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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SPAWN OF IXION; OR, THE 'BITER BIT.' AN ALLEGORY ***

**THE
SPAWN OF IXION;
OR,
The 'Biter Bit.'
AN
ALLEGORY.**

**FORGE OF VULCAN.
1846.**

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THE SPAWN OF IXION.

When Ixion from heaven was hurl'd
To hell, to be for ever whirl'd
In a perpetual damning wheel,
The pit's eternal pains to feel;
'Twas for a bestial, vulgar deed,
Whereby that mortal did succeed
In sinking Juno to the sod—
Seducing e'en that beaut'ous god!
Abomination foul, was this,
To ruin lovely Juno's bliss!—
To raise in heaven domestic strife,
'Twixt Jupiter and his lov'd wife!—
With sins that never were forgiven,

To scandalize the court of heaven!
When Jupiter in pity took
This wretch to heaven, on earth forsook,
He was a vile contempt'ous thing,
Despised by peasant, prince and king;
A wand'ring vagrant, shun'd and curst,
For sending Æneus to the dust.
The aged father of his wife,
Base Ixion deprived of life!
Into a pit of burning fire
He cast poor Æneus to expire!—
And, while this cruel, murd'rous knave,
For sending Æneus to his grave,
From every circle under heaven
With scorn contemptuous, was driven,
This wretched outcast, here forsaken,
By Jupiter, was kindly taken
Into the realms above the skies,
And introduced to deities!
E'en at the tables of the gods
He set this scoundrel of the clods!
Such heavenly condescension should
Inspire a mortal's gratitude:
In Ixion's base and blacken'd breast
Some thankfulness should even rest.
His heart, though steep'd in every deed
Of darkness, in the devil's creed—
In every sin that stains the earth,
Or blackens hell, which gave it birth,
Should now have felt a kindly glow
For what great Jupiter did do.

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But Ixion did only feel
A base desire at once to steal
The heart of Juno, and to tread
On Jupiter's celestial bed!
He had an intrigue with the cloud
Of Juno, which the gods allow'd;
And thus the monstrous Centaur came
From Ixion's and Juno's shame.
But Jupiter with thunder hurl'd
The villain from the heavenly world,—
Sent him to hell fore'er to feel
The ceaseless torments of the wheel.
But his vile offspring stays behind,
The bane and curse of human kind,—
Possessing still the bestial fire,
Which deep disgraced and damn'd the sire:
The same inglorious meanness strays
In the vile veins and verse and lays
Of him, on crutches, devil half,
(At whom his kindred centaurs laugh,)
In that deformity of hell.

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On whom its attributes have fell,
In him, whose shameless, wicked life
Is with abomination rife,
Whose works, thrice damn'd and doubly dead,
The produce of conceit and lead,
Possess no other aim nor end
But foul abuse of foe and friend.
His heart, polluted with the dung
Of demons damn'd, from hell out flung,
Is rotten to the core with lies,
From which foul slanders thickly rise.
His soul, most pitiful and mean,
Infected with hell-scorch'd gangrene,
No kind, redeeming trait contains,
But reeks with bestial blots and stains.
His mind, with vulgar vice imbued,
Libidinous and low and lewd,
Deep stained with malice, hate and spleen,
With sentiments supremely mean,
Is bent on mischief, foul as hell,
O'er which the hideous Centaurs yell.
Low was his birth and low his name,
Low is his life, and low his fame;

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But lower still the depths of wo,
Where Park, when dead and damn'd, must go.
Friends, foes or fiends, alike he fights,
In all he says, or sings, or writes.
This foul defamer, crawling round
The brink of hell, to catch its sound,
Exsudes it thence, in doleful rhyme,
Debased and reeking rank with crime.

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On this deformity of man,
More monstrous than the bastard Pan,
Pegasus turn'd his nimble feet,
As Park, on crutches, crawl'd the street;
Urging that steed, against his will,
To bear him up Helicon's hill.
But Pegasus, a knowing horse,
Perceived that Park's conceited verse
Was only suited to the stews
Of hell, whence emanates his muse.
He, therefore, with Bellerophon,
Left him behind, well trampled on,
To tune a pilfer'd, broken lyre,
In fields of mud, and muck, and mire;
And there, his song most lowly set,
Winding through marshes, undulcet,
Contending always with the fog,
Unable e'er to flee the bog,
Does charm, perhaps, the frogs and snakes,
And loathsome reptiles of the lakes.
Although some demon's wand'ring sprite
May, haply, listen with delight,
To Park's low, grov'ling, growling song,
As, through the sloughs, it pours along;
And though in marshes, fens and ditches,
It may, perhaps, amuse the witches;
Yet, should an unsuspecting team
Hear, unawares, the dismal scream
Of his lugubr'ous, muck-born verse,
'Twould sadly frighten every horse.
And, had the Children in the Wood
Just heard his strain, and understood
Its wretched, wrangling, dismal din,
How frighten'd had those children been!—
Believing soon that doom would crack,
Or that the de'il was on their track!
Had Robert Kid, that pirate knave,
Heard it come creaking o'er the wave,
He had supposed some demon's shell
Was sounding from the gates of hell.
The red men, savage, wild and rude,
Deep buried in their solitude,
Would wake affrighted from their dreams,
If, haply, Park's poetic screams
Should penetrate their secret lair;
And they, forthwith, would kneel in prayer
To the great Spirit of the sun,
Believing that their days were done;
That hell's dark hole was open thrown,
And that this strain was Satan's own,
In wrath, now prowling through the wood,
Devouring Indians for his food.

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Ev'n David Crockett would have run,
Affrighted, from his game and gun,
Had he but heard, in woods remote,
Park's incongruous jangling note,
Wild screeching on the western gale,
An unpoetic dismal wail:
Nor stopp'd in his despairing flight,
In San Jacinto, e'en, to fight;
But, rushing wildly and forlorn,
E'en to the billows, off Cape Horn,
Most likely there, himself had drown'd,
In terror of the doleful sound.
In western wilds, had Daniel Boon
But heard, for once, the lecherous loon,
He would have dropp'd his axe and gun,

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And, to the eastward, rapid run;
 Nor stay'd, in all his fearful flight,
 For wind or storm, through day and night,
 Till he some civil spot could reach,
 Uncurs'd by Park's dolorous screech.
 And had Columbus heard his roar,
 When first he landed on this shore,
 He would have turn'd his bark amain,
 And never ventured here again;
 Impress'd that, in this western world,
 There was, from Pandemonium hurl'd,
 Some spirit damn'd for e'er to bark
 The hideous songs of hideous Park.—
 The owls and bats that curse the land,
 Could they but hear and understand
 The wretched rhymes and nauseous stuff
 Of this conceited, vile ruff-skuff,
 Would, surely, leave their secret haunts,
 And ever cease their nightly chants;
 Convinced that they have been, at last,
 In frightful strains, by Park surpast;
 And that this vagrant of the muse,
 Foul caterer for sinks and stews,—
 The Five-Points' poet, has outdone
 All they have ever screech'd or sung.
 Despairing, thence, they would retire
 Long distance from his loathsome lyre,
 And let their lonely caves and rocks
 Resound with his poetic shocks;
 To be, perhaps, all rent in twain
 By his unearthly, rumbling strain.

As I was musing on this theme,
 I fell asleep, and had a dream:
 I saw the fish that skim the deep,
 And o'er the billows nimbly leap,
 All sink beneath the boiling wave,
 Down to the lowest depths, to lave:
 For they had heard the dismal lay
 Of Park come booming down the bay,
 And, doubtless, thought some hungry shark
 Was chasing them with hellish bark;
 That his sharp teeth, already nigh,
 Would them destroy, and they must die;
 That there, alas, was no escape
 From his terrific gab and gape,
 And that their gamb'ling, watery run
 Was, now, alas, for ever done!
 And as they, deep in ocean's ink,
 Despairing, to the bottom sink,
 O'erwhelm'd by that infernal sound,
 They cast a gloomy gaze around,
 And call'd on Neptune, sea-throned god,
 To smite the rascal with his rod—
 To pierce him with his trident spear,
 And pitch him into hell to sear,
 To stew, and fry, in Satan's dish,
 For frightening thus, poor harmless fish.

But Neptune, monarch of the main,
 With scorn contempt'ous and disdain,
 Look'd down on Park's lugubrious rhyme,
 And hasten'd o'er the boiling brine;
 Unheedful of the fishes' cry—
 And left them, with Park's songs, to die!
 His foaming horses now he lash'd,
 Which, through the boisterous billows, dash'd;
 Affrighted at the dismal strain,
 Now wildly screeching o'er the main.

The god of ocean's angry wave,
 Desirous, only, now, to save
 Himself from that unearthly screech,
 Flew, swift, with might and main, to reach
 The portals of the heavenly world,
 Whence Ixion, disgraced, was hurl'd;
 And there, to gods assembled, tell
 What lately, in the sea, befell

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The finny tribes, that swim the deep,
Now sunk, perhaps, in endless sleep!
The hosts of heaven, when Neptune came,
With foaming horses, from the main,
Rejoiced to see the briny king,
The golden gates, wide open, fling;
And, anxiously, all beg to know
The tidings from the world below?

Great Neptune, their celestial guest,
With haste, thus answer'ed their request:
"O Jove, high heaven's majestic king,
To whom all gods due homage bring:"
(And now the monarch of the sea,
With awful reverence, bows the knee),
"I come in haste, and wish to tell
How an infernal fiend from hell,—
An Ixion spawn,—kick'd down from heaven,
And through the earth, a vagrant, driven,
A cast-off lyre, hath stol'n or begg'd,
Which he, with hempen strings, hath rigg'd;
And now, the ocean, creeks, and bays,
Makes, nightly, hideous, with his lays!
Last night, as I was going to bed,
The villain struck the fish all dead!
His dismal strain, they can't abide,
It smote their ears, and lo, they died!
My noble steeds, affrighted, too,
Like lightning, through the billows, flew;
Nor could, the hellish note, divine,
That creak'd, terrific, o'er the brine;
And, even, I, myself, was shock'd,
And from my chariot, nearly knock'd
Into the boisterous, boiling sea,
By that astounding minstrelsy.
And, now, by all the gods above,
By all that men or angels love,
I call for thunderbolts or fire,
To dash this scoundrel and his lyre!"

Great Jupiter, with horror struck,
In wrath, the heavenly mansion shook;
And order'd Vulcan, quick, to forge
A thunderbolt, tremendous large,
With which he smote the venal ghost,
And cast him into hell, to roast!

Now, aught — — ever wrote,
Let none but fiends incarnate, quote;
For, why should men or angels name
What only sprites infernal claim;
Or, why should men, to darkness, turn,
A hell-curs'd villain's verse, to learn;
Or, in poetic marshes, grope,
To save a scoundrel from the rope;—
To save from damn'd oblivion, Park,
The vilest hound of hell, to bark,
To howl, to scream, and vilify
The rich, the poor, the low, the high;
Who pours on virtue's hallow'd leaf
The vile pollutions of a thief;
Who age, nor youth, nor beauty spares;
But, vulture-like, voracious, tears
The guileless maid and spotless heart,
And stabs them with his venom'd dart!
Let Satan bind, with chains of fire,
This vain, conceited, bestial liar;
Whom gods, and men, and angels spurn,
And call on hell his soul to burn!

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Transcriber's Notes

Page 10: Changed aud to and
(He would have dropp'd his axe aud gun,)

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