

Eros and Psyche

The tale of Eros and Psyche comes down to us from the ancient world via the telling of it in the middle of Apuleius' *Metamorphosis* or *Golden Ass*. This author was a second-century AD Platonist from Maudras (now M'Daourouch, Algeria): apart from the vivid and bawdy novel of the *Golden Ass* which weaves together many subsidiary stories rather in the manner of *One Thousand and One Nights*, he wrote several more orthodox philosophical treatises including a summary of Platonic teaching in three parts.

The story of the *Golden Ass* itself can be read as an analogy of the journey of the soul and its descent into body and its reascent: the protagonist being transformed into the shape of an ass, through a fascination with magic. It is as an ass as he struggles to find a remedy which will reverse his unhappy metamorphoses that he hears many tales one of which is that of Cupid and Psyche.

In a certain city lived a king and a queen, who had three daughters of conspicuous beauty. Of these, the two elder, though of the most agreeable form, were not thought too lovely to be celebrated by the praises of mankind; but the beauty of the younger sister was so great and illustrious, that it could neither be expressed, nor sufficiently praised by the poverty of human speech. At length, a multitude of the citizens, and abundance of strangers, whom the rumour of the exalted spectacle had collected together, full of ardent zeal, stupid with admiration of her inaccessible beauty, venerated her with religious adorations, as if she had been the Goddess Venus herself.

As rumour spread the girl's fame, many came to worship her and the sacred concerns of the Goddess herself were abandoned, her temples were deformed, her ceremonies neglected, her images uncrowned, and her desolate altars defiled with frigid ashes, while a girl was supplicated in her stead, and the divinity of so great a Goddess was appeased in a human countenance

This immoderate translation of celestial honours to the worship of a mortal virgin, inflamed the vehement mind of the true Venus; and calling her son, Cupid, she shows him Psyche, (for this was the name of the girl,) and having told him the whole tale concerning the emulation of her beauty, groaning and raging with indignation, "I beseech thee," says she, "by the leagues of maternal love, by the sweet wounds of thy arrow, by the mellifluous burnings of that flame, to afford thy parent full revenge, through your reverence of me, and severely punish that rebellious beauty. Above all, willingly effect this one thing, that the virgin may be detained by the most ardent love of the lowest of mankind, whom fortune has deprived of his dignity, patrimony, and safety; and so infirm that he may not find his equal in misery throughout the world."

While her elder sisters were married to powerful rulers of neighbouring kingdoms, Psyche herself remained unwooed even while showered with honours and veneration till, sick in her body and wounded in her soul, she begins to hate her beauty in herself. But the most miserable father of the most unfortunate daughter, suspecting the celestial hatred, and fearing the wrath of the Gods, questioned the most ancient oracle of Apollo and received the following response:

On some high mountain's craggy summit place
 The virgin, deck'd for deadly nuptial rites;
 Nor hope a son-in-law of mortal race,
 But a dire mischief, viperous and fierce;
 Who flies through ether, and with fire and sword
 Tires and debilitates whate'er exists,
 Terrific to the powers that reign on high.
 E'en mighty Jove the wing'd destroyer dreads,
 And streams and Stygian shades abhor the pest.

The king, whose days, till then, had been crowned with felicity, on hearing this sacred oracle, returned slowly home, oppressed with sorrow, and disclosed to his wife the mandates of unpropitious fate. Many days were passed, on this occasion, in grief, weeping, and lamentation. But the cruel injunctions of the dire oracle now require to be accomplished. Now preparations were made for the deadly nuptials of the most miserable virgin; now the nuptial was changed into a funeral torch, and the sound of the joyful hymeneal song closed with mournful howling, and the wretched bride wiped away her tears with her own nuptial veil. The whole city likewise lamented the sad destiny of the royal house, and public mourning was immediately proclaimed on the occasion.

The necessity, however, of complying with the celestial mandates, importunately urged the miserable Psyche to her destined punishment. The solemnities, therefore, of the mournful marriage being accomplished with extreme sorrow, the living funeral takes place, followed by all the people, and the weeping Psyche attends not her nuptials, but her obsequies. She, seeing her parents delaying, exhorted them to a compliance with the Oracle, in the following words: "Why do you torture your unhappy old age with long-continued weeping? Why do you waste your spirits, which, indeed, are more mine than yours, with such frequent groans? Why do you deform your countenances, which in my sight are so venerable, with unavailing tears? These must be the rewards which you are to receive of my surpassing beauty, the truth of which having suffered a deadly blow from villainous envy, you, too late, perceive. Alas! then should you have wept and lamented, then bewailed me as one lost, when the people and nations celebrated me with divine honours, and when, with one voice, they called me a new Venus. I now perceive, I now clearly see, that I perish through the name of Venus alone. Lead me away, and place me on the rock to which I am destined by the oracle; I am in haste to accomplish these happy nuptials; I am in haste to see this my noble husband. Why do I delay? Why do I avoid his approach, who is born for the destruction of the whole world?"

The bride, having thus spoke, was silent, and, with undaunted steps, mingled herself with the splendid procession of the people that followed her. They advance to the destined rock of a lofty mountain, on the summit of which, having left the royal maid alone, with the nuptial torches extinguished with their tears, they returned home, with dejected heads and desponding hearts. And her miserable parents, indeed, sinking under the weight of such a mighty calamity, shut up the gates of their palace, hid themselves in darkness, and abandoned themselves to a perpetual night. But the mild breezes of the gently-blowing Zephyr gradually raised Psyche, as she stood, trembling and weeping, on the summit of the rock, her garments through the tranquil breath of the God, filling like a sail, and bearing her through the hollows of a valley, at the bottom of the mountain, softly reclined her on the bosom of a flowery turf.

Psyche, therefore, agreeably reclining in the flowery valley, on a bed of dewy grass, the mighty perturbation of her mind being appeased, enjoyed delightful repose. And, being now sufficiently refreshed with sleep, she rose with a more composed mind, and saw a grove, thick planted with vast and lofty trees, and a fountain in the middle of the grove, gently falling with glassy water. Nearby there was a royal house, which was not raised by human, but by divine hands and art. You might know, from the very entrance of the palace, that you beheld the splendid and pleasant residence of a God. For the lofty ceilings, which were curiously arched with citron-wood and ivory, were supported by golden pillars; and all the walls were ornamented, in every part, with silver carving, beasts of various kinds presenting themselves to the view, in the vestibule of the palace. Wonderful was the man, indeed, and endued with prodigious skill; or, rather, it was some demigod or God, who fashioned the silver carving with such exquisite subtlety of art.

But the very pavement itself consisted of small shells, admirably decorated with pictures of various kinds. Blessed, thrice blessed, are those who tread on such gems! The other parts, too, of this wide-extended and regularly disposed palace were precious, beyond all price; and the walls being bright with gold, they made for the palace a day of its own, while the furniture, too, was answerable to the majesty of this abode; so that it might very properly be considered as a celestial palace, built by mighty Jupiter, for his correspondence with mankind.

Psyche, invited by the delightful aspect of the place, approached to it, and, assuming a little more confidence, entered within the threshold of the place. Presently after, being allured by the charms of the beautiful vision, every thing she surveyed filled her with admiration: and, in the more elevated part of the house, she beheld a magnificent repository, in which immense riches were contained. Indeed, there is not any thing in this universe with which this place is not replete. But amidst the admiration which such prodigious wealth excited, this was particularly wonderful, that this treasury of the whole world was not secured by any bars, or doors, or guards.

Here, while the eyes of Psyche were ravished with delight, a voice, denudated of its body, thus addressed her: "And why, my mistress," it said, "are you astonished at such vast riches? All these are yours. Betake yourself, therefore, to your bedchamber, and refresh your wearied limbs on the bed, and, when you think proper, repair to the bath; for we, whose

voices you now hear, are your servants, who will diligently administer to all your commands, and, while we wait on your person, prepare royal banquets for your repast."

After refreshing herself with sleep she found the banqueting room and instantly, nectareous wines, and numerous dishes of various kinds of food, were served in, without any visible attendants, and having voices alone for her servants. After the table was furnished with this splendid banquet, a certain person entered, and sang, without being seen; at the same time an invisible musician played on the harp; and, last of all, her ears were ravished with a full chorus, from an invisible band.

After these pleasures were finished, the evening now persuading to repose, Psyche retired to her bed; and when the night was far advanced, a certain gentle sound approached her ears. Then, fearing for her virginity, on account of the profound solitude of the place, she trembles, and is filled with horror, and dreads that which she is ignorant beyond any calamity. And now her unknown husband approached, ascended the bed, made her his wife, and hastily left her before the rising of the morning light. Immediately the attendant voices, who were the ministers of the bedchamber, took care of every thing necessary on the occasion. This course was continued for a long time; the novelty, by its constant repetition (as it was natural it should), became at last delightful; and the sound of the uncertain voices was the solace of her solitude.

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In the meantime, the parents of Psyche grew old in unwearied sorrow and lamentation; and the report of her destiny becoming more widely extended, her elder sisters came to know all the particulars respecting it, and immediately, being overwhelmed with sorrow, hastened to the presence of their afflicted parents. On that very night, the husband of Psyche thus addressed her (for the hands and the ears were the only media of their present communication): "Most charming Psyche, and dear wife, more cruel fortune now threatens thee with a deadly danger; which, I think, ought to be guarded against with the utmost attention. For now your sisters, who are disturbed through the belief of your death, in consequence of endeavouring to discover the place of your abode, will soon arrive at the rock on which you were lately exposed. If you should chance to hear any of their lamentations, neither make them any reply, nor even turn your eyes towards them; for, by doing otherwise, you will be the cause of the greatest grief to me, and of extreme destruction to yourself."

Psyche assented, and promised that she would act agreeably to her husband's desire. But as soon as he, together with the night, were fled, the most miserable Psyche consumed the whole day in tears and lamentations, exclaiming that she was now entirely lost, since, securely confined in a blessed prison, she was deprived of human conversation, and not permitted to give salutary assistance to her sorrowing sisters, nor even so much as to see them. Neither refreshing herself, therefore, with the bath, nor with food, but weeping abundantly, she retired to rest. But her husband coming more early than usual, and embracing her weeping, thus expostulated with her: "Is this, my Psyche, what you promised me? What can I, your husband, now expect from you? What can I now hope for, since,

neither by day nor by night, nor even in the midst of our conjugal embraces, you cease to be tormented with grief? But come, act now as you please, and comply with the pernicious desires of your soul. However, when you begin too late to repent of your folly, call to mind my serious admonitions."

Psyche after this had recourse to prayers, and, while she threatens that she shall die if her request is denied, extorts from her husband permission to see her sisters, to assuage their grief and enjoy their conversation. Thus he pardoned the entreaties of his new wife, and permitted her, besides, to present her sisters with as much gold and as many jewels as she pleased; but he again and repeatedly admonished her, with the utmost earnestness, not to be persuaded, by their pernicious advice, to inquire concerning the form of her husband; nor by a sacrilegious curiosity hurl herself, from such an exalted fortune, and by this means deprive herself of his embraces.

She thanked her husband for his indulgence, and requested that his servant Zephyr be placed at her disposal – and he, vanquished by the power of love, consenting, left before the coming dawn.

Soon the sisters arrived in haste at the lofty rock on which Psyche was left abandoned, and there wept and made loud lamentations. And now they called on their miserable sister, by her proper name, till the spreading sound of their mournful voices, gliding down the declivities of the mountain, reached the ears of Psyche, who, distracted and trembling, ran out of her palace, and thus addressed them: "Why do you in vain afflict yourself with miserable lamentations? I, whom you deplore, am now present; cease, therefore, your complaints, and at length dry up those tears which you have so long shed for my loss, since you may now embrace her whom you have so vehemently mourned." Then, calling Zephyr, she acquaints him with her husband's commands, who, entirely obedient to the mandate of Cupid, brought them, borne on the most gentle gales, in safety to Psyche.

The younger welcomed and embraced the two older sisters, led them into her golden palace and feasted them with the delicacies of her immortal table. But as soon as her sisters were satiated with this affluence of celestial riches, they began to nourish envy profoundly in their hearts: and, at last, one of them, with a very particular and curious importunity, inquired who was the master of these celestial possessions? And who, and what sort of a person her husband was? Psyche, however, by no means violated her husband's injunctions, or suffered them to depart from the secret recesses of her bosom; but, devising an answer adapted to the occasion, told them that he was a beautiful youth, whose cheeks were yet only shadowed with down, and that he was, for the most part, occupied in rural employments, and in hunting on the mountains. And lest, by any slip in the course of her conversation, she should betray the secret advice, having loaded them with rich presents of gold and jewels, she called Zephyr, and ordered him to carry them to the lofty rock.

This being immediately accomplished, these admirable sisters, as they were returning home, burning with the rancour of increasing envy, discoursed much with each other, comparing their own lives with Psyche's and plotting to bring her down. Concealing the precious gifts which they had received from Psyche, dishevelled their hair, tearing their

faces with dissembled grief, and renewing fictitious tears, returned to their parents. These, however, the wounds of whose sorrows they had again opened by their narration, they hastily take their leave of, big with the madness of envy, and return to their own habitations, machinating nefarious guile, or rather parricide, against their innocent sister.

In the meantime Psyche's unknown husband again admonished her in his nocturnal discourses, warning her against the stratagems now being formed and pleading with her to avoid them for her own sake and for the sake of an offspring already growing in her womb. Her promises and tears, however, overcome her unseen husband's prohibitions, and once again the sisters visit, and with disassembled affection say, "'Psyche, not now so slender as you were before, since you are now almost a mother, what mighty good do you think you bear for us in your womb? With what prodigious joy will you exhilarate the whole of our house! O how happy shall we be through the nurture of the golden infant, who, if he corresponds in beauty as he ought to do to his parents, will be born a perfect Cupid." And having been feasted and entertained by the unseen chorus, again turn the conversation to Psyche's husband: she, through her too great simplicity, having forgot the former account which she had given of her husband, invented a new story respecting him. She told them that her husband was of the next province; that he carried on a trade with abundance of money; and that he was now of a middle age, a grey hair being here and there scattered on his head. And without prolonging the conversation any further, she again committed them to the charge of the winds, after she had loaded them with costly presents.

The sharp and envious sisters understand that Psyche is unaware of her husband's nature and form, and having passed through a night of interrupted sleep; fly as soon as it was morning to the rock, and by the usual vehicle of the wind, descend rapidly down to Psyche, who, with forced tears, remind her of the words of the oracle and convince her that she is married to a monster who will devour her as soon as she has grown to full term.

Then the miserable Psyche, as being full of simplicity, and of a pliant disposition, is seized with terror at the dire relation, and being thus quite beside herself, loses the remembrance of all her husband's admonitions and her own promises, and hurls herself headlong into a profound abyss of calamity. Trembling, therefore, and pale, and with an almost lifeless voice, she thus addressed them in broken words: "You, indeed, most dear sisters, have acted as it was proper you should, with becoming piety towards me; and it appears to me that those who gave you this information, did not invent a lie. For I have never yet beheld my husband's face, nor do I know who or what he is; but only hearing him by night, I endure a husband of an uncertain condition, and one that perpetually avoids the light of day. I am, therefore, of your opinion, that he is some monstrous beast, who always terrifies me from attempting to behold him, and threatens some prodigious evil as the consequence of curiosity respecting his countenance. Now, therefore, if you are able to give any salutary assistance to your sister, who is thus dangerously situated, defer it not for a moment."

These wicked women, having thus found an avenue to their pernicious design, by a full discovery of their sister's condition, laying aside the concealments of covered artifice, invade the trembling thoughts of the simple girl with the drawn sword of deception. At length, therefore, one of them thus began: "Since the ties of blood oblige us to have no

fear of danger before our eyes in the pursuit of your safety, we will discover to you the only way which leads to your preservation, and which has been the result of long-continued cogitation. Secretly conceal a very sharp razor, which has been perfectly well set, in that part of the bed on which you are accustomed to lie; and provide likewise an elegant lamp, full of oil, and shining with a splendid light. Hide this lamp in some part of the enclosing tapestry; and having acted with the utmost secrecy in these preparations, as soon as with furrowed steps he ascends the accustomed bed, is stretched at length, and held fast in the fetters of his first and soundest sleep, then silently leaving the bed, and tripping along softly with naked feet, free the lamp from its dark concealment, take advantage of its light to accomplish your illustrious undertaking, and with a bold heart, elevated right hand, and strenuous exertion, cut off the head of the noxious serpent. Nor shall our assistance be wanting to you in this affair; but we shall wait near with impatient anxiety, till you have procured your own safety by his death; and then bringing away with you all your invisible attendants, we will join you, who are a woman, in votive nuptials to a man."

With such pernicious discourse, having inflamed the bosom of their now perfectly ardent sister, they left her, fearing in the highest degree the very confines of such a mighty evil; and by the wonted impulse of the winged gale, being raised on the rock, immediately hurl themselves from thence with rapid flight, and having ascended the ships, depart to their respective habitations.

But Psyche being left alone, if she can be said to be alone, who is hurried along by pernicious Furies, is tossed with sorrow like a raging sea; and though her designs were fixed, and her mind was obstinately bent to accomplish what she intended, yet now she was beginning to apply her hands to the impious work, she staggers with uncertain determinations, and is distracted with the apprehension of her approaching calamities. She is now full of speed, then dilatory; now bold, then fearful; now diffident, then angry; and what is the most wonderful of all, in the same body she loves the husband, and hates the beast. However, as soon as the evening drew on the night, she prepares with precipitate haste the instruments of her nefarious enterprise.

The night came, the husband was present, and after the first embrace, he fell into a profound sleep. Then Psyche, who was otherwise of a mild body and mind, yet, the cruelty of fate assisting her, is now corroborated. Hence, taking out the lamp, and snatching the razor, her boldness transformed her nature. But as soon as, by the light of the lamp, the secrets of the bed stood revealed, she saw the most mild and sweet of all wild beasts, even the beautiful God Cupid himself, most beautifully lying on the bed; by whose aspect the lamp itself participated of hilarity, and the razor repented itself of its sacrilegious edge.

But Psyche, terrified at the amazingly beautiful countenance of the God, impotent of mind, sinking through deadly paleness, and trembling, fell on her knees, and could not tell where so properly to hide the steel, as in her own bosom, which, indeed, she would have done, had not the razor, afraid of a crime so prodigious, fled just then out of her rash hand. And now, as she kneels weary on the ground, by often beholding the beauty of his divine countenance, she finds herself refreshed. She sees the genial locks of his golden head, largely anointed with ambrosia; the ringlets gracefully entangled, wandering over his milky

neck and purple cheeks, some pendulous before, and some behind, by whose excessive radiance the very light of the lamp shone with a wavering splendour. On the shoulders of the volatile God, wings of a shining whiteness were seen; and though they were not in motion, yet the outward tender and delicate down, tremulously rebounding, was unquietly wanton. The rest of his body was smooth and elegant, and such as Venus did not repent of bringing forth. At the foot of the bed lay his bow, his quiver, and his arrows, the propitious weapons of the mighty God.

These while Psyche with an insatiable mind handles, and explores with eager curiosity, and admires her husband's arms, she draws out of the quiver one of the arrows, and with the tip of her finger touching the point to try its sharpness, by the bold pressure of her trembling hand she pierced the flesh so deep, that some small drops of rosy blood spread themselves with dewy sprinkling on her skin; and thus ignorant Psyche voluntarily fell in love with love. Then, burning more and more with the desire of Cupid, gazing on his face with insatiable eyes, and multiplying petulant kisses, her only fear was, lest he should wake too soon.

But while, astonished through such a mighty good, her wounded mind fluctuates, the lamp, whether through vile perfidy, or noxious envy, or whether it longed to touch, and as it were, kiss such a beautiful body, threw out a drop of boiling oil from the summit of its light on the right shoulder of the God. The God, thus burnt, leaped from the bed, and seeing the evidence of forfeited fidelity, silently flew away from the eyes and hands of his most unhappy wife. But Psyche immediately, with both her hands, caught hold of his right leg as he was mounting, being the miserable appendix of his sublime flight through the cloudy regions, till at length, through weariness, she fell to the ground.

Her lover God, however, not yet deserting her, as she lay on the ground, flew to a neighbouring cypress tree, and being severely agitated, thus spoke to her from its lofty top: "Most simple Psyche, I, unmindful of the commands of my mother Venus, who ordered me to cause you to be enamoured of some mean and miserable son of the vulgar, chose rather to fly to you as a lover myself. I know that I have acted in this respect lightly, and I, who am so excellent an archer, have wounded myself, with my own arrow, and have made you my wife, that I might, it seems, be considered by you as a beast, and that you might cut off my head, which bears those very eyes by which you are beloved. This was the danger of which I so often warned you to beware; this was the mischief I so benevolently admonished you to consider. But those egregious counsellors of yours shall speedily suffer from me the punishment of such pernicious advice; while you I shall only punish by my flight." Thus spake Cupid, and with the conclusion of his speech sprang with his pinions on high.

But Psyche lay prostrate on the ground, gazing on her soaring husband as long as he remained in sight, and afflicting herself with lamentations in the extreme. When, however, distance had rendered him invisible, she threw herself from the bank of the next river headlong into its stream. But the gentle river, in honour of the God, who used to burn the waters themselves, and fearing for himself, immediately, on the back of a gentle wave, delivered her safe to the flowery bank.

It happened at that time, that the rural God Pan sat on the margin of the river, embracing the Goddess Canna, and teaching her to sing in all manner of gentle strains. Near them a wanton herd of kids browsed on the grassy bank. The shaggy God, who was not ignorant of the misfortune of Psyche, called her gently to him, and thus allured her in soothing language: "Most elegant girl, I am indeed a rural person, and a shepherd; but through the benefit of an extended old age I have acquired abundance of experience; and if I rightly conjecture, since prudent men boast the power of divination, from your stumbling and often reeling gait, from the extreme paleness of your countenance, from your perpetual sighing and sorrowful eyes, you labour under an excess of love. Listen, therefore, to me; attempt no more to drown yourself, or to put an end to your existence by calling any other kind of death to your assistance; but cease to grieve, lay aside your sorrow, and rather by prayers worship Cupid, the greatest of the Gods, and strive to please him by true devotions, as he is a delicate and luxurious youth."

The pastoral God having thus spoken, Psyche made no reply, but adoring the salutary divinity, departed from the place.

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Some mythological and philosophical keys

Psyche and her sisters. According to the Platonic tradition, the soul is composed by the Demiurge from a mixture of *essence*, *sameness* and *difference*; when the soul engages with the manifested world she is said to have three centres of activity or powers – reason, anger and desire, of which reason is the essence and the key to immortality. Further, when she extends her pure power of reason into the mundane world, she must take to herself a certain connection both to nature's impulses and to imagination.

The enmity of Venus (Aphrodite). The real erotic summit belongs to Aphrodite "because a perfectly erotic being, who is taken care of by Aphrodite, ascends towards divine beauty itself, despising the beautiful things on the level of the sensible." Proclus *On the Republic*, I, 109.

The King and Queen retreat into perpetual darkness. The first hypostasis of intelligibles is *being itself*, which is mingled from bound and infinity. Perpetual darkness therefore, may be said to reside here, because this hypostasis through proximity to the ineffable cause of all becomes darkened. "For being very near, as Damascius admirably observes, to the immense principle, if it be lawful so to speak, it dwells as it were in the adytum of that truly mystic silence." This darkness, however, is not any deficiency, but a transcendency of all that is luminous. For as there is one kind of ignorance which is below knowledge as being the defect of it, and another which is above knowledge, being that in which our ascent to the ineffable terminates; thus also, there are two kinds of darkness, the one being below, and the other above light. *Thomas Taylor*.

The high craggy rock – the highest point of the intelligible realm (that is to say the realm of pure being) is like the peak of a mountain, not only because all other conditions of being are "below"

it in terms of power, but also because it is the most stable and immutable of all ontological conditions.

Zephyr – the West wind – was the son of Eos (Dawn) and Astraios (“Starry”) a Titan God.

The Palace of Eros. In the next place, when Psyche is represented as descending from the summit of a lofty mountain into a beautiful valley, this signifies the descent of the soul from the intelligible world into a mundane condition of being, but yet without abandoning its establishment in the Heavens. Hence the palace which Psyche beholds in the valley is, with great propriety, said to be "a royal house, which was not raised by human, but by divine, hands and art." The gems, too, on which Psyche is said to have trod in every part of this palace, are evidently symbolical of the stars. Of this mundane, yet celestial, condition of being, the incorporeal voices which attend upon Psyche are likewise symbolical: for outward discourse is the last image of intellectual energy, according to which the soul alone operates in the intelligible world. As voices, therefore, they signify an establishment subordinate to that which is intelligible, but so far as denuded of body, they also signify a condition of being superior to a terrene allotment. *Thomas Taylor.*

Cupid or Eros, is said in the *Symposium* to have been conceived on the birthday of Aphrodite and as *divine desire* is always close to her, having a profound attachment to beauty. Beauty is, according to Plotinus, the form of form and, indeed, the beautiful paradigm of the cosmos to which the Demiurge looks towards in order to produce the manifested universe is Orphically said to come forth as Eros Protogonos (“the first-born Love”). In the *Phaedrus*, it is the beauty of real being (or eternal ideas) which arouses the Erotic impulse of the soul, and inspires her to re-ascend to the eternal world – for its living beauties are deep in the soul and call “from deep to deep.”

Pan’s description of Psyche’s “tumbling and often reeling gait”: Plato, writing in the *Phaedo* (79c) says, “. . . the soul, when it employs the body in the speculation of any thing, either through sight, or hearing, or some other sense, then, indeed, it is drawn by the body to things which never subsist according to the same, wanders and is agitated, and becomes giddy like one intoxicated. . .”