

### *Cant. III.*

*To sinfull house of Pride, Duessa  
guides the faithfull knight,  
Where brothers death to wreak Sansioy  
doth challenge him to fight.*

[1]

**Y**Oung knight, what euer that dost arms professe,  
And through long labors huntest after fame,  
Beware of fraude, beware of ficklenesse,  
In choice, and change of thy deare loued Dame,  
Least thou of her beleue too lightly blame,  
And rash misweening doe thy hart remoue:  
For vnto knight there is no greater shame,  
Then lightnesse and inconstancie in loue;  
That doth this *Redcrosse* knights ensample plainly proue.

[2]

Who after that he had faire *Vna* lorne,  
Through light misdeeming of her loialtie,  
And false *Duessa* in her sted had borne,  
Called *Fidess'*, and so supposd to bee;  
Long with her traueild, till at last they see  
A goodly building, brauely garnished,  
The house of mightie Prince it seemd to bee:  
And towards it a broad high way that led,  
All bare through peoples feet, which thither traueiled.

[3]

Great troupes of people traueild thitherward  
Both day and night, of each degree and place,  
But few returned, hauing scaped hard,  
With balefull beggerie, or foule disgrace,  
Which euer after in most wretched case,  
Like loathsome lazars, by the hedges lay.  
Thither *Duessa* bade him bend his pace:  
For she is wearie of the toilesome way,  
And also nigh consumed is the lingring day.

[4]

A stately Palace built of squared brick,

Which cunningly was without mortar laid,  
Whose wals were high, but nothing strong, nor thick,  
And golden foile all ouer them displaid,  
That purest skye with brightnesse they dismaid:  
High lifted vp were many loftie towres,  
And goodly galleries farre over laid,  
Full of faire windowes, and delightfull bowres;  
And on the top a Diall told the timely howres.

[5]

It was a goodly heape for to behould,  
And spake the praises of the workmans wit;  
But full great pittie, that so faire a mold  
Did on so weake foundation euer sit:  
For on a sandie hill, that still did flit,  
And fall away, it mounted was full hie,  
That euery breath of heauen shaken it:  
And all the hinder parts, that few could spie,  
Were ruinous and old, but painted cunningly.

[6]

Arriued there they passed in forth right;  
For still, to all, the gates stood open wide,  
Yet charge of them was to a Porter hight  
Cald *Maluenù*, who entrance none denide:  
Thence to the hall, which was on euery side  
With rich array and costly arras dight:  
Infinite sorts of people did abide  
There waiting long, to win the wished sight  
Of her, that was the Lady of that Pallace bright.

[7]

By them they passe, all gazing on them round,  
And to the Presence mount; whose glorious vew  
Their frayle amazed senses did confound:  
In liuing Princes court none euer knew  
Such endlesse richesse, and so sumptuous shew;  
Ne *Persia* selfe, the nourse of pompous pride  
Like euer saw. And there a noble crew  
Of Lords and Ladies stood on euery side,  
Which with their presence faire, the place much beautifide.

[8]

High aboue all a cloth of State was spred,  
And a rich throne, as bright as sunny day,  
On which there sate most braue embellished  
With royall robes and gorgeous array,  
A mayden Queene, that shone as *Titans* ray,  
In glistring gold, and peerelesse pretious stone:  
Yet her bright blazing beauty did assay  
To dim the brightnesse of her glorious throne,  
As enuyng her selfe, that too exceeding shone.

[9]

Exceeding shone, like *Phoebus* fairest childe,  
That did presume his fathers firie wayne,  
And flaming mouthes of steedes vnwonted wilde  
Through highest heaven with weaker hand to rayne;  
Proud of such glory and aduancement vaine,  
While flashing beames doe daze his feeble eyen,  
He leaues the welkin way most beaten plaine,  
And rapt with whirling wheelles, inflames the skyen,  
With fire not made to burne, but fairely for to shyne.

[10]

So proude she shyned in her Princely state,  
Looking to heauen; for earth she did disdayne,  
And sitting high; for lowely she did hate:  
Lo vnderneath her scornefull feete, was layne  
A dreadfull Dragon with an hideous trayne,  
And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,  
Wherein her face shee often vewed fayne,  
And in her selfe-lou'd semblance tooke delight;  
For she was wondrous faire, as any liuing wight.

[11]

Of griesly *Pluto* she the daughter was,  
And sad *Proserpina* the Queene of hell;  
Yet did she thinke her pearelesse wroth to pas  
That parentage, with pride so did she swell,  
And thundring *Ioue*, that high in heauen doth dwell,  
And wield the world, she claymed for her syre,  
Or if that any else did *Ioue* excell:  
For, to the highest she did still aspyre,  
Or if ought higher were then that, did it desyre.

[12]

And proud *Lucifera* men did her call,  
That made her selfe Queene, and crownd to be,  
Yet rightfull kingdome she had none at all,  
Ne heritage of natiue soveraintie,  
But did vsurpe with wrong and tyrannie  
Vpon the scepter, which she now did hold:  
Ne ruld her Realmes with lawes, but pollicie,  
And strong aduizement of six wisards old,  
That with their counsels bad, her kingdome did vphold.

[13]

Soone as the Elfin knight in presence came,  
And false *Duess*a seeming Lady faire,  
A gentle Husher, *Vanitie* by name  
Made rowme, and passage for them did prepare:  
So goodly brought them to the lowest staire  
Of her high throne; where they, on humble knee  
Making obeysance, did the cause declare,  
Why they were come, her royall state to see,  
To proue the wide report of her great Maiestee.

[14]

With loftie eyes, halfe loth to looke so low,  
She thanked them in her disdainefull wise,  
Ne other grace vouchsafed them to show  
Of Princesse worthy, scarce them bad arise.  
Her Lordes and Ladies all this while deuise  
Themselues to setten forth to straungers sight:  
Some frounce their curled haire in courtly guise,  
Some prancke their ruffes, and others trimly dight  
Their gay attire: each others greater pride does spight.

[15]

Goodly they all that knight do entertaine,  
Right glad with him to haue increast their crew:  
But to *Duess'* each one himselfe did paine  
All kindnesse and faire courtesie to shew;  
For in that court whylome her well they knew:  
Yet the stout Faerie mongst the middest crowd  
Thought all their glorie vaine in knightly vew,  
And that great Princesse too exceeding prouwd,  
That to strange knight no better countenance allowd.

[16]

Sudden vpriseth from her stately place  
The royall Dame, and for her coche doth call:  
All hurten forth, and she with Princely pace,  
As faire *Aurora* in her purple pall,  
Out of the East the dawning day doth call:  
So forth she comes: her brightnesse brode doth blaze;  
The heapes of people thronging in the hall,  
Doe ride each other, vpon her to gaze:  
Her glorious glitter and light doth all mens eyes amaze.

[17]

So forth she comes, and to her coche does clyme,  
Adorned all with gold, and girlonds gay,  
That seemd as fresh as *Flora* in her prime,  
And stroue to match, in royall rich array,  
Great *Iuno*s golden chaire, the which they say  
The Gods stand gazing on, when she does ride  
To *Ioues* high house through heauens bras-paued way  
Drawne of faire Pecoocks, that excell in pride,  
And full of *Argus* eyes their tailes dispredden wide.

[18]

But this was drawne of six vnequall beasts,  
On which her six sage Counsellours did ryde,  
Taught to obey their bestiall beheasts,  
With like conditions to their kinds applide:  
Of which the first, that all the rest did guyde,  
Was sluggish *Idlenesse* the nourse of sin;  
Vpon a slouthfull Asse he chose to ryde,  
Arayd in habit blacke, and amis thin,  
Like to an holy Monck, the seruice to begin.

[19]

And in his hand his Portesse still he bare,  
That much was worne, but therein little red,  
For of deuotion he had little care,  
Still drownd in sleepe, and most of his dayes ded;  
Scarse could he once vphold his heauie hed,  
To looken, whether it were night or day.  
May seeme the wayne was very euill led,  
When such an one had guiding of the way,  
That knew not, whether right he went, or else astray.

[20]

From worldly cares himselfe hee did esloyne,  
And greatly shunned manly exercise,  
For euery worke he chalenged essoyne,  
For contemplation sake: yet otherwise,  
His life he led in lawlesse riotise;  
By which he grew to grieuous maladie;  
For, in his lustlesse limbs through euill guise  
A shaking feuer raignd continually:  
Such one was *Idlennesse*, first of this company.

[21]

And by his side rode loathsome *Gluttony*,  
Deformed creature, on a filthie swyne,  
His belly was vp-blowne with luxury,  
And eke with fatnesse swollen were his eyne,  
And like a Crane his necke was long and fyne,  
With which he swallowed vp excessiue feast,  
For want whereof poore people oft did pyne;  
And all the way, most like a brutish beast,  
He spued vp his gorge, that all did him deteast.

[22]

In greene vine leaues he was right fitly clad;  
For, other clothes he could not weare for heat,  
And on his head an yuie girland had,  
From vnder which fast trickled downe the sweat:  
Still as he rode, he somewhat still did eat,  
And in his hand did beare a bouzing can,  
Of which he supt so oft, that on his seat  
His dronken corse he scarce vpholden can;  
In shape and life more like a monster, then a man.

[23]

Vnfit he was for any worldly thing,  
And eke vnhabie once to stirre or go,  
Not meet to be of counsell to a king,  
Whose mind in meat and drinke was drowned so,  
That from his friend he seldome knew his fo:  
Full of diseases was his carcass blew,  
And a dry dropsie through his flesh did flow;  
Which by misdiet daily greater grew:  
Such one was *Gluttony*, the second of that crew.

[24]

And next to him rode lustfull *Lechery*,  
Vpon a bearded Goat, whose rugged haire,  
And whally eyes (the signe of gelosy,)  
Was like the person selfe, whom he did beare:  
Who rough, and blacke, and filthy did appeare,  
Vnseemely man to please faire Ladies eye;  
Yet he of Ladies oft was loued deare,  
When fairer faces were bid standen by:  
O who does know the bent of womens fantasy?

[25]

In a greene gowne he clothed was full faire,  
Which vnderneath did hide his filthinesse,  
And in his hand a burning hart he bare,  
Full of vaine follies, and new fanglenesse:  
For, he was false, and fraught with ficklenesse,  
And learned had to loue with secret lookes,  
And well could daunce, and sing with ruefulnesse,  
And fortunes tell, and read in louing bookes,  
And thousand other wayes, to bait his fleshly hookes.

[26]

Inconstant man, that loued all he saw,  
And lusted after all, that he did loue,  
Ne would his looser life be tide to law,  
But ioyd weake wemens hearts to tempt and proue  
If from their loyall loues he might them moue;  
Which lewdnesse fild him with reprochfull paine  
Of that fowle euill, which all men reprove,  
That rots the marrowe, and consumes the braine:  
Such one was *Lecherie*, the third of all this traine.

[27]

And greedy *Avarice* by him did ride,  
Vpon a Camell loaden all with gold;  
Two iron coffers hong on either side,  
With precious mettall full, as they might hold,  
And in his lap an heape of coine he told;  
For of his wicked pelfe his God he made,  
And vnto hell him selfe for money sold;  
Accursed vsurie was all his trade,  
And right and wrong ylike in equall ballance waide.

[28]

His life was nigh vnto deaths doore yplast,  
And thred-bare cote, and cobled shooes he ware,  
Ne scarce good morsell all his life did tast,  
But both from backe and belly still did spare,  
To fill his bags, and richesse to compare;  
Yet chylde ne kinsman liuing had he none  
To leaue them to; but thorough daily care  
To get, and nightly feare to lose his owne,  
He led a wretched life vnto him selfe vnknowne.

[29]

Most wretched wight, whom nothing might suffise,  
Whose greedy lust did lacke in greatest store,  
Whose need had end, but no end couetise,  
Whose wealth was want, whose plenty made him pore,  
Who had enough, yet wished euer more;  
A vile disease, and eke in foote and hand  
A grieuous gout tormented him full sore,  
That well he could not touch, nor go, nor stand:  
Such one was *Auarice*, the fourth of this faire band.

[30]

And next to him malicious *Enuie* rode,  
Vpon a rauinous wolfe, and still did chaw  
Betweene his cankred teeth a venemous tode,  
That all the poison ran about his chaw;  
But inwardly he chawed his owne maw  
At neighbours wealth, that made him euer sad;  
For death it was, when any good he saw,  
And wept, that cause of weeping none he had:  
But when he heard of harme, he wexed wondrous glad.

[31]

All in a kirtle of discoloured say  
He clothed was, ypainted full of eyes;  
And in his bosome secretly there lay  
An hatefull Snake, the which his taile vptyes  
In many folds, and mortall sting implyes.  
Still as he rode, he gnasht his teeth, to see  
Those heapes of gold with griple Couetyse,  
And grudged at the great felicitie  
Of proud *Lucifera*, and his owne companie.



[32]

He hated all good workes and vertuous deeds,  
And him no lesse, that any like did vse,  
And who with gracious bread the hungry feeds,  
His almes for want of faith he doth accuse;  
So euery good to bad he doth abuse:  
And eke the verse of famous Poets witt  
He does backebite, and spightfull poison spues  
From leprous mouth on all, that euer writt:  
Such one vile *Enuie* was, that first in rowe did sitt.

[33]

And him beside rides fierce reuenging *VVrath*,  
Vpon a Lion, loth for to be led;  
And in his hand a burning brond he hath,  
The which he brandisheth about his hed;  
His eyes did hurle forth sparkles fiery red,  
And stared sterne on all, that him beheld,  
As ashes pale of hew and seeming ded;  
And on his dagger still his hand he held,  
Trembling through hasty rage, when choler in him sweld.

[34]

His ruffin raiment all was staind with blood,  
Which he had spilt, and all to rags yrent,  
Through vnaduized rashnesse woxen wood;  
For of his hands he had no gouernement,  
Ne car'd for bloud in his auengement:  
But when the furious fit was ouerpast,  
His cruell facts he often would repent;  
Yet wilfull man he neuer would forecast,  
How many mischieues should ensue his heedlesse hast.

[35]

Full many mischiefes follow cruell *VVrath*;  
Abhorred bloudshed, and tumultuous strife,  
Vnmanly murder, and vnthrifty scath,  
Bitter despight, with rancours rusty knife,  
And fretting grieffe the enemy of life;  
All these, and many euills moe haunt ire,  
The swelling Splene, and Frenzy raging rife,  
The shaking Palsey, and Saint *Fraunces* fire:  
Such one was *VVrath*, the last of this vngodly tire.

[36]

And after all, vpon the wagon beame  
Rode *Sathan*, with a smarting whip in hand,  
With which he forward lasht the laesie teme,  
So oft as *Slowth* still in the mire did stand.  
Huge routs of people did about them band,  
Showting for ioy, and still before their way  
A foggy mist had couered all the land;  
And vnderneath their feet, all scattered lay  
Dead sculs & bones of men, whose life had gone astray.

[37]

So forth they marchen in this goodly sort,  
To take the solace of the open aire,  
And in fresh flowring fields themselues to sport;  
Amongst the rest rode that false Lady faire,  
The foule *Duesssa*, next vnto the chaire  
Of proud *Lucifera*, as one of the traine:  
But that good knight would not so nigh repaire,  
Him selfe estraunging from their ioyauce vaine,  
Whose fellowship seemd far vnfit for warlike swaine.

[38]

So hauing solaced themselues a space,  
With pleasaunce of the breathing fields yfed,  
They backe returned to the Princely Place;  
Whereas an errant Knight in armes yceled,  
And heathnish shield, wherein with letters red  
Was writ *Sans ioy*, they new arriued find:  
Enflam'd with fury and fierce hardy-hed,  
He seemd in hart to harbour thoughts vnkind,  
And nourish bloody vengeaunce in his bitter mind.

[39]

Who when the shamed shield of slaine *Sans foy*  
He spide with that same Faery champions page,  
Bewraying him, that did of late destroy  
His eldest brother, burning all with rage  
He to him leapt, and that same enuious gage  
Of victors glory from him snatcht away:  
But th'Elfin knight, which ought that warlike wage,  
Disdained to loose the meed he wonne in fray,  
And him rencountring fierce, reskewd the noble pray.

[40]

Therewith they gan to hurtlen greedily,  
Redoubted battaile ready to darrayne,  
And clash their shields, and shake their swords on hy,  
That with their sturre they troubled all the traine;  
Till that great Queene vpon eternall paine  
Of high displeasure, that ensewen might,  
Commaunded them their furie to refraine,  
And if that either to that shield had right,  
In equall lists they should the morrow next it fight.

[41]

Ah dearest Dame, (quoth then the Paynim bold,)  
Pardon the errour of enraged wight,  
Whom great grieffe made forget the raines to hold  
Of reasons rule, to see this recreant knight,  
No knight, but treachour full of false despight  
And shamefull treason, who through guile hath slayn  
The prowest knight, that euer field did fight,  
Euen stout *Sans foy* (O who can then refrayn?)  
Whose shield he beares renuerst, the more to heape disdayn.

[42]

And, to augment the glorie of his guile,  
His dearest loue the faire *Fidessa* loe  
Is there possessed of the traytour vile,  
Who reapes the haruest sowen by his foe,  
Sowen in bloody field, and bought with woe:  
That brothers hand shall dearely well requight  
So be, ô Queene, you equall fauour showe.  
Him litle answerd th'angry Elfin knight;  
He neuer meant with words, but swords to plead his right.

[43]

But threw his gauntlet as a sacred pledge,  
His cause in combat the next day to try:  
So been they parted both, with harts on edge,  
To be aveng'd each on his enemy.  
That night they pas in ioy and iollity,  
Feasting and courting both in bowre and hall;  
For Steward was excessiue *Gluttonie*,  
That of his plenty poured forth to all;  
Which doen, the Chamberlain *Slowth* did to rest them call.

[44]

Now whenas darkesome night had all displayd  
Her coleblacke curtein ouer brightest skye,  
The warlike youthes on dayntie couches layd,  
Did chace away sweet sleepe from sluggish eye,  
To muse on meanes of hoped victory.  
But whenas *Morpheus* had with leaden mace  
Arrested all that courtly company,  
Vp-rose *Duessa* from her resting place,  
And to the Paynims lodging comes with silent pace.

[45]

Whom broad awake she finds, in troublous fit,  
Forecasting, how his foe he might annoy,  
And him amoues with speaches seeming fit:  
Ah deare *Sans ioy*, next dearest to *Sans foy*,  
Cause of my new griefe, cause of new ioy,  
Ioyous, to see his ymage in mine eye,  
And greu'd, to thinke how foe did him destroy,  
That was the flowre of grace and cheualrye;  
Lo his *Fidessa* to thy secret faith I flye.

[46]

With gentle wordes he can her fairely greet,  
And bad say on the secret of her hart.  
Then sighing soft, I learne that little sweet  
Oft tempred is (quoth she) with muchell smart:  
For, since my brest was launcht with louely dart  
Of deare *Sansfoy*, I neuer ioyed howre,  
But in eternall woes my weaker hart  
Haue wasted, louing him with all my powre,  
And for his sake haue felt full many an heauie stowre.

[47]

At last, when perils all I weened past,  
And hop'd to reape the crop of all my care,  
Into new woes vnweeting I was cast,  
By this false faytor, who vnworthy ware  
His worthy shield, whom he with guilefull snare  
Entrapped slew, and brought to shamefull graue.  
Me silly maid away with him he bare,  
And euer since hath kept in darksome caue,  
For that I would not yeeld, that to *Sans-foy* I gaue.

[48]

But since faire Sunne hath sperst that lowring clowd,  
And to my loathed life now shewes some light,  
Vnder your beames I will me safely shrowd,  
From dreaded storme of his disdainfull spight:  
To you th'inheritance belongs by right  
Of brothers prayse, to you eke longs his loue.  
Let not his loue, let not his restlesse spright  
Be vnreung'd, that calles to you aboue  
From wandring *Stygian* shores, where it doth endlesse moue.

[49]

Thereto said he, faire Dame be nought dismaid  
For sorrowes past; their griefe is with them gone:  
Ne yet of present perill be affraid,  
For needlesse feare did neuer vantage none,  
And helplesse hap it booteth not to mone.  
Dead is *Sans-foy*, his vitall paines are past,  
Though greeued ghost for vengeance deepe do grone:  
He liues, that shall him pay his dewties last,  
And guiltie Elfin bloud shall sacrifice in hast.

[50]

O but I feare the fickle freakes (quoth shee)  
Of fortune false, and oddes of armes in field.  
Why dame (quoth he) what oddes can euer bee,  
Where both do fight alike, to win or yield?  
Yea but (quoth she) he beares a charmed shield,  
And eke enchaunted armes, that none can perce,  
Ne none can wound the man, that does them wield.  
Charmd or enchaunted (answerd he then ferce)  
I no whit reck, ne you the like need to reherce.

[51]

But faire *Fidessa*, sithence fortunes guile,  
Or enimies powre hath now captiued you,  
Returne from whence ye came, and rest awhile  
Till morrow next, that I the Elfe subdew,  
And with *Sans-foyes* dead dowry you endew.  
Ay me, that is a double death (she said)  
With proude foes sight my sorrow to renew:  
Where euer yet I be, my secret aid

Shall follow you. So passing forth, she him obaid.

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