

Theogony IV: The Gathering of Demons

by [Paul Martin Freeman](#) (June 2024)



The Fall of the Rebel Angels– Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1562

Prologue

And so they gathered on *Celestial Soil*
And looked across and saw their *Evil* twins.
From what must come does none in fear recoil
And with this firm resolve the *War* begins.

Opposing them are *Armies of the Damned*,
Composed of *Wicked Things* of every kind.

All filth and rankness in their ranks is crammed
And stench that even now torments Mankind.

But now, like bees, a swarm of souls arrive:
A multitude of creatures yet unborn.
Strange *Essences* not properly alive
And yet to *God's Eternal Purpose* sworn.

In numbers teeming as the desert sand,
And like a starling murmuration trail,
They spiral upwards in a streaming band
Incomparable in majesty and scale.

They wrap a *Cloud of Souls* around the *Angels*,
Defending them from harm on flank and side.
In like and manner and the stuff of fables,
A *Shield of Love* they lovingly provide.

Yet so it is with noble human souls
Who sacrifice themselves for what is right.
No *Timorousness* nor *Cowardice* controls
Nor undermines their steadfast will to fight.

But now have *Satan's Demons*, too, arrived:
Rough, feral types and rowdy *Hounds of Hell*.
Though all in cunning guises are disguised
They recognise each other by their smell.

And now these, too, assume their given places
In phalanxes with rusty iron shields.
They plod like tortoises with hidden faces,
Polluting with their tread *Celestial Fields*.

Armorials and crests adorn their armour,
But all is *Scorn*, *Contempt* and *High Disdain*;

And where they pass the air itself turns darker,
Befouled by black *Despair* and blacker *Pain*.

Their crests bespeak those secret depths of *Hell*
Where *Darkness* overwhelms the brightest *Light*:
Inverted realms where *Truth* can never dwell
But right is wrong and foulest wrong is right.

They also come with music of a kind:
Scratchy, violent, insistently discordant.
Uncouth and coarse, the din attacks the mind
And scours and scars it like corrosive mordant.

Yet sometimes strains of *Beauty*, too, are heard
Which in these ruins the more delightful sound.
Between the *Good* and *Bad* the gap is blurred
When these to *Beauty's* peerless power redound.

For *Beauty*, though of *God*, appeals to *Evil*:
It soothes the *Beast*, releasing it from pain.
In this alone are *Good* and *Evil* equal,
Restoring all to blessed peace again.

For *Evil* loathes itself for causing *Woe*
And longs to find again the *Dreamer's Rest*.
And only torment does the *Devil* know
In exile from the *Kingdom of the Blessed*.

The more the *Woe*, the more the *Devil's Pain*,
Forever trapped within his vicious spiral;
And down he goes to never rise again,
Despairing as he tumbles in denial.

And thus eternally he falls and falls:
No bottom is there to the *Devil's Hell*,
And only *Pain* he finds within those walls
Where *Truth* and *Loving-kindness* never dwell.

And so the first of *Satan's Spawn* is *Hatred*:
Love's evil twin and enemy eternal
Who in the guise and semblance of *the Sacred*
Relentlessly pursues his goals infernal.

He counterfeits the *Angel Righteousness*
Or messenger of *God* himself proclaims;
But hiding underneath is *Spitefulness*,
And all he claims he cynically defames.

And with him, sneering, stands his mate *Injustice*:
Tormentor vile and torturer of men.
With victims' blood his armour is encrusted
And flesh of souls who'll never breathe again.

His joy is preying upon the poor and weak
And those who can't against *Oppression* fight.
With *Weasel Words*, *Pretence* and *Doublespeak*
Injustice lusts to aggravate their plight.

Then, next in line to him is *Jealousy*:
An ugly ghoulish *Sprite* with eyes of green.
She poisons minds with *Lies* and *Enmity*
And all is base, despicable and mean.

She knows her sister's every last possession,
And dearest friend's attainments, virtues, wealth;
And all become the fuel for her obsession
To bring her trusting victim down with *Stealth*.

And like the *Angels*, these can change their gender,
Becoming male or female as it suits.
Yet whether male or female or whatever,
They're known forever by their deadly fruits.

For when these *Wicked Things* infest a soul,

Like rats and vermin tunneling inside,
They never stop until they reach their goal
But burrow on until the soul has died.

And others are there present, just as evil:
Dishonour, Vileness, Viciousness and *Greed*.
And these, too, face their opposite and equal
To whom the field they, too, refuse to cede.

And some were known by name in ancient Greece:
Apate, Pseudea, Peitho and *Dolos*.
With these the treacherous Trojans broke the peace,
Inviting *Ate, Nemesis*, and *Ponos*.

And *Malice*, too, and *Bullying* are there
Who taunt and mock and spurn their silent foe,
While these with *Dignity* and *Grandeur* rare
Refrain from all such self-debasing show.

And many *Mutant Types* arrive as well:
Unrecognisable by smell or form.
Commanded from the *Howling Bowels of Hell*,
Their raucous entrance presages the storm.

And these have nothing set or fixed about them,
But constantly they morph and shift in shape,
As barreling roughly into others round them
Their own *Brutality* they dully ape.

Such *Demons* have their human counterparts:
Benighted souls that chase the latest trend;
In fashion are they found and in the arts
Where *Vanity* and *Folly* never end.

Misshapen *Spirits* all these *Hounds of Hell*:
Ignoble, cruel and savage in extreme;
Purveyors of everything corrupt and fell

Inhabiting *the Fiend's* tormented dream.

Then, in the rear, *the Hangers-On of Evil*:
Those multitudes whose silence it condones;
Our culpability the same and equal
When feigning deaf to *Satan's* victims' groans.

And so they stood upon the *Plains of Heaven*,
Or else above in dark formations flew,
Where none will offer quarter nor concession
In all the tests of arms that must ensue.

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Paul Martin Freeman is a former art dealer. The present poem is the third of five parts of *Theogony*. His book, *A Chocolate Box Menagerie*, is published by New English Review Press and is available [here](#).

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