Text: John Mithen: Com plate Young + Major Rose Ed. Merrith Y. Hughes (New York, 1877)

IL PENSEROSO

Such strains as would have won the car That Orpheus' self may heave his head Of heap Elysian flow'rs, and hear From golden slumber on a bed

Of Pluto, to have quite serfice

150

(1631)

These delights if thou canst give, Mirth, with thee I mean to live. His half-regain'd Eurydice.

145. On their wedding day Orpheus lost his wife Eurydice, but when he followed her to Hades, his music won the consent of Proserpina, Pluto's queen, that he should take back his wife. But

the consent—Ovid saye (Met. X, 50-63)—was given on the impossible condition that he should not once look back at her as he led her up into the sunlight.

IL PENSEROSO

And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess, As the gay motes that people the Sunbeams, The Sea Nymphs, and their powers offended. The fickle Pensioners of Morpheus' train. Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys; Hence vain deluding joys, The brood of folly without father bred, O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue. Or that Starr'd Ethiop Queen that strove But hail thou Goddess, sage and holy, Prince Memnon's sister might beseem, Thee bright-hair'd Vesta long of yore, His daughter she (in Saturn's reign, Yet thou art higher far descended; Whose Saintly visage is too bright And therefore to our weaker view, To hit the Sense of human sight; To set her beauty's praise above Black, but such as in esteem, Or likest hovering dreams, Hail divinest Melancholy, Dwell in some idle brain, As thick and numberless To solitary Saturn bore; How little you bested,

MILTON XXENG

RESRV

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Albrecht Dürer's engraving Melencolia I 10. For Morpheus see L'All, 10, n.
16. Albrecht Dürer's engraving Melencolia I
17. S. Fink suggests in PQ, XIX (1940), 310 may
have contributed to Milton's picture of a dark
have contributed to Milton's picture of a dark
goddess of melancholy. Burton said (Anatomy I,
iii, 1, 3; Vol. I, 397) that men in whose horoscope For Morpheus see L'All, 10, n.

(Od. XI, 521) had, according to Dictys, a sister named Hemera.

19. The Starr'd Ethiop Queen is Cassiopeia, who, according to Hyginus' Astronomica II. x, was transformed into the familiar constellation for boasting that her daughter Andromeda (not herself) was

23. Most classical writers made Vesta a virgin daughter of Saturn, but in making her the mother more beautiful than the Nereids.

of Melancholy (i.e. of the contemplative temperament) Milton may have remembered that for the portant thing about her was her enthronement in the heavens in an Orphic Hymn and in Plato's mythographer Conti (VIII, xix; p. 910) the im-Phaedrus, 247-b.

parentage is due in part to Neoplatonic conceptions of him as "the collective angelic mind" and in part to the astrological theory that all melancholic per-25. Milton thought of the Golden Age when Saturn reigned on Mt. Ida in Crete, where Jove was born to him and later overthrew him (Cf. PL. I, 510-22). Saturn's share in Vesta's fanciful sons were born under

ill disposed skyes,
When oblique Saturne sate in the house of agonyes.
(F.Q. II, ix, 52, 8-9)

And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet, 1.15 corners & God Lay, 45 ** I hee Chantress ou un.

I woo to hear thy Even-Song:
And missing thee, I walk unseen Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet, Through the Heav'n's wide pathless way; Sweet Bird that shunn'st the noise of folly, That in trim Gardens takes his pleasure; While Cynthia checks her Dragon yoke, Oft in glimmering Bow'rs and glades And looks commercing with the skies, But first, and chiefest, with thee bring Smoothing the rugged brow of night, Come pensive Nun, devout and pure, Him that yon soars on golden wing, While yet there was no fear of love. Aye round about Jove's Altar sing. With a sad Leaden downward cast, Thou fix them on the earth as fast. Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes: On the dry smooth-shaven Green, To behold the wand'ring Moon, Over thy decent shoulders drawn. Come, but keep thy wonted state, Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne, Less Philomel will deign a Song, He met her, and in secret shades Like one that had been led astray And sable stole of Cypress Lawn, And add to these retired Leisure, With ev'n step, and musing gait, And the mute Silence hist along, Most musical, most melancholy! Gently o'er th' accustom'd Oak; There held in holy passion still, In her sweetest, saddest plight, And hears the Muses in a ring All in a robe of darkest grain, Of woody Ida's inmost grove, Riding near her highest noon, Sober, steadfast, and demure, The Cherub Contemplation; Flowing with majestic train, Forget thyself to Marble, till 1499 2027 00327 *PENSEROSO*

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33. grain: color.
35. Cypress Laure of "Cyprus black as e'er was strow" (Winter's Tale IV, iv, 219).
42. Mr. Garrod compares Thomas Tornkins' Albumasor (I, iv, 3-4): "Wonder for me, admice and be astronished, Marvel thyself to Marble." Cf. Shak, 13.

43. sad: serious. Cf. Comus, 189

52. Ezekiel (i, 4-6) inspired this imagery as it did that of the "Cherubic shapes" which convoy the "Chariot of Paternal deity" in PL VI, 750-3.

56. Philosophy and "lover of song," the Greek name of the nightingale.

59. Cynthia: the goddess of the moon. See Ely.

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And oft, as if her head she bow'd,

Stooping through a fleecy cloud.

Oft on a Plat of rising ground,

Marie Const

19

75 110

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I hear the far-off Curfew sound, Over some wide-water'd shore, Swinging slow with sullen roar; Or if the Air will not permit, Some still removed place will fit,	Where glowing Embers through the room Teach light to counterfeit a gloom, Far from all resort of mirth, Save the Cricket on the hearth,	To bless the doors from nightly harm: Or let my Lamp at midnight hour, Be seen in some high lonely Tow'r, Where I may oft outwatch the Bear, With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere	The spirit of Fiato to unfold What Worlds, or what vast Regions hold The immortal mind that hath forsook Her mansion in this fleshly nook: And of those Dæmons that are found	In hre, air, flood, or underground, Whose power hath a true consent With Planet, or with Element. Sometime let Gorgeous Tragedy In Scepter'd Pall come sweeping by,	Presenting I neves, or retopy line, Or the tale of Troy divine, Or what (though rare) of later age, Ennobled hath the Buskin'd stage. But, O sad Virgin, that thy power	Might raise Musseus from his bower, Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing. Such notes as, warbled to the string, Drew Iron tears down Pluro's cheek, And made Hell grant what Love did seek. Or call up him that left half told

83. The cry of the Bellman (night-watchman) calling the hours is like a chant (charm, which

originally meant, song.")

86. The Tow'r, as Allen notes (Vision, p. 18), is Plato's "acropolis of the soul" (Rep. 560b) and the watchtower." where Isaish said (xxi, 8), "I am set in my ward whole nights." There Milton contemplates the constellation of the Great Bear, which never sets, and which the thrive-great Hermes of

taught was a symbol of perfection.

§ 7. To outwatch the Bear is to work through the night; the Great Bear circles the North Pole with-

Egyptian Thoth and the Greek Hermes and was supposed to have been the author of numerous Alexandria in the third and fourth centuries A.D. Milton probably knew them in the translation of the Plorentine Platonist Marsilio Ficino (Paris, 1494). He was thrice great, said Raleigh (History II, vi, 6), "because he spake of the Trinitie, affirming that there is one God in Trinitie," but in the Dedication esoteric writings which were actually written in Alexandria in the third and fourth centuries A.D. out ever setting.

88. Hernes Trismegistus was identified with both

to the Advancement Bacon made his triplicity consist in "the power and fortune of a king, the knowledge and illumination of a priest, and the

learning and universality of a philosopher.

89. For Plato see Comut, 10-11, n.

93. In Burton's "Digression of Spirits" (Anatomy J. ii. t. 2: Vol. I. 190) evil spirits are classified as "fiery, aerial, terrestrial, watery, and subterranean devils besides those fairies, sayrs, nymphs, &c... XXXIII [1918], i. 84) to the Hermetic Definitions of Ascleptus to King Amon xui, though Burton attributes it to Psellus.

97. Tragedy suggests dramas like Aeschylus Seven against Thebes, plays about Pelops' descendants Agamemnon, Orestes, Iphigenia, and Electra, and Trojan plays like Euripides' Trojan Dames, Andromache, and Hecuba.

104. Perhaps Milton remembered Vugil's picture of the mythical bard Musaeus standing "foremost of all the heroes and poets" in Elysium (Aen. VI, 656-8).

105. Ct. Orpheus in L'All, 145, n.

it renseroso	2
The story of Cambuscan bold,	110
And who had Canace to wife, That own'd the virtuous Ring and Glass.	
And of the wondrous Horse of Brass, On which the <i>Tartar</i> King did ride; And if aught else great Barde becide	115
In sage and solemn trues have sung,	
Of Forests, and enchantments drear,	
Where more is meant than meets the ear.	120
Till civil-suited Morn appear.	
Not trickt and frounc't as she was wont	
With the Attic Boy to hunt,	
But kerchieft in a comely Cloud,	125
Or usher'd with a shound and	
When the gust hash blown his 611	
Ending on the rustling Leaves.	
With minute-drops from off the Faves.	
And when the Sun begins to fling	130
His flaring beams, me Goddess bring	
To arched walks of twilight groves,	
And shadows brown that Sylvan loves	
Of Pine or monumental Oak,	135
Was never heard the Number of Justice	
Or fright them from their hallow?	
There in close covert by some Broad	
Where no profaner eve may look.	
Hide me from Day's garish eye,	140
While the Bee with Honied thigh,	
And the Worse	
With such concert as their Lane	
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep.	145
And let some strange mysterious dream	
Wave at his Wings in Airy stream,	
Of lively portraiture display'd,	
And as I wake, sweet music breather	150
Above, about, or underneath,	
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,	

tool the story of the "Tartre Cambyuskan" and his is children Algarsyf. Camball, and Canacre, whose guest offered him a Horse of Bras and gave her a ring which possessed its wearer with symbolic powers witch have been identified by Allen (Vitien, p. 13) with those to which Milton aspires in the closing lines of the poem.

122. civil-suited: soberly dressed.
123. Ci. the story of Aurora's love for Cephalus IE IV, 49-51, n.
128. Air: its. The modern form for the neuter bad not yet become established.

130. minute-drops: drops falling at intervals of 134. brown: dark. Cf. PR II, 293, n. The wood-god Sylvanus has the forest setting that he a minute.

has in den. VIII, 597-9.

145. consort: harmony.

147. Cl. Jonson's image in Night's speech in The Vision of Delight:

Break, Phant'sie, from thy cave of cloud,
And spread thy purple wings;

Now all thy figures are allowed,
And various shapes of things;

Create of airy forms a stream,

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155

As may with sweetness, through mine car, And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes. Of every Star that Heav'n doth shew, And I with thee will choose to live. To walk the studious Cloister's palc. To something like Prophetic strain. And every Herb that sips the dew; In Service high and Anthems clear, And storied Windows richly dight, And love the high embowed Roof, Or th'unseen Genius of the Wood. The Hairy Gown and Mossy Cell, Where I may sit and rightly spell These pleasures Mclancholy give, There let the pealing Organ blow Find out the peaceful hermitage, And may at last my weary age With antic Pillars massy proof, To the full voic'd Choir below, But let my due feet never fail Casting a dim religious light. Till old experience do attain Dissolve me into ecstasics,

enclosure. The word repeats the meaning of Cloister.

Windows: stained-glass windows 158. antic: quaint, fantastic. representing Bible stories. 159. storicd

171. Scientific prose and poetry alike were full of 170. spell: consider, speculate.

there [could not] be wanting, even for every start a peculiar virtue and operation, as every herb, plant, fruit, and flower adorning the face of the earth hath the like." one of which Raleigh declared (History I, xi) that, "in the treasury of His wisdom, who is infinite," the belief about "the beautiful stars," for every

(1631?)

SONNET VII

How Soon HATH TIME

accused him of "too much love of learning" and of dreaming away his "years in the arms of a studious retirement." R. M. Smith suggests (MLN, LX (1945), 394-8) that Although Milton's twenty-third birthday fell on December 9, 1631, his practice in dating his poems and his retirement to Hammersmith after taking his degree at Cambridge in July after writing it he enclosed a copy of it in a letter to a friend who, he said, had Spenser is one of the "more timely-happy spirits" of line 8, and that the sonnet has more Latin verse-letter to Gabriel Harvey. In Astrophel and Stella XXIII Sidney writes a some than accidental resemblances to Spenser's defense of himself against a similar accusation in 1632, suggests a time early in that year as the date of this sonnet. A few month what similar defense of himself.

Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year! But my late spring no bud or blossom show'th. And inward ripeness doth much less appear, How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth, Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth, That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th. My hasting days fly on with full career, That I to manhood am arriv'd so near,

Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n; To that same lot, however mean or high, It shall be still in strictest measure ev'n As ever in my great task-Master's eye. Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow, All is, if I have grace to use it so,

it, Rester Svendsen prefers (Exp. VII (1949), 53)

10. still: always, forever.

160

what is destined."

165

eternity and interprets the line to mean, "All time is, if I have grace to use it so, as eternity in God's sight." Cf. A. S. P. Woodhouse on the punctua-14. Donald Dorian interprets ever as meaning to have it refer to ripeness in 1. 7. tion in UTQ, XIII (1943), 96. 13. Instead of regarding All as the antecedent of 10-12. The lines are compared by Lewis Campbell (CR, Oct. 1894) with Findar, Nemean Odes IV, 43: "Whatever merit King Fate has given me, I shall know that time in its course will accomplish

ARCADES

Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by some Noble persons of her Family, who appear on the Scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of State, with this Song.

170-

To whom our vows and wishes bend, Look Nymphs, and Shepherds look, Is that which we from hence descry, Fame that her high worth to raise, Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse, Here our solemn search hath end. Less than half we find exprest, What sudden blaze of majesty Of detraction from her praise, Envy bid conceal the rest. We may justly now accuse Goo divine to be mistook: This, this is she

10

Shooting her beams like silver threads. Mark what radiant state she spreads, In circle round her shining throne, Sitting like a Goddess bright, In the center of her light. This, this is she alone,

Might she the wise Latona be, Or the tow'rod Cybele,

matives of Arcady (1, 28) or Arcadia, the Greek in the Peloponnesus within which lay the rivers The Nymphs and Shepherds-the Arcades -of Arcalis which produced the Arcadias of Arcadia which produced the Arcadias of Arcadia of Arcadias o Clour's Come Home Again in 1595. In 1600 natried Sir Thomas Egerton and became the Cyllene (1. 98), Erymanth (1. 100), and Earl of Derby, was lamented by Spenser in teus (1. 30) and Ladon (1. 97) and the moun-Ovid laid the story of Pan's acessful courtship of the nymph Syrinx (1. jahe: Alice Spencer, whose loss of her husband, Malus (1. 102).

stepmother of Sir John Egerton, who (now Earl of Bridgewater) gave the entertainment in her honor for which Arcades was written.

8. Cf. Fame in QNov, 173-202. 20. With her children around her, the Countess members of his household, among them probably his little daughter Alice Egerton, the Lady of 7. The searchers are the Earl's children and other Comus.

21. Cybele appears in the Aeneid (X, 252-3) wearing a turreled crown because she first taught men to build fortified cities, and again (VL 789) as the mother of a hundred gods. is like Latona, the mother of Apollo and Diana.