

Cant. III.

*Calidore brings Priscilla home,
Pursues the Blatant Beast:
Saues Serena whilest Calepine
By Turpine is opprest.*

[1]

TRue is, that whilome that good Poet sayd,
The gentle minde by gentle deeds is knowne.
For a man by nothing is so well bewrayd,
As by his manners, in which plaine is showne
Of what degree and what race he is growne.
For seldome seene, a trotting Stalion get
An ambling Colt, that is his proper owne:
So seldome seene, that one in basenesse set
Doth noble courage shew, with curteous manners met.

[2]

But euermore contrary hath bene tryde,
That gentle bloud will gentle manners breed;
As well may be in *Calidore* descryde,
By late ensample of that courteous deed,
Done to that wounded Knight in his great need,
Whom on his backe he bore, till he him brought
Vnto the Castle where they had decreed.
There of the Knight, the which that Castle ought,
To make abode that night he greatly was besought.

[3]

He was to weete a man of full ripe yeares,
That in his youth had beene of mickle might,
And borne great sway in armes amongst his peares:
But now weake age had dimd his candle light.
Yet was he courteous still to euery wight,
And loued all that did to armes incline.
And was the father of that wounded Knight,
Whom *Calidore* thus carried on his chine,
And *Aldus* was his name, and his sonnes *Aladine*.

[4]

Who when he saw his sonne so ill bedight,
With bleeding wounds, brought home vpon a Beare,

By a faire Lady, and a straunger Knight,
Was inly touched with compassion deare,
And deare affection of so dolefull dreare,
That he these words burst forth; Ah sory boy,
Is this the hope that to my hoary heare
Thou brings? aie me, is this the timely ioy,
Which I expected long, now turnd to sad annoy?

[5]

Such is the weakenesse of all mortall hope;
So tickle is the state of earthly things,
That ere they come vnto their aymed scope,
They fall too short of our fraile reckonings,
And bring vs bale and bitter sorrowings,
In stead of comfort, which we should embrace:
This is the state of Keasars and of Kings.
Let none therefore, that is in meaner place,
Too greatly grieue at any his vnlucky case.

[6]

So well and wisely did that good old Knight
Temper his grieffe, and turned it to cheare,
To cheare his guests, whom he had stayd that night,
And make their welcome to them well appeare:
That to Sir *Calidore* was easie geare;
But that faire Lady would be cheard for nought,
But sigh'd and sorrow'd for her loue deare,
And inly did afflict her pensieue thought,
With thinking to what case her name should now be brought.

[7]

For she was daughter to a noble Lord,
Which dwelt thereby, who sought her to affy
To a great pere; but she did disaccord,
Ne could her liking to his loue apply,
But lou'd this fresh young Knight, who dwelt her ny,
The lusty *Aladine*, though meaner borne,
And of lesse liuelood and hability,
Yet full of valour, the which did adorne
His meanesse much, & make her th'others riches scorne.

[8]

So hauing both found fit occasion,

They met together in that luckelesse glade;
Where that proud Knight in his presumption
The gentle *Aladine* did earst inuade,
Being vnarm'd, and set in secret shade.
Whereof she now bethinking, gan t'aduize,
How great a hazard she at earst had made
Of her good fame, and further gan deuize,
How she the blame might salue with coloured disguise.

[9]

But *Calidore* with all good courtesie
Fain'd her to frolicke, and to put away
The pensiuie fit of her melancholie;
And that old Knight by all meanes did assay,
To make them both as merry as he may.
So they the euening past, till time of rest,
When *Calidore* in seemly good array
Vnto his bowre was brought, and there vndrest,
Did sleepe all night through weary trauell of his quest.

[10]

But faire *Priscilla* (so that Lady hight)
Would to no bed, nor take no kindly sleepe,
But by her wounded loue did watch all night,
And all the night for bitter anguish weepe,
And with her teares his wounds did wash and steepe.
So well she washt them, and so well she wacht him,
That of the deadly swound, in which full deepe
He drenched was, she at the length dispacht him,
And droue away the stound, which mortally attacht him.

[11]

The morrow next, when day gan to vplooke,
He also gan vplooke with drery eye,
Like one that out of deadly dreame awooke:
Where when he saw his faire *Priscilla* by,
He deeply sigh'd, and groaned inwardly,
To thinke of this ill state, in which she stood,
To which she for his sake had weetingly
Now brought her selfe, and blam'd her noble blood:
For first, next after life, he tendered her good.

[12]

Which she perceiuing, did with plenteous teares
His care more then her owne compassionate,
Forgetfull of her owne, to minde his feares:
So both conspiring, gan to intimate
Each others grieve with zeale affectionate,
And twixt them twaine with equall care to cast,
How to saue hole her hazarded estate;
For which the onely helpe now left them last
Seem'd to be *Calidore*: all other helpes were past.

[13]

Him they did deeme, as sure to them he seemed,
A courteous Knight, and full of faithfull trust:
Therefore to him their cause they best esteemed
Whole to commit, and to his dealing iust.
Earely, so soone as *Titans* beames forth burst
Through the thicke clouds, in which they steeped lay
All night in darkenesse, duld with yron rust.
Calidore rising vp as fresh as day,
Gan freshly him addresse vnto his former way.

[14]

But first him seemed fit, that wounded Knight
To visite, after this nights perillous passe,
And to salute him, if he were in plight,
And eke that Lady his faire louely lasse.
There he him found much better then he was,
And moued speach to him of things of course,
The anguish of his paine to ouerpasse:
Mongst which he namely did to him discourse,
Of former daies mishap, his sorrowes wicked sourse.

[15]

Of which occasion *Aldine* taking hold,
Gan breake to him the fortunes of his loue,
And all his disadventures to vnfold;
That *Calidore* it dearly deepe did moue.
In th'end his kyndly courtesie to proue,
He him by all the bands of loue besought,
And as it mote a faithfull friend behoue,
To safeconduct his loue, and not for ought
To leaue, till to her fathers house he had her brought.

[16]

Sir *Calidore* his faith thereto did plight,
It to performe: so after little stay,
That she her selfe had to the iourney dight,
He passed forth with her in faire array,
Fearelesse, who ought did thinke, or ought did say,
Sith his own thought he knew most cleare from wite.
So as they past together on their way,
He can deuize this counter-cast of slight,
To giue faire colour to that Ladies cause in sight.

[17]

Streight to the carkasse of that Knight he went,
The cause of all this euill, who was slaine
The day before by iust auengement
Of noble *Tristram*, where it did remaine:
There he the necke thereof did cut in twaine,
And tooke with him the head, the signe of shame.
So forth he passed thorough that daies paine,
Till to that Ladies fathers house he came,
Most pensiuie man, through feare, what of his childe became.

[18]

There he arriuing boldly, did present
The fearefull Lady to her father deare,
Most perfect pure, and guiltlesse innocent
Of blame, as he did on his Knighthood sweare,
Since first he saw her, and did free from feare
Of a discourteous Knight, who her had reft,
And by outragious force away did beare:
Witnesse thereof he shew'd his head there left,
And wretched life forlorne for vengeance of his theft.

[19]

Most ioyfull man her sire was her to see,
And heare th'adventure of her late mischaunce;
And thousand thanks to *Calidore* for fee
Of his large paines in her deliuerance
Did yeeld; Ne lesse the Lady did aduaunce.
Thus hauing her restored trustily,
As he had vow'd, some small continuaunce
He there did make, and then most carefully
Vnto his first exploite he did him selfe apply.

[20]

So as he was pursuing of his quest
He chaunst to come whereas a iolly Knight,
In couert shade him selfe did safely rest,
To solace with his Lady in delight:
His warlike armes he had from him vndight;
For that him selfe he thought from daunger free,
And far from enuious eyes that mote him spight.
And eke the Lady was full faire to see,
And courteous withall, becomming her degree.

[21]

To whom Sir *Calidore* approaching nye,
Ere they were well aware of liuing wight,
Them much abasht, but more him selfe thereby,
That he so rudely did vppon them light,
And troubled had their quiet loues delight.
Yet since it was his fortune, not his fault,
Him selfe thereof he labour'd to acquite,
And pardon crau'd for his so rash default,
That he gainst courtesie so fowly did default.

[22]

With which his gentle words and goodly wit
He soone allayd that Knights conceiu'd displeasure,
That he besought him downe by him to sit,
That they mote treat of things abrode at leasure;
And of aduentures, which had in his measure
Of so long waies to him befallen late.
So downe he sate, and with delightfull pleasure
His long aduentures gan to him relate,
Which he endured had through daungerous debate.

[23]

Of which whilest they discoursed both together,
The faire *Serena* (so his Lady hight)
Allur'd with myldnesse of the gentle wether,
And pleasaunce of the place, the which was dight
With diuers flowres distinct with rare delight;
Wandred about the fields, as liking led
Her wauering lust after her wandring sight,
To make a garland to adorne her hed,
Without suspect of ill or daungers hidden dred.

[24]

All sodainely out of the forrest nere
The *Blatant Beast* forth rushing vnaware,
Caught her thus loosely wandring here and there,
And in his wide great mouth away her bare.
Crying aloud in vaine, to shew her sad misfare
Vnto the Knights, and calling oft for ayde,
Who with the horroure of her haplesse care
Hastily starting vp, like men dismayde,
Ran after fast to reskue the distressed mayde.

[25]

The Beast with their pursuit incited more,
Into the wood was bearing her apace
For to haue spoyled her, when *Calidore*
Who was more light of foote and swift in chace,
Him ouertooke in middest of his race:
And fiercely charging him with all his might,
Forst to forgoe his pray there in the place,
And to betake him selfe to fearefull flight;
For he durst not abide with *Calidore* to fight.

[26]

Who nathesle, when he the Lady saw
There left on ground, though in full euill plight,
Yet knowing that her Knight now neare did draw,
Staide not to succour her in that affright,
But follow'd fast the Monster in his flight:
Through woods and hils he follow'd him so fast,
That he nould let him breath nor gather spright,
But forst him gape and gaspe, with dread aghast,
As if his lungs and lites were nigh a sunder brast.

[27]

And now by this Sir *Calepine* (so hight)
Came to the place, where he his Lady found
In dolorous dismay and deadly plight,
All in gore bloud there tumbled on the ground,
Hauing both sides through grypt with griesly wound.
His weapons soone from him he threw away,
And stouping downe to her in drery swound,
Vprear'd her from the ground, whereon she lay,
And in his tender armes her forced vp to stay.

[28]

So well he did his busie paines apply,
That the faint sprite he did reuoke againe,
To her fraile mansion of mortality.
Then vp he tooke her twixt his armes twaine,
And setting on his steede, her did sustaine
With carefull hands softing foot her beside,
Till to some place of rest they mote attaine,
Where she in safe assuraunce mote abide,
Till she recured were of those her woundes wide.

[29]

Now when as *Phoebus* with his fiery waine
Vnto his Inne began to draw apace;
Tho wexing weary of that toylesome paine,
In traueilling on foote so long a space,
Not wont on foote with heauy armes to trace,
Downe in a dale forby a riuers syde,
He chaunst to spie a faire and stately place,
To which he meant his weary steps to guyde,
In hope there for his loue some succour to prouyde.

[30]

But comming to the riuers side, he found
That hardly passable on foote it was:
Therefore there still he stood as in a stound,
Ne wist which way he through the foord mote pas.
Thus whilest he was in this distressed case,
Deuising what to doe, he nigh espyde
An armed Knight approaching to the place,
With a faire Lady lincked by his syde,
The which themselues prepard through the foord to ride

[31]

Whom *Calepine* saluting (as became)
Besought of courtesie in that his neede,
For safe conducting of his sickely Dame,
Through that same perillous foord with better heede,
To take him vp behinde vpon his steed,
To whom that other did this taunt returne.
Perdy thou peasant Knight, mightst rightly reed
Me then to be full base and euill borne,
If I would beare behinde a burden of such scorne.

[32]

But as thou hast thy steed forlorne with shame,
So fare on foote till thou another gayne,
And let thy Lady likewise doe the same,
Or beare her on thy backe with pleasing payne,
And proue thy manhood on the billowes vayne.
With which rude speach his Lady much displeased,
Did him reproue, yet could him not restrayne,
And would on her owne Palfrey him haue eased,
For pittie of his Dame, whom she saw so diseased.

[33]

Sir *Calepine* her thanckt, yet inly wroth
Against her Knight, her gentlenesse refused,
And carelesly into the riuier goth,
As in despight to be so fowle abused
Of a rude churle, whom often he accused
Of fowle discourtesie, vnfit for Knight
And strongly wading through the waues vnused,
With speare in th'one hand, stayd him selfe vpright,
With th'other staide his Lady vp with stedly might.

[34]

And all the while, that same discourteous Knight,
Stood on the further bancke beholding him,
At whose calamity, for more despight
He laught, and mockt to see him like to swim.
But when as *Calepine* came to the brim,
And saw his carriage past that perill well,
Looking at that same Carle with count'nance grim,
His heart with vengeaunce inwardly did swell,
And forth at last did breake in speaches sharpe and fell.

[35]

Vnknightly Knight, the blemish of that name,
And blot of all that armes vpon them take,
Which is the badge of honour and of fame,
Loe I defie thee, and here challenge make,
That thou for euer doe those armes forsake;
And be for euer held a recreant Knight,
Vnlesse thou dare for thy deare Ladies sake,
And for thine owne defence on foote alight,
To iustifie thy fault gainst me in equall fight.

[36]

The dastard, that did heare him selfe defyde,
Seem'd not to weigh his threatfull words at all,
But laught them out, as if his greater pryde,
Did scorne the challenge of so base a thrall:
Or had no courage, or else had no gall.
So much the more was *Calepine* offended,
That him to no reuenge he forth could call,
But both his challenge and him selfe contemned,
Ne cared as a coward so to be condemned.

[37]

But he nought weighing what he sayd or did,
Turned his steede about another way,
And with his Lady to the Castle rid,
Where was his won; ne did the other stay,
But after went directly as he may,
For his sicke charge some harbour there to seeke;
Where he arriuing with the fall of day,
Drew to the gate, and there with prayers meeke,
And myld entreaty lodging did for her beseeke.

[38]

But the rude Porter that no manners had,
Did shut the gate against him in his face,
And entraunce boldly vnto him forbad.
Nathelesse the Knight now in so needy case,
Gan him entreat euen with submission base,
And humbly praid to let them in that night:
Who to him aunswer'd, that there was no place
Of lodging fit for any errant Knight,
Vnlesse that with his Lord he formerly did fight.

[39]

Full loth am I (quoth he) as now at earst,
When day is spent, and rest vs needeth most,
And that this Lady, both whose sides are pearst
With wounds, is ready to forgo the ghost:
Ne would I gladly combate with mine host,
That should to me such curtesie afford,
Vnlesse that I were thereunto enforst.
But yet aread to me, how hight thy Lord,
That doth thus strongly ward the Castle of the ford.

[40]

His name (quoth he) if that thou list to learne,
Is hight Sir *Turpine*, one of mickle might,
And manhood rare, but terrible and stearne
In all assaies to euery errant Knight,
Because of one, that wrought him fowle despight.
Ill seemes (sayd he) if he so valiaunt be,
That he should be so sterne to stranger wight:
For seldome yet did liuing creature see,
That curtesie and manhood euer disagree.

[41]

But go thy waies to him, and fro me say,
That here is at his gate an errant Knight,
That house-rome craues, yet would be loth t'assay
The prooffe of battell, now in doubtfull night,
Or curtesie with rudenesse to requite:
Yet if he needes will fight, craue leaue till morne,
And tell with all, the lamentable plight,
In which this Lady languisheth forlorne,
That pitty craues, as he of woman was yborne.

[42]

The groome went streight way in, and to his Lord
Declar'd the message, which that Knight did moue;
Who sitting with his Lady then at bord,
Not onely did not his demaund reprove,
But both himselfe reuil'd, and eke his loue;
Albe his Lady, that *Blandina* hight,
Him of vngentle vsage did approue
And earnestly entreated that they might
Finde fauour to be lodged there for that same night.

[43]

Yet would he not perswaded be for ought,
Ne from his currish will awhit reclame.
Which answer when the groome returning, brought
To *Calepine*, his heart did inly flame
With wrathfull fury for so foule a shame,
That he could not thereof auenged bee:
But most for pitty of his dearest Dame,
Whom now in deadly daunger he did see;
Yet had no meanes to comfort, nor procure her glee.

[44]

But all in vaine; for why, no remedy
He saw, the present mischiefe to redresse,
But th'vtmost end perforce for to aby,
Which that nights fortune would for him addresse.
So downe he tooke his Lady in distresse,
And layd her vnderneath a bush to sleepe,
Couer'd with cold, and wrapt in wretchednesse,
Whiles he him selfe all night did nought but weepe,
And wary watch about her for her safegard keepe.

[45]

The morrow next, so soone as ioyous day
Did shew it selfe in sunny beames bedight,
Serena full of dolorous dismay,
Twixt darkenesse dread, and hope of liuing light,
Vprear'd her head to see that chearefull sight.
Then *Calepine*, how euer inly wroth,
And greedy to auenge that vile despight,
Yet for the feeble Ladies sake, full loth
To make there lenger stay, forth on his iourney goth.

[46]

He goth on foote all armed by her side,
Vpstaying still her selfe vppon her steede,
Being vnhabable else alone to ride;
So sore her sides, so much her wounds did bleede:
Till that at length, in his extreamest neede,
He chaunst far off an armed Knight to spy,
Pursuing him apace with greedy speede,
Whom well he wist to be some enemy,
That meant to make aduantage of his misery.

[47]

Wherefore he stayd, till that he nearer drew,
To weet what issue would thereof betyde,
Tho whenas he approched nigh in vew,
By certaine signes he plainely him descryde,
To be the man, that with such scornefull pryde
Had him abusde, and shamed yesterday;
Therefore misdoubting, least he should misguyde
His former malice to some new assay,
He cast to keepe him selfe so safely as he may.

[48]

By this the other came in place likewise,
And couching close his speare and all his powre,
As bent to some malicious enterprise,
He bad him stand, t'abide the bitter auoure
Of his sore vengeaunce, or to make auoure
Of the lewd words and deedes, which he had done:
With that ran at him, as he would deuoure
His life atonce; who nought could do, but shun
The perill of his pride, or else be ouerrun.

[49]

Yet he him still pursew'd from place to place,
With full intent him cruelly to kill,
And like a wilde goate round about did chace,
Flying the fury of his bloody will.
But his best succour and refuge was still
Behinde his Ladies backe, who to him cryde,
And called oft with prayers loud and shrill,
As euer he to Lady was affyde,
To spare her Knight, and rest with reason pacifyde.

[50]

But he the more thereby enraged was,
And with more eager felnesse him pursew'd,
So that at length, after long weary chace,
Hauing by chaunce a close aduantage vew'd,
He ouer raught him, hauing long eschew'd
His violence in vaine, and with his spere
Strooke through his shoulder, that the blood ensew'd
In great aboundance, as a well it were,
That forth out of an hill fresh gushing did appere.

[51]

Yet ceast he not for all that cruell wound,
But chaste him still, for all his Ladies cry,
Not satisfyde till on the fatall ground
He saw his life powrd forth dispiteously:
The which was certes in great ieopardy,
Had not a wondrous chaunce his reskue wrought,
And saued from his cruell villany.
Such chaunces oft exceed all humaine thought:

That in another Canto shall to end be brought.

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