

# A Dooms-Day Thought

Anno 1659

By Thomas Flatman

Judgment! two Syllables can make  
The haughtiest Son of *Adam* shake.  
'Tis coming, and 'twill surely come,  
The dawning to that *Day of Doom*;  
O, th' morning blush of that dread day,  
When Heav'n and Earth shall steal away,  
Shall in their pristine *Chaos* hide,  
Rather than th' angry Judge abide.  
'Tis not far off; methinks I see  
Among the Stars some dimmer be;  
Some tremble, as their Lamps did fear  
A neighbouring Extinguisher.  
The greater Luminaries fail,  
Their Glories by Eclipses vail,  
Knowing e're long their borrow'd Light  
Must sink in th' Universal Night.  
When I behold a Mist arise,  
Strait to the same astonish'd Eyes,  
Th' ascending Clouds do represent,  
A Scene of th' smoaking Firmament.  
Oft when I hear a blustering Wind  
With a tempestuous murmur joyn'd,  
I phancy, *Nature* in this blast,  
Practises how to breath her Last,  
Or sighs for poor Man's misery,  
Or pants for fair Eternity.

Go to the dull Church-yard and see  
Those Hillocks of Mortality.  
Where proudest Man is only found  
By a small swelling in the Ground?  
What Crouds of Carcasses are made  
Slaves to the Pickax and the Spade!  
Dig but a foot, or two, to make  
A Cold Bed, for thy dead Friends sake,  
'Tis odds but in that scantling room,  
Thou robb'st another of his Tomb,  
Or in thy delving smit'st upon  
A Shinbone, or a Cranion.

When th' Prison's full, what next can be  
But the Grand Goal-Delivery?

The Great *Assize*, when the pale Clay  
Shall gape, and render up its Prey;  
When from the Dungeon of the Grave  
The meager Throng themselves shall heave,  
Shake off their Linnen Chains, and gaze  
With wonder, when the world shall blaze,  
Then climb the Mountains, scale the Rocks,  
Force op'n the Deep's Eternal Locks,  
Beseech the Clifts to lend an Ear,  
Obdurate they, and will not hear.  
What? ne're a Cavern ne're a Grot  
To cover from the common Lot?  
No quite forgotten Hold, to ly  
Obscur'd, and pass the reck'ning by?  
No—There's a quick all-piercing Eye  
Can through the Earth's dark Center pry,  
Search into th' bowels of the Sea,  
And comprehend Eternity.

What shall we do then, when the voice  
Of the shrill *Trump* with strong fierce noise  
Shall pierce our Ears, and summon all  
To th' Universe wide Judgment-Hall?  
What shall we do, we cannot hide,  
Nor yet that Scrutiny abide:  
When enlarg'd Conscience loudly speaks,  
And all our bosom-secrets breaks;  
When flames surround, and greedy *Hell*  
Gapes for a Booty, (*who can dwell*  
*With everlasting Burnings!*) when  
Irrevocable words shall pass on Men;  
Poor naked Men, who sometimes, thought  
These frights perhaps would come to nought!  
What shall we do! we cannot run  
For Refuge, or the strict Judge shun.  
'Tis too late *Then* to think what Course to take;  
While we live Here, we must Provision make.