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Choosing the Fall to Rise Up: Gender Consumption and Eve's Culinary World

An Honors Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of English
Bates College
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
By
Sarah Herde
Lewiston, ME
May 5, 2021

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Tears come to mind when I think of the *village*, as my mom would say, that got me here.

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Abstract

Even as *Paradise Lost* imposes John Milton's own values of gender roles to construct Eden, notably allocating the responsibilities of the feminized, bodily domestic sphere to Eve, while Adam is granted masculinized, intellectual labor, Eve manages to resist and trouble this gendered division. Mastering her role and making it her own, Eve finds solace and happiness within what I call her new "culinary world," a sphere in which Eve conjoins labor to intellectual and emotional creation through the processes of food—including everything from harvesting, to preparation, to eating. The culinary world thus comes to encompass Eve's agency, and she uses food-based skills to defend against Adam's desire to overconsume her. I argue that Adam's aggressive consumption of Eve and rigid dependence on constructing and upholding gender binaries not only leads Eve to seek out her own culinary world; it also informs her eventual choice to eat the apple in order to create a new foundation of equality in which she hosts the necessary skills to defend herself. Eating the apple provides Eve with the knowledge needed to ensure she is not overconsumed by Adam even beyond the space of Eden. In deconstructing gendered binaries, she goes beyond establishing a proficient defense mechanism and gains access to a world-making ability of her own. She succeeds.

Introduction: Baking A New Paradise

We know how it ends. She eats the apple, he follows suit, and humankind is separated from God for all eternity. But, is that what happened? Even as John Milton's retelling of "the Fall of Man" in *Paradise Lost* mainly conforms to traditional Western Christian values, the ways in which he explores Eve's ultimate choice to eat the apple actually complicates the typical ascription of responsibility for original sin to Eve. But, was it really *the* original sin? Was it a sin at all? We know what Eve ultimately chooses to do, but *Paradise Lost* also invites us to consider why. For example, Milton's audience knows that Eve eats the apple, but by setting up my argument to explore the "why" in this manner I am able to deconstruct the narrative more closely. Looking deeper into the causes and effects of each character's behavior and the environment that they are placed in as well as the meaning behind the meticulous details and imagery Milton uses, I am able to explore how humanity was ultimately led to the "Fall." From there, I can reconstruct what the Fall actually means from this deconstructed context. In order to achieve this, I will be honing in on the woman who ate it first.

Critics have interpreted Milton's Eve in a number of different manners over the years. Eve's character has long been debated by countless feminist and antifeminist perspectives. Anti-feminist readings of this text acknowledge and abide by the limiting misogyny and sexism that Milton himself appears to have endorsed (both in *Paradise Lost* and in his other political writings), and thus cuts Eve down to an one-dimensional conceited, ignorant identity. Marcia Landy interprets Eve alongside the traditional Western Christian family identity in which she is stereotyped as "either obedient as 'Matron Mother' or disobedient and wanton if they neglect their responsibilities as wife,

which signified motherhood and submissiveness” (Landy 17). Even feminist critic Sandra M. Gilbert appears to give into these tropes and takes them a step further, asserting that “Eve in *Paradise Lost* is vain, vulnerable and evidently intellectually inferior to Adam” (Gilbert 1). Still, with the increasingly popular realm of feminist literary theory, Eve’s character has been explored with far more depth of identity and character than previously allocated. Focusing on Eve’s speech at the conclusion of the epic, Joshua Held notes that “The range of Eve’s allusions highlights her immense intellectual ability and thus presents her as an appropriate counterpart to Adam in terms of intellect, fallen yet still capable of brilliance” (Held 174). Another critic, Amy L. Tigner, cites that “Milton’s Eve works to transcend her social position by means of both food preparation and consumption” (Tigner 239). This emphasizes Eve’s multidimensional identity, further clarified by Diane McColley’s observation that “Milton’s Eve is distinguished from all other Eves by the fact that she takes her work seriously” (McColley 110). Moreover, Meg Arenerg uses McColley’s argument further to claim that in the fall “Eve not only acknowledges the weakness but manifests the responsive growth that temptation elicits; and the response is stronger, more joyful, and more fully Eve’s than it could have been without the difficulty to be overcome (McColley 83)” (Arenerg 43). Arenerg uses this and other observations to solidify her claim that Milton’s Eve is projected as the “normative subjectivity in the poem, offering the novel possibility for the generalized human subject to be understood as female” (Arenerg 25). These feminist reclamations of Eve thus problematized any one-dimensional reading of Eve that accepts and furthers the notion that her weakness alone is responsible for original sin.

To build on the work of these feminist critics, for my allegiance is to their political and interpretive project, I will deconstruct Adam and Eve's relationship and its progression through the lens of food. More specifically, I argue that the apple is not the only thing improperly consumed in Eden. Eve uses food in paradise to survive and, ultimately, attain a necessary level of agency to avoid being herself completely consumed by Adam. Seeking out the creative powers afforded to her by food, she develops her own identity as an individual. She also complicates the gendered binaries Adam constructs to empower himself and devalue Eve: the separation of man and woman as well as mind and body.

Even as *Paradise Lost* imposes John Milton's own values of gender roles to construct Eden, notably allocating the responsibilities of the feminized, bodily domestic sphere to Eve, while Adam is granted masculinized, intellectual labor, Eve manages to resist and trouble this gendered division. Mastering her role and making it her own, Eve finds solace and happiness within what I call her new "culinary world," a sphere in which Eve conjoins labor to intellectual and emotional creation through the processes of food—including everything from harvesting, to preparation, to eating. The culinary world thus comes to encompass Eve's agency, and she uses food-based skills to defend against Adam's desire to overconsume her. As I will argue, Adam's aggressive consumption of Eve and rigid dependence on constructing and upholding gender binaries not only leads Eve to seek out her own culinary world; it also informs her eventual choice to eat the apple in order to create a new foundation of equality in which she hosts the necessary skills to defend herself. Eating the apple provides Eve with the knowledge needed to ensure she is not overconsumed by Adam even beyond the space of Eden. In

deconstructing gendered binaries, she goes beyond establishing a proficient defense mechanism and gains access to a world-making ability of her own.

Beyond deconstructing Milton's historic misogyny and the baseline narrative of Eve as a dependant, insolent, and selfish being, I intend to redefine the way that Eve has sometimes been read and explore the effect of Eve eating in the apple: what that means for Eve, humanity and the meaning of paradise overall. Hence, my reading engages in what Eve Sedgwick calls both paranoid and reparative readings. She uses the term "paranoid reading" to describe the effect of actively searching for the harm and structures of cultural power dynamics reflected in a literary text. In this case, my reading is paranoid when it emphasizes the way that *Paradise Lost* replicates conservative, misogynistic values that value men over women, the mind over the body. But the risk of stopping at this kind of reading, as Sedgwick asserts, is that a paranoid reading can make it "less rather than more possible to unpack local, contingent relations between any given piece of knowledge and its narrative/epistemological entailments for the seeker, knower, or teller" (Sedgwick 124). Thus, my project also engages in her notion of reparative reading by reading Eve in some ways against the grain of the text. For, in order to avoid the tunnel vision that misogyny imposes even on a critic who would stand against it, we must be open minded to Milton's Eve and her ability to identify as a complex, multidimensional character. Sedgwick validates this method as she describes reconstruction or repairing paranoia as an "anxiety-mitigating achievement" in which "it is possible in turn to use one's own resources to assemble or 'repair' the murderous part-objects into something like a whole...*not necessarily like any preexisting whole*" (Sedgwick 128). Though there is no way to entirely rewrite Milton's epic, nor is there any

way to fully undo the misogynistic legacy Milton leaves behind, in seeking to understand how Eve herself tries to repair those things about the Garden that cause harm to her, I am hoping to rethink and repair some of the damage to women the Edenic story has done. Sedgwick's stance thus compliments and informs my aim to trace Eve's own reparative impulses.

To do so, my first chapter looks at Adam and Eve's initial relationship. Here, I examine Adam and Eve's behavior in preparation for Raphael to come dine with them and warn them about Satan, establishing the ways that the text associates Adam with the mind and Eve with the body. This chapter also looks into their behavior while the Archangel is there. Within these moments, I analyze how Adam subdues Eve and how Eve uses food as a response to this treatment, creating her culinary world as a place where she feels safe.

Chapter Two grows from this foundation, as it reveals Eve's more elaborate drive to defy Adam's attempts to limit, restrain, and lustfully consume her. Eve initiates a debate with Adam over whether she can go off alone and harvest food for them. Although the debate does not include many direct culinary citations, Adam allows the conversation to progress for Eve because the context pertains to food, and Eve presents it as a fair subject to propose for the same reason. Both of their arguments' form and delivery further reveal how Eve's body is consumed and how she resists. By rendering her into a sexual Other, Adam imagines he can possess Eve's labor through her body. While my first chapter reads Adam's initial consumption of Eve as a result of an *accidental* hyper-infatuation or lust, in this chapter I focus on how he feels he must consume her in

order to protect her from her own inferiority and vulnerability from the evil lurking in the garden.

Finally, my last chapter discusses the moments that both Eve and Adam eat the apple as well as the repercussions of this act. Here, I attempt my most overtly reparative reading by exploring how Eve uses her own free will to eat the forbidden fruit and how she fervently works to create a new world in which she need not follow Adam, but in which both she and Adam walk side by side. She achieves this by ultimately proving that each of Adam's *beloved* binaries (man-woman, mind-body, etc) never existed as oppositional entities. By working not to replicate and simply reverse the gendered binary, Eve creates a more inclusive world—a world in which it is possible to dismantle the binary logics that have always upheld the notion of original sin.

Across each part of this thesis, I explore the effects that two major gender-centered binaries (man versus woman and body versus mind) have on Adam and Eve separately, their relationship together, and their experiences in paradise overall. Throughout this process, I reveal the layers of the harmful realities of the western binary system on an individual and a society as a whole by reading how Eve herself questions, explores, and uncovers the impact of binaries limiting and hurting her—for they have the power to poison even paradise.

Chapter 1: The Price of Passionate Praise

With Eve's introduction in *Paradise Lost*, John Milton's description of her focuses primarily on her physical appearance and second on her temperament in association with Adam. Placing this text within the context of the time and noting the popular misogynistic and sexist values of the author, this is no surprise. Paralleling the repeated details of Eve's physical character, the text portrays Adam's behavior toward Eve as an attempt to bend her into submission by herding her into the domestic sphere. This happens the very moment the two first interact, as Adam informs Eve of her role in the garden and, subsequently, with him: being submissive and domestic—in this case, serving him through the culinary field and obeying his desires. Adam's actions both assign her this role explicitly through verbal instruction, and also psychically, at the level of implication that codes Eve into this role due to her status as a woman.

Due to Adam's commitment to a gendered binary construction, his explicit and implicit behavior works to achieve what he sees as a well-balanced lifestyle (the ultimate goal). While Eve finds herself internally questioning the logic of Adam's orders, she initially accepts them, for she knows nothing else, Milton tells us, except to please Adam. Accepting her assigned role, however, she quickly moves beyond simply serving Adam as she becomes a master of the culinary arts and all such knowledge. She is able to gain more power through this because she now has a space free from Adam's binary-limiting dimensions. In this sense, she achieves a creative and intellectual agency within her culinary world—far surpassing Adam's knowledge of it in every respect.

While Adam and Eve's relationship grows deeper into this mold with each passing day, Satan manages to sneak into Eden. In an initial attempt to corrupt Eve, Satan

visits her in a dream. However, she remains faithful to Adam and God—showing no signs of corruption as she maintains her image as the ideal wife and reports the incident immediately to her higher authority, Adam. In response to Satan’s entrance into Eden, God orders the archangel Raphael to fly down to Earth and warn the couple of Satan’s treacherous existence in Paradise. Accordingly, Raphael swoops down to deliver the news. Adam allocates the very important, albeit feminized, role of food (gathering, preparation, and all else) for said meeting to Eve. Eve’s commitment to this role reveals her dutiful commitment to her husband preceding and throughout the entire meal, but it also reveals Eve’s desire to find meaning in her own work, even as Adam’s hunger for her simultaneously grows quite clear.

Throughout this luncheon, Adam and Raphael confer about various intellectual topics while Eve remains quiet and submissive, serving and eating on the side. While Eve abides by each of Adam’s commands and embodies the ideal wife, Raphael and Adam share a notable discussion of temperance, which the passage strangely parallels to Eve’s culinary preparation. Thus, the text blurs the boundary between the consumption of food and Adam’s desire to consume Eve—as an object of domestic service and sexual gratification. Raphael warns Adam about his feelings for Eve, noting a clear objectification or overconsumption of her in a conversation that almost ridiculously dances around the concept of lust.¹ But as Adam speaks to the angel, we see Eve’s mastery of the culinary arts offering her comfort away from Adam’s burgeoning lust; indeed, her over-preparation of food suggests a defense mechanism against his overconsumption. By preparing so much food, Eve attempts to construct a barrier

¹ While the term and concept of lust has not been introduced to Earth at this time in the narrative, I will argue that this is the behavior Adam conducts. A deeper explanation of this convoluted and weird dynamic is explored further later in this chapter.

between herself and Adam in order to avoid being overconsumed by him. Adam's desire to consume Eve leads him to relegate her to the domestic sphere even as he begins to over-consume her; Eve finds comfort in this sphere, creating her own culinary world as an escape from Adam's over-consumption.

For Milton, Adam embodies the father and intelligence of humanity, while Eve encompasses the mother and physical producer of humanity, a notion Raphael emphasizes. During the creation story at the banquet, Raphael recites God's process, revealing man's conception as "not prone / And brute as other creatures, but endued / With sanctity of reason, might erect / His stature, and upright with front serene / Govern the rest, self-knowing" (VII.506-510). The description of intellectual characteristics repeats multiple times, a pleonasm that amplifies the value of terms sharing similar definitions. Terms like "reason" and "self-knowing" are intermingled in their description of intelligence, reinforcing, if not over-enforcing, the value of the characteristic as well as how fundamental to one's character or being it is. Adam demonstrates his internalization of this association and reinforces this hope when God tasks him with naming all His creations and he instinctively knows each name. To amplify his thoughtful mind and reflective persona, we see Adam describe his work for God as easy and natural for him: "I named them, as they passed, and understood / Their nature, with such knowledge God endued / My sudden apprehension" (VIII.352-4). Adam experiences a "natural" grasp of the world around him and of God's intentions. His mind, he thinks, is more apt than Eve's, something he clearly projects onto her when he sends her away from the discussion with Raphael to prepare food.

Raphael reveals an even stranger division between the two genders, however, when he introduces the behaviors of other female creatures, most interestingly the female bee. He reports that “swarming next appeared / The female bee that feeds her husband drone / Deliciously...the rest are numberless / And thou their names know’st, and gav’st them names, / Needless to thee repeated;” (VII.490-491). I cite this as most interesting because the relationship between the male and female bee that Raphael describes contradicts the famous dynamic bees truly embody—a dynamic that would negate the male dominated timeline of this text and what this narrative supports as a patriarchal system. Contradictions to said world include: having a female leader, having a queen responsible for feeding, and more than that, a polyamorous queen—while the male drone bee mates only with the queen and then die, she enjoys multiple partners at one time (Connor). In Raphael’s account, the female bee serves and feeds her husband just as Eve is ordered to serve and feed Adam, her husband. Then, such feeding is reported as conducted “deliciously,” as if the female bee’s natural talents lay in this field. Notably, this was accessible, available knowledge in the 1600s as Samuel Purchas publishes an account of a queen bee “in every Hive hee would have at once several Kings” (Purchas 28), where the “king” refers to the Drone bees and “hee” refers to the queen. Therefore, the rejection of nature’s real-world systems in a creation story about the real world demands extra focus because it implies a conscious alteration of fact to endorse the role of the domestic female in any species dynamic. This allocation of the female role extends more specifically to Eve later in the description when Raphael deconstructs God’s creation of the woman.

Just as the text overemphasizes the association between man and intelligence, Raphael begins discussing woman relative to man. Raphael begins by repeatedly describing man as the first human being, made in God's image. This repetition compliments the previous pleonasm's emphasis on man's mental superiority. It reinforces how man is closer to God. Once he mentions this at least four times in the span of fifteen lines, Raphael continues sharing that "Male he created thee, but thy consort / Female for race [...] and said, / Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth, / Subdue it" (VII.529-532). Raphael's use of the word "consort," in the noun form meaning partner (*OED* n, 1a), suggests that God produces the female *for* mankind *for* reproduction because it connects the definition 'partner' with the possessive "for race." This interpretation of the use of the female reduces her role into reproduction and sustaining the human race, an act that consumes the entire female body. Additionally, consort's fascinating etymology suggests that the meaning of the verb tense is also resonant in this moment: to accompany (*OED* v, 5b). By adjoining this with the possessive "thy" the poem suggests that man is the leader and woman is to accompany him and support his needs and the world's needs of multiplying with all of herself—just as the female bee (supposedly) does with her "husband." Emphasizing Eve's role of accompaniment and fruitfulness, Raphael appears to reduce her to her ability to reproduce. Fruitfulness also reminds us of Eve's work in the culinary world: to "be fruitful" and bear an abundance to feed and support the race of mankind. She must create with her body and then use her body to sustain what she creates while he must use his reason to subdue what she produces.

But even before Raphael helps Adam solidify these binaries—man/women, mind/body, intellectual labor/reproductive labor—Adam has already formally allocated

the role of culinary dominion to Eve. When they notice Raphael coming down to visit them, Adam orders Eve to “go with speed, / And what thy stores contain, bring forth and pour / Abundance, fit to honour and receive / Our heavenly stranger” (V.313-316). This reveals only one example of how Adam directs Eve to perform the role of the domestic wife. The use of the possessive “thy’ stores” amplifies her dominion over said culinary realm. The encouragement to hasten in her work reinforces the power dynamic of his natural comfort enacting dominance over her, for he uses a common trope of master-servant demands: temporal urgency. His focus on collecting food from storage as opposed to gathering fresh sustenance, even though they live in an endlessly ripe and perfect garden, speaks to Adam’s discomfort and or lack of knowledge in agriculture. Eve immediately reinforces Adam’s inexperience when she responds, “Adam, earth’s hallowed mould, / Of God inspired, small store will serve, where store, / All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk; / Save what by frugal storing firmness gains / To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes” (V.321-325). Here, Eve proves that she possesses more agricultural knowledge than Adam by correcting his order. Thus, she exposes his lack of intuition or basic knowledge of the agricultural world. She then accepts the task “with dispatchful looks in haste” (V.331), but only after she asserts her expertise. Furthermore, her concentration on superiority of the “superfluous moist” food reinforces and, possibly, deconstructs the notion of the “leaky” female body—a long trope in which women’s bodies are seen as more “wet” and leaky than men’s. As Gail Kern Paster notes:

This discourse inscribes women as leaky vessels by isolating one element of the female body’s material expressiveness—it’s production of fluids—as excessive, hence either disturbing or shameful...the issue is

women's bodily self-control or, more precisely, the representation of a particular kind of uncontrol as a function of gender (Paster 25).

Understanding that fluids and humors of the body dominate a great deal of this era's ideologies, the leakiness and spillage of the female body often contributes to a sense of chaos and imbalance. Yet, because Eve, here, presents moist food as desirous, and as something she can control, she challenges any sense that a "wet" body or "wet" food is incontinent/out of control. The rejection of abiding by Adam's idea reveals Eve's mastery and superior comfort level in this area, even as her eagerness to abide by his ultimate wishes illustrates her dedication to being a good wife to him.

As Adam tasks Eve with preparing the food and table for Raphael's visit, the brilliance of her preparations further exposes her commitment to encompassing the ideal wife. As Adam observes Raphael come down from the heavens, Eve works fervently to fulfill Adam's order:

What choice to choose for delicacy best,
 What order, so contrived as not to mix
 Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change,
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever Earth all-bearing mother yields
 In India east or west, or middle shore
 In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where
 Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat,
 Rough, or smooth rin, or bearded husk, or shell

She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meads
 For many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed
 She tempers dulcet creams, nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure, then strews the ground
 With rise and odours from the shrub unfumed. (V.332-349)

I will refer to this moment as The Meal Preparation. The sequential repetition of these structures “she gathers,” “she crushes,” and “she tempers” outline the mindful steps she takes in preparing each dish. The artistic and methodical breakdown of her actions in the active present tense exposes the intimacy and dedication to her work. The active present tense reveals a sense of intimacy between the audience and Eve, as if we observe her masterpieces unfold in real time—like a cooking show. This is significant because it provides personal insight into her absolute happiness in this space. The description of Eve’s work in this moment suggests an intense atmosphere of professional labor, as she prepares “with unsparing hand” complex dishes proving her unique and advanced skill. Her skills produce a “pure” success of an extensive variety of dishes. The references to foods from around the world prove such expansive chef-standard behavior, for they allude to a globally inspired range of awareness and knowledge. Additionally, though, this voluminous knowledge also supports her identity as the root and or foundation of sustaining and producing humankind with her physical, bodily skills. Indeed, Joshua Scodel notes how Eve’s swift dedication to this labor “distinguishes herself not only from rebellious Satan but also from those fallen women who upset the gender hierarchy by

assuming the roles of ‘proud fair[s]’ who forever scorn the entreaties of ‘starved lover[s]’ (IV.769-770)” (Scodel 208). Thus, Eve’s labor demonstrates both her desire to have a culinary world of her own, a space for her own creative agency and practice, and her desire to please her starved husband. At least in this moment, Eve hopes and believes that these two things do not have to be mutually exclusive.

The irony, then, is that Eve, in conforming so wholly to Adam’s demand, acquires a sphere of knowledge and even joy that threatens to violate the spirit of Adam’s command—be always subservient—even as she so completely obeys its letter. The Meal Preparation is a marathon; not a sprint, as Adam had requested. In exploring the grammatical construction (listings with commas and no periods) and verbiage chosen (actions cluttered with complimentary adjectives and values), The Meal Preparation cannot be taken apart and dissected separately. Its seemingly endless listing of positive, complimentary details constructs a powerful veil over the time span of this account. Adam ushers her to hurry, and the narrator compliments said command by describing Eve “with dispatchful looks in haste” (V.331). However, when her labors begin, this extensive, methodical detailing slows down time for the reader and for Eve, for the active verbs invite the reader to stand alongside Eve as she teleports into her paradise (as if to prove to the audience how this space is better than her alternative—Adam’s Eden). Knowing Eve actively commits herself to working hard, the contradiction introduced by such a long variety of glorifying and decadent details is evocative. It alludes to how Eve feels entering her culinary world—free from demands of time and obedience. Her perfect actions “upheld with kindest change” creates heaps of “vessels pure” with her “unsparing hand.” The lack of hesitation in her work combined with the timeless flow of

positive values subverts Adam's aims of subjugation. She simply works masterfully on a task she enjoys. It is almost as if Adam demanding this of her was a bonus.

The text brings both evidence of happily obeying Adam and excitedly reentering her culinary world to a cross road in the introduction of The Meal Preparation. The narrator describes Eve's initial behavior upon acting on his command as, "What choice to choose for delicacy best" (V.332). This polyptoton, the repetition of a word derived from the same root, can be viewed in three major ways. Firstly, it could amplify the variability of Eve's task, thereby reinforcing the impressive work she does to cultivate such an expansive array, for there are so many options and she has mastery over all. The listing of global cuisine and expansive culinary techniques reinforces how impressive her labor is; Eve is not just cooking, she cultivates options for others' desires, with a mastery over them all. Secondly, such use of this polyptoton mixed with the context of Eve's limited free will could cause the reader to see this as a moment of awe. While this text at large grapples greatly with the concept of free will, the text does not discuss Eve's agency in these terms. In this moment, however, as she enters her culinary world, she is presented with a mass array of options, an array she appears to enjoy. Eve is in awe of her authority—her "choice to choose." She finds it is so lovely to have a choice despite the delicacy of the situation, and she finds that her authority is most present to her when she immerses herself in her culinary world without Adam. What I want to suggest, then, is that Eve experiences awe, emotions of such pleasurable surprise, because she does not feel her existence in Eden is as ideal as Adam projects. While the beginning of the poem illustrates Eden as fantastical, further into the narrative we find that there are many discrepancies. Things do not add up; Eve experiences discomfort in paradise. Milton

must construct a paradise where a fall is possible, and he does so at the cost of Eve. As J.B. Savage argues:

The first version originates with Eve's creation in Book IV, encompasses those episodes which serve to define the paradisaical state, emphasizes the freedom inherent in their condition, and exhausts itself by the middle of Book VIII. It represents the "official" account of what Paradise is, but interestingly, it is deficient in one respect, in that given its premises, the Fall, as Stanley Fish rightly observes, is "impossible." Presumably, if the Fall is to become an actual possibility, it will be incumbent upon Milton to produce another view of Paradise, the apparent redundancy of which can be explained only insofar as we see that it is in reality a competing view, an alternative view, necessary to satisfy the narrative requirements of the Fall (Savage 300).

We already see Eve experiencing this “other” view of Paradise, but when she steps into her culinary world she feels at peace and struck by her own authority. She escapes “the other.” Thirdly, as the *OED* suggests, the word “choice” could be interpreted as an adjective that compliments an object—i.e. a choice treat or delectable delight (adj. 1a). Therefore, we can see this question as: what “choice” foods shall she choose in order to produce the best delicacies for their meal with an angel? This interpretation reinforces her focus on ensuring they serve the juiciest fruits, as she mentioned to Adam correcting him on gathering food from the storage before she leaves. The juiciest fruit can also be understood as the one with the most sustenance—and the most distraction from Adam’s desire to consume *her*, as I will further argue. Such hyper focus on these details could be

a result of her concentration on creating a banquet as a buffer between her and Adam as well as simultaneously attempting to please Adam by preparing a masterpiece. Formally, the use of polyptoton makes room for both possibilities, exhibiting both Eve's delight at the variety and her anxiety to choose the best from so many options. The Meal Preparation thus calls the reader to experience Eve's perspective as she experiences it—between slowing down time and exploring the complications of the role she inhabits (constantly grappling with finding peace and happiness in her world versus Adam's).

To maintain her status as the perfect wife, Adam feels that Eve's job does not just include feeding Adam's dietary appetite, as she must also service his sexual cravings. As Adam describes Eve and all he appreciates about her to Raphael, he prioritizes her physical traits over the emotional consolation she offers. He begins with complimenting her body's form and praising the comfort her presence brought him upon her initial entry into his life. As Raphael listens, he develops a "contracted brow" (VIII.560) from his concern about Adam's questionable lust. Once Adam completes his passionate praise, Raphael questions him, "For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so, / An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well, / Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love, / Not thy subjection" (VIII.567-570). Raphael suggests here that Adam is blinded by Eve's unquestionable "outside" beauty and therefore cares primarily, if not only, for Eve's body—ignoring her true and or whole identity. Such objectification exhibits a failure of temperance and "of taste to please / True appetite" (V.304-305), for if Adam truly feels this way then he has not treated Eve well enough to develop a healthy, true appetite (an appetite one earns) for her. While the *OED* provides many definitions of "subjection," it specifically allocates the meaning "in (into, or under) the dominion or control of a

superior power” (n, 2a) to Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. The fact that Raphael has to directly warn Adam about his control over Eve supports how Adam abuses his superior power over her. The direct, concise negative clause further reveals Raphael’s deep lack of tolerance of said behavior.

From an economic standpoint, the economy of consumption and taste is a “restricted” economy. Denise Gigante deconstructs the Garden of Eden into different economic systems in order to observe different types of consumption. As Gigante contends, this means that “‘the circle of power’ (which for Bataille also means the cycle of pleasure) is closed [*Visions* 121]” (Gigante 94). By having a closed or restricted economy consolidating this consumption of Eve, we find that there is an imbalance, for Eve takes nothing in return. Hence, Adam consumes too much of her, and she is withering away. Adam “thus half abashed” (VIII.595) replies to Raphael:

Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught
 In procreation common to all kinds
 (Though higher of the genial bed by far,
 And with mysterious reverence I deem)
 So much delights me as those graceful acts...
 From all her words and actions mixed with love
 And sweet compliance... (VIII.596-603).

The double negative continues applauding her physical body and what she “with mysterious reverence” can do “in procreation” with her body. He is abashed and, thus, defensive. Although, even in defense, he struggles to ignore his lustful appetite for her, he continues to provide more details of his appreciation of her body. Thus, he further

exposes his lust by his reference to her sexual ability “with mysterious reverence.” Moreover, his dedication to God above all else is rattled in this statement, as he links implicitly religious terms away from God onto Eve’s sexual abilities. The term “mysterious” is historically used in Christian services to reinforce the power of God and the “mystery of faith.” In addition to this, the term “reverence” alludes to an act of holy dedication—often used to describe the behavior of priests and other ranked religious officials (*OED* n. 1a). Even further, Adam states this in parentheses which implies an underlying counterpoint to his defense against Raphael’s concern. Milton famously marks vocative expressions in poetry with commas and parentheses. Adam’s use of the vocative directly addresses Eve’s sexuality. Putting this address in parentheses makes it stand out and reveals a hint of shame and inner turmoil that Adam does not wish to directly reveal to Raphael, as Savage suggests:

For his pains, Adam's embarrassing, rather fatuous, superlatives are greeted with the contempt they deserve, in the form of Raphael's reprovingly "contracted brow." Certainly it is not because Raphael has failed to grasp what Adam was getting at: angels, after all, are not in the habit of mistaking moral questions, and anyway, the approaching debacle amply confirms him in his worst suspicions about Adam's rapidly deteriorating state. But the point should not be only to establish the fact of Adam's infatuation and to realize that it makes inevitable the Fall. The more important point of the whole scene, where past and present have become so commingled as to be indistinguishable, is to imply

unmistakably that his infatuation has been typical of Paradise all along (Savage 302).

Savage describes the long-term questionable behavior that we and Raphael actively observe. While we do see Adam's mental state is increasingly deteriorating (as he drifts further from Wisdom towards misconsuming Eve), we find that is due to his typical behavior in Paradise. He fails to gain proper nourishment because he dismisses Wisdom and attempts to satiate such cravings (that only Wisdom can provide) from Eve—one who is simply unable to feed Adam's mind like Wisdom can. Therefore, he constructs his own unpleasant future.

Adam's description of Eve's physicality and his desire for her places too much dependence on Eve to appease his sexual, mental, and emotional appetite. After listening to Adam's intimate and objectifying description of his love for Eve, Raphael warns him again, "take heed lest passion sway / Thy judgement to do aught, which else free will / Would not admit; thine and of all thy sons / The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware" (VIII.635-638). Adam's previous attempt to defend his relationship with Eve does not sway Raphael. Once again, the flaws of his defense reveal Adam's true inner turmoil. Raphael continues to reiterate his warnings to Adam in different ways because, as cited by Savage, Raphael is not blind to the faults occurring here. Raphael warns Adam of "passion" rather than lust because Sin has not been released on earth yet; nevertheless, Raphael's concern makes it clear that Adam's behavior embodies a kind of lust for Eve. That is this narrative's problem—as readers, we are presented with both Adam, Eve and now Raphael's fears of something that does not yet exist on Earth. This is weird. My third chapter will further explore this narrative tension and ultimately read it as a critique of

Eden itself, but it is worth noting here that while Sin exists and Raphael met her in the battle of Heaven, Raphael could have not used words or concepts introduced by Sin because Adam has no concept of her—more specifically, in the prelapsarian garden, Adam cannot have concept of lust. Just as Raphael struggles describing the food angels eat in Heaven and adapts his description to meet Adam's understanding, he adapts his warning to adhere to Adam's understanding of passion and love. Indeed, on the meta-narrative level, this struggle is related to Milton's own attempt to construct Paradise without ever having experienced such perfection. After Adam eats from the Tree of Knowledge, the word lust is used for the first time, as it has now become possible and thus entered his vocabulary. Considering that lusting for Eve is not the One Rule God gave man to test them, Adam's lusting and overconsuming Eve is not technically sinning...right now. But, after consuming the apple he formally realizes the long-term error of his treatment of Eve. Hence, Raphael's warning, although fervently attempted, is not enough to alter Adam's behavior, ironically, because he will not be able to understand what lust is fully without the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge.

Adam's aggressive dependence on Eve for all forms of fulfillment leads to his overconsumption of her, a move which pushes him away from reason and pushes them both closer to the Fall. In his attempt to warn Adam of overconsuming various pleasures and disregarding others, Raphael continues explaining, "Accuse not nature, she had done her part;" (VIII.561). When Raphael directly addresses personified nature, this line and its warning compliment the behavior of Eve. Eve has done her part in supporting Adam as the body—adhering to his bodily needs of hunger and desire for companionship. The mother of mankind and Mother Nature are constantly interwoven with tropes of beauty,

fruitfulness, and the ability to provide. This occurs so much so that Eve is often referred to in likeness or superiority to a wood-nymph (V.381) which further deepens this gendered association of nature itself with maternity and the feminine. While Eve walks amongst the garden, nature is described as “A wilderness of sweets; for nature here / Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will / Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,” (V.294-V.297). Nature is described similarly to how Eve’s food preparations are described. The female association with stunning foods could be tied to the domesticity of women. However, when Eve corrects Adam on food storage, it reemphasizes the reality that this task and role is hard. Raphael states that she has done her part—meaning Eve and the garden (Mother Nature) have both done all they can without disobeying Heaven in the role pushed onto them. Ultimately, this suggests that to desire more from them is to reveal the limitations of the role itself.

After Raphael finishes describing Eve’s success in serving Adam as the representative of the body, the angel continues breaking down Adam’s failure in loving Eve as the mind and reason. Raphael continues to explain the difference between passion and love for Adam, for he cannot understand the term lust. Raphael tells Adam that “In loving thou dost well, in passion not, / Wherein true love consists not; love refines / The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat / in reason”(VIII.588-591). With love, reason strengthens; with passion, reason suffers. Raphael notices how Adam’s description of Eve reveals passion over love, for he sees Adam’s reason struggle. Savage describes Adam’s fall (before the real Fall): “He has misvalued what is his natural good, become enamored of an image entirely of his own making, mistaken the visible, seeming worth of Eve, so as to answer his worldly needs, for what she intrinsically is, and perversely cleaved not

unto God but unto the woman” (Savage 301). Such examples of this distancing exist when Adam states that Eve “Seems wisest, virtuous, discreet, best; / All higher knowledge in her presence falls / Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her / Loses discountenanced” (VIII.550-553). If we accept that the creation of Eve from Adam’s rib makes her stand further from God, then her simultaneous existence as “best” seems disingenuous if not extremely unlikely. Additionally, knowing that she exists to serve Adam, the representative of the head, further calls into question her ability to be the “wisest,” for Adam supposedly embodies reason—not Eve. Beyond Adam’s passionate praise, we see Adam fails to inflect the proper form of the superlative adjective “virtuous.” Rather than using “most virtuous,” Adam says “virtuous,” as if he found himself caught in a mindless frenzy of praise (or passion) and lost his reason, relinquishing his grammar along with the logic of his gender binary. With this transformation of the superlative case, the listing of Adam’s praises contains a more consistent flow, as the repeated “-est” sound continues throughout the entire line. However, the desire for such perfect parallelism is created at the cost of Adam’s reason—just as Raphael warns. Adam constructs binaries for man and woman, but his constant fluctuation between upholding them and (knowingly or not) subverting them leads to his demise.

Raphael’s final warning not to abandon Wisdom further reflects how Adam looks to Eve for more than she can physically offer and reveals how such overconsumption leads to their Fall. Raphael admonishes Adam, “be not diffident / Of wisdom, she deserts thee not, if thou / Dismiss not her” (VIII.562-564). Adam previously describes Eve as a replacement of Wisdom as he describes to Raphael how “All higher knowledge in her

presence falls / Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her / Loses discountenanced” (VIII.551-553). Around Eve, Wisdom is not present. The personification of Wisdom as a female ironically compliments gendered power in this historical moment, even as it seems as if it could subvert it. Such personification is maximized by attaching not one but two actions to her: the acts of deserting and clinging (present through the comparative). Further than that, Raphael presents Adam with relationship advice as if he is their councilor and encourages him to treat Wisdom as a woman—with respect and care. Raphael encourages Adam’s male reason to trust and connect fully with Wisdom’s femininity, for Eve does not and cannot currently offer this. Eve provides sustenance for Adam’s physical male self; Wisdom shall sustain his mental male identity. But, Wisdom may desert him if he continues to dismiss her as he has been (“cheating” on Wisdom with Eve). Raphael’s concerns of Adam abandoning Wisdom due to a misplacement of it in Eve proves that Adam overconsumes Eve with his hyper-dependence.

Prior to the introduction of the celestial being coming down to greet them, we find Eve at peace in her culinary world, gently laboring. The narrator describes this moment with graceful delicacy, “due at her hour prepared / For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please / True appetite, and not disrelish thirst / Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream, / Berry or grape: to whom Adam called” (V.303 - V.307). Then, the narrator silences this moment with a swift, “to whom Adam called.” The actions described before the summoning further reinforce Eve’s mastery of food preparation. However, the disrupting hail by Adam reiterates how Adam is the patriarch and how his patriarchal practices disturb Eve’s peace and prosperity. More so than observing the power dynamic in this scene, the narrator describes the phase and/or process of proper

consumption. First, one must labor to prepare the food. Eve behaves superiorly in this step, as she prepares “savory fruits of taste to please.” Next, one must ensure they have labored appropriately to appreciate said food—a concept Milton himself preached.² One’s “True appetite” could refer to this hard earning of food. Scodel reinforces this importance by outlining that “Their daily labors thus underscore the fact that their innocent happiness is not a fixed state but a continuous process of achievement” (Scodel 190). Hence, it is vital to continue with their labors and earn each of their meals. Seeing as this scene projects Eve as the actor, it can be deduced that Eve possesses proper consumption habits. As Adam abruptly interrupts her healthy consumption and or preparations, combined with his lustful behavior we can argue that he is imbalanced. This could categorize Adam’s appetite as less true, less worthy, and less wise. Gigante argues that Milton creates “Epistemological implications of taste [...] Latin *sapere* can mean both ‘to taste’ and ‘to know’” (Gigante 89). Noting Milton’s dedication to Latin and interest in incorporating it into his works, the inclusion of this Latin root supports my claim. This argument further questions who, between Adam and Eve, holds the true reason and knowledge. The text struggles with solidifying and committing to the gender binaries Adam actively works to establish.

When Eve turns to Adam for support after experiencing a frightening nightmare, his dismissal of her reflects his inability to understand any form of discomfort on her behalf, clinging, instead, to his glorification of her. Eve’s description of just how uncomfortable and truly disturbed she feels following the dream ultimately highlights his

² From Milton’s “Of Education”: “After this pattern, as many edifices may be converted to this use, as shall be needful in every city throughout this land, which would tend much to the increase of learning and civility everywhere. This number, less or more thus collected, to the convenience of a foot company, or interchangeably two troops of cavalry, should divide their day’s work into three parts, as it lies orderly. Their studies, their exercise, and their diet” (The Major Works 230). The fact that diet consists of one of the three major variables to establish a strong educational system supports his belief that diet is a central part of all aspects of life.

failure to conform to his own standards. She looks to Adam where her “thoughts find all repose” (V.28), and recounts, “If dreamed, not as I oft am wont, of thee, / Works of day past, morrow’s nest design, / But of offence and trouble, which my mind / knew never till this irksome night;” (V.32-34). Just as time is convoluted when Eve enters her culinary realm to comply with Adam’s demand, time is warped in the moment of her nightmare. In such immense vulnerability and discomfort, she turns to Adam for help and support. Adam swiftly dismisses the concern honing in on his perceived perception of her, “Yes evil whence? In thee can harbour none, / Created pure” (V.99-100). Time in this moment, as Patricia Parker observes, “...depends on where it leads. The uncertainty of time within this poem as to whether it is evening or morning plays the crepuscular ambiguity of a threshold which could be a prelude to a rise or a fall, to ‘dawning’ or simply to a decline into the ‘night’” (Parker 329). The ominous atmosphere defined by such a fluid time mirrors Eve’s uneasiness. The fact that Adam dismisses such emotions reveals his inability—or refusal—to conceptualize any form of discomfort on her behalf, thereby encouraging his oblivious state of lust for her.

Because she has been taught to know nothing other than to obey Adam, Eve can only hope that her distraught state can be resolved by conducting her “job” perfectly. But as Eve continues to feel overconsumed by Adam, and as she assumes this over-abundance of food is his level of need, she will begin to find that using food as her defense mechanism may not be enough to protect herself as well as gain a sense of equity.

Chapter 2: Adults Arguing About Alone-Time

By the time Milton shows the mother and father of all mankind eating for the first time, Eve has performed as the ideal wife to Adam during the feast with Raphael, taught Adam how to harvest and preserve food, and dominates care of the garden. Producing such a positive environment by setting the table and preparing a wide selection of dishes for her husband and the archangel Raphael to taste while they talk, Eve embodies Adam's perfect woman. However, she does not feel satisfied. Adam still actively consumes her during the feast—taking for himself the fruits of her labour, defining her further as beneath him, and lusting after her body. But, Eve will continue to assert her various culinary techniques and abilities in order to be recognized as equal to Adam. The very next day she attempts to further defy the limitations that Adam puts on her by reimagining her labour within the domestic sphere. Indeed, Eve's status, as perceived and defined by Adam, is exhibited through food: how she associates herself with it, and how Adam associates her with it. So, Eve initiates a debate with Adam over whether she can go off alone and harvest food for them.

Although the debate features few direct culinary citations, Adam humors it as a point of discussion for Eve because the context pertains to their culinary world, and Eve presents it as a fair subject to propose for the same reason. While the resolution of this debate may appear merely to speak to the biblical timeline of the narrative, the argument's form and delivery reveal another layer of how Eve's body is consumed: in lusting after her and rendering her into a sexual Other, Adam imagines he can possess Eve's labour through her body. While my first chapter read Adam's initial consumption of Eve as a result of accidental hyper-infatuation or lust, here I focus on how he feels he

must consume her in order to protect her from her own inferiority and vulnerability from the evil lurking in the garden. Eve, however, resists this.

Eve and Adam's debate over Eve's ability to gather food alone reveals her unhappy stance on her status. During the argument, Eve attempts to balance her evidence between common ideas Adam already feels comfortable with, like consumption and gendered divisions of labour, with her new ideas of freedom and equality that she conceptualizes in her mind. Eve's discussion of division of labour and the manner by which food and gender interact within that division outlines her commitment to her individuality. Her attempt to translate her *radical* argument of independence and efficiency into Adam's understanding solidifies her dedication to achieving equality. Her new ideas are radical because they clash with Adam's interpretation of God's will and challenge the stability of Adam and Eve's relationship, as she alludes to Adam's overconsumption of her—a concept Adam had not considered. Adjusting her stance to abide by Adam's gender norms reinforces the power dynamic of male over female; however, Eve nevertheless advocates for her own needs and desires, even as her intellectual argument rhetorically conforms to Adam's male mind. In this way, *Paradise Lost* strangely troubles the division between a "male" mind and "female" body. The text demonstrates how Eve cannot currently access intellectual growth, as Adam dismisses her new ideas (of questioning happiness, supporting efficiency, etc.) and balks at her radical thoughts. But even as Adam refuses to hear his wife's plea for the agency to pursue her own interests in a space of her own, Eve's resistance to merely remaining an object of consumption, a resource to be used like any other plant or animal of the Garden, offers a critique of the way that Adam would limit her mind, her needs, her agency. Eve's

methods of exposing paradise's faults goes beyond a reconfiguration of Adam's values, as she aligns herself with the economic values of Milton's era.

Paradise Lost further perpetuates the long trope, definitively discussed in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, where the mind is associated with men and the body with women. To amplify his thoughtful mind and reflective persona, for example, Adam describes his work for God as easy and natural for him: "I named them, as they passed, and understood / Their nature, with such knowledge God endued / My sudden apprehension" (VIII.352-4). Adam experiences no limitations to his grasp of the world around him and of God's intentions. His mind, he thinks, is more apt than Eve's. Eve compliments this perspective when they first meet, as she calls Adam "my guide / And head" (IV.442-444). However, her willingness to support this binary changes as Adam continues to greedily consume Eve with his actions, words, and eyes.

Eve's use of common 17th century economic values exposes both her discontent and the paradoxical reality of imperfection within a seemingly perfect paradise. Eve's interest in working more efficiently compliments Puritan ideologies of the mid-17th century in which *Paradise Lost* is published. *Paradise Lost* as well as many of Milton's other writings capitalize on the faults of idleness and praise temperance and balance. Indeed, Milton's work as a propagandist for the Puritans during the English Civil War exaggerated his projection of temperate consumption in order to dismantle the monarchy and what he presented as the lavish productions of the Church.³ The structure of Milton's Garden of Eden directly addresses temperance and dedication to a consistent work ethic,

³ A famous example of him doing this is *Eikonoklastes*, where Milton writes validating the execution of Charles I. This is further exposed by this excerpt: "That there hath bin more Christian blood shed by the Commission, approbation, and connivance of King Charles, and his Father James in the latter end of thir raigne, then in the Ten Roman Persecutions. Not to speake of those many whippings, Pillories, and other corporal inflictions wherwith his raign also before this Warr was not unbloodie; some have dy'd in Prison under cruel restraint, others in Banishment, whose lives were shortn'd through the rigour of that persecution, wherwith so many yeares he infested the true Church" (Section IX, *Eikonoklastes*).

like the Protestant Work Ethic, so much so that Joshua Scodel notes that “Their daily labours thus underscore the fact that their innocent happiness is not a fixed state but a continuous process of achievement” (190). By observing how Adam and Eve’s happiness is not fixed and that they must, in fact, work for it continuously each day, Scodel suggests that Eden has the potential to be unfulfilling. This is a paradox: the positive ideals of efficiency and specialized labour transform into negatives. While this garden is understood to be “paradise,” the humans living in it must make it so.

Eve reflects the value of dividing all kinds of labour between the two of them to maximize efficiency when she begins a discussion on the benefits of division of labour in order to experience more freedom and prove to Adam that she is his equal. Eve introduces her argument by emphasizing how the balance of labour and pleasure is at risk: only two gardeners, who continuously get distracted by each other’s company, cannot contain the growth of nature happening in Eden. She offers, “but till more hands / Aid us, the work under our labour grows, / Luxurious by restraint; [...] Let us divide our labours,” (IX.208-214). Her use of “aid” implies a *need* for additional help with their labours. Without this needed assistance, she suggests, their labour will be unable to address all the needs of the garden, allowing the garden to grow out of control, as if it were untended, wanton, “luxurious.” Her use of this paradox—in which un-strategized labour might as well be no work at all—allows Eve to elevate her labour alongside Adam’s, in which they together work to prevent Nature from growing out of control. Expanding the description of Eden within her request, “with wanton growth derides / Tending to wild” (IX.211-212), the words “luxurious,” “wanton,” and “wild” demand our attention as they repeatedly illustrate a Nature incapable of moderating its own excess;

Nature is suffering from overconsumption as Adam is unable to moderate his desire for Eve. While Eve tries to resolve one location of overconsumption, Adam's obsessive hunger for Eve gets in the way.

Conversely, Eve categorizes work within a larger definition of labour. Though the *OED* cites "work" as a synonym for "labour" ("work," n. 4a) Eve appears to subdivide the terms, complimenting her aim to a strategy of divide and conquer. Because "labour" is also defined as physical or mental exertion, and because she puts "work" under the category of labour (an act conducted by the body *and* mind), Eve insinuates that she does not endorse the isolating effect of a different labor strategy, one that relies on gendered spheres of influence, a values system in which Eve's labour could never be recognized as anything but in service to Adam. While work and labour are synonyms, labour holds more implications of toil.⁴ By using these synonyms, she asserts that there are no permanent spheres or groupings of body and mind. Critics from different schools of thought, like early critic E. M. W. Tillyard and subsequently feminist critic Sandra M. Gilbert, question Eve's stance monopolizing on the economic benefits of efficiency. They compare her action-oriented, economic drive with Adam's concentration on the spiritual and on obeying the creator. Through Adam's understanding of Eve as the body and himself as the mind, we see that Eve's more manual focus is expected from her character. Through Eve's use of labour compared to work, we see an attempt to combine spiritual labour with physical work, an attempt to equalize the two spheres. Because Adam is not receptive to her argument in this more radical converging form, Milton reinforces Eve's existence in the body and separation from the mind despite her current efforts. Seeing as

⁴ OED, n. 2a: Bodily or mental exertion particularly when difficult, painful, or compulsory; (hard) work; toil; *esp.* physical toil. Also *personified*.

Milton famously “speaks out on the inferiority and proper subjection of women” (Comte 977), he remains consistent in his values. Yet, still the text continues to challenge this as an idea, as Eve continues to argue for her freedom.

Eve also fights for valuing herself as an equal by having her labours become more efficient and thereby gain more time to develop her mind rather than her body. If we look back at Eve’s initial statement, “Let us divide our labours” (IX.214), we see her repetition of “our labours.” The repeated possessive plural pronoun “our” welcomes a firm stance of unity and leaves no room for a separation of the two of them—especially when labour is singular (“the work under our labour”), for it combines both individuals into one task. Eve uses the more physically-oriented word “work” and this clear unification of “our labour” to tease Adam on how there are no true divisions between the body and the mind. However, implicit divisions of labour, food, and domesticity that Adam confines Eve to upon meeting her complicates this unification. Because Eve does not feel equal to Adam, this supposed “unity” belittles and harms her—a likely cause for why she later questions if Eden is true paradise. She feels that in order to achieve equality she must first divide from him, for when they are together Adam restrains her mind from growing by only allowing her to work with her body.

Eve’s intended actions solidify the innocence of her request of equity and equality that can only be achieved by dividing from Adam. Eve does not ask for the equality of sharing in Adam’s task of naming creatures, but she demands equity in which her work is valued as equally important to Adam’s. Eve suggests that she will “In yonder spring of roses intermixed / With myrtle, find what to redress till noon,” (IX.217-218). In using the word “redress,” she both references tending to the garden and suggests that these few

hours apart from Adam will help her regain a sense of dignity. To “redress” means to set someone upright again, restore, insinuating that a fall or depletion of some sort must have already occurred and supporting her feelings of uncertainty about Paradise and Adam’s treatment of her. Ironically, Eve’s frustration seems to indicate that in this technically pre-fallen world, dignity is not something to which Eve has access. Adam has over-consumed Eve, and now she must get out of reach of him and his appetite in order to restore herself. Her goal for these two acts of “redressing” is healing and establishing a rebirth of herself. Such renewal and life is cited in her concentrated search for “Spring of Roses intermixt / with Myrtle” (218-219), where “Spring” is the season of rebirth and “Myrtle” references evergreens (*OED* “Myrtle” n. 2a).

During her first few hours in existence, Eve experiences a sense of free will that exists only before Adam seizes her hand (IV.484-491) claiming her for his own with her “meek surrender” (IV.94). We can see that the ability to act on her own account (rather than to please Adam) is, thus far, only achieved when she is not being actively consumed and or otherized by Adam. In requesting this privacy, furthermore, she tries to sustain her temperance.

While Adam seems to support efficiency and acknowledge the effectiveness of division of labour, he focuses on dividing chores based on the type of work as opposed to Eve’s desire to treat work in the garden through a strategy of divide and conquer, in which the two share equally important labour. Adam endorses male and female spheres of influence that privilege his work as more important than Eve’s in an attempt to isolate Eve into the domestic realm, as he exhibits very little interest in physically dividing from her side. Eve’s vision of divide and conquer actually allows her to influence the “male”

sphere of the mind, because her vision of divide and conquer is not about dividing types of tasks by gender, but simply of allowing both Adam and Eve to have access to work that fulfills both of their minds, bodies, and desires. Adam fears that Eve is the weaker of the two and feels he must always monitor her. He orates that his duty, as part of his sphere of influence, is to protect her. Subsequently, he maintains that “The wife, where danger and dishonour lurks, / Safest and seemliest by her husband stays, / Who guards her, or with the worst endures” (IX.267-269). The alliteration of the two superlatives that complement the ideal domestic woman tie directly to “stays”—the act that Adam wants Eve to follow and exists as another word associated with the 17th century silent, supportive wife. The alliteration immediately prior, constructed using “danger” and “dishonour,” reinforces the importance of this “s” alliteration because the words juxtapose the meaning of ideal housewife and the sounds of the two descriptions. The use of the present active verb “lurks” insinuates that these negative nouns are first and foremost ever present in the female. Having those frightening words first also reinforces the insinuations from “lurks.” Additionally, the “d” alliteration first emphasizes the risk of not following one’s husband. Further, by weaving in “her husband” to the positively toned alliteration and then continuing to describe the role of the man, Adam appears as a hero to protect Eve. Jeanie Grant Liebert takes this idea and extends it by arguing that, “She was not privileged with an opportunity for self-exploration or prompted to identify and express the ‘spirit within’ her” (Liebert 161). The spirit within her is her mind. Eve is not given the same intellectual opportunity as Adam, and she is at risk of falling because of it.

To reinforce the lack of mental stimulus and over promotion of Eve's domesticity, Adam restates at the beginning of their conversation that "nothing lovelier can be found / In woman, than to study household good, / And good works in her husband to promote" (IX.232-233). In saying "nothing lovelier can be found," Adam amplifies how, with their current level of knowledge in the world, Eve is doomed to remain subservient to Adam and pushed into the study of "household goods." Adam's statement suggests Eve is a tool to enhance his work and himself while he labours naming all the animals and leads them through their life on Earth. Leading with the definitive adverb "nothing," we see the magnitude of Adam's limited, yet assertive knowledge of women. This narrow understanding of the abilities of women reinforces how Adam otherizes Eve, so he does not have to learn more about women.

At the beginning of her argument, Eve offers ideas of unity and equality. Adam fully dismisses these ideas, however, rejecting Eve's offer and hiding his conservative perspective behind the excuse of how God created women. This perspective ignores that God made women from man—alluding to a transferal or shared level of skill between the two genders, just as with other animals—and insinuates that due to the fact that Eve is made from Adam, she is further from God and therefore less perfect. Following this, Milton's use of enjambment after "found" speeds up the sentence, creating a rush towards "in women." The increase in pace at the end makes the qualifier, "nothing," alter the reader's expectations—transitioning the prospects of a complement to isolating Eve, or (at least) Adam's isolated perspective on her abilities. The use of the preposition "in" with "women" further limits Adam's viewpoint to one location: within Eve. Moreover, the use of the imperfect tense hyper complicates the wording of this phrase. Coupled with

the rushed pace constructed by the enjambment, it appears as if Adam is rambling due to his lack of confidence in reinforcing separate gender spheres. Still, the imperfect tense also projects him as actively attempting to support these spheres. His categorization, more than it conforms to God's instructions, simply otherizes Eve.

Eve's attempt to get physical space to improve efficiency can be understood as an attempt to break free of the social constraints that Adam continues to push her into. Eve masks her attempt/argument to break free from social constraints because she feels obligated to speak to Adam using ideas he understands: as she is a woman and does not possess the mental standing of a man. Rather than explaining to Adam that he over-consumes her like Raphael attempts to warn, Eve returns to the logic of defining paradise—a concept Adam himself had emphasized to Eve. She offers a rhetorical question, "If this be our condition, [...] How are we happy, still in fear of harm?" (IX.323-327). Adam reverses this question by asserting that "best are all things as the will / Of God ordained them" (IX.343-344) to nip the intellectual use of rhetoric thought that Eve produced in the bud. Based on the bounds of this world as they in this moment both know it, Adam's superiority traps Eve, and he cannot conceptualize them as equals.

Adam continues struggling to categorize Eve and define her role as separate from his while they are physically together in Eden, for he weakly explains *different* areas of responsibility he wants her to command. He fails to define these areas, however, because it is not possible to successfully separate the body and mind, physical from the spiritual. Adam begins by divulging God's plan for their lives in Paradise and how those acts of labour are rewarded:

Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed

Labour, 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 denied, and are of love the food,
 Love not the lowest end of human life (IX.234-240).

Strong words like “strictly” and “imposed” remind the audience of the power dynamic between man and the almighty monarch God. This unequal power placement between God and man reinforces the dedication to an entity above the couple. Given that Adam is the only human to directly converse with God, when he says “our Lord” the “our” refers to the relationship of Adam to God. Beyond this, the “us” evokes a transition from monarchical implications to Adam and Eve as a dichotomy because Adam moves to listing the refreshments compatible with the both of them. Still, with Adam as the speaker of God’s wishes, he solidifies his superiority over Eve. The grammar of the opening line further amplifies Adam’s dominance over Eve. Milton opens the sentence with “yet.” As a conjunction, we see the line shifting to a comparative stance equating God’s demands to the prospect of enjoying refreshments and relaxing. Combining the comparative conjunction or qualifying adverb with the opinion, “not,” once again reminds the audience of the power dynamic between man and woman, as Adam has the authority to explain God’s ways, through his point of view, to Eve. Eve, on the other hand, does not even try to present a definitive perspective on things other than food.

Although the power dynamics demonstrate relationships across celestial existences, both power dynamics involve a monarch—the head—and a follower—the

body; Adam exists in both. With God, Adam is the body—the feminized, passive, obedient role. But, as Adam acts as God’s mouthpiece delivering his words into the physical realm of Earth, with Eve, Adam is the head—the masculine monarch. Being both of these simultaneously means that Adam’s existence cannot be solely understood as operating within a so-called “masculine” division of labour. The very God through which Adam draws his authority and demands his wife’s subservience is also the God whose authority requires Adam to be himself subservient. Thus, Adam’s sense of his power over Eve as somehow perfectly analogous to God’s power over mankind fails its own logic, and his argument stands on shaky ground.

When Adam turns to the refreshments that the two of them get to enjoy, he further attempts to associate the mind with masculinity and the body with femininity in order to uphold his power over Eve. However, Adam’s references to food of the body and “of the mind” blurs the lines between body and mind—physical and emotional. The repetition of the word food in these various contexts confuses Adam’s message of clearly dividing their spheres of labour. Hunger clouds the mind while harming the body; we can see how food most effectively deconstructs the gendered binary because food nourishes both the mind and the body. Aside from nourishment, another refreshment Adam clutters amongst his various culinary citations is smiles. When he mentions how “smiles from reason flows,” Adam associates a physical reaction to an emotion—commonly happiness, something Eve just articulated she is at risk of not feeling. Adam, then, introduces reason into this seesaw between physical and emotional realms. The ability to think within “Reason” (IX.239-243) means both with logic and within moderation. Adam says smiling comes from reason, the power source of the mind, implying that Adam’s reason will

make Eve's body smile. As opposed to articulating the emotion with the response of reason, Adam brings the reaction into the physical realm—Eve's realm. However, even reason is needed in moderation. Seeing as Adam has been over-consuming Eve, he is not using real reason. So: Why would Eve ever give him the smile he seeks, refreshing his desire with her very being? By weaving food into concepts of labour, love and thought (the three major components of their lives at this point), Adam has inadvertently broken through all the gendered binaries that have been actively constructed when he tries to push Eve into the domestic sphere. Each of these concepts exist in both physical and mental spaces. When Adam describes the way that all life (physical and emotional/intellectual) requires nourishment, Adam integrates the symbol of Eve's domesticity into himself. This fusion of both aspects of the gender and body/mind binaries into one person thus ironically breaks down those very same binaries.

Diane Elizabeth Dreher does not see this moment as a deconstruction of the gender binaries that Adam attempts to sustain. She sees Eve as a problematic workaholic who “not only neglects recreation, which was deemed necessary for health and balance, but she also overlooks the importance of conjugal love, which would be seen as a grievous error by Milton's Puritan contemporaries” (Dreher 34). Dreher assumes that Eve pursues this dedication to labour because she is less interested in romantic love. However, this interpretation ignores the objectification of Eve by Adam because it holds up romantic love as something that Eve should want in her current state and fails to note the possibility of other needs needing to be met above this. We see this on a number of occasions beginning with their first meeting. When Adam reflects on Eve approaching him for the first time with Raphael, he notes: “but fairest this / Of all thy gifts, nor

enviest. I now see / Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh” (VIII.493-495). The imagery concentrating on her appearance and, namely, her flesh illustrates her status as an object to be looked at rather than heard. While a body can speak, bone and flesh cannot.

Furthermore, the use of the word “gifts” implies ownership by Adam over Eve—gifts are associated with objects, not people. Gift-giving is a power dynamic of superiority from those giving and getting; Adam is also telling her what her own gifts are as if she is not able to define her own self. Ownership accentuates the projection of her as an object, for one owns objects and not people.

But despite Adam’s treatment of her, a vital context for understanding Eve’s interest in labour, Eve’s dedication to and love of Adam is still evident upon numerous occasions. The narrator describes Eve’s feelings towards Adam at the banquet with Raphael; Eve concentrates on the “conjugal caresses, from his lip / Not words alone pleased her” (VIII.54-57). Here, we see Eve leaving the feast when the conversation transitions to a discussion of planetary alignments. While this could be interpreted as a point where Eve’s intelligence falls short, it actually suggests that Eve prefers to have Adam explain the discussion to her privately, an experience of listening tied to her desire for his body as well as his words. This references her love and interest in listening and learning from him as a part of her desire—both sensuous and intellectual—*for* him. With Dreher’s perspective, Adam’s convoluted analogies and descriptions are an attempt to remind Eve of that “sweet intercourse” of love that “is a special blessing, a gift from God, and an essential part of their lives” (Dreher 34), but Dreher ignores the climax of why Eve questions this love. She urges that, “In stressing physical labour before their divinely appointed union, Eve has reversed her priorities, placing the physical before the

spiritual” (Dreher 34). It is Dreher, however, who confuses what Eve’s priorities are, for she believes that Eve is the one to disrupt the balance of body and mind. However, it is not Eve who disrupts this supposedly dichotomous pairing, but Adam; for, through Adam’s isolation of Eve’s identity, he creates the imbalance between the physical and spiritual.

Adam’s attempt to define nourishment and maintain divisions between the feminized physical realm and the masculinized mental realm convolutes his own claim with worldly examples, weakening his appeal for separate spheres of influence.

Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
Labour, 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 denied, and are of love the food,
Love not the lowest end of human life (IX.234-240).

The only time Adam cites items separate from the physical world are the emotions “love” and “mind.” Yet, in each instance, these references get back to the physical by attaching them both to food—Eve’s area of expertise. Adam tries to describe how the mind and body need different things. To his mind, these *separate* entities need different gendered roles to support them. However, he cannot effectively articulate the separation of the two because they are inseparable—he dooms himself by attempting to achieve the impossible.

There are so many flaws in his attempt to use food to separate the mind from the body. Firstly, he is unable to describe it with words successfully, for his various rambling

examples embody no sustained mental nourishment and no purely physical nourishment. When qualifying such reasons/logic, he cites smiles and looks. Both these vanish swiftly as one can look away, and a facial expression can swiftly change. Secondly, when he begins to articulate a mental trait, he ends up relating it to refreshment, sustenance, food. By connecting the emotional and mental levels of nourishment to food, furthermore, he connects it to Eve. Though he would have Eve fully encompass the physical body as the master of the culinary realm, Adam clearly also needs the language of food and physicality of hunger to understand his own mind, for the mind demands nourishment just as the body does. This binary fails because nourishment is constantly both physical and mental. If someone stops feeding the mind, then it falls flat. It fails, just like when someone does not nourish their body. Adam attempts to articulate that the mind is a hungry being that needs to be fed, but what he fails to realize is that to understand the mind we need the body. Even though Adam tries holding up the mind above Eve, detaching himself from the body, his own articulation of his mental needs reveal the impossibility of this separation.

In considering Adam's failure to separate the body from the mind, we should question whether or not Adam is a reliable narrator. Adam attempts to construct barriers between the male and the female. He fails. However, he maintains his composure and continues to defend his stance. This is later accentuated when he fumbles through his own argument for not letting Eve go off alone. J. B. Savage reinforces Adam's *Adam-centric*, skewed mindset when they explain that "What 'seems' real about Eve and about the nature of Paradise is real as far as Adam is concerned, although on the basis of what Paradise has ideally been known to be, the reader understands that Adam's view can

amount to no more than a parody or profanation of God's creation” (Savage 304). By seeing Adam as an unreliable narrator in the text, we begin to note moments of abusing his monarchical title over Eve which highlights how she resists him and his otherization of her.

In an attempt to have Adam listen and understand her relatively abstract argument, Eve adjusts her points to appeal to his viewpoint, to his lens. Once more, Adam tells Eve that it is best for her to stay with him because he can protect her. Her response questions their state of happiness: “If this be our condition...we not endued / Single with like defense, wherever met, / How are we happy, still in fear of harm?” (IX.322-327). *Paradise Lost* projects Eve’s statements as facts when they are objective or aligned with Adam’s (already articulated) ideas. On the other hand, her opinions are often formatted as conditional clauses—as if she is a savvy rhetorician who knows she has to appeal to Adam through his own lens. This statement must be a conditional clause due to Adam’s privilege as the man, for he enjoys Eden and has not experienced any cause for questioning their status in paradise. Often, her conditional clauses are constructed with “can” and “may,” as the condition is commonly dependent on Adam’s action. But Eve uses an “if” clause to emphasize their state of being in “our condition.” Such wording demands attention to their present existence together, as it emphasizes the dangerous effects of their present situation to the reader. Eve warns Adam that if they cannot venture out apart, then they will live unhappily. To reinforce the discomfort Eve feels in Eden, she states forwardly that such unhappiness will prove that Eden is not paradise. While the text hints at the flaws in Eden through rotting food imagery and various negative conditions of labour and obedience, the clearest articulation of its flaws are present in this

condition. Unfortunately, due to the power relations currently in play, Adam does not listen to her frustration. So, she must put her unhappiness in the context of something Adam understands: God's intentions for the Garden of Eden to be paradise. When she says it will not be paradise as God intends, Adam is able to grasp an essence of her discomfort.

Eve's adoption of Adam's rhetoric is one aspect of a woman appropriating a male-oriented viewpoint in this argument. However, even if she does so strategically, the fact remains that she must rhetorically conform to Adam's viewpoint to advocate for her needs, reifying and in some ways maintaining the body/mind and woman/man binaries. Indeed, the text of *Paradise Lost* also invests in these binaries, for Adam and other characters along with the narrator continuously comment on Eve's physical attractiveness.

Raphael and Adam discuss Eve, and Raphael warns Adam of his physical admiration of her. In this warning, the narrator's descriptions of Adam's desire for Eve dangerously flirts with consumption. As Eve "Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers [...] they at her coming sprung" (VIII.44-46), the narrator warns that "With goddess-like demeanor forth she went; / Not unattended [...] And from about her shot darts of desire / Into all eyes to wish her still in sight" (VIII.62-63). Leaving as the conversation leaned towards "studious thoughts" (VIII.40) supports Eve's dedication to caring for the garden and acting as the ideal wife. In this action, we see how each living thing, breathing or not, becomes sexually charged by Eve's presence. However, Adam's "darts of desire" extend beyond her presence; they linger in a longing or "wish" for her to return. The concentration on visual imagery and sight in this wish amplifies the lack of

emotional depth to this longing. While Adam's mind and reason is the center of his strength, the flavor of this all-consuming lust overpowers such assets to the point where Eve is equated to a goddess. While sin, and the subsequent Ten Commandments, do not exist, Adam flirts with the danger of idolizing Eve and creating an imbalance of praise between God and a human.

Raphael clarifies and solidifies the warning of desire mentioned by the narrator when he addresses Adam's "fair Eve; heaven is for thee too high / To know what passes there; be lowly wise" (VIII.172-173). Separate from the clear objectification of Eve's physically "fair" beauty and Raphael's presentation of Eve as Adam's property, Raphael tells Adam that she is too detached from heaven to understand all its celestial ways.

Adam, on the other hand, has direct correspondence with God and angels.

Complementing this denigration of her intellect, Raphael tells him to "be lowly wise."

While this could reference Raphael endorsing Adam's thinking by using a state of being verb in a command to be wise, "lowly" means meek, humble. Thus, it asserts that

Raphael commands Adam to limit his physical admiration of Eve and humble his praise of her. This further suggests that wisdom, the form of knowledge most associated with the "masculine" mind Adam covets, requires Adam to humbly understand all that he does not know—about God, about Eve, and about even himself.

During Raphael's visit, Eve had portrayed the ideal womanly role and was hyper-objectified to the point of Raphael feeling the need to warn Adam. Now, she desires more freedom and responsibility like Adam. She wants to be perceived as Adam's equal and not fall into just tending to household goods. Only maintaining agency over food, Eve tries to divide herself from the oppression of Adam in order to grow spiritually.

Eve's response to Adam's comments on the spheres of influence makes some critics question the good nature of her character, for she shares characteristics of Satan's manipulative behavior. Some theories argue that Eve's part in this discussion for freedom mirrors Satan's manipulative interaction with Eve later, for it "puts her on a par with Satan in her refusal to accept hierarchy and [...] ability to move the plot of *Paradise Lost* forward" (Gilbert 1). This theory stems from Satan and Eve's position as active agents in the text. Through their willingness to pursue their aims, the plot of *Paradise Lost* is moved forward. In this argument, their mutual drive creates a parallel between the two characters; the reasoning behind their actions and the delivery of their arguments, however, shatters the parallel.

Eve's drive to go out alone comes from two major sources: a hope to escape being completely consumed by Adam and a hope to maintain her love for him. Satan's drive to doom the humans comes from revenge, vengeance against God. Gilbert's argument cites aspects of the text that articulate a negative tone by which Eve develops her stance: "To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, / As one who loves, and some unkindness meets, / With sweet austere composure thus replied" (IX.271-273). Gilbert sees the unkindness as bitter, vengeful anger as if to dismiss the active verb "who loves" and the determiner "some" immediately before. But Satan does not love; a focus on himself and a thirst for revenge drive him. While Eve's frustration grows as Adam continues to isolate her, she still looks outward and embraces the love she shares with Adam. Additionally, "some unkindness" is understandable, as her husband just belittled her by calling her, "The wife, where danger and dishonour lurks" (IX.267). Eve's sweet and stoic composure further severs this satanic connection. The snake, while smooth talking, speaks more with

passion and exaggerates his arguments, as Gilbert describes, “...Satan embarks on his great temptation speech, which is almost like an operatic aria in praise...” (10). Due to Eve’s “austere composure,” she strays from the sly and “great temptation” that serpentine Satan coins. The gentle tone might, indeed, be read as motherly—the mother of all mankind considers the words of every creature the way she wishes hers would be heard. By reading Eve as a slithering, sneaking trickster, then, these critics dismiss her overly expressed naïveté and innocent desire to be Adam’s equal, and her tenderness towards others as an orientation of her being.

Unlike those who attempt to equate Eve to Satan’s serpentine persona, Scodel goes further to defend Eve’s persistence and explains where such interest in individuality stems from. In exploring the expanse and limitations of the classical concept “pleasurable restraint,” where temperance is understood as a romantic act of foreplay, Scodel dissects Eve’s behavior with Adam and compares it to Satan’s relationship to God. He asserts that:

While Satan’s pride is evident in his vow ‘never to submit or yield’ (1.108) and his ‘deign[ing] subjection (4.50), Eve’s ‘modest pride’ is associated with her slow yielding to Adam ‘in all things.’ In yielding she distinguishes herself not only from rebellious Satan but also from those fallen women who upset the gender hierarchy by assuming the roles of ‘proud fair[s]’ who forever scorn the entreaties of ‘starved lover[s]’ (4.769-770) (Scodel 208).

Scodel’s analysis refers to Eve’s dedication to Adam and reserved willingness to follow and listen to him at the beginning of their relationship. The allusion to the virgin

mother—the one person after original sin that is born pure and innocent—strengthens his claim that Eve’s behavior distances herself further from fallen women and from Satan. In this argumentative scene, we see a more abstract form of this reserved dedication—a coy submission. Eve still asks Adam for permission, as she passionately presents him with all her facts. She also better understands the need to create happiness and pleasure from labour and temperance. While observing Adam, Eve begins to notice an over indulgence—similar to the observations of the archangel Raphael at the luncheon. As they spend time together, Adam’s efforts to isolate Eve increase. This otherization can also be interpreted as an over-consumption of her because it fosters idolization of beings other than God. In trying to defend her individuality and reinforce equality, she pushes for them both to have a moment apart. She pushes for Adam to embrace temperance and reduce his consumption of her, unlike Satan who pushes for selfish revenge and over-consumption. Thus, while these critics find Eve’s passion for separation from Adam as borderline sinister, they dismiss the pain she has endured being isolated as a liability and weakness. Eve tries to thoughtfully contribute to their sustenance by going off on her own. By seeing her as manipulative and sinister, it overlooks her unhappy status as the other and her active attempts to have Adam see her as an equal.

Indeed, the ambiance of the morning further suggests the innocence of Eve’s request. After their minds and bodies are satisfied by their morning meals, both humans are more apt to making sound decisions. Additionally, Eve promises to return before lunch. This time between meals in the morning is traditionally the ideal zone of physical labour, as farmers and other cultivators, like bakers, work fervently at this time to avoid the heat and monopolize on their strength gathered from breakfast. By requesting to

maximize their efficiency during prime working hours, she further amplifies the good nature of her request. Beyond this characterization of the daylight, some critics like Patricia Parker see “‘evening’ as a turning away from ‘light’” (328) in *Paradise Lost* where light embodies the brightness and safety of God and Heaven, leaving darkness as the will of Satan and Hell. Her request shines brightly in the light of God and Heaven; Eve’s aims are pure and of good intent.

Eve continues to defend her right to go out on her own and prove that she is Adam’s equal by dismantling Adam’s fear of losing paradise. Because Adam sees Eve as the weaker of the two of them, he tries to convince Eve to stay with him because he worries about her falling victim to the evil they were warned about. Eve argues that if they can lose paradise by simply not being in each other’s presence, then the reality of this paradise and the *true* happiness they experience is questionable. She theorizes:

Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the maker wise,
As not secure to single or combined.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were not Eden thus exposed (IX.337-341).

Eve begins with an active present proposal requesting Adam not to assume their happiness was made with flaws and conditions by God, meaning that they would not need to stay together or be apart to be happy. The present active tense proposal “Let us not then suspect” contrasts with the past tense of God’s actions which highlights God’s detachment from their current situation and conversation. Because God’s actions are presented in the past it also removes God from actively conducting the action. Seeing as

God is omnipotent and omniscient, removing Him from His actions enables Eve to imagine a space where she can examine the potential flaws in His work. The flaw Eve concentrates on is her inability to attain a satisfactory level of independence; if this is paradise, then Eve must have the ability to walk away from Adam.

Eve explains here that Adam is at risk of failing her by not having faith in their ability to be apart, just as he fails her in his uncontrolled desire to consume her. Eve's use of "if" creates a conditional clause which lightens her potential criticism of God, turns it into a statement of concern for their wellbeing, and reveals the risks of the effects of the coming actions. This exonerates her from any fault of challenging God. By speaking in the conditional clause, Eve makes this appear as a pivotal moment of hope and risk for her and Adam in Eden. However, the fact that the conditional clause is placed near the end of the statement constructs a wonky syntax. Through this overly convoluted sentence structure, it appears as if Eve directly attacks Adam and her relationship because the reader hears a declarative statement defining their happiness as frail first. This directly hints at Eve's frustration. Beginning with the declarative makes it feel like this moment has already failed her. The rhetoric, then, foreshadows how Adam fails through the strange syntax, for it appears as though she is already attacking Eden. While Eve formally defends Eden with her remarks at this moment, the weird syntax foreshadows Adam's coming failure to Eve.

Neither Adam nor Eve have tasted the apple of knowledge yet, so they are not meant to have any concept of evil or negativity. Yet, the status of their happiness concerns Eve. Eve's concerns likely result from Adam isolating and belittling her even though she already behaves like Adam's ideal woman. By first stating "secure to single,"

she reinforces how she feels detached from Adam. The use of listing to include “combined” further reflects Eve’s conformation to Adam’s perspective, for she understands that Adam does not comprehend her feelings of isolation. Being in direct communication with God and other celestial beings as well as possessing the title of master of Earth, Adam is the central character. Eve must adjust her argument to encompass points that he understands—hence the creation of an Adam-centric argument. Her fundamental stance argues that Adam and Eve must not assume or suspect that they will be unhappy when apart, for that mindset would imply that God created an imperfect garden. Therefore, they should be happy whether they are alone (single) in Eden or together (combined). If their happiness is not achievable in either or both states, then this place must not be paradise. While Adam fears for the loss of his paradise *because Eve can walk away*, Eve’s sense that Adam’s desire to control her is *itself the flaw in paradise* speaks to their different fears of entrapment in the garden. Her need to divide the single and combine to articulate her stance exemplifies her isolation. Without tasting the full meaning of good and bad, Eve is still able to illustrate a negative image of paradise because her status as “other” sets up the foundation for such feelings.

The epic further exposes the way that Adam others Eve through Adam’s own rhetoric. Adam ultimately permits Eve to go off on her own which could be viewed as resisting an overconsumption of Eve. However, Adam questions Eve’s ability to remain strong without him. After Adam restates the definition of the ideal woman and her role, he attempts to calm Eve by promising her that “These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands” (IX.244). Then, he transitions to offer acknowledgement to her request. He articulates to her that “if much [...] /Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield. / For

solitude sometimes is best society, / And short retirement urges sweet return” (IX.247-250). This statement reinforces the idea of temperance and the constructive influence of proximal distance. The *OED* defines “sate” as “to weary or disgust as a result of excessive indulgence” (*OED* “sate” v. 2a). By creating a conditional clause for Eve, Adam acknowledges that one can over indulge other people. This clause references Eve which makes it hard to say if Adam feels he is capable of overconsumption. Additionally, the verb “urges” personifies Adam’s “short retirement.” This personification of Adam’s separation from Eve appears as though he is trying to recreate a space for her body to exist with him while she is physically gone. Adam thinks he needs her body to feel balanced. Hence, he must personify his privacy to compensate for her absence. This feeble attempt to find balance between his mind and her body calls into question his positive outlook. Conversely, the use of positive words like “best” and “sweet” offer an optimistic tone as Adam mentions only what he, as an individual, can endure. The focus of his success and the benefits of distance are only associated with him.

Immediately following this cognition on his personal benefits, Adam concludes that “other doubt possesses me, lest harm / Befall thee severed from me” (IX.251-252). The stark contrast in the benefits of distance between these two individuals, or from the way it was previously described as temperance from overconsumption, insinuates that Eve is not equal to Adam. The use of “doubt,” “harm,” and “befall” appear to foster a transition in the tone of Adam’s speech, moving from optimism to fear because the negative terms speak directly to Adam’s main concern: losing Eve. This concern implies that Eve is higher than God, a fear flirted with a number of times throughout the epic, in

Adam's eyes—whether he knows it or not. In fact, Eve confirms this sentiment when she brings Adam the apple, and he consumes it.

Although optimistic and frightening terms are both used by Adam, possibly altering the tone of his argument, Adam's language creates a hypocritical tone:

[...] but if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield.
 For solitude sometimes is best society,
 And short retirement urges sweet return.
 But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
 Befall thee severed from me; (IX.247-252).

The abrupt transition from assurance to a formidable and daunting feeling emphasizes the hypocrisy of his statements; one cannot be one's "best society" when they are possessed by doubts.

Ultimately, this passage muffles the division that Adam attempts to create between himself and Eve through sounds blurring identifications and improper personification. The assonance of "ee" in lines 251-252 blurs the words "thee," "me," and "befall" together. The strongest assonance appears between "thee" and "me," where "me" is repeated twice as if to engulf "thee"—blurring the identification of Adam (me) and Eve (thee) together. To compliment this, the sound "ee" is only uttered twice in the preceding lines: once, at the beginning to confirm the condition onto "thee" (Eve) and second in "sweet" return also referring to Eve—causing a balance between the double "me" and singular "thee." The seven repeated sounds in these lines act even more pronounced as dactyls speeding up the pace and amplifying the interchangeability of the two pronouns

and their subsequent people. To accentuate this confusion of people, I want to return to the personification of Adam's "short retirement." Retirement, no matter the length, cannot urge another action to happen. Because Adam repeatedly craves Eve with "darts of desire [...] to wish her still in sight" (VIII.62-63), the act of personifying the state of her departure operates as a coping mechanism to reassure himself that he can endure time without her. This coping mechanism marks Adam's descent from reason into a craving of Eve's physical self—blurring his intellect with her physical body. His mind processes the situation upon the condition of her not being present and nothing else. The assonance scrambling the two identities together further reinforces this confusion of reason and the physical world. Both the abrupt shift in tone and the convolution of the two people present Adam's argument with an ironic, if not hypocritical, tone.

Thus, while his words attempt to distinguish the male mind from the female body, the delivery fails to support his distinction. The hypocrisy of Adam's attempts to separate the body from the mind once more demands that the audience acknowledge the lack of temperance and balance that the construction of the binary itself introduces. Eve's position as primarily a body in Adam's eyes may stunt the development of her mind when in his presence, but it also stunts him! Therefore, her capacity to behave temperately and control her consumption is moot. In her current state, she is doomed to remain his inferior, but so, too, is he doomed to remain less than he could be otherwise. It is this knowledge, perhaps, that leads Eve to embrace knowledge of another kind.

Chapter 3: Eve's (Re)Evolutionary Epistemology — Reconstructing the World

Eve's attempts to adapt her existence to appease Adam's rules and definitions are over; she now hunts for a strategy to construct a new world with new rules. After achieving the means to go off on her own, Eve now walks through the garden alone. Still, Adam puts Eve at risk of manipulation because he only allows her to act as a body—to reinforce his role as the mind. However, the conditions of her walk (her alone, without the leech-like nature of Adam surrounding her, and on a food-related mission) provide the proper agency for her to decide to eat the apple from the Tree of Knowledge. While Satan expends much of his energy and time to convince Eve to eat the apple, the text suggests that Eve makes a conscious personal decision to do so—a decision that is not foolish, but is strategic. She is driven to this strategy due to the fact that no other tactics of protecting herself from Adam's overconsumption within her tool belt (preparing mass amounts of food and satiating Adam with everything she can other than sacrificing herself) have been effective. The effect of Eve's actions are, as Christian tradition tells us, the Fall of Mankind. But when Adam learns of her eating the apple and concludes that it is the Fall, he becomes disheveled and panicked. In contrast to this distraught response, Eve takes up the role of a confident and collected agent. This role reversal coupled with her different, far more respectful and thoughtful treatment of Adam after the Fall ultimately proves how Eve uses the culinary world to the best of her abilities to 'bake' a new paradise where the two of them exist in a balanced economy of consumption.

To Eat Or Not To Eat, That Is The Question

Eve's soliloquy immediately before eating the forbidden fruit exposes the high level of authority Eve possesses in choosing to eat the apple. Critics have long argued

about the free will of humans in *Paradise Lost*, perhaps best exemplified in Stanley Fish's *Surprised By Sin*. For Fish, in fact, this question is formal in nature: any time the reader finds herself identifying with Satan, he argues, Milton simply confirms the fallenness of humankind. The scene of Eve, Satan and the apple is no exception. Though it may appear to be Satan's slippery tongue that draws Eve into the Fall, the scene's careful deliberation when she spends "a while, thus to herself" suggests otherwise. The time she dedicates to herself is undefined, but her soliloquy is almost an entire page. Looking at the concluding remarks of her inner thoughts, we see the level to which she reflects on this conscious, purposeful decision:

What fear I then, rather what know to fear
 Under this ignorance of good and evil,
 Of God or death, of law or penalty?
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind? (IX.773-779).

Eve has just listened to Satan's elaborate speech to convince her to eat the apple, "yet first / pausing a while, thus to herself she mused" (IX. 743-744). Such a pause and self-reflection amplifies the high level of personal agency within the moment right before and during the Fall. Moreover, Eve metacognitively questions her developing fears; she subdues them by reminding herself that she is ignorant. This is paradoxical again, as her thought process is blurred by alluding to words and meanings of negative things. How would she even understand the concept of fear in a prelapsarian Eden? In an attempt to

subject paradise to his own understanding of perfection, an understanding that relies on binaristic thinking, Milton must corrupt paradise before it is even corrupted. Though I have discussed this paradox before, I want to insist now that Milton's text appears to be in conflict with his gendered and religious ideology.

The numerous binaries Eve lists suggest that she is processing the way that she herself has been positioned within a binary by and with Adam. Her emotional and embodied experience of this binary, furthermore, is what draws her towards this act. To begin with, she aligns good with evil. The simplicity of this comparison further compliments her initial developing thought process, which begins with basic ideas such "God or death" before moving forward with more elaborate concepts like "law or penalty." Notably, though, the first binary in the series, that of "good and evil" is presented through the conjunction "and," where in all other cases she uses the comparator "or": "Of God *or* death, of law *or* penalty?" (IX.775). The use of "and" heightens her awareness that good and evil are both present in this decision. The structure of opposition articulated in the "or" of the following binaries thus implies an attempt to discern which is which, for she reveals no evidence to the point of her knowing what is good and what is evil. Put into the context of how Adam has treated her in Paradise, her confusion is no surprise.

When Eve compares God to death, though, the logic of the passage gets even weirder. Death in *Paradise Lost* is not a concept but is a character, and Death is not alignable with God in either a positive or negative way. While it is true that God is the creator of life, Death is the child of Sin and Satan—these identities and their subsequent powers or gifts do not foil one another. To limit God to merely the identity of "the creator

of life” would strip Him of so many more layers to His identity. These two entities are far from accurate foils of one another, and the fact that Eve aligns them reveals a misunderstanding of who and or what they actually are. But Eve, of course, does not know this; without access to this knowledge, her choice to eat the apple of knowledge will always be based in misunderstanding.

Because all the other binaries fit within the logics of Western binary oppositions, Eve’s ignorance in this initial comparison stands out even further. Indeed, her attempt and failure to compare God to anyone emphasizes her displacement from God. It is a struggle to endorse a being, however almighty, who has let her suffer to the extent she has at Adam’s hands. Next, she compares law to penalty. Laws, in an ideal society, are intended to maintain peace and prosperity. Paradise was only given one law; this law was not designed for that. God established the one law on Earth as a test for humans to prove their boundless love to Him. Although one can argue that this law did provide prosperity because it was their “ticket” to staying in Paradise, Eve’s discomfort in her gendered role within the Garden reveals that the law did not effectively establish peace and prosperity for her. Therefore, by comparing law and penalty, Eve indicates her unhappiness in her current situation while also questioning the validity of said rule—returning us to her struggle to define what is good and what is evil. Because of constant exposure to Adam’s binary logic, Eve resorts to categorizing her thinking into binaries of good and bad in the process of contemplating whether to eat the apple. As a result of her cluttered negative and positive experiences in Paradise, her understanding of a number of the binaries introduced is skewed. Nevertheless, her mental struggle here demonstrates the violence at

the heart of structural binaries themselves, a violence Adam uses and labels in the name of God.

Eve's final binary presents itself in the last line of her soliloquy: body and mind. Like her introduction to good and evil, she uses the conjunction "and" to bring them together. Ending on the word "mind," the trait Adam and Raphael reiterate she does not possess, Eve suggests that she longs for those things forbidden to her by their association of the mind with the masculine. Moreover, she finds that protecting herself through means that rely only on practices supposedly belonging to the body will not be enough. She no longer accepts her separation from an intellectual sphere; she no longer accepts herself as different from Adam but supposedly equal in quality. She finds that she is impatient with trying to pursue spaces of her own within this limiting framework. She wants a mind; she wants her own mind. But she wants, too, to keep her body. She craves a new world—one in which the freedom provided to her in her culinary world exists beyond the realm of food. The concentration of the steady, equal pace to "feed *at once* both body and mind" (IX.779, emphasis mine), exhibits a methodical dedication to resisting binary logic as such. From the beginning of this risky action (eating the apple), she aims to provide equal sustenance to her body and mind. Therefore, neither Adam's constructed mind-body nor his man-woman binary could elevate one value above the other or have a head-start in any way.

Beyond the binaries above, Eve's words insinuate a determination to preserve her identity while moving toward a different kind of world. After thinking about the various binaries she associates with this situation, she reflects that "Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine, / Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste, / Of virtue to make wise:"

(IX.776-778). When she thinks “The cure of all,” her thoughts expose the level of discomfort she experiences in Paradise, for “cure” implies that there is a fault that needs to be healed. Further, the etymology of “cure” is the Latin “cura” which means “to take care of or care for,” a root meaning which further supports how she looks at the apple like a medical remedy to the psychological suffering she has endured (*OED* 1, 7A). Even further, though, she also sees the fruit as a mechanism to nurture all of humanity. Given that Eve has been overly consumed by Adam this entire time, it is understandable why she would look at something consumable and nurturing to finally satiate Adam’s cravings—and to claim, honor, and satiate her own. The further descriptions, “Fair to the eye” and “inviting to the taste,” both relate to the two major categories to which Eve is subjected: her physical appearance and body as well as the culinary world. By noting that something else possesses those characteristics, she eagerly approaches it as an option to replace her as being over-consumed by Adam. By relating to these both, she reveals how she is thinking about this from all the angles she knows. Being constantly praised for these two forms, she has almost been conditioned to believe that these are the only valuable traits to consider in a situation. Seeing as these are the two things that Adam appreciates most, by consuming the apple’s apparent abundance of these traits, Eve finds a way to survive given Adam’s appetite.

Labeling the fruit as divine ironically affords Eve a kind of detachment from God. This further exposes the failure of Adam’s refusal to educate her mind, for she easily glorifies the apple above God and (if we accept the Christian framework) thus misplaces her faith. She wonders, “Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine, / Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste, / Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then / To reach, and feed at

once both body and mind?” (IX.776-779). While we have discussed the influence of “cure” in this train of thought, when we connect the ideas of healing to her perception of the fruit as divine the soliloquy suggests her misunderstanding of holy power. While God offers eternal salvation, that is not His entire identity. Finding herself detached from God, she looks to the apple for protection and hope. She glorifies its medical abilities. She calls it fair, inviting, and virtuous. She personifies it. In personifying the apple, she blurs the lines between her actions and the behavior and or traits of the apple. To further obscure this boundary, she never uses any personal pronouns or references to self. It is unclear who she formally defines as the beneficiary “to make wise” or “feed at once both body and mind.” This ambiguity suggests that she sees it as a benefit to herself, but also to Adam. She implies that there will be benefits for both of them, for she begins discussing how the apple would be a “cure for all.” Considering that “all” is the only reference to a person in this long and complex sentence, by referring to the beneficiaries as both Adam and Eve, Eve believes growth and development of mind and body are important for both of them. “All” can further be connected to all of humankind—which only deepens her claim to its importance. She sees both humans as currently without complete fulfillment: Adam overconsumes Eve in an attempt to fulfill his desires; Eve lacks the resources she wants to protect herself from Adam’s overconsumption.

Where Adam’s constant reinforcement of Eve’s existence as the body, not the mind, limits the female self into the physical and “elevates” the male to this superior mental mastermind, Eve’s sense that she must *feed* herself incorporates something spiritual and intellectual into the language of the body. She desires a kind of sustenance that she received from her personal culinary world but that exceeds literal food. She must

feed it or else she would wither away. Seeing as she has never had a mind (according to the binary structure that Adam attempts to establish throughout their relationship), she feels that to formulate a safe, new space for herself to thrive she must formulate her own mind.

Beginning her soliloquy by questioning if she is afraid, Eve transitions to finding the apple inviting, which encompasses her dedication to becoming Adam's equal. Her descriptions of the apple as "fair to the eye," "inviting to the taste" and "of virtue to make wise" complement the body-mind binary, as the compliments begin with the eye's ability to objectify. Then, the description moves to the personified "inviting" where taste acts as a bridge between body and mind. For, taste nourishes the physical body while also providing energy for the brain to develop one's mind. Finally, the description of the apple as "Of virtue to make wise" directly connects to Raphael's warning to Adam about his treatment of Eve, and the need to dedicate himself to Wisdom for his mind. This smooth transition describes the various ways the apple can benefit the human, ways which necessarily suture the mind and body together, rather than dividing them. Given Eve's association with the culinary world, her consideration of the apple in terms of taste to bridge the two identities together endorses her continued dependence on the culinary realm as the foundation of her agency. Feeding "at once both body and mind" reinforces her hope to strengthen her agency, for the taste of said feeding has created the bridge. The feeding provided the energy and or nourishment to flow across the bridge in both directions. This metaphor thus exposes that they were never separate to begin with. Adam puts all of his energy into constructing a dichotomy between the male and female, mind

and body. Yet, throughout the process of exploring his and Eve's behaviors we see that the dichotomy does not actually exist.

The results of this soliloquy expose the true fluidity of identity within humanity forever. The earth "felt the wound, and nature from her seat / Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe," (IX.782-783). Just as the economy of consumption was explored in previous chapters, we see it happen again here. H.J. Hodges contends that "The postlapsarian 'men' destined to '[g]row up to their provision' will be corrupt men with corrupting touch. As soon as the forbidden fruit is touched and devoured, and thereby corrupted by Eve (and thereafter, by Adam), all fruit is similarly 'touched,' and no longer hangs 'incorruptible' — 'Earth felt the wound' (9.782)—but is 'polluted'" (Hodges 25). This means that the atmosphere of Eden was designed to support perfect consumption. I would argue, however, that Adam's overconsumption of Eve was itself a polluting force, one which led not only to Eve's choice to eat the apple, but one which was always polluting Eve's experience of what should have been Paradise. Prelapsarian Eden, we must note, never offered Eve a sense of home nor access to a complete, un-dichotomized identity.

While Eve's thought process for why she eats the apple reveals a drive towards the betterment of her quality of life as well as an understanding that all of mankind will grow, Adam's reasoning for eating the apple stems from a desperate craving of Eve and a fear of loneliness. This reasoning exposes how tainted Adam's feelings and actions towards Eve are. As Eve informs Adam of what she has done while "her cheek distemper flushing glowed" (IX.886), Adam "amazed, / Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill / Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed" (IX.899-891). Eve's news

immediately turns Adam to stone and makes him speechless. However, the phrase “joints relaxed” is confusing, seemingly blurred with the notion of muscles relaxing—for we do not typically think of joints as the bodily parts that can relax. However, joints connect one’s bones. Interpreting this phrase literally: where one’s joints relax, the body’s bones would become unsteady, and could entirely collapse. Disjointed bones could appear as a person internally melting, or, more colloquially, becoming spineless. The imagery, therefore, encapsulates Adam’s embodied fear. As Adam listens to his bewitching wife, he transforms into a spineless form of himself—unable to hold himself up at the thought of losing Eve and experiencing true loneliness. He becomes his own satanic snake; convincing himself to join Eve’s fall Adam ignores the distemperment glowing in Eve’s cheek. Seconds after Adam’s joints relax, he begins with flattering remarks, “O fairest of creation, last and best / Of all God’s works, creature in whom excelled / Whatever can to sight or thought be formed, / Holy, divine, good, amiable or sweet!” (IX. 896-899). This excessive praise appears to overcompensate for his disbelief, constructing a haze of denial. The level of such praise skyrockets above his adoration of God, just as Raphael warned. As we see when Raphael and Adam converse at the luncheon, Adam uses religious terms to glorify Eve, even though she has just fallen from God’s graces. Beyond this stroke of denial, the way his adjectives trail from the most religiously glorified “holy” and “divine” to the pleasant flavor “sweet” insinuates his desperate need to elevate her morality. The use of a culinary tasting adjective also refers to how Adam has enjoyed consuming Eve. He finds her sweet and tasty. Now that Adam has listened to Eve’s confession, he rushes to preserve his mental image and taste of her by

hyper-glorifying her. His exaggeration of her description exposes his desperate need for her.

Adam's desperation is compounded by the next phase of his thinking: processing how Eve could have done this. Adam continues his response to Eve:

How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,
 Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote?
 Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidden! some cursed fraud
 Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown (IX.900-906).

Within this section, we see a transition from the flattery above. The repetition of “how” conjoined with various descriptions of the same scene illustrates how Adam is still in shock. The consonance of “de” present in “defaced,” “deflowered,” “death” and then finally “devote” transition from anger and shock to a new experience: anticipated loss. Combining the three first negative “de” words with “devote”—a term that used to symbolize Adam and Eve’s commitment to one another—exhibits the pain and betrayal he feels. Additionally, his use of words like “strict,” “forbiddance,” “transgress,” and “violate” can all be categorized as terms that support structure and law. This legal diction amplifies Adam’s commitment to constructing order. His frustration with Eve comes from her deconstruction of the patriarchal order he built. To this point, this concluding action of eating the apple and taking steps forward reveals an acceptance, or at least an acknowledgement, of what has happened.

While Adam processes his grief rather quickly, his final state of acceptance and decision to eat the apple reveals how he is less mentally reasonable when compared to Eve's methodical reflection. Adam concludes, "And me with thee hath ruined, for with thee / Certain my resolution is to die; / How can I live without thee" (IX.907-909). His close minded fear is revealed by the hyperbolized rhetorical question, "How can I live without thee" (IX.909). The level of distress of this question is accentuated by the hyperbolized statements of guaranteed doom directly before, for his "certain" belief that he will die from not being with Eve, we know, is not likely true. When Eve thinks about eating the apple, her thought process includes a comparison of authority and repercussions, good and evil and other meta concepts. Conversely, Adam's thought process consists of establishing an ultimatum where his choices are death, by which he means being alone, or sinning. In this metaphor, Adam equates loneliness, something he has experienced, with death, something he has not experienced but which is his only other concept of what is bad. Adam reveals how his relationship with Eve and fear of death is greater than his love of God because he ultimately chooses sinning against God for Eve. This logic does not equate. They actually expose a very interesting relationship with the association between man and mind and woman and body. Eve, the female and body, thinks about this decision from multiple perspectives at a more reason-oriented and level-headed standpoint; while Adam thinks about this decision after Eve already commits the act (so we must account for the grief of the Fall), his perspective is one dimensional and concentrated only on Eve—without consideration of the greater good

and state of humanity. He simplifies the repercussions to death or life from loneliness while Eve considers much more, as a reasonable mind should.⁵

Processing Grief in the Embodied Mind

Beyond the variance in their reasoning for eating the apple, we see a similar contrast in how they respond to the effects of this act. Eve's reaction to eating the apple leads her to develop her intellect and elevate her demeanor in a number of ways. After Adam eats the apple, his behavior mirrors that of his previous thought process—distraught, dishevelled, disconsolate. Seeing as Adam appears to lose control of his emotions and hurries to express his feelings first, I will explore his response first.

Eating the apple challenges Adam's manhood because his uncontrollable emotions, something he understands as a problem, appear to dominate his demeanor. At this point, both humans have eaten the apple. Archangel Michael has now come down to Earth to escort them out of the garden and explain what has happened and what will happen next. While conversing with Michael, Adam loses control of his emotions again:

Adam could not, but wept,
 Though not of woman born; compassion quelled
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess,
 And scarce recovering words his plaint renewed.

O miserable mankind, to what fall

⁵ Raphael tells Adam that “In loving thou dost well, in passion not, / Wherein true love consists not; love refines / The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat / in reason”(VIII.588-591). If Adam were of a reasonable mind in this moment, then he would note Raphael's definitions. However, he does not. Instead, Eve is doing what Raphael told Adam to do.

Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!” (XI.495-502)

By describing Adam’s tears as inevitable, the text emphasizes the extent to which he cannot stop himself from crying. His manhood “gave him up to tears,” where tears in this instance embodies the feminine. When he gathers “firmer thoughts,” the composed state he feels begins with “o miserable mankind.” The “o” exerts such woe at the beginning of his firm thought that it reveals the true lack of composure he actually possesses. The generalization to all mankind (when there are only two of them and he cannot speak to the future of an entire race) illustrates the exaggerations of his concerns. Michael, after Adam has eaten the apple, presents a number of visions to him in an attempt to educate him, using the narrative trope of romance as a teaching tool. When Adam is presented with many visions filled with varying scenarios, he still cannot identify the difference between the good and bad. This reveals Adam’s lack of growth, struggle to change, and awkward lack of development. Conversely, Eve experiences a singular dream of the future and she is consumed with righteous hope and drive towards a better future. Emily Griffiths Jones dissects these visions or teaching lessons. Discussing “the tropes of ‘Soft’ and ‘amorous’ romance,” Jones argues that Adam’s response to Michael’s lesson makes two mistakes: he is first drawn to courtly romance, only to then overcorrect and assume that courtship and matrimony lead to doom and destruction (Jones 132). She points out that “once Michael corrects him, he [Adam] reacts too vehemently and, like many readers since, interprets this errant mode as feminine, inextricably associated with womanish wiles” (Jones 132). Jones’s argument illustrates Adam’s inability to inhabit the space of mental moderation, either entirely glorifying or entirely denigrating the structure of romance. Her reading resonates with my own, then, given that Adam’s toxic treatment of

Eve relies on rigidly constructed binaries of difference. Following Raphael's correction to a further extreme by associating his mistake with femininity, Adam exposes his hard-headed refusal to think beyond the gendered binary in which femininity is taken as morally dangerous. His rash assumptions are clear in his exclamation "O miserable mankind, to what fall / Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!" and through his inability to comprehend the layers of complexity of mankind even when directly coached through them. A combination of the two, the onomatopoeia and generalization, reveals a deep sense of desperate panic. Such a panic is further supported by the exclamation point for punctuation of his dreary sentence.

The reference of "mankind" as opposed to a personal pronoun like "us" or "me" does more than emphasize Adam's panic; it reveals an attempt to disassociate with the act. No formal naming is used to connect either him or Eve to the event. Additionally, he uses "what" rather than "a," "the," or a personal pronoun: "to what fall / Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!" (XI.501-502). These other options create a more specific and pointed citing of the event. Considering they both ate the apple at different moments and for different reasons, vaguely citing the event could be a result of shame or embarrassment. The use of enjambment between these two lines speeds up the reading of these rhetorical questions—reflecting the way an embarrassed person may scramble their thoughts and rush through their words.

Furthermore, in discussing the Fall, he uses multiple prepositional phrases—describing the state of a situation. The use of the prepositional phrase "to what fall" is coupled with the depressing verb "degraded." While Eve feels more hopeful as a result of her action (as we will discuss next), Adam feels he has truly fallen. This

opposition reinforces how one person had nowhere to fall and the other person placed themselves upon a high pedestal that now erodes with his tears under his feet. The direct form of the verb reveals no hesitation in this observation or feeling. The other prepositional phrase “to what wretched state” is joined with “reserved.” Reserved implies preservation. When conjoined with the wretched state described, Adam more thoroughly exposes his feelings of doom.

Moreover, the phrase “Though not of woman born” exposes Adam’s tense, ironic feelings regarding his own behavior in this moment. In this phrase, Adam hints at the trope where women are emotionally unquelled. The construction of an “although” clause or “though” clause suggests that a man can be emotional only because they came from a woman. This means that deep down a man can be tainted by a woman’s emotional instability because he grew inside and from her and was birthed through her. However, Adam does not even have that reasoning as an excuse for his tears because he came from the almighty Him (the omnipotent male God). Hence, this line is ironic because Adam naturally has no association to women. He was made by God (a masculine figure in this text) and, being the first man, is the definition of man himself. The irony comes from how he becomes that which he has previously only associated with women—irrational, emotional, and, to his mind, weak. Eve’s control over her humors and various *excretions*, as I discussed in my first chapter, contrasts with this moment.⁶ Furthermore, Adam blames compassion, a quality worthy of praise, for the loss of Adam’s best qualities of his masculinity. By having compassion as the main subject, “compassion quelled / His best of man,” it then removes the responsibility and fault of him surrendering to tears away

⁶ In my first chapter, I discuss Gail Kern Paster’s work exploring the trope of women as leaky vessels and the connection between their supposedly leaky bodies and assumed inability to control their emotions.

from him. Adam has tasted the apple. Therefore, his mind is elevated. Adam's inability to control himself in this state reveals how the binaries he fought to construct are actively crumbling around him.

Even though Adam sees his own response as stereotypically effeminate, Eve remains level-headed and thoughtful—reasonable and wise. Adam has just finished conversing with archangel Michael. Adam, now, turns to Eve to tell her about his attempts to talk their way out of a harsher punishment. Eve “with sad demeanor meek” (XI.162) responds:

But the field

To labour calls us now with sweat imposed,
 Though after sleepless night; for see the morn,
 All unconcerned with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling; let us forth,
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?

Here let us live, though in fallen state, content (XI.171-180).

Eve's speech to Adam is full of solace, calming imagery, and hope—all aimed at bringing Adam down from his distraught state. The repeated use of “our” reinforces trust and confidence in the fact that she is connected with Adam; they are on equal footing now. The use of “our” also addresses Adam's main concern: loneliness. Eve's string of promises and descriptions are laced with imagery of coupling which appears to directly

target Adam's gravest fear. Her dedication and ability to talk Adam down from his hysterical state amplifies the influence the apple has on her. She uses words like "enjoined" and "all" to further reinforce this unity. The enjambed statement, "though now enjoined / Laborious," is interesting because so much tension has developed around the labor practices of these two people. Eve, before, dominated the culinary realm and served and supported Adam while he went about naming animals and lightly contributing to harvesting and the food process. Seeing as Eve finds peace within her culinary world, the promise to be enjoined in all labors together could mean that she no longer feels she needs that level or strategy of protection. The fact that the words "enjoined" and "laborious" are enjambed together, almost as if she is forcing the two terms together, speaks even more so to the dedication to this idea.

Paralleling Eve's caretaking role, this speech also reveals how invested she is in making sure Adam feels included in this new world. By using the subordinate clause "Let us live," Eve offers the power and authority back to Adam to include him (or help him feel included) in their growth and ability to develop the strength to become content after such a devastating fall. She strategically clutters positive terms amongst negative ideas to reduce fear. Beyond this, she puts the arguments into rhetorical questions to fuel Adam's reasoning into clearly seeing the "obvious" claims she makes. This is a far more loving and considerate use of her care for Adam's mindset than she felt when she feels subject to his overconsumption and tries to have space from Adam. The caring, wise mindset of Eve causes us to return to the imagery of Adam's joints relaxing. Adam's body struggles "while horror chill / Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed" (IX.890-891). Within the context of Adam's crumbling binaries, his body's reaction and, as he sees it,

hysterical emotional state makes it appear as though part of Adam's panic stems from confronting his body for the first time. Eve, having been aggressively aware of her body this entire time, guides him through this process. He continues to process his own body by leaning on Eve's saying, "we are one, / One flesh" (IX.958-959). The process of him coming to terms with how they have both possessed a body and mind this whole time is slow, but Eve cautiously and lovingly causes him to feel and to recognize what has always been there.

The Final Words Uttered In Eden

The acceptance of a number of realities (mind and body being one and the unification of the genders as another) is brought to an ultimate peak in the final speech delivered in Eden. The leadership role Eve takes on in this moment rises to an even more critical boil in her final speech uttered in Eden and in the epic as a whole. The power of Eve's words, her impressive and revolutionary sonnet structure, and the influence of her having the last say as they leave Eden reveals the importance of "falling" and illustrates how Eve reconstructs a new foundation for the world.

Eve's words, strung beautifully together, weave a lyric of rhetorical acknowledgement and ownership of her faults, while also communicating her acceptance and drive towards hope for their future. After waking up from a vivid dream delivered directly from God to provide solace and purpose to Eve while Adam "learned" from Michael in an attempt to attain the same goal, Eve "thus with words not sad she him received" (XII.609):

Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;

For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,

Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
 Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on;
 In me is no delay; with thee to go,
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
 Art all things under heaven, all places thou
 Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.
 This further consolation yet secure
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
 Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,
 By me the promised seed shall all restore (XII.620-624).

To set the tone of her speech, Eve manipulates her words to construct a rhyme-like lyrical flow. This is apparent in the first line with “Whence” and “Whither” as well as “return’st” and “went’st,” for their various levels of consonance coupled with each other to create a musical flow. Almost promising a bright future, Eve performs a motherly lullaby to Adam, for he has just failed his lessons from Michael. The first line reflects both Adam and Eve’s individual beginnings and where they have come now together. When she says “By me the promised seed shall all restore” (XII.624), she takes possession of the future and ownership of her ability to heal. This emphasizes her confidence and defence of her actions—there is no shame in what she has done. She and Adam are in this fall together, and she is assured and confident about that.

Beyond the calming musical effect of these words, their meanings deliver a similar message. Eve's use of words like "Whence" and "whither" embrace the fluidity of time. The next pair, "return'st" and "went'st," exhibit the fluidity of space. By combining these opposing terms together, a sense of fluidity develops. Joshua Held notes that "These principles radiate the Stoic emphasis on the centrality of inner disposition over outer circumstance, an emphasis that, applied to exile, provides that the mind can overcome physical hardship through equanimity, the Stoic ataraxia" (Held 174). By creating those fluid categories and presenting herself in stoic peace, Eve demonstrates a powerful sense of holistic self. This lyrical appearance further compliments the "not sad" tone Eve speaks in. Adam feels bad, and this caring, calm response from Eve speaks to how Eve is determined to walk out of Eden with Adam at her side in this new state as they enter the new world together.

Beyond the lyrical tone of her sonnet and her stoic demeanor, Eve's masterful discussion of God reveals her growth of Wisdom and understanding. In line 621, "For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise," the adverb "also" interrupts the flow of the "to be" phrase imposed by the possessive "for" and the active to be "is." By putting "also" into the center of the line, it takes apart the two ideas the line connects. This compliments the multiple ways to read this phrase. Firstly, "For God is" is a state of being clause and sentence by itself. It evokes a simple acknowledgement that God "is," implicitly, *all*. This simple acknowledgement, however, is drastically different from the way Eve previously addresses God.⁷ A transition to this more accurate and holistic understanding reveals how she embraces her mind and welcomes learning, for she had to relearn who God truly is to attain this definition. When deconstructing the entire line, "For God is also in sleep, and

⁷ For example, her failed binary comparing God to Death.

dreams advise,” her greater awareness of God in her dream is revealed. This revelation contrasts her previously confused state and lack of understanding of when Satan previously meddles in her dreams. Eve’s more alert state and her increase in knowledge and awareness further speaks to her more complete understanding of God as the previous “to be” phrase insinuates. To further emphasize her full comprehension of God now, she uses adjectives like “propitious” with religious and or holy implications when describing His actions. Eve’s consumption of the apple unlocks a more fervent display of individual thought.

Similar to her internal struggle in deciding to eat the apple, Eve creates a series of binary-like comparative spaces in this speech. It is most notable when looking at the ends of each line: “good” with “distress,” “go” and “stay” as well as “secure” and “lost.” However, these binaries are introduced in a less rigid and comparative manner than before. We can account for the difference here by dissecting how each of these contrasts are used. The foils appear to be used as if to amplify her dedication to finding and staying with Adam; this is interesting because it implies that despite the binary scenarios Eve outlines, the binary will always be torn down and they will be together as one. Additionally, Held reinforces Eve’s commitment to always being *there* for Adam “By encapsulating her commitment to Adam in a sonnet, a form traditionally used to express intimate love, she suggests the couple’s regained unity, thus mitigating the loss of the Edenic paradise and fostering in its place the ‘paradise within’” (Held 173). Now, we reconstruct the ashes of Adam’s theoretical binaries by building a new world in which such categorizations are impossible to produce due to the fluidity of identity and discourse. While Eve presents conditions that appear as stark contracts, she dismisses that

environment and offers a new one where the two of them will “This further consolation yet secure / I carry hence” (XII.620-621). Beyond the reading Held presents with the classic romance sonnet, we must note Milton’s dedication and reputation of creating revolutionary sonnets as well.⁸ By analyzing Eve’s sonnet from only a romantic angle, we ignore just how radical her ideas for this *new world* are. The short phrases she uses can appear as a chant. The haste in her speech “but now lead on; In me is no delay; with thee to go,” embodies the excitement and drive towards revolution. Eve intelligently balances encouragement to raise Adam’s morale and inspiration to foster hope and drive together outside of paradise. Sonnets of love typically illustrate unrequited love; revolutions speak of change and a future that has not come yet. These readings are not mutually exclusive; she creates layers of apology and defence of her revolutionary actions while also yearning for a different political system, a revolutionary new world. Held further breaks down the power of this love sonnet through the structure of the universal ideas she presents. Held asserts that Eve unifies three sources of positive encouragement for herself and Adam as they approach exile: “the Stoic trope of the world as a homeland, the Renaissance love motif of the lover as a world, and the divine promise of salvation through the ‘Promis’d Seed’ which will be born through the sexual realization of the couple’s love” (Held 196). When looked at separately and together, Held notes how they all encompass a different aspect of the ‘paradise within’ (Held 196). It is evident in Held’s reading that Eve connects these three principles in order to embody a collective “force of fortitude, love, and faith” (Held 196). As he shows, “through her sonnet, grounded in both theological and classical principles, she begins the restorative process

⁸ For example, Milton's "On the Late Massacre at Piedmont" uses the sonnet form to call for God's love to be directed toward the Puritan revolutionaries during the English Civil War (The Major Works 80).

of love or ‘Charitie,’ which Michael shows to be the closest human approximation of the inner paradise” (Held 196). Few times do we experience or observe Eve in such a state of peace and confidence; until now, such a state of being was only available to her when she was alone within her culinary dominion. Having consumed the apple, she has broken down the walls of her private sphere and works passionately to whisk her world with Adam’s to establish a new environment with a less corrupt economy of consumption for the both of them. The dedication to whipping together her oil with his water can be witnessed within her citation of these various locations and their opposite associations to each other uniting within this new “paradise within.”

While Adam struggles to process his ‘new’ connection to his body, Eve’s stoic demeanor and complex, elaborate thought demonstrates a smooth embrace of both her body and mind.

Held reiterates Eve’s presence as “The range of Eve’s allusions highlights her immense intellectual ability and thus presents her as an appropriate counterpart to Adam in terms of intellect, fallen yet still capable of brilliance” (Held 174). Eve’s brilliantly articulate nature places her as the last speaker of the entire epic. She has the last say. With her final words (all of humankind’s final words within this narrative), she prioritizes making Adam more comfortable with his body and his position beside Eve in this ‘new’ world. Finally, within this last speech, Eve outlines how this new world will run. She puts aside her culinary paradise, assists Adam in putting aside his destructive paradise, and cooks up a new paradise from within both of them based upon a balanced economy of consumption. Her drive towards inclusiveness (between mind and body, man and woman, etc.) reveals all that could be possible if we, too, left these binaries behind.

Conclusion: “The World Was All Before Them” (XII.646)

It is not only Eve who is abused in a gender-specific way within *Paradise Lost*. While Eve is titled with the world-altering distinction of introducing “original sin” to Earth, Sin, herself gendered as a woman, suffers intense, repetitive abuse from not one but many male-assumed and identified figures prior to that moment. From the onset of her Athena-like birth from Satan (far before humans and Eve herself were brought into existence: “Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed / Out of thy head I sprung:” [II.757-758]), Satan takes her away and lustfully consumes her body by raping and impregnating her. The disgust of this incestuous rape is exaggerated by the birth of an equally disgusting being—Death. The pain Sin describes from birthing Death embodies such a dangerous, harmful result of overconsumption that it permanently alters her physical body: “breaking violently away / Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain / Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew transformed” (II. 782-784). That her prey-like suffering is coded by Milton as an aspect of her female existence suggests that Eve’s own gendered suffering in the garden is hardly accidental. From the very first, Milton can only associate the pain of sin with the feminine. Even further, this pain is sexual, continuing from her son, Death, as she “fled, but he pursued (though more, it seems, / Inflamed with lust than rage)...Engendering with me, of that rape begot / These yelling monsters” (II.790-795), ought to make any reader feel unsettled. The imagery of her repeatedly being raped is extremely gruesome:

hourly conceived,

And hourly born, with sorrow infinite

To me, for when they list into the womb

That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast...
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death my son and foe, who set the on,
 And me his parent would full soon devour
 For want of other prey (II.796-805).

Notably, Sin understands her torment as a gnawing and devouring of herself. This imagery of unquestionable overconsumption precedes Adam and Eve's introduction into the narrative, and thus necessarily informs Eve's own sense of the ways that she, too, is over-consumed.

While acknowledging that both Sin and Eve experience extremely different levels and forms of overconsumption, they each actively and repeatedly suffer from gendered abuse before Eve is blamed for "original sin." It is not the case that the flaws of Paradise mark a fallen reader, then, so much as it is the case that the structure of *Paradise Lost* seems to be unable to imagine Christian transgression without first subjecting its women to torment. We might ask whom it serves to label their responses to this torment "original sin"? Therefore, coupled with the evidence demanding attention to Eve's own conscious actions and thought processes to protect and develop herself, I want to assert that Eve does not succumb to the desirous lure of "sin" that Christianity and Milton advertise. Within the structure that Milton himself imposes, Eve actively chooses to eat the forbidden fruit because it appears to be the more advantageous of her feasible paths forward for her as a woman in a position of vulnerability and abuse.

So how are we to understand Eve's place within a larger feminist history?

Looking at historical trends and shifts as "waves" contains numerous flaws and puts a scholar at risk of constructing historical inaccuracies, generalizations, and assumptions about what triggers the onset and marks the end of that particular time period, etc.

However, in our current moment, feminist discourse has very few other mechanisms for discussing such developments. So, despite my hesitance to abide by the risks of expressing the development of feminism as waves, I shall. In Eve's various stages of resistance—from the fulfillment she finds in her culinary world, to her insistence that her work should be recognized and she should have a right to solitude, to her ultimate choice to undo the binaries of the Garden by eating the apple—, we see something akin to the three major waves of feminism.

Eve bakes a new pie. As we read *Paradise Lost* in a new era of feminist discourse, we are able to observe her same actions with new and more dynamic lens. We are able to reconstruct her thoughts, actions, and behaviors using this new lens as it resonates with the flow of the feminist movement. Just as the feminist movement develops from the advocacy for suffrage and the barest recognition of women's political agency, to the reclamation of women's desire, labor, and life, to a recognition that even the category of woman must be open and inclusive beyond what it has "traditional" been, Eve seems to move from self recognition to a proud sense of acceptance within one's own complete identity. Ryleigh Nucilli asserts:

Third Wave feminists also aimed to deconstruct terms like 'sisterhood' because they believed that these labels ignored the experiences of trans women and other individuals. Third Wave feminists no longer wanted a

piece of the men's pie; they aimed to create a whole new pie that could honor more complex experiences and forms of oppression (Nucilli).

Although, Eve does not actively embody the feminist process, as she was not written in this time period, she does anticipate the process. Eve's struggle dismantling Adam's patriarchal beliefs begins with abiding by them just as women have attempted to play along for centuries. Once this was deemed unsuccessful or simply not enough, Eve transitions to offense. She fights for her voice to be heard and her body to be freed from outside of the realm of the kitchen as well as the realm of Adam. Once achieved, Eve unlocks more agency which she uses to go a step further and dismantle the Western world of binaries Adam and God built around her. By eating the apple she creates a new world in which she is free to be herself in her entirety. She is free of the lurking fear of overconsumption. She is free to enjoy both her mind and body simultaneously.

Eve enters something like the most recent, current wave of feminism when she passionately guides and assists Adam in stepping into and embracing this new world. In this moment, she extends her fight to create a whole new pie to be enjoyed by all. She does more than deconstruct all the binaries that chained her down. She breaks them down for everyone; she spends time with Adam and helps him acknowledge and accept his body for the first time. In replacing the Western binary system with a system of mutual support and holistic individual self expression, Eve effectively conducts what Sedgwick would call a reparative reading of Adam.

Like Eve, then, this has been my method. If it is paranoid to read for misogyny, it is still regressive to note it is not there. But I hold to the belief that it is reparative for a reader to interpret Eve with more depth. It is reparative for Eve to choose to help and

support Adam after the Fall. By allowing for these reparative readings to take hold, my hope is that a reader can see the first woman of humanity predict the dismantling of an ancient, oppressive system. This reading explicitly reveals that the complete abolition of the use of constructed binaries to create oppressive systems is the only way to guarantee the safety and happiness of humanity—the only way to fully and completely express and embrace all of humanity.

We see her. We see her eat and rise up. We see her choosing to guide Adam hand-in-hand in order to explore a whole new world together. We see her as a strong, independent woman. We see her achieve peace, determination, and happiness when she dismantles the binaries restricting her. We are able to see her because she calls out to us as all women call to us—a cry to dismantle all layers of oppressive systems that rely on binary categorizations to limit others and control power within a society.

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