

Dante's *Inferno*

First English Translation by Charles Rogers

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Inferno - Canto 1 - Rogers

When in my middle stage of life,
 I found myself entangl'd in a wood obscure.
 Having the right path miss'd:
but to relate the horrid wildness
 of that rugged wood
 renews a dread,
which that of death itself can scarce exceed:
 yet I will first recount those things I met with,
 ere I shall declare the salutary good I after found.
How I came in it I can't well explain,
 so much had sleep my faculties of mind
 confus'd, when I abandon'd the true way.
Arriving at a mountain's foot,
 whose base bounded the valley which had fill'd my heart
 with fear before unfelt,
I looked up, and saw its top
 cloathed with shining rays of that bright planet
 which the right way shews.
Then somewhat was my fearful heart appeas'd;
 te night in greatest anguish
 having spent.
As he who, just recover'd from a storm,
 near breathless from the sea, attains the shore,
 turns back to view the per'lous waves escap'd;
my mind, while yet I ran,
 oft on the road reflected,
 in which none were left alive.
My body having with some rest refresh'd,
 I took my way along the barren strand;
 the foot supporting me being still behind.
From the hill's first ascent a panther rush'd.
 Both light and nimble,
 with her spotted hide;
she never left me, nor was out of sight;
 but so obstructed my desir'd way,
 that I was oft resolv'd to turn my course.
'Twas now the early morn, and the sun rose
 among those stars which him accompanied,
 when first the universal frame was put

in motion by th' all-pow'rful Love divine.

This time of day, and season of the year
gave me some hope that I should her subdue,
myself adorning with her beauteous spoils.

It prov'd not so: for soon engag'd my fear
a lion tow'rds me running, who,
with head erect,

and raging hunger unappeas'd,
struck dread into the circumambient air.

Besides, a famish'd wolf appear'd, whose jaws
are greedy after ev'ry thing she views;
and who, on many, lives of anguish brings:

my spirits so at her dire visage sunk,
that I to mount
the wish'd-for hill despair'd.

Like him who in acquiring wealth is pleas'd;
if by some accident he loses it,
deeply he grieves, and mournfully laments.

Impetuous, with approaching steps sh' advanc'd,
and push'd me where
the bright sun ne'er appears.

While I was falling to th' abyss below,
I saw one who was
by long silence hoarse.

"Have pity on me, in this desert," then
I cry'd, "whate'er you be,
or shade or man."

He answer'd thus; "I am not now a man,
as formerly I was, my parents both
were Lombards, and in Mantua they were born.

Ere Julius govern'd I began to breathe;
and under good Augustus liv'd at Rome
(A time when doctrines of false Gods prevail'd)

A poet fam'd, and sung the pious son
of old Anchises, who arriv'd from Troy,
when lofty Ilion was consum'd in flames.

But why return you to this place of woe?
Why the delightful hill ascend you not,
which is the source and cause of ev'ry joy?"

With modesty I then to him reply'd:

"Are you that Virgil, you that copious spring
of eloquence, which many streams supplies?"

O light and honour of all other bards,
 regard the study, and the ardent love
 with which I have attended to your works.
 You are my master; you are only he
 on whom I've form'd that beauty of my style
 which fame and honour to my verse has brought.
 Behold the beast who caus'd me to turn back;
 defend me from her with your counsel sage,
 for my whole frame yet trembles at her sight."
 "Best 'tis for you to take another way,"
 he answer'd when he saw my falling tears,
 "If you'd escape out of this desert wild.
 This raging beast, which here you so much dread,
 permits not any to pass on their way,
 and never leaves them 'till their death she gains:
 Her nature so perversely is dispos'd,
 that she ne'er satisfies her greedy will;
 but with each meal her hunger is increas'd.
 Many the animals with which she has,
 and many more she will associate with,
 'till a staunch hound shall hunt her e'en to death,
 who will between each Feltrio take his birth.
 Or landed property, or metals rare
 delight not him; but he alone is pleas'd
 with virtue, and with gen'ral love humane
 he shall of humble Italy become the head supreme,
 for which Camilla fell, Turnus, and Nisus with his faithful friend.
 Through ev'ry city he shall give her chace,
 'till he shall drive her back to Hell, from whence
 envy first sent her to torment mankind.
 Wherefore I think, and judge it best that you
 should follow me, and I will be your guide
 from hence to places of eternal woe,
 where you shall hear the wailings of despair,
 and see the ghosts of former times lament,
 who eagerly request a second death.
 Yet some in fire contentedly remain,
 trusting that they shall in a proper time
 at th' happy regions of the Blessed arrive.
 If your desire it is to these attain,
 A shade, more worthy far than I can prove,
 shall you attend, when I from you depart.

That Emperor divine who reigns above
 (as always I have not obey'd his laws)
 will not that I should to his city go,
where he with power absolute commands:
 O happy he who
 there's allow'd to dwell!"

I answer'd then; "You, poet, I request,
 by that Divinity you never knew,
 so that I may this ill and worse escape,
that you would lead me to the promis'd place
 where I the wretches may lamenting see,
 and view the gate that is by Peter kept."
He then went on, and I him follow'd near.

Inferno - Canto 2 - Rogers

The day was past, and now the shade of night
from various toils all animals releas'd;
when I alone prepared to sustain
the great fatigues of a laborious way,
and those in torments to commiserate;
as I shall now delineate with truth.

O Muses, O my lofty genius join'd
with memory, to transcribe what I saw,
assist: so shall your pow'rs immense appear.

"You, poet, who are now become my guide,
examine whether I dare undertake
th' infernal journey, 'fore I it attempt.

You say that Sylvius' parent, which alive,
descended to th' immortal seats below:
xxx

Him the opposite of every ill
esteemed worthy of this favour bland,
the race well knowing that from him would spring,
xxx

he having in empyreal Heav'n been
elected Father of immortal Rome,
xxx

in which establish'd is the holy place
where the Successor of great Peter sits.

Æneas in those regions was foretold o
of his victorious arms, in consequence
of which, the papal Mantle there is worn,
and the great Vessel of Election went
where to his faith more strength he might acquire,
which to salvation is a certain path.

Yet I, should I to thither go attempt?
For I am not Æneas, nor yet Paul;
unworthy in my own and others thoughts.

If I should then on this design resolve,
of its success I apprehensive am:
therefore determine you, for you are wise.

As he who what he first resolv'd rejects,
and by some fresher reasons is induc'd
wholly to lay aside his first intent;

so I, now in the mountain's shade arriv'd,
 xxx
 refus'd th' attempt which I at first desir'd."
 "If I your words have rightly understood,"
 replied the shade magnanimous, "your mind
 is stagger'd with distrust, which oft perverts
 a good design with honour first begun:
 as frequently the shadow of a beast
 appears more horrid than the form itself.
 That from this fear you may yourself remove,
 I'll tell you why I came, and what I heard
 when first I knew of your unhappy fate.
 I one of those was who suspended were
 between Hell's torments and the bliss of Heav'n.
 A Maid call'd to me, beautiful and young,
 the lustre of whose eyes outshone the stars;
 to me command I then requested her;
 thus she began with an angelic voice:
 'O courteous shade of Mantua, of whom
 the fame through all the world is now dispers'd,
 and will continue while this doth exist;
 my real friend, and not by chance become,
 is obstructed in the desert strand,
 that fear almost compels him to return.
 Perhaps too late it is to now attempt
 him to relieve, so much his way h'has mist,
 according to reports in Heav'n rife.
 To him assist with your great eloquence
 xxx
 yet try, that I may consolation have.
 I Beatrice am nam'd who you request;
 and to return from whence I came desire.
 Love brought me thence, and now inspires my tongue.
 When I again before my Lord appear,
 of you I'll speak, and often will commend.'
 She then was silent, and I thus reply'd:
 'O virtuous Maid, by whose kind help alone
 mortals do here all happiness enjoy,
 where in the lesser circle we're confin'd.
 So eager your command I'm to obey,
 that I appear, ere yet receiv'd, remiss:
 nor need you further your desire declare.

But the cause tell me of your steep descent
 down to this centre, from that space immense
 whither you are desirous to return.'

'Since you would know from others what's conceal'd;
 I'll relate to you in few words,' she said,
 'Why fear deters me not from ent'ring there.

Those things alone we should regard with dread,
 by whose dire pow'r we may some ill receive,
 not others, as they give no cause for fear.

By God's great favour I am formed such,
 that what may you affect offends not me.
 Nor can I suffer in that flaming gulph.

In Heaven's a noble Lady who laments
 that in the passage to the place you're sent,
 you should, unmeriting, impeded be:

She Lucia thus in your behalf address'd;
 "Your faithful servant your assistance wants,
 go therefore to him, and afford him aid."

Lucia, a foe to ev'ry cruel act,
 came to the place
 where I with Rachel sat,

And said, "O Beatrice, by God belov'd,
 why not assist who you so much ador'd,
 and by your aid the vulgar herd has left?

Do you not hear his piteous complaints,
 his strenuous efforts, do you not behold,
 to combat death upon the waves of vice?

None in the world e'er moved with such speed,
 to gain advantage, or to fly from ill,"
 as I, so soon as I these words had heard.

I left my happy seat, and to you come,
 confiding in that eloquence, which both
 honour to you, and those who hear you gives.'

Her bright eyes, weeping then,
 she turn'd away:
 this gave me ardour to relieve your grief,

And you deliver from the raging wolf,
 when she prevented you
 the mount t'ascend.

Whence is it then? Why, why do you oppose?
 Why does such cowardise debase your heart?
 Why proper courage do you not assume?

Since three such heav'nly Ladies you protect,
 and recommend to the celestial Court:
 besides the promise I give you myself."
As flowers nipt by a nocturnal frost,
 drooping, decline, and close their op'ning buds;
 but when they're cherish'd by th' enliv'ning sun,
They raise their heads, and beauties full display;
 fresh courage at these words my heart assail'd,
 and thus, with ardour, I to him reply'd;
"O, how companionate was she, and you
 how courteous, to immediately obey
 her mandates kind, which she to give was pleas'd.
So great desire you have in me inspir'd,
 xxx
 that I am eager to renew the task.
Go then; one will alone directs us both;
 for you my leader, lord, and master are."
 xxx
Then enter'd I the steep and dreary path.

Inferno - Canto 3 - Rogers

Through me you to the doleful city go;
 Through me you go where is eternal grief;
 Through me you go among the sinners damn'd.
With strictest justice is this portal made,
 By power, wisdom,
 And by love divine.
Nothing before me e'er created was;
 Unless eternal, as I also am.
 Ye who here enter to return despair."
Obscurely written o'er a gate
 I saw these words;
 the sense of which seem'd too severe.
My prudent master me then thus address'd;
 "Suspect not here that any thing is wrong.
 It's proper now that fear should be extinct.
W'are to that place you've been inform'd of come,
 where you will those lamenting wretches see,
 who have in vicious lives their god forgot."
And then he kindly put his hand on mine,
 giving me comfort with a look of joy,
 and shew me sights within unknown above.
There sighs, and cries, and horrid howlings mix'd with shrieks,
 re-echo'd through the starless air,
 which frequent tears of pity from me drew.
Variety of tongues, reproaching taunts,
 words grief expressing, accents full of ire,
 voices both loud and hoarse, and clapping hands
Rais'd in that dusky air a tumult wild,
 like to the land
 when by a whirlwind toss'd.
Then I, with horror struck, "O master," said,
 "inform me who these are
 with grief o'erwhelm'd."
"These doleful beings," he reply'd,
 "have liv'd in indolence,
 without or blame or praise.
Angels are mix'd with this unhappy band,
 who neither rebels, nor yet faithful were to God,
 but liv'd sequestred by themselves.

These Heav'n discarded for being too remiss,
 nor did e'en Hell this lukewarm herd receive;
 that favour might not to the damn'd be shewn."
 "What was the cause," I then my master ask'd,
 "that such loud lamentations from them forc'd:"
 who briefly thus return'd;
 "These have no hope of death,
 but wish for any lot than their's;
 having so blindly led their lives in sloth.
 The world knows nothing of them, and alike mercy,
 and justice their supineness scorn; speak not;
 but view them only, and pass on."
 A standard then
 borne rapidly around I saw,
 xxx
 And follow'd by a longer train
 than I had thought
 that death had e'er subdu'd.
 These I examin'd, and among the croud
 discern'd the shade of him who,
 struck with fear of governing, the great refusal made.
 This wretched crew
 I soon knew to be those
 who God displeas'd, and his enemies:
 And to have liv'd could scarcely be allow'd.
 They naked were,
 and stung by gnats and wasps.
 Blood mix'd with tears ran down
 their harrow'd checks,
 which at their feet lick'd by loathsome worms.
 When I my eyes held up, and farther look'd,
 I saw a throng on the great river's bank:
 and said, "Permit me, master, now to know
 Who these may be, and why so eagerly
 they thus endeavour to the river pass,
 as I do by this gloomy light perceive."
 "This shall be told to you,"
 he then replied, "when we
 the joyless shore of Ach'ron gain."
 Fearing that I improperly had spoke,
 downward I bent my eyes
 'till there we came.

Lo, rowing tow'rds us
 was one white with age, and bawling out,
 "Woe to you souls deprav'd,
 Heaven expects not you e'er more to see;
 I come to waft you to another coast,
 where are eternal darkness, heat, and frost.
 And you, sir, there, who yet do live and breathe,
 get hence from these, for they are now deceas'd."
 but when he saw I did not from them move,
 "You by some other way,"
 he said, "may pass.
 A lighter vessel will you better suit."
 My leader then; "Caron, do not torment yourself,
 nor trouble us with asking more;
 for who would this, can do whate'er he wills."
 Then quiet were become the hoary checks
 of the fell boatman of the livid marsh,
 whose eyes were swimming in a scalding rheum.
 Those souls, dismayed and which naked were,
 chang'd to a pallid hue, and gnash'd their teeth,
 soon as they heard his hoarse and cruel words.
 God and their parents they alike blasphem'd,
 cursing all human kind, the time,
 the seed from whence they sprang, and of their birth the place.
 They crowd'd then, with horrid yells and loud,
 close to the cursed shore of bliss devoid:
 where ev'ry mortal waits who fears not god.
 Caron the fiend, with eyes like burning coals,
 hails them together, and, if any stray,
 he drives them close with his relentless oar.
 Thick as in autumn fall the tumbling leaves,
 one on each other pressing,
 'till each tree sees all her spoils lie scatter'd on the ground.
 So Adam's wicked sons obey his call in crowds,
 as does the hawk the falc'ners lure,
 and themselves headlong throw from off the bank:
 Yet ere they're huddled in the crazy bark,
 a fresh recruit of ghosts
 their room supplies.
 "My son," to me my courteous master said,
 "all those who have incurr'd the wrath of God
 assemble in this place, whence e'er they come:

And they are eager to this river pass,
 justice divine them spurring to this act,
 fear being changed now into desire.
None go this way who what is good pursue;
 therefore of you if Caron now complains,
 you must confess it's only as he thinks."
Then this dread region
 with such trembling shook,
 that yet with fear I'm bathed in a sweat.
From out it's caverns gush'd a mighty wind,
 join'd with bright flashes of vermillion hue:
 at this great shock I my sensations lost;
I fell, and was by a deep sleep o'ercome.

Inferno - Canto 4 - Rogers

By a loud noise like thunder I wak'd,
and from my sleep arose
as one disturb'd.

With great attention I my eyes turn'd round,
to view, and if I knew
the place discern.

Myself I found transported to the bank
of a deep vale
resounding many a groan.

So dark, and deep it was, and full of fogs,
that I could nothing at the bottom see.
The poet now, become all wan, began:

"Let us to the blind world below descend,
I will the first,
and you shall second go."

Having his paleness well observ'd, I said;
how shall I come if you such fear express,
who us'd to comfort me in all my doubts?

"The anguish of those wretches," he reply'd,
"Who cry below, paints in my face that tint
of pity, which you apprehend is fear.

Let us go forward, for the way is long."
We enter'd then, with hast'ning steps and quick,
The upper circle that surrounds th' abyss.

Loud lamentations were not heard from thence,
but heavy sighs
which trembled through the air:

from th' anguish these of mind,
not body, came of many infants,
women, and of men.

"You do not ask me," my kind master said,
"what are these spirits in this place you see;
this you should know before we farther pass.

These have not sinn'd; and 'though they had reward deserved
for their meritorious acts, 'twould not avail, since they
were ne'er baptiz'd; for this in your belief's the gate of faith.

They who have lived before Christ appear'd
have not with proper prayers ador'd their God.
And I myself, alas! Am one of those.

For these defects, and not for any crime,
 we're lost; and, without other punishment,
 we live desiring, yet depriv'd of hope."
 When I heard this, it much oppress'd my heart;
 as many of them of great worth I knew,
 whose fate in Limbo undetermin'd was.
 "Tell me, my master,
 tell me, lord," I said,
 "that I may on unerring faith depend,
 goes any from this place to that of bliss,
 or by another's merit, or his own?"
 He, who my covert way of speaking knew,
 reply'd: "I was 'mong these but lately come,
 when I saw one all-powerful arrive,
 whose head was with victorious honours crown'd;
 the shade of our first parent he releas'd,
 with those of Abel his beloved son, of Noah,
 Moses for obedience fam'd and giver of the Law;
 of Abraham the patriarch, of David the great king,
 of Israël, his father, and his sons,
 with Rachaël for whom he serv'd so long,
 and many others whom he happy made:
 for, before this
 were sav'd no human souls."
 Then we together passed through the wood;
 the wood I mean
 of closely crowded ghosts.
 We had not far from th' upper station gone,
 when I a fire saw that of th' hemisphere
 below, all darkness with its flame dispell'd;
 and, at some distance, many could discern,
 but not distinctly,
 who claim'd great respect.
 "O, you who ev'ry art and science prize,
 say, who are these which have such fame acquir'd
 that far removes them from the mean and base."
 "Their honourable names," he then replied,
 "which in your world deservedly resound,
 are by the favour of kind Heaven gain'd."
 Immediately by me a voice was heard,
 "His shade, which had retir'd,
 was now return'd."

Soon as the voice had utter'd this great praise,
 I saw four venerable shades approach,
 who neither sorrow, nor yet joy express'd.
 My master then began: "Observe," he said,
 "him, who displays a drawn sword in his hand,
 advance, as sire, before the other three;
 this Homer is, the leader of our choir;
 Horace, the Satirist, then follows next,
 Ovid's the third, and Lucan is the last.
 These, who acknowledge what the declar'd,
 pay to me that respect
 they think my due."
 Uniting I the followers then saw
 of the great dov'reign of the lofty strain,
 who above others, like the eagle, soars.
 When they together had discours'd some time,
 they, courteous, turn'd, and gave me a salute,
 at which my master with great pleasure smil'd;
 and farther honours,
 unexpected, paid,
 by placing me the sixth among their train.
 Thus walk'd we forward to th' illumin'd spot,
 discoursing things there with propriety,
 which now it is far better to conceal.
 We to the foot of a grand castle came,
 seven times surrounded by its lofty walls,
 defended likewise by a running brook.
 This having pass'd as if it were dry land,
 I, with my learn'd companions, enter'd through
 its seven gates, and in a meadow green
 With verdure fresh, we several shades beheld,
 whose great authority compell'd esteem,
 talking but seldom, yet with voices sweet.
 Then to a corner of this open place,
 both luminous and lofty,
 we retir'd.
 Where from a rising ground
 I could survey heroes
 who were for great achievement fam'd.
 I saw Electra leading many chiefs;
 and Hector, and Æneas bold in fight.
 Snd armed Cæsar with his piercing eye.

Penthesilea, and Camilla were
standing apart; Latinus the good king
there with Lavinia his daughter sat:
I Brutus who proud Tarquin had expell'd, and chast
Lucretia and Cornelia saw, with Julia Pompey's, Martia
Cato's wife; and Saladin secluded from the rest.
A little more when I my eye-lids rais'd,
I the great master view'd of those who sit
teaching their art in philosophic schools:
all him admire, all him do honour pay.
Next him stood Socrates
with Plato join'd:
Democritus, who taught the world was made
by chance, Diogenes the Cynic proud,
Thales, and Anexagoras, were there: Zeno, Empedocles,
and he who wept for the misfortunes that attend mankind,
and Dioscorides I saw, who cull'd the salutary herbs for med'cine fit,
and Orpheus, Linus, Tully, Seneca the moral Sage,
Euclid in Geometry, and Ptolemy in the Earth's limits
skill'd; with these Hippocrates and Galen were, great
Avicen, and of him emulous Averrois, who the large comment made.
Each name distinct I cannot here relate,
prevented by my subject's extreme length,
which causes oft me to my pow'rs distrust.
In this still air our company we left:
my sage conductor to another place
me led, where all was turbulent and dark;
for fearce a glimm'ring light was there perceiv'd.

Inferno - Canto 5 - Rogers

From the first circle we descended down
to that which was of a more narrow space,
where pain from ev'ry one excited cries.
Horribly grinning Minos, standing there,
examines at their entrance each one's crime,
tries them, and passes judgment in their turns.
Whene'er a guilty soul before him comes
it all confesses: he the proper place,
well knowing, that of Hell's to be their due,
so many times his tail around him twists,
as the degrees
to which he'd have it cast.
Many before him always ready stand,
who forward come, and are in order tried;
they plead, they're sentenc'd, and then turned down.
"O you who to this place of torments come,"
Minos, his office
then suspending, said,
"Regard your entrance, and to whom you trust,
nor be you by the ample gates deceiv'd."
To him my guide: "Why do you thus exclaim?
Prevent his passage not, by fate ordain'd:
for who would this, can do what e'er he wills.
More obstacles it is not fit to raise."
Their loud complaining notes
I now began to hear,
being at the place of woe arriv'd,
deprived of all light;
which bellows loud like the sea
toss'd about by adverse winds.
Th' infernal storm,
which never is allay'd,
the sprites tormented in its vortex whirls.
When they near the ruinous gulph approach,
their lamentations, and their shrieks are loud,
blaspheming e'en Divinity itself.
These who such torments suffered, I learnt,
were condemn'd to them for their carnal sins,
their reason by their passion being subdued.

And as the birds, who at the first approach
 of cold, take wing, and gather in thick clouds,
 so does the storm these wretched spirits drive,
 from 'bove, below, and ev'ry side around.
 They have no hope of ever being releas'd:
 and e'en of lighter punishment despair.
 Like to the cranes, who,
 living in long trains,
 the air disturb with their complaining notes,
 these spirits uttered their moaning griefs.
 I therefore said "O master, who are these
 That do so much this dingy air molest?"
 "The first of these, of whom you would inquire,"
 he said, "was emperess of many tongues,
 and many nations govern'd;
 yet so prone to leachcry become,
 that she was forc'd
 by a new law to justify her crime:
 she is Semiramis, the wife belov'd
 of Ninus, and inherited those lands
 o'er which th' unrival'd Sultan now commands.
 The next is she who slew herself for love,
 and to her fond Sichæus broke her faith.
 Luxurious Cleopatra follows her."
 Helen I saw, for whom so long time was
 ill spent in war; the great Achilles next,
 who conquer'd was at last by am'rous charms.
 Paris, and Tristan,
 and a thousand more he shew me,
 whom love had depriv'd of life.
 When these were to me nam'd,
 I was o'ercome with pity,
 and I nearly swoon'd away.
 I then; "O poet, willingly I'd speak
 to both those who together come this way,
 and seem to move far quicker than the wind."
 He thus reply'd: "When they shall nearer come,
 requesting by that love which governs them,
 you may that they shall come to you prevail."
 Soon as the wind them to us wafted had,
 I thus to them; "Unhappy souls, O now
 with us discourse, if nothing you prevents."

Like doves, when they
 by fond desire are call'd,
 with raised wings fly eager to their nests;
 so these, leaving both Dido and her band,
 came swiftly tow'rds us through the foggy air;
 such power had with them affection's plea!
 "O mortal man replete with grace divine,
 who in this azure region visit us
 that have defiled with our blood the world,
 if by the universal King we were
 befriended, we would to him for you pray:
 since you commis'rate our unhappy lot,
 we're ready to reply
 to what you ask;
 now that the wind is still to favour us.
 The land where I was born is on the shore
 plac'd, where the Po and all his rivulets
 run with their tributes smoothly to the sea.
 Love, which possesses soon a courteous breast,
 seiz'd on my handsome paramour, whose loss
 I yet lament, reflecting on the act:
 love, which will always be by love repaid,
 caus'd me to that great pleasure in him take,
 which still possesses me, as you perceive.
 Love brought us both to the like fatal end:
 but Caina him expects who did this deed."
 These suffr'ing shades, when I knew who they were,
 I on my breast declin'd
 my thoughtful head,
 'till Virgil of my meditations ask'd.
 I thinking was, alas!
 on that dire end
 to which they by their fond amours are brought.
 Then to them turning, I,
 "Francesca," said,
 "your torments move my pity, and draw tears:
 but tell me, when your sighs and lost desires
 were yet uncertain of a due return,
 what caus'd you to unlawful love permit?"
 "No greater grief assails us" she replied,
 "than in unhappy hours to recollect
 a better time; and this your teacher knows.

But if you still to learn the tender root
request, from which our am'rous dalliance sprung,
however irksome, I will it relate.
Together we, for pleasure, one day read
how strictly Lancelot was bound by love;
we then alone, without suspicion, were:
t'admire each other, often from the book
our eyes were ta'en, and oft our colour chang'd;
that was the point of time which conquer'd us,
when, reading that her captivating smile
was by the lover she adored kiss'd;
this my companion, always with me seen,
tearful, and trembling, also kiss'd my mouth.
The writer, Galeotto, nam'd the book,
but from that day we never read in't more."
During one spirit
was relating this,
so deeply did the other mourn,
that I with pity swoon'd, and fell like a dead corse.

Inferno - Canto 6 - Rogers

When understanding was to me restor'd,
 of which I had for some time been depriv'd
 by those relations' most unhappy loves,
new torments and new suff'ers I beheld,
 which way so'er I turn'd
 myself and look'd.

At the third circle I was now arriv'd
 of rain eternal, cold accurs'd and thick:
 no change is ever here of weather known,
but hail-slones large with filthy water mix'd;
 and dirty snow still flutters in the air
 of this dark pit, which putrid earth imbibes.

Cerb'rus, a beast implacable and fierce,
 incessant's barking with his triple throat
 at the poor wretches who are here confin'd.

His eyes are firey red, his greasy beard is black and
 nasty, and his belly's swoln. He the sprites scratches
 with his hooked claws, flays off their skins, and into quarters tears;
and howls tremendous at the storming rain.

 Like frighted dogs who for protection seek,
 from side to side the ghosts unhappy ran.

Soon as us Cerberus, this monster, saw,
 he op'd his jaws, and shew us all his fangs;
 and ev'ry limb in agitation mov'd.

My guide, large handfuls
 taking up of earth,
 them into all his craving gullets threw.

Like as a cur,
 who's eager for his food,
 rests quiet soon as his repast h'attains;
so of the dæmon Cerb'rus were appeas'd
 the horrid jaws, which often, with their yells,
 the spirits stun, who now for deafness wish.

We passed through those shades whom th' heavy rain
 had driv'n together, and their vanity
 deplor'd, who'd seem alive when they were not.

All, except one, lay scatter'd on the ground;
 who to a sitting posture rais'd himself,
 when to be coming near he us observ'd.

"O you who're led to this infernal seat,"
 to me he said, "confess that me you know;
 for you was born before that I was dead."
 Then I to it replied: "Perhaps the pains
 you've suffer'd here, have so much chang'd your mien,
 that I'm uncertain if I e'er you saw:
 but tell me who you are,
 that in this filth
 art put, than which none more disgustful is."
 He said: "Your city which of envy's now
 so full, that it o'erflows its usual bounds,
 was my asylum, where, in better times,
 I by the name of Ciacco was well known.
 For the foul crime of gluttony you see
 me now by rain reduc'd to this weak state.
 But I a mournful shade am not alone;
 for all you here behold are of this fault
 judg'd to be guilty:" he then said no more.
 "Ciacco," replied I, "your unhappy fate
 draws tears of pity;
 tell me, if you can,
 how far will your divided city go,
 if any honest man does there remain;
 and why so great a discord has them seiz'd."
 Thus he: "After a long contention had
 for sway, the adverse pow'rs will come to blood;
 the savage party 'll drive away its foe.
 But ere three solar years have passed by,
 the other will with greater force prevail,
 assisted by that pow'r which yet delays.
 Long will they raise their lofty fronts aloft,
 and their opponents in submission keep;
 this I lament, and from my heart regret.
 Two honest men there are, without regard.
 The three discording sparks which have inflam'd
 their hearts, are envy, pride, and avarice."
 He ended here his lamentable tale:
 but I continued:
 "Still I'd from you know
 shere Farinata, and Arrigo are,
 with Tegghia, and with Rusticucci join'd,
 Mosca, and others, who are men of worth;

tell me the place in which I them may find;
 for I to know most ardently desire
 if they're in Heav'n bless'd, or curs'd in Hell."
 "They are," said he, "among the blackest souls;
 their faulty far outweighs their virtuous scale:
 if you should low descend, you'll see them there.
 But when you shall to the sweet world above
 arrive, that you'll with favour of me speak
 I earnestly request:" he then askance
 look'd at me,
 and fell downward on his face,
 mixing with others in the filthy mire.
 To me my leader: "These no more will rise,
 before the sound of the angelic trump.
 When they the pow'rful Enemy will see
 of wicked acts, then ev'ry one recourse will have unto
 their melancholy place of sepulture, will reassume their
 flesh and form, and their eternal judgment hear."
 With gentle steps we passed through these shades,
 and filthy mixture made of mire and rain;
 discoursing lightly on the future state.
 "Master," I said, "When the grand sentence 's pass'd,
 will an increase of punishment ensue,
 or will't continue thus, or less become."
 "Return to your Philosophy," he said,
 "by which you're taught, that the more perfect are
 more sensible of good, as well as ill.
 And this unhappy crew expect not e'er that they at true
 perfection shall arrive; but that their suff'rings will be
 more severe after the dreadful sentence than before."
 Discoursing more than I do here relate,
 we travell'd round the path, 'till we arriv'd
 whence we descended to a lower place,
 where we found Pluto, foe of human kind.

Inferno - Canto 7 - Rogers

"O Satan, Satan, Oh alas!" exclaim'd
 Pluto, expressing both surprize and dread.
 But the wise Gentile, who did all things know,
said cheerfully: "Be not by fear dismay'd;
 for all the power which by him's possess'd
 cannot prevent you in your steep descent."
Then to the fiend with pride inflated said:
 "Peace, cruel wolf,
 and stifle all your rage:
'tis not without authority we here
 are come; for thus it is ordain'd above,
 where Michaël subdued the rebels proud."
As sails, when swollen by some boist'rous wind,
 fall o'er the board if e'er the mast is broke;
 so to the earth this cruel tyrant fell.
To the fourth district we descended then,
 which all the wicked
 in itself ingulphs.
Great is God's Justice; as increase with crimes
 their punishments, which here I many saw:
 but why do we encourage this increase?
As in Charibdis, when the waves
 are dash'd against those
 hurled from th' opponent shore;
so, many I tumultuously engag'd
 saw in this place: these 'gainst each other roll'd
 lumps vast and heavy, with their lab'ring breath:
they met and clash'd:
 then roll'd them back again;
 bawling aloud, "Why hoard ye?" "Why d'ye spend?"
This they repeated with continual toil,
 and their loud bawling,
 when they met, renew'd:
returning always to the like contest.
 My heart becoming
 with compassion pierc'd,
I ask'd my Master who these people were,
 and whether all were church-men whom we saw
 with shaven crowns, on our sinister side.

He said: "All things perversly, when alive,
 these view'd, and never govern'd their expence;
 lavishly living, or with too great thrift.
 Loud barks their voice
 when e'er they justling meet at the two points
 from which they must return.
 These clergy were, whose heads are cover'd not
 with hair, or Popes or Cardinals, to whom
 av'rice superfluous was, for they'd no heirs."
 Then I replied: "Some should be known to me
 among so many
 spotted with these crimes."
 "Your hope is vain, he said, for they their lives
 without one meritorious act have spent;
 they're consequently totally unknown.
 To the two shocks eternally they'll push.
 Some, rising from their tombs, will keep their hands
 shut fast, and some will rise with hair shorn close.
 Giving or keeping with imprudence has
 expell'd them life, and driven to this place
 of contest, which no words can pleasant make.
 Therefore, my son, the vanity you may
 of Fortune's gifts perceive, for which mankind
 raise such a bustle, and so much contend.
 Not all the gold which is beneath the moon,
 or which was by these wretched souls possess'd,
 could ever satisfy their craving minds."
 "Tell to me also, master, then I said,
 what is this Fortune of which you discourse,
 who the world's goods disposes as she wills?"
 He then to me: "O mortals without sense,
 how great's the ignorance that you possess!
 Listen attentively to what I say.
 He, whose great wisdom ev'ry thing transcends,
 the heavens fram'd, and placed over them
 those who should govern and conduct their course,
 and make each part with equal lustre shine;
 He in like manner over worldly goods
 appointed one, with power to transfer
 to other nations gifts enjoy'd by these,
 and ev'ry family's possessions change;
 in opposition to all human schemes:

this with imperious sway commands, and that
 submits, obedient to her strict ordain,
 which lies conceal'd, as snakes in verdant grass.
 Your wizzard can't in competition come
 with her's, for she foresees, and judgment gives,
 and executes her pow'r, like other gods.
 So her permutations never have a truce.
 Necessity compells her motion swift;
 quickly she flies, and quick returns again:
 and this is she who is so oft accur'd,
 even by those who should commend her acts,
 blaming her wrongly with ungrateful taunts:
 but she is happy, and she hears them not.
 Like other beings who were early form'd,
 her sphere she governs, and enjoys her bliss.
 T' a place of greater pity let us now descend; for ev'ry
 star's already set that shone in its meridian, when we
 first sat out; we should not therefore here delay."

We on the other side the circle came,
 above a spring which boils up and subsides,
 and went along the fosse which it had form'd.
 The water rather dull than cœrule was;
 in company of this
 slow stream we went.

A marsh it makes known
 by the name of Styx,
 the riv'let now becoming grey and thick.

And I, who them did stedfastly behold,
 saw many naked in the miry fen,
 whose countenances were with anger red.

These did not with their hands alone engage,
 but with their heads, and breasts, and feet;
 and with their teeth themselves in pieces tore.

My master kind then said:
 "My son, you see
 the ghosts of those whom anger triumph'd o'er:
 others, likewise, beneath the water are,
 who through it, grieving, send their bubbling sighs;
 as your eyes tell you where so e'er you look.

Fix'd in the mire they sing, 'When the sweet air
 we breath'd, which is enliven'd by the sun,
 in heaviness and sloth we then indulg'd:

but in this black and torpid slime we now
 lament, and gurgle through our throats this dirge:
 not able here our words distinct to speak.'"
Along the way encircling the thick slough
 we went, the marsh and the dry bank between;
 turning our eyes to those who swallow'd mire:
and at a tower's foot at last arriv'd.

Inferno - Canto 8 - Rogers

Pursuing my discourse. Soon as we at
the lofty tower's foot arrived were,
we lifted up towards its top our eyes,
and two lights saw display'd,
as signs to one which,
by its distance, barely was discern'd.
Then, turning to the sea of knowledge, I
said: "What means these, and what that other
light? And who are they that do these flames illumine?"
"You," he replied, "already may perceive
what you desire to know; 'less vapours thick,
rising from off the marsh, obstruct your view."
Swift as an arrow from the bowstring flies,
cutting the air,
I saw a little bark
skim o'er the waters, and direct its course
tow'rds us, which guided was by one alone,
who cried aloud: "Are you, fell shade, arriv'd?"
"O Phlegyas, Phlegyas, you complain in vain;"
my lord, reproving, said; "for nothing more
you've now to do, than pass us o'er this slough."
As one who for a wrong receiv'd bemoans,
his wrath so Phlegyas
stifled in his breast.

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The bark my guide then enter'd, and me caus'd
to follow, which seem'd loaded with my weight;
and deeper, than with other freight, was sunk.
Whilst we were running through the standing pool,
one cover'd o'er with dirt thus me address'd:
"Tell who you are who come before your time."
"Although I'm come, 'tis not here to remain,"
I to him said; "But who are you bedaub'd
with mire thus?" "You see a plaining ghost;"
he in reply, and I to him return'd;
"Spirit accurs'd, with your complaints depart;
for you I know thus wretchedly disguis'd."

Then both his hands towards the boat he stretch'd;
 from whence my prudent master drove him off,
 commanding him with other dogs to herd.
 My neck he then incircled with his arms, kissed my face,
 and said: "My worthy friend, disdain all that's ill, she
 blessed is, who such an offspring as yourself brought forth.
 This in the world was arrogant and proud;
 nothing that's good his memory adorns:
 raging with pride his ghost e'en here is seen.
 How many kings were thought of high renown,
 who wallow in this marsh, like hogs in mire,
 leaving their horrid characters behind!"
 "Master," I said, "much pleasure
 it would give To see him
 in this filthy lake immerg'd:"
 And he to me;
 "Before you shall discern the other shore,
 you'll your desire attain."
 Soon the drear ghosts who dwelt in mire I saw
 tear off his flesh, and whelm him in the mud:
 for which I yet return God thanks and praise.
 Philip Argenti all with shouts attack'd:
 the haughty Florentine with arrogance
 turned away, and gnash'd his teeth with ire.
 We left him there deserving no more note.
 With fresh complaining were my ears now struck,
 which caus'd me eager to stretch ope my eyes:
 My master said: "We now approach at last,
 my son, near to the city nam'd from Dis,
 inhabited by many suff'ring souls."
 "Already I discern," said I,
 "its mosques of a red colour,
 as if burnt by fire."
 "This," said he,
 "by the conflagration's caus'd,
 which flames eternal in this lower Hell."
 In the deep trenches we were now arriv'd,
 that circled round of consolation void
 a place with walls which seem'd of iron form'd.
 Not without rowing much about, we came
 close to the shore; when bawl'd the pilot loud,
 "Get out, for this the place of entrance is."

More than a thousand demons, who were driv'n
 from Heav'n as thick as rain, about the gates
 I saw, these cried with angry voice; "Who's this
 comes to the region of the dead, alive?"
 My prudent master then a signal made,
 that he would speak to them in privacy.
 Their rage this somewhat slifled, and they said:
 "Come you alone, but let that other go,
 our kingdom who so rashly enter'd has:
 let that great fool return alone, if e'er
 his way he can recover; while you here
 remain, who've led him through such dismal paths."
 Judge, Reader, whether I discomforted
 was not, at hearing these vile sounding words,
 which made me think return I never should.
 "O my dear guide,
 by whom I oft have been
 from dangers freed to which I was expos'd,
 leave me not thus disheartened," I said,
 "If it is farther to advance denied,
 together quickly let us yet return."
 "Fear not," said he,
 "to none is power giv'n
 to stop our journey, or to us molest:
 wait for me here; your spirits faint become,
 comfort receive, reviv'd with hope benign;
 forsake you I will not in this low world."
 I then was there by my kind father left,
 with many thoughts contending in my mind,
 whether he would or not again come back.
 The words he to them spake
 I could not hear;
 but long he did not with them stay; in haste
 our adversaries ran within the walls,
 and shut the gates against my master's breast.
 He to me with slow steps return'd, his eyes
 fix'd on the ground; his eye-brows smooth express'd
 no courage, but with sighs he said: "Who has
 denied me entrance in this house of woe?
 Do not despond, 'though you me angry see,
 for I shall overcome their bold attempt
 to keep me out:

nor does this arrogance now first appear, for they it
practised at a less private gate, which still without
a lock remains, and over which you read
Th' inscription writ with some obscurity."
Having now passed on, we see descend
the craggy steep, and down the circles come
one without guide, to whom all gates are ope.

Inferno - Canto 9 - Rogers

My guide, perceiving me
 turn pale with fear,
 endeavour'd his own passion to conceal;
he stopt, as one who listens,
 for he nought
 could through the vapours black and thick discern.
"We should ourselves endeavour to o'ercome
 this obstacle, he said, if one had not —
 how tedious seems it ere that he arrives!"
I well observed that he would conceal
 his former speech by what he after said,
 which an import far different convey'd.
But his unfinish'd words
 yet rais'd my fear,
 and I, perhaps, did wrongly them expound.
"Down to this concave's melancholy depth
 did from the upper station e'er descend
 one who was there confin'd without all hope?"
I put this question, to which he replied:
 "Seldom it happens that e'er one of us
 this journey goes, that I now undertake.
'Tis true, I once was
 by Erichtho dire conjur'd,
 who to their bodies souls rccall'd:
soon after that I was depriv'd of flesh;
 she me compell'd to enter these dread walls,
 and from where Judas dwells a spirit drag,
that is the lowest place, and most obscure,
 farthest remov'd from Heav'n which all surrounds.
 The way I know, and you secure may rest.
This stench-exhaling marsh encircles all
 the city full of woe, which we cannot
 enter, unless with ire from those within."
And more he said, which I don't recollect;
 for to the lofty tower's top my eyes
 were drawn, that fiercely burning, was in flames:
where I the three infernal Furies
 soon beheld, who women seem'd
 besmear'd with blood;

The greenest serpents girted round their loins,
 and horned snakes
 supplied their want of hair.

Then he, who knew full well these wretched hags,
 attendants on the queen of dire complaints,
 said to me: "Here behold these horrid fiends:
 this is Megæra sitting on the left;
 Alecto's she who on the right laments;
 Tisiphone's between:" he said no more.

They with their crooked nails tore up their breasts,
 together struck their palms, and scream'd so loud,
 that I with fear close to the poet clung.

"Let but Medusa come," they, looking down on me,
 exclaim'd, "we him shall turn to stone. If we on Theseus
 had due vengeance ta'en, this daring mortal would not now appear."

Then said my master: "Turn your back, and keep
 conceal'd your face; for if you ever see
 the Gorgon's visage, you'll no more return."

Towards them then he turn'd my back himself,
 and, thinking not my hands effectual were,
 he likewise held his own before my eyes.

O ye, who with sound knowledge are endow'd,
 regard the learning deep which hidden lies
 beneath the veil of words express'd not clear.

A sudden crash came o'er the turbid waves,
 whose horrid noise struck dread,
 and shook each shore:

like an impetuous storm, whose violence
 is rais'd by adverse and contending winds,
 the forest strikes,
 and snaps off ev'ry bough,
 triumphs superbly o'er the dusty plane,
 and drives both deasts and shepherds from the field.

His hands he now remov'd, and said:
 "Your eyes over the foam,
 and thickest smoke direct."

As through the water from a serpent glide
 the frogs pursued,
 and huddle to the shore;

more than a thousand ghosts, dismay'd I saw,
 fly before one who, with unwetted feet,
 pass'd o'er the marsh, and waters of the Styx.

Oft with his left hand wav'd before his eyes,
 'Till weary it became, he from his face
 dispers'd the fog arising from the lake.
 I plainly that from Heaven he was sent
 perceiv'd, and to my master turn'd, who made
 a sign to still remain, and bow to him.
 How full of wrath he seem'd! When at the gate
 so arriv'd, he struck it with his slender wand,
 and open'd; for it no obstruction gave.
 "O wretches much despis'd, from Heav'n cast down,"
 he, standing on the threshold, thus began:
 "whither does this your Insolence presume?
 Why kick you thus against that Will which you
 can ne'er controul, and which inflicted oft
 has punishments severe you've well deserv'd?
 What profits it the laws of Fate t'oppose?
 The chins and throats of your guard Cerberus
 by Herc'les' chains are yet depriv'd of hair."
 Then through the dirty path he back return'd,
 and spoke not to us; but seem'd like a man
 in other cares, and other thoughts involv'd,
 after he had to us assistance giv'n.
 We then, encourag'd
 by his words divine,
 free from obstruction went within the walls.
 And I, who much desir'd to know the hate
 of those who were within this fortress kept,
 turn'd my' eyes round,
 and saw on ev'ry side
 a plane extensive full of grief and woe.
 As about Arles, where to the sea the Rhosne
 its tribute gives; as near to Pola, which
 limits the bound'ries of th' Italian coast,
 sepultures without number are beheld:
 so here the ground was cover'd o'er with tombs,
 in which were suff'rings far more bitter felt.
 These monuments so heated were with fire,
 greater need not
 to soften ir'n be us'd.
 The cov'rings of the tombs were raised up;
 and from these graves such lamentations came
 that prov'd their mis'ry, and their punishments.

“My master,” said I, “tell me who they are,
 (Thus sepultur’d within those arched chests)
 that heavily complain with grievous sighs.”
He in reply: “These arc hæresiarchs
 of ev’ry scct, and those who follow’d them:
 their tombs, beyond belief, are crouded thick;
of each opinion they together lie,
 whose monuments of diff’rent heats partake.”
 We on the right hand turned then, and went
among the martyrs, and the lofty tow’rs.

Inferno - Canto 10 - Rogers

Along a secret way, between the wall
and martyrs' tombs,
my master and I went.

"O pattern of all virtue, I began,
"who lead me through the paths of punishment,
as you think meet, in this me satisfy;

can they who in these sepulchres lie here
see what is done? their lids are all rais'd up,
yet not one looks out:" he then in reply:

"These graves will all be clos'd, when from the vale
of Josaphat they with their bodies shall
return, which they in th' upper world have left.

With his disciples Epicurus has
in this division an allotted place,
who hold the soul does with the body die.

As to what further you request, you shall
soon satisfaction full receive; as well
to what you ask, as what from me you hide."

"This," said I, "my kind guide, was not design'd
to any thing conceal, but to comply
with your commands, that I should briefly speak."

"O Tuscan, who so properly do talk,
and through this firey city pass alive,
I you beseech a little while to stop:
your language to me manifestly proves,
that you are native of that place renown'd,
yo which, perhaps, I too offensive was."

Out of a chest this sudden voice was heard,
which caus'd me to go near
my guide with fear.

"Turn tow'rds him, what d'ye fear? he to me said;
you Farinata see, who's rais'd upright,
and upwards from this girdle stands confess'd."

My eyes on his were stedfastly now fixt;
his chest inflated, and his lofty front
were suitable to him who Hell despis'd.

My guide courageous with his hands me push'd
among the tombs, that near him I might stand,
bidding me cautious of my words to prove.

When at the foot of his sepulchre I was come, he on me
cast a slight regard, demanding with disdainful air and
proud: "Who were your ancestors?"

To him obey I was desirous,
and nought from him hid:
he then with haughtiness his eyebrows rais'd,
and fiercely said: "They always adverse
to me, to mine, and party howe'er strong:
but I dispersed twice their routed bands."

"Although they banish'd were," I then replied,
"They twice return'd, and twice made head again;
which was an art your party ne'er could learn."

A shade near this was to the chin discern'd,
so that I thought him
raised on his knees.

He look'd around me as if with desire
to see if any me accompanied:
but when he was of this thought undeceiv'd,
he said lamenting; "If through these dark paths
you, by the power of your genius, come,
my son, where is he, and why not with you?"

I in reply: "I am not come alone,
he, who's attending there, did me here lead,
whom, possibly, your Guido did too much despise."

My answer was thus full and clear,
as from his words, and kind of punishment,
his name and rank I had discovered.

With quickness rising up:
"What say you, 'did?' Lives he not then,
and the sweet light enjoy?"

When he perceiv'd I soon not answer'd him,
he backwards fell supine,
nor was seen more.

But that proud spirit near which I was plac'd,
shew'd not the least submission to his fate,
by changing colour, or by bowing down:

he said, continuing his former specch:
"If they the art of rallying have not learnt,
it more torments me than this bed of fire.

Yet, 'fore the queen, who governs in this place,
shall fifty times her face have reallum'd,
you will well know the power of this art.

And if you hope again to rule above,
 tell to me why your impious party thus
 rages 'gainst mine with many laws severe?"

"The boundless slaughter," I him answered,
 "which caus'd the Arbia to run red with blood,
 produced in our councils these resolves."

He, deeply sighing, shook his head, and said,
 "In that great rout I acted not alone,
 nor without reason did I others join:
 but when it was resolved to destroy
 Florence itseif, I dared to stand forth,
 and it defend alone with all my force."

"So may your seed for ever live in peace!"
 I him intreated, "this my doubt explain,
 which long time has enveloped my mind.
 You, if I rightly hear, appear to view
 things yet to come,
 but know not present acts."

"Like those with failing sight," he said, "we see
 objects at distance far from us remov'd;
 this is allow'd us by the power supreme:
 when they approach us near, or present are,
 we do not them discern: unless some ghost
 shall bring us the advice, we nothing know
 of human race, or what is done above:
 nor of futurity can only speak,
 before its gate shall be for ever shut."

Being convinced of my fault, I said,
 "Tell to that shade who's fallen back supine,
 that his son yet among the living breathes:
 and, in my answer if I were remiss,
 acquaint him that I meditating was
 concerning doubts which to me you've explain'd."

My master to him calling me; in haste
 I to this spirit I intreated that he'd tell
 the names of those who lying were with him.
 "I with a thousand more lie here," he said.
 "The second Fred'ric, and the Cardinal;
 but of the others I shall nothing say."

He in his coffin then conceal'd himself;
 and I towards the poet turn'd my steps,
 thinking on what unpleasant was me told.

The poet moved on, and ask'd me why
I thus disheartened seem'd;
which I confess'd.

"What you have heard against you," said the sage,
"Preserve well in your mind; likewise to this,"
holding his finger up, "you should attend:
when you shall at the joyous sight arrive
of her whose eye benign does all things view,
she will to you your future life display."

We turning to the left hand,
left the wall,
and tow'rds the middle went, along a path
which to a valley led of horrid stench.

Inferno - Canto 11 - Rogers

When at the farther end of a steep bank,
formed of great and broken stones;
we came over a place more horrid still,
from whose deepest abyss a putrid stink exhal'd:
and, to avoid this stench, we stood behind
a monument made of the largest size,
on which we this inscription saw ingrav'd:
"Within this tomb Pope Anastasio's kept,
whom Fotino out of the right way drew."
"'Tis prudent not to hasten our descent,
my master said, but rather to ourselves
accustom to this smell, which fainter 'll seem by use."
"Tell me," then said I, "by what means
we recompensate can this loss of time."
"Observe," replied he, "that of this I think.
My son, below these stones three circles are,
gradually less'ning,
like to those you've left above,
which all are full of souls accurst.
That you may them the better understand,
learn how, and why they are confined here.
Of ev'ry vice which odious is in Heav'n,
to injure is the purport, and the end;
either by force, or fraud.
But as to man fraud is peculiar, it more God offends:
therefore the fraudulent are lower plac'd,
and greater punishment and pains endure.
They who use violence sole occupy the circle first in rank;
but as all force against three persons may be tried,
this one into three other circles is dispos'd.
Force may be us'd 'gainst God, his neighbour, and himself,
himself I say, and what relates
to him; as you shall fully hear explain'd.
By force are grievous wounds, and death itself,
inflicted on our neighbour; whose effects
destroyed likewise are by theft and fire.
In the first circle are for this confin'd
thieves, homicides, and who such crimes commit,
where they, but not alike, their torments meet.

A man with violence his hands may lay on his own
 person; or disperse his wealth: 'tis therefore in the
 second circle fit that he, though to no purpose, should repent;
 as he by gaming, or by other means,
 did his estate in dissipation lose,
 when in your world he should have joy, not woe.
 Force against God himself may be applied
 by those who him blaspheme, and from their hearts deny;
 and Nature, and her laws contemn,
 so like those who'n Sodom, and Caorsa dwelt,
 and those who heartily their God despise:
 there with the lesser circle's seal are stamp'd.
 That fraud of which each conscience feels the pangs
 man may commit 'gainst those who do confide
 in him, as well as those who trust him not.
 The first unhappily destroys the bond
 in general by Nature form'd: from whence
 confined in the second circle are
 The hypocrites, the flatterers, and they
 who practice coz'ning, sorcery, and theft,
 base simony, procuring with a smile,
 masked feceit, and all such filthy tricks.
 He who a fraud against his friend commits,
 forgets the chain firm linkt with special faith
 between relations and those best belov'd, and traitor turns;
 in lasting pains he dwells In the last circle,
 which the centre is of th' universe, where Lucifer resides."

Then I said, "Master,
 you with clearness have eplain'd this gulf,
 and those in it contain'd:
 yet tell me, why they who in this thick marsh
 are driven by the winds, or beat by rain,
 or with reproachful speech together meet,
 within that city red with raging fire
 receive not punishment, if with them God
 is wrathful made? if not, why even thus?"

"Why is your mind," he in reply, "less sane
 than it was wont to be? or whither turns?
 Do not you recollect the words with which
 Your Ethics of those dispositions treats,
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 which Heav'n cannot permit,

incontinence, determin'd vice, and bestial cruelty;
and that incontinence God least offends?

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If this opinion you will call to mind,
and those who punish'd are
without the walls,
you'll soon discern why from more wicked ghosts
they separated are, and why on them
Justice divine less punishment inflicts."

"O you, who like the sun each weaken'd sight
relieve, and give such pleasure when you clear
my doubts, that I to raise them oft desire;

explain to me," I said, "what lately you
advanc'd, that divine Goodness greatly was
offended by all acts of usury."

"Philosophy to those who it attend,"
he in reply, "in sev'ral points directs,
that Nature's course should ever be pursued:
and early in your Physics you will find,
that the proceeds from th' Intellect divine;

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And art her follows,
as the pupil does
his master near;

and if you recollect your Genesis,
you'll know that from these two
mankind should life, tillage the Earth receive.

But, because us'ry takes another way,
despising Nature and her daughter art,
it God displeases, and incurs his wrath.

More forward to advance I would desire;
for now the Fishes on th' horizon glide,
and all the Wain towards the North-west drives:
betides, the steep is near we must descend."

Inferno - Canto 12 - Rogers

The place, where we were to descend,
look'd wild: a sight thus horrid
every one would shun.

Like to the mountain's broken cliffs near Trent,
caus'd by an earthquake, or corroding waves
of the fam'd Adige beating 'gainst its sides;
and which were riven from its lofty top
down to the plane below;
so through this rock
a way was open'd of a steep descent.

Upon the margin of this splinter'd crag
the infamy of Crete extended lay,
which was conceiv'd in a pretended cow:
who, when he us discover'd, bit himself,
as those who are with inward anger torn.

My prudent Virgil call'd to him aloud:
"Think you that the Athenian chief is here,
who slew you in the world above?"

Rest sure, this does not
by your sister tutor'd come,
but to behold your punishments alone."

Like to a bullock, who a mortal wound
received has, not knowing where to go,
skips wildly round, and bounds about the plane;
in such distress the Minotaur I saw.

"Haste," cried my guide, "run to the passage quick:
while he's enrag'd, 'tis right you should descend."

Then, o'er the scattered stones we took our way,
that moved oft beneath my slipping feet,
which were unusual in this rocky strand.

My guide, who saw me meditating, said:
"Perhaps you on this ruin think, which now is guarded
by that angry beast, whom I have forced to retire:
you this may know;

when to th' abyss below I formerly
this way went down, the rock not broken was.

But, if I judge aright, not long before
He came, who from the upper circle took
many who were by Lucifer confin'd,

The foetid vale was so severely shook,
 that it appear'd the universe again
 did of that Love partake, which many think
 often the world to chaos does reduce.
 And at that time
 this ancient rock was split.
 Now to the valley turn your eyes, for we
 the bloody river near approach, in which
 whoe'er with violence another hurts is plung'd."

O foolish rage, O blind desire, that spurs you on,
 in the short life above, to such dire acts as to eternity
 will keep you in this wretched bath below!

I saw an ample trench, curv'd like a bow,
 embracing all the plane within; just as
 my guide had me inform'd:
 between this trench flowing with blood,
 and bottom of the rock, after each other Centaurs ran,
 who were with arrows arm'd as following the chace.

When they descending saw us, each stood still:
 three of this crew before the rest advanc'd,
 furnish'd with bows, and with short chosen spears;
 one at a distance cried, "What punishment
 are you to undergo, who thus come here?
 Tell me this instant, or I draw my bow."

My master said, "Our answer we will give
 to Chiron whom we presently shall meet:
 your fierce desire was always premature."

He touch'd me then, and said: "This Nessus is,
 who for the beauteous Deianira died,
 and did himself on Hercules revenge:
 he in the middle, seen down to this chest,
 is the great Chiron who Achilles taught:
 the other's Pholus so replete with ire."

These round about the trench by thousands went,
 shooting whatever soul emerg'd above
 the bloody lake, more than their crimes allow'd.

When nearer to these agile Monsters come;
 Chiron an arrow took, and drew his bow
 so tightly that the barb was seen behind his check,
 and, opining his vast mouth, he said to his companions,
 "Do you not observe that he who walks behind, where'er
 he goes, makes an impression with his feet or touch?"

This is not done by feet of those who're dead."
 And my kind leader, standing at his breast,
 where the two natures join of man and horse,
 Replied: "He certainly's alive, and I
 to him alone must this dark vale disclose.
 Necessity, not choice, has brought him here.
 She, who that place where halleluja's sung
 has left, to me this office new consign'd.
 We come not here condemn'd for any crime.
 You by that power therefore I intreat,
 by which I walk along this rugged path,
 afford us one of your's who may point out
 The place, to us unknown, where we can ford.
 And on his back my charge may safe convey:
 for he's no ghost that can pervade the air."
 Then Chiron, turning to the right hand,
 said To Nessus: "Undertake this task with care;
 and drive away whatever band you meet."
 Escorted by our faithful guard, we went
 along the shore of the vermillion lake,
 where those in boiling blood made grievous cries.
 Some to the eyes sunk in the stream I saw;
 th' enormous Centaur said: "There tyrants are,
 who on their people's blood and treasure prey'd;
 but, without pity, damned here lament:
 Alexander, Dionysius fierce,
 who Sicily o'erwhelm'd for years in woe;
 and Azzolino with his hair so black,
 are with that other join'd, with flaxen locks,
 Obizzo d'Esti nam'd, who from the world
 was by his won in-law deserv'dly sent."
 I turned to the poet then, who said:
 "He's now the first, and I the second am."
 When we a little farther had advanc'd
 and came to some who in the bubbling spring
 were sunk up to the throat, the Centaur stopt,
 And pointed to a solitary shade, saying:
 "This, in the bosom of the church,
 pierced a heart yet on the banks of Thames rever'd."
 Then some I saw whose heads above
 the stream were rais'd, and some with all their chests;
 of these I many knew:

the farther we proceeded, they were
 less immerg'd in blood; 'till some we saw whose feet
 were barely hid: and in the shallow part we pass'd the trench.
"As you on this side see the bubbling stream
 still less'ning in its depth,"
 the Centaur said,
"so on the other side it rises fast,
 'till it with that part joins
 where tyrants groan,
where divine Prudence has, with justice, thrust
 that Attila the scourge of God on earth;
 Sextus; and Pyrrhus of Epiros king;
and from the two Riniers draws scalding tears,
 who in the public streets
 great slaughter made."
Nessus then turned, and repass'd the ford.

Inferno - Canto 13- Rogers

Nessus had not attain'd the other side,
 before we entered a pathless wood,
 whose leaves were never green, but brown and dark:
no taper branches, but intwisted knots;
 no wholelome fruit,
 but twigs with poison ting'd, were there:
such rugged, and such thick-set stumps
 are not discover'd in those hated wilds
 between Cecina and Corneto plac'd.
'Tis here the filthy Harpies form their nests,
 who from the Strophades the Trojans drove,
 with sad forebodings of their future ills.
Their necks and visage human are, their wings spread wide, their feet
 are arm'd with griping claws, and their swoln paunches cover'd are
 with plumes: from these dire trees they utter their complaints.
Before you farther go," my master said:
 "Know, that you in the second circle are,
 and will remain, 'till to the horrid sand
you shall arrive: with diligence observe,
 and you such things shall see, as will deprive
 whatever words I speak, of all belief."
Wailing and cries on ev'ry side I heard,
 but yet no person saw from whom they came:
 wherefore I, all dismay'd, in silence stood.
I think that he imagin'd I believ'd,
 that all the voices 'mong these wither'd stumps
 from people came who hid themselves through fear.
My master therefore said: "If you break off
 a single twig from one of these dry plants,
 the thoughts you have of them you'll find are vain."
I then a little farther stretch'd my hand,
 and a small sprig from a great bramble pluck'd:
 its trunk exclaim'd: "Why do you split me thus?"
With drops of blood this rending follow'd was;
 the cries renew'd, "Why do you thus me tear?
 Divested of all pity is your mind?
We once were men, but now are plants become.
 Better 'twould be more piety to shew,
 although of serpents we had been the souls."

As a green brand, which at the one end burns,
while at the other it sheds mournful tears,
and crackles in the all-dispersing wind;
so from that shiver issued both words
and blood; which caused me to drop the shoot,
and stand agast, like one with fear assail'd.

"O shade offended," then replied my guide,
if Dante to my words had given faith
for what he now has seen, he had not stretch'd
his hand out to your hurt: this strange affair,
passing belief, induc'd me to comply
with that which to me great displeasure gives.

But, that in recompence for what h'as done,
he may in th' upper world your fame renew,
when he returns, inform him who you were."

The trunk replied: "Your sweet words so allure,
that longer silent I cannot remain;
permit me therefore to explain my fate.

Know, I am he, who the two keys possess'd
of Fred'ric's heart, which I so craft'ly us'd,
both locking and unlocking,
that I left no hope for other to his secrets know.
Such credit in my office I obtain'd,
as in process of time procur'd my death.

The harlot envy, who ne'er turns aside
her eyes deluding from where Cæsar reigns,
(The common vice, and ruin of all courts)
against me, by her pow'r, inflamed each heart;
and these the emperor did so inflame,
that all who favour'd me against me turn'd.

Persuaded by my wrathful mind, that I
by dying should avoid the stinging pangs
of disregard, I to myself became unjust.

By the new roots which from this wood
shoot forth, I swear, that never I betray'd
my lord, who of all honour worthy was.

If either of you to the world return,
kindly restore my memory, which now
oppressed lies for crimes by envy fram'd."

Perceiving that in silence he remain'd;
"Lose not your time," the poet to me said,
"But ask him what you more desire to know."

I him requested thus: "Do you inquire
 that which you judge should satisfy my mind;
 for my compassion will not let me speak."
 Addressing him, he said: "If you would have,
 imprison'd spirit, this man freely do
 what you of him desire, be pleas'd to tell,
 why in these knotty stumps
 are souls confin'd,
 and if they ever hope to be releas'd."
 Fetching a heavy sigh, the trunk then blew,
 which wind was soon converted to these words:
 "To you an answer brief shall be return'd.
 Soon as the guilty soul
 the body 'as left,
 It Minos to the seventh circle sends,
 where it falls in the wood, without a choice
 of place, and, where by chance it falls, it shoots
 like to a grain of corn, still putting forth fresh branches,
 but which always barren prove.
 The Harpies, feeding on its tender leaves,
 puts it to pain, which pain excites complaints.
 When the great Day of Judgment shall arrive, like other
 ghosts, we for our spoils shall seek; but with our former
 bodies none recloath ourselves, for 'tis not fit
 that any should regain what men themselves have ta'en away.
 Our bodies here we after us shall drag, and each be on
 its proper bramble hung; where torments now the hated soul endures."
 Expecting more to hear,
 we list'ning stood.
 Soon by a sudden noise we were alarm'd,
 resembling that when a wild boar is heard,
 chased by dogs,
 and rustling through the woods.
 Two naked men on our left hand appear'd,
 scratched all o'er, and flying with such speed,
 that ev'ry branch obstructing them they broke.
 The foremost cried: "O succour, succour, Death:"
 the other, who him could not overtake,
 exclaimed: "Lano, you in Toppo's field
 so ready was not to engage, as now to run."
 His failing breath here stopp'd his course,
 and in a thicket he himself conceal'd.

Many black dogs pursued him through the woods,
like greyhounds running with an eager speed,
just from their coupling loos'd:
they fix'd their teeth
in him who hidden lay, and piece-meal tore,
and carried off his yet bemoaning limbs.
My guide then took me by the hand,
and led me to the thicket where complain'd,
in vain, this soul, of tortures which it now endured.
"O Giacopo, what profits you," it said,
"to seek with me protection in this bush?
Why should I suffer for your wicked life?"
When close to it my master was arriv'd, he said:
"Who were you that now breathe complaints
provok'd by wounds received from these hounds?"
He thus replied: "O shades,
who here are come
to see my leaves with such dishonour pluck'd,
gather them up, and place them at my root.
I native of that city was, which now
has for the Baptist its first patron chang'd,
who on it always
will inflict his art:
if some resemblance of him were not seen
on Arno's bridge,
it would be now in vain
on ashes left by Attila to build.
To me a gibbet my own house supplied."

Inferno - Canto 14 - Rogers

For my compatriot now with pity mov'd,
I gather'd up the scatter'd leaves, and gave
to him who with complaining hoarse became.

Then we pass'd forward to the confines, where
The second circle from the third divides,
and Justice with her punishments is seen:

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A plane it was devoid of ev'ry plant.
This plane the wailing wood encompass'd round,
as that was by the bloody lake confin'd.
We went not on, but at the wood's edge stopp'd.

The space within a sand
was deep and dry,
like that which Cato in the desert trod.

O vengeance dire of God, how much you should
by ev'ry one be dreaded, when he reads
what to my eyes was manifestly shewn!

I many crouds of naked ghosts beheld
with greatest mis'ry utt'ring their complaints:
their torments yet did not alike appear.

Some supine stretched lay along the ground,
others were sitting gather'd in a heap,
and others ran continually about.

These far the greater number were;
and those the fewer, who lay on the earth supine:
but to complaining were their tongues more free.

Upon the sand a gentle fall of fire
rain'd like the flakes of softly dropping snow,
which deeply cloath the Alps without a wind:
or like the fire that Alexander saw
fall on his army,
when through India led;

which to extinguish, he his soldiers caus'd
to trample on the ground, and, by this scheme,
destroy its force before it gather'd strength.

So thick descended the eternal fire,
that it the sand inflam'd, as does the flint
the tinder, when 'tis stricken by the steel.

And thus their tortures doubled were; nor could
 their scorched hands with quickest motion quell
 the fire that them on ev'ry side attack'd.
 "O master," I began, "who conquer all,
 except those dæmons dire that through the gates
 of Dis your enterance oppos'd, me tell
 who this vast body is that disregards
 the hot combustion, and with such disdain
 unmoved lies, nor in the fire relents?"
 He, hearing what I ask'd,
 quick said aloud:
 "Such as I living was, such am I dead.
 Though Jove his fabricating smith should tire,
 from whom he that sharp-pointed lightning took.
 Which struck me dead; and though he should again
 his other workmen, one by one, fatigue,
 in Mongibello's smithy black with smoak,
 aloud exclaiming, 'Help, good Vulcan, help,'
 (as he before in Phlegra's battle did;)
 and at me hurl his dart with all his force,
 to his revenge I never will submit."
 My guide then in a sharper accent said
 than I before had ever heard him speak:
 "O Capaneus, you greater punishment
 tannot endure, than thus
 to have your pride
 with unabating fury rage:"
 and turning then,
 he me with milder words address'd: "This wretch
 was one of seven kings that Thebes besieg'd,
 the gods contemn'd and little did esteem:
 but, as I told him, his contemptuous pride
 is by the tortures in his breast repaid.
 To follow me 'tis best; and to observe
 not in the burning sand to put your feet;
 but, bord'ring on the wood, pursue your way."
 Silent we came
 where from the forest springs
 a rivulet whose redness yet affrights:
 through the hot sand it flows,
 like to that stream which harlots
 in their dwelling-place divides.

Its bottom and its banks
 were stone become;
 which prov'd that there a passage was allow'd.
 "Among whatever things I've to you shewn,
 since we have passed through that open gate,
 whose entrance free to no one is denied;
 none more deserving notice have you seen
 than this small brook died red with bubbling blood,
 which ev'ry little flame extinguishes;"
 these were my leader's words,
 whom I beseech'd
 to satisfy that hunger he had rais'd.
 "In the mid-sea a land deserted lies,
 which is call'd Crete;" he in reply return'd;
 "under whose king the world was free from crimes.
 A mountain named Ida's in it plac'd,
 in verdure formerly and water rich;
 but now forsaken like a barren soil.
 This Rhea chose, where safely might be nurs'd
 her son, and, better to conceal his cries,
 she caus'd her priests to drown them with their noise.
 An old man's statue in this mountain stands,
 who towards Damiata turns his back,
 and stedfast looks at Rome as in a glass.
 His head is formed of the finest gold;
 his arms and breast are of pure silver made;
 and to the waist brass does the parts supply;
 with iron all constructed is below,
 except one foot, which is of baked clay;
 this is the right, and this his chief support.
 All parts are rotten, unless that of gold.
 Tears from a cleft gush out, that in a grot
 collected are, in which this statue's plac'd:
 precipitately falling, in this vale
 they Ach'ron form, and Phlegethon, and Styx;
 and then along this strait canal they run,
 'till they can fall no more, but constitute
 the Lake Cocytus; and what that is you'll see
 hereafter; therefore I'll now say no more."
 "If," then I asked him, "this running stream
 does from our world above derive its course,
 why is it only in this district seen?"

To which he said,

 “You know this place is round;
 the way was always on the left you came;
therefore the circle have not seen complete:
 then let not what is new
 raise your surprise.”

“Master,” I said again, “pray tell me where are
 Phlegethon and Lethe, one of which you say does from
 those gushing tears proceed; but of the other you quite silent are.

Your questions always please,”

 he then replied;
 “One should be answer’d by this burning stream;
Lethe is not in this region found,
 but where the souls to bathe themselves resort,
 when fully they’ve repented of their crimes.

Now it is time to leave

 this dreary wood;
 the canal’s border a safe way affords,
where burning vapours never can prevail.”

Inferno - Canto 15 - Rogers

One of the stony banks we pass'd along, where, by the
 exhalations of the brook, we were protected from the
 burning heat of the hot sand;
which banks resembled those that are 'twixt Bruges and
 Guizante rais'd, from sudden floods the Flemings to
 defend that them attack, and drive the sea away:
or like to those the Padouans erect
 along the Brent, their cities to preserve
 and castels, ere the Chiarentana feels a heat;

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 but these were not so high nor thick.
We now had left the wood so far behind,
 that, 'though I look'd,
 I could not it discern;
when a large company of ghosts we met,
 who came aside the bank,
 and each one look'd at us,
as in the ev'ning when the moon is new; and knit their brows
 to us observe, like to an artist, when his sight
 grows dim, aiming his thread at a small needle's eye.
Soon I by one of them was known, who held
 my garment's hem, and cried:
 "What marvel's this?"
And I, when he his arm to me stretch'd forth,
 my eyes upon his scorched visage
 fix'd so stedfastly,
that I him also knew.
 Stooping, I held my hand before his face;
 and said to him: "Is Ser Brunetto here?"
He in reply: "My son, be not displeas'd,
 although Brunetto should with you turn back,
 and let the croud their destin'd course pursue."
To this I gave assent, and further said:
 "If you will stay, I'll sit with you awhile;
 of this I trust my guide will well approve."
O son," return'd he, "who e'er of this drove
 stops but a moment, lies an hundred years
 without relief, however hot's the fire.

Go you now on, and I will near you keep,
 and after will my company rejoin,
 who their eternal torments still deplore."
 I dar'd not to descend the bank, to walk close by his side
 upon the burning sand: but, to him hear, my head inclined low,
 like one expressing most profound respect.
 "What Fortune, or what Destiny," he then began,
 "does from above you hither bring, before you are to your last
 day arriv'd? And who is this that here directs your way?"
 To him I answer'd: "In that happy life
 I in a vale my path desir'd miss'd,
 before my destin'd years were all complete:
 and yester morn I chang'd my path design'd.
 This my kind friend his guidance does afford,
 and brings me safely to my wish'd-for home."
 Then he: "If you the influence of your star
 pursue, the port of fame you cannot miss.
 This I observed when I breath'd your air:
 And, if my days were ended not so soon,
 I to your views should have incitement giv'n;
 perceiving Heav'n was so benign to you.
 But that ungrateful people and malign,
 which anciently from Fiesole came,
 and of its mountain, and its quarry yet partakes,
 will you for your advantage make
 their enemy; nor should we be surpris'd
 that with sweet figs agrees not sour fruit.
 By fame of old they were proclaimed blind;
 a nation covetous, invidious, proud.
 From these their vices polish then yourself;
 since for such honour Fortune you reserves,
 that greedy of you each side will become.
 But long 'twill be before they taste such grass.
 Let for themselves these beastly Fiesolans
 make straw, but not a plant of merit touch,
 if such by chance shall in their dunghill spring,
 reviving from that Roman seed left there,
 when of such wickedness
 a nest 'twas form'd."
 "If I could all that I request obtain,"
 to him I then replied; "you should not yet
 from human intercourse be banished:

For in my mind,
 and in my heart is fix'd your image,
 when with kind paternal care,
 me you instructed daily in those rules,
 by which I may myself immortalize.
 And what esteem I do of this retain,
 my tongue shall long as I shall live declare.
 What you relate concerning my affairs, with that I have from
 Farinata heard, I to that lady shall communicate
 who all things knows, if I to her arrive.
 Willing I am that all should be disclos'd,
 since by my conscience I am not reproach'd,
 your information's to my ear's not new.
 Just as they please, let Fortune roll her wheel,
 and let the husbandman his mattock use."
 Back turning to the right, my matter said,
 fixing his eyes with earnest look on me:
 "He listens well, who what he hears remarks."
 This did not me prevent from going on
 with Ser Brunetto, and inquiring who
 were his companions of the greatest note.
 "Of some it may be right to ask," he said,
 "Of others best it is to silent be:
 nor will the time permit me now to tell.
 However know, that all these clergy were,
 or learned men exalted high in fame,
 by the same crime disgraced in the world:
 Priscian, to every grammarian known,
 joins, with Accursius skill'd in law, this band.
 And, of such odious sights if sond,
 you him may see, who by the Servants Servant was
 to that which laves Vicenza's walls transferr'd
 from Arno's river where he died contemn'd.
 I more could tell, but our discourse cannot
 prolonged be; for from the sand I view
 a smoke arise, and those advance with whom
 it is not proper that I should be seen.
 Let me my 'Treasure' to you recommend,
 in which I yet survive; I ask no more."
 He quickly then ran from me with that speed
 with which those in Verona's meads contend
 for the green cloth's desired prize, and seem'd

like him who wins the race, not him that's beat.

Inferno - Canto 16 - Rogers

We now were come where th' echoing noise was heard,
of water, which in the next circle fell,
like to the buzzing of a swarm of bees;
when tow' rds us, from a band which had pass' d
through a shower of fire,
three shades running came,
and each cried out: "O stop awile, I pray,
for, by your habit, you to us should seem
one who in our depraved country dwells."
Alas! what wounds I in their limbs beheld,
recent and old, which by the flames were burnt!
It yet me grieves, when I them recollect.
My guide attended to their cries, and said,
turning to me: "You here should wait for them,
if you are willing to shew them respect:
and, if they had not merited the fire
which darts upon them in this place, I' d say,
that you should them address, and not they you."
Soon as we stopp' d, they their bewailings old
again began, and, when to us arriv' d,
in the same tract they in a circle ran:
like to those champions who, for wrestling stript,
and well anointed, run around the stage,
observing what advantages to take,
before they throw their foe, or fall themselves.
Each, thus employ' d, towards me turned his face,
so that their eyes and feet mov' d diff' rent ways.
"If our most wretched state on this loose land,"
began then one of them, "and if our prayers,
and sad and naked forms by you're despis' d,
yet let our fame induce you to relate
who you may be, that, living, thus secure
direct your steps in these infernal shades.
This, in whose footsteps you now see me tread,
naked, despoiled even of his skin,
liv' d in a higher rank than to you seems.
He grandson of the good Gualdrada was,
well by the name of Guido Guerra known,
whose mind and sword him reputation gave.

The other; who next to me treads this sand,
 is Aldobrandi fam'd for prudence great,
 and in the world deservedly proclaim'd.
 I, also who like punishment with them
 endure, was Rusticucci, and my fate
 by the fierce temper of my wife's procur'd."

If without suff'ring from the firey show'r,
 I'd willingly to them embrace attempt:
 and this my leader freely would allow,
 but, dreading that I should
 be scorcht and burnt,
 my fear o'ercame my violent desire.

I then said to them: "Soon as this my lord
 inform'd me of your rank, and who you were,
 compassion, not contempt,
 was in my mind
 so fix'd, that only late
 it will depart.

I of your country am, and ever did
 with great affection to your names attend,
 and all your honorable acts repeat.

Leaving all gall behind, I'm in pursuit
 of the sweet fruit by my true guide foretold:
 but to the centre I must first descend."

"So may your life long time your limbs preserve,"
 one of these ghosts replied; "So may your fame
 to distant ages shine;

to us relate if courtesy and valour now reside
 within our city, as in former times,
 or if they have departed from its walls.

For Borsiere, who now laments with us,
 and whom you see with his companions go,
 with his reports uneasiness excites."

"Your new Inhabitants, and sudden gain have in you, Florence,
 introduc'd such pride, and arrogance, and boundless luxury,
 that you yourself do of this change complain,"

I then exclaim'd with elevated front.
 The shades, who knew this answer'd their request,
 by looking at each other, give assent.

"If other times to satisfaction give,"
 they all replied, "it you so little costs,
 happy you are to speak thus with such ease.

But, if you e'er shall these dark regions leave,
and to admire the beauteous stars return,
(when you may say with pleasure, I was there)
of us with our kind friends above discourse."
Their wheel they broke then, and so swiftly ran,
that to us wings their nimble feet appear'd.
Nor could an Amen
he so soon express'd,
as suddenly they vanish'd from our sight.
My master now did depart desire, I follow'd him;
and we not far were gone, when the loud roar of water
falling near scarcely our words permitted to be heard.
That river like, which from mount Veso runs
tow'rds the Levant, and leaving on the left
the Apennine, from its still course retains
the name of Aqua-cheta, 'till it falls
into its lower bed at Forli, where
it is by that calm name no longer call'd;
but its resounding waves are by the Alps
re-echo'd near to where St. Benedict
a thousand of Recluse could entertain;
we found this was, down tumbling from a rock;
a water raging with such horrid noise,
as us almost of hearing to deprive.
The string of fraud was girt around my waist,
with which I formerly attempted had
to take the panther with the spotted hide.
This, when I'd loosen'd
by my guide's command;
coil'd up in many rounds I gave to him;
who, turning to the right,
far from the shore,
cast it into the midst of the deep gulph.
Some novelty, I thought within myself,
this must prognosticate, as with his eyes
my master it pursued.
How cautious men their own imaginations to indulge
should be, not knowing what th' event will prove;
but should those trust who with more prudence judge!
"Soon from below," he to me said, "you'll see
arrive what I with certainty expect,
not what in your wild fancy's only form'd."

Always we ought to in our lips retain
 a truth which falsehood may to some appear;
 that shame we may not without fault acquire.
Yet here I cannot silent be: to you I swear,
 O Reader, by these lines, if destitute
 of merit they are not by you esteem'd,
that I beheld through the thick air obscure
 a figure swimming up towards us,
 that would any heart with dread amazement strike;
like one who dives to loosen in the sea
 an anchor sunk,
 which to a rock is fix'd,
And tugs it up with clenched hands and feet.

Inferno - Canto 17 - Rogers

“Behold the Monster with a pointed tail,
 who pierces mountains, breaks down walls, and arms
 destroys; lo him who all the world infects:”
my guide this me address’d,
 and shew me where
 he was approaching to the marble path.
This filthy Image of deceitful fraud
 came boldly forward with his head and breast;
 but did not rest his tail upon the bank.
His face in semblance
 was a man’s benign,
 and all the rest like to a serpent formed.
Two paws he had thick cover’d o’er with hair;
 his back, his breast, and both his shining sides
 with nodules, and with ringlets painted were.
Colours more high, or brighter than were these
 the Tartars, or the Turks ne’er gave their cloths;
 nor was Arachne’s web more richly ting’d.
As sometimes barks upon the strand, whose prows
 are fix’d on land, and sterns in water float;
 and as among the greedy Germans lurks
the beaver, watching for the fish his prey;
 so this fell monster on the brink repos’d
 of stone, the river bounding from the sand:
his length of tail he flirted in the air;
 and upwards turned its envenom’d point,
 which like a scorpion’s was with poison arm’d.
“‘Tis proper now,
 my master said, to go
 towards that beast perfidious who there lies.”
Therefore ten paces on the right hand we
 (the burning land, and firey show’r t’avoid)
 descended near the circle’s extreme bounds.
And when we were at him arriv’d, I saw
 many shades sitting on the distant sand,
 close to the precipice of broken stones.
“That you may thoroughly this circle know,”
 my master said;
 “Observe how they’re employ’d;

of short duration with them make your stay:
 ere you return I will with him discourse,
 that his strong back he may to us afford."

The seventh circle's edge
 I came to then,
 alone, where sat a melancholy crew.

Their grief gush'd plenteous from their eyes; their hands
 were constantly employ'd in beating off the burning vapours
 from this side or that, or from the scorching sand defend their feet:
as dogs in summer use their snouts and claws,
 when they are bit by gnats,
 or flies, or wasps.

Although I stedfast fix'd my eyes on those
 on whom the painful fire fell, yet I could
 not any know;

but I observ'd a bag
 hung from their necks,
 on which they pleased look'd,
having some figure
 on some colour mark'd.
 An azure lion on a yellow purse

I saw, and, on another far more red
 than blood, a goose was plac'd
 of perfect white.

And one, who on his white sack painted had
 a sow of colour blue, and big with young,
 said to me, "What do you in this vile place?
Go quickly hence; but, although yet he lives,
 be certain that Vitaliano,
 who my neighbour was, will on my left hand sit.

A Paduan I'm among these Florentines,
 who often thunder in my stunned ears,
 'Let now your sov'reign Cavalier appear,
who bears his budget loaded with three goats.'"

He then his mouth distorted, and loll'd out
 his tongue, ox-like when he his nostrils licks.

I, fearing that I should him cause to wait,
 who had requested me to stay not long,
 turned my back upon the moaning shades.

My guide I found had on the crupper leap'd
 of the wild animal, and to me:
 "Take courage and be bold, since we this way

may lower now descend: mount you before,
 and I behind will sit, to you protect
 from any blows his noxious tail may give."

Like him, who by a quartan ague's shook
 'till his nails livid turn, yet does not leave
 the shade however hurtful be the cold;

I all o'er trembling at his words became:
 but shame me check'd, which animates the slave
 when orders he receives from his kind lord.

On his broad shoulders I then plac'd myself,
 and did attempt to say: "Embrace me ere
 I fall;" yet utter I could not the words.

But he who does at all times me assist,
 so soon as I was fixed in my seat,
 did me support, encircling in his arms;

And said to him: "You, Geryon, now may move;
 "let your rotations large, and your descent
 be gentle, and to your new charge attend."

Like to a boat which does the harbour leave,
 he backwards from the stony bank retir'd:
 and when himself he found in open air,
 where his breast rested there he turn'd his tail,
 which he extending, waved like an eel;
 and with his clutches gather'd in the air.

I think that greater fear was never felt,
 when Phaëton abandoned the reins,
 by which the Heav'ns to be yet heated seem;

nor when unhappy Icarus perceiv'd
 his wings were dropping with the melting wax,
 his father crying, "Ill you keep your way,"

than mine was, when
 on ev'ry side was air,
 and nought was seen except the monster fell.

He slowly floated, and in circles went, descending gently
 in a spiral line; but of this passage I was not appriz'd,
 till a wind from below blew on my face.

I on my right discern'd a whirlpool vast,
 whose jarring waters rais'd a horrid found.
 My head I then stretch'd out, with eyes declin'd;

and with the sight more fearful far became:
 I fires saw, and lamentations heard,
 that made me close my knees together press.

Uncertain I that we descended were,
 'till crouds of sufferers from ev'ry side
 convinc'd me by their lamentations dire.
A hawk that on his wings has long remain'd,
 without discerning either lure or bird,
 causes the falc'ner to command him down,
fatigued now become: to him obey, he, circling oft,
 descends upon the ground, (displeas'd that he without
 his prey return'd) but not his disappointed master near;
so Geryon lighted on the steep rock's base:
 and, having us
 discharged from his back,
he vanish'd like an arrow from a bow.

Inferno - Canto 18 - Rogers

A place in Hell that's Malebolge nam'd
of stone is form'd of ferruginous hue;
as is the margin which surrounds this gulph.
Right in the midst of the malignant plane
an empty well's display'd, both wide and deep,
of which I here shall a description give.
The border that confines the whole is round:
between the well and the steep bank of rocks,
ten sep'rate pits are in that space inclos'd;
each less'ning 'till they to the bottom sink.
As many fosses, to protect their walls,
castels surround, and render them secure,
such here did these incircling pits appear:
and as small bridges from the sally-ports
of fortresses, for passing thence, are laid,
rough stones, which from the rock were broken off,
formed a passage from the lowest pit
up to the well above, which stopp'd its course.
Here from the back of Geryon we found
ourselves discharg'd: the left the poet took,
and I him followed; when on my right
new subjects for compassion I discern'd,
torments not seen before, and scourgers fresh,
like those abounding in the upper pit.
Coming tow'rds us some naked sinners ran;
while others with us travel'd the same way,
but with far larger strides than those we took.
As in the year of Jubilee vast crowds
of Romans, thick as armies, pass the bridge;
one way they have the Castel full in view,
but when they to St. Peter's haste their course,
their faces are directed to the Mount.
This side and that, upon the rocky path,
I horned devils
with large whips beheld,
who as they passed cruelly them scourg'd.
How the first stripe
them caus'd to lift their legs!
Nor did they for a second wait, or third.

As I went on, my eyes on one were cast;
 and I immediately, surpris'd, exclaim'd,
 this time of seeing him is not my first.
 But with more care to him observe, I fix'd
 on him my sight; and my obliging guide
 stood still awhile, and gave me his assent
 that I a little should go back with him.
 This scourged wretch, believing that he might himself conceal,
 bent to the ground his eyes: but this him nought avail'd;
 for I him thus address'd; "If your appearance be not false,
 you, who on the ground so stedfast look, Venetico Caccianimico are:
 but what has brought you to this suff'ring state?"
 He then replied; " Unwillingly I tell;
 but your clear voice, which calls into my mind
 the world I once enjoy'd, compels me to't.
 Know I was he who Ghisola the fair
 seduced to the Marquisses foul will;
 whatever idle tales may else declare.
 Nor I, a Bolognese, do here complain,
 since with as many bauds this place is fill'd
 as speak the jargon us'd by those who live
 between the Reno's and Savena's streams:
 and if you doubt, or testimony want,
 call to your mind our boundless avarice."
 Whilst saying this, a dæmon with his whip
 scourg'd him, and cried; "Hence you vile baud, begone;
 for women here are not expos'd to hire."
 My guide I then rejoin'd: we soon arriv'd
 where by a shiver from the rock was form'd
 a bridge, which, turning to the right, with ease
 we did ascend, and the large circles left.
 When in the midst of it,
 we stood, 'neath which
 a vacant passage is for those who're scourg'd,
 my leader said:
 "Stop, and those wretches view
 whose faces now are obvious to your sight,
 before unseen, for they the same way came
 as we ourselves."
 From the same bridge we saw
 the train distinct that came the other way;
 and which the whip did in like manner lash.

Without my asking, my good master said:
 "Regard that hero who does hither come:
 however great his pain, no tears it draws;
 what royal aspect does he yet retain!
 This Jason is, who with his prowess bold,
 and art, the Colchians of their Fleece depriv'd.
 At Lemnos he arriv'd when in the Isle
 th' enraged women all the males had slain.
 With looks alluring, and with studied speech
 the young Hypsipyle's consent he gain'd,
 who many women
 had herself deceiv'd:
 and there he left her breeding, and forlorn.
 Such fault him to such punishment condemns.
 Medea's likewise in this place reveng'd.
 They go his way who're guilty of his crimes.
 Of the first vale let this suffice to know,
 and those who do their torments here inflict."
 We now arrived where a narrow path,
 crossing the second border of the pit,
 sprung from its side, and form'd another bridge,
 from which we in the next pit many view'd
 puffing for breath in their uneasy state,
 and themselves madly beating with their hands.
 The sides were grimed o'er with mouldiness
 which from the noisom fumes below exhal'd,
 and both our noses, and our eyes attack'd.
 The bottom was so deep that we could not
 look down to it, 'till we were on the top
 of the arch'd bridge made by th' impending rock.
 There sev'ral plung'd in excrements I saw,
 from human privies
 which appear'd supplied.
 Whilst with my eyes I them examined,
 one I beheld so cover'd o'er with filth,
 (or clerical or laic I could not discern;)

who thus, rebuking me, cried out:
 "Why do you me more eagerly regard
 than other filthy wretches in this place?"
 And I to him: "If I remember right, I formerly have you
 with clean hair seen; and you Alessio of Lucca are:
 therefore you more than all the rest I eye."

Beating his forehead, he replied then:

"Here flattering discourse has me immerg'd;
with which was never satiated my tongue."

My guide then to me said: "Your face advance

a little, that you may distinctly see

a wretch deformed with dishevel'd hair,

who scratches with her ordur'd nails her checks,

now sitting on her thighs,

and standing now:

this Thais is, the famed courtesan, who to her suiter said,

when he inquir'd whether his gift was fav'rably receiv'd,

'Not kindly only, but with greatest joy.'"

We with these sights were fully satisfied.

Inferno - Canto 19 - Rogers

Simon the mighty sorcerer, and ye
 who follow him, the things which appertain
 to God, and which should be with freedom giv'n,
you, list'ning to rapacious arts permit to be obtain'd by
 silver and by gold. 'Tis fitting now my trumpet sound for you,
 who in the third cavernous pit are fix'd.

We then the top of the next bridge assail'd,
 and to the bottom
 in a straight line look'd.

O supreme Wisdom, how great is your power
 in Heav'n, in Earth, and in the world below,
 and with what justice is your virtue shewn
the livid pavement I beheld was full
 of holes that round were,
 and of equal size.

They larger to my view did not appear,
 than those which in my beautiful St. John's
 appointed are for the baptizing priests.

One of these fonts, not many years ago,
 I broke, to save one who was nearly drown'd:
 other suspicion then let this remove.

From ev'ry hole a sinner's feet appear'd,
 and to his calves his legs,
 the other part remain'd within;
on fire were both his soles,
 this caus'd his ancles to so nimbly move,
 as would snap ev'ry cord that had them bound.

Quick as a flame
 'long what is oiled runs,
 his soles were from his heels burnt to his toes.

"Master," I said, "pray tell me who is he,
 flutt'ring his feet, expresses greater pain
 than his associates, and who more is scorcht?"

When he replied: "If you'd permit me bear you to that bank below,
 you from himself his case may know, as well as all his crimes.
 Whatever pleases you to me is right."

I said, "You are my lord, and well you know
 that I no other will e'er have than your's,
 and know my thoughts before I them declare."

To the fourth margin then we turn'd our course,
 and tow'rds the left descended, till we came
 where we both frequent holes and narrow found.
 But my good master did not from his side
 me let in safety down, 'till near the hole
 of him who with his feet such pains express'd.
 "O you, unhappy ghost, who upside down,
 like to a stake, are fixed in this place,"
 I then began, "Speak, if you can, some words."
 As does the priest, who a vile murderer confesses,
 and who oft is called back, after he's fixt in th' earth,
 to death delay, I stoop'd my ear to him;
 and he exclaim'd:
 "If you yourself now Boniface stand there,
 a prophecy some years has me deceiv'd.
 Are you so soon so satiated with wealth,
 for which you have not dreaded to espouse
 the beauteous Church, and all her rights purloin?"
 Like those who do not know what's said to them,
 I stupid was,
 nor could I ought reply.
 Then Virgil said: "Quickly thus answer him,
 'I am not he, I am not he you think?'"
 To his command I soon obedience paid:
 at which the ghost held still his moving feet;
 and, sighing deep, with a complaining voice,
 he said; "What more of me would you request?
 If you it does so much concern to know
 whom I may be; since you have passed the bank;
 with the great Mantle know that I was cloath'd:
 my greedy av'rice truly prov'd my birth was from a bear,
 and I so eager was t' advance the lesser cubs to me allied,
 that with your wealth above I fill'd my purse;
 but in this hole below have thrust myself.
 Under my head are others that are dragg'd
 through the stone's cleft, and down are flatly laid,
 who before me were simonizing found.
 There also I shall fall, when he arrive,
 whom I believ'd you was, when you I ask'd.
 But my feet blister'd longer must remain,
 and on my head I longer time must stand,
 before his burning feet be planted here.

Yet after him a Pastor far more vile,
 a lawless priest, shall from the West arrive;
 and he will cover Boniface and me;
 another Jason he will prove, of whom in the fam'd book
 of Maccabees you read: and as he to his king complying was,
 so will this be to him who governs France."

I know not if that I were not too bold,
 when thus to him, a Pope, I made reply.
 "Tell me, I pray, how much the treasure was,
 At which our Lord
 the Keys to Peter sat.
 Certain, not greater than to follow him.

Nor did St. Peter and the other ten or gold or silver
 of Matthias ask, when he by lot was chosen in the room
 of him who late his guilty soul had lost.

Therefore 'tis right that justly you endure
 your punishment; and well defend that wealth
 ill-gotten, which 'gainst Charles inflam'd your pride.

If not forbid by rev'rence to those Keys
 which your hands held, when in your life above,
 I should more seriously express myself,
 and say your avarice oppress'd the world,
 depressing good,
 and raising up bad men.

Th' Evangelist of you, O Pastor, writes,
 when her, who upon many waters sits,
 playing the harlot with the kings he saw.

She with ten horns and seven heads
 appear'd with dignity,
 while the her husband pleas'd;

but you of silver and of gold have made your God:
 what differs your idolatry from that of others,
 but that they did one alone, and you a hundred gods adore.

Ah, Constantine, what are the many ills you have been parent of:
 I do not mean by your conversion, but that pompous gift
 by which our Holy Father you enrich'd!"

While I these hateful notes sung in his ears,
 (how rage, how conscience, bit him to the quick!)
 with violence he vibrated his feet.

I think with truth, that what I said to him
 my leader pleas'd, for with attention he
 listen'd to me, nor moved e'er his lips.

Then to his breast with both his arms he took
me up, and bore me to the place from whence
se had descended;
and, without fatigue,
me carried safely to the bridge's top
which from the fourth to the fifth border leads.
There gently he discharg'd the load he brought
through the both steep and craggy rock; and which
a dang'rous passage to e'en goats would prove.
Another vale was then to me disclos'd.

Inferno - Canto 20 - Rogers

It proper is, this twentieth canto should
 verses contain of a new punishment
 of those immersed in th' abyss profound.
I suitably was plac'd to these survey
 who were in tears
 of painful anguish bath'd.
Many I saw in the round vale below
 weeping, and in a slow procession move,
 like those who do the litany recite.
As I more closely bent my eyes to them,
 each wonderfully seem'd to have his head
 twisted half round, where to his trunk is join'd
his chin, so that his face o'er-look'd his back
 and in his walk he always backward went;
 as forward he could not discern his way.
Perhaps a palsy might have some of these
 twisted thus far; yet none such have I seen,
 nor do I think that such is its effect.
If God permits you, Reader, to obtain
 profit from what you read, oh, think yourself
 how with dry eyes I could our Image view
wash with his tears
 the hollow of his back.
 Leaning against the rock,
I so great grief express'd,
 that thus my guide to me apply'd:
 "Are you among the weak to be arrang'd?
When without life, 'tis here compassion lives.
 Who can more wicked be esteem'd than he
 who thinks that the divine decrees are wrong.
Raise up your head, raise up, and see
 Amphiaraus, for whom the Theban earth
 wide op'd a gulph; and, 'Whither do you fall?'
All cried out; 'Why leave you thus the fight?'
 Nor did he stop 'till he to Minos came,
 whom none e'er pass without being by him judg'd.
Observe his shoulders he has made his breast,
 and backwards walks,
 'cause he'd too much foresee.

Tiresias view,
 who his appearance chang'd,
 when he a woman from a male became:
 and he a second time was forc'd to beat
 The twisted serpents, 'fore he could resume
 the bearded honours of a man again.
 This Aruns is, whose back is placed where his belly
 should be seen: he lived in the barren rocks of Luni,
 which are dug by those who do Carrara's quarries till;
 'mong the white marbles
 where his den was plac'd,
 from whence he could the stars survey and sea.
 And she whose breasts, which are not seen by you,
 are with dishevel'd tresses cover'd o'er,
 which should more properly flow down her back,
 Was Manto nam'd, who many lands pass'd through,
 'till to the place she came where I was born:
 I therefore your attention now request.
 After her father was of life bereft,
 and Bacchus' city brought to servitude,
 Manto for long time wander'd o'er the world.
 Above, in Italy the fair there lies,
 at the Alps' foot, a lake, which separates
 Germania's region from the Tirollese, Benaco nam'd:
 more than a thousand springs,
 I think, between Valdimonica flow
 and Garda; here their waters in this lake conjoin;
 in which there is a famed spot the Pastor where of Brescia,
 and of Trent, ws well as of Verona, may of right
 his Blessing give, if he should go that way.
 Peschiera, a strong fortress to oppose
 the Brescian soldiers and of Bergamo,
 is placed at the bottom of this pool.
 The waters all that in Benaco run,
 more than his bosom can contain, unite,
 and a rich river flows through verdant meads.
 Not now Benaco,
 but 'tis Mincio call'd
 'till at Governo it falls in the Po.
 His course not long is, ere it finds a plane
 in which it spreads, and a dull marsh becomes,
 breathing in summer's heat unwholsome fumes.

Passing this way, the wilder'd virgin saw
 within the fen a desert spot of land,
 depriv'd of culture, or inhabitants.
 There, the with those who follow'd her from Thebes,
 to fly all human converse, stopt her course, better to practice
 her presaging art; and liv'd, and left her body void of soul.
 The men, who were dispersed round this marsh,
 assembled in this spot, which was become
 a place not easily to be assail'd;
 on ev'ry side encompass'd with a slough. They over her dead bones
 a city rais'd, and, to her honour who had made this choice.
 They't, without other auspice, Mantoua nam'd.
 Gentry more frequent were within its walls,
 before the Casalodi's folly was
 by Pinamonte treach'rously deceiv'd.
 Therefore, I you apprise, if e'er you hear
 a story diff'rent of my native soil,
 that you should not be of the truth depriv'd."
 "My master," then I said, "all your discourse
 such plane conviction ever with it brings,
 that other's is, like lifeless coals, despis'd.
 But tell me if you any one of note
 discern, who in this drear procession walks;
 for to such only does my mind attend."
 He said: "He from his chin who there his beard
 o'er his brown shoulders spreads,
 when Greece was robb'd of all its males,
 and scarcely one was left nurs'd in his cradle for some future war,
 an augur was, and with fam'd Calchas told
 the time exact when they from Aulis' port
 should loosen the first ship, and cut its rope, Eurypylus was call'd,
 and somewhere thus my lofty Tragedy does sing of him,
 as you well know, for you well know it all.
 That other who's so slender in the waist,
 was Michel Scotto
 skill'd in magic tricks.
 Guido Bonatti, and Asdente view,
 who now would willingly be at his awl
 and end employ'd; but he too late repents.
 Those wretched witches you may now behold, who have their distaff,
 shuttle, needle, left the magic art to practise, and their charms
 to make with herbs, and images of wax.

But now come on, for with his brambles Cain
 touches th' horizon 'tween the hemispheres,
 and beyond Seville dips into the sea.
Last night the moon,
 as you then knew, was round,
 which in the thick wood not displeasing was."
Thus he spoke to me, and we forward went.

Inferno - Canto 21 - Rogers

Discoursing thus, from bridge to bridge we passed,
 (of what my Comedy does not declare)
 to the fifth gulph untill we came,
from whence of Malebolge we another cleft
 could view, and other plainings hear in vain.
 This place appear'd uncommonly obscure.
As in the Arsenal of Venice boils
 the pitch tenacious, when the winter reigns,
 to caulk their ships disabled now to sail:
when some, to them refit,
 stop up their leaks, while some their prows,
 and some their poops rebuild;
this makes new oars,
 and this new cables twists,
 and this their mizzen and their mainsails mends:
so, in this gulph below, by art divine, and not by common fire,
 was boiling seen a thick and noisome pitch, whose pest'lent smoke
 did with its vapours either bank defile.
The pitch I saw; nought else I could discern,
 but bubbles which irregularly swell'd,
 and then subsided in its mass compress'd.
Whilst with attention great I looked down,
 saying to me, "Beware, beware," my guide
 from the place where I stood, call'd me to him.
I turned round, as one who stops awhile
 to that examine from which he should fly,
 and stands dispirited with sudden fear.
When soon a devil I saw black of hue,
 running towards us
 o'er the splinter'd rock.
How fierce his aspect! with what cruel rage
 did he advance with wings display'd, which gave
 to his feet swiftness!
He his shoulder high had raised up, inflated as with pride,
 and an offender's haunches on it bore,
 holding him griped by his ancle fast.
"Ye ill-fang'd devils," he then bawled out;
 "Who guard this bridge, I of Saint Zita here
 have brought an alderman; plunge him beneath,

while to that city I return, where all,
 except Bonturo, bribe for places high,
 and vilely change for money No to Aye."
 He then down shot him, and with greater speed
 o'er the hard rock return'd, than e'er a dog,
 when loosen'd from his chain, pursues a thief.
 He dived down, and wallow'd in the pool.
 The fiends, who were beneath the bridge, cried out;
 "The Holy Face has here no prevalence;
 nor do they swim, as in the Serchio, here.
 If you would not be scratched by our poles,
 lift not your head above the burning pitch."
 They then him poked with an hundred hooks,
 and said deridingly; "They who dance here
 should in the boiling pitch duck unobserv'd."
 Not otherwise the cooks their scullions cause
 within the cauldron to keep down the meat
 with their long prongs, nor suffer it to float.
 Then my good master said: "That you may not
 be seen, behind some splinter of a rock
 conceal yourself, which may protection give.
 For any opposition I may meet,
 dread not, as I for it am well prepar'd,
 and have before been used to such frays."
 He then pass'd o'er the bridge; and when he had
 at the sixth bank arriv'd, it prudent was
 to have his front serene, devoid of fear.
 With all the fierceness, and with all the rage
 dogs fly upon a tatter'd beggar's back,
 who, stopping at some door, implores an alms;
 the fiends from underneath the bridge rush'd out,
 and pointed at him with their forked hooks;
 who to them said: "Let none s' outrageous be:
 before on me be fastened your prongs,
 dispute one of your tribe who may me hear,
 and then on seizing me deliberate."
 They loud exclaim'd; "Let Malacoda go."
 While he advanced, all the rest stood still
 and he said to them: "What will this avail?
 Believe you, Malacoda, that I here
 am come," my matter then to him replied,
 "(well knowing all your subterfuging wiles)

without the Will divine, and prosp'rous Fate?
 Let me pass on, for 'tis in heav'n decreed that I
 in this bewildred path should guide another guest."
 His pride was so subdued,
 that at his feet he dropp'd his iron prong,
 to the rest saying: "Him don't at present strike."
 Then my guide me address'd: "O you who sit
 safely conceal'd behind the splinter'd rock,
 securely now you may to me return."
 Therefore I quickly went to him, but all
 the devils stood before me in such ranks,
 that they would not to their agreement keep
 I fear'd: and thus I formerly the foot beheld
 their dread express, when they Caprona left,
 finding themselves by enemies inclos'd.
 I near my leader drew myself, nor did
 I turn my eyes from them,
 who threat'ning seem'd.
 They to each other said, their hooks held down,
 "Would you that I his crupper now should prick?"
 "Yes, do," they then replied, "and make him skip."
 That dæmon, who discoursed with my guide,
 quickly turn'd round, and with commanding voice,
 Said: "Rest, Scarmiglione, quiet rest."
 Applying then to us: "Over this rock
 you cannot farther pass; for the sixth bridge
 wholly destroyed to the bottom lies.
 But if you're pleas'd your passage to advance,
 along this ridge you may conduct yourselves;
 another rock will then afford a way.
 One thousand two hundred and fifty-six
 years are completed
 since 'twas broken down.
 I send these scouts of mine abroad, t' inquire
 tf any have escaped from this pitch.
 Go you with them, for they'll you not deceive.
 Come forward, Alichino," he then said,
 "and Calcabrina with Cagnazzo join'd:
 you, Barbariccia, corp'ral of the ten,
 and Libicocco from your ranks advance, with Draghinazzo
 full of venom'd gall, tusked Ciriato, Graffiacone fell,
 vain Farfarello, Rubicante wild,

Look carefully around this boiling pool.

Then to the other rock these safely guard,
where a sound bridge is stretched o'er the slough."

"O master," then I said; "What's this I see?

Without a convoy we now go alone:
if you can pass, 'tis more than I desire.

If you're so quick, as you were wont to be,
see you not how they grind their teeth, and with
their knitted eye-brows threaten us dire ill?"

But he to me: "I would not have you fear;
as much to grin permit them as they please,
for this is at those wretches seeth'd in pitch."

'Long the left bank the dæmons turn'd away; but first,
each to their captain made a sign, by biting hard their tongues
between their teeth, that they derided us; and he ere this,
had founded a loud trumpet from behind.

Inferno - Canto 22 - Rogers

I armies in their march have often seen,
 now forming an attack, and rallying now,
 and now for safety making a retreat;
scouts in your land, O Aretines, I've view'd,
 and squadrons ravaging among your corn;
 in tournaments engaging, or in justs,
when they their orders had from trumps receiv'd,
 or bells, or drums, or from the castel's tow'r,
 or signals of our own or foreign stamp;
but ne'er did I in motion to be put with such an instrument
 of wind, observe or horse, or foot, or ship which from
 the land receives its guidance, or the Polar Star.
With the ten dæmons, vile associates!
 We went; for as at Church we are with Saints,
 so in the taverns we're with drunkards join'd.
My sole attention
 to the pitch was giv'n,
 to observe who were boiled in this gulph.
As dolphins, when they to the mariners
 make signals to preserve their ships from storms,
 arch up their backs;
so to alleviate
 his pain, one of these suff'ers raised up
 his side, but, quick as lightning, sunk't again.
Like frogs, which in a pond are standing seen,
 with their snouts lifted up, but with their feet,
 and swollen bodies 'neath the water hid;
the sinners so on ev'ry side appear'd:
 but soon as Barbariccia them approach'd,
 under the bubbling pitch they made retreat.
I saw (my heart yet shudders at the sight)
 one stay behind, frog-like,
 when others spring away;
and Graffican, who nearest was
 to him, fix'd in his clotted hair his hook,
 and, as he would an otter, drew him up.
The dæmons names I noted had, when first
 they were appointed,
 and when called o'er.

"So on his back, O Rubicante, fix
your hook, that with it you may flay his skin,"
these devils all at one time bawled out.

And I: "My master, if you can, obtain
the information who this wretch may be,
thus fallen in his adversaries power."

My guide accosted him, and asked who
he was, alive; to whom he thus replied:
"I in the kingdom of Navarre was born;
my father did himself to ruin bring,
lavish of his effects; my mother first
in a lord's service plac'd me,
from thence soon I was admitted in the family of the
good king Thebaldo, and I there bart' red my duty
for seducing gold: for which I in this burning place account."

Then Ciriato, from each side whose mouth
a tusk stood out, resembling to a boar's,
made him perceive how one of them could tear.

Th' unhappy mouse between two cats had got:
when Barbariccia grip'd him in his arms,
and said: "Let me my fork now in him plunge."

Turning then to my master, asked him:
"If, ere he was destroy'd,
he'd more inquire."

To him my guide: "Of others now discourse who guilty
are: know you one here who is a Latin,
sunk beneath the pitch?" Then he: "One I left lately
who dwelt in an Isle nearly adjoining your Italian coast;
and so completely cover'd was with him,
that I not dreaded either claws or hook."

Then Libicocco said: "Too much we have
endur'd:" and seized with his prong his arm,
from which he soon a gobbet tore:
besides would Draghinozzo on his legs him strike.
The leader of the ten, at this enrag'd,
dealt many a stroke among his brother fiends.

When they a little were restor'd to peace,
my guide, without the least delay, him asked,
who still was looking at his new-made wound:
"Say who is he from whom you, ill-advis'd,
have to this shoar, where you thus suffer, come?"
Then he replied: "He Fra Gomita was, and of Gallura,

skill'd in ev'ry fraud;
 who all his master's foes had in his power,
 yet so behav'd, that ev'ry one was pleas'd.
 He took their money, and let them go free.
 No piddler he,
 but sov'reign in his art.
 The like by Michel Zanche practis'd was
 with his own master, Logodoro's Lord:
 and the Sardinians ever talk of him.
 Alas! Look at that fiend who grinning stands;
 I would say more, but that I much do fear
 that he preparing is to scratch my poll."
 The captain then to Farfarello turn'd,
 who squinted with his eyes to aim aright,
 and to him said: "Ill-omen'd fowl, retire."
 "If you," the frightened spirit recommenc'd,
 "Tuscans or Lombards would or see or hear,
 I'll make them come:
 but let these dæmons stand aloof, that they may dread
 not their revenge. And I, while sitting in this place alone,
 for one, as I am, will up seven call,
 soon as I whistle;
 as our custom is,
 to reassemble those who're gone astray."
 Cagnazzo at these words his muzzle rais'd,
 shaking his head, and said: "Hear his device,
 who by this craft thinks he may dive below."
 He then replied who had deceits in store,
 "I very crafty surely must be thought
 when for my friends new torments I procure."
 Here Alichin could not himself retain, but his proposal,
 diff'ring from the rest, he gave, and said:
 "Though you to dive attempt, I shall not gallop after you with speed;
 but o'er the surface of the pitch will fly. Let us both leave the hill;
 and let the bank conceal us from each other like a shield;
 then try, if you or I shall best succeed."
 O you who read, shall a new wile perceive.
 All to the adverse bank had turn'd their eyes;
 e'en he to be deceived least inclin'd.
 The Navarrese observ'd this proper time,
 stood firmly on the ground, and quickly sprung
 from out the corporal's strict-gripping arms.

At this they suddenly were all perplex'd;
but he the most who had this blunder caus'd.
He cried aloud to him: "Are you escap'd?"
Which nothing signified; as with his wings
he could not the poor culprit overtake,
who sunk below, while this flew o'er the pitch:
like to a duck, who when the Hawk is near,
dives down beneath,
while he returns disgrac'd.
Inraged Calabrina at the trick,
(yet not displeas'd the other had escap'd)
flew after Alichin to him chastise.
Soon as the Navarrese had disappear'd,
he turn'd his talons on his brother fiend,
and on the bank was with him grappled close:
While this, a rav'nous falcon,
clos'd with him;
'till they into the boiling lake both fell.
The heat would soon have driven them from thence,
if so the pitch had not insnar'd their wings,
as them to extricate themselves prevent.
Griev'd Barbariccia then caus'd four to fly
from th' other side, armed with all their prongs;
these quickly having to their post recourse,
held out their poles to their entangled friends,
who now were
nearly bak'd within the crust.
We left them in this irksome state ingag'd.

Inferno - Canto 23 - Rogers

Pensive, alone, without more company,
 each following, like Friars Minors, each,
 we went. The strife we lately left them in,
Th' æsopian fable brought into my mind,
 where of the Mouse
 and knavish Frog it treats:
than which not more
 are Now and Instantly alike,
 than these from first to last compar'd.
And as one thought
 does from another spring,
 so now renewed was my former fear.
For thus I reason'd: These on our account
 are cheated, ridiculed, mock'd, and scorn'd;
 therefore they will th' affront on us resent.
If anger in bad minds e'er takes its root,
 their object, not less fiercely, they'll pursue,
 than does a dog the hare he 'fore had seiz'd.
I now perceiv'd my hair to stand upright
 with dread; and hast'ned not, profound in thought:
 when I said to him: "Master, if you don't
yourself and me immediately conceal,
 much from those dæmons left behind I fear,
 and now I think their footsteps near resound."
Then he: "If I a glass were lin'd with lead,
 more perfect I could not receive your form,
 than I well know what's in your mind conceiv'd:
so similar your thoughts
 are now to mine,
 as if one counsel did direct us both.
If the right hand a passage shall afford,
 by which we may to the next gulph descend,
 we shall fly from th' imagin'd chace with ease."
He scarce had ended
 when I saw them near,
 pursuing us with wings extended wide.
My guide me in his arms took suddenly;
 (as a fond mother, wak'ned with alarms,
 when she around her sees the raging flames,

takes up her son, and the dread danger flies;
 wrapt in his shirt alone the seizes him,
 his safety more regarding than her own)
 and from the rocky bank
 he supine slid to that below
 which the next gulph confines.

The tater through a
 pipe descended not so fast,
 of a corn-mill to turn the wheels,
 as did my master down the sloping rock,
 bearing me on his breast, more like his son,
 than a companion not to him allied.

His feet were barely on the bottom plac'd,
 when on the hill above us were arriv'd
 the fiends; howe'er in him they caus'd no fear:
 for Providence, who them appointed had
 as guards to the fifth gulph, and there attend,
 so depriv'd them of all pow'r to further move.

Here in this pit we found a painted race,
 bewailing much, and walking slowly round,
 and with their load oppressed and fatigued.

Their capes with so long cowls were furnished,
 that they hung o'er their eyes, and made like those
 worn by the Monks of Cologne:

they were gilt thick on the outside, and so bright appear'd
 as ev'ry eye to dazzle; but within were form'd of lead, and were
 of such great weight, that those of Fred'ric seemed light as straw.

O, to eternity fatigueing dress!
 We, turning to the left hand, went on
 with those engaged in their sad complaints:

but they so slow proceeded, by their weights
 oppress'd, that ev'ry step which we advanc'd
 procured us new company to join.

Therefore I to my leader said:
 "Observe If any one
 of those you know of fame;"

And, as I walk'd, I turn'd about my eyes: when one, who understood
 the Tuscan speech, call'd after us: "Stop, I request, your feet,
 ye who run through this dingy air so fast:
 perhaps ye'll know from me what ye desire."

My guide turn'd round and said: "A little wait,
 and then, according to his pace, advance."

Still I then stood;
 and two I saw express
 with looks and mind great haste to be with me.
 Soon as they join'd, they cast a scowling eye,
 look'd stedfast at me, yet spoke not a word;
 but, turning to each other, thus discours'd:
 "This, by the motion of his throat, appears
 alive; but, by what privilege, if dead,
 are they without of lead the heavy stole?"
 Then to me said: "O Tuscan, who are come
 to the sad College of the Hypocrites,
 disdain not to inform us who you are."
 To them I thus replied: "I had my birth
 in the great city on the Arno built,
 and the same body which I always had possess;
 but tell us who may you be nam'd,
 down whose wet cheeks such pain-expressing tears
 are flowing seen: and why thus punished."
 One of them then replied: "Our orange capes
 are made of lead so thick, that with their weight
 our scarce-supporting shoulders often creek.
 We Fra Godenti were, and Bolognese,
 I Catalano, he Lod'ringo nam'd.
 We by your city were elected both,
 instead of one, to govern it in peace:
 and what we proved, it may well be known
 from the vile state in which Gardingo lies."
 "O wicked Friars" - I began, but said
 no more: for a man fixed on a cross
 before my eyes appear'd; when me he saw,
 he writh'd himself,
 ruffling his beard with sighs.
 Fra Catalan, who this observed, said:
 "This wretch whom you see crucified, advis'd
 the Pharisees to put one man to death,
 the people to appease;
 you see him thus lying, thrown down and naked, in the way;
 where he must feel the weight of ev'ry one
 that over him shall pass; and in this pit
 his father likewise suffers, join'd with those
 who did the same imprudent counsel give,
 which prov'd to all the Jews so bad a seed."

Virgil I saw then with amazement look
on him who lay distended on the cross
thus vilely in eternal punishment.
Applying to the Frier, he now said:
"If it does not displease you, tell to us,
whether there be a passage on the right,
by which we may from this place extricate
ourselves, ere the black angels seize on us,
who come pursuing with such virulence."
He thus replied: "Far better than you hope:
some rocks are near, which form a circle round
these horrid gulphs,
excepting only this which has been ruin'd
from an early date;
those rocks you may attain, and them avoid."
My guide stood musing with his head inclin'd,
and said: "He who hooks winners with his prong
us falsely of this passage notice gave."
To him the Frier: "I in Bologna oft have many vices
to the devil heard ascrib'd, and frequently have known
him call'd a lyar base, and Father of untruths."
Then my guide passed forward with large strides
having his mind somewhat with anger mov'd:
now those oppressed with their weights I left;
and follow'd the dear footsteps of my lord.

Inferno - Canto 24 - Rogers

When in that season of the youthful year,
 the sun beneath Aquarius bathes his locks;
 and day and night to equal each advance:
when the hoar frost is spread o'er all the earth,
 resembling her white sister much, the snow;
 (but often does not long its sharpness keep:)
the husband-man, who is oppress'd with want,
 rises, and looks around, and sees the fields
 cover'd with white alone, which makes him strike
his thigh with grief, returning to his home,
 and lament loud, not knowing where to turn:
 but when in a short time he views the world
has its appearance chang'd, his hope returns,
 he reassumes his crook, and drives again
 his sheep, to in their usual pasture feed.
My master in like manner me dismay'd,
 when I his rustled countenance observ'd;
 and I was in like manner soon reliev'd.
For when we to the broken bridge arriv'd,
 he to me turn'd that pleasing aspect, which
 in him, at the mount's foot, I first had seen.
After he had reflected with himself,
 viewing the ruin well, he op'd his arms,
 and with a fond embrace me closely press'd.
Like him, who in whate'er he undertakes,
 looks forward, and provides for that's to come;
 he to the top of a large rock me took,
and bad me on the next to step,
 but first try if it
 such was as me could support.
This was no path for those with heavy capes;
 for Virgil, who was light, and I, sustain'd
 by him, could scarcely get from cliff to cliff.
And if this inner circle's bank were not
 narrow'r than that above,
 I will not say that he,
but certainly I never should
 attain the spot propos'd: for as towards
 the lowest gulph steep Malebolge tends

one bank does high, whilst t'other low appears
 of each the intermediate vales.
 At last, we at the utmost splinter of the rock
 arriv'd, when of my breath my lungs were suck'd
 so, that I could by no means farther go,
 but was oblig'd immediately to sit.
 "It now is proper," said my lord, "that you
 should from this bed of yours arise; for they
 ne'er fame acquire who spend their lives in down:
 he who, without pursuing her, consumes
 his time, leaves of himself such tracts behind,
 as froth in water, or as smoke in air:
 therefore rise up; your breathing short o'ercome
 with courage, for it ev'ry battle wins;
 unless your heavy limbs submit to sloth.
 You are a loftier ladder to ascend:
 content with this alone you're not to rest,
 if me you understand; then do what's fit."
 I now got up, appearing more in breath
 than really I was; and to him said;
 "Proceed, for I recover'd am, and stout."
 Over the rock we then pursued our way,
 which rugged, narrow, and fatiguing was,
 and far more steep than that before w' had pass'd.
 That I might not seem weak, I talking went;
 on which, from the next gulph a voice was heard,
 words utt'ring, not articulately form'd:
 for what he said I could not understand,
 although I on the summit of the bridge
 was plac'd; but he appear'd with anger much disturb'd.
 I looked down, yet could I not
 see to the bottom through the air obscure.
 Then I said, "Master; from the bridge's top
 let us descend, and to the gulph approach:
 for what I hear I do not comprehend,
 and, though I look, I nothing can discern."
 "I other answer do not give," he said, "than to perform
 what you request; for when what is requested honorable
 proves, it with compliance tacitly should meet."
 We to the bridge's foot went down, which joins
 to the eighth bank, from whence
 I clearly saw the guiph beneath,

and there beheld vast crouds
 of horrid serpents, with such various forms,
 that yet their recollection chills my blood.
 Libya with her lands can't boast of more;
 although she those produces which infect
 the water, or which like swift arrows dart,
 or stand erected on their tails, or those with many spots,
 or double-headed snakes. Nor did all Ethiopia e'er send
 forth such pestilence, or where the Red-sea flows.
 Among those biting and most noxious heaps
 naked and terrified wretches ran,
 hopeless of refuge, or an heliotrope.
 Their hands behind them were with serpents bound,
 which stung their reins,
 and twisted were before.
 Lo! a serpent one,
 who was on our side;
 bit where the neck is o the shoulders join'd:
 nor is an I or O so quickly writ,
 as he became inflam'd, was burnt,
 and fell an heap of ashes;
 which its pristine form
 soon re-assum'd,
 how wondrous e'er it seems.
 So dies the Phoenix, as philosophers
 declare, and so he is again reborn,
 when he arrives at his five hundredth year:
 nor grass, nor corn sustain him when alive;
 but cinnamon, and tears of frankincense,
 and nard, and myrrh are only his support.
 Like him who falls he knows not from what cause,
 whether he's forced by some dæmon's power,
 or fainting fit,
 when he arises, looks
 around him stupid, and, expressing grief.
 For what h'as suffer'd, he sighs heavily;
 so was this sinner from his ashes rais'd.
 Justice of God, O how severe it is,
 when crimes he punishes with vengeance due!
 My master then demanded who he was:
 he thus replied: "I, like an evil sprite,
 lately from Tuscany into this gulph

am fall'n; a beastly, not a human life, me pleas'd, and
like a perverse mule I liv'd; was Vanni Fucci nam'd,
Pistoja was my den, a place well worthy such a wretch."
I to my guide: "Command him not to stir,
and ask the crime that forc'd him here; for him
I sanguinary knew, and full of wrath."
The sinner, who me heard nor other feign'd,
turn'd to me full his face
suffus'd with shame,
and said: "It more me grieves that in this place
you have discover'd me, than when I was
depriv'd of th' other life yet can't deny
what you request: I here am plac'd thus low,
because I robbed
of its rich effects the sacristy,
and accusation laid 'gainst him who of the theft was innocent.
But that you may not at my sight rejoice,
if e'er you shall escape this dingy hole,
reflect on what I now shall prophecy.
Pistoja first will be of Blacks depriv'd,
which Florence will assist it to replace.
In Valdimagra Mars will vapours raise,
that now in stormy clouds is deep involv'd.
Impetuously it will, with tempests rough
and sharp, be fought upon Picena's planes;
where will so suddenly the clouds be broke,
that ev'ry White will there receive a wound.
This I now tell, that it may you afflict."

Inferno - Canto 25 - Rogers

When thus the thief had spoken, he his hands
lifted aloft with mocking signs, and cried:
"See these, O God, for pointed they're to you."

The serpents now were to me friends become;
for one entwin'd himself about his neck,
as if he'd say, "You shall not more blaspheme;"
himself another twisted
round his arms so tight,
as their least motion to prevent.

Pistoja, Oh Pistoja, to reduce
yourself to ashes you delay no time!
Surpassing far your ancestors in ill.

Through all the circles of th' Infernal shades,
no spirit more haughty against God I saw;
not him who fell from off the walls of Thebes.

He flew away, without word saying more:
and I beheld a Centaur, full of rage,
bawling aloud: "Where is, where is the wretch?"

I did not think that any marshy coast
ever abounded with so many snakes,
as he had on his horse-like crupper plac'd:
below his shoulders, and behind his back,
a dragon lay with wide displayed wings,
which strangles all whom he encounters with.

"This Cacus is," my master said,
"who oft beneath Mount Aventine
show'd lakes of blood.

He with his brothers the same way does not
proceed, who trifles fraudulently steal;
but robs his neighbour of large herds at once.

These thefts the club of Hercules
suppress'd with strokes an hundred,
but he felt not ten."

While we discoursed thus, he went away.
Under us then three spirits came, with whom
neither my guide nor I acquainted were.

But when they to each other said: "Who're you?"
We all our talking stopp'd,
attending close to them,

whom yet I could not recollect.

And as it often happens, that by chance
one calls another by his name, so now
this said; "Where thus, Cianfa, have you staid?"

That my guide should attentive stand, I press'd
my finger from my chin up to my nose.

If, Reader, you are tardy to believe
what I shall say, it will no wonder raise;
for I who saw it scarcely give assent.

As towards them I lifted up my eyes,
a serpent with six feet on one of these
darted, and wholly fastened himself.

With his mid feet his body he entwin'd,
and with his fore he seized on his arms;
fixing his lurid teeth in either cheek:

his hind were 'bout his thighs,
and, with his tail between them thrust,
he girded round his loins.

Ivy about a tree does not to fix
its tendrils, as this horrid monster did
entwine its own around the other's limbs.

So close they stuck, as if of soften'd wax
they formed were; and blended so their hues,
that what they were, they neither now appear'd:
as by the fire paper first grows brown,
losing its white,
before it black becomes.

The other two look'd hard at him, and each
cry'd out: "O my Agnello how you're chang'd!
For now you neither two appear, nor one."

Two heads make one,
and blended are in one
those that two faces late distinct were seen.

Two arms and thighs composed are of four,
his belly and his breast so monstrous are
become, as such before were never seen.

His first appearance was now wholly chang'd;
and all his Image was perversely form'd.
With such a figure he pass'd slowly on.

As in the season of the Dog-star's rage,
changing his hedge, a lizard, traversing
the path, a flash of lightning to us seems;

so, tow' rds th' abdomen of the other two
 a firey serpent darting quick appear'd,
 livid and black, like to a pepper's grain;
 and, in that part where first is ta'en our food,
 he pierced one of them,
 who soon down fell.
 He who was pierced look'd full at him; but nought
 he said; and only yawned wide, as if
 a fever, or sound sleep had him assail'd.
 He and the serpent at each other star'd.
 Thick smoke then issued from the mouth of this,
 and from that's wound; which fumes were blended soon.
 Let Lucan now be silent, where he treats
 of what Sabellus, and Nasidius felt,
 and give attention to what here is said.
 Of Cadmus, and of Arethusa let
 Ovid be silent; though a serpent he,
 and she a spring became, I env' him not.
 He never chang'd two subjects face to face,
 so that the one the other's form assum'd,
 each ready to their substances transmute.
 These were the means
 by which new shapes they took:
 the serpent's tail divided was in two,
 and formed thighs and legs; while those of him
 who wounded was, together join'd so close,
 as if they separate had never been:
 his cloven tail did that appearance take,
 which t' other lost; and the skin of one
 was soft become, while t' other's hard was grown.
 I saw his arms into his armpits sink;
 and the short fore-feet of the reptile stretch
 out to that length from which those Arms had shrunk.
 Then his hind feet, together twisted, form'd
 the part which men conceal; that of the wretch
 divided was, and two small feet display'd.
 With a new colour smoke then ting'd them both:
 and hair left one,
 but on the other grew.
 One stood upright, and down the other fell.
 No alteration underwent their eyes;
 but beneath them their visages were chang'd.

He who stood up, had tow' rds his temples drawn
materials fit to form a human face;
his thin cheeks from his ears were seen to sprought;
from what remain'd a proper nose was made,
and his spare lips
were to due thickness swell'd.

He who fell down, thrust out a sharpen'd snout,
and his ears drew within his head, as does
a snail his out-stretch'd horns: his tongue which he
before entire, and had for speaking fit,
was split in twain; while his which forked was,
became united: then the smoke dispers'd.

The spirit which a serpent was become,
'scap'd 'long the valley, hissing as he went;
while the now man call'd after him, and spat;
then his new back from him he turn'd away,
saying t'his other friend: "Let Buoso now
crawl through these paths as I before have done."

This seventh gulph I saw could thus transform,
and give new shapes. Let novelty excuse,
if may of flowers my pen deficient be.

Although my eyes might somewhat be confus'd,
and my mind be
at these strange sights dismay'd,

I planely could Puccio Sciancato see:
and of the three companions which first came,
he was alone not chang'd: the other who
a serpent was, Gaville, you lament.

Inferno - Canto 26 - Rogers

Florence, rejoice since you're so great become,
that your fame flies o'er ev'ry land and sea,
and in th' infernal regions is well known:
five of your citizens among those thieves
I found, which causes me to blush with shame,
and does no honour to your name reflect.
But if that ever morning dreams prove true,
you'll in short time be sensible of what,
not distant climes alone, but Prato near,
longs to see happen; and which if before it had befall'n,
'would not have been too soon. Would it were thus,
for this you've long deserv'd; and more 'twill grieve me, longer 'tis delay'd.
Our way we then pursued, and up those steps
we had descended, when we scarce could see,
my guide remounted, and me drew with him.
Groping along the splinters of the rock,
our feet could make no way
without our hands.
I then lamented, and I yet lament,
when I reflect on what I there beheld;
and more my genius curb than I am wont,
that it may run not without Virtue's guide: if a kind star,
or a far better cause, has me endow'd with this not
common gift, I would not willingly it misapply.
As many glow-worms as the villager,
whose life's employ'd at vintage or at plough,
whilst on a hillock he reposes, sees,
(at that time he who all the world illumines,
for a short space withdraws himself from us,
and the fly to the ev'ning gnat gives place;)
the eighth gulph with so many fires flam'd;
which I observ'd
when I its bottom view'd.
As he who with the bears himself reveng'd,
and saw Elijah's chariot disappear,
when by its horses he was rapt to heav'n,
but with his eyes could not pursue his course,
nor, except steeds of fire, could ought discern,
he being from him by a whirlwind borne;

to the gulph's mouth
 such flames were seen to rise,
 and ev'ry flame conceal'd a sinning wretch.
 I on the bridge did so attentive stand,
 that, if I had not of a rock took hold,
 I should into 't, without being push'd, have fall'n.
 My guide, who me observed thus intent,
 said, "Spirits are inclosed in those fires
 and each is wrapt in that by which he's burnt."
 "Master," I answer'd,
 "you me now confirm
 in that before I had conjectured.
 But tell me, yet, who in that flame resides,
 which comes divided at its top, as if it from the burning pyre arose,
 on which Eteocles was with his brother plac'd."
 He thus replied: "Ulysses suffers there
 with Diomede who now as eagerly
 run to be punished, as erst with rage
 they hasten'd to destroy the Trojan walls. They both
 within one flame with grief lament The Horse's guile, for which
 that gate was op'd, whence issued the great Ancestor of Rome.
 Their art they there regret, by which deceiv'd
 Deidamia for Achilles weeps,
 and Troy was of its fam'd Palladium robb'd."
 "If they within those sparks can speak," I said,
 "Master, I earnestly intreat, and pray
 a thousand times, I may with them discourse:
 the horned flame approaching near to us,
 observe, I with desire
 lean down to them."
 "Your prayer," to me he said,
 "deserves much praise;
 yet I would have your tongue due silence keep;
 and let me speak; for I do much suspect,
 that they will cautious be with you to talk,
 as they were Greeks, and you Italian are."
 When to that spot the flame arrived was,
 which to my guide a proper place appear'd,
 I heard him them in such like words address:
 "O ye, who both are in one fire join'd,
 if, while I liv'd, I have of you deserv'd,
 if little or if more I've merited,

when in the world I lofty verses wrote,
 do not depart, but one of you declare,
 of life regardless, where you went to die.”
 The larger horn of th’ antique flame began
 to shake itself: with murmurs as by wind
 it had been blown,
 and waving to and fro its top,
 like to a tongue
 which spoke, he said:
 “When I left Circe, who more than a year
 had me seduc’d, near to Cajeta’s port,
 but before thus Æneas had it nam’d:
 not the sweet fondness for a son, nor yet
 the pious duty for an ancient sire,
 nor all the love I ow’d Penelope,
 that ardor could subdue which me possest,
 in distant climes experience to learn,
 and human vices well as virtues know.
 Wherefore I went into the open deep,
 with a small crew
 who did not me forsake.
 Both shores I then beheld; on this side Spain,
 on that Maurocco: and Sardinia’s Isle
 I saw, with others by the mid-sea lav’d.
 My company and I were old and slow
 become, when we arrived at that Strait
 where Hercules his well-known Pillars plac’d,
 that boldly men should not beyond advance.
 On my right hand I Seville’s city left,
 as on my left I Ceuta had before.
 ‘Brethren,’ I said,
 ‘since at the western Sea
 through perils many thousand you’re arriv’d;
 to that small remnant left our curious minds
 do not deny th’ attempt of following
 the sun into the world unpeopled yet.
 On your original reflect, nor think
 that you were made, like brutes, to only live,
 but knowledge and to virtuous acts pursue.’
 In my companions I such spirit rais’d
 with this short speech, that I could not restrain
 them afterwards from our unhappy flight.

We, turning to the morning's seat our stern,
 made of our oars swift wings; but always bent
 our course towards the left:
the night soon shew all the bright stars of the antartic Pole;
 and then our northern did so low appear,
 as not to rise above that azure plane.
Five times the moon had re-allum'd her torch,
 and five times suffer'd it to be extinct,
 from our first ent'ring into this vast sea,
when to our crew appear'd a mountain, brown
 by its great distance, and so lofty as,
 before, I had not ever seen:
we all rejoic'd, but soon our joy to wailing turn'd.
 A whirlwind quick from the new land arose,
 which on its nearest quarter struck our ship:
three times it turn'd it with the waves around,
 and at the fourth it lifted up the poop,
 sinking the prow beneath; nor was it long
before the waters clos'd above our heads."

Inferno - Canto 27 - Rogers

The flame then rose upright,
and silent was,
and went from us with my kind poet's leave.
When, lo! another, which behind it came,
caus'd us to turn our eyes towards its top,
by a confused sound which thence was heard.
As the Sicilian Bull, that roared first
with the complaints of him (which proper was)
who with his plastic file had giv'n it form;
and lowed so with the poor wretches voice,
that it appear'd tormented with sharp pain,
although it all constructed were of brass:
in a like manner did this flame,
depriv'd of a free passage,
utter out its moans.
When through the top
the voice a vent had found,
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We heard it say: "O you whom I address,
and who the Lombard language lately spoke,
the other flame permitting to depart;
although I somewhat tardy am arriv'd, think it not
tiresome a short time to stop, and with me to discourse;
as you observe to me it is not irksome, 'though I burn.
If you are fallen into this dark world
from that sweet Latian earth, where I incurr'd
those punishments for which I suffer here;
tell me if now those of Romagna have
or peace, or war: for I was of that clime,
between those mountains whence the Tiber flows."
List'ning to what I heard, I looked down;
when my guide gently touch'd my side, and said:
"Speak you to him for he a Latian is."
And I, who was prepar'd to him address,
immediately began" "O ghost, who here
are now confin'd,
Romagna without war Is not, nor ever was,
nor from it e'er its tyrants hearts exempt,
though now they free appear.

Ravenna still in the same state in which it has been many years, remains.

The Eagle of Polenta yet broods there,
which covers Cervia with its spreading wings.

The land which long with bloody heaps of French
has cover'd been,
beneath green paws now lies.

Verrucchio's Mastiff old and young, who slew
the brave Montagna, grind now with their teeth
e'en those who their unhappy subjects live.

The city by Lamone bath'd, with that
by the Santerno, the white lion rules,
who fickle changes, with, each season, sides.

And that whose walls are by the Savio wash'd,
as 'tis between the plane and mountain plac'd,
partakes of tyranny, and a free state.

Tell me, I now intreat you, who you are; if it not more
unpleasing be to you than to that other flame it was;
and if your reputation in the world may last."

After the fire had, in its fashion, roar'd,
this way and that it mov'd its pointed flame,
and blasted forth these words:

"If I believ'd that my reply were to a person made
who ever should return into the world,
my flame should without any motion rest.

But, since none ever from this gulph alive
return again, if what I've heard be true;
I'll answer without fear of infamy.

I was a man of arms; and then became a Cordelier,
thinking when cinctur'd thus, that I compensated my former crimes:
and this my thought had certainly prov'd true,

had not the great Priest (whom may Ill attend!)

Sent me to recommit my ancient faults.

Wherefore, and how, I'm willing you should know.

Whilst I was formed of the bones and flesh
which me my mother gave, whate'er I did
partook not of the lion, but the fox

all wariness, and covert ways so well

I knew, that my art
sounded o'er the earth.

When to that part of life I found myself
arriv'd, in which we all our sails should strike,
and house our bales;

what formerly me pleas'd displeasing then became;
 and of those crimes me to repentance,
 and confession brought. Would that this had unhappy me avail'd!
 The Prince of the new Pharisees, who near
 the Lateran was waging civil war;
 not with the Saracins, nor yet the Jews:
 but ev'ry Christian was to him a foe,
 although they had not against Acri gone;
 or, lawless, traded in the Soldan's land.
 To his high office he had no regard,
 nor sacred Orders, nor that Cord which us'd
 to make those who were with it girt more lean.
 As Constantine requested to be cur'd
 of leprosy by good Silvester's aid,
 who in Soracte had himself conceal'd;
 this faithless master me engag'd to heal his fev'rous pride,
 and asked my advice; but I was silent,
 as I thought him wild: then he said to me:
 'Judge not that you're wrong,
 for I do you absolve, that you may teach
 demolish how that I Præneste may.
 I can both lock and unlock Heaven's gate,
 as you well know; for I keep both the Keys
 which were not by my antecessor priz'd.'
 His reasons grave did fully me convince,
 that to be silent was the worst advice;
 therefore I said: 'Since, Father, you absolve
 me from that crime I'm going to commit;
 fair promises without performing ought,
 will make you triumph in your lofty feat.'
 When I was dead, St. Francis for me came;
 nut one of the black Cherubims thus said:
 'Bear him not hence, infringe not on my right;
 among my wretches he should go below,
 for having counsel given full of fraud:
 and for this cause I drag him by the hair.
 He who does not repent can't be absolv'd;
 to sin and to repent at the same time,
 is contradiction not to be allow'd.'
 Alas! how much I trembled, when he took
 me up, and thus, deriding, said: 'Perhaps,
 you did not know that I'm in logic skill'd.'

To Minos he me bore, who soon entwin'd
 eight times his tail around his iron loins;
 and, as I raged with myself, he laid:
'This Wretch is one to be inclos'd in fire.'
 Therefore, you here me punished behold;
 and, clothed thus, in deep affliction move."
Soon as he had completed his discourse,
 the flame, complaining, waded to and fro,
 shaking its pointed horn, and from us wen.
Along the rock my guide and I then pass'd,
 till we arrived on the bridge stretch'd o'er
 the gulph, where the due tax is paid by those
who, disuniting friends, their conscience load.

Inferno - Canto 28 - Rogers

Who fully could, although in prose, display;
 'though oft repeated, fitly could relate
 the blood and cruel wounds I now beheld?
Surely would ev'ry tongue, and mind like ours
 defective prove in these expressing clear,
 as they by us are barely understood.
If all united were, who, in the land
 of blest Apulia, their spilt blood deplor'd,
 or by the Trojans;
or in that long war
 which made such spoils of rings,
 as Livy writes;
or that in which it many wounds receiv'd,
 when it opposed
 Robert Guiscard's force;
and that at Ceperan, whose bones are pick'd up,
 when each Apulian prov'd himself a traitor; and at
 Tagliacozzo, where did old Alardo conquer without arms:
If all these slaughterd limbs collected were,
 they would not equal
 those in this ninth gulph.
Like to a cask without its middle stave
 I one beheld, split downwards from his chin
 to where the wind has vent:
between his legs his bowels fell; his entrails all were seen,
 with that foul paunch which to vile excrements
 whatever food it swallows does convert.
While I in him beholding fixed stood,
 he look'd at me, and open'd with his hand
 his breast, and said; "View how I tear myself;
view how Mohammed is thus open burst.
 Ali lamenting loud before me goes,
 whose face from's chin up to his crown is cleft:
and all these others whom you here behold,
 spreaders of schism were,
 and thus therefore split.
A devil's here behind, who with a sword
 cruelly lashes all the doleful tribe
 as it goes round this lamentable path;

yet ere he does return their wounds are heal'd.

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But who are you, that musing on the bridge sit,
to delay, perhaps, the punishment
which to your crimes is judged to belong?"

"He is not dead," my master then replied,
"Nor does he come to suffer for his crimes;
but to observe how he may them avoid.

I, who am dead,
must him through Hell conduct,
and shew him ev'ry circle as we pass."

(When they heard this,
more than a hundred stopt
to me admire, forgetful of their pains.)

"You, who perhaps may shortly view the sun,
tell Fra Dolcino
that he should provide
ample provisions for himself, if he would not my steps soon follow in this place;
or, being besieged by deep snow, permit the Novarese a vict'ry to obtain,
for he by other means cannot escape."

Thus spoke Mohammed, as he going was,
with one foot lifted up;
then forward stept.

Another, who had his wide throat bor'd through,
high as his eye-brow with his nose cut off,
and with one ear alone,
stopp'd to observe my being there, with others much amaz'd.
He, first of them, his windpipe op'd, which was
vermillion'd round on ev'ry side, and said:

"O you who are not yet condemn'd, and whom
I in the Latian earth have seen before;
if in your likeness I am not deceiv'd;
ever if you return to that sweet plane
which from Vercello tow'rds Mercabo leans,
then Pier da Medicina recollect;
and to the two best men of Fano tell,
Guido and Messer Angiolello nam'd,
(if to foresee it here does not prove vain)
they will be out of their own vessel cast,
and near unto Catolica be drown'd;
by the base treach'ry of a tyrant fell.

Between fam'd Cyprus and Majorca's Isles
 Neptune so vile an act did ne'er behold,
 not e'en by Pyrates, or by Grecian crews.
 This villain, who sees only with one eye,
 and holds that land, which he who's now with me
 wishes that he it never had beheld,
 will some invite to treat of state affairs,
 and so will manage, that they shall not dread
 Focara's winds, or offer up their vows."

Then I to him: "If you would have me speak
 of you above, demonstrate who is he
 that wishes ne'er to have that land beheld."

Putting his hand to his companion's jaw,
 his mouth he op'd, and said: "This, this is he
 (but now he talks no more)
 when driv'n away,
 who Cæsar's doubts remov'd, declaring that
 the well provided suffer by delay."

O, how desponding Curio did appear,
 with his tongue closely sever'd from its root,
 which was accusom'd to so boldly speak.
 And one, who both his hands had lost,
 his stumps held up so high,
 they smear'd his face with blood,
 Cried out: "Keep likewise Mosca in your mind,
 who said, alas! A fact ends what's propos'd.
 This to the Tuscans prov'd unhappy seed."

To which I added: "and death to your race."
 Wherefore, accumulating grief on grief,
 th' unhappy wretch, his senses lost, went on.

But I remained to the troop behold;
 and saw, unless I'd certain proof, what I
 could not have courage to relate as true;
 yet a good conscience, which does always prove
 the best companion, and protects secure,
 like to a cuirass, each breast without fear:
 I surely saw, and yet appear to see,
 a trunk without his head like others walk;
 which, holding by the hair,
 he in his hand
 carried, as if it had a lantern been.
 Looking at us, the head sigh'd out: "O me!"

He of himself did to himself afford
a lamp; two were in one, and one in two:
how this could be, he knows who governs all.
When at the bridge's foot I near him came,
he with his hand his head uplifted high,
that what he said I might distinctly hear;
which was: "Observe my grievous punishment,
you who, 'though breathing, pass among the dead,
observe if any be so great as this.
That you may of me information bear,
know that I Beltram of Bornio am,
who ill advice imparted to King John,
and between sire and son rebellion rais'd;
Achitophel did not a greater strife
excite 'tween David and his Absalom.
Because I sever'd those so closely join'd,
divided now, alas! my brain I bear
from th' heart its chief, which in this trunk remains.
Thus is my crime retaliated on me."

Inferno - Canto 29 - Rogers

The many people, and their various wounds
 had so suffus'd my eyes with tears, that I
 desirous was to stop, and them lament.
But Virgil said: "Why look you stedfast thus?
 Why is your sight directed thus below,
 among the maimed and afflicted shades?
You did not so when in the other gulphs.
 If you may think that you can number them,
 know that this valley two and twenty miles contains;
and now the moon's beneath our feet.
 The time is short which is to us allow'd;
 and things you think not of are to be seen."
"If you'd the reason known," I then replied,
 "Why so attentively I look'd at them,
 you my delay would have yourself allow'd."
My guide I follow'd, who went slowly on,
 continuing my discourse:
 "Within that cave,
to which my eye I aim'd, I think a shade
 related to me does that crime lament,
 for which his suff'rings are severe below."
My master then replied: "Lament not him,
 attend t' another;
 let him there remain:
for him I saw, when at the bridge I stood,
 point at you with his finger, threatning much;
 and heard his name Geri del Bello call'd.
Then your attention was so much engag'd
 by him who Altaforte once maintain'd,
 that 'fore he left you, you would not retire."
"His Death untimely, O my guide," I said,
 "not being yet by any one aveng'd,
 (which is disgraceful to our family)
made him thus wrathful; and for this, I think,
 he without speaking to me went away:
 on this account I pity him the more."
Discoursing thus we to the place arriv'd,
 where from the rock the other vale appear'd,
 and, if more lighted, to the bottom would be seen.

To the last cloister here we came
 of Malebolge, and so near approach'd,
 that we its converts plainly could discern;
 their various moanings 'gainst me darted were,
 those pity-moving arrows were so steel'd,
 that with my hands I cover'd both my ears.
 If all diseases of the hospitals of Valdichiana
 with the Marshes join'd, and of Sardinia's Isle,
 between the months of July and September,
 in one pit united were,
 such from this place exhal'd,
 and such a stench as from corrupted limbs.
 On the last bank of the long rock we went
 downwards, yet bearing to the left our course;
 and then I clearly could the bottom view,
 where Justice never failing executes
 the Will of the great Sire, and punishes
 the falsifier, whose name's recorded here.
 I can't believe that a more doleful sight
 were all the people in Ægina sick,
 when was the air so full of pestilence,
 ah! every animal, e'en worm, fell dead,
 (its old inhabitants were soon renew'd,
 as sing the poets, by the seed of ants)
 than in this obscure vale
 'twas to behold spirits
 lie languishing in various heaps.
 This on the belly, that upon the back,
 lay of each other, and this crawling went,
 changing his place along the doleful path.
 Without e'er speaking, we ourselves pass'd on,
 looking and listning to these shades diseas'd,
 who from the ground could not their bodies raise.
 Two I beheld, which to each other lean'd,
 like earthen vessels set up to be dried:
 from head to foot they cover'd were with scabs.
 I never saw a lad so nimbly move
 his curry-comb, when by his master call'd,
 or when he wish'd to sleep, so scratch himself,
 as these tore with their nails themselves, through rage.
 To ease their itching
 this was their relief;

with their sharp nails
 to claw off the dry scabs,
 as from a fish the knife scrapes off its scales.
 "O you, yourself who with your fingers tear," (began my guide
 to one of them to say) "And them to pincers sometimes
 do convert, tell me if any Latian's here confin'd:
 so may your mails for ever ease your pain."
 "We both are Latians
 whom you thus behold,"
 replied, complaining, one of these.
 "But who are you,
 who do of us this question ask?"
 My guide then said: "I with this living man
 descend from rock to rock; and him to show
 th' infernal tegions my intentions are."
 Their mutual support they then disjoin'd;
 and, trembling with dismay, both to me turn'd,
 with those who what was talk'd rebounded heard.
 My master kind, addressing me alone,
 said: "Ask them now whatever you may please."
 And I began, obedient to his will:
 "If your remembrance may not stolen be
 from human minds in the chief world above,
 but that it may survive for many suns;
 who ye are tell me, and your families.
 Your faults, and your disgustful punishment
 you may, without all fear, to me disclose."
 One of them said: "I of Arezzo was,
 and Albero of Siena was the cause
 of my being burnt; but this not plac'd me here:
 truth is, I jestingly once to him said,
 the art of flying in the air I knew; and he,
 who for it had great eagerness, yet little prudence,
 would that I should teach to him this art;
 and that I did not make him fly like Dædalus,
 he caused him, whose son he was, to put me in the fire.
 But Minos, who is never wrong, condemn'd
 me to this last gulph of the ten, because
 I in your world had practis'd alchemy."
 The poet I addreaaing said: "Was e'er
 so vain a people as are these Sanese?
 Certain, the French in pride exceed them not."

The other leper,
hearing me, replied:
"Stricca except so sparing of expence,
and Niccolo, who the rich fashion found
of burning spices in that garden where
such feed's produc'd; with that choice company,
'mong whom Caccia d'Asciamo had consum'd
his fruitful vineyards, and extensive woods;
and Abbagliato his good sense had shown.
'Gainst the Sanesi why I second you,
sharpen your sight
and you may know the cause:
you will discern that I'm Capocchio's shade,
who counterfeited metals with my skill
in alchymy; and you should recollect
that a good ape I was of Nature's works."

Inferno - Canto 30 - Rogers

When Juno was on Semele's account,
 against the Thebans,
 more than once, inflam'd,
so madden'd Athamas became,
 that he, seeing his wife
 in each arm bear his sons,
cried out aloud: "Let us so spread our nets,
 that I the lioness, and her two whelps
 may take;" and then he, stretching out his claws,
seized Learchus, hurl'd him round, and dash'd,
 devoid of pity, 'gainst the rigid rock:
 and with her other charge she drown'd herself.

When Fortune overturn'd the tow'rs of Troy,
 and the good king was at one time depriv'd
 of life and kingdom;
wretched Hecuba, deeply afflicted,
 and o'erwhelm'd with grief,
 after she saw Polixena was slain,
and, having met her Polydorus' shade on the unhappy shore
 where he was kill'd, she with her canine barkings fill'd the air:
 such an effect had sorrow on her mind.

But neither Theban, nor was Trojan rage
 ever observ'd so fiercely to attack
 the brutal race, and much less human limbs;
as I beheld two naked ghosts and wan,
 biting, and running with that eagerness
 with which a hog does, when his sly he escapes.

Capocchio one o'ertook, and on his neck
 fixed his fangs, and threw him on the ground,
 so that he made his belly grate the earth.

He of Arezzo, who then trembling stood,
 said: "Gianni Schicchi is this soul condemn'd."
 "And alike furious does another run with him?"
which caus'd me to address him thus:
 "So may this never fix its teeth on you;
 say who it is before it hence departs."
And he replied: "This is the ancient ghost
 of wicked Myrrha, who, with lawless love,
 a mistress to her father did become.

To sin with him
 she took another's form;
 as he another counterfeited had,
 the beauteous heifer of the herd t' acquire,
 when he Buoso Donati's shape assum'd,
 and duly seal'd a falsified will."

When the two furious shades were gone, on whom
 my eye was fix'd; I turned to observe
 the others who ill-fated likewise were.

One shaped like a perfect lute I saw,
 if from his groin his thighs had off been ta'en.
 The swelling dropsy, that deforms the limbs
 so, with a humour which all food perverts,
 that with the paunch
 ne'er corresponds the face;
 caus'd him to open wide his lips, like one
 asthmatic, who, enduring parching thirst,
 raises one up, and t'other downward drops.

"O ye, who free from punishment
 (but why I do not know)
 are in this wretched world,"

he to us said; "view Adam's misery.
 I, when alive, what I desir'd enjoy'd;
 but for a drop of water now I sigh.

The riv'lets, which from the green hills descend
 of Casentino down to Arno's banks,
 making their passage fresh and moist,
 appear always before me, but, alas! they bring
 no succour, for their image parches more
 than does the thirst that robs my face of flesh.

Now, rightly punishing, strict Justice draws
 fit reasons from the place in which I've sinn'd,
 why I should more lament;

Romena 'tis, where I had falsified
 the Baptist's coin,
 and for which cause I left my body burnt.

But if I here could see the suff'ring souls
 of Alexander, and his brothers twain,
 I would not give the sight for Branda's spring.

One is already here; if the mad shades, who run about,
 say true; but what avails all this to me,
 who by the dropsy have my limbs confin'd?

If I so nimble were,
as in a hundred years to move one mile,
I should the journey have ere this begun,
seeking for him 'mong the deformed croud;
although to travel cross this gulph
exceeds eleven miles.

I here on their account
am brought; and they with me so far prevail'd,
that I, three carats base, did florins coin."

Then I to him: "Who are those wretched two
smoking as does a hand in winter wash'd,
and lying on your right hand closely join'd?"

"I found them here, when I into this gulph
was shower'd down;" he answer'd; "nor have they
ever turn'd round, nor, think I, ever will.

One the chaste Joseph falsely did accuse, the Grecian Sinon
is the other, who with false pretences Troy deceiv'd;
now they burnt with a fever, such hot stench exhale."

One of the last, who much displeas'd was
for having so disgracefully been nam'd,
struck his hard belly with his double fist,
which sounded as it were a beaten drum.

Then Master Adam hit him o'er the face
with his strong arm;

"Though I'm depriv'd," he said,
"of motion by the great weight of my limbs,
yet I an arm have for this office free."

To which he answer gave: "When you was burnt,
you had it not s' obedient to your will;
though, when you coin'd, it was at your command."

He with the dropsy: "You say true in this,
but did not so true testimony give
when you examin'd strictly was at Troy."

Sinon replied:

"If I spoke falsely once,
you many times have falsified the coin."

To this he said: "Think of the perjury
relating to the Horse with swollen sides,
and your own guilt confess; as does the world."

"The thirst which bursts you;" the Greek answer'd him;
"And the corrupted water in your paunch,
by which your sight's obstructed, you condemn."

The coiner then: "Your mouth is open'd wide,
to say, as it was wont, whatever's ill.
If I'm athirst, the dropsy me supplies.
Your aching head, and burning fever cause,
without for invitation waiting long,
you to desire to lick Narcissus' glass."
To listen to them I attentive was,
when my good master said to me: "Beware,
for I to quarrel with you am induc'd."
When I perceiv'd him angrily to speak,
I to him turned, cover'd so with shame,
that in my memory it yet is fix'd.
As he, who of what's hurtful to him dreams,
is still desirous to prolong his sleep,
hoping that what he dreams may not prove true;
so did I muse, without all pow'r to speak:
but yet, desirous to myself excuse,
I did effect it, without knowing how.
My master said: "Less shame would wash away
a greater fault than that now done by you:
therefore, of all uneasiness discharge yourself;
and, that I present always am
with you, imagine; if, perchance, you e'er
in such contesting company shall fall.
Low minds alone will hearken to these strifes."

Inferno - Canto 31 - Rogers

The same tongue first did me severely wound
so, that with blushing ting'd wag either check,
and then a healing med'cine to me bring:
as I have heard related of the spear,
which to Achilles and his sire belong'd;
that it first gave, and then reliev'd the pain.

We on that wretched valley turn'd our backs,
the bank repassing,
without saying word.

The light was so obscure 'tween night and day,
as before me my sight could scarce advance.
But the loud sounding of a horn I heard,
which would all thunder silence; and by this
directed were to that one spot my steps.
After the melancholy rout by which
the schemes of Charlemagne defeated were,
Orlando's trump
did not so horrid sound.

I lifted up my head, and thought I saw before me
many lofty towers rise; wherefore I said to him:
"Tell, master, what's this country nam'd?"

and he to me replied:
"By looking through this dingy air you err,
and your imagination this deceives:
you'll truly see, when you shall closer go.
If by the distance is misled your sight,
a nearer view the error will correct."

Then kindly took me by the hand, and said:
"Before we farther do advance, and that
it, unexpected, may not strange appear,
know that these giants, and not towers, are,
who round the border of the gulph are seen;
but downwards from the navel are conceal'd."

When a cloud dissipates, the objects plane
are one by one discern'd, which were before
by vapours thick obscur'd:
so, nearer when the bank I approach'd,
my former error was fully clear'd up,
and all my fears dispers'd.

As towers Montereccion's castel crown,
 so horrid giants
 do surround this wall,
 half only 'though in view;
 whom Jove yet threatens,
 whene'er he thunders from his lofty sky.
 The face of one I now discerned plane,
 his shoulders, belly, breast,
 and both his arms.
 Right, certainly, did nature, when she left
 of forming such like animals the art,
 and of such instruments deprived war.
 'Though she of elephants and making whales
 do not repent, to one consid'ring well
 it will appear with discreet judgment done:
 for where the mind to bad intention's join'd,
 and with a pow'r what's ill design'd to act,
 none can himself from such a force defend.
 To me his face appear'd both long and large,
 like to the Pine which at St. Peter's seen;
 and all his bones to it proportion'd were.
 Above the bank (which served to conceal
 like breeches, all the parts below the waiste)
 so much was seen, that three tall Friezlanders
 in vain could boast to reach up to his hair:
 and from his middle, the space I observ'd
 of thirty palms, to where men tie their cloaks.
 Confused jargon burst from his fierce mouth,
 to which no milder sound
 e'er suited was.
 My guide then to him said: "O silly ghost,
 keep to your horn, and with it vent yourself,
 when by some passion, or by anger mov'd:
 feel round your neck,
 and you will find the strap
 that it across your breast vast-spreading girts."
 And then to me: "He's by himself accus'd:
 this Nimrod is, by whose vain-glorious scheme
 one tongue alone's not used in the world."
 We, leaving him, spoke not, as 'twas in vain;
 for ev'ry language was to him unknown,
 and no one understood what e'er he said.

Turn'd to the left, we went a longer way,
 and, at the distance of a cross-bow's shot,
 we found another larger and more fierce.
 Who girt him round 'tis not for me to say,
 but his left arm before,
 and at his back
 his right was bound by an encircling chain,
 which all his body, that discover'd was
 below his neck, five times about entwin'd.
 "This haughty giant would his power try
 'gainst Jove himself;" my leader to me said;
 "and this reward has therefore merited.
 He Ephialtes' nam'd, and great effort
 made when the giants struck the gods with fear.
 His arms, which then he us'd, now stir no more."
 Then I to him: "If possible it be,
 to the enormous Briareus behold
 my eyes have great desire."
 To which he said: "You soon will to Antæus come,
 who speaks, and is himself unbound; he will convey
 you to that pit where the most wicked lie.
 He whom you ask for is far hence remov'd,
 is bound, and, Ephialtes like, entwin'd;
 but far more fierce he in his face appears."
 No earthquake did so powerfully shake
 a lofty tower, as this giant when
 himself he shook; which struck me with such dread,
 that instantly would have my life been gone,
 if I had not observ'd
 his chains were tight.
 We then advanced farther in our course,
 and to Antæus came, who full five ells,
 his head excepted, rose above the bank.
 "O you, who have in that propitious plane
 (which Scipio made of so great glory heir,
 when Hannibal and's army turn'd their backs)
 a thousand lions often hunted down;
 and, with your brothers if you'd gone to fight,
 'tis thought the sons of earth
 had conq'rors prov'd:
 we you desire, expressing no disdain,
 to place us near Cocytus' frozen stream.

To Tityus, or to Typhon send us not,
 though they can grant what we of you request:
 therefore stoop down, nor wrinkle up your snout.
For this my charge can spread your fame above,
 as, he's alive, and long expects to breathe,
 unless by Heav'n he's claim'd before his time."
So said my master; and Antæus took
 him up in haste, extending out those arms
 whose pow'rs were once to Hercules well known.
When Virgil to be taken up perceiv'd
 himself, he to me said: "Contrive that I
 may take you likewise, and one package make."
As Carisenda, when a cloud flies o'er
 the side that's opposite to which it leans,
 hanging appears to him who sits beneath:
so did Antæus seem to me, when I
 observ'd him stoop; and then desirous was
 to pass the other way:
but gently he down set us in the bottom of that Pit
 which Lucifer and Judas does devour.
 When this he'd done, without the least delay,
straight as a mast himself he upright rais'd.

Inferno - Canto 32 - Rogers

If I were master of such diction rough,
 which would the miserable gulph best suit,
 tow'rds whose dark op'ning ev'ry bridge inclines,
I should more planely what I think express:
 but as I am not, I shall it attempt
 not without fear lest I may in it fail.

No trifle 'tis the centre to describe
 of the whole universe, nor does't become
 the mammy or the pappy of a child.

But may those Ladies animate my lines, who to Amphion
 due assistance gave to raise the Theban walls;
 and me instruct close to the truth to what is done relate.

O traitors, wretched far above the rest, who in this place remain,
 of which to talk much it displeasing is; it better were
 if ye had mortal sheep or goats been made.

When we were at the Pit obscure arriv'd,
 greatly beneath the giant's feet, and when I was
 admiring the high wall which it encompass'd round,

I heard one to me say:
 "How you pass here take care, lest tread you should
 under your feet your wretched brethren's heads."

I therefore turned, and before me
 saw a frozen lake that Ice,
 not water, seem'd.

Nor Austrian Danube
 e'er became so hard,
 nor Tanais in its cold climate bound;
and if the lofty mountain Taberniech, or Pietrapana on it fallen had,
 such creaking it would never have produc'd,
 as from the borders of the Ice was heard;

like to the croaking of a frog, when he stands with his muzzle
 'bove the water's brim, in summer, when the peasant's wife
 intends the fields to traverse, and to glean her corn.

With livid faces (where's the seat of shame)
 ghosts were lamenting sore within the ice,
 sounding with chatt'ring teeth the notes of storks.

His guilty countenance each downward held;
 their mouths the cold,
 their eyes their grief declar'd.

After I'd sometime look'd around, my eyes
 I cast down to my feet, and saw so close
 two join'd together, that their hair was mix'd.
 "Tell me," I said, "who you may be that thus
 strictly gripe each other's breast?" Up they stretch'd
 their necks; and when they had their faces rais'd,
 tears flowing from their eyes
 dropp'd on their lips,
 which soon close frozen were;
 nor ever did two planks a dovetail so tenacious hold.
 With anger therefore spurred on, like goats
 they 'gainst each other butted with their heads.
 And one, who both his ears had lost with cold,
 said to us, but his head still holding down:
 "Why do you look at us so stedfastly?
 Who these two art, if you're inclin'd to know;
 the valley, where Bisentio's river flows,
 did to their father Albert once belong,
 and then was their's; one belly bore them both.
 Y' examine may all Caina through, before
 a ghoft you'll fitter for this jelly find;
 not that, who's breast was pierc'd
 by Arthur's hand;
 nor yet Focaccia,
 nor yet he whose head, before me thrust, prevents me
 more to see. His name was Sassol Mascheroni call'd.
 You'll know him well, if you a Tuscan are.
 And that you may not force me more to talk,
 know I Camiscion of the Pazzi was,
 and expect Carlin to me justify."
 Grinning, like dogs, with cold a thousand heads
 I saw, which caus'd a shiv'ring to me seize;
 and frozen fords will always haunt my sight.
 While we towards the centre went, to which
 all bodies gravitate, I trembling stood
 in that recess for ever dark and cold.
 Or by design, or destiny, or chance,
 I cannot say; but passing 'mong the heads,
 I on his face one kicked with my foot:
 plaining, he me rebuk'd: "Why trample thus
 on me? Unless you come t'avenge the rout
 of Mont'aperto, why d'you me molest?"

I to my master said: "Stay for me here
 awhile, 'till I with him clear up a doubt;
 then I will make whatever haste you please."
 Silent he stood; and I applied myself
 to him who yet most bitterly revil'd.
 "Tell who you are that others thus rebuke."
 "Pray tell me who you are," he quick replied, "that, as
 you pass through Antenora, kick whatever cheeks you find?
 If you alive had done this act, it could not well be borne."
 "I am alive;" was my reply; "and this
 may useful prove, if you should fame desire,
 that I your name may in my notes insert."
 Then he to me: "The contrary I ask;
 begone, and me no more disquiet give;
 for ill you know to in this place cajole."
 The nape then of his neck I seiz'd, and said:
 "You either shall your name to me declare,
 or I'll this hair I hold pluck off your head."
 He answer'd then: "Why tear you thus my locks?
 I will not tell you who I am, although
 a thousand times you toss my head about."
 Much of his hair I'd in my hand torn off,
 while he was roaring
 with his eyes cast down.
 Another then exclaim'd: "Why, Bocca, thus? Is't not enough
 that you should gnash your teeth with cold, but you must likewise
 roar aloud? What devil now does instigate your rage?"
 I to him said: "I want not you to talk,
 perfidious traitor, for to your great shame
 'twill prove, when I the truth alone shall tell."
 "Get hence," he answer'd, "and say what you please.
 But, if you e'er from this place shall escape,
 silent be not of him who ready had
 his tongue, and still of the French bribes complains;
 you may relate, I of Duera saw
 him in that place where stand offenders cool.
 If you should who the others were be ask'd;
 you him of Beccheria 've near your side,
 whose throat with justice was by Florence cut.
 Gian' del Soldanier I think farther off
 with Ganellone stands, and Tribaldell
 who op'd Faënza at the time of sleep."

When we departed were from him, I saw
 two frozen in one hole; the head of one,
 like to a hat, the other's cover'd o'er:
And, greedily as bread in hunger's eat,
 in th' under's skull the upper fix'd his teeth,
 there where the brain's united with the neck.
Not with less joy did Tydeus, in revenge,
 his great foe Menalippus' temples tear,
 than did this shade the other's head devour.
"O you, who with such bestial signs declare
 to him your hatred upon whom you feed,
 on this condition tell the cause," I said,
"that if with reason you of him complain,
 when who you are, and his crime I shall know,
 I in the world above will sound your praise:
unless that tongue with which I speak be dry."

Inferno - Canto 33 - Rogers

His mouth this sinner from the fell repast
withdrew, and wip'd it with that hair he'd torn
from the head's hinder part;
then thus began:
"You me request to that deep grief renew,
which my heart tortures 'fore I tell the tale:
but if my words base fruits of infamy
can to this traitor whom I gnaw produce,
wailing with tears, I shall the whole relate.
I can't say who you are, nor by what means
you here below are come: but Florentine
you seem to be, when you discourse I hear.
Know then, that I Count Ugolino was,
and the Archbishop Ruggieri this.
Why thus I treat him I'll to you unfold.
That, trusting to his machinations vile,
I taken was and died,
I need not say;
But, what from others you could not have heard,
how cruel was my death, I mean, you now
shall learn; then judge yourself of his offence.
A little hole within that dingy coop
(which from me soon the name of Famine took,
and in which more will be hereafter shut)
through its small chink afforded me some light:
when in the early morn I slumb'ring dreamt
what of my future fate remov'd the veil,
hunting a wolf and's young a prelate seem'd,
and driving to that mountain which deprives
the Pisans of the sight of Lucca's planes.
Lean hounds, who were attentive to their prey,
by the Gualandi and Sismondi led,
with those of the Lanfranchi, them pursued.
In a short time, the father and his sons
in the course falter'd, and their haunches soon
appear'd to be by their sharp tushes torn.
When I, ere yet 'twas morn, awaken'd was,
I heard my children in their sleep complain,
and ask for bread. You must most cruel be,

if with due feeling you do not lament,
 thinking on that my bleeding heart presag'd.
 If not for this, for what will you e'er grieve?
 They likewise wak'd; and the due hour approach'd
 when their accustom'd food was to them brought:
 this now they doubted, by their dreams alarm'd.
 The horrid tower's jarring door I heard
 nail'd up, at which with stedly eyes I look'd
 in my sons faces, without utt'ring word.
 I, petrified with grief, did not lament, but they their lamentations
 sore express'd. My Anselmuccio said: 'O Father, why
 do you thus look? pray tell to us the cause.'
 Still I wept not, nor spake I that whole day,
 nor yet the following night: another sun
 did then arise;
 and I, by a dim ray,
 which glimmer'd faint in the dolorous den,
 my count'nance could in my four sons discern.
 With frantic anguish I bit both my hands:
 they, thinking this was with desire to eat,
 quickly stood up, and said:
 'O Father 'twill hurt us far less, if you would on us feed:
 for, as you've cloath'd us with this wretched flesh,
 you have a right of it to us despoil.'
 To not increase their woe, I quiet then
 remain'd; we that day and the next were mute.
 Hard-hearted Earth, why op'd you not for us!
 When to the fourth day we arrived were,
 Gaddo fell down extended at my feet,
 saying: 'My sire, why give you not your aid?'
 And then expir'd. As you behold me here,
 I, one by one, the others fall beheld
 between the fifth day and the sixth:
 then I my eye-sight lost, and, groping, felt for them,
 calling for three days on their names, 'though dead.
 Famine at last did more for me than grief."
 When this he'd said, he, with distorted eyes,
 the skull detested scranch'd between his teeth,
 as a dog when a mangled bone he gnaws.
 Ah, Pisa the disgrace of those who dwell
 in that fair land where the Italian's spoke!
 If slow to punish you, your neighbours prove,

so may both Capraia's and Gorgona's
 move from their rocks, and slop up Arno's mouth,
 'till ev'ry person in your city's drown'd;
 which a new Thebes for wickedness is fam'd.
 Suppose the Count your castels had betray'd,
 his sons you ought not thus severely treat;
 their tender age their innocence declar'd,
 Uguiccione with Bragata join'd,
 and th' other two whose names above are sung.
 We passed on to where the frost
 confines another tribe,
 not prone, but supine turn'd.
 Weeping itself prevents them more to weep.
 th' accumulated drops flown from their eyes
 turn others back, and thus increase their pain:
 the first tears frozen form a group of ice,
 and, like a mask of crystal, fill the space
 between the cheek-bone and th' o'er hanging brow.
 Although my face was,
 by the cold severe, callous become,
 and of all sense depriv'd,
 I yet perceiv'd a little wind to blow
 wherefore I, "Master," said, "What causes this?
 Are not all vapours in this place extinct?"
 To this he answer'd: "Quickly you'll be where
 your eyes to what you ask will make reply;
 seeing the cause that makes this blast arise."
 One of the wretches in the frozen crust
 call'd out to us: "O ye most cruel shades,
 before ye shall in your last post be fix'd,
 remove these vails hard binding from my eyes.
 That I may vent the grief my heart torments,
 ere that my running tears may re-congeal."
 To him I said: "If you desire that I should you relieve,
 first tell me who you was. If to you I do not of assistance give,
 the lowest Ice will be my fittest place."
 "Fra Alberigo I am," he replied,
 "from a bad garden I have gather'd fruit,
 and in this place exchange my figs for dates."
 "O," said I to him, "are you now deceas'd?"
 And he to me: "What state my body's in
 the world above, I have no knowledge of.

This great advantage Tolomea has,
 that oft the soul falls into't long before
 it from the body Atropos disjoins.
 And that you may more willingly scrape off
 my face the tears which, frozen, slass appear;
 know, that soon as the guilty soul betrays, like mine,
 the body by a dæmon is
 possess'd, who ev'ry act of it directs,
 'till its allotted time's completely run:
 but, first the soul in this deep cistern falls.
 Likewise, perhaps, the body's still alive
 of that ghost, who behind me stands benumm'd.
 If you go low'r, the truth of it you'll know.
 He Branca d'Oria is, and many years
 have pass'd, since he was in this place inclos'd."

I said to him: "Sure, you on me impose;
 for Branca d'Oria is not yet deceas'd,
 but eats, and drinks, and sleeps, and cloaths himself."
 "In the fell dæmons gulph above," he said,
 "where the tenacious Pitch was boiling seen,
 then Michel Zanche was not there arriv'd.
 This shade a dæmon in his body left;
 another was to his relation's sent,
 who acted with him in this treach'rous deed.
 But now you should extend your hand this way,
 and ope my eyes." This I did not perform:
 to be a knave to him was acting right.
 Ah Genouese, ye men who are averse
 to what is good, and prone to all that's ill,
 why are ye not extirpated the world?
 With a worse sprite than e'er Romagna gave,
 I have found one of you, for whose ill acts,
 his soul is in Cocytus river bath'd,
 while yet above his body seems alive.

Inferno - Canto 34 - Rogers

“The banners of th’ Infernal King tow’rds us
 approach; therefore,” my master said, “your eyes
 advance, and try if you can him discern.”

As when a thick and cloudy sky prevails;
 or when our hemisphere’s obscur’d by night,
 a mill at distance ‘s seen turn’d by the wind;
such was the object that to me appear’d.

 I, to avoid the wind, behind by guide
 retir’d; for no protection else was near.

There, (and with dread I put it into verse)
 there, were the shades all cover’d o’er with ice,
 and seen transparent like a reed in glass.

Down some were lying, others stood upright,
 this on his feet, and that was on his head;
 and this with ‘s face bent down, curv’d like a bow.

When we were both so near to him advanc’d,
 as it my master pleas’d to shew to me
 that being, which once was beautifully form’d;
before him he me took, and to me said:

 “Now Dis behold, and this is now the place,
 where you with fortitude should yourself arm.”

How frozen I was then, and hoarse with cold,
 Reader, ask not; for I nought of it write,
 as ‘twill too little prove, whate’er I say.

I did not die, nor yet alive remain’d.
 Think for yourself, if you have any sense,
 what I then was, depriv’d of life and death.

The Emperor of this domain of woe
 from his mid-breast arose above the ice:
 tar nearer to a giant’s is my size

than giants are when to his arms compar’d.
 How large would he appear, if wholly seen,
 judging from what we view, of what’s conceal’d!

As ugly now, if he as handsome was,
 and ‘gainst his Maker rais’d his haughty brow;
 ‘tis right all wailings should from him proceed.

O, how it wonderful to me appear’d,
 when I beheld three faces to his head!
 The one before was of vermilion hue:

the other two, which were to this conjoin'd,
 rose from each shoulder,
 joining in a crest;
 that on the right, 'tween white and yellow seem'd;
 the left was like that soil
 whence flows the Nile.

Two monstrous wings grew under each of these,
 such as became a fowl of his large size;
 sails of a ship I never saw so vast.

These had no feathers, but were bare like bat's:
 and, as they mov'd,
 three blasts of wind were blown,
 by which Cocytus all was frozen o'er.
 With his six eyes he wept, and down three chins
 both gushing tears, and bloody slaver ran.

A sinner's bones were broke with each mouth's teeth,
 as by an engine mashing flax; and thus
 three at one time most severe tortures bore.

The biting which the foremost sinner felt
 was trifling, to those scratches when compar'd,
 which sometimes left his sides quite bare of skin.

"That soul which there endures the greater pain,
 Judas Iscariot is," my master said,
 "whose head's within his mouth, his legs without.

Of th' other two that have their heads hung down,
 he's Brutus, who from the black muzzle hangs;
 see how he writhes, and yet says not a word:
 the other's Cassius, who so nervous seems.
 But the night rises, and 'tis now fit time
 that we from hence should go, as we've seen all."

Complying with him, I clang round his neck:
 he took his proper place, and time observ'd;
 and when the wings a fitting op'ning made,
 he closely to his shaggy side adher'd.
 From hair to hair he then descended down,
 between the thick fur and the frozen ice.

When at that place we were arrived, where
 the thigh is to the swelling hip conjoin'd,
 my guide, with great fatigue and energy,
 turn'd down his head to that spot where his feet
 had lately stood; griping the shag like one who takes a leap;
 and thus I likewise seem'd to be turn'd round.

My master wearied much, and breathing short:
 "Observe well now," he said, "tis by such stairs as these
 we must depart this place of punishment."
 Soon through a hole,
 in a rock form'd, he rose, and on its brim
 me sitting plac'd, he standing by my side.
 I lifted up my eyes, and thought I should
 see Lucifer in that state I'd him left:
 but his legs now were lifted up in th' air.
 If I much disconcerted were become,
 the ignorant may judge, who never saw
 that central point which lately I had pass'd.
 "Raise on your feet," my master said, "yourself;
 the way is long, the road is likewise bad;
 and now the sun's to the third hour arriv'd."
 The place, where we were in, no palace was,
 but a rude dungeon as by nature left;
 with rugged ground, and of sol's rays depriv'd.
 "So soon as I was got out of th' abyss,
 master," I said, when standing on my feet,
 "to clear my error talk with me awhile.
 Where is the ice? and upside down how he
 is fixed thus? and in so short a time,
 how is the sun from even gone to morn?"
 And he replied: "You fancy that you
 are on the centre's other side, where I
 griped the shag of that fell worm that bores the world.
 So long as I descended, you
 was there; but, when I turn'd myself, you pass'd
 that point to which all bodies gravitate.
 Now you are to this hemisphere arriv'd,
 which is oppos'd to that, where the dry Earth
 covers a space on whose top suffered
 the Man who without sin was born and liv'd.
 Your feet are standing now on that small sphere
 which has on'ts other side Giudecca plac'd.
 Here it is morn, when there it ev'ning is.
 And he, whose hair afforded stairs to us,
 is yet fixt in that spot he always was.
 He on this side that point from Heaven fell.
 and that land which before this time was here,
 dreading him falling, sunk into the sea,

and came to our hemisphere; when, perhaps
 flying from him, this space was empty left,
 and a new land did in the void emerge.
A place there is to Belzebub's oppos'd,
 of the same largeness; and whose vast extent
 is not by sight, but by the sound well known
of a final riv'let made, which 'long a hole
 pierc'd in a rock by its own course, descends,
 not falling steep, but winding in its way."
My guide and I, to the bright world attain,
 enter'd this secret path;
 nor took repose.
We leaped up, he first, I foll'wing him;
 'till through a space round formed I beheld
 those beauteous sights which are in Heav'n display'd
and thence we rose to view again the stars.