



“To Reign or Serve”  
by: John Gomez

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If I could write a poem or song to set  
Me on the shelf somewhere between Herbert  
And Donne, and all I had to do was write  
A poem or song that man would love, but God  
Would be ashamed of, then I should hope  
I'd take that power and sing a song of praise  
To God with perfect pitch, untainted tone  
And words like those of David's, for not an ear  
But His. But He is merciful and wise  
To keep the muse away, for if she fell  
Upon me now, His praise I would not sing.  
I should be deeply grateful my Lord denies  
To let the muse descend. For if she did,  
I would gladly praise myself as I became  
A poet of poets and made myself a name.

<sup>1</sup>It is “better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n.” –  
Words spoken by Satan in *Paradise Lost*, Book 1.