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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK, NATURAE ***

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NATURAE by DOM

ARBITER: That which is swiftest may speak first .

LIGHTNING: My tardy twin Thunder , resent me not for my swiftness . Bear with me

patiently . I was made to streak . Seen as jagged slender strands , flashing boorishly . A snippet of intensity . Tarry for a twinkling , then I'll away unlike the sun who burns through the life of day . My bolts set afire inconspicuous shrubs of lowlands and I have felled towering trees . No hiatus for hesitation ere the fateful sweep . Whipping lashes stay their distance from compassion . Dart as I may I cannot escape being a herald and accompaniment of Nature's tempestuous ravings .

THUNDER: Clarion of the heavens . Faithful and boisterous shadow of bolting lightning . Herald of advancing showers . Thunder I am named . I trail my brethren so faithfully we are often thought of as one entity . Some fear my bellowing more than whipping cracks from my kinsman . When I erupt , my sonic boom flusters and splinters quiet . To the faint hearted I'm the dreaded heart jolter , after the flash . Even at my most subtle attempts at whispering , my secrets are known across the plains .

ARBITER: A mite tardier than lightning but still promptly stated .

SKY: From the horizon upwards , lies my dominion . Whenever Heaven is mentioned , I come to mind . Claimed by governments of the earth though they are bound to the ground . Perhaps it is my Fate to literally be the ?air of contention? . Mortals look up to me as they invoke , voyagers seek me to discern course and location . I evolve from being plainly pale to being bedaubed with every obtainable hue in the hours of diurnal privilege . On nights clear , jewelled treasures wink and gleam on darkened backdrop . When my mood is darkened , my state is overcome by sinister cloud banks , a sure presage of intemperance . Winds growl ominously . Thunder rumbles threateningly while its twin flashes and cracks its whip . It's violence ascending . Vexations or calm of the earth below , by virtue of my station , I am privy to them . What mischief or righteous deeds of earth dwellers , I am aware unless they be cautiously guarded , discreet in manner , shielded by opportunely erected walls or foliage dense , I must confess the confines of my notice .

WIND: Aye , yea to all that . But o'erlook me not for I'm roving evolving clouds skywards any season . I have watched them in limber state or weary with a load of grey . Mutating portions distancing , approaching , amalgamating with main hub of the herd . At the fancy of my exhalation , I lead them along a lazy trot , in prancing pace or at full gallop .

EARTH: Surface that sprawls till ebbing edges of sight . Lesser than the sea yet I too am a host to life . In plainer terms ? The very ground that you tread . Lush where dew and rainfall converge . My verdant glory thrives well in temperate clime . None of the living will ever be in want unless they be severe unto themselves . Harsh where elements rave and abundance , a rarity . There an oasis of ease and generosity is an aberration . Past ages have seen me cleave continents into serrated portions . Crust peel to chisel and shape . Some perish in the upheaval of creation . I am most capricious where my faults lie . When dregs of fits peters , composure is bestirred .

A rush of Wind . Then a voice hisses .

WIND: If I may again , Arbiter your pardon , I beseech . Earth rests snugly in repose from core to outlying crust . Earth too has its scions to bear and nurture . My intervention is welcomed in the diaspora of seedlings and efforts of pollination . Thus Earth shall neither lack fresh foliage to clothe its bare soil nor shall I lack labours to attest to my worthiness .

ARBITER: Fair assembly , I have so far spoken sparsely . Your contribution has been favourable to our efforts . So it is now that I wish to add to your orations

. While we speak Earth unleashes a torrid surprise . Look below you . Molten flaming splinters sprout from funnels , lofty protrusions from surface crust . Springs of ancient wrath spray and fling its repressed fury , heeding not whom or what it incinerates when gravity reclaims lava's spurts . Roiled dust form smoky plumes , shroud clarity of view , choke and engulf those hopelessly ensnared . Lava is no kin to mercy yet its ashes enriches where it settles , exorcising the curse of previous barrenness . (A pause .) Proceed with the next willing player . I withdraw and the cue is yours to take .

WIND: Breath that seeps through stitches of fabric , permeates structures , strokes faces with fleeting feathery brushes unseen . A force which reins you aback even as you strain forth . I bend branches and scatter flakes of parched leaves all over the sod . Dry current which flay suspended flags , gushing exhalations that increase swelling of waves , a prelude to nature's outpourings . When incensed my gusts snatch up loosened surface of an irritated ocean . We unite in a furious enterprise . Together we pummel coastlines with vehement abandon ah .. but that is only a hair's breadth of my intemperance ! Beware my churning vortex uproots and disbands ! My indiscretion upsets both natural and contrived array for it is I who play the part of howling harbinger in nature's agitations .

ARBITER: Another comes ! What have you to add to this amusing fray ? Speak and we shall bear gladly for you as for all before .

RAIN: I'm the load discharged by the grey underbelly of clouds . Slight melting drops upon uncovered brow's arch , spillover from forehead's incline . I flit like cascading leaves of autumn . Droplets hover at the seams , swiftly absorbed by fibers . Offer your hands , watch drops roll from tips of digits , gathering at the depression of upturned palms then overflowing on to the curvature of wrists . Showers cast a hazy blur over drop zones of its descent . Beads of gravel that coagulate at the base of grassy blades are softened , plumped and liquefied . Aliment seeps into the earth . Every drop eagerly imbibed . A feast which mazes of roots cannot refuse . The remainder , they prudently conserve . I come as torrents broiling with impatience . Ready at the knock when floodgates are unbolted , sprint the instant the aperture fits . When seasons assume their turn in even alteration , I dive to thicken mobs which have descended , not as rain , as flakes initially pristine , then soiled as I melt . Verdant lands testify to my labours but the deserts have hitherto been hesitant .

Wind reenters the scene .

WIND: Be not carried away with regaling tales of your might scions of clouds grey . It is I who sweep you while aloft and guide your trajectory .

Deprived of my bolstering breath , you'll be mere dull thuds that litter immaculate slates of earthly calm .

Another enters . Speaks .

SEA: Rain , your drops are trifling trickles compared to the expanse of my form yet you feed me still , with unflinching duty . Replenishing those lost to that implacable torrid torch of day . Think of me not as ungrateful .

With a sweeping gesture Arbiter orders peace to those in the forum . Rises to speak .

ARBITER: Nature's luminous sphere can neither boast nor gloat over its lunar glow . Light that it sheds on earth is borrowed from solar effulgence . How may Earth's turf flourish or renew itself if denied of sustenance rained down by bellies of weighty clouds ? The sea shan't hail its fickle tides without alluding it to lunar influence . Elements mercurial evolve from benevolence to presence fearsome . Each stride smoothens each stumble .

For every strength , a flaw . An enhancing complement for a vulnerability
. For all their imposing sinews , yours are not the governing hands of
existence . They act upon the will and bidding of the Supreme Master .
May the tardy guest proceed .

OCEAN: The greater portion of the Earth . My mass exceeds that of land yet my
jurisdiction lies below airy sky . Altering currents pass through my mass .
Moored in tranquil rest I am a delightful sight for strollers along the
strand , a fortunate find for a happy cruise . Often called ?The Sea? or
?Ocean? , I?m the watery brine though many a stream of fresh rivers feed
me . Swell to gargantuan heights , I shake courage off bravado?s veneer ,
my unease peels off pugnaciousness as hollow quaverings of terror are
shoved within core of accustomed seafarers . Ships and boats are
playthings . At rest , I allow them free rein to bob friskily . In vexation?s
fettlers I toss them vigorously , sometimes causing them to keel over .
Within me creatures close to the surface and residents of the deep depths
are lodged . Game to seafaring land dwellers whose existence upon my
munificence rely immensely . There are seasons when I grant grand
bounty but when abused I turn skinflint . Seabound land dwellers despair
till abates my rage . Look ye ! A speeding craft slices thinly upon
overlapping billowy currents , leaving traces of its course with trails of
upturned foam . As speedily as it was spliced asunder , tidal ripples suture
incisions made . Stitching with natural precision , revived waves teem
with renewal .

Withdraws from the rostrum . Arbiter rises . Speaks .

ARBITER: Well said all ! Soon ebbs this respite . We shall part and I shall take
contents of proceedings to my Celestial Master . Go now your diverse
ways . The spherical world awaits anxiously . A pause too lengthy
upheaves life?s cycle . To this amusing assemblage , my gratitude to your
accommodating forbearance . Hasten to your preordained forte . Recent
friends and orators , fare thee well !

END

NATURAE part 2 by DOM

the scene : at DAWN

Two fleeting phases when light and twilight blend . Thus sojourns both Day and Night .
One to end while the other ascend .

DAY: Good morning cousin . How fares the night ? I have had my fill of peace
and hunger now for the business of the day .

NIGHT: Greetings my cousin . For now we meet and then part again . We bandy
thoughts at this hour of Night and Day .

DAY: Day and Night .

NIGHT: Whatever pleases you . Well now my Day , speak of the struggle of
existence which you?ve often seen .

DAY: The struggle for existence ceases not for Day or Night . A pervasive
conflict that bows not to the Hour . Green thatches of interlocking foliage
jostle and slalom . They long to be Sunlight?s chosen . Bough battles
bough , each sprouting leaf and lengthening shoot aims to outwit its rival .
Sub ground roots hit and parry along dense soil . Roots wrestle for
coveted routes towards moisture . Self preservation is the strongest

impulse underground as well as above .

NIGHT: Since primordial age have both land and sea been at odds for a larger slice of this world . Sea still whips outer reaches of land in its attempt to encroach further . Humanity intervenes . Soil deposits of hinterland are poured upon chosen shores . Beach head outstretches into the sea instead . But constant vigil is a prerequisite to curtail the efforts of lashing waves .

DAY: Cousin Night . With your sprawling cape over the world , surely you are most apt to tell us of Vice .

NIGHT: It is true that my cape conceals but caution I bid you . Do not pitch me into vile corners of knavery . 'tis not a whittling chore to seek Good if discernment stays lucid , gumption remains yours while will defies still the convenience of hearsay . Veils may be drawn in the shade of Nocturne yet weigh the weight with care for all cast in Darkness are not all kin or consort to the mask of Menace . At all hours stealthy thievery and tainted intrigue are spun and done . A measure of its doers heed to care that form and face stay anonymous in the knowledge of those grieved . Risk of telling mark brands those known as sought fodder for aspiring avengers .

DAY: Offence was not the intention nor ill will sought . Fault of tongues missteps . We offer our apologies as balm for a bruise . Most unfortunate that my cousin is oft mistaken as a blanket for misconduct .

NIGHT: Time imposes not upon virtuous deeds . The noble regress not into turpitude when nightly shadows mute shards of infant light . Likewise scorching sun shrivels not pure kernels . What's Good by far possesses sturdier base than mutating humour . Yet I shan't deprive you of your request . On Vice I have these on it . In hushed secrecy Truth is muffled beneath distracting mien . Where misdeeds lurk there are few confessors . Vice . Treasures dubiously sprung . Fillips of questionable pedigree overlooked in mid frenetic jollification . Picaresque wranglings bear surreptitious delight . Fruits of strange origin overcome tongues with sweetness acquired bitterly from those aggrieved . I pray that I have abated your curiosity .

DAY: Indeed !

NIGHT: Having quenched your first thirst , I bid you, speak of Virtue .

DAY: A foil made to counter Vice ! Virtue soldiers on untempted by enticements procured by Vice , from tainted intentions proffered . Pain of sacrifice smarts . Transient . Far worse to drink from the chalice of Vice , suffer censure and lifelong penance . Virtue , fount of fine attributes . Guardian of innocence . Bastion of moral consciousness . Virtue's the sublime awareness that winnows knave from noble . Bequeaths those deserving with legitimate trophies . Their bounty swell with honours honourably won and deeds nobly done .

NIGHT: I see that much still lodge in your mind like a bursting powder keg you are . You have a willing pair of ears and a flint for your powder in me .

DAY: You have discerned well . Amusing it is to know that Night has clairvoyant sight ! I have laid sight on debilitating Despair . Drove of souls lie prostrate . Mowed by Doubt . Despair drapes its cloak over Hope . Stifling garotte which asphyxiates optimistic Faith . This slate implodes upon itself and spares no refrain in dejected denial . Clouding up mood of others with plaintive pestilence . What else are you Despair ? An abyss that impel those hopelorn over the precipice . Propel average souls towards uncharacteristic foolhardiness in their desperation . While the scales of Justice weigh Circumstance and Consequence , Life reels from

the outrage. What of you Night ? Have you saving grace for these souls ?

NIGHT: I have . Faith's the obstinate flame unbowed even though adversity threatens to douse earnest efforts . A shaft that leads out of the pit . Secret aspirations whispered to ourselves . A place we dare visit amid private reverie's vision with a longing contrary to present inconvenience . A bulwark Faith is . It controverts scattering fickleness . Surety in spirit against floundering facades for Faith invigorates mortal hearts with obdurate conviction .

DAY: A saving grace and no less eloquent ! My cousin the clairvoyant ! Yet I wish to add , there are those who fear still the onset of Night . It is sight that is frail and sight that is oft at fault . Illuminated by daylight , leafless branches are leaden exceptions against plush terraces . ?neath scanty light of Night , those same branches appear like unsheathed ghostly daggers , suspended at menacing height . Buoyed by safety in numbers , masked by scarce light , formidable silhouettes , agitators of patience , crucibles of resolve , teasers of courage , all charge boldly . How one wishes for guardian gargoyles to smite these preying spectres ! Friends and foes blurred by garbled silhouettes . Proximity reveal tardily or opportunely . Outcome rests on gifts of deftness and speed .

NIGHT: Hold still there ! I do bear comfort too ! For those who shun the sun at its midday prime , the evening phase becomes their chosen juncture to emerge and gaze at day without braving sting of heat or pallor of a tan . I spare their sight from instinctively squinting . Moistened not their clothing with noon swelter . The Day is the more boisterous portion of the two . Suburbs and metropolis reverberate with industrious din . Smoke stacks increase exhaust density . In the desert , Day misleads sight while I undeniably obscure . Sunlight sparks upon the sand as flickering mirages confound . Night's dark cape is sloughed off friends and foes . Under lighted lucidity , shadows of doubt evaporate . Come Day , speak of eagles and bats in your time !

DAY: Preying eagles flex their talons . With wings outstretched , unhinge themselves off the ledge , into flight . Daybreak presages an outward course towards feeding fields . Bats wing toward cavernous habitats . Seeking shelter from Sunlight's blaze and daylong repose . What of bats and eagles at dusk , my cousin ?

NIGHT: Regal eagles rest pinions and talons . Hunting time is past . Declining light presages a homeward course to their roost . Slakened eaglets curl up for rest and eventual slumber . Bats flap wings , a prelude to nightly swoops and sorties . Bats , legendary cohorts of phantoms reinforce their myth in fabled horror .

DAY: Dreamers rouse from Nocturne's lap . At initial squint of wakefulness reality prompts consciousness about cares left at Sleep's portal . Streetlamps snuffed of their glow . Receding shadows at the first peek of dawn , evict their usefulness . Pavement cracks are read with ease when liberated from nightfall's blindfold . Farmhands unbolt enclosures . Flocks of sheep up and about . Bleating with relish they trot forth with anxious appetites . Scattering out of their pen imposed proximity , they bask , frolic and graze on lush grass . Night , what have you to say of this ?

NIGHT: Having had a day's fill of meandering grazing , a contented flock is led to their common enclosure .

DAY: Scholars rouse rested intellect .

NIGHT: Scholars douse vented intellect .

DAY: Doubters wake up spiritless .

NIGHT: Doubters brood to sleep .
DAY: Those hopeful pursue cares earnestly .
NIGHT: Those hopeful nestle in pleasant mullings .
DAY: Rites of passion suspend their fervour .
NIGHT: Perfume and ardent promises of courtship .
DAY: To their devotion , the faithful stream spiritedly .
NIGHT: One last prayer and the faithful rest with peace . At the threshold of
descending dusk , my veils wait to blanket those sleep bound . One last
burst of the spectrum when glaring gold mellows into subdued crimson .
Pursued and inevitably overcome by evening's dusky tan . That is vesper
as I know it .
DAY: Discreet amber imposes upon greys of nocturnal heavens . Amorphous
aberration evolves from circular discolour to pronounced glow , growing
out of the livery of darkness , enlightens all on earth domiciled . That is
dawn as I know it .
NIGHT: Time is fleeing . Let's retire from this verbal bandying . The scene alters .
Go now and reign wisely . Prosper well the world under your auspices .
DAY: Fear not . Creation shall stay on course . We are alternating sentinels in
this perennial parade .
NIGHT: Once more granules drain from top portion of the hour glass . Old
Nocturne to rest . Nascent Aurorae to govern .
DAY: God be your guide . Relieve me when I'm no longer at dawning dawn .
When you re-emerge freshly eager , while I to leisure , saunter .

END

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