

Cant. II.

*Babes bloudie hands may not be clenst,
the face of golden Meane.
Her sisters two Extremities:
striue her to banish cleane.*

[1]

THus when Sir *Guyon* with his faithfull guide
Had with due rites and dolorous lament
The end of their sad Tragedie vptyde,
The litle babe vp in his armes he hent;
Who with sweet pleasance and bold blandishment
Gan smile on them, that rather ought to weepe,
As carelesse of his woe, or innocent
Of that was doen, that ruth emperced deepe
In that knights hart, and wordes with bitter teares did steepe.

[2]

Ah lucklesse babe, borne vnder cruell starre,
And in dead parents balefull ashes bred,
Full litle weenest thou, what sorrowes are
Left thee for portion of thy liuelihed,
Poore Orphane in the wide world scattered,
As budding braunch rent from the natiue tree,
And throwen forth, till it be withered:
Such is the state of men: thus enter wee
Into this life with woe, and end with miseree.

[3]

Then soft himselfe inclyning on his knee
Downe to that well, did in the water weene
(So loue does loath disdainfull nicitee)
His guiltie hands from bloudie gore to cleene.
He washt them oft and oft, yet nought they beene
For all his washing cleaner. Still he stroue,
Yet still the litle hands were bloudie seene;
The which him into great amaz'ment droue,
And into diuerse doubt his wauering wonder cloue.

[4]

He wist not whether blot of foule offence
Might not be purgd with water nor with bath;

Or that high God, in lieu of innocence,
Imprinted had that token of his wrath,
To shew how sore bloudguiltinesse he hat'th;
Or that the charme and venim, which they druncke,
Their bloud with secret filth infected hath,
Being diffused through the senselesse truncke,
That through the great contagion direfull deadly stunck.

[5]

Whom thus at gaze, the Palmer gan to bord
With goodly reason, and thus faire bespake;
Ye bene right hard amated, gracious Lord,
And of your ignorance great maruell make,
Whiles cause not well conceiued ye mistake.
But know, that secret vertues are infusd
In euery fountaine, and in euery lake,
Which who hath skill them rightly to haue chusd,
To prooffe of passing wonders hath full often vsd.

[6]

Of those some were so from their sourse indewd
By great Dame Nature, from whose fruitfull pap
Their welheads spring, and are with moisture deawd;
Which feedes each liuing plant with liquid sap,
And filles with flowres faire *Floraes* painted lap:
But other some by gift of later grace,
Or by good prayers, or by other hap,
Had vertue pourd into their waters bace,
And thenceforth were renowmd, & sought from place to place.

[7]

Such is this well, wrought by occasion straunge,
Which to her Nymph befell. Vpon a day,
As she the woods with bow and shafts did raunge,
The hartlesse Hind and Robucke to dismay,
Dan Faunus chaunst to meet her by the way,
And kindling fire at her faire burning eye,
Inflamed was to follow beauties chace,
And chaced her, that fast from him did fly;
As Hind from her, so she fled from her enemy.

[8]

At last when fayling breath began to faint,

And saw no meanes to scape, of shame affrayd,
She set her downe to weepe for sore constraint,
And to *Diana* calling lowd for ayde,
Her deare besought, to let her dye a mayd.
The goddesse heard, and suddeine where she sate,
Welling out streames of teares, and quite dismayd
With stony feare of that rude rustick mate,
Transform'd her to a stone from stedfast virgins state.

[9]

Lo now she is that stone; from those two heads,
As from two weeping eyes, fresh streames do flow,
Yet cold through feare, and old conceiued dreads;
And yet the stone her semblance seemes to show,
Shapt like a maid, that such ye may her know;
And yet her vertues in her water byde:
For it is chast and pure, as purest snow,
Ne lets her waues with any filth be dyde,
But euer like her selfe vnstained hath bene tryde.

[10]

From thence it comes, that this babes bloody hand
May not be clensd with water of this well:
Ne certes Sir striue you it to withstand,
But let them still be bloody, as befell,
That they his mothers innocence may tell,
As she bequeathd in her last testament;
That as a sacred Symbole it may dwell
In her sonnes flesh, to minde reuengement,
And be for all chast Dames an endlesse monument.

[11]

He hearkned to his reason, and the childe
Vptaking, to the Palmer gaue to beare;
But his sad fathers armes with bloud defilde,
An heauie load himselfe did lightly reare,
And turning to that place, in which whyleare
He left his loftie steed with golden sell,
And goodly gorgeous barbes, him found not theare.
By other accident that earst befell,
He is conuaide, but how or where, here fits not tell.

[12]

Which when Sir *Guyon* saw, all were he wroth,
Yet algates mote he soft himselfe appease,
And fairely fare on foot, how euer loth;
His double burden did him sore disease.
So long they traueiled with little ease,
Till that at last they to a Castle came,
Built on a rock adioyning to the seas;
It was an auncient worke of antique fame,
And wondrous strong by nature, and by skilfull frame.

[13]

Therein three sisters dwelt of sundry sort,
The children of one sire by mothers three;
Who dying whylome did diuide this fort
To them by equall shares in equall fee:
But strifull mind, and diuerse qualitee
Drew them in parts, and each made others foe:
Still did they striue, and dayly disagree;
The eldest did against the youngest goe,
And both against the middest meant to worken woe.

[14]

Where, when the knight arriu'd, he was right well
Receiu'd, as knight of so much worth became,
Of second sister, who did far excell
The other two; *Medina* was her name,
A sober sad, and comely curteous Dame;
Who rich arayd, and yet in modest guise,
In goodly garments, that her well became,
Faire marching forth in honourable wize,
Him at the threshold met, and well did enterprize.

[15]

She led him vp into a goodly bowre,
And comely courted with meet modestie,
Ne in her speach, ne in her hauiour,
Was lightnesse seene, or looser vanitie,
But gracious womanhood, and grauitie,
About the reason of her youthly yeares:
Her golden locks she roundly did vptye
In brayded tramels, that no looser heares
Did out of order stray about her daintie eares.

[16]

Whilest she her selfe thus busily did frame,
Seemely to entertaine her new-come guest,
Newes heereof to her other sisters came,
Who all this while were at their wanton rest,
Accourting each her friend with lauish fest:
They were two knights of perelesse puissaunce,
And famous far abroad for warlike gest,
Which to these Ladies loue did countenaunce,
And to his mistresse each himselfe stroue to aduance.

[17]

He that made loue vnto the eldest Dame,
Was hight Sir *Huddibras*, an hardy man;
Yet not so good of deeds, as great of name,
Which he by many rash aduentures wan,
Since errant armes to sew he first began;
More huge in strength, then wise in workes he was,
And reason with foole-hardize ouer ran;
Sterne melancholy did his courage pas,
And was for terrour more, all armd in shyning bras.

[18]

But he that lou'd the youngest, was *Sans-loy*,
He that faire *Vna* late foule outraged,
The most vnruely, and the boldest boy
That euer warlike weapons menaged,
And to all lawlesse lust encouraged,
Through strong opinion of his matchlesse might:
Ne ought he car'd, whom he endamaged
By tortious wrong, or whom bereau'd of right.
He now this Ladies champion chose for loue to fight.

[19]

These two gay knights, vovd to so diuerse loues,
Each other does enuie with deadly hate,
And dayly warre against his foeman moues,
In hope to win more fauour with his mate,
And th'others pleasing seruice to abate,
To magnifie his owne. But when they heard,
How in that place straunge knight arriued late,
Both knights and Ladies forth right angry far'd,
And fiercely vnto battell sterne themselues prepar'd.

[20]

But ere they could proceede vnto the place,
Where he abode, themselues at discord fell,
And cruell combat ioynd in middle space:
With horrible assault, and furie fell,
They heapt huge strokes, the scorned life to quell,
That all on vprere from her settled seat,
The house was raysd, and all that in did dwell;
Seemd that loud thunder with amazement great,
Did rend the ratling skyes with flames of fouldring heat.

[21]

The noyse thereof calth forth that stranger knight,
To weet, what dreadfull thing was there in hand;
Where when as two braue knights in bloody fight
With deadly rancour he enraunged fond,
His sunbroad shield about his wrest he bond,
And shying blade vnsheathd, with which he ran
Vnto that stead, their strife to vnderstand;
And at his first arriual, them began
With goodly meanes to pacifie, well as he can.

[22]

But they him spying, both with greedy forse
Attonce vpon him ran, and him beset
With stroakes of mortall steele without remorse;
And on his shield like yron sledges bet:
As when a Beare and Tygre being met
In cruell fight on lybicke Ocean wide,
Espye a traueiler with feet surbet,
Whom they in equall pray hope to deuide,
They stint their strife, and him assaile on euery side.

[23]

But he, not like a wearie traueilere,
Their sharpe assault right bloody did rebut,
And suffred not their blowes to byte him nere,
But with redoubled buffes them backe did put:
Whose griued mindes, which choler did englut,
Against themselues turning their wrathfull spight,
Gan with new rage their shields to hew and cut;
But still when *Guyon* came to part their fight,
With heaueie load on him they freshly gan to smight.

[24]

As a tall ship tossed in troublous seas,
Whom raging windes threatning to make the pray
Of the rough rockes, do diuersly disease,
Meetes two contrary billowes by the way,
That her on either side do sore assay,
And boast to swallow her in greedy graue;
She scorning both their spights, does make wide way,
And with her brest breaking the fomy waue,
Does ride on both their backs, & faire her selfe doth saue.

[25]

So boldly he him beares, and rusheth forth
Betweene them both, by conduct of his blade
Wondrous great prowesse and heroick worth
He shewd that day, and rare ensample made,
When two so mighty warriours he dismade:
Attonce he wards and strikes, he takes and payes,
Now forst to yield, now forcing to inuade,
Before, behind, and round about him layes:
So double was his paines, so double be his prayse.

[26]

Strange sort of fight, three valiaunt knights to see
Three combats ioyne in one, and to darraine
A triple warre with triple enmitee,
All for their Ladies froward loue to gaine,
Which gotten was but hate. So loue does raine
In stoutest minds, and maketh monstrous warre;
He maketh warre, he maketh peace againe,
And yet his peace is but continuall iarre:
O miserable men, that to him subiect arre.

[27]

Whilst thus they mingled were in furious armes,
The faire *Medina* with her tresses torne,
And naked brest, in pittie of their harmes,
Emongst them ran, and falling them before,
Besought them by the wombe which them had borne,
And by the loues, which were to them most deare,
And by the knighthood, which they sure had sworne,
Their deadly cruell discord to forbear,
And to her iust conditions of faire peace to heare.

[28]

But her two other sisters standing by,
Her lowd gainsaid, and both their champion bad
Pursue the end of their strong enmity,
As euer of their loues they would be glad.
Yet she with pitthy words and counsell sad,
Still stroue their stubborne rages to reuoke,
That at the last suppressing fury mad,
They gan abstaine from dint of direfull stroke,
And hearken to the sober speaches, which she spoke.

[29]

Ah puissaunt Lords, what cursed euill Spright,
Or fell *Erinnys* in your noble harts
Her hellish brond hath kindled with despight,
And stird you vp to worke your wilfull smarts?
Is this the ioy of armes? be these the parts
Of glorious knighthood, after bloud to thrust,
And not regard dew right and iust desarts?
Vaine is the vaunt, and victory vniust,
That more to mighty hands, then rightfull cause doth trust.

[30]

And were their rightfull cause of difference,
Yet were not better, faire it to accord,
Then with bloud guiltness to heape offence,
And mortall vengeaunce ioyne to crime abhord?
O fly from wrath, fly, O my liefest Lord:
Sad be the sights, and bitter frutes of warre,
And thousand furies wait on wrathfull sword;
Ne ought the praise of prowesse more doth marre,
Then fowle reuenging rage, and base contentious iarre.

[31]

But louely concord, and most sacred peace
Doth nourish vertue, and fast friendship breeds;
Weake she makes strong, & strong thing does increace,
Till it the pitch of highest prayse exceeds:
Braue be her warres, and honorable deeds,
By which she triumphes ouer ire and pride,
And winnes an Oliue girlond for her meeds:
Be therefore, O my deare Lords, pacifide,
And this misseeming discord meekely lay aside.

[32]

Her gracious wordes their rancour did appall,
And suncke so deepe into their boyling brests,
That downe they let their cruell weapons fall,
And lowly did abase their loftie crests
To her faire presence, and discrete behests.
Then she began a treatie to procure,
And stablish termes betwixt both their requests,
That as a law for euer should endure;
Which to obserue in word of knights they did assure.

[33]

Which to confirme, and fast to bind their league,
After their wearie sweat and bloody toile,
She them besought, during their quiet tregue,
Into her lodging to repaire a while,
To rest themselues, and grace to reconcile.
They soone consent: so forth with her they fare,
Where they are well receiu'd, and made to spoile
Themselues of soiled armes, and to prepare
Their minds to pleasure, & their mouthes to dainty fare.

[34]

And those two froward sisters, their faire loues
Came with them eke, all were they wondrous loth,
And fained cheare, as for the time behoues,
But could not colour yet so well the troth,
But that their natures bad appeared in both:
For both did at their second sister grutch,
And inly grieue, as doth an hidden moth
The inner garment fret, not th'vtter touch;
One thought their chear too litle, th'other thought too mutch.

[35]

Elissa (so the eldest hight) did deme
Such entertainment base, ne ought would eat,
Ne ought would speake, but euermore did seeme
As discontent for want of merth or meat;
No solace could her Paramour intreat
Her once to show, ne court, nor dalliance,
But with bent lowring browes, as she would threat,
She scould, and frownd with froward countenance,
Vnworthy of faire Ladies comely gouernaunce.

[36]

But young *Perissa* was of other mind,
Full of disport, still laughing, loosely light,
And quite contrary to her sisters kind;
No measure in her mood, no rule of right,
But poured out in pleasure and delight;
In wine and meats she flowd about the bancke,
And in excesse exceeded her owne might;
In sumptuous tire she ioyd her selfe to prancke;
But of her loue too lauish (litle haue she thancke.)

[37]

First by her side did sit the bold *Sans loy*,
Fit mate for such a mincing mineon,
Who in her loosenesse tooke exceeding ioy;
Might not be found a franker franion,
Of her lewd parts to make companion;
But *Huddibras*, more like a Malecontent,
Did see and grieue at his bold fashion;
Hardly could he endure his hardiment,
Yet still he sat, and inly did himselfe torment.

[38]

Betwixt them both the faire *Medina* sate
With sober grace, and goodly cariage:
With equall measure she did moderate
The strong extremities of their outrage;
That forward paire she euer would asswage,
When they would striue due reason to exceed;
But that same froward twaine would accourage,
And of her plenty adde vnto their need:
So kept she them in order, and her selfe in heed.

[39]

Thus fairely she attempered her feast,
And pleasd them all with meete satietie:
At last when lust of meat and drinke was ceast,
She *Guyon* deare besought of curtesie,
To tell from whence he came through ieopardie,
And whither now on new aduventure bound.
Who with bold grace, and comely grautie,
Drawing to him the eyes of all around,
From lofty siege began these words aloud to sound.

[40]

This thy demaund, ô Lady, doth reuiue
Fresh memory in me of that great Queene,
Great and most glorious virgin Queene aliue,
That with her soueraigne powre, and scepter shene
All Faery lond does peaceable sustene.
In widest Ocean she her throne does reare,
That ouer all the earth it may be seene;
As morning Sunne her beames dispredden cleare:
And in her face faire peace, and mercy doth appeare.

[41]

In her the richesse of all heautnly grace,
In chiefe degree are heaped vp on hye:
And all that else this worlds enclosure bace,
Hath great or glorious in mortall eye.
Adornes the person of her Maiestie;
That men beholding so great excellence,
And rare perfection in mortalitie,
Doe her adore with sacred reuerence,
As th'Idole of her makers great magnificence.

[42]

To her I homage and my seruice owe,
In number of the noblest knights on ground,
Mongst whom on me she deigned to bestowe
Order of *Maydenhead*, the most renownd,
That may this day in all the world be found:
An yearely solemne feast she wontes to make
The day that first doth lead the yeare around;
To which all knights of worth and courage bold
Resort, to heare of straunge aduentures to be told.

[43]

There this old Palmer shewed himselfe that day,
And to that mighty Princesse did complaine
Of griuous mischiefes, which a wicked Fay
Had wrought, and many whelmd in deadly paine,
Whereof he crau'd redresse. My Soueraine,
Whose glory is in gracious deeds, and ioyes
Throughout the world her mercy to maintaine,
Eftsoones deuisd redresse for such annoyes;
Me all vnfit for so great purpose she employes.

[44]

Now hath faire *Phoebe* with her siluer face
Thrice seene the shadowes of the neather world,
Sith last I left that honorable place,
In which her royall presence is introd;
Ne euer shall I rest in house nor hold,
Till I that false *Acrasia* haue wonne;
Of whose fowle deeds, too hideous to be told
I witnesse am, and this their wretched sonne,
Whose wofull parents she hath wickedly fordonne.

[45]

Tell on, faire Sir, said she, that dolefull tale,
From which sad ruth does seeme you to restraine,
That we may pittie such vnhappy bale,
And learne from pleasures poyson to abstaine:
Ill by ensample good doth often gayne.
Then forward he his purpose gan pursew,
And told the storie of the mortall payne,
Which *Mordant* and *Amauia* did rew;
As with lamenting eyes him selfe did lately vew.

[46]

Night was far spent, and now in *Ocean* deepe
Orion, flying fast from hissing snake,
His flaming head did hasten for to steepe,
When of his pitteous tale he end did make;
Whilest with delight of that he wisely spake,
Those guesstes beguiled, did beguile their eyes
Of kindly sleepe, that did them ouertake.
At last when they had markt the chaunged skyes,
They wist their houre was spent; then each to rest him hyes.

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