

## *Cant. VII.*

*Turpine is baffuld, his two knights  
doe gaine their treasons meed,  
Fayre Mirabellaes punishment  
for loues disdainde decreed.*

[1]

**L**ike as the gentle hart it selfe bewrayes,  
In doing gentle deedes with franke delight,  
Euen so the baser mind it selfe displayes,  
In cancred malice and reuengefull spight.  
For to maligne, t'enuie, t'vse shifting slight,  
Be arguments of a vile donghill mind,  
Which what it dare not doe by open might,  
To worke by wicked treason wayes doth find,  
By such discourteous deeds discouring his base kind.

[2]

That well appears in this discourteous knight,  
The coward *Turpine*, whereof now I treat;  
Who notwithstanding that in former fight  
He of the Prince his life receiued late,  
Yet in his mind malitious and ingrate  
He gan denize, to be aueng'd anew  
For all that shame, which kindled inward hate.  
Therefore so soone as he was out of vew,  
Himselfe in hast he arm'd, and did him fast pursew.

[3]

Well did he tract his steps, as he did ryde,  
Yet would not neare approch in daungers eye,  
But kept aloofe for dread to be descryde,  
Vntill fit time and place he mote espy,  
Where he mote worke him scath and villeny.  
At last he met two knights to him vnknowne,  
The which were arm'd both agreeably,  
And both combynd, what euer chaunce were blowne,  
Betwixt them to diuide, and each to make his owne.

[4]

To whom false *Turpine* comming courteously,  
To cloke the mischiefe, which he inly ment,

Gan to complaine of great discourtesie,  
Which a straunge knight, that neare afore him went,  
Had doen to him, and his deare Ladie shent:  
Which if they would afford him ayde at need  
For to auenge, in time conuenient,  
They should accomplish both a knightly deed,  
And for their paines obtaine of him a goodly meed.

[5]

The knights beleeu'd, that all he sayd, was trew,  
And being fresh and full of youthly spright,  
Were glad to heare of that aduenture new,  
In which they mote make triall of their might,  
Which neuer yet they had approu'd in fight;  
And eke desirous of the offred meed,  
Said then the one of them; where is that wight,  
The which hath doen to thee this wrongfull deed,  
That we may it auenge, and punish him with speed?

[6]

He rides (said *Turpine*) there not farre afore,  
With a wyld man soft footing by his syde,  
That if ye list to haste a litle more,  
Ye may him ouertake in timely tyde:  
Eftsoones they pricked forth with forward pryde,  
And ere that litle while they ridden had,  
The gentle Prince not farre away they spyde,  
Ryding a softly pace with portance sad,  
Deuizing of his loue more, then of daunger drad.

[7]

Then one of them aloud vnto him cryde,  
Bidding him turne againe, false traytour knight,  
Foule womanwronger, for he him defyde.  
With that they both at once with equall spight  
Did bend their speares, and both with equall might  
Against him ran; but th'one did misse his marke,  
And being carried with his force forthright,  
Glaunst swiftly by; like to that heauenly sparke,  
Which glyding through the ayre lights all the heuens darke.

[8]

But th'other ayming better, did him smite

Full in the shield, with so impetuous powre,  
That all his launce in peeces shiuered quite,  
And scattered all about, fell on the flowre.  
But the stout Prince, with much more stedly stowre  
Full on his beuer did him strike so sore,  
That the cold steele through piercing, did deuowre  
His vitall breath, and to the ground him bore,  
Where still he bathed lay in his owne bloody gore.

[9]

As when a cast of Faulcons make their flight  
At an Herneshaw, that lyes aloft on wing,  
The whyles they strike at him with heedlesse might,  
The warie foule his bill doth backward wring;  
On which the first, whose force her first doth bring,  
Her selfe quite through the bodie doth engore,  
And falleth downe to ground like senselesse thing,  
But th'other not so swift, as she before,  
Fayles of her souse, and passing by doth hurt no more.

[10]

By this the other, which was passed by,  
Himselfe recouering, was return'd to fight;  
Where when he saw his fellow lifelesse ly,  
He much was daunted with so dismall sight;  
Yet nought abating of his former spight,  
Let driue at him with so malitious mynd,  
As if he would haue passed through him quight:  
But the steele-head no stedfast hold could fynd,  
But glauncing by, deceiu'd him of that he desynd.

[11]

Not so the Prince: for his well learned speare  
Tooke surer hould, and from his horses backe  
Aboue a launces length him forth did beare,  
And gainst the cold hard earth so sore him strake,  
That all his bones in peeces nigh he brake.  
Where seeing him so lie, he left his steed,  
And to him leaping, vengeance thought to take  
Of him, for all his former follies meed,  
With flaming sword in hand his terror more to breed.

[12]

The fearefull swayne beholding death so nie,  
Cryde out aloud for mercie him to saue;  
In lieu whereof he would to him descrie,  
Great treason to him meant, his life to reauē.  
The Prince soone hearkned, and his life forgauē.  
Then thus said he, There is a straunger knight,  
The which for promise of great meed, vs draue  
To this attempt, to wreake his hid despight,  
For that himselfe thereto did want sufficient might.

[13]

The Prince much mused at such villenie,  
And sayd; Now sure ye well haue earn'd your meed,  
For th'one is dead, and th'other soone shall die,  
Vnlesse to me thou hether bring with speed  
The wretch, that hyr'd you to this wicked deed,  
He glad of life, and willing eke to wreake  
The guilt on him, which did this mischiefe breed,  
Swore by his sword, that neither day nor weeke  
He would surceasse, but him, where so he were, would seeke.

[14]

So vp he rose, and forth streight way he went  
Backe to the place, where *Turpine* late he lore;  
There he him found in great astonishment,  
To see him so bedight with bloodie gore,  
And griesly wounds that him appalled sore.  
Yet thus at length he said, how now Sir knight?  
What meaneth this, which here I see before?  
How fortuneth this foule vncomely plight,  
So different from that, which earst ye seem'd in sight?

[15]

Perdie (said he) in euill houre it fell,  
That euer I for meed did vndertake  
So hard a taske, as life for hyre to sell;  
The which I earst aduentur'd for your sake.  
Witnessse the wounds, and this wyde bloudie lake,  
Which ye may see yet all about me steeme.  
Therefore now yeeld, as ye did promise make,  
My due reward, the which right well I deeme  
I yearded haue, that life so dearly did redeeme.

[16]

But where then is (quoth he halfe wrothfully)  
Where is the bootie, which therefore I bought,  
That cursed caytiue, my strong enemy,  
That recreant knight, whose hated life I sought?  
And where is eke your friend, which halfe it ought?  
He lyes (said he) vpon the cold bare ground,  
Slayne of that errant knight, with whom he fought;  
Whom afterwards my selfe with many a wound  
Did slay againe, as ye may see there in the stound.

[17]

Thereof false *Turpin* was full glad and faine,  
And needs with him streight to the place would ryde,  
Where he himselfe might see his foeman slaine;  
For else his feare could not be satisfyde.  
So as they rode, he saw the way all dyde  
With streames of bloud; which tracting by the traile,  
Ere long they came, whereas in euill tyde  
That other swayne, like ashes deadly pale,  
Lay in the lap of death, rewing his wretched bale.

[18]

Much did the Crauen seeme to mone his case,  
That for his sake his deare life had forgone;  
And him bewayling with affection base,  
Did counterfeit kind pittie, where was none:  
For wheres no courage, theres no ruth nor mone.  
Thence passing forth, not farre away he found,  
Whereas the Prince himselfe lay all alone,  
Loosely displayd vpon the grassie ground,  
Possessed of sweete sleepe, that luld him soft in swound.

[19]

Wearie of trauell in his former fight,  
He there in shade himselfe had layd to rest,  
Hauing his armes and warlike things vndight,  
Fearelesse of foes that mote his peace molest;  
The whyles his saluage page, that wont be prest,  
Was wandred in the wood another way,  
To doe some thing, that seemed to him best,  
The whyles his Lord in siluer slomber lay,  
Like to the Euening starre adorn'd with deawy ray.

[20]

Whom when as *Turpin* saw so loosely layd,  
He weened well, that he in deed was dead,  
Like as that other knight to him had sayd:  
But when he nigh approcht, he mote aread  
Plaine signes in him of life and liuelihead.  
Whereat much grieu'd against that straunger knight,  
That him too light of credence did mislead,  
He would haue backe retyred from that sight,  
That was to him on earth the deadliest despight.

[21]

But that same knight would not once let him start,  
But plainely gan to him declare the case  
Of all his mischiefe, and late lucklesse smart;  
How both he and his fellow there in place  
Were vanquished, and put to foule disgrace,  
And how that he in lieu of life him lent,  
Had vow'd vnto the victor, him to trace  
And follow through the world, where so he went,  
Till that he him deliuered to his punishment.

[22]

He therewith much abashed and affrayd,  
Began to tremble euery limbe and vaine;  
And softly whispering him, entyrelly prayd,  
T'aduize him better, then by such a traine  
Him to betray vnto a straunger swaine:  
Yet rather counseld him contrarywize,  
Sith he likewise did wrong by him sustaine,  
To ioyne with him and vengeance to deuize,  
Whylest time did offer meanes him sleeping to surprize.

[23]

Nathesle for all his speach, the gentle knight  
Would not be tempted to such villenie,  
Regarding more his faith, which he did plight,  
All were it to his mortall enemie,  
Then to entrap him by false treacherie:  
Great shame in lieges blood to be embrew'd.  
Thus whylest they were debating diuerslie,  
The Saluage forth out of the wood issew'd  
Backe to the place, whereas his Lord he sleeping vew'd.

[24]

There when he saw those two so neare him stand,  
He doubted much what mote their meaning bee,  
And throwing downe his load out of his hand,  
To weet great store of forrest frute, which hee  
Had for his food late gathered from the tree,  
Himselfe vnto his weapon he betooke,  
That was an oaken plant, which lately hee  
Rent by the root; which he so sternely shooke,  
That like an hazell wand, it quiuered and quooke.

[25]

Whereat the Prince awaking, when he spyde  
The traytour *Turpin* with that other knight,  
He started vp, and snatching neare his syde  
His trustie sword, the seruant of his might,  
Like a fell Lyon leaped to him light,  
And his left hand vpon his collar layd.  
Therewith the cowheard deaded with affright,  
Fell flat to ground, ne word vnto him sayd,  
But holding vp his hands, with silence mercie prayd.

[26]

But he so full of indignation was,  
That to his prayer nought he would incline,  
But as he lay vpon the humbled gras,  
His foot he set on his vile necke, in signe  
Of seruile yoke, that nobler harts repine.  
Then letting him arise like abiect thrall,  
He gan to him obiect his haynous crime,  
And to reuile, and rate, and recreant call,  
And lastly to despoyle of knightly banner all.

[27]

And after all, for greater infamie,  
He by the heeles him hung vpon a tree,  
And baffuld so, that all which passed by,  
The picture of his punishment might see,  
And by the like ensample warned bee,  
How euer they through treason doe trespasse.  
But turne we now backe to that Ladie free,  
Whom late we left ryding vpon an Asse,  
Led by a Carle and foole, which by her side did passe.

[28]

She was a Ladie of great dignitie,  
And lifted vp to honorable place,  
Famous through all the land of Faerie,  
Though of meane parentage and kindred base,  
Yet deckt with wondrous giftes of natures grace,  
That all men did her person much admire,  
And praise the feature of her goodly face,  
The beames whereof did kindle louely fire  
In th'harts of many a knight, and many a gentle squire.

[29]

But she thereof grew proud and insolent,  
That none she worthie thought to be her fere,  
But scornd them all, that loue vnto her ment;  
Yet was she lou'd of many a worthy pere,  
Vnworthy she to be belou'd so dere,  
That could not weigh of worthinesse aright.  
For beautie is more glorious bright and clere,  
The more it is admir'd of many a wight,  
And noblest she, that serued is of noblest knight.

[30]

But this coy Damzell thought contrariwise,  
That such proud looks would make her prayesd more;  
And that the more she did all loue despize,  
The more would wretched louers her adore.  
What cared she, who sighed for her sore,  
Or who did wayle or watch the wearie night?  
Let them that list, their lucklesse lot deplore;  
She was borne free, not bound to any wight,  
And so would euer liue, and loue her owne delight.

[31]

Through such her stubborne stifnesse, and hard hart,  
Many a wretch, for want of remedie,  
Did languish long in life consuming smart,  
And at the last through dreary dolour die:  
Whylest she, the Ladie of her libertie,  
Did boast her beautie had such soueraine might,  
That with the onely twinckle of her eye,  
She could or saue, or spill, whom she would hight.  
What could the Gods doe more, but doe it more aright?

[32]

But loe the Gods, that mortall follies vew,  
Did worthily reuenge this maydens pride;  
And nought regarding her so goodly hew,  
Did laugh at her, that many did deride,  
Whilest she did weepe, of no man mercifide.  
For on a day, when *Cupid* kept his court,  
As he is wont at each Saint Valentide,  
Vnto the which all louers doe resort,  
That of their loues successe they there may make report.

[33]

It fortun'd then, that when the roules were red,  
In which the names of all loues folke were fyled,  
That many there were missing, which were ded,  
Or kept in bands, or from their loues exyled,  
Or by some other violence despoyled.  
Which when as *Cupid* heard, he wexed wroth,  
And doubting to be wronged, or beguyled,  
He bad his eyes to be vnblindfold both,  
That he might see his men, and muster them by oth.

[34]

Then found he many missing of his crew,  
Which wont doe suit and seruice to his might;  
Of whom what was becomen, no man knew.  
Therefore a Iurie was impaneled streight,  
T'enquire of them, whether by force, or sleight,  
Or their owne guilt, they were away conuayd.  
To whom foule *Infamie*, and fell *Despight*  
Gaued euidence, that they were all betrayd,  
And murdred cruelly by a rebellious Mayd.

[35]

Fayre *Mirabella* was her name, whereby  
Of all those crymes she there indited was:  
All which when *Cupid* heard, he by and by  
In great displeasure, wild a *Capias*  
Should issue forth, t'attach that scornefull lasse.  
The warrant straight was made, and therewithall  
A Baylieffe errant forth in post did passe,  
Whom they by name there *Portamore* did call;  
He which doth summon louers to loues iudgement hall.

[36]

The damzell was attacht, and shortly brought  
Vnto the barre, whereas she was arrayned:  
But she thereto nould plead, nor answere ought  
Euen for stubborne pride, which her restrayned.  
So iudgement past, as is by law ordayned  
In cases like, which when at last she saw,  
Her stubborne hart, which loue before disdayned,  
Gan stoupe, and falling downe with humble awe,  
Cryde mercie, to abate the extremitie of law.

[37]

The sonne of *Venus* who is myld by kynd,  
But where he is prouokt with peeuishnesse,  
Vnto her prayers piteously enclynd,  
And did the rigour of his doome repressse;  
Yet not so freely, but that nathelesse  
He vnto her a penance did impose,  
Which was, that through this worlds wyde wildernes  
She wander should in companie of those,  
Till she had sau'd so many loues, as she did lose.

[38]

So now she had bene wandring two whole yeares  
Throughout the world, in this vncomely case,  
Wasting her goodly hew in heauie teares,  
And her good dayes in dolorous disgrace:  
Yet had she not in all these two yeares space,  
Saued but two, yet in two yeares before,  
Throgh her dispiteous pride, whilest loue lackt place,  
She had destroyed two and twenty more.  
Aie me, how could her loue make half amends therefore.

[39]

And now she was vpon the weary way,  
When as the gentle Squire, with faire *Serene*,  
Met her in such misseeming foule array;  
The whiles that mighty man did her demeane  
With all the euill termes and cruell meane,  
That he could make; And eeke that angry foole  
Which follow'd her, with cursed hands vncleane  
Whipping her horse, did with his smarting toole  
Oft whip her dainty selfe, and much augment her doole.

[40]

Ne ought it mote auaille her to entreat  
The one or th'other, better her to vse:  
For both so wilfull were and obstinate,  
That all her piteous plaint they did refuse,  
And rather did the more her beate and bruse.  
But most the former villaine, which did lead  
Her tyreling iade, was bent her to abuse;  
Who though she were with wearinesse nigh dead,  
Yet would not let her lite, nor rest a little stead.

[41]

For he was sterne, and terrible by nature,  
And eeke of person huge and hideous,  
Exceeding much the measure of mans stature,  
And rather like a Gyant monstrous.  
Forsooth he was descended of the hous  
Of those old Gyants, which did warres darraine  
Against the heauen in order battailous,  
And sib to great *Orgolio*, which was slaine  
By *Arthure*, when as *Vnas* Knight he did maintaine.

[42]

His lookes were dreadfull, and his fiery eies  
Like two great Beacons, glared bright and wyde,  
Glauncing askew, as if his enemies  
He scorned in his ouerweening pryde;  
And stalking stately like a Crane, did stryde  
At euery step vppon the tiptoes hie,  
And all the way he went, on euery syde  
He gaz'd about, and stared horriblie,  
As if he with his lookes would all men terrifie.

[43]

He wore no armour, ne for none did care,  
As no whit dreading any liuing wight;  
But in a Iacket quilted richly rare,  
Vpon checklaton he was straungely dight,  
And on his head a roll of linnen plight,  
Like to the Mores of Malaber he wore;  
With which his locks, as blacke as pitchy night,  
Were bound about, and voyded from before,  
And in his hand a mighty yron club he bore.

[44]

This was *Disdaine*, who led that Ladies horse  
Through thick & thin, through mountains & through plains,  
Compelling her, wher she would not by force  
Haling her palfrey by the hempen raines.  
But that same foole, which most increast her paines,  
Was *Scorne*, who hauing in his hand a whip,  
Her therewith yirks, and still when she complaines,  
The more he laughes, and does her closely quip,  
To see her sore lament, and bite her tender lip.

[45]

Whose cruell handling when that Squire beheld,  
And saw those villaines her so vildely vse,  
His gentle heart with indignation sweld,  
And could no lenger beare so great abuse,  
As such a Lady so to beate and bruise;  
But to him stepping, such a stroke him lent,  
That forst him th'halter from his hand to loose,  
And maugre all his might, backe to relent:  
Else had he surely there bene slaine, or fowly shent.

[46]

The villaine wroth for greeting him so sore,  
Gathered him selfe together soone againe,  
And with his yron batton, which he bore,  
Let driue at him so dreadfully amaine,  
That for his safety he did him constraine  
To giue him ground, and shift to euery side,  
Rather then once his burden to sustaine:  
For bootelesse thing him seemed, to abide,  
So mighty blowes, or proue the puissaunce of his pride.

[47]

Like as a Mastiffe hauing at a bay  
A saluage Bull, whose cruell hornes doe threat  
Desperate daunger, if he them assay,  
Traceth his ground, and round about doth beat,  
To spy where he may some aduauntage get;  
The whiles the beast doth rage and loudly rore,  
So did the Squire, the whiles the Carle did fret,  
And fume in his disdainefull mynd the more,  
And oftentimes by Turmagant and Mahound swore.

[48]

Nathlesse so sharpely still he him pursewd,  
That at aduantage him at last he tooke,  
When his foote slipt (that slip he dearely rewd,)  
And with his yron club to ground him strooke;  
Where still he lay, ne out of swoune awooke,  
Till heauy hand the Carle vpon him layd,  
And bound him fast: Tho when he vp did looke,  
And saw him selfe captiu'd, he was dismayd,  
Ne powre had to withstand, ne hope of any ayd.

[49]

Then vp he made himselfe, and forward fare,  
Led in a rope, which both his hands did bynd;  
Ne ought that foole for pittie did him spare,  
But with his whip him following behynd,  
Him often scourg'd, and forst his feete to fynd:  
And other whiles with bitter mockes and mowes  
He would him scorne, that to his gentle mynd  
Was much more grieuous, then the others blowes:  
Words sharpely wound, but greatest griefe of scorning growes.

[50]

The faire *Serena*, when she saw him fall  
Vnder that villaines club, then surely thought  
That slaine he was, or made a wretched thrall,  
And fled away with all the speede she mought,  
To seeke for safety, which long time she sought:  
And past through many perils by the way,  
Ere she againe to *Calepine* was brought;  
The which discourse as now I must delay,  
Till *Mirabellaes* fortunes I doe further say.

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