

Acquaintances

(1) *Paradise Lost*

Salient Facts

Full Title:	The complete title of the poem is <i>Paradise Lost</i> .
Name of the Writer:	John Milton (The life-span of John Milton was 1608-74. He learned many languages and completed his studies at Cambridge University in 1632. Later, he travelled in Europe, where he continued studying and also wrote poems, including his famous pastoral poem <i>Lycidas</i> . When the English Civil War started in 1642, Milton supported Oliver Cromwell and wrote strongly in favour of executing King Charles I. But when the monarchy returned, Milton had to hide. During this time, he wrote his greatest work, <i>Paradise Lost</i> . By then, he was completely blind and had to dictate the poem to his daughter. Later, the monarchy forgave him, and he lived the rest of his life quietly. He died of kidney disease at the age of sixty-five.
When Written:	Milton wrote the poem between the years 1658 and 1663.
Where Written:	He wrote it in London, England.
Written in Book/s	12
Characters	Main/Major: Satan, God the Father, God the Son, Adam, Eve, Sin, Death. Minor: Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael, Abdiel, Beelzebub, Moloch, Belial, Mammon, Mulciber, Chaos, Night, The Muse (Urania), Ithuriel, Zephon, The Holy Spirit, Cain and Abe, Enoch, Noah, Nimrod, Abraham, Pharaoh, Moses, Joshua, David, Mary.
When Published:	The first edition was printed in 1667. A second edition, with some changes, was published in 1674.
Literary Period:	The poem belongs to the period of the late English Renaissance and the English Restoration.

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Genre:	It is an epic poem based on stories from Christian religion and mythology.
Setting:	The poem takes place in three main places—Heaven, Hell, and Paradise (the Garden of Eden).
Climax:	The most important turning point in the poem is when Eve eats the forbidden fruit.
Point of View:	The story is told by a narrator who knows everything (third-person omniscient).

Plot Summary of *Paradise Lost*

The poem begins with Milton asking a Heavenly Muse to help him tell the story of the “Fall of Man.” The action starts in Hell, where Satan and his followers lie after being defeated by God. The devils build a meeting hall called Pandaemonium, where they plan how to continue fighting against God. Beelzebub suggests that they should harm God’s new creation, Earth. Satan agrees and decides to go alone to find Earth. On his way out of Hell, he meets Sin and Death, who are his children. They decide to follow him and later build a bridge between Hell and Earth.

Meanwhile, God knows that Satan will try to mislead humans. The Son (Christ) offers to sacrifice himself to save humankind. Satan then travels through Chaos and reaches Earth. He disguises himself as a good angel and sneaks past the guards. When he enters Paradise, he feels jealous of its beauty but chooses to spoil it with evil. He sees Adam and Eve and hears them talking about God’s command not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge.

That night, Adam and Eve sleep after innocent love. Satan becomes a toad and whispers into Eve’s ear. The angel Gabriel catches him and challenges him, but when God shows Golden Scales in the sky, Satan flees. Eve wakes up from a dream of disobedience. To protect Adam and Eve’s free will, God sends the angel Raphael to warn them.

Raphael eats with Adam and Eve and tells them about Satan’s rebellion in Heaven. Satan was jealous of God’s Son and convinced one-third of the angels to join him. Only one angel, Abdiel, left him and returned to God. In the war, the angels fought fiercely. The rebels even used cannons, but finally the Son of God defeated them and cast them into Hell. Raphael warns Adam not to be tricked by Satan.

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Raphael also explains how the world was created: first light, then stars and planets, then animals and humans. Adam asks more questions about the universe, but Raphael advises him not to desire too much knowledge. Adam then tells Raphael about his first memories and his strong love for Eve. After this, Raphael goes back to Heaven.

Seven days later, Satan returns to Eden. This time, he enters the body of a serpent. Eve suggests that she and Adam work separately. Adam does not like the idea but finally agrees. Alone in the garden, Eve meets Satan in the serpent's body. He praises her beauty and tells her he could speak because he ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. He tempts Eve, saying that if she eats the fruit, she will become wise and even like a goddess. Eve hesitates, but finally eats the fruit. She then gives some to Adam. Adam knows this is wrong, but eats it anyway because he does not want to lose Eve. After eating, they feel lust and have sinful desire.

God sends the Son to punish them. The serpent must crawl on the ground forever. Eve must suffer pain in childbirth and obey her husband. Adam must work hard for food. Sin and Death then enter Earth to spread suffering. Satan returns to Hell, but he and his followers are punished by being turned into serpents.

After the Fall, Earth becomes rougher and harder to live on. Animals turn wild and begin to harm each other. Adam and Eve argue and blame one another. At last, Eve admits her fault and even thinks of dying, but Adam comforts her. He suggests they can defeat Satan by being faithful to God. They both cry and repent.

Finally, God sends the angel Michael to remove them from Paradise. Before sending them out, Michael shows Adam visions of the future: many sins, the Great Flood, the Tower of Babel, the people of Israel, and their journey from Egypt. He also shows him the coming of Jesus, who will sacrifice himself to save humanity from sin. Adam feels comforted by this hope. At last, Adam and Eve leave Eden with tears, but also with courage to live and follow God's will.
