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THE FIRST BOOKE OF  
THE FAERIE QUEENE

CONTAINING

THE LEGENDE OF THE KNIGHT OF THE RED  
CROSSE, OR OF HOLINESSE

\* \* \* \* \*

CANTO VII

The Redcrosse knight is captive made  
by Gyaunt proud opprest,  
Prince Arthur meets with Una great-  
ly with those newes distrest.

I

What man so wise, what earthly wit so ware,  
As to discry the crafty cunning traine,  
By which deceit doth maske in visour faire,  
And cast her colours dyed deepe in graine,  
To seeme like Truth, whose shape she well can faine,  
And fitting gestures to her purpose frame;  
The guiltlesse man with guile to entertaine?  
Great maistresse of her art was that false Dame,  
The false Duessa, cloked with Fidessaes name.

II

Who when returning from the dreary Night, 10  
She fownd not in that perilous house of Pryde,  
Where she had left, the noble Redcrosse knight,  
Her hoped pray; she would no lenger bide,  
But forth she went, to seeke him far and wide.  
Ere long she fownd, whereas he wearie sate 15  
To rest him selfe, foreby a fountaine side,  
Disarmed all of yron-coted Plate,  
And by his side his steed the grassy forage ate.

III

He feedes upon the cooling shade, and bayes 20  
His sweatie forehead in the breathing wind,  
Which through the trembling leaves full gently playes,  
Wherein the cherefull birds of sundry kind  
Do chaunt sweet musick, to delight his mind:  
The Witch approaching gan him fairely greet,  
And with reproch of carelesnesse unkind 25  
Upbrayd, for leaving her in place unmeet,  
With fowle words tempring faire, soure gall with hony sweet.

IV

Unkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat,  
And bathe in pleasaunce of the joyous shade,  
Which shielded them against the boyling heat, 30  
And with greene boughes decking a gloomy glade,  
About the fountaine like a girlond made;  
Whose bubbling wave did ever freshly well,  
Ne ever would through fervent sommer fade:  
The sacred Nymph, which therein went to dwell, 35

Was out of Dianes favour, as it then befell.

V

The cause was this: One day, when Phoebe fayre  
 With all her band was following the chace,  
 This Nymph, quite tyr'd with heat of scorching ayre, 40  
 Sat downe to rest in middest of the race:  
 The goddesse wroth gan fowly her disgrace,  
 And bad the waters, which from her did flow,  
 Be such as she her selfe was then in place.  
 Thenceforth her waters waxed dull and slow,  
 And all that drinke thereof do faint and feeble grow. 45

VI

Hereof this gentle knight unweeting was,  
 And lying downe upon the sandie graile,  
 Drunke of the streame, as cleare as cristall glas:  
 Eftsoones his manly forces gan to faile, 50  
 And mightie strong was turned to feeble fraile.  
 His chaunged powres at first them selves not felt,  
 Till crudled cold his corage gan assaile,  
 And cheareful bloud in faintnesse chill did melt,  
 Which like a fever fit through all his body swelt.

VII

Yet goodly court he made still to his Dame, 55  
 Pourd out in loosnesse on the grassy grownd,  
 Both carelesse of his health, and of his fame:  
 Till at the last he heard a dreadfull sownd,  
 Which through the wood loud bellowing did rebownd,

That all the earth for terrour seemd to shake, 60  
 And trees did tremble. Th' Elfe therewith astownd,  
 Upstarted lightly from his looser make,  
 And his unready weapons gan in hand to take.

VIII

But ere he could his armour on him dight,  
 Or get his shield, his monstrous enemy 65  
 With sturdie steps came stalking in his sight,  
 An hideous Geant, horrible and hye,  
 That with his tallnesse seemd to threat the skye,  
 The ground eke groned under him for dreed;  
 His living like saw never living eye, 70  
 Ne durst behold: his stature did exceed  
 The hight of three the tallest sonnes of mortall seed.

IX

The greatest Earth his uncouth mother was,  
 And blustering Aeolus his boasted syre,  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Brought forth this monstrous masse of earthly slime 75  
 Puft up with emptie wind, and fild with sinfull crime.

X

So growen great through arrogant delight  
 Of th' high descent, whereof he was yborne,  
 And through presumption of his matchlesse might, 80  
 All other powres and knighthood he did scorne.  
 Such now he marcheth to this man forlorne,  
 And left to losse: his stalking steps are stayde

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Upon a snaggy Oke, which he had torne  
Out of his mothers bowelles, and it made  
His mortall mace, wherewith his foeman he dismayde.  
85

XI

That when the knight he spide, he gan advance  
With huge force and insupportable mayne,  
And towardes him with dreadfull fury prounce;  
Who haplesse, and eke hopelesse, all in vaine  
Did to him pace, sad battaile to darrayne, 90  
Disarmd, disgrast, and inwardly dismayde,  
And eke so faint in every joynt and vaine,  
Through that fraile fountaine, which him feeble made,  
That scarsely could he weeld his bootlesse single blade.

XII

The Geaunt strooke so maynly mercillesse, 95  
That could have overthrowne a stony towre,  
And were not heavenly grace, that did him blesse,  
He had beene pouldred all, as thin as flowre:  
But he was wary of that deadly stowre,  
And lightly lept from underneath the blow: 100  
Yet so exceeding was the villeins powre,  
That with the wind it did him overthrow,  
And all his sences stound, that still he lay full low.

XIII

As when that divelish yron Engin wrought  
In deepest Hell, and framd by Furies skill, 105

With windy Nitre and quick Sulphur fraught,  
And ramd with bullet round, ordaind to kill,  
Conceiveth fire, the heavens it doth fill  
With thundring noyse, and all the ayre doth choke,  
That none can breath, nor see, nor heare at will, 110  
Through smouldry cloud of duskish stincking smoke,  
That th' onely breath him daunts, who hath escapt the stroke.

XIV

So daunted when the Geaunt saw the knight,  
His heavie hand he heaved up on hye,  
And him to dust thought to have battred quight, 115  
Untill Duessa loud to him gan crye;  
O great Orgoglio, greatest under skye,  
O hold thy mortall hand for Ladies sake,  
Hold for my sake, and do him not to dye,  
But vanquisht thine eternall bondslave make, 120  
And me, thy worthy meed, unto thy Lemman take.

XV

He hearkned, and did stay from further harmes,  
To gayne so goodly guerdon, as she spake:  
So willingly she came into his armes,  
Who her as willingly to grace did take, 125  
And was possessed of his new found make.  
Then up he tooke the slombred sencelesse corse,  
And ere he could out of his swowne awake,  
Him to his castle brought with hastie forse,  
And in a Dongeon deepe him threw without remorse.  
130

XVI

From that day forth Duessa was his deare,  
 And highly honourd in his haughtie eye,  
 He gave her gold and purple pall to weare,  
 And triple crowne set on her head full hie,  
 And her endowd with royall majesty: 135  
 Then for to make her dreaded more of men,  
 And peoples harts with awfull terrour tye,  
 A monstrous beast ybred in filthy fen  
 He chose, which he had kept long time in darksome den.

XVII

Such one it was, as that renowned Snake 140  
 Which great Alcides in Stremona slew,  
 Long fostred in the filth of Lerna lake,  
 Whose many heads out budding ever new  
 Did breed him endlesse labour to subdew:  
 But this same Monster much more ugly was; 145  
 For seven great heads out of his body grew,  
 An yron brest, and back of scaly bras,  
 And all embrewd in bloud, his eyes did shine as glas.

XVIII

His tayle was stretched out in wondrous length,  
 That to the house of heavenly gods it raught, 150  
 And with extorted powre, and borrow'd strength,  
 The ever-burning lamps from thence it braught,  
 And proudly threw to ground, as things of naught;  
 And underneath his filthy feet did tread  
 The sacred things, and holy heasts foretaught. 155

Upon this dreadfull Beast with sevenfold head  
 He sett the false Duessa, for more aw and dread.

XIX

The wofull Dwarfe, which saw his maisters fall,  
 Whiles he had keeping of his grasing steed,  
 And valiant knight become a caytive thrall, 160  
 When all was past, tooke up his forlorne weed,  
 His mightie armour, missing most at need;  
 His silver shield, now idle maisterlesse;  
 His poynant speare, that many made to bleed,  
 The rueful monuments of heavinesse, 165  
 And with them all departes, to tell his great distresse.

XX

He had not travaild long, when on the way  
 He wofull Ladie, wofull Una met,  
 Fast flying from that Paynims greedy pray,  
 Whilest Satyrane him from pursuit did let: 170  
 Who when her eyes she on the Dwarfe had set,  
 And saw the signes, that deadly tydings spake,  
 She fell to ground for sorrowfull regret,  
 And lively breath her sad brest did forsake,  
 Yet might her pitteous hart be seene to pant and quake.  
 175

XXI

The messenger of so unhappie newes,  
 Would faine have dyde: dead was his hart within,  
 Yet outwardly some little comfort shewes:

At last recovering hart, he does begin  
 To rub her temples, and to chaufe her chin, 180  
 And everie tender part does tosse and turne.  
 So hardly he the flitted life does win,  
 Unto her native prison to retourne:  
 Then gins her grieved ghost thus to lament and mourne.

XXII

Ye dreary instruments of dolefull sight, 185  
 That doe this deadly spectacle behold,  
 Why do ye lenger feed on loathed light,  
 Or liking find to gaze on earthly mould,  
 Sith cruell fates the carefull threds unfould,  
 The which my life and love together tyde? 190  
 Now let the stony dart of senselesse cold  
 Perce to my hart, and pas through every side,  
 And let eternall night so sad sight fro me hide.

XXIII

O lightsome day, the lampe of highest Jove,  
 First made by him, mens wandring wayes to guyde,  
 195

When darkenesse he in deepest dongeon drove,  
 Henceforth thy hated face for ever hyde,  
 And shut up heavens windowes shyning wyde:  
 For earthly sight can nought but sorrow breed,  
 And late repentance, which shall long abyde, 200  
 Mine eyes no more on vanitie shall feed,  
 But seeled up with death, shall have their deadly meed.

XXIV

Then downe againe she fell unto the ground;  
 But he her quickly reared up againe:  
 Thrise did she sinke adowne in deadly swownd  
 205

And thrise he her reviv'd with busie paine,  
 At last when life recover'd had the raine,  
 And over-wrestled his strong enemye,  
 With foltring tong, and trembling every vaine,  
 Tell on (quoth she) the wofull Tragedie, 210  
 The which these reliques sad present unto mine eie.

XXV

Tempestuous fortune hath spent all her spight,  
 And thrilling sorrow throwne his utmost dart;  
 Thy sad tongue cannot tell more heavy plight,  
 Then that I feele, and harbour in mine hart: 215  
 Who hath endur'd the whole, can beare each part.  
 If death it be, it is not the first wound,  
 That launched hath my brest with bleeding smart.  
 Begin, and end the bitter balefull stound;  
 If lesse then that I feare, more favour I have found. 220

XXVI

Then gan the Dwarfe the whole discourse declare,  
 The subtill traines of Archimago old;  
 The wanton loves of false Fidessa faire,  
 Bought with the blood of vanquisht Paynim bold;  
 The wretched payre transformed to treen mould;  
 225  
 The house of Pride, and perils round about;

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The combat, which he with Sansjoy did hould;  
The lucklesse conflict with the Gyant stout,  
Wherein captiv'd, of life or death he stood in doubt.

XXVII

She heard with patience all unto the end, 230  
And strove to maister sorrowfull assay,  
Which greater grew, the more she did contend,  
And almost rent her tender hart in tway;  
And love fresh coles unto her fire did lay:  
For greater love, the greater is the losse. 235  
Was never Lady loved dearer day,  
Then she did love the knight of the Redcrosse;  
For whose deare sake so many troubles her did tosse.

XXVIII

At last when fervent sorrow slaked was,  
She up arose, resolving him to find 240  
Alive or dead: and forward forth doth pas,  
All as the Dwarfe the way to her assynd:  
And evermore, in constant carefull mind,  
She fed her wound with fresh renewed bale;  
Long tost with stormes, and bet with bitter wind, 245  
High over hills, and low adowne the dale,  
She wandred many a wood, and measurd many a vale.

XXIX

At last she chaunced by good hap to meet  
A goodly knight, faire marching by the way  
Together with his Squire, arrayed meet: 250

His glitterand armour shined farre away,  
Like glauncing light of Phoebus brightest ray;  
From top to toe no place appeared bare,  
That deadly dint of steele endanger may:  
Athwart his brest a bauldrick brave he ware, 255  
That shynd, like twinkling stars, with stons most pretious rare.

XXX

And in the midst thereof one pretious stone  
Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous might,  
Shapt like a Ladies head, exceeding shone,  
Like Hesperus emongst the lesser lights, 260  
And strove for to amaze the weaker sights:  
Thereby his mortall blade full comely hong  
In ivory sheath, ycarv'd with curious slights;  
Whose hilts were burnisht gold, and handle strong  
Of mother pearle, and buckled with a golden tong.  
265

XXXI

His haughtie helmet, horrid all with gold,  
Both glorious brightnesse, and great terrour bred;  
For all the crest a Dragon did enfold  
With greedie pawes, and over all did spred  
His golden wings: his dreadfull hideous hed 270  
Close couched on the bever, seem'd to throw  
From flaming mouth bright sparkles fierie red,  
That suddeine horror to faint harts did show,  
And scaly tayle was stretcht adowne his backe full low.

XXXII

<p>Upon the top of all his loftie crest,                  A bunch of haire discolourd diversly,                  With sprinckled pearle, and gold full richly drest,                  Did shake, and seemd to daunce for jollity,                  Like to an Almond tree ymounted hye                  On top of greene Selinis all alone,                  With blossoms brave bedecked daintily;                  Whose tender locks do tremble every one                  At every little breath that under heaven is blowne.</p>	<p>275           280</p>	<p>And silver Cynthia waxed pale and faint,                  As when her face is staynd with magicke arts constraint.</p>	<p>300</p>
<p>XXXIII</p>		<p>XXXV</p>	
<p>His warlike shield all closely cover'd was,                  Ne might of mortall eye be ever seene;                  Not made of steele, nor of enduring bras,                  Such earthly mettals soone consumed beene;                  But all of Diamond perfect pure and cleene                  It framed was, one massie entire mould,                  Hewen out of Adamant rocke with engines keene,                  290                  That point of speare it never percen could,                  Ne dint of direfull sword divide the substance would.</p>	<p>285</p>	<p>No magicke arts hereof had any might,                  Nor bloudie wordes of bold Enchauntes call;                  But all that was not such as seemd in sight,                  Before that shield did fade, and suddeine fall;                  And, when him list the raskall routes appall,                  Men into stones therewith he could transmew,                  And stones to dust, and dust to nought at all;                  And when him list the prouder lookes subdew,                  He would them gazing blind, or turne to other hew.                  310</p>	<p>305</p>
<p>XXXIV</p>		<p>XXXVI</p>	
<p>The same to wight he never wont disclose,                  But when as monsters huge he would dismay,                  Or daunt unequall armies of his foes,                  Or when the flying heavens he would affray;                  For so exceeding shone his glistring ray,                  That Phoebus golden face it did attaint,                  As when a cloud his beames doth over-lay;</p>	<p>295</p>	<p>Ne let it seeme, that credence this exceedes,                  For he that made the same, was knowne right well                  To have done much more admirable deedes.                  It Merlin was, which whylome did excell                  All living wightes in might of magicke spell:                  Both shield, and sword, and armour all he wrought                  For this young Prince, when first to armes he fell;                  But when he dyde, the Faerie Queene it brought                  To Faerie lond, where yet it may be seene, if sought.</p>	<p>315</p>
<p>XXXVII</p>		<p>XXXVII</p>	
<p>A gentle youth, his dearely loved Squire,                  His speare of heben wood behind him bare,                  Whose harmefull head, thrice heated in the fire,</p>	<p>320</p>		

Had riven many a brest with pikehead square:  
 A goodly person, and could menage faire  
 His stubborne steed with curbed canon bit, 325  
 Who under him did trample as the aire,  
 And chaft, that any on his backe should sit;  
 The yron rowels into frothy fome he bit.

XXXVIII

When as this knight nigh to the Ladie drew,  
 With lovely court he gan her entertaine; 330  
 But when he heard her answeres loth, he knew  
 Some secret sorrow did her heart distraine:  
 Which to allay, and calme her storming paine,  
 Faire feeling words he wisely gan display, 335  
 And for her humour fitting purpose faine,  
 To tempt the cause it selfe for to bewray;  
 Wherewith emmov'd, these bleeding words she gan to say.

XXXIX

What worlds delight, or joy of living speach  
 Can heart, so plung'd in sea of sorrowes deep,  
 And heaped with so huge misfortunes, reach? 340  
 The carefull cold beginneth for to creepe,  
 And in my heart his yron arrow steepe,  
 Soone as I thinke upon my bitter bale:  
 Such helplesse harmes yts better hidden keepe,  
 Then rip up griefe, where it may not availe, 345  
 My last left comfort is, my woes to weepe and waile.

XL

Ah Ladie deare, quoth then the gentle knight,  
 Well may I weene your griefe is wondrous great;  
 For wondrous great griefe groneth in my spright, 350  
 Whiles thus I heare you of your sorrowes treat.  
 But wofull Ladie, let me you intrete  
 For to unfold the anguish of your hart:  
 Mishaps are maistred by advice discrete,  
 And counsell mittigates the greatest smart;  
 Found never helpe who never would his hurts impart.  
 355

XLI

O but (quoth she) great griefe will not be tould,  
 And can more easily be thought then said.  
 Right so (quoth he), but he that never would,  
 Could never: will to might gives greatest aid.  
 But griefe (quoth she) does greater grow displaid, 360  
 If then it find not helpe, and breedes despaire.  
 Despaire breedes not (quoth he) where faith is staid.  
 No faith so fast (quoth she) but flesh does paire.  
 Flesh may empaire (quoth he) but reason can repaire.

XLII

His goodly reason, and well guided speach, 365  
 So deepe did settle in her gracious thought,  
 That her perswaded to disclose the breach,  
 Which love and fortune in her heart had wrought,  
 And said; Faire Sir, I hope good hap hath brought  
 You to inquire the secrets of my griefe, 370  
 Or that your wisdom will direct my thought,  
 Or that your prowesse can me yield reliefe:



Then heare the storie sad, which I shall tell you briefe.

XLIII

The forlorne Maiden, whom your eyes have seene  
 The laughing stocke of fortunes mockeries, 375  
 Am th' only daughter of a King and Queene,  
 Whose parents deare, whilest equal destinies  
 Did runne about, and their felicities  
 The favourable heavens did not envy,  
 Did spread their rule through all the territories, 380  
 Which Phison and Euphrates floweth by,  
 And Gehons golden waves doe wash continually.

XLIV

Till that their cruell cursed enemy,  
 An huge great Dragon horrible in sight,  
 Bred in the loathly lakes of Tartary, 385  
 With murdrous ravine, and devouring might  
 Their kingdome spoild, and countrey wasted quight:  
 Themselves, for feare into his jawes to fall,  
 He forst to castle strong to take their flight,  
 Where fast embard in mighty brasen wall, 390  
 He has them now foure yeres besiegd to make them thrall.

XLV

Full many knights adventurous and stout  
 Have enterpriz'd that Monster to subdew;  
 From every coast that heaven walks about,  
 Have thither come the noble Martiall crew, 395  
 That famous hard atchievements still pursew;

Yet never any could that girlond win,  
 But all still shronke, and still he greater grew:  
 All they for want of faith, or guilt of sin,  
 The pitteous pray of his fierce crueltie have bin. 400

XLVI

At last yledd with farre reported praise,  
 Which flying fame throughout the world had spred,  
 Of doughty knights, whom Faery land did raise,  
 That noble order hight of Maidenhed, 405  
 Forthwith to court of Gloriane I sped  
 Of Gloriane great Queene of glory bright,  
 Whose Kingdomes seat Cleopolis is red,  
 There to obtaine some such redoubted knight,  
 The Parents deare from tyrants powre deliver might.

XLVII

It was my chance (my chance was faire and good)  
 410  
 There for to find a fresh unproved knight,  
 Whose manly hands imbrew'd in guiltie blood  
 Had never bene, ne ever by his might  
 Had throwne to ground the unregarded right:  
 Yet of his prowesse prooffe he since hath made 415  
 (I witnesse am) in many a cruell fight;  
 The groning ghosts of many one dismaide  
 Have felt the bitter dint of his avenging blade.

XLVIII

And ye the forlorne reliques of his powre,

His byting sword, and his devouring speare, 420  
 Which have endured many a dreadfull stowre,  
 Can speake his prowesse, that did earst you beare,  
 And well could rule: now he hath left you heare  
 To be the record of his ruefull losse,  
 And of my dolefull disaventurous deare: 425  
 O heavie record of the good Redcrosse,  
 Where have you left your Lord, that could so well you tosse?

XLIX

Well hoped I, and faire beginnings had,  
 That he my captive languor should redeeme,  
 Till all unweeting, an Enchaunter bad 430  
 His sence abusd, and made him to misdeeme  
 My loyalty, not such as it did seeme;  
 That rather death desire, then such despight.  
 Be judge ye heavens, that all things right esteeme,  
 How I him lov'd, and love with all my might, 435  
 So thought I eke of him, and thinke I thought aright.

L

Thenceforth me desolate he quite forsooke,  
 To wander, where wilde fortune would me lead,  
 And other bywaies he himselfe betooke,  
 Where never foot of living wight did tread, 440  
 That brought not backe the balefull body dead;  
 In which him chaunced false Duessa meete,  
 Mine onely foe, mine onely deadly dread,  
 Who with her witchcraft, and misseeming sweete,  
 Inveigled him to follow her desires unmeete. 445

LI

At last by subtill sleights she him betraid  
 Unto his foe, a Gyant huge and tall,  
 Who him disarmed, dissolute, dismaid,  
 Unwares surprised, and with mighty mall  
 The monster mercilesse him made to fall, 450  
 Whose fall did never foe before behold;  
 And now in darkesome dungeon, wretched thrall,  
 Remedilesse, for aie he doth him hold;  
 This is my cause of grieffe, more great then may be told.

LII

Ere she had ended all, she gan to faint: 455  
 But he her comforted and faire bespake,  
 Certes, Madame, ye have great cause of plaint,  
 The stoutest heart, I weene, could cause to quake.  
 But be of cheare, and comfort to you take:  
 For till I have acquit your captive knight, 460  
 Assure your selfe, I will you not forsake.  
 His chearefull wordes reviv'd her chearelesse spright,  
 So forth they went, the Dwarfe them guiding ever right.

\* \* \* \* \*

CANTO VIII

Faire virgin, to redeeme her deare  
 brings Arthur to the fight:  
 Who slayes that Gyant, woundes the beast,  
 and strips Duessa quight.

I

Ay me, how many perils doe enfold  
 The righteous man, to make him daily fall,  
 Were not that heavenly grace doth him uphold,  
 And stedfast truth acquite him out of all.  
 Her love is firme, her care continuall, 5  
 So oft as he through his owne foolish pride,  
 Or weaknesse is to sinfull bands made thrall:  
 Else should this Redcrosse knight in bands have dydd  
 For whose deliverance she this Prince doth thither guide.

II

They sadly traveild thus, until they came 10  
 Nigh to a castle builded strong and hie:  
 Then cryde the Dwarfe, Lo yonder is the same,  
 In which my Lord my liege doth lucklesse lie,  
 Thrall to that Gyants hateful tyrannie:  
 Therefore, deare Sir, your mightie powres assay. 15  
 The noble knight alighted by and by  
 From loftie steede, and bad the Ladie stay,  
 To see what end of fight should him befall that day.

III

So with the Squire, th' admirer of his might,  
 He marched forth towards that castle wall; 20  
 Whose gates he found fast shut, ne living wight  
 To ward the same, nor answere commers call.  
 Then tooke that Squire an horne of bugle small.  
 Which hong adowne his side in twisted gold  
 And tassels gay. Wyde wonders over all 25

Of that same hornes great vertues weren told,  
 Which had approved bene in uses manifold.

IV

Was never wight that heard that shrilling sownd,  
 But trembling feare did feel in every vaine;  
 Three miles it might be easie heard around, 30  
 And Ecchoes three answerd it selfe againe:  
 No false enchauntment, nor deceitfull traine,  
 Might once abide the terror of that blast,  
 But presently was voide and wholly vaine:  
 No gate so strong, no locke so firme and fast, 35  
 But with that percing noise flew open quite, or brast.

V

The same before the Geants gate he blew,  
 That all the castle quaked from the ground,  
 And every dore of freewill open flew.  
 The Gyant selfe dismaied with that sownd, 40  
 Where he with his Duessa dalliance fownd,  
 In hast came rushing forth from inner bowre,  
 With staring countenance sterne, as one astownd,  
 And staggering steps, to weet, what suddein stowre,  
 Had wrought that horror strange, and dar'd his dreaded powre.  
 45

VI

And after him the proud Duessa came  
 High mounted on her many-headed beast;  
 And every head with fyrie tongue did flame,

And every head was crowned on his creast,  
 And bloody mouthed with late cruell feast. 50  
 That when the knight beheld, his mightie shield  
 Upon his manly arme he soone adrest,  
 And at him fiercely flew, with courage fild,  
 And eger greedinesse through every member thirld.

VII

Therewith the Gyant buckled him to fight, 55  
 Inflam'd with scornefull wrath and high disdaine,  
 And lifting up his dreadfull club on hight,  
 All arm'd with ragged snubbes and knottie graine,  
 Him thought at first encounter to have slaine.  
 But wise and wary was that noble Pere, 60  
 And lightly leaping from so monstrous maine,  
 Did faire avoide the violence him nere;  
 It booted nought to thinke such thunderbolts to beare.

VIII

Ne shame he thought to shunne so hideous might:  
 The idle stroke, enforcing furious way, 65  
 Missing the marke of his misaymed sight  
 Did fall to ground, and with his heavie sway  
 So deepely dinted in the driven clay,  
 That three yardes deepe a furrow up did throw:  
 The sad earth wounded with so sore assay, 70  
 Did grone full grievous underneath the blow,  
 And trembling with strange feare, did like an earthquake show.

IX

As when almightie Jove, in wrathfull mood,  
 To wreake the guilt of mortall sins is bent, 75  
 Hurles forth his thundring dart with deadly food,  
 Enrold in flames, and smouldring dreriment,  
 Through riven cloudes and molten firmament;  
 The fierce threeforked engin making way  
 Both loftie towres and highest trees hath rent,  
 And all that might his angry passage stay, 80  
 And shooting in the earth, casts up a mount of clay.

X

His boystrous club, so buried in the ground,  
 He could not rearen up againe so light,  
 But that the knight him at avantage found,  
 And whiles he strove his combred clubbe to quight 85  
 Out of the earth, with blade all burning bright  
 He smote off his left arme, which like a blocke  
 Did fall to ground, depriv'd of native might;  
 Large streames of bloud out of the truncked stocke  
 Forth gushed, like fresh water streame from riven rocke. 90

XI

Dismayed with so desperate deadly wound,  
 And eke impatient of unwonted paine,  
 He lowdly brayd with beastly yelling sound,  
 That all the fields rebellowed againe;  
 As great a noyse, as when in Cymbrian plaine 95  
 An heard of Bulles, whom kindly rage doth sting,  
 Do for the milkie mothers want complaine,

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And fill the fields with troublous bellowing,  
The neighbour woods around with hollow murmur ring.

XII

That when his deare Duessa heard, and saw 100  
The evil stownd, that daungerd her estate,  
Unto his aide she hastily did draw  
Her dreadfull beast, who swolne with blood of late  
Came ramping forth with proud presumptuous gate, 105  
And threatned all his heads like flaming brands.  
But him the Squire made quickly to retrate,  
Encountring fierce with single sword in hand,  
And twixt him and his Lord did like a bulwarke stand.

XIII

The proud Duessa, full of wrathfull spight,  
And fierce disdaine, to be affronted so, 110  
Enforst her purple beast with all her might  
That stop out of the way to overthroe,  
Scorning the let of so unequall foe:  
But nathemore would that courageous swayne  
To her yeeld passage, gainst his Lord to goe, 115  
But with outrageous strokes did him restraine,  
And with his bodie bard the way atwixt them twaine.

XIV

Then tooke the angrie witch her golden cup,  
Which still she bore, replete with magick artes;  
Death and despeyre did many thereof sup, 120  
And secret poyson through their inner parts,

Th' eternall bale of heavie wounded harts;  
Which after charmes and some enchauntments said  
She lightly sprinkled on his weaker parts;  
Therewith his sturdie courage soone was quayd, 125  
And all his senses were with suddeine dread dismayd.

XV

So downe he fell before the cruell beast,  
Who on his neck his bloody clawes did seize,  
That life nigh crusht out of his panting brest:  
No powre he had to stirre, nor will to rize. 130  
That when the carefull knight gan well avise,  
He lightly left the foe, with whom he fought,  
And to the beast gan turne his enterprise;  
For wondrous anguish in his hart it wrought,  
To see his loved Squire into such thraldome brought.  
135

XVI

And high advauncing his blood-thirstie blade,  
Stroke one of those deformed heads so sore,  
That of his puissance proud ensample made;  
His monstrous scalpe downe to his teeth it tore,  
And that misformed shape mis-shaped more: 140  
A sea of blood gusht from the gaping wound,  
That her gay garments staynd with filthy gore,  
And overflowed all the field around;  
That over shoes in bloud he waded on the ground.

XVII

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Thereat he roared for exceeding paine, 145  
 That to have heard great horror would have bred,  
 And scourging th' emptie ayre with his long traine,  
 Through great impatience of his grieved hed  
 His gorgeous ryder from her loftie sted  
 Would have cast downe, and trod in durtie myre, 150  
 Had not the Gyant soone her succoured;  
 Who all enrag'd with smart and franticke yre,  
 Came hurtling in full fierce, and forst the knight retyre.

XVIII

The force which wont in two to be disperst,  
 In one alone left hand he now unites, 155  
 Which is through rage more strong than both were erst;  
 With which his hideous club aloft he dites,  
 And at his foe with furious rigour smites,  
 That strongest Oake might seeme to overthrow:  
 The stroke upon his shield so heavie lites, 160  
 That to the ground it doubleth him full low:  
 What mortall wight could ever beare so monstrous blow?

XIX

And in his fall his shield, that covered was,  
 Did loose his vele by chaunce, and open flew:  
 The light whereof, that heavens light did pas, 165  
 Such blazing brightnesse through the aier threw,  
 That eye mote not the same endure to vew.  
 Which when the Gyaunt spyde with staring eye,  
 He downe let fall his arme, and soft withdrew  
 His weapon huge, that heaved was on hye 170  
 For to have slaine the man, that on the ground did lye.

XX

And eke the fruitfull-headed beast, amazd  
 At flashing beames of that sunshiny shield,  
 Became starke blind, and all his senses daz'd,  
 That downe he tumbled on the durtie field, 175  
 And seem'd himselfe as conquered to yield.  
 Whom when his maistresse proud perceiv'd to fall,  
 Whiles yet his feeble feet for faintnesse reeld,  
 Unto the Gyant loudly she gan call,  
 O helpe Orgoglio, helpe, or else we perish all. 180

XXI

At her so pitteous cry was much amoov'd  
 Her champion stout, and for to ayde his frend,  
 Againe his wonted angry weapon prov'd:  
 But all in vaine: for he has read his end  
 In that bright shield, and all their forces spend 185  
 Themselves in vaine: for since that glauncing sight,  
 He had no powre to hurt, nor to defend;  
 As where th' Almightyes lightning brond does light,  
 It dimmes the dazed eyen, and daunts the senses quight.

XXII

Whom when the Prince, to battell new addrest, 190  
 And threatning high his dreadful stroke did see,  
 His sparkling blade about his head he blest,  
 And smote off quite his right leg by the knee,  
 That downe he tombled; as an aged tree,  
 High growing on the top of rocky clift, 195

Whose hartstrings with keene steele nigh hewen be,  
 The mightie trunck halfe rent, with ragged rift  
 Doth roll adowne the rocks, and fall with fearefull drift.

XXIII

Or as a Castle reared high and round,  
 By subtile engins and malicious slight 200  
 Is undermined from the lowest ground,  
 And her foundation forst, and feebled quight,  
 At last downe falles, and with her heaped hight  
 Her hastie ruine does more heavie make,  
 And yields it selfe unto the victours might; 205  
 Such was this Gyants fall, that seemd to shake  
 The stedfast globe of earth, as it for feare did quake.

XXIV

The knight then lightly leaping to the pray,  
 With mortall steele him smot againe so sore,  
 That headlesse his unweldy bodie lay, 210  
 All wallowd in his owne fowle bloody gore,  
 Which flowed from his wounds in wondrous store.  
 But soone as breath out of his breast did pas,  
 That huge great body, which the Gyaunt bore,  
 Was vanisht quite, and of that monstrous mas 215  
 Was nothing left, but like an emptie bladder was.

XXV

Whose grievous fall, when false Duessa spide,  
 Her golden cup she cast unto the ground,  
 And crowned mitre rudely threw aside;

Such percing grieffe her stubborne hart did wound,  
 220  
 That she could not endure that dolefull stound,  
 But leaving all behind her, fled away;  
 The light-foot Squire her quickly turnd around,  
 And by hard meanes enforcing her to stay,  
 So brought unto his Lord, as his deserved pray. 225

XXVI

The royall Virgin which beheld from farre,  
 In pensive plight, and sad perplexitie,  
 The whole atchievement of this doubtfull warre,  
 Came running fast to greet his victorie,  
 With sober gladnesse, and myld modestie, 230  
 And with sweet joyous cheare him thus bespake:  
 Faire braunch of noblesse, flowre of chevalrie,  
 That with your worth the world amazed make,  
 How shall I quite the paines ye suffer for my sake?

XXVII

And you fresh budd of vertue springing fast, 235  
 Whom these sad eyes saw nigh unto deaths dore,  
 What hath poore Virgin for such perill past  
 Wherewith you to reward? Accept therefore  
 My simple selfe, and service evermore;  
 And he that high does sit, and all things see 240  
 With equall eyes, their merites to restore,  
 Behold what ye this day have done for mee,  
 And what I cannot quite, requite with usree.

XXVIII





In vaine to mocke, or mockt in vaine to bee:  
 But if thou be, as thou art pourtrahed 295  
 With natures pen, in ages grave degree,  
 Aread in graver wise, what I demaund of thee.

XXXIV

His answer likewise was, he could not tell.  
 Whose sencelesse speach, and doted ignorance  
 When as the noble Prince had marked well, 300  
 He ghest his nature by his countenance,  
 And calmd his wrath with goodly temperance.  
 Then to him stepping, from his arme did reach  
 Those keyes, and made himselfe free enterance.  
 Each dore he opened without any breach; 305  
 There was no barre to stop, nor foe him to empeach.

XXXV

There all within full rich arrayd he found,  
 With royall arras and resplendent gold.  
 And did with store of every thing abound,  
 That greatest Princes presence might behold. 310  
 But all the floore (too filthy to be told)  
 With bloud of guiltlesse babes, and innocents trew,  
 Which there were slaine, as sheepe out of the fold,  
 Defiled was, that dreadfull was to vew,  
 And sacred ashes over it was strowed new. 315

XXXVI

And there beside of marble stone was built  
 An Altare, carv'd with cunning ymagery,

On which true Christians bloud was often spilt,  
 And holy Martyrs often doen to dye,  
 With cruell malice and strong tyranny: 320  
 Whose blessed sprites from underneath the stone  
 To God for vengeance cryde continually,  
 And with great grieffe were often heard to grone,  
 That hardest heart would bleede, to hear their piteous mone.

XXXVII

Through every rowme he sought, and every bowr,  
 325  
 But no where could he find that woful thrall:  
 At last he came unto an yron doore,  
 That fast was lockt, but key found not at all  
 Emongst that bounch, to open it withall;  
 But in the same a little grate was pight, 330  
 Through which he sent his voyce, and lowd did call  
 With all his powre, to weet, if living wight  
 Were housed there within, whom he enlargen might.

XXXVIII

Therewith an hollow, dreary, murmuring voyce  
 These pitteous plaints and dolours did resound; 335  
 O who is that, which brings me happy choyce  
 Of death, that here lye dying every stound,  
 Yet live perforce in balefull darkenesse bound?  
 For now three Moones have changed thrice their hew,  
 And have been thrice hid underneath the ground, 340  
 Since I the heavens chearfull face did vew,  
 O welcome thou, that doest of death bring tydings trew.

XXXIX

Which when that Champion heard, with percing point  
 Of pittie deare his hart was thrilled sore,  
 And trembling horrour ran through every joynt 345  
 For ruth of gentle knight so fowle forlore:  
 Which shaking off, he rent that yron dore,  
 With furious force, and indignation fell;  
 Where entred in, his foot could find no flore,  
 But all a deepe descent, as darke as hell, 350  
 That breathed ever forth a filthie banefull smell.

XL

But neither darkenesse fowle, nor filthy bands,  
 Nor noyous smell his purpose could withhold,  
 (Entire affection hateth nicer hands)  
 But that with constant zeale, and courage bold, 355  
 After long paines and labours manifold,  
 He found the meanes that Prisoner up to reare;  
 Whose feeble thighes, unable to uphold  
 His pined corse, him scarce to light could beare.  
 A ruefull spectacle of death and ghastly dreere. 360

XLI

His sad dull eyes deepe sunck in hollow pits,  
 Could not endure th' unwonted sunne to view;  
 His bare thin cheekes for want of better bits,  
 And empty sides deceived of their dew,  
 Could make a stony hart his hap to rew;  
 His rawbone armes, whose mighty brawned bowrs 365  
 Were wont to rive steele plates, and helmets hew,

Were cleane consum'd, and all his vitall powres  
 Decayd, and all his flesh shronk up like withered flowres.

XLII

Whom when his Lady saw, to him she ran 370  
 With hasty joy: to see him made her glad,  
 And sad to view his visage pale and wan,  
 Who earst in flowres of freshest youth was clad.  
 Tho when her well of teares she wasted had,  
 She said, Ah dearest Lord, what evill starre 375  
 On you hath fround, and poud his influence bad,  
 That of your selfe ye thus berobbed arre,  
 And this misseeming hew your manly looks doth marre?

XLIII

But welcome now my Lord, in wele or woe,  
 Whose presence I have lackt too long a day; 380  
 And fie on Fortune mine avowed foe,  
 Whose wrathful wreakes them selves doe now alay.  
 And for these wrongs shall treble penaunce pay  
 Of treble good: good growes of evils priefe.  
 The chearelesse man, whom sorrow did dismay,  
 385  
 Had no delight to treaten of his grieffe;  
 His long endured famine needed more reliefe.

XLIV

Faire Lady, then said that victorious knight,  
 The things, that grievous were to do, or beare,  
 Them to renew, I wote, breeds no delight; 390

Best musicke breeds delight in loathing eare:  
 But th' onely good, that growes of passed feare,  
 Is to be wise, and ware of like agein.  
 This dayes ensample hath this lesson deare  
 Deepe written in my heart with yron pen, 495  
 That blisse may not abide in state of mortall men.

XLV

Henceforth sir knight, take to you wonted strength,  
 And maister these mishaps with patient might;  
 Loe where your foe lyes stretcht in monstrous length,  
 And loe that wicked woman in your sight, 400  
 The roote of all your care, and wretched plight,  
 Now in your powre, to let her live, or dye.  
 To do her dye (quoth Una) were despight,  
 And shame t'avenge so weake an enemy;  
 But spoile her of her scarlot robe, and let her fly. 405

XLVI

So as she bad, that witch they disaraid,  
 And robd of royall robes, and purple pall,  
 And ornaments that richly were displaid;  
 Ne spared they to strip her naked all.  
 Then when they had despoiled her tire and call, 410  
 Such as she was, their eyes might her behold,  
 That her misshaped parts did them appall,  
 A loathly, wrinckled hag, ill favoured, old,  
 Whose secret filth good manners biddeth not be told.

\* \* \* \* \*

XLIX

Which when the knights beheld, amazd they were,  
 415  
 And wondred at so fowle deformed wight.  
 Such then (said Una) as she seemeth here,  
 Such is the face of falshood, such the sight  
 Of fowle Duessa, when her borrowed light  
 Is laid away, and counterfesaunce knowne. 420  
 Thus when they had the witch disrobed quight,  
 And all her filthy feature open showne,  
 They let her goe at will, and wander wayes unknowne.

L

She flying fast from heavens hated face,  
 And from the world that her discovered wide, 425  
 Fled to the wastfull wilderness apace,  
 From living eyes her open shame to hide,  
 And lurkt in rocks and caves long unespide.  
 But that faire crew of knights, and Una faire  
 Did in that castle afterwards abide, 430  
 To rest them selves, and weary powres repaire,  
 Where store they found of all that dainty was and rare.

\* \* \* \* \*

CANTO X

Her faithfull knight faire Una brings  
 to house of Holinesse,  
 Where he is taught repentance, and  
 the way to heavenly blesse.



Both plaine, and pleasant to be walked in,  
 Where them does meete a francklin faire and free,  
 And entertaines with comely courteous glee,  
 His name was Zele, that him right well became,  
 For in his speeches and behaviour hee  
 Did labour lively to expresse the same,  
 And gladly did them guide, till to the Hall they came.

VII

There fairely them receives a gentle Squire,  
 Of milde demeanure, and rare courtesie,  
 Right cleanly clad in comely sad attire;  
 In word and deede that shew'd great modestie,  
 And knew his good to all of each degree,  
 Hight Reverence. He them with speeches meet  
 Does faire entreat; no courting nicetie,  
 But simple true, and eke unfained sweet,  
 As might become a Squire so great persons to greet.

VIII

And afterwards them to his Dame he leades,  
 That aged Dame, the Ladie of the place:  
 Who all this while was busy at her beades:  
 Which doen, she up arose with seemely grace,  
 And toward them full matronely did pace.  
 Where when that fairest Una she beheld,  
 Whom well she knew to spring from heavenly race,  
 70  
 Her hart with joy unwonted inly sweld,  
 As feeling wondrous comfort in her weaker eld.

IX

And her embracing said, O happie earth,  
 Whereon thy innocent feet doe ever tread,  
 Most vertuous virgin borne of heavenly berth, 75  
 That, to redeeme thy woefull parents head,  
 From tyrans rage, and ever dying dread,  
 Hast wandred through the world now long a day;  
 Yet ceasest not thy weary soles to lead,  
 What grace hath thee now hither brought this way?  
 80  
 Or doen thy feeble feet unweeting hither stray?

X

Strange thing it is an errant knight to see  
 Here in this place, or any other wight,  
 That hither turnes his steps. So few there bee  
 That chose the narrow path, or seeke the right: 85  
 All keepe the broad high way, and take delight  
 With many rather for to go astray,  
 And be partakers of their evill plight,  
 Then with a few to walke the rightest way;  
 O foolish men, why haste ye to your owne decay?  
 90

XI

Thy selfe to see, and tyred limbes to rest,  
 O matrone sage (quoth she) I hither came;  
 And this good knight his way with me address,  
 Led with thy prayses and broad-blazed fame,

That up to heaven is blowne. The auncient Dame  
 95  
 Him goodly greeted in her modest guise,  
 And entertaynd them both, as best became,  
 With all the court'sies that she could devise,  
 Ne wanted ought, to shew her bounteous or wise.

XII

Thus as they gan of sundry things devise, 100  
 Loe two most goodly virgins came in place,  
 Ylinked arme in arme in lovely wise,  
 With countenance demure, and modest grace,  
 They numbred even steps and equall pace:  
 Of which the eldest, that Fidelia hight, 105  
 Like sunny beames threw from her christall face,  
 That could have dazd the rash beholders sight,  
 And round about her head did shine like heavens light.

XIII

She was araied all in lilly white,  
 And in her right hand bore a cup of gold, 110  
 With wine and water fild up to the hight,  
 In which a Serpent did himselfe enfold,  
 That horroure made to all that did behold;  
 But she no whit did chaunge her constant mood:  
 And in her other hand she fast did hold 115  
 A booke, that was both signd and seald with blood:  
 Wherin darke things were writ, hard to be understood.

XIV

Her younger sister, that Speranza hight,  
 Was clad in blew, that her beseemed well;  
 Not all so chearefull seemed she of sight, 120  
 As was her sister; whether dread did dwell,  
 Or anguish in her hart, is hard to tell:  
 Upon her arme a silver anchor lay,  
 Whereon she leaned ever, as befell:  
 And ever up to heaven, as she did pray, 125  
 Her stedfast eyes were bent, ne swarved other way.

XV

They seeing Una, towards her gan wend,  
 Who them encounters with like courtesie;  
 Many kind speeches they betwene them spend,  
 And greatly joy each other well to see: 130  
 Then to the knight with shamefast modestie  
 They turne themselves, at Unaes meeke request,  
 And him salute with well beseeming glee;  
 Who faire them quites, as him beseemed best,  
 And goodly gan discourse of many a noble gest. 135

XVI

Then Una thus; But she your sister deare,  
 The deare Charissa where is she become?  
 Or wants she health, or busie is elsewhere?  
 Ah no, said they, but forth she may not come:  
 For she of late is lightned of her wombe, 140  
 And hath encreast the world with one sonne more,  
 That her to see should be but troublesome.  
 Indeed (quoth she) that should be trouble sore;  
 But thank't be God, and her encrease so evermore.

XVII

Then said the aged Coelia, Deare dame, 145  
 And you good Sir, I wote that of youre toyle,  
 And labours long, through which ye hither came,  
 Ye both forweared be: therefore a whyle  
 I read you rest, and to your bowres recoyle.  
 Then called she a Groome, that forth him led 150  
 Into a goodly lodge, and gan despoile  
 Of puissant armes, and laid in easie bed;  
 His name was meeke Obedience rightfully ared.

XVIII

Now when their wearie limbes with kindly rest,  
 And bodies were refresht with due repast, 155  
 Faire Una gan Fidelia faire request,  
 To have her knight into her schoolehouse plaste,  
 That of her heavenly learning he might taste,  
 And heare the wisdom of her words divine.  
 She graunted, and that knight so much agraste, 160  
 That she him taught celestiall discipline,  
 And opened his dull eyes, that light mote in them shine.

XIX

And that her sacred Booke, with blood ywrit,  
 That none could read, except she did them teach,  
 She unto him disclosed every whit, 165  
 And heavenly documents thereout did preach,  
 That weaker wit of man could never reach,  
 Of God, of grace, of justice, of free will,

That wonder was to heare her goodly speach:  
 For she was able with her words to kill, 170  
 And raise againe to life the hart that she did thrill.

XX

And when she list poure out her larger spright,  
 She would commaund the hastie Sunne to stay,  
 Or backward turne his course from heavens hight;  
 Sometimes great hostes of men she could dismay;  
 175  
 [Dry-shod to passe she parts the flouds in tway;]  
 And eke huge mountaines from their native seat  
 She would commaund, themselves to beare away,  
 And throw in raging sea with roaring threat.  
 Almightye God her gave such powre, and puisaunce great.  
 180

XXI

The faithfull knight now grew in litle space,  
 By hearing her, and by her sisters lore,  
 To such perfection of all heavenly grace,  
 That wretched world he gan for to abhore, 185  
 And mortall life gan loath, as thing forlore,  
 Greevd with remembrance of his wicked wayes,  
 And prickt with anguish of his sinnes so sore,  
 That he desirde to end his wretched dayes:  
 So much the dart of sinfull guilt the soule dismayes.

XXII

But wise Speranza gave him comfort sweet, 190

And taught him how to take assured hold  
 Upon her silver anchor, as was meet;  
 Else had his sinnes so great and manifold  
 Made him forget all that Fidelia told.  
 In this distressed doubtfull agonie, 195  
 When him his dearest Una did behold,  
 Disdeining life, desiring leave to die,  
 She found her selfe assayld with great perplexitie.

XXIII

And came to Coelia to declare her smart,  
 Who well acquainted with that commune plight,  
 200  
 Which sinfull horror workes in wounded hart,  
 Her wisely comforted all that she might,  
 With goodly counsell and advisement right;  
 And streightway sent with carefull diligence,  
 To fetch a Leach, the which had great insight 205  
 In that disease of grieved conscience,  
 And well could cure the same; his name was Patience.

XXIV

Who comming to that soule-diseased knight,  
 Could hardly him intreat to tell his grieffe:  
 Which knowne, and all that noyd his heavie spright  
 210  
 Well searcht, eftsoones he gan apply relief  
 Of salves and med'cines, which had passing prieffe,  
 And thereto added words of wondrous might;  
 By which to ease he him recured briefe,  
 And much aswag'd the passion of his plight, 215

That he his paine endur'd, as seeming now more light.

XXV

But yet the cause and root of all his ill,  
 Inward corruption and infected sin,  
 Not purg'd nor heald, behind remained still,  
 And festring sore did rankle yet within, 220  
 Close creeping twixt the marrow and the skin.  
 Which to extirpe, he laid him privily  
 Downe in a darkesome lowly place farre in,  
 Whereas he meant his corrosives to apply,  
 And with streight diet tame his stubborne malady. 225

XXVI

In ashes and sackcloth he did array  
 His daintie corse, proud humors to abate,  
 And dieted with fasting every day,  
 The swelling of his wounds to mitigate,  
 And made him pray both earely and eke late: 230  
 And ever as superfluous flesh did rot  
 Amendment readie still at hand did wayt,  
 To pluck it out with pincers firie whot,  
 That soone in him was left no one corrupted jot.

XXVII

And bitter Penance with an yron whip, 235  
 Was wont him once to disple every day:  
 And sharpe Remorse his hart did pricke and nip,  
 That drops of blood thence like a well did play:  
 And sad Repentance used to embay



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His bodie in salt water smarting sore, 240  
 The filthy blots of sinne to wash away.  
 So in short space they did to health restore  
 The man that would not live, but earst lay at deathes dore.

XXVIII

In which his torment often was so great,  
 That like a Lyon he would cry and rore, 245  
 And rend his flesh, and his owne synewes eat.  
 His owne deare Una hearing evermore  
 His ruefull shriekes and gronings, often tore  
 Her guiltlesse garments, and her golden heare, 250  
 For pittie of his paine and anguish sore;  
 Yet all with patience wisely she did beare;  
 For well she wist his crime could else be never cleare.

XXIX

Whom thus recover'd by wise Patience  
 And trew Repentaunce they to Una brought:  
 Who joyous of his cured conscience, 255  
 Him dearely kist, and fairely eke besought  
 Himselfe to chearish, and consuming thought  
 To put away out of his carefull brest.  
 By this Charissa, late in child-bed brought,  
 Was woxen strong, and left her fruitfull nest; 260  
 To her faire Una brought this unacquainted guest.

XXX

She was a woman in her freshest age,  
 Of wondrous beauty, and of bountie rare,

With goodly grace and comely personage,  
 That was on earth not easie to compare; 265  
 Full of great love, but Cupid's wanton snare  
 As hell she hated, chast in worke and will;  
 Her necke and breasts were ever open bare,  
 That ay thereof her babes might sucke their fill;  
 The rest was all in yellow robes arayed still. 270

XXXI

A multitude of babes about her hong,  
 Playing their sports, that joyd her to behold,  
 Whom still she fed, whiles they were weake and young,  
 But thrust them forth still as they wexed old:  
 And on her head she wore a tyre of gold, 275  
 Adornd with gemmes and owches wondrous faire,  
 Whose passing price uneach was to be told:  
 And by her side there sate a gentle paire  
 Of turtle doves, she sitting in an yvorie chaire.

XXXII

The knight and Una entring faire her greet, 280  
 And bid her joy of that her happie brood;  
 Who them requites with court'sies seeming meet,  
 And entertaines with friendly chearefull mood.  
 Then Una her besought, to be so good  
 As in her vertuous rules to schoole her knight, 285  
 Now after all his torment well withstood,  
 In that sad house of Penaunce, where his spright  
 Had past the paines of hell, and long enduring night.

XXXIII

<p>She was right joyous of her just request,          And taking by the hand that Faeries sonne,          Gan him instruct in every good behest,          Of love, and righteousnesse, and well to donne,          And wrath, and hatred warely to shonne,          That drew on men Gods hatred and his wrath,          And many soules in dolours had fordonne:          In which when him she well instructed hath,          From thence to heaven she teacheth him the ready path.</p>	<p>290</p> <p>295</p>	<p>She held him fast, and firmly did upbeare,          As carefull Nourse her child from falling oft does reare.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XXXVI</p> <p>Eftsoones unto an holy Hospitall,          That was fore by the way, she did him bring,          In which seven Bead-men that had vowed all          Their life to service of high heavens king,          Did spend their dayes in doing godly thing:          Their gates to all were open evermore,          That by the wearie way were traveiling,          And one sate wayting ever them before,          To call in commers by, that needy were and pore.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XXXVII</p> <p>The first of them that eldest was, and best,          Of all the house had charge and government,          As Guardian and Steward of the rest:          His office was to give entertainment          And lodging, unto all that came, and went:          Not unto such, as could him feast againe,          And double quite, for that he on them spent,          But such, as want of harbour did constraine:          Those for Gods sake his dewty was to entertaine.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XXXVIII</p> <p>The second was as Almner of the place,          His office was, the hungry for to feed,          And thristy give to drinke, a worke of grace:</p>	<p>315</p> <p>320</p> <p>325</p> <p>330</p> <p>335</p>
<p>XXXIV</p> <p>Wherein his weaker wandring steps to guide,          An auncient matrone she to her does call,          Whose sober lookes her wisdome well descride:          300          Her name was Mercie, well knowne over all,          To be both gracious, and eke liberall:          To whom the carefull charge of him she gave,          To lead aright, that he should never fall          In all his wayes through this wide worldes wave,          That Mercy in the end his righteous soule might save.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XXXV</p> <p>The godly Matrone by the hand him beares          Forth from her presence, by a narrow way,          Scattred with bushy thornes, and ragged breares,          Which still before him she remov'd away,          That nothing might his ready passage stay:          And ever when his feet encombred were,          Or gan to shrink, or from the right to stray,</p>			

He feard not once him selfe to be in need,  
 Ne car'd to hoord for those whom he did breede:  
 The grace of God he layd up still in store,  
 Which as a stocke he left unto his seede; 340  
 He had enough, what need him care for more?  
 And had he lesse, yet some he would give to the pore.

XXXIX

The third had of their wardrobe custodie,  
 In which were not rich tyres, nor garments gay,  
 The plumes of pride, and wings of vanitie, 345  
 But clothes meet to keepe keene could away,  
 And naked nature seemely to aray;  
 With which bare wretched wights he dayly clad,  
 The images of God in earthly clay;  
 And if that no spare cloths to give he had, 350  
 His owne coate he would cut, and it distribute glad.

XL

The fourth appointed by his office was,  
 Poore prisoners to relieve with gracious ayd,  
 And captives to redeeme with price of bras,  
 From Turkes and Sarazins, which them had stayd, 355  
 And though they faultie were, yet well he wayd,  
 That God to us forgiveth every howre  
 Much more then that why they in bands were layd,  
 And he that harrowd hell with heavie stowre,  
 The faultie soules from thence brought to his heavenly bowre. 360

XLI

The fift had charge sicke persons to attend,  
 And comfort those, in point of death which lay;  
 For them most needeth comfort in the end,  
 When sin, and hell, and death do most dismay  
 The feeble soule departing hence away. 365  
 All is but lost, that living we bestow,  
 If not well ended at our dying day.  
 O man have mind of that last bitter throw  
 For as the tree does fall, so lyes it ever low.

XLII

The sixt had charge of them now being dead, 370  
 In seemely sort their corsers to engrave,  
 And deck with dainty flowres their bridall bed,  
 That to their heavenly spouse both sweet and brave  
 They might appeare, when he their soules shall save.  
 The wondrous workmanship of Gods owne mould, 375  
 Whose face he made all beasts to feare, and gave  
 All in his hand, even dead we honour should.  
 Ah dearest God me graunt, I dead be not defould.

XLIII

The seventh, now after death and buriall done,  
 Had charge the tender orphans of the dead 380  
 And widowes ayd, least they should be undone:  
 In face of judgement he their right would plead,  
 Ne ought the powre of mighty men did dread  
 In their defence, nor would for gold or fee  
 Be wonne their rightfull causes downe to tread: 385

And, when they stood in most necessitee,  
He did supply their want, and gave them ever free.

XLIV

There when the Elfin knight arrived was,  
The first and chiefest of the seven, whose care  
Was guests to welcome, towards him did pas: 390  
Where seeing Mercie, that his steps upbare,  
And alwayes led, to her with reverence rare  
He humbly louted in meeke lowlinesse,  
And seemely welcome for her did prepare:  
For of their order she was Patronesse, 395  
Albe Charissa were their chiefest founderesse.

XLV

There she awhile him stayes, him selfe to rest,  
That to the rest more able he might bee:  
During which time, in every good behest  
And godly worke of almes and charitee, 400  
She him instructed with great industree;  
Shortly therein so perfect he became,  
That from the first unto the last degree,  
His mortall life he learned had to frame  
In holy righteousnesse, without rebuke or blame. 405

XLVI

Thence forward by that painfull way they pas,  
Forth to an hill, that was both steepe and hy;  
On top whereof a sacred chappell was,  
And eke a little Hermitage thereby,

Wherein an aged holy man did lye, 410  
That day and night said his devotion,  
Ne other worldly busines did apply;  
His name was heavenly Contemplation;  
Of God and goodnesse was his meditation.

XLVII

Great grace that old man to him given had; 415  
For God he often saw from heavens hight,  
All were his earthly eyen both blunt and bad,  
And through great age had lost their kindly sight,  
Yet wondrous quick and persant was his spright,  
As Eagles eye, that can behold the Sunne: 420  
That hill they scale with all their powre and might,  
That his fraile thighes nigh weary and fordonne  
Gan faile, but by her helpe the top at last he wonne.

XLVIII

There they do finde that godly aged Sire,  
With snowy lockes adowne his shoulders shed, 425  
As hoarie frost with spangles doth attire  
The mossy braunches of an Oke halfe ded.  
Each bone might through his body well be red,  
And every sinew seene through his long fast:  
For nought he car'd his carcas long unfed; 430  
His mind was full of spirituall repast,  
And pyn'd his flesh, to keepe his body low and chast.

XLIX

Who when these two approaching he aspide,  
 At their first presence grew agrieved sore,  
 That forst him lay his heavenly thoughts aside; 435  
 And had he not that Dame respected more,  
 Whom highly he did reverence and adore,  
 He would not once have moved for the knight.  
 They him saluted, standing far afore;  
 Who well them greeting, humbly did requight, 440  
 And asked, to what end they clomb that tedious height.

L

What end (quoth she) should cause us take such paine,  
 But that same end which every living wight  
 Should make his marke, high heaven to attaine?  
 Is not from hence the way, that leadeth right 445  
 To that most glorious house that glistreth bright  
 With burning starres and everliving fire,  
 Whereof the keyes are to thy hand beight  
 By wise Fidelia? She doth thee require,  
 To show it to his knight, according his desire. 450

LI

Thrise happy man, said then the father grave,  
 Whose staggering steps thy steady hand doth lead,  
 And shewes the way, his sinfull soule to save.  
 Who better can the way to heaven aread,  
 Then thou thy selfe, that was both borne and bred 455  
 In heavenly throne, where thousand Angels shine?  
 Thou doest the prayers of the righteous sead  
 Present before the majestie divine,  
 And his avenging wrath to clemencie incline.

LII

Yet since thou bidst, thy pleasure shal be donne. 460  
 Then come thou man of earth, and see the way,  
 That never yet was seene of Faeries sonne,  
 That never leads the traveiler astray,  
 But after labors long, and sad delay,  
 Brings them to joyous rest and endlesse blis. 465  
 But first thou must a season fast and pray,  
 Till from her bands the spright assoiled is,  
 And have her strength recur'd from fraile infirmitis.

LIII

That donne, he leads him to the highest Mount;  
 Such one as that same mighty man of God, 470  
 That blood-red billowes like a walled front  
 On either side disparted with his rod,  
 Till that his army dry-foot through them yod,  
 Dwelt forty dayes upon; where writ in stone  
 With bloody letters by the hand of God, 475  
 The bitter doome of death and balefull mone  
 He did receive, whiles flashing fire about him shone.

LIV

Or like that sacred hill, whose head full hie,  
 Adorn'd with fruitfull Olives all arownd,  
 Is, as it were for endlesse memory 480  
 Of that deare Lord who oft thereon was fownd,  
 For ever with a flowring girlond crownd:  
 Or like that pleasaunt Mount, that is for ay

ENG 236A (Fall 2015) Readings

Through famous Poets verse each where renownd,  
 On which the thrise three learned Ladies play 485  
 Their heavenly notes, and make full many a lovely lay.

LV

From thence, far off he unto him did shew  
 A litle path, that was both steepe and long,  
 Which to a goodly Citie led his vew;  
 Whose wals and towres were builded high and strong  
 490

Of perle and precious stone, that earthly tong  
 Cannot describe, nor wit of man can tell;  
 Too high a ditty for my simple song;  
 The Citie of the great king hight it well,  
 Wherein eternall peace and happinesse doth dwell.  
 495

LVI

As he thereon stood gazing, he might see  
 The blessed Angels to and fro descend  
 From highest heaven in gladsome companee,  
 And with great joy into that Citie wend,  
 As commonly as friend does with his frend. 500  
 Whereat he wondred much, and gan enquire,  
 What stately building durst so high extend  
 Her loftie towres unto the starry sphere,  
 And what unknowen nation there empeopled were.

LVII

Faire knight (quoth he) Hierusalem that is, 505

The new Hierusalem, that God has built  
 For those to dwell in, that are chosen his,  
 His chosen people purg'd from sinfull guilt  
 With pretious blood, which cruelly was spilt  
 On cursed tree, of that unspotted lam, 510  
 That for the sinnes of al the world was kilt:  
 Now are they Saints all in that Citie sam,  
 More dear unto their God then younglings to their dam.

LVIII

Till now, said then the knight, I weened well,  
 That great Cleopolis, where I have beene, 515  
 In which that fairest Faerie Queene doth dwell,  
 The fairest citie was that might be seene;  
 And that bright towre all built of christall cleene,  
 Panthea, seemd the brightest thing that was:  
 But now by prooffe all otherwise I weene; 520  
 For this great Citie that does far surpas,  
 And this bright Angels towre quite dims that towre of glas.

LIX

Most trew, then said the holy aged man;  
 Yet is Cleopolis, for earthly frame,  
 The fairest peece that eye beholden can; 525  
 And well beseemes all knights of noble name,  
 That covett in th' immortall booke of fame  
 To be eternized, that same to haunt,  
 And doen their service to that soveraigne dame,  
 That glorie does to them for guerdon graunt: 530  
 For she is heavenly borne, and heaven may justly vaunt.

LX

And thou faire ymp, sprong out from English race,  
 How ever now accompted Elfins sonne,  
 Well worthy doest thy service for her grace,  
 To aide a virgin desolate fordonne. 535  
 But when thou famous victory hast wonne,  
 And high emongst all knights hast hong thy shield,  
 Thenceforth the suit of earthly conquest shonne,  
 And wash thy hands from guilt of bloody field:  
 For blood can nought but sin, and wars but sorrowes yield.  
 540

LXI

Then seek this path, that I to thee presage,  
 Which after all to heaven shall thee send;  
 Then peaceably thy painefull pilgrimage  
 To yonder same Hierusalem do bend,  
 Where is for thee ordaind a blessed end: 545  
 For thou emongst those Saints, whom thou doest see,  
 Shall be a Saint, and thine owne nations frend  
 And Patrone: thou Saint George shalt called bee,  
 Saint George of mery England, the signe of victoree.

LXII

Unworthy wretch (quoth he) of so great grace, 550  
 How dare I thinke such glory to attaine?  
 These that have it attaind, were in like cace,  
 (Quoth he) as wretched, and liv'd in like paine.  
 But deeds of armes must I at last be faine  
 And Ladies love to leave so dearely bought? 555

What need of armes, where peace doth ay remaine,  
 (Said he,) and battailes none are to be fought?  
 As for loose loves, they're vain, and vanish into nought.

LXIII

O let me not (quoth he) then turne againe  
 Backe to the world, whose joyes so fruitlesse are; 560  
 But let me here for aye in peace remaine,  
 Or streight way on that last long voyage fare,  
 That nothing may my present hope empare.  
 That may not be, (said he) ne maist thou yit  
 Forgo that royall maides bequeathed care, 565  
 Who did her cause into thy hand commit,  
 Till from her cursed foe thou have her freely quit.

LXIV

Then shall I soone (quoth he) so God me grace,  
 Abet that virgins cause disconsolate,  
 And shortly backe returne unto this place, 570  
 To walke this way in Pilgrims poore estate.  
 But now aread, old father, why of late  
 Didst thou behight me borne of English blood,  
 Whom all a Faeries sonne doen nominate?  
 That word shall I (said he) avouchen good, 575  
 Sith to thee is unknowne the cradle of thy blood.

LXV

For well I wote thou springst from ancient race  
 Of Saxon kings, that have with mightie hand  
 And many bloody battailes fought in place

High reard their royall throne in Britane land, 580  
 And vanquisht them, unable to withstand:  
 From thence a Faerie thee unweeting reft,  
 There as thou slepst in tender swadling band,  
 And her base Elfin brood there for thee left.  
 Such men do Chaungelings call, so chang'd by Faeries theft.  
 585

LXVI

Thence she thee brought into this Faerie lond,  
 And in an heaped furrow did thee hyde,  
 Where thee a Ploughman all unweeting fond,  
 As he his toylesome teme that way did gyde, 590  
 And brought thee up in ploughmans state to byde  
 Whereof Georgos he gave thee to name;  
 Till prickt with courage, and thy forces pryde,  
 To Faerie court thou cam'st to seeke for fame,  
 And prove thy puissaunt armes, as seemes thee best became.

LXVII

O holy Sire (quoth he) how shall I quight 595  
 The many favours I with thee have found,  
 That hast my name and nation red aright,  
 And taught the way that does to heaven bound?  
 This said, adowne he looked to the ground,  
 To have returnd, but dazed were his eyne 600  
 Through passing brightnesse, which did quite confound  
 His feeble sence and too exceeding shyne.  
 So darke are earthly things compar'd to things divine.

LXVIII

At last whenas himselfe he gan to find,  
 To Una back he cast him to retire; 605  
 Who him awaited still with pensive mind.  
 Great thankes and goodly meed to that good syre  
 He thence departing gave for his paines hyre.  
 So came to Una, who him joyd to see,  
 And after little rest, gan him desire 610  
 Of her adventure mindfull for to bee.  
 So leave they take of Coelia, and her daughters three.

\* \* \* \* \*

CANTO XI

The knight with that old Dragon fights  
 two dayes incessantly;  
 The third him overthrowes, and gayns  
 most glorious victory.

I

High time now gan it wex for Una faire  
 To thinke of those her captive Parents deare,  
 And their forwasted kingdome to repaire:  
 Whereto whenas they now approched neare,  
 With hartie wordes her knight she gan to cheare, 5  
 And in her modest manner thus bespake;  
 Deare knight, as deare as ever knight was deare,  
 That all these sorrowes suffer for my sake,  
 High heaven behold the tedious toyle ye for me take.

II



		He rousd himselfe full blith, and hastned them untill.	
		V	
Now are we come unto my native soyle, And to the place where all our perils dwell; Here haunts that feend, and does his dayly spoyle; Therefore henceforth be at your keeping well, And ever ready for your foeman fell. The sparke of noble courage now awake, And strive your excellent selfe to excell: That shall ye evermore renowned make, Above all knights on earth that batteill undertake.	10      15	Then bad the knight his Lady yede aloofe, And to an hill her selfe withdraw aside: From whence she might behold that battailles proof, And eke be safe from daunger far descryde: She him obayd, and turnd a little wyde. Now O thou sacred muse, most learned Dame, Faire ympe of Phoebus and his aged bride, The Nourse of time and everlasting fame, That warlike hands ennoblest with immortall name;	40
III		45	
And pointing forth, Lo yonder is (said she) The brasen towre in which my parents deare For dread of that huge feend emprisond be, Whom I from far, see on the walles appeare, Whose sight my feeble soule doth greatly cheare: And on the top of all I do espye The watchman wayting tydings glad to heare, That O my parents might I happily Unto you bring, to ease you of your misery.	20      25	VI	
IV		O gently come into my feeble brest Come gently, but not with that mighty rage, Wherewith the martiall troupes thou doest infest, And harts of great Heroes doest enrage, That nought their kindled courage may aswage, Soone as thy dreadfull trompe begins to sownd, The God of warre with his fiers equipage Thou doest awake, sleepe never he so sownd, All scared nations doest with horroure sterne astownd.	50
With that they heard a roaring hideous sound, That all the ayre with terrour filled wide, And seemd uneth to shake the stedfast ground. Eftsoones that dreadful Dragon they espide, Where stretcht he lay upon the sunny side, Of a great hill, himselfe like a great hill. But all so soone as he from far describe Those glistring armes, that heaven with light did fill,	30      35	VII	
		Faire Goddess, lay that furious fit aside, Till I of warres and bloody Mars do sing, And Briton fields with Sarazin bloud bedyde, Twixt that great Faery Queene, and Paynim king,	55

That with their horroure heaven and earth did ring;  
 A worke of labour long and endlesse prayse: 60  
 But now a while let downe that haughtie string  
 And to my tunes thy second tenor rayse,  
 That I this man of God his godly armes may blaze.

VIII

By this the dreadfull Beast drew nigh to hand,  
 Halfe flying, and halfe footing in his haste, 65  
 That with his largenesse measured much land,  
 And made wide shadow under his huge wast,  
 As mountaine doth the valley overcast.  
 Approching nigh, he reared high afore  
 His body monstrous, horrible, and vaste, 70  
 Which to increase his wondrous greatnesse more,  
 Was swoln with wrath, and poyson, and with bloody gore.

IX

And over, all with brasen scales was armd,  
 Like plated coate of steele, so couched neare,  
 That nought mote perce, ne might his corse be harmd  
 75  
 With dint of sword, nor push of pointed speare;  
 Which, as an Eagle, seeing pray appeare,  
 His aery plumes doth rouze, full rudely dight;  
 So shaked he, that horroure was to heare,  
 For as the clashing of an Armour bright, 80  
 Such noyse his rouzed scales did send unto the knight.

X

His flaggy wings when forth he did display,  
 Were like two sayles, in which the hollow wynd  
 Is gathered full, and worketh speedy way:  
 And eke the pennes, that did his pineons bynd, 85  
 Were like mayne-yards, with flying canvas lynd;  
 With which whenas him list the ayre to beat,  
 And there by force unwonted passage find,  
 The cloudes before him fled for terrour great,  
 And all the heavens stood still amazed with his threat. 90

XI

His huge long tayle wound up in hundred foldes,  
 Does overspred his long bras-scaly backe,  
 Whose wreathed boughts when ever he unfolds,  
 And thicke entangled knots adown does slacke,  
 Bspotted as with shields of red and blacke, 95  
 It sweepeth all the land behind him farre,  
 And of three furlongs does but litle lacke;  
 And at the point two stings in-fixed arre,  
 Both deadly sharpe, that sharpest steele exceeden farre.

XII

But stings and sharpest steele did far exceed 100  
 The sharpnesse of his cruell rending clawes;  
 Dead was it sure, as sure as death in deed,  
 What ever thing does touch his ravenous pawes,  
 Or what within his reach he ever drawes.  
 But his most hideous head my tounge to tell 105  
 Does tremble: for his deepe devouring jawes  
 Wide gaped, like the griesly mouth of hell,  
 Through which into his darke abisse all ravin fell.

XIII

And that more wondrous was, in either jaw  
 Three ranckes of yron teeth enraunged were, 110  
 In which yet trickling blood, and gobbets raw  
 Of late devoured bodies did appeare,  
 That sight thereof bred cold congealed feare:  
 Which to increase, and as atonce to kill,  
 A cloud of smothering smoke and sulphure seare,  
 115  
 Out of his stinking gorge forth steemed still,  
 That all the ayre about with smoke and stench did fill.

XIV

His blazing eyes, like two bright shining shields,  
 Did burne with wrath, and sparkled living fyre:  
 As two broad Beacons, set in open fields, 120  
 Send forth their flames far off to every shyre,  
 And warning give, that enemies conspyre  
 With fire and sword the region to invade;  
 So flam'd his eyne with rage and rancorous yre:  
 But farre within, as in a hollow glade, 125  
 Those glaring lampes were set, that made a dreadfull shade.

XV

So dreadfully he towards him did pas,  
 Forelifting up aloft his speckled brest,  
 And often bounding on the brused gras,  
 As for great joyance of his newcome guest. 130  
 Eftsoones he gan advance his haughtie crest,

As chauffed Bore his bristles doth upreare,  
 And shoke his scales to battell ready drest;  
 That made the Redcrosse knight nigh quake for feare,  
 As bidding bold defiance to his foeman neare. 135

XVI

The knight gan fairely couch his steadie speare,  
 And fiercely ran at him with rigorous might:  
 The pointed steele arriving rudely theare,  
 His harder hide would neither perce, nor bight,  
 But glauncing by forth passed forward right; 140  
 Yet sore amoved with so puissaunt push,  
 The wrathfull beast about him turned light,  
 And him so rudely passing by, did brush  
 With his long tayle, that horse and man to ground did rush.

XVII

Both horse and man up lightly rose againe, 145  
 And fresh encounter towards him address:  
 But th'idle stroke yet backe recoyld in vaine,  
 And found no place his deadly point to rest.  
 Exceeding rage enflam'd the furious beast,  
 To be avenged of so great despight; 150  
 For never felt his imperceable brest  
 So wondrous force, from hand of living wight;  
 Yet had he prov'd the powre of many a puissant knight.

XVIII

Then with his waving wings displayed wyde,  
 Himselfe up high he lifted from the ground, 155

And with strong flight did forcibly divide  
 The yielding aire, which nigh too feeble found  
 Her flitting parts, and element unsound,  
 To beare so great a weight: he cutting way  
 With his broad sayles, about him soared round: 160  
 At last low stouping with unweldie sway,  
 Snacht up both horse and man, to beare them quite away.

XIX

Long he them bore above the subject plaine,  
 So far as Ewghen bow a shaft may send,  
 Till struggling strong did him at last constraime 165  
 To let them downe before his flightes end:  
 As hagar d hauke, presuming to contend  
 With hardie fowle, above his hable might,  
 His wearie pounces all in vaine doth spend  
 To trusse the pray too heavy for his flight; 170  
 Which comming downe to ground, does free it selfe by fight.

XX

He so disseized of his gryping grosse,  
 The knight his thrillant speare again assayd  
 In his bras-plated body to embosse,  
 And three mens strength unto the stroke he layd; 175  
 Wherewith the stiffe beame quaked, as affrayd,  
 And glauncing from his scaly necke, did glyde  
 Close under his left wing, then broad displayd:  
 The percing steele there wrought a wound full wyde,  
 That with the uncouth smart the Monster lowdly cryde.  
 180

XXI

He cryde, as raging seas are wont to rore,  
 When wintry storme his wrathfull wreck does threat  
 The roaring billowes beat the ragged shore,  
 As they the earth would shoulder from her seat,  
 And greedy gulfe does gape, as he would eat 185  
 His neighbour element in his revenge:  
 Then gin the blustring brethren boldly threat  
 To move the world from off his steadfast henge,  
 And boystrous battell make, each other to avenge.

XXII

The steely head stucke fast still in his flesh, 190  
 Till with his cruell clawes he snatcht the wood,  
 And quite a sunder broke. Forth flowed fresh  
 A gushing river of blacke goarie blood,  
 That drowned all the land, whereon he stood;  
 The streame thereof would drive a water-mill: 195  
 Trebly augmented was his furious mood  
 With bitter sence of his deepe rooted ill,  
 That flames of fire he threw forth from his large nosethrill.

XXIII

His hideous tayle then hurled he about,  
 And therewith all enwrapt the nimble thyes 200  
 Of his froth-fomy steed, whose courage stout  
 Striving to loose the knot that fast him tyes,  
 Himselfe in streighter bandes too rash implyes,  
 That to the ground he is perforce constraynd  
 To throw his rider: who can quickly ryse 205

From off the earth, with durty blood distaynd,  
For that reprochfull fall right fowly he disdaynd.

XXIV

And fiercely tooke his trenchand blade in hand,  
With which he stroke so furious and so fell,  
That nothing seemd the puissaunce could withstand:  
210

Upon his crest the hardned yron fell,  
But his more hardned crest was armd so well,  
That deeper dint therein it would not make;  
Yet so extremely did the buffe him quell,  
That from thenceforth he shund the like to take, 215  
But when he saw them come, he did them still forsake.

XXV

The knight was wroth to see his stroke beguyld,  
And smote againe with more outrageous might;  
But backe againe the sparckling steele recoyld, 220  
And left not any marke, where it did light,  
As if in Adamant rocke it had bene pight.  
The beast impatient of his smarting wound,  
And of so fierce and forcible despight,  
Thought with his wings to stye above the ground;  
But his late wounded wing unserviceable found. 225

XXVI

Then full of grieffe and anguish vehement,  
He lowdly brayd, that like was never heard,  
And from his wide devouring oven sent

A flake of fire, that, flashing in his beard,  
Him all amazd, and almost made affeard: 230  
The scorching flame sore swunged all his face,  
And through his armour all his body seard,  
That he could not endure so cruell cace,  
But thought his armes to leave, and helmet to unlace.

XXVII

Not that great Champion of the antique world, 235  
Whom famous Poetes verse so much doth vaunt,  
And hath for twelve huge labours high extold,  
So many furies and sharpe fits did haunt,  
When him the poysond garment did enchaunt,  
With Centaures bloud and bloudie verses charm'd;  
240  
As did this knight twelve thousand dolours daunt,  
Whom fyrie steele now burnt, that earst him arm'd,  
That erst him goodly arm'd, now most of all him harm'd.

XXVIII

Faint, wearie, sore, emboyled, grieved, brent  
With heat, toyle, wounds, armes, smart, and inward fire,  
245  
That never man such mischiefes did torment;  
Death better were, death did he oft desire,  
But death will never come, when needes require.  
Whom so dismayd when that his foe beheld,  
He cast to suffer him no more respire, 250  
But gan his sturdy sterne about to weld,  
And him so strongly stroke, that to the ground him feld.

XXIX

It fortun'd, (as faire it then befell,  
 Behind his backe unweeting, where he stood,  
 Of auncient time there was a springing well, 255  
 From which fast trickled forth a silver flood,  
 Full of great vertues, and for med'cine good.  
 Whylome, before that cursed Dragon got  
 That happy land, and all with innocent blood  
 Defyld those sacred waves, it rightly hot 260  
 \_The well of life\_, ne yet his vertues had forgot.

XXX

For unto life the dead it could restore,  
 And guilt of sinfull crimes cleane wash away,  
 Those that with sicknesse were infected sore  
 It could recure, and aged long decay 265  
 Renew, as one were borne that very day.  
 Both Silo this, and Jordan did excell,  
 And th' English Bath, and eke the German Spau;  
 Ne can Cephise, nor Hebrus match this well:  
 Into the same the knight back overthrowen, fell. 270

XXXI

Now gan the golden Phoebus for to steepe  
 His fierie face in billowes of the west,  
 And his faint steedes watred in Ocean deepe,  
 Whiles from their journall labours they did rest,  
 When that infernall Monster, having kest 275  
 His wearie foe into that living well,  
 Can high advance his broad discoloured brest

Above his wonted pitch, with countenance fell,  
 And clapt his yron wings, as victor he did dwell.

XXXII

Which when his pensive Ladie saw from farre, 280  
 Great woe and sorrow did her soule assay,  
 As weening that the sad end of the warre,  
 And gan to highest God entirely pray,  
 That feared chance from her to turne away;  
 With folded hands and knees full lowly bent, 285  
 All night she watcht, ne once adowne would lay  
 Her daintie limbs in her sad dreriment,  
 But praying still did wake, and waking did lament.

XXXIII

The morrow next gan early to appeare,  
 That Titan rose to runne his daily race; 290  
 But early ere the morrow next gan reare  
 Out of the sea faire Titans deawy face,  
 Up rose the gentle virgin from her place,  
 And looked all about, if she might spy  
 Her loved knight to move his manly pace: 295  
 For she had great doubt of his safety,  
 Since late she saw him fall before his enemy.

XXXIV

At last she saw, where he upstarted brave  
 Out of the well, wherein he drenched lay:  
 As Eagle fresh out of the Ocean wave, 300  
 Where he hath left his plumes all hoary gray,

And deckt himselfe with feathers youthly gay,  
 Like Eyas hauke up mounts unto the skies,  
 His newly budded pineons to assay,  
 And marveiles at himselfe, still as he flies: 305  
 So new this new-borne knight to battell new did rise.

XXXV

Whom when the damned feend so fresh did spy,  
 No wonder if he wondred at the sight,  
 And doubted, whether his late enemy  
 It were, or other new supplied knight. 310  
 He, now to prove his late renewed might,  
 High brandishing his bright deaw-burning blade,  
 Upon his crested scalpe so sore did smite,  
 That to the scull a yawning wound it made;  
 The deadly dint his dulled senses all dismaid. 315

XXXVI

I wote not, whether the revenging steele  
 Were hardned with that holy water dew,  
 Wherein he fell, or sharper edge did feele,  
 Or his baptized hands now greater grew;  
 Or other secret vertue did ensew; 320  
 Else never could the force of fleshly arme,  
 Ne molten mettall in his blood embrew;  
 For till that stownd could never wight him harme,  
 By subtilty, nor slight, nor might, nor mighty charme.

XXXVII

The cruell wound enraged him so sore, 325

That loud he yelded for exceeding paine;  
 As hundred ramping Lyons seem'd to rore,  
 Whom ravenous hunger did thereto constraine:  
 Then gan he tosse aloft his stretched traine,  
 And therewith scourge the buxome aire so sore, 330  
 That to his force to yeelden it was faine;  
 Ne ought his sturdy strokes might stand afore,  
 That high trees overthrew, and rocks in peeces tore.

XXXVIII

The same advauncing high above his head,  
 With sharpe intended sting so rude him smot, 335  
 That to the earth him drove, as stricken dead,  
 Ne living wight would have him life behot:  
 The mortall sting his angry needle shot  
 Quite through his shield, and in his shoulder seasd,  
 Where fast it stucke, ne would there out be got: 340  
 The grieve thereof him wondrous sore diseasd,  
 Ne might his ranckling paine with patience be appeasd.

XXXIX

But yet more mindfull of his honour deare,  
 Then of the grievous smart, which him did wring,  
 From loathed soile he can him lightly reare, 345  
 And strove to loose the far infixd sting:  
 Which when in vaine he tryde with struggeling,  
 Inflam'd with wrath, his raging blade he heft,  
 And strooke so strongly, that the knotty string  
 Of his huge taile he quite a sunder cleft, 350  
 Five joints thereof he hewd, and but the stump him left.

XL

Hart cannot thinke, what outrage, and what cryes,  
 With foule enfoldred smoake and flashing fire,  
 The hell-bred beast threw forth unto the skyes,  
 That all was covered with darkenesse dire: 355  
 Then fraught with rancour, and engorged ire,  
 He cast at once him to avenge for all,  
 And gathering up himselfe out of the mire,  
 With his uneven wings did fiercely fall,  
 Upon his sunne-bright shield, and gript it fast withall. 360

XLI

Much was the man encombred with his hold,  
 In feare to lose his weapon in his paw,  
 Ne wist yet, how his talaunts to unfold;  
 For harder was from Cerberus greedy jaw  
 To plucke a bone, then from his cruell claw 365  
 To reave by strength the griped gage away:  
 Thrise he assayd it from his foot to draw,  
 And thrise in vaine to draw it did assay,  
 It booted nought to thinke to robbe him of his pray.

XLII

Tho when he saw no power might prevaile, 370  
 His trustie sword he cald to his last aid,  
 Wherewith he fiercely did his foe assaile,  
 And double blowes about him stoutly laid,  
 That glauncing fire out of the yron plaid;  
 As sparckles from the Andvile use to fly, 375  
 When heavy hammers on the wedge are swaid;

Therewith at last he forst him to unty  
 One of his grasping feete, him to defend thereby.

XLIII

The other foot, fast fixed on his shield,  
 Whenas no strength, nor stroks mote him constraine 380  
 To loose, ne yet the warlike pledge to yield,  
 He smot thereat with all his might and maine,  
 That nought so wondrous puissaunce might sustaine;  
 Upon the joint the lucky steele did light,  
 And made such way, that hewd it quite in twaine; 385  
 The paw yett missed not his minisht might,  
 But hong still on the shield, as it at first was pight.

XLIV

For grieffe thereof and divelish despight,  
 From his infernall founnace forth he threw  
 Huge flames, that dimmed all the heavens light, 390  
 Enrold in duskish smoke and brimstone blew:  
 As burning Aetna from his boyling stew  
 Doth belch out flames, and rockes in peeces broke,  
 And ragged ribs of mountains molten new,  
 Enwrapt in coleblacke clouds and filthy smoke, 395  
 That all the land with stench, and heaven with horror choke.

XLV

The heate whereof, and harmefull pestilence  
 So sore him noyd, that forst him to retire  
 A little backward for his best defence,



To save his body from the scorching fire, 400  
 Which he from hellish entrails did expire.  
 It chaunst (eternall God that chaunce did guide,)  
 As he recoiled backward, in the mire  
 His nigh forweared feeble feet did slide,  
 And downe he fell, with dread of shame sore terrifide.  
 405

XLVI

There grew a goodly tree him faire beside,  
 Loaden with fruit and apples rosie red,  
 As they in pure vermilion had beene dide,  
 Whereof great vertues over all were red:  
 For happy life to all which thereon fed, 410  
 And life eke everlasting did befall:  
 Great God it planted in that blessed sted  
 With his Almighty hand, and did it call  
 The tree of life, the crime of our first fathers fall.

XLVII

In all the world like was not to be found, 415  
 Save in that soile, where all good things did grow,  
 And freely sprong out of the fruitfull ground,  
 As incorrupted Nature did them sow,  
 Till that dread Dragon all did overthrow.  
 Another like faire tree eke grew thereby, 420  
 Whereof whoso did eat, eftsoones did know  
 Both good and ill: O mornefull memory:  
 That tree through one mans fault hath doen us all to dy.

XLVIII

From that first tree forth flowd, as from a well,  
 A trickling streame of Balme, most souveraine 425  
 And dainty deare, which on the ground, still fell,  
 And overflowed all the fertile plaine,  
 As it had deawed bene with timely raine:  
 Life and long health that gracious ointment gave,  
 And deadly wounds could heale and reare againe  
 430  
 The senselesse corse appointed for the grave.  
 Into that same he fell: which did from death him save.

XLIX

For nigh thereto the ever damned beast  
 Durst not approach, for he was deadly made,  
 And all that life preserved did detest: 435  
 Yet he is oft adventur'd to invade.  
 By this the drouping day-light gan to fade,  
 And yield his roome to sad succeeding night,  
 Who with her sable mantle gan to shade  
 The face of earth, and wayes of living wight, 440  
 And high her burning torch set up in heaven bright.

L

When gentle Una saw the second fall  
 Of her deare knight, who wearie of long fight,  
 And faint through losse of blood, mov'd not at all,  
 But lay, as in a dreame of deepe delight, 445  
 Besmeard with pretious Balme, whose vertuous might  
 Did heale his wounds, and scorching heat alay,  
 Againe she stricken was with sore affright,

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And for his safetie gan devoutly pray,  
And watch the noyous night, and wait for joyous day.  
450

LI

The joyous day gan early to appeare,  
And faire Aurora from the deawy bed  
Of aged Tithone gan herselfe to reare  
With rosy cheekes, for shame as blushing red;  
Her golden locks for haste were loosely shed 455  
About her eares, when Una her did marke  
Clymbe to her charet, all with flowers spred;  
From heaven high to chase the chearelesse darke,  
With merry note her loud salutes the mounting larke.

LII

Then freshly up arose the doughtie knight, 460  
All healed of his hurts and woundes wide,  
And did himselfe to battell ready dight;  
Whose early foe awaiting him beside  
To have devourd, so soone as day he spyde,  
When now he saw himselfe so freshly reare, 465  
As if late fight had nought him damnifyde,  
He woxe dismayd, and gan his fate to feare;  
Nathlesse with wonted rage he him advaunced neare.

LIII

And in his first encounter, gaping wide,  
He thought attonce him to have swallowd quight,  
470

And rusht upon him with outragious pride;  
Who him r'encountring fierce, as hauke in flight  
Perforce rebutted backe. The weapon bright  
Taking advantage of his open jaw,  
Ran through his mouth with so importune might,  
475  
That deepe emperst his darksome hollow maw,  
And back retyrd, his life blood forth with all did draw.

LIV

So downe he fell, and forth his life did breath,  
That vanisht into smoke and cloudes swift;  
So downe he fell, that th' earth him underneath 480  
Did grone, as feeble so great load to lift;  
So downe he fell, as an huge rockie clift,  
Whose false foundation waves have washt away,  
With dreadfull poyse is from the mayneland rift,  
And rolling downe, great Neptune doth dismay;  
485  
So downe he fell, and like an heaped mountaine lay.

LV

The knight himselfe even trembled at his fall,  
So huge and horrible a masse it seem'd,  
And his deare Ladie, that beheld it all,  
Durst not approach for dread, which she misdeem'd; 490  
But yet at last, whenas the direfull feend  
She saw not stirre, off-shaking vaine affright,  
She nigher drew, and saw that joyous end:  
Then God she praysd, and thankt her faithfull knight,

That had atchieved so great a conquest by his might.  
495

\* \* \* \* \*

CANTO XII

Faire Una to the Redcrosse knight,  
betrouthed is with joy:  
Though false Duessa it to barre  
her false sleights doe imploy.

I

BEHOLD I see the haven nigh at hand,  
To which I meane my wearie course to bend;  
Vere the maine shete, and beare up with the land,  
The which afore is fairely to be kend,  
And seemeth safe from storms that may offend; 5  
There this faire virgin wearie of her way  
Must landed be, now at her journeyes end:  
There eke my feeble barke a while may stay  
Till merry wind and weather call her thence away.

II

Scarsely had Phoebus in the glooming East 10  
Yet harnessed his firie-footed teeme,  
Ne reard above the earth his flaming creast;  
When the last deadly smoke aloft did steeme  
That signe of last outbreathed life did seeme  
Unto the watchman on the castle wall, 15  
Who thereby dead that balefull Beast did deeme,

And to his Lord and Ladie lowd gan call,  
To tell how he had seene the Dragons fatall fall.

III

Uprose with hastie joy, and feeble speed  
That aged Sire, the Lord of all that land, 20  
And looked forth, to weet if true indeede  
Those tydings were, as he did understand,  
Which whenas true by tryall he out found,  
He bad to open wyde his brazen gate,  
Which long time had bene shut, and out of hond 25  
Proclaymed joy and peace through all his state;  
For dead now was their foe which them forrayed late.

IV

Then gan triumphant Trompets sound on hie,  
That sent to heaven the ecchoed report  
Of their new joy, and happie victorie 30  
Gainst him, that had them long opprest with tort,  
And fast imprisoned in sieged fort.  
Then all the people, as in solemne feast,  
To him assembled with one full consort,  
Rejoycing at the fall of that great beast, 35  
From whose eternall bondage now they were releast.

V

Forth came that auncient Lord and aged Queene,  
Arayd in antique robes downe to the ground,  
And sad habiliments right well beseene;  
A noble crew about them waited round 40

Of sage and sober Peres, all gravely gownd;  
 Whom farre before did march a goodly band  
 Of tall young men, all hable armes to sownd,  
 But now they laurell braunches bore in hand;  
 Glad signe of victorie and peace in all their land. 45

VI

Unto that doughtie Conquerour they came,  
 And him before themselves prostrating low,  
 Their Lord and Patrone loud did him proclame,  
 And at his feet their laurell boughes did throw.  
 Soone after them all dauncing on a row 50  
 The comely virgins came, with girlands dight,  
 As fresh as flowres in meadow greene do grow,  
 When morning deaw upon their leaves doth light:  
 And in their hands sweet Timbrels all upheld on hight.

VII

And them before, the fry of children young 55  
 Their wanton sports and childish mirth did play,  
 And to the Maydens sounding tymbrels sung,  
 In well attuned notes, a joyous lay,  
 And made delightfull musicke all the way,  
 Untill they came, where that faire virgin stood; 60  
 As faire Diana in fresh sommers day,  
 Beholds her Nymphes enraung'd in shadie wood,  
 Some wrestle, some do run, some bathe in christall flood:

VIII

So she beheld those maydens meriment

With chearefull vew; who when to her they came,  
 65  
 Themselves to ground with gracious humblesse bent,  
 And her ador'd by honorable name,  
 Lifting to heaven her everlasting fame:  
 Then on her head they set a girland greene,  
 And crowned her twixt earnest and twixt game; 70  
 Who in her self-resemblance well beseene,  
 Did seeme such, as she was, a goodly maiden Queene.

IX

And after, all the raskall many ran,  
 Heaped together in rude rablement,  
 To see the face of that victorious man: 75  
 Whom all admired, as from heaven sent,  
 And gazd upon with gaping wonderment.  
 But when they came where that dead Dragon lay,  
 Stretcht on the ground in monstrous large extent,  
 The sight with idle feare did them dismay, 80  
 Ne durst approch him nigh, to touch, or once assay.

X

Some feard, and fled; some feard and well it faynd;  
 One that would wiser seeme then all the rest,  
 Warnd him not touch, for yet perhaps remaynd  
 Some lingring life within his hollow brest, 85  
 Or in his wombe might lurke some hidden nest  
 Of many Dragonets, his fruitfull seed;  
 Another said, that in his eyes did rest  
 Yet sparckling fire, and bad thereof take heed;  
 Another said, he saw him move his eyes indeed. 90

XI

One mother, when as her foolehardie chylde  
 Did come too neare, and with his talants play,  
 Halfe dead through feare, her little babe revyld,  
 And to her gossips gan in counsell say;  
 How can I tell, but that his talants may 95  
 Yet scratch my sonne, or rend his tender hand?  
 So diversly themselves in vaine they fray;  
 Whiles some more bold, to measure him nigh stand,  
 To prove how many acres he did spread of land.

XII

Thus flocked all the folke him round about, 100  
 The whiles that hoarie king, with all his traine,  
 Being arrived where that champion stout  
 After his foes defeasance did remaine,  
 Him goodly greetes, and faire does entertaine  
 With princely gifts of yvorie and gold, 105  
 And thousand thanks him yeelds for all his paine.  
 Then when his daughter deare he does behold,  
 Her dearely doth imbrace, and kisseth manifold.

XIII

And after to his Pallace he them brings,  
 With shaumes, and trompets, and with Clarions sweet;  
 110  
 And all the way the joyous people sings,  
 And with their garments strowes the paved street:  
 Whence mounting up, they find purveyance meet

Of all that royall Princes court became,  
 And all the floore was underneath their feet 115  
 Bespred with costly scarlot of great name,  
 On which they lowly sit, and fitting purpose frame.

XIV

What needs me tell their feast and goodly guize,  
 In which was nothing riotous nor vaine?  
 What needs of dainty dishes to devize, 120  
 Of comely services, or courtly trayne?  
 My narrow leaves cannot in them containe  
 The large discourse of royall Princes state.  
 Yet was their manner then but bare and plaine:  
 For th' antique world excesse and pride did hate; 125  
 Such proud luxurious pompe is swollen up but late.

XV

Then when with meates and drinckes of every kinde  
 Their fervent appetites they quenched had,  
 That auncient Lord gan fit occasion finde,  
 Of straunge adventures, and of perils sad, 130  
 Which in his travell him befallen had,  
 For to demaund of his renowned guest:  
 Who then with utt'rance grave, and count'nance sad,  
 From point to point, as is before exprest,  
 Discourst his voyage long, according his request. 135

XVI

Great pleasures mixt with pittiful regard,  
 That godly King and Queene did passionate,

Whiles they his pittifull adventures heard,  
 That oft they did lament his lucklesse state,  
 And often blame the too importune fate, 140  
 That heaped on him so many wrathfull wreakes:  
 For never gentle knight, as he of late,  
 So tossed was in fortunes cruell freakes;  
 And all the while salt teares bedeawd the hearers cheaks.

XVII

Then sayd the royall Pere in sober wise; 145  
 Deare Sonne, great beene the evils which ye bore  
 From first to last in your late enterprise,  
 That I note whether prayse, or pittie more:  
 For never living man, I weene, so sore  
 In sea of deadly daungers was distrest; 150  
 But since now safe ye seised have the shore,  
 And well arrived are, (high God be blest)  
 Let us devize of ease and everlasting rest.

XVIII

Ah, dearest Lord, said then that doughty knight,  
 Of ease or rest I may not yet devize, 155  
 For by the faith, which I to armes have plight,  
 I bounden am streight after this emprise,  
 As that your daughter can ye well advize,  
 Backe to returne to that great Faerie Queene,  
 And her to serve six yeares in warlike wize, 160  
 Gainst that proud Paynim king that workes her teene  
 Therefore I ought crave pardon, till I there have beene.

XIX

Unhappie falles that hard necessitie,  
 (Quoth he) the troubler of my happie peace,  
 And vowed foe of my felicitie; 165  
 Ne I against the same can justly preace:  
 But since that band ye cannot now release,  
 Nor doen undo; (for vowes may not be vaine,)  
 Soone as the terme of those six yeares shall cease,  
 Ye then shall hither backe returne againe, 170  
 The marriage to accomplish vovd betwixt you twain.

XX

Which for my part I covet to performe,  
 In sort as through the world I did proclame,  
 That whoso kild that monster most deforme,  
 And him in hardy battaile overcame, 175  
 Should have mine onely daughter to his Dame,  
 And of my kingdome heyre apparaunt bee:  
 Therefore since now to thee perteines the same,  
 By dew desert of noble chevalree,  
 Both daughter and eke kingdome, lo, I yield to thee. 180

XXI

Then forth he called that his daughter faire,  
 The fairest Un' his onely daughter deare,  
 His onely daughter, and his onely heyre;  
 Who forth proceeding with sad sober cheare,  
 As bright as doth the morning starre appeare 185  
 Out of the East, with flaming lockes bedight,  
 To tell that dawning day is drawing neare,  
 And to the world does bring long wished light:

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So faire and fresh that Lady shewd her selfe in sight.

XXII

So faire and fresh, as freshest flowre in May; 190

For she had layd her mournfull stole aside,  
 And widow-like sad wimple throwne away,  
 Wherewith her heavenly beautie she did hide,  
 Whiles on her wearie journey she did ride; 195  
 And on her now a garment she did weare,  
 All lilly white, withoutten spot, or pride,  
 That seemd like silke and silver woven neare,  
 But neither silke nor silver therein did appeare.

XXIII

The blazing brightnesse of her beauties beame,  
 And glorious light of her sunshyny face, 200

To tell, were as to strive against the streame;  
 My ragged rimes are all too rude and bace,  
 Her heavenly lineaments for to enchace.  
 Ne wonder; for her owne deare loved knight,  
 All were she dayly with himselfe in place, 205  
 Did wonder much at her celestially sight:  
 Oft had he seene her faire, but never so faire dight.

XXIV

So fairely dight, when she in presence came,  
 She to her Sire made humble reverence,  
 And bowed low, that her right well became, 210  
 And added grace unto her excellence:  
 Who with great wisdome and grave eloquence

Thus gan to say. But eare he thus had said,  
 With flying speede, and seeming great pretence  
 Came running in, much like a man dismayd, 215  
 A Messenger with letters, which his message said.

XXV

All in the open hall amazed stood  
 At suddeinnesse of that unwarie sight,  
 And wondred at his breathlesse hastie mood.  
 But he for nought would stay his passage right, 220  
 Till fast before the king he did alight;  
 Where falling flat, great humblesse he did make,  
 And kist the ground, whereon his foot was pight;  
 Then to his hands that writ he did betake,  
 Which he disclosing, red thus, as the paper spake. 225

XXVI

To thee, most mighty king of Eden faire,  
 Her greeting sends in these sad lines adrest,  
 The wofull daughter, and forsaken heire  
 Of that great Emperour of all the West;  
 And bids thee be advized for the best, 230  
 Ere thou thy daughter linck in holy band  
 Of wedlocke to that new unknowen guest:  
 For he already plighted his right hand  
 Unto another love, and to another land.

XXVII

To me sad mayd, or rather widow sad, 235  
 He was affiaunced long time before,

And sacred pledges he both gave, and had,  
 False erraunt knight, infamous, and forswore:  
 Witnesse the burning Altars, which he swore,  
 And guiltie heavens of his bold perjury, 240  
 Which though he hath polluted oft of yore,  
 Yet I to them for judgement just do fly,  
 And them conjure t'avenge this shamefull injury.

XXVIII

Therefore since mine he is, or free or bond,  
 Or false or trew, or living or else dead, 245  
 Withhold, O sovaine Prince, your hasty hond  
 From knitting league with him, I you aread;  
 Ne weene my right with strength adowne to tread,  
 Through weaknesse of my widowed, or woe;  
 For truth is strong her rightfull cause to plead, 250  
 And shall find friends, if need requireth soe.  
 So bids thee well to fare, Thy neither friend, nor foe, Fidessa.

XXIX

When he these bitter byting wordes had red,  
 The tydings straunge did him abashed make,  
 That still he sate long time astonished, 255  
 As in great muse, ne word to creature spake.  
 At last his solemne silence thus he brake,  
 With doubtfull eyes fast fixed on his guest;  
 Redoubted knight, that for mine onely sake  
 Thy life and honour late adventurst, 260  
 Let nought be hid from me, that ought to be exprest.

XXX

What meane these bloody vowes, and idle threats,  
 Throwne out from womanish impatient mind?  
 What heavens? what altars? what enraged heates 265  
 Here heaped up with termes of love unkind,  
 My conscience cleare with guilty bands would bind?  
 High God be witnesse, that I guiltlesse ame.  
 But if your selfe, Sir knight, ye faultie find,  
 Or wrapped be in loves of former Dame,  
 With crime do not it cover, but disclose the same. 270

XXXI

To whom the Redcrosse knight this answere sent  
 My Lord, my King, be nought hereat dismayd,  
 Till well ye wote by grave intendiment,  
 What woman, and wherefere doth me upbrayd 275  
 With breach of love, and loyalty betrayd.  
 It was in my mishaps, as hitherward  
 I lately traveild, that unwares I strayd  
 Out of my way, through perils straunge and hard;  
 That day should faile me, ere I had them all declar'd.

XXXII

There did I find, or rather I was found 280  
 Of this false woman, that Fidessa hight,  
 Fidessa hight the falsest Dame on ground,  
 Most false Duessa, royall richly dight,  
 That easy was to invegle weaker sight:  
 Who by her wicked arts, and wylie skill, 285  
 Too false and strong for earthly skill or might,  
 Unwares me wrought unto her wicked will,



And to my foe betrayd, when least I feared ill.

XXXIII

Then stepped forth the goodly royall Mayd,  
 And on the ground her selfe prostrating low, 290  
 With sober countenance thus to him sayd;  
 O pardon me, my soveraigne Lord, to show  
 The secret treasons, which of late I know  
 To have bene wrought by that false sorceresse.  
 She onely she it is, that earst did throw 295  
 This gentle knight into so great distresse,  
 That death him did awaite in dayly wretchednesse.

XXXIV

And now it seemes, that she suborned hath  
 This craftie messenger with letters vaine,  
 To worke new woe and unprovided scath, 300  
 By breaking of the band betwixt us twaine;  
 Wherein she used hath the practicke paine  
 Of this false footman, clokt with simplenesse,  
 Whom if ye please for to discover plaine,  
 Ye shall him Archimago find, I ghesse, 305  
 The falsest man alive; who tries shall find no lesse.

XXXV

The king was greatly moved at her speach,  
 And, all with suddein indignation fraight,  
 Bad on that Messenger rude hands to reach.  
 Eftsoones the Gard, which on his state did wait, 310  
 Attacht that faitor false, and bound him strait:

Who seeming sorely chauffed at his band,  
 As chained Beare, whom cruell dogs do bait,  
 With idle force did faine them to withstand,  
 And often semblaunce made to scape out of their hand.  
 315

XXXVI

But they him layd full low in dungeon deepe,  
 And bound him hand and foote with yron chains  
 And with continual watch did warely keepe:  
 Who then would thinke, that by his subtile trains 320  
 He could escape fowle death or deadly paines?  
 Thus when that princes wrath was pacifide,  
 He gan renew the late forbidden bains,  
 And to the knight his daughter dear he tyde,  
 With sacred rites and vowes for ever to abyde.

XXXVII

His owne two hands the holy knots did knit, 325  
 That none but death for ever can devide;  
 His owne two hands, for such a turne most fit,  
 The housling fire did kindle and provide,  
 And holy water thereon sprinckled wide;  
 At which the bushy Teade a groome did light, 330  
 And sacred lamp in secret chamber hide,  
 Where it should not be quenched day nor night,  
 For feare of evill fates, but burnen ever bright.

XXXVIII

Then gan they sprinckle all the posts with wine,

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And made great feast to solemnize that day; 335  
 They all perfumde with frankencense divine,  
 And precious odours fetcht from far away,  
 That all the house did sweat with great aray:  
 And all the while sweete Musicke did apply  
 Her curious skill, the warbling notes to play, 340  
 To drive away the dull Melancholy;  
 The whiles one sung a song of love and jollity.

XXXIX

During the which there was an heavenly noise  
 Heard sound through all the Pallace pleasantly,  
 Like as it had bene many an Angels voice 345  
 Singing before th' eternall Majesty,  
 In their trinall triplicities on hye;  
 Yet wist no creature whence that heavenly sweet  
 Proceeded, yet eachone felt secretly  
 Himselfe thereby reft of his sences meet, 350  
 And ravished with rare impression in his sprite.

XL

Great joy was made that day of young and old,  
 And solemne feast proclaimd throughout the land,  
 That their exceeding merth may not be told:  
 Suffice it heare by signes to understand 355  
 The usuall joyes at knitting of loves band.  
 Thrise happy man the knight himselfe did hold,  
 Possessed of his Ladies hart and hand,  
 And ever, when his eye did her behold,  
 His heart did seeme to melt in pleasures manifold. 360

XLI

Her joyous presence, and sweet company  
 In full content he there did long enjoy;  
 Ne wicked envie, ne vile gealosity,  
 His deare delights were able to annoy:  
 Yet swimming in that sea of blissfull joy, 365  
 He nought forgot how he whilome had sworne,  
 In case he could that monstrous beast destroy,  
 Unto his Faerie Queene backe to returne;  
 The which he shortly did, and Una left to mourne.

XLII

Now strike your sailes ye jolly Mariners, 370  
 For we be come unto a quiet rode,  
 Where we must land some of our passengers,  
 And light this wearie vessell of her lode.  
 Here she a while may make her safe abode,  
 Till she repaired have her tackles spent, 375  
 And wants supplide. And then againe abroad  
 On the long voyage whereto she is bent:  
 Well may she speede and fairely finish her intent.