

Cant. VII.

*The witches sonne loues Florimell:
she flyes, he faines to die.
Satyrane saues the Squire of Dames
from Gyants tyrannie.*

[1]

Like as an Hynd forth singled from the heard,
That hath escaped from a rauinous beast,
Yet flyes away of her owne feet affeard,
And euery leafe, that shaketh with the least
Murmure of winde, her terror hath encreast;
So fled faire *Florimell* from her vaine feare,
Long after she from perill was releast:
Each shade she saw, and each noyse she did heare,
Did seeme to be the same, which she escapt whyleare.

[2]

All that same euening she in flying spent,
And all that night her course continewd:
Ne did she let dull sleepe once to relent,
Nor wearinesse to slacke her hast, but fled
Euer alike, as if her former dred
Were hard behind, her readie to arrest:
And her white Palfrey hauing conquered
The maistring raines out of her weary wrest,
Perforce her carried, where euer he thought best.

[3]

So long as breath, and hable puissance
Did natiue courage vnto him supply,
His pace he freshly forward did aduance,
And carried her beyond all ieopardy,
But nought that wanteth rest, can long aby.
He hauing through incessant trauell spent
His force, at last perforce a downe did ly,
Ne foot could further moue: The Lady gent
Thereat was suddein strooke with great astonishment.

[4]

And forst t'alight, on foot mote algates fare,
A traeller vnwonted to such way:

Need teacheth her this lesson hard and rare,
That fortune all in equall launce doth sway,
And mortall miseries doth make her play.
So long she trauelled, till at length she came
To an hilles side, which did to her bewray
A little valley, subiect to the same,
All couerd with thick woods, that quite it ouercame.

[5]

Through the tops of the high trees she did descry
A litle smoke, whose vapour thin and light,
Reeking aloft, vprolled to the sky:
Which, chearefull signe did send vnto her sight,
That in the same did wonne some liuing wight.
Estsoones her steps she thereunto applyde,
And came at last in weary wretched plight
Vnto the place, to which her hope did guyde,
To find some refuge there, and rest her weary syde.

[6]

There in a gloomy hollow glen she found
A little cottage, built of stickes and reedes
In homely wize, and wald with sods around,
In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weedes,
And wilfull want, all carelesse of her needes;
So choosing solitarie to abide,
Far from all neighbours, that her deuilish deedes
And hellish arts from people she might hide,
And hurt far off vnknowne, whom euer she enuide.

[7]

The Damzell there arriuing entred in;
Where sitting on the flore the Hag she found,
Busie (as seem'd) about some wicked gin:
Who soone as she beheld that sudde in stound,
Lightly vpstarted from the dustie ground,
And with fell looke and hollow deadly gaze
Stared on her awhile, as one astound,
Ne had one word to speake, for great amaze.
But shewd by outward signes, that dread her sence did daze.

[8]

At last turning her feare to foolish wrath,

She askt, what deuill had her thither brought,
And who she was, and what vnwonted path
Had guided her, vnwelcomed, vnsought?
To which the Damzell full of doubtfull thought,
Her mildly answer'd; Beldame be not wroth
With silly Virgin by aduerture brought
Vnto your dwelling, ignorant and loth,
That craue but rowme to rest, while tempest ouerblo'th.

[9]

With that adowne out of her Christall eyne
Few trickling teares she softly forth let fall,
That like two Orient pearles, did purely shyne
Vpon her snowy cheeke; and therewithall
She sighed soft, that none so bestiall,
Nor saluage hart, but ruth of her sad plight
Would make to melt, or pitteously appall;
And that vile Hag, all were her whole delight
In mischiefe, was much moued at so pitteous sight.

[10]

And gan recomfort her in her rude wyse,
With womanish compassion of her plaint,
Wiping the teares from her suffused eyes,
And bidding her sit downe, to rest her faint
And wearie limbs a while. She nothing quaint
Nor s'deignfull of so homely fashion,
Sith brought she was now to so hard constraint,
Sate downe vpon the dusty ground anon,
As glad of that small rest, as Bird of tempest gon.

[11]

Tho gan she gather vp her garments rent,
And her loose lockes to dight in order dew,
With golden wreath and gorgeous ornament;
Whom such whenas the wicked Hag did vew,
She was astonisht at her heauenly hew,
And doubted her to deeme an earthly wight,
But or some Goddessse, or of *Dianes* crew,
And thought her to adore with humble spright;
T'adore thing so diuine as beauty, were but right.

[12]

This wicked woman had a wicked sonne,
The comfort of her age and weary dayes,
A laesie loord, for nothing good to donne,
But stretched forth in idlenesse alwayes,
Ne euer cast his mind to couet prayse,
Or ply him selfe to any honest trade,
But all the day before the sunny rayes
He vs'd to slug, or sleepe in slothfull shade:
Such laesinesse both lewd and poore attonce him made.

[13]

He comming home at vndertime, there found
The fairest creature, that he euer saw,
Sitting beside his mother on the ground;
The sight whereof did greatly him adaw,
And his base thought with terrour and with aw
So inly smot, that as one, which had gazed
On the bright Sunne vnwares, doth soone withdraw
His feeble eyne, with too much brightnesse dazed;
So stared he on her, and stood long while amazed.

[14]

Softly at last he gan his mother aske,
What mister wight that was, and whence deriued,
That in so straunge disguizement there did maske,
And by what accident she there arriued:
But she, as one nigh of her wits depriued,
With nought but ghastly lookes him answered,
Like to a ghost, that lately is reuiued
From *Stygian* shores, where late it wandered;
So both at her, and each at other wondered.

[15]

But the faire Virgin was so meeke and mild,
That she to them vouchsafed to embace
Her goodly port, and to their senses vild,
Her gentle speach applide, that in short space
She grew familiare in that desert place.
During which time, the Chorle through her so kind
And curteise vse conceiu'd affection bace,
And cast to loue her in his brutish mind,
No loue, but brutish lust, that was so beastly tind.

[16]

Closely the wicked flame his bowels brent,
And shortly grew into outrageous fire;
Yet had he not the hart, nor hardiment,
As vnto her to vtter his desire;
His caytiue thought durst not so high aspire,
But with soft sighes, and louely semblaunces,
He ween'd that his affection entire
She should aread; many resembraunces
To her he made, and many kind remembraunces.

[17]

Oft from the forrest wildings he did bring,
Whose sides empurpled were with smiling red,
And oft young birds, which he had taught to sing
His mistresse prayses, sweetly caroled,
Girmonds of flowres sometimes for her faire hed
He fine would dight; sometimes the squirell wild
He brought to her in bands, as conquered
To be her thrall, his fellow seruant vild;
All which, she of him tooke with countenance meeke and mild.

[18]

But past awhile, when she fit season saw
To leaue that desert mansion, she cast
In secret wize her selfe thence to withdraw,
For feare of mischiefe, which she did forecast
Might be the witch or that her sonne compast:
Her wearie Palfrey closely, as she might,
Now well recouered after long repast,
In his proud furnitures she freshly dight,
His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right.

[19]

And earely ere the dawning day appeared,
She forth issewed, and on her iourney went;
She went in perill, of each noyse affeard,
And of each shade, that did it selfe present,
For still she feared to be ouerhent,
Of that vile hag, or her vnciuile sonne:
Who when too late awaking, well they kent,
That their faire guest was gone, they both begonne
To make exceeding mone, as they had bene vndonne.

[20]

But that lewd louer did the most lament
For her depart, that euer man did heare;
He knockt his brest with desperate intent,
And scratcht his face, and with his teeth did teare
His rugged flesh, and rent his ragged heare:
That his sad mother seeing his sore plight,
Was greatly woe begon, and gan to feare,
Least his fraile senses were emperisht quight,
And loue to frenzy turnd, sith loue is franticke hight.

[21]

All wayes she sought, him to restore to plight,
With herbs, with charms, with counsell, & with teares,
But tears, nor charms, nor herbs, nor counsell might
Asswage the fury, which his entrails teares:
So strong is passion, that no reason heares.
Tho when all other helps she saw to faile,
She turnd her selfe backe to her wicked leares
And by her deuilish arts thought to preuaile,
To bring her backe againe, or worke her finall bale.

[22]

Eftsoones out of her hidden caue she cald
An hideous beast, of horrible aspect,
That could the stoutest courage haue appald;
Monstrous mishapt, and all his backe was spect
With thousand spots of colours queint elect,
Thereto so swift, that it all beasts did pas:
Like neuer yet did liuing eye detect;
But likest it to an *Hyena* was,
That feeds on womens flesh, as others feede on gras.

[23]

It forth she cald, and gaue it streight in charge,
Through thicke and thin her to pursew apace,
Ne once to stay to rest, or breath at large,
Till her he had attaind, and brought in place,
Or quite deuourd her beauties scornfull grace.
The Monster swift as word, that from her went,
Went forth in hast, and did her footing trace
So sure and swiftly, through his perfect sent,

And passing speede, that shortly he her ouerhent.

[24]

Whom when the fearefull Damzell nigh espide,
No need to bid her fast away to flie;
That vgly shape so sore her terrifide,
That it she shund no lesse, then dread to die,
And her flit Palfrey did so well apply
His nimble feet to her conceiued feare,
That whilest his breath did strength to him supply,
From perill free he her away did beare:
But when his force gan faile, his pace gan wex areare.

[25]

Which whenas she perceiu'd, she was dismayd
At that same last extremitie full sore,
And of her safetie greatly grew afrayd;
And now she gan approach to the sea shore,
As it befell, that she could flie no more,
But yield her selfe to spoile of greedinesse.
Lightly she leaped, as a wight forlore,
From her dull horse, in desperate distresse,
And to her feet betooke her doubtfull sicknesse.

[26]

Not halfe so fast the wicked *Myrrha* fled
From dread of her reuenging fathers hond:
Nor halfe so fast to saue her maidenhed,
Fled fearefull *Daphne* on th'*AEgean* strond,
As *Florimell* fled from that Monster yond,
To reach the sea, ere she of him were raught:
For in the sea to drowne her selfe she fond,
Rather then of the tyrant to be caught:
Thereto feare gaue her wings, and neede her courage taught.

[27]

It fortun'd (high God did so ordaine)
As she arriued on the roring shore,
In minde to leape into the mighty maine,
A little boate lay houing her before,
In which there slept a fisher old and pore,
The whiles his nets were drying on the sand:
Into the same she leapt, and with the ore

Did thrust the shallop from the floting strand:
So safetie found at sea, which she found not at land.

[28]

The Monster ready on the pray to sease,
Was of his forward hope deceiued quight;
Ne durst assay to wade the perlous seas,
But greedily long gaping at the sight,
At last in vaine was forst to turne his flight,
And tell the idle tidings to his Dame:
Yet to auenge his deuilish despight,
He set vpon her Palfrey tired lame,
And slew him cruelly, ere any reskew came.

[29]

And after hauing him embowelled,
To fill his bellish gorge, it chaunst a knight
To passe that way, as forth he trauelled;
It was a goodly Swaine, and of great might,
As euer man that bloody field did fight;
But in vaine sheows, that wont yong knights bewitch,
And courtly seruices tooke no delight,
But rather ioyd to be, then seemen fich:
For both to be and seeme to him was labour lich.

[30]

It was to weete the good Sir *Satyrane*,
That raungd abroad to seeke aduentures wilde,
As was his wont in forrest, and in plaine;
He was all armd in rugged steele vnfilde,
As in the smoky forge it was compilde,
And in his Scutchin bore a Satyres hed:
He comming present, where the Monster vilde
Vpon that milke-white Palfreyes carkas fed,
Vnto his reskew ran, and greedily him sped.

[31]

There well perceiu'd he, that it was the horse,
Whereon faire *Florimell* was wont to ride,
That of that feend was rent without remorse:
Much feared he, least ought did ill betide
To that faire Mayd, the flowre of womens pride;
For her he dearely loued, and in all

His famous conquests highly magnifide:
Besides her golden girdle, which did fall
From her in flight, he found, that did him sore apall.

[32]

Full of sad feare, and doubtfull agony,
Fiercely he flew vpon that wicked feend,
And with huge strokes, and cruell battery
Him forst to leaue his pray, for to attend
Him selfe from deadly daunger to defend:
Full many wounds in his corrupted flesh
He did engraue, and muchell bloud did spend,
Yet might not do him dye, but aye more fresh
And fierce he still appeared, the more he did him thresh,

[33]

He wist not, how him to despoile of life,
Ne how to win the wished victory,
Sith him he saw still stronger grow through strife,
And him selfe weaker through infirmity;
Greatly he grew enrag'd, and furiously
Hurling his sword away, he lightly left
Vpon the beast, that with great cruelty
Rored, and raged to be vnder-kept:
Yet he perforce him held, and strokes vpon him hept.

[34]

As he that striues to stop a suddein flood,
And in strong banckes his violence enclose,
Forceth it swell about his wonted mood,
And largely ouerflow the fruitfull plaine,
That all the countrey seemes to be a Maine,
And the rich furrowes flote, all quite fordonne:
The wofull husbandman doth lowd complaine,
To see his whole yeares labour lost so soone,
For which to God he made so many an idle boone.

[35]

So him he held, and did through might amate:
So long he held him, and him bet so long,
That at the last his fiercenesse gan abate,
And meekely stoup vnto the victour strong:
Who to auenge the implacable wrong,

Which he supposed donne to *Florimell*,
Sought by all meanes his dolour to prolong,
Sith dint of steele his carcass could not quell:
His maker with her charmes had framed him so well.

[36]

The golden ribband, which that virgin wore
About her slender wast, he tooke in hand,
And with it bound the beast, that lowd did rore
For great despight of that vnwonted band,
Yet dared not his victour to withstand,
But trembled like a lambe, fled from the pray,
And all the way him followd on the strand,
As he had long bene learned to obay;
Yet neuer learned he such seruice, till that day.

[37]

Thus as he led the Beast along the way,
He spide far off a mighty Giautesse,
Fast flying on a Courser dapled gray,
From a bold knight, that with great hardinesse
Her hard pursewd, and sought for to suppressse;
She bore before her lap a dolefull Squire,
Lying athwart her horse in great distresse,
Fast bounden hand and foote with cords of wire,
Whom she did meane to make the thrall of her desire.

[38]

Which whenas *Satyrane* beheld, in hast
He left his captiue Beast at liberty,
And crost the nearest way, by which he cast
Her to encounter, ere she passed by:
But she the way shund nathemore for thy,
But forward gallopt fast; which when he spyde,
His mighty speare he couched warily,
And at her ran: she hauing him descryde,
Her selfe to fight addrest, and threw her lode aside.

[39]

Like as a Goshauke, that in foote doth beare
A trembling Culuer, hauing spide on hight
An Egle, that with plummy wings doth sheare
The subtile ayre, stouping with all his might,

The quarrey throwes to ground with fell despight,
And to the battell doth her selfe prepare:
So ran the Geauntesse vnto the fight;
Her firie eyes with furious sparkes did stare,
And with blasphemous bannes high God in peeces tare.

[40]

She caught in hand an huge great yron mace,
Wherewith she many had of life depriued;
But ere the stroke could seize his aymed place,
His speare amidst her sun-broad shield arriued;
Yet nathemore the steele a sunder riued,
All were the beame in bignesse like a mast,
Ne her out of the stedfast sadle driued,
But glauncing on the tempred mettall, brast
In thousand shiuers, and so forth beside her past.

[41]

Her Steed did stagger with that puissaunt strooke;
But she no more was moued with that might,
Then it had lighted on an aged Oke;
Or on the marble Pillour, that is pight
Vpon the top of Mount *Olympus* hight,
For the braue youthly Champions to assay,
With burning charet wheelles it nigh to smite:
But who that smites it, mars his ioyous play,
And is the spectacle of ruinous decay.

[42]

Yet therewith sore enrag'd, with sterne regard
Her dreadfull weapon she to him address,
Which on his helmet martelled so hard,
That made him low incline his lofty crest,
And bowd his battred visour to his brest:
Wherewith he was so stund, that he n'ote ryde,
But reeled to and fro from East to West:
Which when his cruell enemy espyde,
She lightly vnto him adioyned side to syde;

[43]

And on his collar laying puissant hand,
Out of his wauering seat him pluckt perforce,
Perforce him pluckt, vnable to withstand,

Or helpe himselfe, and laying thwart her horse,
In loathly wise like to a carion corse,
She bore him fast away. Which when the knight,
That her pursewed, saw with great remorse,
He neare was touched in his noble spright,
And gan encrease his speed, as she encreast her flight.

[44]

Whom when as nigh approaching she espyde,
She threw away her burden angrily;
For she list not the battell to abide,
But made her selfe more light, away to fly:
Yet her the hardy knight pursewd so nye,
That almost in the backe he oft her strake:
But still when him at hand she did espy,
She turnd, and semblaunce of faire fight did make;
But when he stayd, to flight againe she did her take.

[45]

By this good Sir *Satyrane* gan wake
Out of his dreame, that did him long entraunce,
And seeing none in place, he gan to make
Exceeding mone, and curst that cruell chaunce,
Which reft from him so faire a cheuisaunce:
At length he spide, whereas that wofull Squire,
Whom he had reskewed from captiuaunce
Of his strong foe, lay tumbled in the myre,
Vnable to arise, or foot or hand to styre.

[46]

To whom approaching, well he mote perceiue
In that foule plight a comely personage,
And louely face, made fit for to deceiue
Fraile Ladies hart with loues consuming rage,
Now in the blossome of his freshest age:
He reard him vp, and loosd his yron bands,
And after gan inquire his parentage,
And how he fell into that Gyaunts hands,
And who that was, which chaced her along the lands.

[47]

Then trembling yet through feare, the Squire bespake,
That Geauntesse *Argante* is behight,

A daughter of the *Titans* which did make
Warre against heauen, and heaped hills on hight,
To scale the skyes, and put *Ioue* from his right:
Her sire *Typhaeus* was, who mad through merth,
And drunke with bloud of men, slaine by his might,
Through incest, her of his owne mother Earth
Whilome begot, being but halfe twin of that berth.

[48]

For at that berth another Babe she bore,
To weete the mighty *Ollyphant*, that wrought
Great wreake to many errant knights of yore,
And many hath to foule confusion brought.
These twinnes, men say, (a thing far passing thought)
Whiles in their mothers wombe enclosed they were,
Ere they into the lightsome world were brought,
In fleshly lust were mingled both yfere,
And in that monstrous wise did to the world appere.

[49]

So liu'd they euer after in like sin,
Gainst natures law, and good behauioure:
But greatest shame was to that maiden twin,
Who not content so fowly to deuoure
Her natiue flesh, and straine her brothers bowre,
Did wallow in all other fleshly myre,
And suffred beasts her body to deflowre:
So whot she burned in that lustfull fyre,
Yet all that might not slake her sensuall desyre.

[50]

But ouer all the countrey she did raunge,
To seeke young men, to quench her flaming thirst,
And feed her fancy with delightfull change:
Whom so she fittest finds to serue her lust,
Through her maine strength, in which she most doth trust,
She with her brings into a secret Ile,
Where in eternall bondage dye he must,
Or be the vassall of her pleasures vile,
And in all shamefull sort him selfe with her defile.

[51]

Me seely wretch she so at vantage caught,

After she long in waite for me did lye,
And meant vnto her prison to haue brought,
Her lothsome pleasure there to satisfye;
That thousand deathes me leuer were to dye,
Then breake the vow, that to faire *Columbell*
I plighted haue, and yet keepe stedfastly:
As for my name, it mistreth not to tell;
Call me the *Squyre of Dames* that me beseemeth well.

[52]

But that bold knight, whom ye pursuing saw
That Geauntesse, is not such, as she seemed,
But a faire virgin, that in martiall law,
And deedes of armes aboute all Dames is deemed,
And aboute many knights is eke esteemed,
For her great worth; She *Palladine* is hight:
She you from death, you me from dread redeemed.
Ne any may that Monster match in fight,
But she, or such as she, that is so chaste a wight.

[53]

Her well beseemes that Quest (quoth *Satyrane*)
But read, thou *Squyre of Dames*, what vow is this,
Which thou vpon thy selfe hast lately ta'ne?
That shall I you recount (quoth he) ywis,
So be ye pleasd to pardon all amis.
That gentle Lady, whom I loue and serue,
After long suit and weary seruicis,
Did aske me, how I could her loue deserue,
And how she might be sure, that I would neuer swerue.

[54]

I glad by any meanes her grace to gaine,
Bad her commaund my life to saue, or spill.
Eftsoones she bad me, with incessaunt paine
To wander through the world abroad at will,
And euery where, where with my power or skill
I might do seruice vnto gentle Dames,
That I the same should faithfully fulfill,
And at the twelue monethes end should bring their names
And pldges; as the spoiles of my victorious games.

[55]

So well I to faire Ladies seruice did,
And found such fauour in their louing hartes,
That ere the yeare his course had compassid,
Three hundred pledges for my good desartes,
And thirse three hundred thanks for my good partes
I with me brought, and did to her present:
Which when she saw, more bent to eke my smartes,
Then to reward my trusty true intent,
She gan for me devise a grieuous punishment.

[56]

To weet, that I my trauell should resume,
And with like labour walke the world around,
Ne euer to her presence should presume,
Till I so many other Dames had found,
The which, for all the suit I could propound,
Would me refuse their pledges to afford,
But did abide for euer chast and sound.
Ah gentle Squire (quoth he) tell at one word,
How many foundst thou such to put in thy record?

[57]

In deed Sir knight (said he) one word may tell
All, that I euer found so wisely stayd;
For onely three they were disposd so well,
And yet three yeares I now abroad haue strayd,
To find them out. Mote I (then laughing sayd
The knight) inquire of thee, what were those three,
The which thy proffred curtesie denayd?
Or ill they seemed sure auizd to bee,
Or brutishly brought vp, that neu'r did fashions see.

[58]

The first which then refused me (said hee)
Certes was but a common Courtisane,
Yet flat refusd to haue a do with mee,
Because I could not giue her many a Iane.
(Thereat full hartely laughed *Satyrane*)
The second was an holy Nunne to chose,
Which would not let me be her Chappellane,
Because she knew, she said, I would disclose
Her counsell, if she should her trust in me repose.

[59]

The third a Damzell was of low degree,
Whom I in countrey cottage found by chaunce;
Full little weened I, that chastitee
Had lodging in so meane a maintenaunce,
Yet was she faire, and in her countenance
Dwelt simple truth in seemely fashion.
Long thus I woo'd her with dew obseruance,
In hope vnto my pleasure to haue won;
But was as farre at last, as when I first begon.

[60]

Safe her, I neuer any woman found,
That chastity did for it selfe embrace,
But were for other causes firme and sound;
Either for want of handsome time and place,
Or else for feare of shame and fowle disgrace.
Thus am I hopelesse euer to attaine
My Ladies loue, in such a desperate case,
But all my dayes am like to wast in vaine,
Seeking to match the chaste with th'vnchaste Ladies traine.

[61]

Perdy, (said *Satyrane*) thou *Squire of Dames*,
Great labour fondly hast thou hent in hand,
To get small thanks, and therewith many blames,
That may emongst *Alcides* labours stand.
Thence backe returning to the former land,
Where late he left the Beast, he ouercame,
He found him not; for he had broke his band,
And was return'd againe vnto his Dame,
To tell what tydings of faire *Florimell* became.

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