes a phantom to Adam because he seeks in her only his own likeness, the mirror of his own defects, and not, as before, her unlikeness which perfected him. Adam helps Eve play the temptress with his own narcissism and sentimental love. For a brief moment he imagines that his lust might find satisfaction in sexual intercourse, but his fancy soon proves a delusion. Adam, frustrated by the loneliness that is the inevitable companion of lust, becomes a type of the man who turns his thwarted desire into hatred for women. Thomas Elyot, in The Defence of Good Women, argues that poets frequently denounce women not because of female fault but because of their own sexual failures:

As soon as eyther by age, or with huantying of brothelles,  
 the shame of carnalitie is throughly quenched, or elles if  
 women do constantly refuse their unhonest desires, anone

arme they their pennes and tongues with serpentine malice,  
 obietying against al womē most beastly condicions. Wherby  
 they more detect their propre inconstancy, then womennes un-  
 faithfulnessse.<sup>3</sup>

Adam becomes like the celibate monks who, denied marriage by their Church, claim that there was no sexual love in the Garden before the Fall, "Defaming as impure what God declares / Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all" (IV, 746-47).

Adam's fierce vituperation of Eve is not an exposition of Milton's true, contemptuous opinion of women.<sup>4</sup> Whatever private rages the poet may have had, the Adam of Paradise Lost invents misogyny while his mind is suffering from its worst corruption by Satanic logic. The charges that Adam brings against Eve, deceptive beauty, vanity and pride, are not female faults. In fact, he blindly imputes his own failings to her. Nevertheless, Adam's invective against Eve, like Satan's lies, has a ring of truth about it:

Out of my sight, thou Serpent, that name best  
 Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false  
 And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,  
 Like his, and color Serpentine may show  
 Thy inward fraud, to warn all Creatures from thee  
 Henceforth; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended  
 To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee  
 I had persisted happy, had not thy pride  
 And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe,  
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd  
 Not to be trusted, longing to be seen  
 Though by the Devil himself, him overweening  
 To over-reach, but with the Serpent meeting  
 Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee,  
 To trust thee from my side, imagin'd wise,  
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults.  
 (X, 867-83)

Adam begins by postulating a sinister alliance between woman and the serpent, as though envisioning the Medieval iconography of the Temptation that gave the serpent a female face.<sup>5</sup> Adam is, in fact, identi-

fying Eve with Sin, who is both a beautiful woman and a monstrous serpent, both fair and foul at once. But while it is true that Eve has played the serpent to Adam, tempting him to fatal disobedience, that her beauty proved to be his snare is his error more than hers. From the beginning Adam was wont to overvalue Eve's external beauty at the expense of her other virtues. He was wont to perceive beauty as a superficial pleasure of the corporeal eye rather than as the more substantial pleasure of the eye of the mind. Her beauty and his love of her beauty become the instruments of his Fall by his own choice and for that he may blame himself. Milton's Adam may be admonished by the answer made to the charge in Swetnam's misogynous Araignment that female beauty is a dangerous lure for men: "Are external & dumbe shews such potent baites, nets, lures, charmes, to bring men to ruine? Why? Wilde Asses, dotterels and woodcocks, are not so easily entangled and taken? Are men so idle, vaine, and weake, as you seeme to make them?"<sup>6</sup> Michael condemns the Sons of God who surrender to the fair women of the plains ("that fair female Troop thou saws't, that seem'd / Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay" [XI, 614-15]) with the same argument of masculine failure before the pleasing shape of female beauty.

While Eve cannot be absolved for her part in Adam's Fall, though her deceitful beauty is not what inspired his downfall so much as his attachment to the way he feels about that beauty, the charge that her pride and vanity caused their present misery is absolutely false. Eve does, of course, become proud as the Satanic logic takes hold of her mind and she flirts with the notion of divinity and

intellectual superiority over Adam. But Adam argues ex post facto that pride led Eve to believe that she could withstand their adversary: "him overweening / To over-reach" assumes that to stand against temptation was inherently beyond human capacity, or at least beyond female capacity. It must be allowed, however, that Eve was not falsely proud in her fidelity to God and to Adam until she fell and made herself insufficient to stand. As for vanity, pride in her own beauty, Eve abandoned that at the pool of Narcissus when she exchanged her reflection for Adam's embraces. Adam's denunciation of Eve's vanity allies him with Satan who assumes that beauty must be vain and begins his temptation, both in the dream and in reality, with words of "glozing courtesy," as did Comus to the Lady. Yet, in truth, Eve wears her gift to command all eyes very lightly; after the Narcissus episode she becomes the least self-conscious of creatures. It is clear that Eve's presumed vanity reflects Adam's concerns more distinctly than hers. Adam accuses her of wishing to show herself off to the Devil himself but, during the debate before her departure, it was he who made the argument for public acts of valor. To Eve's argument that they must be free to separate or risk circumscribing their Paradise with fear, Adam answered that not only would they be better able to withstand temptation together but, thus, they could also bear witness to each other's constancy and obedience. If she resisted the temptation alone, Adam implied, the unseen event would be lost in obscurity and therefore would be no heroic act at all: "who can know, / Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?" (IX, 368-69). Eve, on the other hand, was

unconcerned whether her valor would be made public; it would have sufficed that she alone knew that she had been proven faithful.

Eve's disregard for public opinion may not seem quite commendable; after all, the mythographer's Narcissus was guilty of shunning other men's opinions. Nevertheless, at the beginning of Book IX the poet has renounced the heroic acts of the public military sort for the private heroism of temptation and choice and, therefore, Eve's disdain for her reputation allies her with the greater heroism that knows nothing of

Races and Games  
Or tilting Furniture, emblazon'd Shields,  
Impreses quaint, Caparisons and Steeds;  
Bases and tinsel Trappings, gorgeous Knights  
At Joust and Tournament; then marshall'd Feast  
Serv'd up in Hall with Sewers, and Seneschals.  
(IX, 33-38)

During the debate Adam was already allied to the public sphere of valor and reputation which the Fall relegates to him. That he now accuses Eve of vanity is a perfect case, in modern terms, of psychological projection. The same mechanism leads Satan to suppose that Eve must wish to weigh and measure her beauty by the size of her retinue:

Thee all things living gaze upon, all things thine  
By gift, and thy Celestial Beauty adore  
With ravishment beheld, there best behold  
Where universally admir'd: but here  
In this enclosure wild, these Beasts among,  
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,  
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.  
(IX, 539-48)

The serpent's praises, echoing both Adam's delight in Eve's beauty and

his argument for public opinion, win their way into her heart. Yet the praises are probably unnecessary; the wonder of a speaking snake interests Eve more than her own beauty. The unfallen Eve, whom all eyes wished in sight, did not need to seek an audience among the Angels and was quite content to be seen by only one man. She did not leave Adam to garden separately in the hope of gaining more admirers. The process of making Eve "other," Adam's unknown and rejected self, the creation of a supernumerary rib, is completed here when he blames her for his own weakness and adduces his motives to her.

The faults that Satan and Adam ascribe to Eve are the standard litany of the misogynists. Adam's diatribe is full of false accusations which are almost worn out through overuse in contemporary pamphlets and treatises against women. The vanity of women in their appearance is described with cliché contempt by Swetnam:

For commonly women are the most part of the forenoone painting themselves, and frizzling their hayres, and prying in their glasses like Apes, to pranke up themselves in their gaudies, like Puppets, or like the Spider which weaves a fine web to hang the Flie.<sup>7</sup>

After a morning's work at the mirror they become gorgeous snares to capture and ruin men:

A woman which is faire in shew, is foule in condition: shee is like unto a glow-worme, which is bright in the hedge, and black in the hand; in the greenest grasse lyeth hid the greatest serpents: painted pots commonly hold deadly poyson: and in the clearest water the ugliest Tode; and the fairest woman hath some filthinesse in her.<sup>8</sup>

Woman's "wandering vanity," her pride and her inconstancy that give way to foolish whims, is among the chief reasons that John Knox cites for denying woman the right to govern over nations:

It is a thing verie difficile to a man, (be he never so constant) promoted to honors, not to be tickled some what with pride (for the winde of vaine glorie doth easilie carie up the drie dust of the earth). But as for woman, it is no more possible, that she being set aloft in authoritie above man, shall resist the motions of pride, then it is able to the weake reed, or to the turning wethercocke, not to bowe or turne at the vehemencie of the unconstant wind.<sup>9</sup>

Whether she is deliberately plotting mischief or not, in the opinion of the misogynists, woman's superficial beauty, empty of all real worth and sometimes artificially acquired, and her weak and vacillating mind combine to make her a creature to be shunned or strictly subjected to steadfast male authority.

Adam's misogyny never quite leaves him, though he relents in his ferocity toward Eve and accepts her for the flawed creation that she is; and his rejection of the female is as blind and mechanical as the lust that engendered it. After his reconciliation with Eve, when he is shown the vision of future human history, the fate of the Sons of God with the women of the plains inspires Adam's ready contempt for women. It is true that Michael rebukes Adam's initial delight in their loveliness and sweet music by depicting the women as hollow snares that lead men to their destruction:

For that fair female Troop thou saw'st, that seem'd  
Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
Yet empty of all good wherein consists  
Woman's domestic honor and chief praise;  
Bred only and completed to the taste  
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,  
To dress, and troll the Tongue, and roll the Eye,  
To these that Sober race of Men, whose lives  
Religious titl'd them the Sons of God,  
Shall yield up all thir virtue, all thir fame  
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
Of these fair Atheists, and now swim in joy,

(Erelong to swim at large) and laugh; for which  
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep.  
 (XI, 614-27)

Adam no doubt sees the misogynous version of his own history in the lives of the Sons of God and he responds with a bad pun that condemns all women, not only those dedicated to vanity and devoid of virtue, and absolves himself:

But still I see the tenor of Man's woe  
 Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.  
 (XI, 632-33)

Adam's woman-woe-man pun shows how much his mental faculties, not less than his visual, have been eclipsed by the Fall. The shopworn pun, which is repeated much too often and is much too obvious in English, is a curious decline for Adam who once named all the animals, defining them perfectly as they passed before him. For Adam the pun has even more serious implications than the loss of his erstwhile linguistic powers, sacrificed to his new ideology. It draws upon the Latin anagram of Eve's name, vae, put forth by St. Jerome in his dictionary of Hebrew names: "Eva calamitas, aut vae vel vita."<sup>10</sup> Adam has changed the meaning of Eve's name from the mother of all living to the mother of all woe and, since she is to be the source of the human race and the seed of the promised Redeemer, the pun reveals how little faith is left in man. Adam's first definition of woman, "of man / Extracted," celebrated her birth from his own rib and heart-blood; the new definition shows man's despair of life which can only come out of his union with the despised female.

Woman is declared vain, superficial, and demonic by man's frustrated self-love and with the rejection of woman as the destroyer of

man comes, of course, the rejection of marriage with this creature who cannot be looked to for any fit help. Adam ends his vituperation of Eve and her deceitful beauty with a catalogue of the future failures of erotic love in marriage, undoing, as it were, his prophecy of marriage as the strongest human bond for which a man would even forego his parents and filial love. The prophecy, though still the fruit of Adam's erring imagination, unfortunately proves true and it is just such impediments to wedded love that Milton seeks to remove in his *Divorce Tracts*:

innumerable  
Disturbances on Earth through Female snares,  
And strait conjunction with this Sex: for either  
He never shall find out fit Mate, but such  
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake,  
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain  
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd  
By a far worse, or if she love, withheld  
By Parents, or his happiest choice too late  
Shall meet, already linkt and Wedlock-bound  
To a fell Adversary, his hate or shame:  
Which infinite calamity shall cause  
To human life, and household peace confound.  
(X, 896-908)

Either chance will intervene between a man and his choice in a wife, or her contrary nature will prevent the match, or he will choose badly and suffer the consequences of finding himself yoked to a stubborn wife whose unsociable nature condemns him to a life of loneliness. In short, marriage will prove to be a haphazard arrangement that will cause more ills than it purports to cure. Adam's prophecy of bad marriages resembles St. Jerome's admonition that choosing a wife is a risky venture over which a man can exercise too little control:

Notice, too, that in the case of a wife you cannot pick and choose: you must take her as you find her. If she has a bad

temper, or is a fool, if she has a blemish or is proud, or has bad breath, whatever her fault may be--all this we learn after marriage. Horses, asses, cattle, even slaves of the smallest worth, clothes, kettles, wooden seats, cups, and earthenware pitchers, are first tried and then bought: a wife is the only thing that is not shown before she is married, for fear that she may not give satisfaction.<sup>11</sup>

A wife is bound to be a bad bargain and a troublesome piece of household furnishing.

Jerome concludes that whatever a man seeks in a wife can best be found in a slave who is more easily ruled:

Men marry, indeed, so as to get a manager for the house, to solace weariness, to banish solitude; but a faithful slave is a far better manager, more submissive to the master, more observant of his ways, than a wife who thinks she proves herself mistress if she acts in opposition to her husband, that is, if she does what pleases her, not what she is commanded.<sup>12</sup>

Like Jerome, Adam fears the "fell adversary" in the disobedient wife who will ruin domestic peace. Adam ended his first conjugal argument, which arose as soon as their intoxication with the forbidden fruit wore off, by a proverbial warning to all husbands to beware the government of wives who wish to indulge their wilful pride without bearing the responsibility for the consequences of their foolish acts:

Thus it shall befall  
Him who to worth in Woman overtrusting  
Lets her Will rule; restraint she will not brook,  
And left to herself, if evil thence ensue  
Shee first his weak indulgence will accuse.  
(IX, 1182-86)

There he prepared himself for the vituperation that will declare women worthless at best and demonic at worst. And if he does not quite wish that God had given him a slave instead of a wife, he wishes now that he had been given brother Adams as companions instead of the burden of a mischievous female. It is no small irony that he finds

occasion to expound on the disastrous marriages with ill-chosen wives that will be the lot of his sons because Eve has approached him, submissive and repentant, seeking reconciliation and thus belying the misogyny of both St. Jerome and Adam. It is Adam who proves perverse, a fell adversary to her entreaties, and acts the husband who blames his wife for all his faults. The future of marriage, though not bright, is not as dim as Adam predicts, if he will only consent to reconciliation.

Whether it is born of frustrated lust or disillusioned awe, misogyny is a demonic aberration that reflects Adam's corruption more than Eve's defects. Satan interposes the shadow of Narcissus between man and woman so that Adam, no longer acknowledging his solitary imperfection and wishing only for his own likeness, despairs of finding a fit mate. Adam's rejection of Eve is proud and self-indulgent. His misogyny sums up all the errors he and Satan, who joins him in his sentimentality and his admiration of female beauty, have made about Eve. The starved lover of the court is the logical descendant of Adam's errors and his hunger may be blamed on his own confusion more justly than on his proud lady. The awe itself puts such a distance between the lover and his lady that precludes reciprocity; for the purpose of the serenade it would make no difference if she were a statue made of marble or a creature of his fancy rather than flesh and blood. The artificial beauties of the court ladies and the bought smiles of the prostitute are, by implication, the products of male vanity and devotion to their own passions. Raphael chides Adam for both these errors and warns him, in effect, that unless he is careful

not to fall into the snares of self-love, the Bower will be turned into a bower of bliss of false but teasing eroticism. When the bower of wedded love has been destroyed, Michael admonishes Adam, again, to remember how men make themselves victims of the superficial female beauty that self-love has wrought.

Though Adam's repudiation of Eve ends in reconciliation, the distance and distaste interposed between man and woman by the Fall is incorporated into the institution of marriage as male authority and female subjection. Whether the choice of wife is good or bad, the domestic hierarchy will prevent the unfallen reciprocity of love from asserting itself between man and wife. We have seen that Adam and Eve invent the concept of wifely obedience when they awaken from their uneasy sleep to guilty knowledge of their Fall. This new female subjection is a punishment that Eve brings on herself in her attempt to be free of both God and Adam. With the higher intellectual powers gained from the false fruit, Eve raises the question of domination in marriage and allows Satan, however briefly, to transform her into Lilith, the legendary earth-born wife of Adam. According to rabbinic commentary, Lilith was the original wife of Adam, created out of earth like man, who claimed equality with him on the basis of their common origin. She refused to be subjected to her husband and, uttering the ineffable name, flew away from him and vanished into the air. Adam complained to God of her desertion and Angels were sent to bring her back, threatening that if she did not return a hundred of her demon children would be slaughtered every day. Lilith preferred this punishment to a life of subjection with Adam. She became a demon and takes revenge on mankind by injuring new-born babies. Afterwards

God created a second wife, Eve, from Adam's rib so that she would better understand her station in life.<sup>13</sup> The Christian exegetes are fond of repeating the legend of Lilith but they invariably reject it as rabbinic nonsense.<sup>14</sup> Ultimately, Adam and Eve also reject the possibility that Eve may be Lilith and Satan is not quite successful in rewriting Eve's creation to make her the earth-born wife who makes a domestic hell for Adam. Sin, Satan's own creation, with the monstrous, howling brood in her entrails and her revenge on mankind through her son, is a true type of Lilith. Eve is rescued from that fate as Adam is ultimately saved from the mazes of his narcissism and self-loathing, but the momentary suggestion that Eve might be Lilith is sufficient to ensure rebellion and misandry among her daughters.

Satan first attempts to cast Eve in the role of Lilith when he tempts her in the dream. She eats the forbidden fruit, like Lilith defying a Divine prohibition, and flies off into the clouds with her Angelic guide. Nothing is said of her equality with Adam except that she implicitly rejects him and their terrestrial life when, following the voice she thinks his, she finds instead an Angel and accepts his guidance to the realms above the earth. Although unaware of her own ambition, Eve in the dream is trying to exalt herself above Adam. The thought of such a deed and such a flight is horrible to the innocent Eve when she awakes, but Satan returns to the same ploy at the second temptation of Eve. Again nothing is said of Eve's equality with Adam (we know that Satan finds her unequal to her husband and therefore the preferred prey) but the desire for godhead becomes in Eve the desire to master her husband. Satan offers her equality with God if she will

only eat that same fruit that gave him human speech and human sense:

That ye should be as Gods, since I as Man,  
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 than this can bring.  
And what are Gods that Man may not become  
As they, participating God-like food?

(IX, 710-17)

Eve succumbs to the temptation of god-like knowledge but her thoughts, characteristically, soon return to the human Paradise. She does not intend to supplant God nearly as much as she hopes to supplant Adam whom she has newly declared her superior. In one moment she divides Heaven from earth, imagining that her forbidden act may not have yet been made known in Heaven, a distant realm perhaps otherwise occupied than with the affairs of earth:

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  
About him.

(IX, 811-16)

The new distance between Heaven and earth is echoed in an enlarged distance between Eve and her husband and in the new expanse of space man is elevated above woman. Eve misunderstands her submissive love and Adam's superior love as a vertical, hierarchical ordering and loses the hope of Edenic reciprocity. Now she must seek to wrest the same power from Adam that was hers in their harmonious equality. Though Milton's Eve was born out of the side of Adam, she was equal to man as if she had been born out of the same dust as he. The Fall

makes a self-defeating paradox for woman: Eve must fancy herself Lilith in order to regain the equality she has forfeited.

The possibility that she may only be the first of Adam's wives is crucial in Eve's decision to persuade him to imitate her transgression. If she dies alone, she will be like the legendary Lilith who shunned the earth and was replaced by a second and better wife:

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;  
A death to think.

(IX, 826-30)

Milton's Eve, more sentimental than Lilith, grows jealous at the thought of another woman for Adam and resolves to prove her identity. When Adam must decide whether to Fall with her or to remain obedient and innocent, he, too wonders whether Eve may not be his first and false wife: "Should God create another Eve, and I / Another Rib afford." The identity of the present wife hangs in the balance for a moment. There is a pause after "I" while Adam ponders if he can survive the creation of a new wife. His memory reassures him that Eve was made of his rib and, therefore, no matter how false she proves, he cannot part from her. Both Adam and Eve implicitly reject the rabbinic story of an earth-born amazonian wife that would conflate Eve's creation from the rib with God's unsuccessful attempt to form and fashion a wife for Adam. In fact, after the first delirium of power, Eve completely rejects the desire for equality and proves herself both submissive and the wife of Adam's heart. Nevertheless, as Adam prophesies, the fabled Lilith leaves her mark on human marriage as the symbol of an

insidious household threat: the obstinate and incorrigible wife who rebels against her husband's authority.

The belief that women seek power over their husbands is part of the tradition of misogyny, but Milton ascribes the origin of this fear to the woman's perversity as well as to the frustrations of the starved and lusting lover. Eve, the wife who corresponds to Adam as his answering image, by virtue of the Fall, becomes, as the rabbis warned in their gloss to kenegdo, the wife who opposes him.<sup>15</sup> Argument replaces conversation as they blame each other for their unhappy state:

They sat them down to weep, nor only Tears  
Rain'd 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  
And full of Peace, now toss't and turbulent:  
For Understanding rul'd not, and the Will  
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now  
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath  
Usurping over sovran Reason claim'd  
Superior sway.

(IX, 1121-31)

They are angry, distempered, and profoundly uncomfortable with each other. Adam accuses Eve of disobedience to his better knowledge. In the manner of Lilith, she answers that obedience would have dehumanized her and robbed her of all her freedom. Had she stayed with him, she would have become a lifeless rib, Eve protests, but perversely concludes that, since she came upon disaster, it was his fault because he let her wander off. Eve is a half-hearted Lilith; her rejection of Adam lacks the ferocity and conviction of her prototype's hatred for her husband or of Adam's misogyny. The woman who in innocence could rationally be expected to withstand their formidable adversary alone

has lost all the courage of her reason. She is rebellious but not enough either to renounce Adam or to wish for a world without men. She simply does not want to share her burden of the blame. Adam's proverbial summation of Eve's argument, that woman seeks to dominate her husband and then blames him when her wilful actions lead her into trouble, is not an inaccurate assessment of Eve's fallen state.

Eve's quest for domestic rule without responsibility allies her with Chaucer's Wife of Bath, that embodiment of all accusations against women, whose tale proves that the greatest desire of all wives is to dominate their husbands. As if anticipating and then deliberately inverting the standard advice of the seventeenth-century marriage manuals, the Wife of Bath declares that there can be no domestic peace until the wife is given rule over house and land. Her last and best husband, tricked out of his bookish misogyny, becomes her willing subject, and wedded bliss follows:

He yaf me al the bridel in myn hond,  
 To han the governance of hous and lond,  
 And of his tonge, and of his hond also;  
 And made hym brenne his book anon right tho.  
 And whan that I hadde geten unto me,  
 By maistrie, al the soveraynetee,  
 And that he seyde, 'Myn owene trewe wyf,  
 Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf;  
 Keep thyn honour, and keep eek myn estaat' -  
 After that day we hadden never debaat.  
 God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde  
 As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,  
 And also trewe, and so was he to me.

(Prologue, 813-25)

The Wife of Bath is a latter-day, comic Lilith determined to resist male domination without, of course, opting for celibacy as the corresponding male rejection of women so frequently does. But she does not

claim equality of male and female and her desire for 'maistrie' remains well within the misogynous tradition itself. She argues that, since there must be subordination and domination in marriage, by virtue of their greater weakness, women are entitled to rule:

Oon of us two moste bowen, doutelees;  
 And sith a man is moore resonable  
 Than womman is, ye moste been suffrable.  
 (Prologue, 440-42)

The Wife of Bath wants to rule precisely because, like all women, she is wilful and vain and, like a child, given to want her whims indulged. Her quest after domestic power seems to stem from that same perversity that makes her love the last husband best of all:

I trowe I loved hym best, for that he  
 Was of his love daungerous to me.  
 We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye,  
 In this matere a queynte fantasye;  
 Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly have,  
 Therafter wol we crie al day and crave.  
 Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we  
 Preesse on us faste, and thanne wol we fle.  
 With daunger oute we al oure chaffare;  
 Greet prees at market maketh deere ware,  
 And to greet cheep is holde at litel prys:  
 This knoweth every womman that is wys.  
 (Prologue, 513-24)

Immediately after her Fall, Eve is a sister of the Wife of Bath; she is not quite the legendary female who claimed equal dominion over the earth with her husband. That was Eve's portion while she remained innocent. Now she has been reduced by Satanic logic to the status of a difficult and peevish wife who wishes to rule house and home simply because she has accepted her own inferiority.

The Fall does not awaken Eve to consciousness of her equal worth to Adam, but, by acquiescing to Satan's contempt and awe, Eve discovers her own weakness. Satan, the original and arch-misogynist,

whose vision of the female is Sin, half beautiful woman and half monster, seductive and repulsive and an alien shadow of himself, teaches Eve the domesticated version of the legend of Lilith. The demon who haunts marriage is, thereafter, not the woman who, demanding equality on the basis of the common humanity of both sexes, belongs to an encomium mulieris, but the shrewish wife who is contrary only because it is the crooked nature of women to oppose their husbands. Eve discovers her desire for 'maistrie' when she breaks God's simple prohibition in the belief that it is an elaborate puzzle that she must solve. With that act she proves herself vain, silly and wilful, easily deluded by trifles, like the misogynists' female. She exercises her 'maistrie' when with tears and pleading lies she offers Adam the forbidden fruit and joys in her control over his heart. Her victory here must be sharply distinguished from her earlier victory before their separation; there her reason prevailed because she made the better argument. Adam and Eve blur the distinction afterwards to date her rebellion from her desire to work alone; but, as we have seen, this is a convenient device for both to forego responsibility. Adam eventually dates Eve's rebellion from her creation to prove that the Fall was not so much his bad choice, or Eve's, but the result of the unlucky birth of that fair defect of nature, woman. The two forms of female government presented in Paradise Lost are very different: the unfallen Eve, of equal worth with her husband, ruled with the strength of her reason; the fallen Eve, like the Wife of Bath, rules by the weakness of her reason and the strength of her wiles. She separated from Adam in mutual trust and faith in her innocence and returned with new faith in her tricks and lies and bad advice.

At her worst, Eve is the wife depicted in the treatises that warn men against marriage and bondage to the loathsome and corrupt nature of women. First, as she urges Adam to fall with her, she is the wife of the heroic tradition seen through the eyes of St. Jerome:

In all the bombast of tragedy and the overthrow of houses, cities, and kingdoms, it is the wives and concubines who stir up strife. Parents take up arms against their children: unspeakable banquets are served: and on account of the rape of one wretched woman Europe and Asia are involved in a ten years war.<sup>16</sup>

Later, when she denounces Adam for letting her leave his side, by her own assumptions of female subordination she becomes the more prosaic wife who tries to prove herself mistress of the house by disregarding her husband's commands and doing whatever she likes. The husband may expect no sweet conversation from such a wife but eternal railing and mistreatment, as Jerome, again, warns:

Our gaze must always be directed to her face, and we must always praise her beauty: if you look at another woman, she thinks that she is out of favour. She must be called my lady, her birth-day must be kept, we must swear by her health and wish that she may survive us. . . . If you give her the management of the whole house, you must yourself be her slave. If you reserve something for yourself, she will not think you are loyal to her; she will turn to strife and hatred and unless you quickly take care, she will have the poison ready.<sup>17</sup>

Satan transforms Eve into a household bully whose revenge against the superiority of her husband is to be his constant torment, whether as a minor, demanding nuisance or as a serious threat upon his life. Under Satan's tutelage, between the moment she eats the forbidden fruit until the reconciliation with Adam, Eve is a convincing argument against marriage.

The guilty and unrepentant Eve validates Adam's misogyny. The rejection of the female is at the core of their fallen thoughts. The Chorus of Samson Agonistes, excoriating marriage and female deception, and Dalila, defending her infidelity and treachery, outline the predicament of Adam and Eve in the depths of their corruption and lovelessness. Like Adam, the Chorus suspects that nature concentrates its perfections on the external beauties of women and leaves their minds and souls unfinished or, perhaps, it makes them too fond of themselves. Wives are, therefore, more hindrances than helpers in a man's life:

Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best  
 Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,  
 Soft, modest, meek, demure,  
 Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn  
 Intestine, far within defensive arms  
 A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue  
 Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms  
 Draws him awry enslav'd  
 With dotage, and his sense deprav'd  
 To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.  
 What Pilot so expert but needs must wreck  
 Embark'd with such a Steers-mate at the Helm?  
 (1034-45)

The Chorus concludes that because women prove so dangerous and inconstant, God instituted their subordination in marriage, almost as though it were an amulet to protect the husbands helpless before the evil whims and charms of their wives. The Chorus does not know that the domestic revolt after marriage is as much caused as cured by female acceptance of their inferiority. In fact, Dalila, the worst of wives, thinks no better of the female sex than they do. She tries to excuse herself before Samson by repeating all the old accusations against women:

it was weakness,  
 In me, but incident to all our sex,  
 Curiosity, inquisitive, importune  
 Of secrets, then with like infirmity  
 To publish them, both common female faults:  
 Was it not weakness also to make known  
 For importunity, that is for naught,  
 Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?  
 To what I did thou show'st me first the way.  
 But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not.  
 Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:  
 Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.  
 Let weakness then with weakness come to parle.  
 (773-85)

Her excuse, like the Wife of Bath's demand for sovereignty, is based on the innate defects of the female sex. She is of the same party as the Chorus, but Samson, who has abandoned hope both for pleasure and domestic comfort, has no further need to vent his frustrations in misogyny. He ceases denouncing Dalila and forgives her provided she does not approach him: "At a distance I forgive thee, go with that" (954).<sup>18</sup>

Samson needs no wife for the singular act of valor he is to perform against the Philistines, but more ordinary men, among them Adam, will need their heroism at home when they choose wives who seem to promise them solace from loneliness but instead prove to be fell adversaries. The Chorus of Samson Agonistes simply blames women for all marital woes; Adam acknowledges that perverse fate as well as the perverse female personality may make marriage an intolerable bondage. The Milton of the Divorce Tracts has a more equitable view. He lays the blame for conjugal misery neither on man nor on woman but on the institution that would keep them yoked when they have obviously been badly matched. The real bane of man's happiness is not the wife's

rebellion against his authority but the more subtle stubbornness of a wife who cannot or will not offer her husband the companionship of mind and soul. Woman is not innately false and intent upon upsetting the household peace but chance makes her so if she is married to a man of irreconcilably disparate temperament and divorce is forbidden the ill-matched pair. A bad marriage makes a false wife and it makes God seem to be the purveyor of fraud:

Nay such an unbounteous giver we should make him, as in the fables Jupiter was to Ixion, giving him a cloud instead of Juno, giving him a monstrous issue by her, the breed of Centaures--a neglected and unlov'd race, the fruits of a delusive marriage. . . . But God is no deceitfull giver, to bestow that on us for a remedy of lonelines, which if it bring not a sociable minde as well as a conjunctive body leavs us no lesse alone than before; and if it bring a minde perpetually avers and disagreeable, betrajes us to a wors condition than the most deserted lonelines.<sup>19</sup>

The misogynous tradition would find all women to be clouds, airy forms made to deceive the credulous man, at best, and, at worst, intestine thorns and cleaving mischiefs. Milton uses the image of the delusive woman of the misogynous tradition not to exculpate himself nor to plead the cause of celibacy but to propose that Lilith was a monster only because she was married to an unsuitable husband. Without divorce, a husband may become the starved lover of the court and his home turned into a bower of bliss of lonely and frustrating eroticism without love. Adam's prophecy of domestic hell is nullified once divorce permits a man to seek another companion when he has erred in his first choice of a wife. It would seem that Adam's misogyny might be nullified by that same doctrine of divorce and Milton implies, perhaps, that Adam's bleak vision of the future is not the last word.

Though Adam's prophecy of mismatings may not be without remedy, the assumptions about marriage in the *Divorce Tracts* would seem grim enough after the Edenic love in the Bower of Paradise. In the *Divorce Tracts* Milton does not doubt the universal order that declares men superior to women. In fact, in Tetrachordon he uses that unquestioned hierarchy to strengthen his argument for the necessity of divorce. If St. Paul is correct and man is the head of woman and she is expressly created of him and for him, why does the law shackle a man to an unsuitable wife by an indissoluble bond? A man forced to remain with such a wife becomes her inferior, her slave, and the marriage inverts the divinely ordained hierarchy:

But that which far more easily and obediently follows from this verse, is that, seeing woman was purposely made for man, and he her head, it cannot stand before the breath of this divine utterance, that man the portraiture of God, joyning to himself for his intended good and solace an inferiour sexe, should so become her thrall, whose wilfulness or inability to be a wife frustrates the occasional end of her creation, but that he may acquitt himself to freedom, by his naturall birthright, and that indeleble character of priority which God crown'd him with.<sup>20</sup>

Though the lack of love between man and woman creates an unbearable hierarchy, Milton here sees no impediment to love in the hierarchy of male superiority linked to submissive female inferiority in a golden dependence. In Paradise Lost, however, Milton reinterprets the facts of Eve's creation so that there is no need for a hierarchy in the prelapsarian marriage. He depicts a vision of love that transcends the questions of priority and headship. In *Paradise* Eve is neither inferior nor superior to Adam but his counterpart whose equality can be measured only by her ability to perfect his solitary

defects. At the Fall, both Adam and Eve surrender to Satan's misogyny and the result of their error is the subjection of the wife to her husband. The subjugation of Eve institutionalizes the alienation of man and woman from each other while it attempts also to provide the means to unite them in some peaceful order. The domestic hierarchy, like the Ten Commandments and all the Laws given to the Jews in Sinai, argues the depravity of mankind. When Adam hears how the one prohibition shall be multiplied, he is astonished that God would dwell among people who need so many laws:

So many and so various Laws are given;  
 So many Laws argue so many sins  
 Among them; how can God with such reside?  
 (XII, 282-84)

The Laws are imperfect, Michael answers, and they will serve to uncover sin without having the power to remove it. They are "but given / With purpose to resign them in full time / Up to a better Covenant" (XII, 300-302). In the *Divorce Tracts* Milton sees a better covenant in marriage if divorce is permitted on the grounds of spiritual incompatibility. In *Paradise Lost*, looking backwards, Milton sees a better covenant where there is reciprocity instead of hierarchy between man and woman. There are, however, no promises that in the future the law of female subjugation will be abrogated and the wedded love of Eden restored.

Though the future of human marriage is not as dark as Adam's jaundiced vision predicts, it is severely compromised as Adam and Eve leave their Paradise. In terms of the prevailing seventeenth-century opinions on marriage and the status of women, Adam and Eve are

reconciled, hand in hand once more. But in terms of Milton's vision of human love depicted in the Garden of Eden, the reconciliation is bought at a dear price. Adam and Eve are reunited largely through Eve's repeated submission, her acquiescence to and acceptance of her punishment. The subjection of the wife is a curse and, though contemporary doctrine occasionally strives to soften and transform male authority into the kind and good counsel of the husband to his spouse, the curse impedes the "unfeign'd / Union of mind" of Edenic marriage. Coerced by law and custom, the wife's obedience, no matter how willing, cannot replace Eve's "Love / And sweet compliance." And the wife's subjection will not undo the perverse dislike of women that Adam's sons inherit. Adam has made dire prophecies for his descendants: they will choose their wives haphazardly and none too well, or, if they choose well, circumstance will intervene to prevent their expected happiness. Adam might add that his own misogyny, his own rejection of Eve as the creature of a supernumerary rib, and his own self-love will do as much as chance and female stubbornness to upset domestic quiet. His sons, like the starved lover who, intent on his own emotions, seeks his image in the lady he serenades or in the joyless smile he buys, cannot but choose badly. The lesson Adam and Eve learned at the pool of Narcissus will be generally forgotten among lovers. Seeking their own likenesses, they will be foiled in their attempts to end their loneliness in marriage. The prospects for wedded love are actually brighter in the Divorce Tracts where Milton does not deviate much from the accepted notions of the relation of men and women and assumes that if divorce and remarriage were permitted a fit mate

could be found by trial and error and domestic happiness, long spoiled by the stringent literalness of the canon law, would flourish. In Paradise Lost, where conjugal love at its highest and best has been magnificently described, there is a strong doubt that such love can be sought anywhere but in the visionary past.<sup>21</sup> Divorce may indeed undo the harm Adam foresees in marriage, but it will not undo the hierarchy between man and woman that is the sad reminder of the lost harmony of mind and soul and heart.

The Fall of marriage may be charted by the shift in Adam's perception of woman from the prelapsarian dream-vision to his fallen vision of history. Adam implicitly incorporates the encomium mulieris tradition into his narrative of Eve's creation, though his vision is as free of female superiority as it is of male. Eve's looks, infusing sweetness into his heart, and her air, inspiring the spirit of love and amorous delight, are reminiscent of one etymology of the Latin mulier, woman, offered by the defenders of the female sex against their detractors. Austin, for instance, has: "Mulier quasi mollis aer propter puritatem, a sweet and pure aire."<sup>22</sup> The birth of Eve effects a sudden transformation on Adam and on the Garden, but the sweet looks and amorous airs suggest that same lightness and transparency offered as praise to woman. The airy lightness of Eve is, of course, not without ambiguity. A fallen version of a sweet and pure air would be the cloud that Ixion received in place of the goddess, Juno. Or the false Una created by Archimago to mislead Red Crosse:

with charms and hidden arts  
Had made a lady of that other sprite,  
And framed of liquid air her tender parts

So lively and so like in all men's sight,  
That weaker sense it could have ravished quite.  
(Bk. I, I, 45)

The equivocal nature of the air of Eve, invoking the tradition of praise of the female sex or invoking her falseness, is settled when Adam sees his next vision of female beauty in the fair women of the plains. His initial delight, "the bent of Nature," (XI, 597) gives way to disgust when Michael explains that these beautiful women are worthless seducers of honest men and empty of all good. Adam, as though he perceives himself fooled by beauty a second time, responds with his woe-man-woman pun. He has replaced the praises of Eve and her beauty with the simplest and most ordinary contempt of the defamers of women. His contempt surfaces after his nominal reconciliation with Eve when they agreed to cease blaming each other for the Fall:

let us no more contend, nor blame  
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere, but strive  
In offices of Love, how we may light'n  
Each other's burden in our share of woe.  
(X, 958-61)

It may then be inferred that Adam's contempt of the female is fixed, though he is reminded by the Angel that the woman may be redeemed by her good work as a wife ("wherein consists / Woman's domestic honor and chief praise" [XI, 616-17]). But female beauty is no longer to be praised; without domestic good a woman is an airy nothing with a false, pleasing form. In this last vision, beauty inspires hate, not love, in Adam and, though he learns how he may hope to gain a new Paradise, it is all too evident that Eden has been lost. Between Adam's suspicion of the female sex and Eve's subjection of her will to his, it is certain that there will be no unfeigned conversation between man and woman in the future.

If after the Fall Adam and Eve become familiar in their quarrelsome eroticism and their arguments and their partial reconciliation, the familiarity serves only to reveal the remoteness of the unfallen pair "imparadis't in one another's arms." The new order elucidates the old. Adam and Eve leave Paradise bound in the most conventional marriage because earlier they lived without the restraints of hierarchy or suspicion or contempt of one another. Satan's egotism and his envy bring the same disasters upon the erotic pleasure and perfect companionship of the human pair as the Fall brings upon astronomy and the animal kingdom. Summer heat and winter cold and winds are let loose to plague the earth; the earth is tilted on its axis, the sun moved off its course, and the stars taught to shed evil influence on the earth. The animals become carnivorous and hunt each other:

Thus began  
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first  
 Daughter of Sin, among th'irrational,  
 Death introduc'd through fierce antipathy:  
 Beast now with Beast gan war, and Fowl with fowl,  
 And Fish with Fish; to graze the Herb all leaving,  
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe  
 Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim  
 Glar'd on him passing.

(X, 706-14)

The relation of male to female is tilted on its axis, also, and fierce antipathy arises between the two genders. The erring doubts that worried Adam are now firm facts: Eve is a lesser creature, second to man, made to serve the occasion of his loneliness; she is made of him and for him and therefore must be ruled by him. She has too much of ornament and too little inner worth. Adam may now claim the superiority of contemplation and valor to Eve's softness and sweet attractive grace. Though Adam is superior by all odds, paradoxically, the creation of

woman may have impaired him because he finds himself powerless before her intriguing beauty. Eve's doubts are confirmed, too. Adam can find no one like himself and must solace his loneliness with an inferior creature. Under the new order woman is somewhere between a cleaving mischief and a seductive goddess and man is a benevolent despot or a tyrant in his government over her. Satan's misreading of the emblem of reciprocal love formed by Adam and Eve as they sat by the fountain in the Garden is made valid by the Fall. Edenic equality measured by giving and receiving is lost and Satan's reduced and jealous vision prevails. From Satan's vantage point, as he spies on the man and woman, it certainly seems that Milton has a grudge against women and that he is a spokesman for the patriarchal culture that subjugates women in marriage. But Satan, who is incapable of perceiving what is unlike him, brings his fallen vision to obscure by simplifying the complex world of Eden. In Paradise Lost the inferiority of woman and the superiority of man is very clearly born from the demonic corruption of the human imagination.

Human love, the greatest of the joys of Paradise, is too precarious in aftertimes to secure happiness for mankind. As the Christian vision of history is revealed to Adam, celestial love, which created the world and framed the Garden of Eden for man's earthly pleasure, subsumes terrestrial love. The sexual division of mankind, in Eden a private human matter, becomes a public figure of the redemption. Eve's creation, which was the beginning of human love, must now be glossed by the analogy of the birth of the Church from the side of Christ, second Adam. Adam's narrative of Eve's creation in Book VIII omitted

the standard Christian typology because it was part of his innocence that the wound in his side was caused by the arrow of Cupid and that the rib was "formed and fashioned" into a beautiful woman. In the new version of the creation of Eve, Adam is initiated into religious knowledge rather than into the sensual pleasure taken in the amorous beauty of the Garden and his wife. The rib is used to build the Church which leads man from the terrestrial world to the Paradise within. The Eve who seemed to be the sum and source of all beauty on earth is replaced by the Eve who will bear the promised seed of man's deliverance from the Fall. The parallel between the creation of Eve, who led Adam to the earthly Garden, and the preparations for his departure into a third and last new world are sharply drawn. The vision of Adam in Books XI and XII is, in effect, an emendation of his dream-vision in Book VIII.<sup>23</sup> His terrestrial dream of love now seems partial as the Christian exegesis is added to the creation of woman.

Before he appends Christian typology to the creation of Eve, Milton adds one element that he deliberately omitted from his original exegesis. Adam's first account of Eve's birth was innocent of any pain or harm or sense of loss, all traditionally part of the exegesis of the creation of woman from the side of man. Adam's sleep in Book VIII was not an anaesthetic device used by a surgeon-God while he performed his curious operation on the man's body. The anaesthesia and the pain, excluded from Paradise, finally appear as Adam and Eve are given their sentence of exile. When he hears that he must leave the Garden

Adam at the news  
Heart-strook with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
That all his senses bound.

(XI, 263-65)

Adam is frozen, anaesthetized, so as not to feel the pain of his terrible punishment. His bound senses are curiously reminiscent of the description of the bound senses of Adam cast into a deep sleep so that God might create the woman in Sylvester's *DuBartas*.<sup>24</sup> Milton numbs man's heart and his senses, however, so that he will not feel the pain of the loss of the Garden, a far greater loss than one rib, which the innocent Adam, not plagued by the literal facts of his dream, understood as a metaphor. Adam may not choose metaphor to understand his sentence. He is silent and Eve, hidden from the Angel, breaks out into her lament for their Paradise. When Adam recovers from his trance-like horror, he thanks the Angel for the kindness with which he delivered the frightful sentence:

gently hast thou told  
Thy message, which might else in telling wound  
And in performing end us.

(XI, 298-300)

The Angel's demeanor and Adam's shock, celestial love and the natural frailty of man, combine to protect him against the new terror of imagining life outside the Garden in the subjected plain below. It is worth noting that the horror and pain that other exegetes associate with the creation of woman Milton unequivocally reserves for man's exile. Horror and pain without the balm of anaesthesia Milton reserves for Satan and the birth of his offspring, Sin, who becomes the emblem of tormenting births.

Adam's dream-vision of the creation of Eve drew him further into his terrestrial domain and inspired him with a prophecy of human love and marriage. The vision is now completed according to the Christian exegesis of Adam's sleep as a revelation of future human

history. The parallel between this new vision and Adam's dream of the creation of Eve is underscored by Michael as he prepares to educate him for life in exile:

Ascend  
This Hill; let Eve (for I have drencht her eyes)  
Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak'st,  
As once thou slep'st, while Shee to life was form'd.  
(XI, 366-69)

History implicitly becomes the new spouse of Adam and the present moment is made tolerable only by the thought of its redemption. Adam becomes a type of Christ with this vision of the future. His ascent to the Mount echoes another ascent to a mount where man's failure will be atoned:

It was a Hill  
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top  
The Hemisphere of Earth in clearest Ken  
Stretcht out to the amplest reach of prospect lay,  
Not higher that Hill nor wider looking round,  
Whereon for different cause the Tempter set  
Our second Adam in the Wilderness,  
To show him all Earth's Kingdoms and thir Glory.  
(XI, 377-84)

Adam's series of three visions, his transportation into Paradise, the creation of Eve, and the revelation of the effects of the Fall, mark his brief stay in Paradise. As the last vision completes the other two, innocence loses its reality and seems a short, pleasant dream, an interlude between the creation of man and his familiar, fallen state. From the Mount of Vision, in the face of the horrors of the future and the Divine love that will pay the penalty for mankind, Adam's vision of Eve, the promise of the highest happiness in Eden, seems slight. The dream-vision, in retrospect, seems more like a convenient device employed by God to create a woman acceptable to

the man, rather than a revelation of Adam's humanity and his place in creation.

Reading backwards from the aftermath of the Fall it is possible, then, to reinterpret Eve's creation so that it may be glossed with the standard exegesis of Milton's contemporaries. The doubts that Adam raised before Raphael become adequate explications of the hieroglyphic of the rib. After Eve has acted out the old prejudices against woman and has come to believe in them herself, her birth, if it were narrated a second time, would express her inferior status and the priority of Adam. In the same light, Eve's version of her birth, which begins with the temptation by the clear, smooth lake, seems to demonstrate not only her secondary nature but her inherent self-absorption, weakness and vanity. Admiring her own beauty and very nearly choosing her reflection against the counsel of the voice of God that leads her to Adam, Eve seems never to have been innocent at all.<sup>25</sup> And this is, in fact, what Satan, hidden among the beasts of the field, deduces from her story. The contemporary exegesis largely coincides with Satan's vision but to read Eve's creation through him is to forego the fiction of Paradise where equality, unless measured in reciprocity, is as absurd as superiority or inferiority and where visual beauty, verified by aural explication, is not a fleeting pleasure but solid virtue. The hierarchical concepts that diminish the worth of the terrestrial world, symbolized by the reflection in the lake that "seem'd another Sky," cannot rightly be applied until Paradise is lost. A too hasty application of the ordinary, or devilish, commentary obviates the change that comes with the Fall and reduces

the earth to dead matter and the woman to an allegory of the flesh now forfeit to death.

For the same reason, though the promise of redemption is established in Book III, long before the poet describes the earthly Paradise, the standard typology of Adam and Eve plays no part in the Garden until a new Paradise must be sought. If the analogy of Adam and Eve as Christ and his Church is normally used to argue that male authority must be tempered with love, Milton's Adam needs no supernatural aids to teach him to love his wife, nor to warn him not to hold her in too strict subjection. The secular vision of the origin of love suffices. If Raphael greets Eve with "Hail . . . the holy salutation us'd / Long after to blest Mary, second Eve" (V, 387), the terms he uses for the first Eve are, nevertheless, exclusively terrestrial:

Hail Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful Womb  
Shall fill the World more numerous with thy Sons  
Than with these various fruits the Trees of God  
Have heap'd this Table.

(V, 388-91)

His salutation, though it encapsules both the present Paradise and the later one regained by Christ's sacrifice, is weighted on the side of a purely human world where the easy transmutation of flesh to spirit leaves man's realm remarkably free of theology. Only after that transmutation is made impossible does the religious vision become necessary as a promise of the atonement of Christ that saves the earth and human life from complete surrender to the shadows of Death and Hell. The Incarnation will be the new version of the lost reciprocity of Heaven and earth that found expression in Raphael's

dining on the fruits of the Garden and in the barren sun that shone on the fruitful earth for the sake of vegetable growth. Adam, told of the virgin birth of the Son of God, exclaims with joy, "So God with man unites" (XII, 382); it is actually a reunion of the two realms alienated through his disobedience. Had he not lost his terrestrial innocence, Adam would have had to seek no further than his Eve to find the higher realms. Because of mankind's failure, the transformation of flesh to spirit revealed at her creation will be enacted by the Promised Seed, first when the Divine essence is clothed in human flesh and finally at the last Judgment when Christ will

dissolve

Satan with his perverted World, then raise  
 From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,  
 New Heav'ns, new Earth, Ages of endless date  
 Founded on righteousness and peace and love,  
 To bring forth fruits Joy and eternal Bliss.  
 (XII, 546-51)

This is the Christian version of the secular transformation of Adam's rib and blood into Eve, whose spirit of love and amorous delight made the terrestrial Garden a paradise of human pleasure.

The creation of Eve in a dream-vision which sums up man's life in Paradise is finally completed with the loss of innocence and the corruption of pleasure. The new Paradise within may have its joys in man's heart and mind, but it will not have the sensual delight of the Garden of Eden. The fateful equation of Eve with Eden that Adam makes at her creation is fulfilled. When he loses the vision of beauty and the promise of love freely given and received between man and woman, that is, when he loses Eve to death and to the domestic hierarchy that defines their mutual distrust and distaste, Adam loses

his Paradise. It is remarkable that Milton has been so often and so long accused of misogyny when he places the woman at the center of his vision of the perfect world and equates the loss of love between man and woman with the Fall from God's Grace. It is true that the new world in the subjected plain below will exalt the man and debase the woman. Eve, comforted by dreams given her by the Archangel, prepares herself for meek submission to her fate and to her husband and passes into the silent, unwritten history which is the lot of all women. It is also true that the Paradise promised at the end of time will be centered on Divine, not erotic, love and in that drama woman's part, too will be meek and silent. Yet as Kermode has pointed out, the primary concern of the poem is the terrestrial Garden and human pleasure:

Paradise Lost is a poem about death, and about pleasure and its impairment. . . . And the sense of loss is keener by far than the apprehension of things unseen, the remote promise of restoration. The old Eden we know, we can describe it, inlay it with a thousand old flowers and compare it with a hundred other paradises; throughout the whole history of loss and deprivation the poets have reconstructed it with love. The new one may be called 'happier farr,' but poetry does not know it. The paradise of Milton's poem is the lost, the only true paradise.<sup>26</sup>

The emotional and intellectual focus of that loss is the corruption of the marriage of Adam and Eve by their demonic misreading of reciprocity as hierarchy and their acceptance of misogyny invented by Satan when he gave birth to Sin, his notion of another self. If at the end of the poem Eve has been unmasked as a deceiving temptress, half woman and half serpent, and, therefore, relegated to be the shadow of her husband, it is because God's creation has been perverted from its original intent.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>For Milton's version of the Platonic myth of the birth of love, see Chapter III, p. 156 above.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter III, pp. 179-80 above.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Elyot, The Defence of Good Women (London, 1545), sig. A6v.

<sup>4</sup>For the opinion that Adam's vituperation is an exposition of Milton's beliefs about women see Rogers, The Troublesome Helpmate (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1966), p. 155.

<sup>5</sup>For the serpent with a female face in Medieval iconography, see J. M. Evans, "Paradise Lost" and the Genesis Tradition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), p. 170 and pp. 181-82; J. B. Trapp, "The Iconography of the Fall of Man," Approaches to "Paradise Lost," ed. C. A. Patrides (London: Edward Arnold, 1968), pp. 262-63; and Roland M. Frye, Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), p. 103.

<sup>6</sup>Ester Sowernam, Ester hath hang'd Haman (London, 1617), p. 36.

<sup>7</sup>Joseph Swetnam, The araignment of lewd, idle, froward and unconstant women (London, 1617), p. 28.

<sup>8</sup>*ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>9</sup>John Knox, The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, ed. Edward D. Arber, The English Scholar's Library of Old and Modern Works, No. 2 (London, 1878), p. 19.

<sup>10</sup>St. Jerome, Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum, ed. Paul de Lagarde, in Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1959), LXXII, 65.

<sup>11</sup>St. Jerome, Against Jovinianus, trans. W. H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W. G. Martley, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, ed. H. Wace and P. Schaff (N.Y.: Charles Scribner, 1912), VI, 383.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 383.

<sup>13</sup> Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, trans. Henrietta Szold (1925; rpt. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1942), I, 65-66. See also Mary Irma Corcoran, Milton's Paradise with Reference to the Hexameral Background (Wash., D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1945), pp. 62-63.

<sup>14</sup> Andreus Rivetus, Operum Theologicorum (Rotterdam, 1561), I, 102: "Ibi fabulantur, Chachamim, id est, sapientes suos, disputare super eo quod scriptum est, Creabatque Deus hominem, & c. Creabat inquam, masculum & foemellam. Deinde hoc cap. 2 scriptum extat., Bonum non est ut homo solus sit, ego ipsi adjutorium procurabo, quod circum eum sit. Ibi quaerunt sapientes isti scilicet, quo mulier illa prima quae cum Adamo creata fuerat, abient respondentque mulierem omnium primam, Lilim, vocatam, superbe de se sentientem, viri sui dicto audientem esse noluisse, quod statueret eum non minus è terra conditum quam se ipsam. Hunc igitur Deum separavisse ab Adamo, eique aliam è corpore ejus formatam adjunxisse, ut eum sequeretur, ei morem gereret, serviens illi, tanquam membrum corporis ejus, & c. De Lili autem sua mira fabulantur, quod ne quidem ab Angelis à Deo missis potuit adduci, ut marito reconciliaretur, quod Mater sit Daemonum, & quod infantibus recens natis insidietur, iis tantum exceptis, quibus alligatur schedula, in qua scripta sint nomina trium Angelorum, qui ad ipsam à Deo missi ferunt ut mandatum Dei ipsi declararent, quibus promisit se non nocitarum iis de quibus dictum est, qui in charta aut pergamento scripta gestarent nomina Senoi, Sammasenoi, & Sanmangeloph. Quae deliramenta & portenta, non tam deridenda sunt, quam deploranda."

<sup>15</sup> See Chapter III, pp. 163-65 above.

<sup>16</sup> Against Jovinianus, p. 385.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p. 383.

<sup>18</sup> The resemblance between Eve and Dalila is temporary. For a study of their different fates see Mary Ann Nevins Radzinowicz, "Eve and Dalila: Renovation and the Hardening of the Heart," Reason and Imagination, ed. J. A. Mazzeo (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 155-81. For a discussion of Dalila's defense of herself, see Mary Ann Radzinowicz, Toward "Samson Agonistes" (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 36-50.

<sup>19</sup> Tetrachordon, ed. Ernest Sirluck in Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959), II, 597-98.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 589-90.

<sup>21</sup> It may be that Milton's argument for polygamy reflects his pessimism about erotic love and marriage. In the Christian Doctrine he advocates polygamy as it was practiced by the Old Testament Patriarchs on the grounds that there is no Scriptural authority that prohibits it: "if anyone has several wives his relationship towards each one will be no less complete and the husband will be no less one flesh with each one of them, than if he had only one wife." Trans. John Carey, ed. Maurice Kelley, in Complete Prose Works (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1973), XI, 357. Milton seems to imply that each marriage can offer only partial companionship. It is impossible to imagine Adam with a multitude of dream-visions and a multitude of wives, but for fallen man the numbers may hope to supply what one wife alone cannot.

<sup>22</sup> William Austin, Haec Homo, wherein the excellency of the creation of woman is described (London, 1637), p. 119.

<sup>23</sup> For the Eve-Mary typology see Mary Christopher Pecheux, "The Concept of the Second Eve in Paradise Lost," PMLA, 75 (1960), 359-66. In her article "The Second Adam and the Church in Paradise Lost," ELH, 34 (1967), 184, Pecheux notes the parallel relation between Adam's vision in Books XI and XII and his vision at Eve's creation: "The 'sum of earthly bliss' which Adam found in the nuptial bower as the fruit of his union with Eve is subsumed now into the endless joy which the elect share in the spirit of love which is the bond between the Father and the Son." The typology of Divine Love ought not to be used, however, to gloss the dream in Book VIII. The "opening" of Adam's side, which Pecheux (p. 177) links to the aperçuit of the Vulgate for the piercing of Christ's side, is initially linked to the opening of Adam's cell of fancy, his internal sight. Only after Book IX, when the mind's eye has been darkened, is it possible to read the opening of Adam's side as a type of the wounding of Christ on the Cross.

<sup>24</sup> See Chapter I, p. 12 above for Dubartas' description of the sleep of Adam.

<sup>25</sup> See C. A. Patrides, Milton and the Christian Tradition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 105-6, for the opinion that Milton, like his contemporaries, regarded Eve as prejudiced towards Satan's arguments and as partly fallen even before she ate the forbidden fruit.

<sup>26</sup> "Adam Unparadised," The Living Milton, ed. Frank Kermode (1960; rpt. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 121.

## CONCLUSION

In Paradise Lost, Milton offers an explanation for the historical condition of women and the nature of marriage. Eve is created in a world where "Great or Bright" is not a measure of excellence and where she does not need to strive for equality. Though both she and Adam anticipate fallen doubts about their respective status, so long as they remain obedient to God, they resolve their doubts through the reciprocity inherent in their union. When Eve is deluded by Satan's false reasoning and attempts to abandon her humanity for Godhead, she loses a world whose logic kept her free and falls into the world of hierarchy where she is inferior to her mate and subject to his will.

The innocent Eve does not conform to our idea of a free and equal woman. Neither does she conform to the standard seventeenth-century view of woman as the inferior sex whose creation for and from man institutes her obedience to his authority. Nor does she conform to the view of the more enlightened commentators who argue that woman is equal to man because she is identical to him in all but body. In fact, the Eve of Paradise Lost belies the assumptions Milton himself made in the Divorce Tracts and in the Christian Doctrine. In those treatises Milton did not doubt the validity of the marital hierarchy and saw no impediment to conjugal love in female subjection to male authority. But the best of marriages in the fallen world is only a distorted shadow of the perfect marriage in the Garden of Eden. For

the epic, perhaps to accommodate his vision of an "unfeign'd Union of Mind" between Adam and Eve, Milton reinterprets the aboriginal status of woman. Milton consistently argued that companionship is the prime purpose of matrimony and, in Paradise Lost, the friendship between man and woman is so exalted that it obviates the petty questions of equality or hierarchy. In the poem, Milton seems to agree with Cicero that friends ought not to keep too exact account of their credits and debits.

From the perspective of the fallen world, it is difficult to believe in the importance of Eve for Milton's myth of Paradise. Before the Fall, Eve is the genius loci of the Garden of pleasure. She is the true Aphrodite:

more lovely fair  
 Than wood nymph, or the fairest Goddess feign'd  
 Of three that in Mount Ida strove.  
 (V, 380-82)

She is Adam's guide to the world he is created to rule and, in time, she would have been his guide to the celestial realms and the sky he so eagerly sought from the beginning. When, like the goddess on Mount Ida, she acquires the golden apple, Eve loses the power to make Eden a garden of amorous delight and Adam becomes the guide to their wanderings in the wild world of their exile. The fate of Eve's awesome beauty is foreshadowed as Satan spies her among the roses:

Much hee the Place admir'd, the Person more,  
 As one who long in populous City pent,  
 Where houses thick and Sewers annoy the Air,  
 Forth issuing on a Summer's Morn to breathe  
 Among the pleasant Villages and Farms  
 Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,  
 The smell of Grain, or tedded Grass, or Kine,  
 Or Dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;

If chance with Nymphlike step fair Virgin pass,  
 What pleasing seem'd for her now pleases more,  
 She most, and in her look sums all Delight.  
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold  
 This Flow'ry Plat, the sweet recess of Eve.  
 (IX, 444-56)

The country maid who sums up all delight is a diminutive version of the Eve who appeared in Adam's dream-vision. While in his dream Adam saw Eve as the goddess of love and beauty inspiring life into the dull earth, Satan sees her as a peasant. The reductive vision of Eve is victorious. After the Fall, Eve becomes the good wife of the conduct books and the marriage sermons. Dim echoes of the power of her beauty survive only in the pastoral dream where, for a moment, the city dweller recaptures the delights of the natural world through a random encounter with a pretty girl.

The Fall of man told by Milton's Adam is the story of his loss of Eve. Only through her can we understand what has been forfeited with the loss of innocence. Eve is vulnerable, as vulnerable as the Garden and the human capacity for pleasure. She is second to Adam, a moon to his sun, preoccupied with the earth as he is with the heavens, but unless we are willing to imagine a world in which second is not baser than first, and the earth is not less worthy than the sky, and to be vulnerable is not to be doomed, then we cannot get beyond the envious, hierarchical vision of Satan. Unless we can see that Eve is a fit help for Adam, and in that sense his equal, then we cannot imagine Milton's Paradise. Her fragility, her vine-like dependence, is a measure of our willingness to believe in the myth of Eden as the perfection of our own perverse world which values strength and despises softness. Milton deliberately emphasizes the

fragility and dependence of the first woman. At the crucial moment, when Satan approaches masked as a serpent, Milton inverts the traditional exegesis which argues that woman is created to be a prop to her husband and describes Eve as the "fairest unsupported Flow'r, / From her best prop so far and storm so nigh" (IX, 432-33). This is the last vision of such fragility before it is transformed into despicable weakness. If the reader can approach Eve without losing himself in questions of priority and superiority and without condemning her fragility, then he may begin to understand Milton's vision of innocence.

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