

Cant. III.

*Bold Marinell of Britomart,
Is throwne on the Rich strond:
Faire Florimell of Arthur is
Long followed, but not fond.*

[1]

VV Here is the Antique glory now become,
That whilome wont in women to appeare?
Where be the braue atchieuements doen by some?
Where be the battels, where the shield and speare,
And all the conquests, which them high did reare,
That matter made for famous Poets verse,
And boastfull men so oft a basht to heare?
Bene they all dead, and laid in dolefull herse?
Or doen they onely sleepe, and shall againe reuerse?

[2]

If they be dead, then woe is me therefore:
But if they sleepe, ô let them soone awake:
For all too long I burne with enuy sore,
To heare the warlike feates, which *Homere* spake
Of bold *Panthesilee*, which made a lake
Of *Greekish* bloud so oft in *Troian* plaine;
But when I read, how stout *Debora* strake
Proud *Sisera*, and how *Camill'* hath slaine
The huge *Orsilochus*, I swell with great disdaine.

[3]

Yet these, and all that else had puissaunce,
Cannot with noble *Britomart* compare,
Aswell for glory of great valiaunce,
As for pure chastitie and vertue rare,
That all her goodly deeds do well declare.
Well worthy stock, from which the branches sprong,
That in late yeares so faire a blossome bare,
As thee, ô Queene, the matter of my song,
Whose lignage from this Lady I deriue along.

[4]

Who when through speaches with the *Redcrosse* knight,
She learned had th'estate of *Arthegall*,

And in each point her selfe informd aright,
A friendly league of loue perpetuall
She with him bound, and *Congé* tooke withall.
Then he forth on his iourney did proceede,
To seeke aduentures, which mote him befall,
And win him worship through his warlike deed,
Which alwayes of his paines he made the chieftest meed.

[5]

But *Britomart* kept on her former course,
Ne euer dofte her armes, but all the way
Grew pensiue through that amorous discourse,
By which the *Redcrosse* knight did earst display
Her louers shape, and cheualrous aray;
A thousand thoughts she fashioned in her mind,
And in her feigning fancie did pourtray
Him such, as fittest she for loue could find,
Wise, warlike, personable, curteous, and kind.

[6]

With such selfe-pleasing thoughts her wound she fed,
And thought so to beguile her grievous smart;
But so her smart was much more grievous bred,
And the deepe wound more deepe engord her hart,
That nought but death her dolour mote depart.
So forth she rode without repose or rest,
Searching all lands and each remotest part,
Following the guidaunce of her blinded guest,
Till that to the sea-coast at length she her address.

[7]

There she a lighted from her light-foot beast,
And sitting downe vpon the rocky shore,
Bad her old Squire vnlace her lofty creast;
Tho hauing vewd a while the surges hore,
That gainst the craggy cliffs did loudly rore,
And in their raging surquedry disdaynd,
That the fast earth affronted them so sore,
And their deuoring couetize restrynd,
Thereat she sighed deepe, and after thus complaynd.

[8]

Huge sea of sorrow, and tempestuous griefe,

Wherein my feeble barke is tossed long,
Far from the hoped haven of reliefe,
Who do thy cruell billowes beat so strong,
And thy moyst mountaines each on others throng,
Threatning to swallow vp my fearefull life?
O do thy cruell wrath and spightfull wrong
At length allay, and stint thy stormy strife,
Which in these troubled bowels raignes, & rageth rife.

[9]

For else my feeble vessell crazd, and crackt
Through thy strong buffets and outrageous blowes,
Cannot endure, but needs it must be wrackt
On the rough rocks, or on the sandy shallowes,
The whiles that loue it steres, and fortune rowes;
Loue my lewd Pilot hath a restlesse mind
And fortune Boteswaine no assuraunce knowes,
But saile withouten starres, gainst tide and wind:
How can they other do, sith both are bold and blind?

[10]

Thou God of winds, that raignest in the seas,
That raignest also in the Continent,
At last blow vp some gentle gale of ease,
The which may bring my ship, ere it be rent,
Vnto the gladsome port of her intent:
Then when I shall my selfe in safety see,
A table for eternall monument
Of thy great grace, and my great ieopardie,
Great *Neptune*, I auow to hallow vnto thee.

[11]

Then sighing softly sore, and inly deepe,
She shut vp all her plaint in priuy grieve;
For her great courage would not let her weepe,
Till that old *Glauce* gan with sharpe reprieve,
Her to restraine, and giue her good reliefe,
Through hope of those, which *Merlin* had her told
Should of her name and nation be chiefe,
And fetch their being from the sacred mould
Of her immortall wombe, to be in heauen enroll.

[12]

Thus as she her recomfited, she spyde,
Where farre away one all in armour bright,
With hastie gallop towards her did ryde;
Her dolour soone she ceast, and on her dight
Her Helmet, to her Courser mounting light:
Her former sorrow into suddein wrath,
Both coosen passions of distroubled spright,
Conuerting, forth she beates the dustie path;
Loue and despight attonce her courage kindled hath.

[13]

As when a foggy mist hath ouercast
The face of heauen, and the cleare aire engrost,
The world in darkenesse dwels, till that at last
The watry Southwinde from the seabord cost
Vpblowing, doth disperse the vapour lo'st,
And poures it selfe forth in a stormy showre;
So the faire *Britomart* hauing disclo'st
Her clowdy care into a wrathfull stowre,
The mist of grieve dissolu'd, into vengeance powre,

[14]

Eftsoones her goodly shield addressing faire,
That mortall speare she in her hand did take,
And vnto battell did her selfe prepaire.
The knight approching, sternely her bespake;
Sir knight, that doest thy voyage rashly make
By this forbidden way in my despight,
Ne doest by others death ensample take,
I read thee soone retyre, whiles thou hast might,
Least afterwards it be too late to take thy flight.

[15]

Ythrild with deepe disdaine of his proud threat,
She shortly thus; Fly they, that need to fly;
Words fearen babes. I meane not thee entreat
To passe; but maugre thee will passe or dy.
Ne lenger stayd for th'other to reply,
But with sharpe speares the rest made dearly knowne.
Strongly the straunge knight ran, and sturdily
Strooke her full on the brest, that made her downe
Decline her head, & touch her crouper with her crowne.

[16]

But she againe him in the shield did smite
With so fierce furie and great puissaunce,
That through his threesquare scuchin percing quite,
And through his mayled hauberque, by mischaunce
The wicked steele through his left side did glaunce;
Him so transfixed she before her bore
Beyond his croupe, the length of all her launce,
Till sadly soucing on the sandie shore,
He tombled on an heape, and wallowd in his gore.

[17]

Like as the sacred Oxe, that carelesse stands,
With gilden hornes, and flowry girlonds crownd,
Proud of his dying honor and deare bands,
Whiles th'altars fume with frankincense arownd,
All suddenly with mortall stroke astownd,
Doth groueling fall, and with his streaming gore
Distaines the pillours, and the holy grownd,
And the faire flowres, that decked him afore;
So fell proud *Marinell* vpon the pretious shore.

[18]

The martiall Mayd stayd not him to lament,
But forward rode, and kept her readie way
Along the strond, which as she ouer-went,
She saw bestrowed all with rich aray
Of pearles and pretious stones of great assay,
And all the grauell mixt with golden owre;
Whereat she wondred much, but would not stay
For gold, or perles, or pretious stones an howre,
But them despised all; for all was in her powre.

[19]

Whiles thus he lay in deadly stonishment,
Tydings hereof came to his mothers eare;
His mother was the blacke-browd *Cymoent*,
The daughter of great *Nereus*, which did beare
This warlike sonne vnto an earthly peare,
The famous *Dumarin*; who on a day
Finding the Nymph a sleepe in secret wheare,
As he by chaunce did wander that same way,
Was taken with her loue, and by her closely lay.

[20]

There he this knight of her begot, whom borne
She of his father *Marinell* did name,
And in a rocky caue as wight forlorne,
Long time she fostred vp, till he became
A mightie man at armes, and mickle fame
Did get through great aduentures by him donne:
For neuer man he suffred by that same
Rich strond to trauell, whereas he did wonne,
But that he must do battell with the Sea-nymphes sonne.

[21]

An hundred knights of honorable name
He had subdew'd, and them his vassals made,
That through all Farie lond his noble fame
Now blazed was, and feare did all inuade,
That none durst passen through that perilous glade.
And to aduance his name and glorie more,
Her Sea-god syre she dearely did perswade,
T'endow her sonne with treasure and rich store,
Boue all the sonnes, that were of earthly wombes ybore.

[22]

The God did graunt his daughters deare demaund,
To doen his Nephew in all riches flow;
Eftsoones his heaped waues he did commaund,
Out of their hollow bosome forth to throw
All the huge treasure, which the sea below
Had in his greedie gulfe deuoured deepe,
And him enriched through the ouerthrow
And wreckes of many wretches, which did weepe,
And often waile their wealth, which he from them did keepe.

[23]

Shortly vpon that shore there heaped was,
Exceeding riches and all pretious things,
The spoyle of all the world, that it did pas
The wealth of th'East, and pompe of *Persian* kings;
Gold, amber, yuorie, perles, owches, rings,
And all that else was pretious and deare,
The sea vnto him voluntary brings,
That shortly he a great Lord did appeare,
As was in all the lond of Faery, or elsewheare.

[24]

Thereto he was a doughtie dreaded knight,
Tryde often to the scath of many deare,
That none in equall armes him matchen might,
The which his mother seeing, gan to feare
Least his too haughtie hardines might reare
Some hard mishap, in hazard of his life:
For thy she oft him counseld to forbear
The bloudie battell, and to stirre vp strife,
But after all his warre, to rest his wearie knife.

[25]

And for his more assurance, she inquir'd
One day of *Proteus* by his mightie spell,
(For *Proteus* was with prophecie inspir'd)
Her deare sonnes destinie to her to tell,
And the sad end of her sweet *Marinell*.
Who through foresight of his eternall skill,
Bad her from womankind to keepe him well:
For of a woman he should haue much ill,
A virgin strange and stout him should dismay, or kill.

[26]

For thy she gaue him warning euery day,
The loue of women not to entertaine;
A lesson too too hard for liuing clay,
From loue in course of nature to refraine:
Yet he his mothers lore did well retaine,
And euer from faire Ladies loue did fly;
Yet many Ladies faire did oft complaine,
That they for loue of him would algates dy:
Dy, who so list for him, he was loues enemy.

[27]

But ah, who can deceiue his destiny,
Or weene by warning to auoyd his fate?
That when he sleepes in most security,
And safest seemes, him soonest doth amate,
And findeth dew effect or soone or late.
So feeble is the powre of fleshly arme.
His mother bad him womens loue to hate,
For she of womans force did feare no harme;
So weening to haue arm'd him, she did quite disarme.

[28]

This was that woman, this that deadly wound,
That *Proteus* prophecide should him dismay,
The which his mother vainely did expound,
To be hart-wounding loue, which should assay
To bring her sonne vnto his last decay.
So tickle be the termes of mortall state,
And full of subtile sophismes, which do play
With double senses, and with false debate,
Tapproue the vnknown purpose of eternall fate.

[29]

Too true the famous *Marinell* it fownd,
Who through late triall, on that wealthy Strond
Inglorious now lies in senselesse swownd,
Through heauy stroke of *Britomartis* hond.
Which when his mother deare did vnderstond,
And heauy tydings heard, whereas she playd
Amongst her watry sisters by a pond,
Gathering sweet daffadillies, to haue made
Gay girlonds, from the Sun their forheads faire to shade.

[30]

Eftsoones both flowres and girlonds farre away
She flong, and her faire deawy lockes yrent,
To sorrow huge she turnd her former play,
And gameson merth to grieuous dreriment:
She threw her selfe downe on the Continent,
Ne word did speake, but lay as in a swowne,
Whiles all her sisters did for her lament,
With yelling outcries, and with shrieking sowne;
And euery one did teare her girlond from her crowne.

[31]

Soone as she vp out of her deadly fit
Arose, she bad her charet to be brought,
And all her sisters, that with her did sit,
Bad eke attonce their charets to be sought;
Tho full of bitter grieve and pensiue thought,
She to her wagon clombe; clombe all the rest,
And forth together went, with sorrow fraught.
The waues obedient to their beheast,
Them yielded readie passage, and their rage surceast.

[32]

Great *Neptune* stood amazed at their sight,
Whiles on his broad round backe they softly slid
And eke himselfe mournd at their mournfull plight,
Yet wist not what their wailing ment, yet did
For great compassion of their sorrow, bid
His mightie waters to them buxome bee:
Eftsoones the roaring billowes still abid,
And all the grievly Monsters of the See
Stood gaping at their gate, and wondred them to see.

[33]

A teme of Dolphins raunged in aray,
Drew the smooth charet of sad *Cymoent*;
They were all taught by *Triton*, to obay
To the long traines, at her commaundement:
As swift as swallowes, on the waues they went,
That their broad flaggie finnes no fome did reare,
Ne bubbling roundell they behind them sent;
The rest of other fishes drawen weare,
Which with their finny oars the swelling sea did sheare.

[34]

Soone as they bene arriu'd vpon the brim
Of the *Rich strond*, their charets they forlore,
And let their temed fishes softly swim
Along the margent of the fomy shore,
Least they their finnes should bruze, and surbate sore
Their tender feet vpon the stony ground:
And comming to the place, where all in gore
And cruddy bloud enwallowed they found
The lucklesse *Marinell*, lying in deadly swound;

[35]

His mother swowned thrise, and the third time
Could scarce recouered be out of her paine;
Had she not bene deuoyd of mortall slime,
She should not then haue bene reliu'd againe,
But soone as life recouered had the raine,
She made so piteous mone and deare wayment,
That the hard rocks could scarce from teares refraine,
And all her sister Nymphes with one consent
Supplide her sobbing breaches with sad complement.

[36]

Deare image of my selfe (she said) that is,
The wretched sonne of wretched mother borne,
Is this thine high aduauncement, ô is this
Th'immortall name, with which thee yet vnborne
Thy Gransire *Nereus* promist to adorne?
Now lyst thou of life and honor reft;
Now lyst thou a lumpe of earth forlorne,
Ne of thy late life memory is left,
Ne can thy irreuocable destiny be weft?

[37]

Fond *Proteus*, father of false prophecis,
And they more fond, that credit to thee giue,
Not this the worke of womans hand ywis,
That so deepe wound through these deare members driue.
I feared loue: but they that loue do liue,
But they that die, doe neither loue nor hate.
Nath'lesse to thee thy folly I forgiue,
And to my selfe, and to accursed fate
The guilt I doe ascribe: deare wisdomes bought too late.

[38]

O what auailes it of immortall seed
To beene ybred and neuer borne to die?
Farre better I it deeme to die with speed,
Then waste in woe and wailefull miserie.
Who dyes the vtmost dolour doth abyee,
But who that liues, is left to waile his losse:
So life is losse, and death felicitie.
Sad life worse then glad death: and greater crosse
To see friends graue, then dead the graue selfe to engrosse.

[39]

But if the heauens did his dayes enuie,
And my short blisse maligne, yet mote they well
Thus much afford me, ere that he did die
That the dim eyes of my deare *Marinell*
I mote haue closed, and him bed farewell,
Sith other offices for mother meet
They would not graunt.
Yet maulgre them farewell, my sweetest sweet;
Farewell my sweetest sonne, sith we no more shall meet.

[40]

Thus when they all had sorrowed their fill,
They softly gan to search his griesly wound:
And that they might him handle more at will,
They him disarm'd, and spredding on the ground
Their watchet mantles frindgd with siluer round,
They softly wipt away the gelly blood
From th'orifice; which hauing well vpbound,
They pourd in soueraine balme, and Nectar good,
Good both for earthly med'cine, and for heauenly food.

[41]

Tho when the lilly handed *Liagore*,
(This *Liagore* whylome had learned skill
In leaches craft, by great *Appolloes* lore,
Sith her whylome vpon high *Pindus* hill,
He loued, and at last her wombe did fill
With heauenly seed, whereof wise *Pæon* sprong)
Did feele his pulse, she knew their staid still
Some litle life his feeble sprites emong;
Which to his mother told, despeire she from her flong.

[42]

Tho vp him taking in their tender hands,
They easily vnto her charet beare:
Her teme at her commaundement quiet stands,
Whiles they the corse into her wagon reare,
And strow with flowres the lamentable beare:
Then all the rest into their coches clim,
And through the brackish waues their passage sheare;
Vpon great *Neptunes* necke they softly swim,
And to her watry chamber swiftly carry him.

[43]

Deepe in the bottome of the sea, her bowre
Is built of hollow billowes heaped hye,
Like to thicke cloudes, that threat a stormy showre,
And vaulted all within, like to the sky,
In which the Gods do dwell eternally:
There they him laid in easie couch well dight;
And sent in haste for *Tryphon*, to apply
Salues to his wounds, and medicines of might:
For *Tryphon* of sea gods the soueraine leach is hight.

[44]

The whiles the *Nymphes* sit all about him round,
Lamenting his mishap and heauy plight;
And oft his mother vewing his wide wound,
Cursed the hand, that did so deadly smight
Her dearest sonne, her dearest harts delight.
But none of all those curses ouertooke
The warlike Maid, th'ensample of that might,
But fairely well she thriu'd, and well did brooke
Her noble deeds, ne her right course for ought forsooke.

[45]

Yet did false *Archimage* her still pursew,
To bring to passe his mischieuous intent,
Now that he had her singled from the crew
Of courteous knights, the Prince, and Faery gent,
Whom late in chace of beautie excellent
She left, pursewing that same foster strong;
Of whose foule outrage they impatient,
And full of fiery zeale, him followed long,
To reskew her from shame, and to reuenge her wrong.

[46]

Through thick and thin, through mountaines & through plains,
Those two great champions did attonce pursew
The fearefull damzell, with incessant paines:
Who from them fled, as light-foot hare from vew
Of hunter swift, and sent of houndes trew.
At last they came vnto a double way,
Where, doubtfull which to take, her to reskew,
Themselues they did dispart, each to assay,
Whether more happie were, to win so goodly pray.

[47]

But *Timias*, the Princes gentle Squire,
That Ladies loue vnto his Lord forlent,
And with proud enuy, and indignant ire,
After that wicked foster fiercely went.
So beene they three three sundry wayes ybent.
But fairest fortune to the Prince befell,
Whose chaunce it was, that soone he did repent,
To take that way, in which that Damozell
Was fled afore, affraid of him, as feend of hell.

[48]

At last of her farre off he gained vew:
Then gan he freshly pricke his fomy steed,
And euer as he nigher to her drew,
So euermore he did increase his speed,
And of each turning still kept warie heed:
Aloud to her he oftentimes did call,
To doe away vaine doubt, and needlesse dreed:
Full myld to her he spake, and oft let fall
Many meeke wordes, to stay and comfort her withall.

[49]

But nothing might relent her hastie flight;
So deepe the deadly feare of that foule swaine
Was earst impressed in her gentle spright:
Like as a fearefull Doue, which through the raine,
Of the wide aire her way does cut amaine,
Hauing farre off espyde a Tassell gent,
Which after her his nimble wings doth straine,
Doubleth her haste for feare to be for-hent,
And with her pineons cleaues the liquid firmament.

[50]

With no lesse haste, and eke with no lesse dreed,
That fearefull Ladie fled from him, that ment
To her no euill thought, nor euill deed;
Yet former feare of being fowly shent,
Carried her forward with her first intent:
And though oft looking backward, well she vewd,
Her selfe freed from that foster insolent,
And that it was a knight, which now her sewd,
Yet she no lesse the knight feared, then that villein rude.

[51]

His vncouth shield and straunge armes her dismayd,
Whose like in Faery lond were seldome seene,
That fast she from him fled, no lesse affrayd,
Then of wilde beastes if she had chased beene:
Yet he her followd still with courage keene,
So long that now the golden *Hesperus*
Was mounted high in top of heauen sheene,
And warnd his other brethren ioyeous,
To light their blessed lamps in *Ioues* eternall hous.

[52]

All suddenly dim woxe the dampish ayre,
And griesly shadowes couered heauen bright,
That now with thousand starres was decked fayre;
Which when the Prince beheld, a lothfull sight,
And that perforce, for want of lenger light,
He mote surcease his suit, and lose the hope
Of his long labour, he gan fowly wyte
His wicked fortune, that had turnd aslope,
And cursed night, that reft from him so goodly scope.

[53]

Tho when her wayes he could no more descry,
But to and fro at disauenture strayd;
Like as a ship, whose Lodestarre suddenly
Couered with cloudes, her Pilot hath dismayd;
His wearisome pursuit perforce he stayd,
And from his loftie steed dismounting low,
Did let him forage. Downe himselfe he layd
Vpon the grassie ground, to sleepe a throw;
The cold earth was his couch, the hard steele his pillow.

[54]

But gentle Sleepe enuyde him any rest;
In stead thereof sad sorrow, and disdaine
Of his hard hap did vexe his noble brest,
And thousand fancies bet his idle braine
With their light wings, the sights of semblants vaine:
Oft did he wish, that Lady faire mote bee
His Faery Queene, for whom he did complaine:
Or that his Faery Queene were such, as shee:
And euer hastie Night he blamed bitterlie.

[55]

Night thou foule Mother of annoyance sad,
Sister of heauie death, and nourse of woe,
Which wast begot in heauen, but for thy bad
And brutish shape thrust downe to hell below,
Where by the grim floud of *Cocytus* slow
Thy dwelling is, in *Herebus* blacke hous,
(Blacke *Herebus* thy husband is the foe
Of all the Gods) where thou vngratious,
Halfe of thy dayes doest lead in horreur hideous.

[56]

What had th'eternall Maker need of thee,
The world in his continuall course to keepe,
That doest all things deface, ne lettest see
The beautie of his worke? Indeed in sleepe
The slouthfull bodie, that doth loue to steepe
His lustlesse limbes, and drowne his baser mind,
Doth praise thee oft, and oft from *Stygian* deepe
Calles thee, his goddesse in his error blind,
And great Dame Natures handmaide, chearing euery kind.

[57]

But well I wote, that to an heauy hart
Thou art the root and nurse of bitter cares,
Breeder of new, renewer of old smarts:
In stead of rest thou lendest rayling teares,
In stead of sleepe thou sendest troublous feares,
And dreadfull visions, in the which aliue
The drearie image of sad death appeares:
So from the wearie spirit thou doest driue
Desired rest, and men of happinesse depriue.

[58]

Vnder thy mantle blacke there hidden lye,
Light-shonning theft, and traiterous intent,
Abhorred bloudshed, and vile felony,
Shamefull deceit, and daunger imminent;
Foule horror, and eke hellish dreriment:
All these I wote in thy protection bee,
And light doe shonne, for feare of being shent:
For light ylike is loth'd of them and thee,
And all that lewdnesse loue, doe hate the light to see.

[59]

For day discouers all dishonest wayes,
And sheweth each thing, as it is indeed:
The prayes of high God he faire displayes,
And his large bountie rightly doth areed.
Dayes dearest children be the blessed seed,
Which darknesse shall subdew, and heauen win:
Truth is his daughter; he her first did breed,
Most sacred virgin, without spot of sin.
Our life is day, but death with darknesse doth begin.

[60]

O when will day then turne to me againe,
And bring with him his long expected light?
O *Titan*, haste to reare thy ioyous waine:
Speed thee to spread abroad thy beames bright?
And chase away this too long lingring night,
Chase her away, from whence she came, to hell.
She, she it is, that hath me done despight:
There let her with the damned spirits dwell,
And yeeld her roome to day, that can it gouerne well.

[61]

Thus did the Prince that wearie night outweare,
In restlesse anguish and vnquiet paine:
And earely, ere the morrow did vpreare
His deawy head out of the *Ocean* maine,
He vp arose, as halfe in great disdaine,
And clombe vnto his steed. So forth he went,
With heauie looke and lumpish pace, that plaine
In him bewraid great grudge and maltalent:
His steed eke seem'd t'apply his steps to his intent.

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