Spenser's Method of Grace in the Legends of Holiness, Temperance, and Chastity

A thesis submitted
to the Graduate School
Valdosta State University

in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in English

in the Department of English
of the College of Humanities and Social Science

May 2020

Rachel A. Miller

BA, The Baptist College of Florida, 2017

This Thesis, "Spenser's Method of Grace in the Legends of Holiness, Temperance, and Chastity," by Rachel A. Miller, is approved by:

Thesis Committee Chair

Jane M. Kinney, Ph.D.
Professor of English

Committee Members

Maren Clegg Hyer, Ph.D.
Professor of English

Catherine Oglesby, Ph.D.
Professor Emerita of History

Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research

Becky K. da Cruz, Ph.D., J.D.
Professor of Criminal Justice

FAIR USE

DUPLICATION

I authorize the Head of Interlibrary Loan or the Head of Archives at the Odum Library at Valdosta State University to arrange for duplication of this Thesis for educational or scholarly purposes when so requested by a library user. The duplication shall be at the user's expense.

Signature Rachel A. Miller

I refuse permission for this Thesis to be duplicated in whole or in part.

Signature _____

ABSTRACT

The knights Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour from *The Faerie Queene* are tasked with quests that curiously do not depend on wit or strength. Rather, the quests depend on each knight's virtue and his acceptance of grace, the supreme virtue for Spenser. Through the wanderings of each knight, Spenser shows that there is a method of grace fashioned specifically for each knight's quest both physical and spiritual that always requires the knights to reject false images of grace in exchange for God's true grace. Grace will not abandon Gloriana's knights, but as Guyon and Scudamour's stubborn rejection of this virtue teaches, when grace is rejected, divine harmony, the loving cooperation between God and humanity that Redcrosse glimpses at the end of his quest, will be broken and replaced with fear and all the vices that follow it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Jane Kinney and Dr. Maren Clegg-Hyer for assisting me in the creation of this project. I have grown as a scholar, a writer, and a person because of your mentorship. I would also like to thank Dr. Geoffrey Reiter for inspiring me in my undergraduate years to study *The Faerie Queene*. This project owes a lot to the knowledge and enthusiasm that you brought to all your classes that I had the privilege to be a part of not too many years ago.

DEDICATION

To my parents and first instructors, Joan and Kurt.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: THE QUESTS BEGIN

The knights Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour from Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* each has an external challenge that he is committed to meet; each knight is called in some capacity to restore harmony where there is chaos, and life where there is death. However, if they are to successfully defeat their external foes, if they are to defeat death and chaos, the knights must attend to their internal challenges—spiritual conflicts that war against their hearts and minds. Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour, though, cannot conquer their external or internal challenges on their own. If they are to complete their quests, they must freely accept grace—unearned, undeserved assistance from God and their neighbors.

Redcrosse is committed to slaying the dragon that terrorizes Eden; however, before Redcrosse can save Eden, he must rid himself of his faithlessness and learn that truth is relational and found only through faith. Through the grace-filled actions of Prince Arthur and Una, Redcrosse is rescued from his faithlessness, which enables him to defeat the dragon. Guyon is committed to capturing the witch Acrasia; however, if Guyon is to defeat Acrasia, he must rid himself of his vengeance and pride and learn that a victorious man is filled with forgiveness and humility. Through the good will of Arthur, Guyon is rescued from the Paynim Brothers. Unlike Redcrosse, though, Guyon does not fully accept the grace given to him to conquer his vices; Guyon's partial failure to put aside his sins demonstrates that grace will not force a person to accept its benefits; grace, in short, requires free will. Scudamour wants to save his love Amoret from the lustful enchanter Busirane, yet if Scudamour is to successfully save Amoret, he must learn that marriage is based on gentleness and trust rather than on sexual hunger. Through the

selfless actions of Britomart, Scudamour is given the opportunity to be reconciled with Amoret. Yet despite Britomart's aid, Scudamour does not conquer his internal sins, and thus his reconciliation with Amoret is deferred. Scudamour's fear keeps him from trusting grace, and like Guyon, Scudamour foolishly uses his free will to reject grace; nevertheless, despite Scudamour's poor choices, grace persistently pursues Scudamour, illustrating that even in the face of rejection grace is still available to those willing to accept it.

Spenser's World: The Faerie Queene's *Historical Context*

When Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558, she had her own external battle to face. Helen Hackett notes that Elizabeth had to prove to England that she was a sound Protestant ruler since many Protestants in the court and country feared the idea of a female monarch (49). Elizabeth's predecessor, Mary I, had only confirmed their dislike of female rulers by outlawing and persecuting the Protestant faith. The Scottish theologian John Knox wrote that a female ruler was despicable and that God would punish any nation who had a female monarch (Hackett 39). As Elizabeth prepared to take the throne, Knox carefully voiced his concern when in a letter to Lord Burghley, Elizabeth's close advisor, Knox stated "'that if Elizabeth does rule it is because of a special dispensation of Providence'" (qtd.in Hackett 39). Echoing Knox and drawing upon John Calvin's "exceptional woman motif" (Hackett 50), John Aylmer saw Elizabeth's rule as justifiable only as long as she saw herself as a mother to the nation, which ultimately entailed "producing an heir" (Hackett 52).

When Elizabeth became queen, the London coronation pageants of 1559, like Knox and Aylmer's letters, mixed skepticism with approval, as Hackett explains. In one pageant Elizabeth reconciled York and Lancaster, and in another, with the help of personified virtues, Elizabeth, who was cast as a child-ruler, obliterate[d] "superstition and ignorance" (Hackett 43); one

memorable pageant had a female personification of Truth liberating a fallen nation and presenting the Scriptures entitled *Verbum Veritatis* to Elizabeth; and in another, the newly crowned queen was portrayed as the Old Testament judge Deborah, attended by a host of saints and laymen (Hackett 43). Hackett notes that each pageant assumed that Elizabeth would bring peace and concord to England, but the pageant of Truth highlighted the question raised by all the pageants collectively: would Elizabeth live by the word of truth—that is, the word of God as understood by the Protestants? Elizabeth had the means to bring peace and justice to the nation, but would she, like Deborah or an innocent child, possess the moral fortitude to do so?

To assure the Protestants that she was a godly queen, Elizabeth made Protestantism the state religion, established herself as the governor of the Church, and used the Theory of the King's Two Bodies to rebut those who doubted the efficacy of her rule. Elizabeth told her Privy Council that though her natural body was feminine, God had ordained her to put on the masculine body, "'a Bodye Politique to Governe'" (qtd. in Hackett 40). Hackett notes that "despite the femaleness of her body natural, Elizabeth could lay claim to the 'masculine' public virtues of rule through her possession of the body politic" (40); Edmund Plowden, a key developer of the Theory of the King's Two Bodies, wrote "'disability of the body naturall is washed away by accesse of the body politicke to it'" (qtd. in Hackett 40). In other words, when a woman became a ruler, her womanhood would not technically interfere with her masculine and god-like duty to the state.

Once she had made herself the head of the new Protestant state church, Elizabeth crafted a "neo-medieval" image of herself and her court to solidify her nation's support. Roy Strong notes that Elizabeth used tilts and festivities as a way to show that despite "violent and political upheaval" England had not completely divorced itself from its heritage (Strong 161). This was

especially important given the shift in values under a Protestant Queen and court who valued secular images over sacred. As Hackett points out, The Articles of Inquiry from the Royal Injunctions called for the destruction of many Catholic relics and religious representations but left secular or political imagery intact. Under the Injunctions, images of the crown replaced public crosses (Hackett 63-65). Some subjects, like the Catholic Nicholas Sanders, were outraged over the Crown's decision to discard religious images and vehemently condemned the Crown for hypocrisy and promoting "true" idolatry (Hackett 65). By connecting her court with medieval traditions, though, Elizabeth endeavored to make her rule more palatable to disgruntled subjects like Sanders who believed that she was rejecting "sacred" tradition. Elizabeth's image thus became powerful because "all the riches of Renaissance philosophy and learning could be set into it . . . [while its] outward covering" remained anchored in medieval tradition (Strong 112). The Queen balanced in her person both the old and new worlds. As Susan Doran and Helen Hackett both note, Elizabeth appeared as a Petrarchan woman—a medieval idealized lady whom knights, nobles, and commoners could venerate—and she a sober Protestant woman who could guide England. Elizabeth may have legitimized her rule by evoking the King's Two Bodies doctrine and by making Protestantism the state religion, but she secured her rule by recontextualizing popular images of the past to suit an audience of both Protestant and Catholic.

Not only did a neo-medieval image help Elizabeth satisfy the ideals of her subjects but it allowed her to have, as Shormishtha Panja observes, a politically effective personality. Because of her hybrid image, Elizabeth became loved and feared. Like a familiar authority and lover, the Queen descended into the crowd during her national tours and stopped her entourage to acknowledge the requests of belated "petitioner[s]," a gesture that was foreign during the reign of Mary I and uncommon during the rule of Edward VI (Panja 36-37). Yet at the same time, her

subjects did not forget that Elizabeth was also, as Spenser states in Book 6 of the *Faerie Queene*, a "most dreaded Soueraine" who should only be approached with reverential submission (6 Proem 7.1). During public appearances citizens knew that there was a clear space that divided court from commons. As Spenser's tutor Richard Mulcaster recorded, on the day Elizabeth was crowned, she "most tender and gentle . . . receive[d] her people" who "stood far off" (Mulcaster 91). Through the careful balance of opposing images Elizabeth warned and "'bewitched" her people (Neale qtd. in Panja 37).

If the Queen's external challenge was to legitimize and secure her throne, the ambitious nobleman's external challenge was to become a courtier. As Steven May notes, being a courtier meant that one could aspire to join Elizabeth's privy chamber where the Queen and her chief councilors met (12, 29). Here the courtier advised the Queen in return for patents and monopolies, "gifts of cash and land" (29) and "wedding and christening" presents (May 26). In addition, if one was a courtier and a member of the Queen's "elite bodyguard," who performed "in the tournaments that entertained the court on the Queen's Accession Day and other special occasions," one was exempt from laws that regulated a performer's expenditure (May 15). The sumptuary laws did not apply to the Queen's performing knights, and often these popular entertainers became courtiers who were awarded "patents of monopoly . . . gift[s] generally . . . reserved for prominent favorites" (May 27). The courtier's life offered the hope of luxury and prestige. To the man seeking political and economic achievement, it was the pinnacle of success.

In the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign, in order for an ambitious nobleman to achieve courtiership, he had to treat the Queen like a Petrarchan woman, distant, beautiful, and holy (May 24, 41). May points out that a nobleman had a chance to gain courtier status if he learned to tilt and perform in the Whitehall tournaments (May 28). At Whitehall, the soldier-

performers would treat the Queen as if she were their unapproachable lady-love. Performers would send gifts and artfully crafted messages to Elizabeth, who watched their performance from her elevated seat (May 28). The Queen greatly enjoyed her tournaments and was often inclined to reward those who put on a stellar performance in the tiltyard (May 28).

For all of its monetary and political benefits, though, courtiership was a precarious business since being a courtier depended upon the Queen's favor. Even prominent courtiers like Sir Walter Raleigh and the Earl of Essex experienced the fickleness of court life. Heran Chang notes that Essex and Raleigh competed against each other for the coveted prize of favorite courtier in the late 1580s, and in 1587, the Queen preferred Essex over Raleigh because of Essex's youth and charm (52). However, both Raleigh and Essex eventually lost the Queen's ear when they married without her consent. Furthermore, though both eminent courtiers had secret affairs, the Queen did not punish Raleigh and Essex equally. Because Essex's marriage was not as scandalous to Elizabeth as Raleigh's "secret affair," Essex eventually fell back into good standing with the Queen (Chang 54). Raleigh's indiscreet behavior, however, landed him and his bride in the Tower of London. In the Queen's eyes, according to Chang, Essex's marriage was justifiable because Essex had married just below his station into a family that would give him political power (Chang 53). Raleigh's marriage, on the other hand, was less forgivable to the Queen because Raleigh had married out of love a woman well above his station (Chang 53). Such motives on Raleigh's part, Donald Stump and Susan M. Felch note, offended both the Queen's pride and the moral standards that she had set for her courtiers (437).

The Queen preferred that her courtiers remain single; she wanted each courtier to pretend to be a loving suitor to her, the pure unachievable woman who only granted favors and gifts to her most devoted lovers (Chang 53). Essex and Raleigh flouted this Petrarchan ideal, and thus

experienced not only her anger but her prejudice when she banished them from court. Being a courtier could give a nobleman income and some power, and if a nobleman was fortune enough became a member of the Privy Chamber, he earned real political power as well as prestige. However, as Essex and Raleigh learned, such rewards were only available to those who always bowed to the Queen's rule.

Spenser's introduction to the challenging and competitive world of the court came through the Earl of Leicester. During his short-lived courtly career, Spenser learned that those in court preferred a comfortable life over political integrity. In the 1570s, Spenser's Cambridge tutor Gabriel Harvey recommended Spenser to Leicester, and by 1579 Spenser indicated to Harvey that he was so busy waiting on Leicester that he hadn't time to write many poems or letters. In his letter to Harvey, Spenser reveals his courtly ambitions and fears: "'For, whiles the yron is hote, it is good striking and minds of Nobles varie, as their Estates"' (qtd. in Panja 92). Spenser's courtly aspirations, unfortunately, were severely damaged when, as Andrew Hadfield notes, his politically offensive *Shepheardes Calender* gained unwanted attention from Leicester in 1579 (279). Spenser's work strongly condemned the Queen's proposed marriage to the French Catholic prince the Duke of Anjou (Hadfield 132). Leicester did not want Elizabeth to marry the Duke, but he, unlike Spenser, preferred to approach the issue diplomatically (Panja 6, Hadfield 126).

In addition, the *Calender* criticized Leicester's personal life and usefulness as a poet's patron. During the year the *Calender* was published, the Queen had banished Leicester from the court because of his "secret" second marriage (Hadfield 130-31). Hadfield argues that it is probable, given Leicester's standing at court, that the exiled earl was particularly irritated that Spenser criticized his politics and personal life (Hadfield 279). When Spenser was sent to Ireland

in 1580 to be the secretary to Lord Grey, it is not a stretch to say that Leicester was punishing Spenser for overstepping his bounds. Leicester that year had regained the Queen's favor and was assigned to deal with the Irish rebels; thus, as Panja writes, Leicester would have been in a position to station Spenser in Ireland (Panja 93, Hadfield 128). Spenser was a political liability for Leicester and his faction, and ending Spenser's chance to succeed in court was the best way for Leicester to protect himself and his cause (Panja 93).

In 1590 Spenser returned to England with Raleigh and published the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, while Raleigh introduced *The Faerie Queene* and possibly Spenser to Elizabeth. It seems that the Queen was pleased with the poem because in the following year Elizabeth, as Willy Maley observes, "granted . . . [Spenser] a life pension of fifty pounds a year" (24). Ten years away from the center of political power, however, had not improved Spenser's opinion of the court. In 1591 Spenser published *Complaints*, a collection of poems which included *Mother Hubbards Tales*, *Ruines of Time*, and *Virgils Gnat*. Like the *Calender*, *Complaints* harshly criticized the politically powerful. But unlike the *Calender*, *Complaints*, as Hadfield states "took an unusually direct attack on Burghley and the corrupt court" (Hadfield 272). In *Mother Hubbards Tales*, Spenser wrote that at court politicians use virtue as a means for "gainfull benefit / Or that they may for their owne turnes be fit" (*M.H. Tales* 639-40). Panja argues that in *M. H. Tales* Spenser portrays Burghley as a fox who "builds a large private fortune while neglecting to repair the queen's property on grounds of thrift" (Panja 98). Spenser also attacks Burghley for withholding "benefits" from worthy civil servants: "So pitifull a thing is Suters state / Most miserable man, whom wicked fate / Hath brought to Court" (*M.H Tales* 890-92). Hadfield believes that it is likely that Spenser, after ten years of service in Ireland, "had hoped for preferment . . . [at] court" and was severely disgruntled when Burghley ignored him

(Hadfield 274). Panja notes that in *Ruines of Time*, Spenser reflects upon how courtiers like his past patron Leicester "cannot distinguish between flatterers . . . and loyal friends" and how courtiers falsely believe that a political life brings immutable popularity (Panja 102): "And when the courting masker louteth lowe . . . / All is but fained, and with oaker dide / . . . All things doo change that vunder heauen abide'" (*Ruines of Time* 202- 206).

Panja observes that in *Virgils Gnat* Spenser mourns how his old patron Leicester ruined his chance at court (100). Spenser compares Leicester to a lazy shepherd, and suggests that Leicester failed at court because he ignored Spenser's warnings about Burghley (Panja 100). Hadfield notes, that Spenser with bitter humor claims that the late Leicester had wronged him, and that his sorrow is now too deep to reveal (279). Spenser still had high political ambitions in 1579, as his letters to Harvey attest, and thus Spenser tried to balance political honesty with flattery. But, as Panja concludes, after his ten year "banishment" to Ireland and—as Spenser thought—a rather icy court welcome in 1590, the poet scoffed at political power and instead searched for meaning in "learning and [heavenly] vision," (100) not in "hope of earthly thing[s]" such as "painted faces" and "smooth flatter[y]" (*Ruines of Time* 198, 200).

The first three books of *The Faerie Queene* build upon Spenser's court critique presented in *Mother Hubbards Tales, Virgils Gnat*, and *Ruines of Time*. While these three poems from *Complaints* bring attention to the obvious results of a corrupt court life, flattery, greed, and folly, *The Faerie Queene* addresses the fundamental flaw at the heart of the Elizabethan court's political endeavors: self-sufficiency. Through the lives of Gloriana's knights Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour, Spenser shows how it is far too easy for courtiers to trust in their own power—their fine shows or "painted faces" and their flattering words, over grace—unmerited favor and assistance which enables a person to be free from the corrupt self. The gradual decline of each

knight's ability to complete his internal and external quest questions whether the Queen's and her courtiers' self-sufficiency can foster long-lasting personal and political stability. Like Gloriana's knights, if Elizabeth and her court do not freely choose to allow grace to help them correct their moral failings, their social and political goals will either fail or remain unfinished. Grace will not abandon the English court, but as Guyon and Scudamour's stubborn rejection of grace teaches, when grace is rejected, divine harmony, the loving cooperation between God and humanity that Redcrosse glimpses at the end of his quest, will be broken and replaced with fear and all the vices that follow it.

In Book 1 of *The Faerie Queene*, Redcrosse's goal is to defeat the dragon that makes war upon Una's land, but the only way that he can do so is if he follows truth which is found through faith. Redcrosse, though, does not follow the truth because he lacks faith. In Book 1 of *The Faerie Queene*, truth is defined as a love relationship with God and one's neighbor, and faith is the ability to trust that divine and human love are possible. Redcrosse proves himself faithless and divorced from the truth when he leaves the good lady Una because of a dream and enters into an illicit relationship with the seemingly fair Duessa. Once Redcrosse becomes Duessa's lover, he no longer cares about saving Una's land from the dragon. While Redcrosse is under Duessa's power, the giant Orgoglio wounds Redcrosse and locks him in his dungeon. Completely powerless, Redcrosse is left alone in the giant's prison to die.

However, when Prince Arthur and Una rescue Redcrosse from Orgolio's dungeon, Redcrosse is given an opportunity to rid himself of his faithlessness so that he can contend with the dragon. In other words, Redcrosse is given grace. Once Redcrosse is free from Orgoglio and later Despaire, Una leads Redcrosse to the House of Holiness where he overcomes his faithlessness and gains truth. Here Redcrosse learns how to commune with God from the holy

hermit Contemplation who holds the keys of heaven. The hermit is blind, but he still can see God with his spiritual eyes. The hermit teaches Redcrosse that truth is not easily perceived by the senses and thus requires faith, and because Redcrosse believes what the hermit tells him, Redcrosse is able to defeat the dragon.

In Book 2, Guyon, the knight of temperance, is commissioned by the Faerie Queene to save the prisoners of Acrasia, a witch who steals the souls of men whom she entices into the Bower of Bliss. However, because of Guyon's pride and vengeance, Mammon prevents Guyon from capturing Acrasia and freeing her prisoners. Guyon therefore needs grace to complete his mission, grace that Spenser shows comes from divine love, which Guyon receives when Arthur saves him from the Paynim Brothers. After Guyon receives grace, he goes to Alma's House, where he observes Alma and her servants working together in perfect temperance; here Guyon learns what temperate sexuality looks like. Upon leaving Alma's House Guyon does capture Acrasia and he does free her prisoners, but because he unnecessarily and violently destroys the Bower of Bliss, it would appear that he has not completely mastered his vengeful spirit and thus has failed to live temperately. It would be unfair, though, to say that Guyon has failed his quest because he destroyed the Bower of Bliss, for he did attempt to teach Verdant—one of Acrasia's prisoners—how to live temperately, and he did spare Acrasia's life. Instead, it would be better to say that Guyon masters his quest for Acrasia and his quest for temperance as far as a good but flawed knight can likely do in a complex world where good and evil sexuality are often hard to distinguish.

In Books 3 and 4, Scudamour goes on a quest to win the love of Amoret, the daughter of Venus. After he conquers Doubt, Delay, and Danger and escapes Hatred's club, he arrives at Venus' altar where Amoret waits for her champion. However, because Scudamour does not

attend to his internal challenge, mastering his lust, he cannot enjoy a relationship with Amoret. Scudamour loses Amoret because he has an unchaste heart: he fails to serve her lovingly as a friend. At their wedding feast, while Scudamour and his friends lie about in a drunken stupor, the lustful magician Busirane steals Amoret, and though Scudamour tries to save his bride, he is unable to enter Busirane's house, which is surrounded by a fiery wall. Because Britomart is the knight of Chastity, however, she can save Amoret, and because she is full of grace, she helps Scudamour. Scudamour, sadly, does not believe that Britomart can rescue Amoret. When Britomart saves Amoret, Scudamour does not wait to receive his beloved. Scudamour becomes afraid, and he runs away from Busirane's castle because he believes that Britomart perished in her attempt to rescue his beloved. In Book 4, Scudamour believes Duessa's and Ate's lies that Britomart took advantage of Amoret. Consumed with anger and jealousy, Scudamour stays at the House of Care, where he nurses his bitterness. Though Scudamour and Britomart eventually reconcile, Scudamour loses Amoret again—this time to the giant Lust. Fortunately, Arthur and his squire save Amoret, yet despite Arthur's victory, Scudamour and Amoret never meet again. Perhaps Spenser had planned to reunite Amoret and Scudamour in the books that he never got a chance to write. Yet the text that Spenser left supports the reading that Scudamour fails both his internal and his external quest. Like Guyon, Scudamour uses his free will to unwittingly sabotage his mission, and though ultimately grace will not abandon Scudamour, Scudamour's poor choices, his reliance on false grace, painfully postpone his redemption.

Chapter 2

WHEN A CLOWNISH YOUNG MAN SLAYS A DRAGON: UNVEILING TRUTH, FAITH, AND GRACE IN BOOK 1 OF THE FAERIE QUEENE

Book 1 of *The Faerie Queene* is a narrative about how to successfully navigate a reality that is not what it seems. Spenser's bumbling, ambitious Redcrosse knight embarks on a perilous quest to free Eden from a dragon. Little does Redcrosse realize, though, that in order to defeat the monster, he must complete a far subtler quest: he must master his faithless heart and in so doing bind himself to truth through faith. Redcrosse demonstrates his faithlessness when he forsakes both his quests and enters into a relationship with the seemingly fair Duessa. Once Redcrosse becomes entangled with Duessa, however, he painfully discovers that what looks most sweet is often what is most foul. He learns that his senses will lead him astray and that only divine grace can free his faithless heart and enable him to re-establish harmony in paradise.

Redcrosse Receives His Calling

On the first day of the Queene's twelve day-festival, when Una asks the Faerie Queene to give her a champion who can free her country from a dragon who has long held her people captive, Redcrosse begs the Queene to let him undertake the quest. Both the Faerie Queene and Una doubt whether Redcrosse, who is an untrained rustic, has the strength to conquer a dragon, but since the Queene had agreed at the beginning of the festival to Redcrosse's request to permit him to have "the atchieuement of any adventure, which during that feaste should happen," the Queene, after much begging on Redcrosse's part, assigns Redcrosse to be Una's champion (Spenser 717). Still doubtful, despite the Queene's consent, Una warns Redcrosse that unless he wears the armor that she brought for the knight who would undertake her quest, which is "the

armour of a Christian man specified by St. Paul," he will not succeed in destroying the serpent who ravages her land (717). Upon hearing Una's good advice, Redcrosse eagerly dons the holy armor and, after being knighted by the Faerie Queene, climbs up for the first time on a bold charger. Newly clothed and mounted, Redcrosse now appears "the goodliest man" in the court (717), and with his simple persistence and eagerness to do good, Redcrosse begins to gain Una's confidence and affection.

As a young Christian raised by a plowman and eager to make a name for himself in the court among the Faerie Queene's knights, Redcrosse's willingness to save Una and her people is quite admirable, for to rescue Una's nation is a serious and desperate achievement, requiring any man who attempts the quest to do battle with the oldest cosmic evil and restore prelapsarian harmony to Una's kingdom. Una's land is Eden, and within her borders grows the Tree of Life, "which Great God . . . planted in that blessed stedd / With his Almighty hand" (Spenser 1. 11.46.7-8), and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which "through one mans fault" has doomed all of mankind (1.11.47.9). After Adam fell, the dragon "overthr[e]w" Eden and corrupted it (1.11.47.5); "where all good things did grow" and where all good things "freely sprong out of the fruitfull grownd," (1-2) the dragon burned with his "mouth of hell" (1.11.12.8), which is filled with the "blood . . . / of . . . deuoured bodies" (1.11.13.4). While certain sacred spaces in Eden, such as the Tree and Well of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, are immune to the dragon's terror, all else has lost its health and pines away in disease or fear. Una's parents, along with the remainder of their people, have locked themselves away in a brass tower, and those unfortunate enough to remain outside of its walls are soon devoured by the dragon. In short, because of Adam's sin, Eden has fallen, and the serpent or the devil who deceived him now holds dominion as the dragon over Una's people.

Before the fall, Eden was a place where all lived together in loving community. It was a place where "incorrupted Nature" (1.11.47.4) dwelled, a place "where all good things did grow / And freely sprong out of the fruitful grownd" (1.11.47.2-3). The bliss of Spenser's Eden sprang from the fact that men and women could live in a perfect relationship with God unencumbered by sin, which severs all loving relationships through fear. The commentary on Genesis from *The Geneva Bible* states "that the worlde and all things therein were created by God, and that man . . . [was] placed in this great tabernacle of the worlde to beholde God's wonderful workes, and to praise his Name for the infinite graces, wherewith he had endued him" (1)[1]. When the dragon came into Eden, though, he destroyed and polluted Eden's law of love. The dragon's eyes cast a "dreadfull shade" (1.11.14.9) like the corrupt eyes of the man that produce only darkness (Matt. 6:23), and with those eyes that embody the insidious inversion of good and evil, the dragon consistently destroyed Eden's holy love[2].

Una tells Prince Arthur that all knights who attempted to rescue Eden have failed because of their "want of faith, or guilt of sin" (Spenser 1.7.45.8). Though these knights wore the holy armor that Una provided for them, they failed because they did not understand or refused through pride to apply what it means to wear St. Paul's armor: wearing St. Paul's armor, one is transformed from a proud man bothered only about his own glory to a holy man who willingly serves God and his neighbor. Ake Bergvall argues that Spenser defines holiness in terms of "wholeness" (37). "All through the poem," Bergvall notes, "Spenser has warned the reader that in a fallen world many signs [or words] are not what they seem. The divine Word, however,

---

[1] All Scripture passages are taken from the 1560 edition of *The Geneva Bible*. In addition, I have changed the "*ſ*" in *The Geneva Bible* of 1560 to "S," its modern counterpart, for the sake of clarity.

[2] Man "fel willingly from God through disobedience: who yet for his owne mercies sake restored him to life, and confirmed him in the same by his promes of Christ to come, by whome he shulde overcome Satan, death, and hel" (*The Geneva Bible* Commentary on Genesis 1).

exposes false significations and establishes interpretative bearings" (36). The divine Word, thus, brings wholeness to a person's life, because a person who lives under the lordship of Christ learns that his or her identity is fixed or made complete in Christ. If Redcrosse, then, is to succeed where all other knights have failed, Redcrosse must allow himself to be made holy. Like St. Paul's armor, each part of which works together to protect and prepare a knight's whole body, Redcrosse must allow truth, faith, and grace to nourish his soul so that he may contend with the dragon. This will not be easy, though, and as Beatrice Groves notes, Redcrosse's journey to holiness will be marked by "tangled skeins" and "delay[ed] actions" (371).

Discovering Truth

In Book 1 of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser portrays truth as not only simple facts about reality but as a necessary partnership, a union, or a loving fellowship between humanity and God. After the first passing description of Redcrosse in the opening canto as a knight who is "right faithfull true" (1.1.2.7), Spenser defines truth by giving us a picture of its opposite. Redcrosse and Una have fallen asleep, and Archimago conjures a legion of sprites to help him destroy the couple's friendship. Una is emblematic of true faith, and Archimago knows that if he can separate Redcrosse from her good influence, he will have a better chance of wrecking Redcrosse's life.

> And forth he cald out of deepe darknes dredd
> Legions of Sprights, the which like litle flyes
> Flutt[ered] about his euerdamned hedd,
> . . . . . .
> Of those he chose out two, the falsest twoo,
> And fittest for to forge true-seeming lyes. (1.1.1-3,6-7)

Next, Morpheus sends Archimago a “fit false dreame” that will “delude” Redcrosse, and once Archimago has the dream in hand, he sends the wicked sprite to plant the dream in Redcrosse’s mind, so that “with false shewes” the dream may “abuse” Redcrosse’s “fantasy” or imagination (1.1.43.9, 46.4). The false shows with which Archimago has infected Redcrosse’s mind are images of “loues and lustfull play” (1.1.47.4), which immediately fill Redcrosse’s heart with “wanton blis and wicked ioy” (1.1.47.6) as he imagines Una lying beside him, “her chaste heart” seemingly conquered by Cupid, “the false winged boy” (1.1.47.8-9). In Archimago’s house, then, untruth or falsehood means lust or sinful desire and so truth by default is defined in terms of chastity. The dreams that Archimago sends Redcrosse and the disguised sprite that Archimago sends to Redcrosse’s bed thus are “false shewes” because they enslave his mind to “lustful play,” desires and actions that ignore his commitment to treat Una with the utmost purity.

Not long after the lustful dreams, Archimago sends a sprite disguised as Una to Redcrosse’s bed. This final act of deception throws an impassioned Redcrosse into wild confusion; the dreams have aroused his desire for Una, but his conscience tells him that to give in to Una’s seeming invitation would be a sin: “In this great passion of vnwonted lust, / Or wonted feare of doing ought amis,” Redcrosse “starteth vp” when Una enters his bedroom, “as seeming to mistrust, / Some secret ill, or hidden foe of his” (Spenser 1.1.49.1-4). Redcrosse’s passion and fear brought about by his sexual temptation soon turn to wrath, as the false Una urges him to make love with her; Redcrosse all along has believed that Una is a virgin and now that his belief has been called into question, Redcrosse feels angry and betrayed, and yet Redcrosse’s encounter with the false Una reveals the unfortunate consequence of what happens when falsehood supersedes truth. Once Redcrosse is enjoying the unchaste dreams from Archimago, it isn’t long before this seemingly natural pleasure turns into a fierce, unreasonable

wrath against Una. First submerged in loose thoughts, Redcrosse's reason is not prepared to keep wrath from disturbing his emotions[3].

On the morning following his entanglement with the false Una, Redcrosse is next falsely led to believe that Una is sleeping with a squire. In anger and grief, Redcrosse flees from Archimago's house, firmly believing that Una has betrayed him. Archimago's deceit has prevailed, and as planned, his "diuelish artes" have overcome the "true meaning harts" or the committed hearts of Redcrosse and the real Una. In fact, the argument of canto two says that Archimago's wiles have actually separated Redcrosse "from Truth" itself and such a separation will make Redcrosse particularly vulnerable to "faire falsehood" who, as Redcrosse's adventures unravel, turns out to be the witch Duessa (Spenser 1.8.49.4). Like the false Una,[4] Duessa plays upon Redcrosse's passion, which ultimately leads to his imprisonment in Orgoglio's castle. However, unlike Redcrosse's entanglement with the false Una who only kindles Redcrosse's lust and wrath, Redcrosse's relationship with Duessa leads him to the House of Pride, where falsehood's second face of self-adoration throws truth into sharp relief.

Lucifera is queen of the House of Pride, and as queen she despises the poor and spends her days on her throne holding a mirror "wherein her face she often vewed fayne, / And in her selfe-lou'd semblance tooke delight" (1.4.10.7-8). In addition, Lucifera is allied with the Seven Deadly Sins and keeps a prison full of men and women that she cunningly enslaves "through wastful Pride, and wanton Riotise" (1.5.46.5). In her dungeon lies Nebuchadnezzar and many Roman lords and ladies, and in her dungeon lie many thralls who once were courtiers but who

[3] Lust's ability to kindle wrath is marked well by Spenser in Busirane's Masque of Cupid, arguably *The Faerie Queene's* most comprehensive expression of lust or false love.

[4] While scholars such as A. C. Hamilton argue that the False Una is most likely an embodiment of Duessa, Spenser does not explicitly state this in the text. For my purposes, I will assume that the False Una and Duessa, while similar in character and purpose, are two distinct individuals.

fell through “ydle pomp, or wanton play” (1.5.51.7). Here in the House of Pride, a life separated from the love of truth quite simply leads to spiritual death. A mind that only adores its own loveliness and glory becomes trapped in its own selfishness. How telling it is that Spenser describes Lucifera’s House and Pluto’s underworld—Duessa’s home, and the prison of many violent criminals such as Typhoeus and Tityus—in the same canto. A life cut off from truth is a terrifying place to be; its evils rooted in the seemingly ridiculous sin of vanity are vast and insidious.

In Book 1 of *The Faerie Queene*, falsehood is lustful and vain like Duessa and Lucifera, and cruel and wrathful like the Seven Deadly Sins and Archimago. But truth is characterized by loyal love, which brings harmony to the lover and beloved. Perhaps Spenser’s greatest embodiment of this love is Una. In the arguments to both cantos two and three, Spenser identifies Una with truth. When Redcrosse forsakes Una at Archimago’s house, Spenser states that “The guilefull great Enchaunter parts / The Redcrosse Knight from Truth,” and soon after Redcrosse leaves Una, Spenser remarks that though Una or Truth has been “forsaken,” she still “seekes her loue” and is able to “make the Lyon mylde” because “beautie” can “maister the most strong, / And simple truth” can “subdue auenging wrong” (1.3.6.4-5). Redcrosse believes that Una’s *truth* has been “staynd with treason,” but the reality of the matter is that Una is pure, and for “his loue, and for her own self sake,” she wanders far and wide to find Redcrosse (1.6.2.4-7). In addition to constancy and the beauty that accompanies truth, Una is clothed in mercy. When Una finds Redcrosse in Orgoglio’s dungeon after Duessa betrayed him, she doesn’t condemn Redcrosse but helps him recover both physically and spiritually from his sins: true is the love that “hath no powre / to looken backe,” for love’s “eies be fixt before” to the present and future joy that reconciliation brings (1.3.30.7-8). As Una shows us, the truth sought after in human relationships

is gentle and steadfast. Unlike Duessa or Lucifera, truth has nothing to hide; she seeks the good of her lover or her neighbor and finds her joy not in thinking about herself, but in thinking about others.

Redcrosse's journey to discovering truth begins with his running up against what truth is in his human relationships. But it certainly does not end there, because even though Una is an example of a truthful person and Duessa a false person, Redcrosse needs a spiritual explanation of what truth is. In the world of *The Faerie Queene*, human examples are intended to point to a heavenly or hellish reality that lies just above or below the visible world. Una is a daughter of heaven and Duessa is a daughter of hell, but because Redcrosse is a fallen man who lives in Faerie Land, a land of shadows, veils, and "darke conceits," he has difficulty recognizing Una's and Duessa's real natures and thus whether their allegiance is to heaven or hell. Redcrosse needs to go beyond the veil of Faerie Land into the spiritual realm of God, angels, and devils so that he may see what truth and falsehood really are, and so take in the very source of truth that he sees veiled in Una.

Spiritual truth and falsehood are first depicted as books that Redcrosse confronts throughout his wanderings. The first collection of papers that Redcrosse sees comes from Errour's vomit, which Spenser immediately associates with the mud of the Nile River:

> Her vomit full of bookes and papers was,
> With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke
> And creeping sought way in the weedy gras:
> Her filthie parbreake all the place defiled has.
>
> As when old father Nilus gins to swel

With timely pride aboue the Aegyptian vale

His fattie waues doe fertile slime outwell

And ouerflow each plaine and lowly dale. (1.1.20.6-21.4)

As A. C. Hamilton observes, this epic simile encourages one to pay attention to the similarities between Errour's false books and the biblical significance of the Nile River as a sign of "the captivity of the Israelites in Egypt and hence with the fallen world, the flesh, and bondage to sin" (36). Errour's books, then, come to be understood as not just the disgusting vomit of a monster that Redcrosse wants to prove his hardihood against, but also as instruments of deception designed to keep mankind from fellowship with God. The second book that Redcrosse encounters is the Christian scriptures, "a worke of wondrous grace" able to save many souls, which Fidelia at the House of Holiness uses to teach Redcrosse the character of God and the Christian doctrine "of grace . . . iustice, [and] free will" (Spenser 1.10.19.6).

As opposed to Errour's false books, which foster separation from God's love, Fidelia's "sacred Booke" teaches men and women the truth—how they may be reconciled to God and thus brought back into a prelapsarian relationship with Him. Contemplation reinforces this divine truth when he shows Redcrosse the New Jerusalem and explains to him the city's purpose. God has built the New Jerusalem, Contemplation says, for "his chosen people, purged from sinful guilt / With the pretious blood" of the sinless Christ which was "cruelly spilt / On cursed tree for the sinnes of all the world" (Spenser 1.10.57.2-7). Those who live in the New Jerusalem have been reconciled to God and are now God's children, "Saints . . . / More dear vnto God, then younglings to their dam" (1.10.57.8-9). Fellowship with God, then, is to be understood in terms of truth. If Errour's job is to spread falsehood, which in turn breeds sin and thus separation from God, Scripture reveals truth, which in turn brings divine reconciliation and love. Truth or divine

fellowship, though, is not merely obtained by believing that Christ has paid the penalty for one's sins. Speranza, Charissa, and Contemplation show Redcrosse how the right belief that Fidelia has taught him is put into practice. Speranza first shows Redcrosse, who is fearful that his sins will always separate him from God, how to take comfort or "assured hold" upon the truth that he has learned from Fidelia: that God loves him and has forgiven him by grace. Next, Charissa teaches Redcrosse how to abstain from "wrath and hatred" and to instead bind himself to "loue, and righteousnes," which means showing cheerful hospitality to friends and strangers, caring for the poor, showing mercy to the sinner, defending the cause of the widow and orphan, and honoring the dead (Spenser 1.10.53.4-5). Lastly, Contemplation teaches Redcrosse to think about God; through long months of prayer with Redcrosse in his hermitage, Contemplation helps Redcrosse learn what it means to delight in God and to be sufficient in him alone. The fellowship found between God and his saints is the truth that Contemplation, Fidelia, and her sisters help Redcrosse take hold of. This is the divine comedy that Redcrosse must believe if he is to love and be loved by God, and this is the truth that Redcrosse must nourish to redeem Eden.

Discovering Faith

If prelapsarian harmony is based on the fundamental truth that women and men were made for loving fellowship with God and each other, then it follows that a knight who wants to defeat the dragon and restore Eden needs to be about the business of loving God and his neighbor. He must love God by trusting in Christ's redemption and by showing charity to all, and he must love his lady by putting away lust and pride. This definition of truth, though, is only half of what it means for Redcrosse to correctly wear St. Paul's holy armor. It shows what a knight must have faith in to restore Eden, but it doesn't define faith, the catalyst that enables a knight to pursue truth. The centrality of faith to the success of Redcrosse's quest cannot be

underestimated. Not only does Una, who is consistently known as a woman of faith, consider it a prerequisite to destroying falsehood[5], but Fidelia, whose name means faith, is the first holy healer who tends Redcrosse. In short, if Redcrosse does not trust in truth, if he does not believe that loving God, Una, and his neighbors is worth committing his life to, he will have given in to falsehood and unwittingly joined the dragon's camp, making victory over the monster impossible. Like his journey to truth, Redcrosse's journey to faith starts on earth and ends in heaven. At the beginning, Spenser calls Redcrosse a "faithful" knight "in deede and word" (1.1.2.7) and, in the knight's ensuing actions, shows us how Redcrosse becomes a faithful man through earthly and heavenly examples.

The first and primary example of earthly faith in Redcrosse's adventures is Una. Una, "the flower of faith," demonstrates what faith is when she binds herself to Redcrosse and the love that she has for him in spite of Archimago's trickery: "Yet she most faithfull Ladie all this while / Forsaken, wofull" sought "her knight; who subtily betrayed through that late vision . . . / Had her abandoned" (1.3.3.1-2, 5-7). When Redcrosse leaves Una after Archimago deceives him into believing that she has forsaken him for a squire, Una awakens in Archimago's house unaware of why Redcrosse has left her. However, because Una values her relationship with Redcrosse, she puts herself at risk to find him. Una's love for Redcrosse is faithful: her love "is firme" and "her care continuall" (1.8.1.5). Redcrosse has proven himself loyal to Una in the past. He agreed to wear her holy armor, he watched over her in their first adventure in the Wandering Wood, and he defeated Errour; Una has reason to believe that Redcrosse is trustworthy, and that his sudden disappearance must be somehow warranted. One could say that from Una's

[5] Una tells Prince Arthur that every knight that has attempted to slay the Dragon has failed "for want of faith, or guilt of sin" (1.7.45.8).

perspective, her commitment to Redcrosse, her faith that he will continue to love her, is reasonable.

Yet while her faith in Redcrosse may be reasonable, Una's commitment to Redcrosse still nearly costs her her life. Una has faith that her and Redcrosse's love will last even though there is no guarantee that she will be reconciled with him. Maintaining a relationship with Redcrosse means risk, pain, and possible rejection, but at the same time maintaining a relationship with Redcrosse means that Una has enabled herself to love and be loved. If Una had refused to pursue Redcrosse because the risks were too great, she would have avoided Sansloy, the Satyrs, and Archimago's wiles; giving up on Redcrosse and the entire quest, she could have returned to the Faerie Queene's court and lived there in safety. Una would have lived in safety and comfort without Redcrosse's friendship; however, she would not have lived to her full potential. She would have missed what makes life good; she would have locked herself up from love and all the redemption and reconciliation that comes with it. Una's faith is a personal, steadfast commitment to help a dear friend continue loving and being loved. Her faith is like a strong cord unable to let trials break those whom it binds, and because of her faith, she is able to withstand the violent lust of Sans Loy and endure capture by the Satyrs because she has her mind fixed on the future joy of a love maintained and strengthened through long-suffering: "Was neuer Lady loued dearer day / Then she did loue the knight of the *Redcrosse*; / For whose deare sake so many troubles her did tosse" (1.7.27.7-9).

Redcrosse, partly because of sin and partly because of ill fortune, struggles to learn what faith is from Una's example. If Redcrosse is not plunging rashly after Errour to impress Una, he is fleeing from her because he has been deceived into believing that she is faithless. Still, Una's faithfulness is not lost upon Redcrosse, for when Una with the help of Prince Arthur rescues

Redcrosse—who is nearly dead—from the dungeon that Orgoglio has cast him into, Redcrosse for the first time is on his way to realizing what faith really means. Free from Duessa's lies, Redcrosse now can begin to understand that faith has nothing to do with charming words and looks or proud heroic deeds, all the things that he thought belonged to faith when he pursued the false Fidessa (better known as Duessa) and when he fought in Lucifera's tournament at the House of Pride. Instead, being faithful is a commitment of the soul to love another enough to urge the other's soul heavenward:

Ay me, how many perils doe enfold
The righteous man, to make him daily fall?
Were not that heauenly grace doth him vphold,
And stedfast truth acquite him out of all:
Her loue is firme, her care continuall,
So oft as he thorough his own foolish pride,
Or weaknes is to sinfull bands made thrall:
Els should this *Redcrosse* knight in bands haue dyde
For whose deliuerance she [Una] this Prince doth thether guyd. (1.8.1.1-9)

Once Redcrosse is freed from prison, Una takes Redcrosse to the House of Holiness where he meets Fidelia, Una's heavenly counterpart, the first cardinal virtue, and eldest sister of Speranza and Charissa. Una's earthly faith was strong enough to save Redcrosse from Duessa, Orgoglio, and Despaire, but Una knows that if Redcrosse is going to save Eden, he will need faith that comes from God, and so her faith, like any good reflection, directs him to its source.

By that, which lately hapned, *Vna* saw,
That this her knight was feeble, and too faint;

And all his sinewes woxen weake and raw,

. . . . . .

Therefore to cherish him with diets daint,

She cast to bring him where he chearen might,

Till he recouered had his late decayed plight. (1.10.2.1-3, 7-9)

When we consider Fidelia's heavenly faith and how she instructs Redcrosse in its virtuous discipline, an excellent place to turn to define her faith is Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the grounds of things which are hoped for, and the evidence of things which are not seen." The Geneva gloss explains that faith was the steadfast belief of the patriarchs that God was good and that he was going to redeem them from their sins[6]. Hamilton notes that the light that radiates from Fidelia's face and her white clothes is emblematic of the glory of God which accompanies those like Moses who, through trusting in God's love and grace, became friends of God (126). In addition, the gold cup filled with wine and water that Fidelia holds represents the blood of Christ that the patriarchs had placed their trust in. In the cup lies a snake, and in her other hand she holds the Christian scriptures, a book full of mystery "sealed" in blood (Spenser 1.10.13.8). Hamilton also observes that the serpent in the chalice is a picture of the healing power of Christ's blood upon faithful souls, and that the serpent is traditionally an emblem of Christ's salvation, and also "the emblem of Aesculapius" (126). St. John compares Christ's ministry of reconciliation to the healing that God brought to the Israelites in Numbers 21:9 through Moses and his serpent-staff [7]. Like the bronze snake that Moses mounted upon his staff so that the

[6] *The Geneva Bible* gloss for Hebrews 11 says, "What faith is, and a comendacion of the same. Without faith we can not please God. The stedfast belefe of the fathers in olde time. Because God receiued him to mercie, therefore, he imputed him righteous" (105).

[7] "So Moses made a serpent of brasse, and let it vp for a signe: and when a serpent had bitten a man, then he loked to the serpent of brasse, and liued" (Num. 21:1).

Israelites who looked upon it would be saved from their sins, so those who look to Christ for forgiveness will be saved. In light of this iconography, Hamilton concludes then that "Fidelia holds the symbol of true healing" (126).

With her sacred text full of the mysteries of divine love, Fidelia also keeps a "schoolehouse . . . / That of her heauenly learning" Redcrosse "might taste" (Spenser 1.10.18.4-5). Fidelia's words are powerful, able even "to kill, / And rayse againe to life the hart, that she did thrill," (1.10.19.8-9) and by God's power Fidelia's words can even "commaund" nature to obey her (1.10.20.2). Fidelia's pedagogic role makes the healing powers found in her chalice available to the man or woman willing to trust in God's salvation that is found in her divine book. Fidelia's divinely inspired words convict Redcrosse of his faithlessness but give him the means to be free from it, and because of Fidelia, Redcrosse finally takes hold of the power that will enable him to walk in truth—in both divine and earthly love:

> Shortly therein so perfect he [Redcrosse] became,
> That from the first vnto the last degree,
> His mortall life he learned had to frame
> In holy righteousnesse, without rebuke or blame. (1.10.45.6-9)

Una and Redcrosse's relationship demonstrates that faith is a costly personal commitment to will the good of the beloved—to struggle with the beloved so that he or she may learn to continue giving and receiving love. Fidelia shows that divine faith means believing in Christ's salvation so that one can enjoy a relationship with God through the Eucharist and Scripture. In both human and divine representations of faith, faith is a catalyst that enables men and women to pursue and experience truth through love, the fundamental reality of Eden. Una is a good example of this mutual relationship between divine and human faith. Una certainly values

her commitment to Redcrosse, putting herself at risk more than once to save their relationship, and without a doubt Una also has a strong faith in God. She tries to teach Satyrane and the Satyrs to worship God, instruction called "true sacred lore" or the "discipline of truth and verity" (Spenser 1.6.30.9, 31.9), and she saves Redcrosse from Despaire by reminding him of Christ's grace. Thus, it is no coincidence that Una is a most faithful lover and a most faithful friend of God. The logic of the House of Holiness shows that those who have faith in God will love God, and those who love God will faithfully love their partners as Charissa loves her husband and as Mercy loves the poor whom she attends in Charissa's hospital. In Faerie Land, there is no loving only God or loving only people. All consistent or faithful acts of love are born out of a consistent love for God. That is why problems always arise when Redcrosse tries to love God at the expense of Una, when he wants to forsake his quest after his vision of heaven,[8] or when he tries to love Una at the expense of God, as in the false dreams of Archimago and his encounter with the false Una. In both cases, Redcrosse fails in faith and truth because he fails to participate in the Edenic harmony of faith expressed in love that exists between God and his children. Bergvall observes that Redcrosse "began his quest with a grandiose opinion of himself . . . but the House of Holiness teaches him" that his name Redcrosse "has validity only to the extent that its meaning is provided by . . . the divine Logos who alone is worthy to carry the name and the armor" (36).

At the House of Holiness Redcrosse's journeys of faith and truth converge. Here Redcrosse meets men and women who are faithful and true, who have fashioned their lives on the fundamental and inseparable relationship between divine and human love. These characters

[8] While in Contemplation's hermitage Redcrosse implores Contemplation, "O let me not (quoth he) then turne againe / Backe to the world, who ioyes so fruitlesse are, / But let me heare for aie in peace remaine" (1.10.63.1-3). But Contemplation tells Redcrosse, "That may not be (said he) ne maist thou yitt / Forgoe that royal maides bequeathed care, / Who did her cause into thy hand commit" (6-8).

like Una and Charissa have a beautiful resilience against evil. They bring life to creatures broken by sin and are most content when they are helping others. If Redcrosse is to save Eden, he must be a mender of broken things too—broken lands, broken bodies, and broken souls. Through truth and faith, he must struggle with the dragon, the deception that has destroyed friendships and all manner of love. Like Redcrosse's journey to truth, Redcrosse's journey to faith is not easily attained. At the end of many battle-worn and foolish days, though, Redcrosse gains at the House of Holiness what he has always needed from the beginning: a robust faith that keeps him true to God, Una, and his fellow pilgrims.

Discovering Grace

As important as truth and faith are to Redcrosse's maturity and his victory over the dragon, Redcrosse's third spiritual journey to discover grace may be perhaps his most important spiritual journey of all. Grace—in both its earthly and divine form—is the chief reason that Redcrosse is able to complete his spiritual journey of truth and faith, for without grace Redcrosse would not even have the opportunity to become a true and faithful knight equipped to defeat the dragon because he would still be under condemnation for his transgressions against God and Una. In Faerie Land, grace is unmerited favor, which means giving someone a chance to change despite the fact that he or she deserves to be punished.

If we follow Redcrosse's adventures from his first battle with the monster Errour to his imprisonment in Orgoglio's dungeon, Redcrosse has committed crimes that deserve to be punished and that ought to prohibit him from saving Eden. In Canto 4, after Archimago has tricked Redcrosse into believing that Una has acted unfaithfully, Redcrosse decides to believe Archimago and leave Una not only because Archimago has deceived him but because Redcrosse is naive to "fraud" and has a "fickle" heart corrupted by inconstant love (Spenser 1.4.1.3).

Patrick Cullen identifies Redcrosse's susceptibility to fraud as the knight's lack of self-knowledge. Redcrosse does not have a robust awareness of his fallen nature; he trusts in his own virtue, and when he confronts Errour, he disregards Una's caution against "rashness" and tells her that his own "virtue" will be enough to protect him against the monster and all her dark allies (30). Redcrosse's encounter with Archimago, though, proves that Redcrosse's innate virtue cannot begin to contend with the subtle enchanter who knows exactly how to derail Redcrosse with false images.

The fickleness that Redcrosse is unaware of is his own changeable heart. "Beware of ficklnesse, / In choice and chaunge of thy deare loued Dame," Spenser exhorts his readers after Redcrosse leaves Una, "Least thou of her belieue too lightly blame / And rash misweening do thy heart remoue" (1.4.1.4-6). In other words, a knight who is aware of his inclination to unfairly judge his lady because he wants a seemingly more pleasing woman will be better prepared to fortify himself against fickleness's appeal. Spenser's chief example of Redcrosse's fickleness is clearly Redcrosse's liaison with Duessa and rejection of Una. However, there are also some indications leading up to Redcrosse's affair with Duessa that show that Redcrosse is susceptible to fickleness. Richard A. Levin shows how the events leading up to Redcrosse's poor decision to leave Una indicate that Redcrosse struggles remaining chaste. When we meet Redcrosse in the opening stanza of Book 1, we find that Redcrosse struggles to control his horse and is immediately described as a "gentle knight pricking on the plain" (Spenser 1.1.1). Levin argues that Redcrosse's unmastered horse is "derived from Plato's image of unruly passions" and horses as "sexual symbols in Renaissance literature"; in addition, Levin argues that Spenser's "bawdy" example of Redcrosse as a "pricking" knight[9] strongly suggests that Redcrosse struggles getting

[9] Levin argues that the term "pricking knight" is a double entendre: a knight that is confident or a knight that is experiencing an erection.

his passions under control, and is probably not too keen on waiting until the wedding night (4). Next, when Redcrosse and Una find shelter in the Wandering Wood, the forest is described in terms of a "*locus amoenus*," which "allude[s] to the choice [Redcrosse and Una] must make, that between married love ('the vine-prop Elme') and illicit love ('the Willow worne of forlorne Paramours')" (Levin 4-6). Thus, even though Redcrosse leaves Una clearly because he believed that she betrayed him, in light of the hints that Redcrosse is a passionate knight stuck with a chaste beloved, Redcrosse's love for Duessa is a sign of fickleness; it hints at the fact that Redcrosse is not only Archimago's victim, but a knight who is at least tempted to value immediate pleasure over lawful love.

It is interesting that Redcrosse succumbs to fraud, fickleness, and finally inconstant love after deserting Una in Canto 4, and in Canto 7, before Orgoglio captures him, Redcrosse is a "guiltless man" sadly misled by an imitation. Isabel MacCaffrey and Susannah Monta, aware of this tension, argue for, as Monta puts it, "a more sympathetic . . . reading of Redcrosse" (84); as MacCaffrey points out, in canto seven, Spenser recognizes that Redcrosse was deeply deceived and sympathizes with Redcrosse and the "guiltless" who fall prey to falsehood's cunning (158-59). This tension between Redcrosse's innocence and guilt invites a complex reading of Redcrosse. It may suggest that, as in life, a person is not always fully culpable for his or her poor choices and that an error in judgment will lead to the surfacing and proliferation of bad desires. It is true that Redcrosse is not well aware of his own virtue's inadequacy, and it is true that this overweening pride blinds him to fraud and the fickleness of his heart. But it is also true that Archimago changed the appearance of reality and made it terribly difficult for Redcrosse to believe that Una had remained honest.

It seems almost unfair to say that Redcrosse is unable to save Eden because he left a woman who he thought was unchaste in favor of a woman whom he (not wholly unreasonably) believed to be better. And yet as soon as Redcrosse is separated from Una, the emblem of true faith, "will" becomes his guide, and "griefe" leads "him astray" (Spenser 1.2.12.3-4); he fights Sansfoy, whose name means faithlessness, on equal terms, and like Sansfoy, he is compared to a ram "stird with ambitious pride" who "fight[s] for the rule" of female sheep (1.2.16.1-2), whereas when he is with Una he is compared to a "gentle shepherd" faithfully tending his flock (1.1.23.1). Away from Una, Redcrosse is bedazzled by Duessa's physical appearance and doesn't seem concerned at all that she takes him to the House of Pride where she is an honored guest. Robert Lanier Reid points out that when Redcrosse fights Sansjoy, he fights him not because justice demands him to but because his own "desire for . . . personal glory" has overtaken "the loving self-sacrifice" that Redcrosse as the patron of holiness is called to (67). Redcrosse may not be fully to blame for leaving Una, but as Redcrosse's actions afterward reveal, an error in judgment is powerful enough to stir up in him actions that deserve punishment. Archimago did deceive Redcrosse, but not all the blame can be thrown on Archimago, for Redcrosse was not under any enchantment when he chose to imitate Sansfoy, or to lustfully court Duessa, or enjoy himself in a foolish battle at the House of Pride. Redcrosse may not have thought that his behavior was sinful, but regardless of Redcrosse's feelings, poor choices in Faerie Land do lead to temptation and bad actions do not go unpunished. Under heaven's law, self-centered Redcrosse is not only unable to slay the dragon; he doesn't even deserve to. He doesn't deserve to be given the chance to save Eden and enjoy a happy marriage with Una, because he has broken faith with God and his fellows and has deemed ambition and comfort to be better than the love of God and man.

Along Redcrosse's journey to grace, Orgoglio's dungeon sets the stage for Redcrosse to receive grace. From the very beginning, Redcrosse needed grace, and now that he is held captive by a giant whose name means " disdaine" or "haughtines" (Hamilton 94), it is apparent that Redcrosse's lack of faith has created in him a foolish pride that keeps him from physical and spiritual freedom. Redcrosse, though not a terribly wicked knight, has always been a man of flesh. He didn't realize that in the beginning though, and thus ignorant of his need for grace, Redcrosse paid the penalty for his fleshiness in a giant's prison. Yet here in the prison—the very place of punishment—Redcrosse receives the grace that he has forgotten about, and as is perhaps fitting for a shadowy fairy world made up of earthly and heavenly plains, grace comes first to Redcrosse through Una and Prince Arthur, who show Redcrosse grace by rescuing him from Orgoglio's prison. Una or "stedfast truth acquite[s]" (1.8.1.4) Redcrosse from the "many perils" that "doe enfold / The righteous man" (1.8.1.1-2). Through the power of "heavenly grace" Una saves Redcrosse from his "own foolish pride" (1.8.1.6) and guides Prince Arthur to Orgoglio's prison so that the Prince may deliver him. When Prince Arthur finds Redcrosse in prison, he is not afraid of the "nether darknesse fowle" or the "filthy band" or "noyous smell" but "with constant zele, and corage bold" and "long paines and labors manifold" discovers "the meanes" to save Redcrosse (1.8.40.1-2, 4-6). Like Una, earthly grace is fair, patient, and gentle, and like Arthur, earthly grace is fierce, powerful, and free of all fastidiousness. One could say that Spenser's examples of earthly grace are a glorious embodiment of the whole human being, both female and male working together to restore love to not only Redcrosse but to the universe, for when Una and Prince Arthur descend into Redcrosse's prison, they, as A. C. Hamilton has noted, imitate Christ's harrowing of hell. Spenser's authoritative source for Arthur and Una's harrowing of hell would have been 1 Peter 3:19, which in the Geneva translation records that Christ

"preached vnto the spirits that were in prison," but Spenser's literary inspiration for their descent may have been *Piers Plowman*, which depicts Christ (like Arthur) as a brave king and warrior who wrestles his way into hell to save his friends (110). Redcrosse's experience with Una and Prince Arthur's grace brings him physical freedom and spiritual reconciliation. It brings him freedom from Orgoglio and Duessa, and the humility that he needs to restore his friendship with Una. But Una and Prince Arthur's grace is not an end in itself for Redcrosse. Instead, like Redcrosse's experience with earthly truth and faith on his first two spiritual journeys, Una and Prince Arthur's grace functions as a ladder that Redcrosse climbs to discover the divine nature, where grace resides in its fullness.

After Redcrosse is saved from Orgoglio, Redcrosse encounters divine grace in a very curious place. We might think that Redcrosse should naturally encounter something as beautiful as divine grace first in the House of Holiness, the place where he has discovered divine truth and faith on his last two spiritual journeys. It is not in the light and laughter of the House of Holiness or even its rooms of godly sorrow and penance that Redcrosse finds divine grace, but in Despaire's hellish cave, where Redcrosse is tempted to end his life. Redcrosse meets Despaire in rather the same overconfident mood that he met Errour. Traveling in the care of Una, Redcrosse hears of Despaire and his cave from the poor knight Sir Treuisan. Sir Treuisan warns Redcrosse to stay away from Despaire and tells him the ghastly story of how Despaire had convinced his friend Sir Terwin to stab himself to death, but Redcrosse cannot be persuaded to avoid Despaire. Despite the fact that his virtue and strength had miserably failed him in the not so distant past, Redcrosse is determined to try his courage against Despaire and prove himself a noble knight to himself and Una. However, when Redcrosse enters Despaire's Cave, he quickly becomes Despaire's next victim. Through subtle logic and fine rhetoric, Despaire convinces Redcrosse to

believe that he can never escape the deadly consequences of his corruption. Despaire tells Redcrosse that no amount of wishful thinking will wipe out the fact that he has permanently "falsed" his "faith" toward Una "with periuree," and "sold" himself forever "to serue Duessa vild" (Spenser 1.9.46.7-8). Because of his sin, Despaire says, Redcrosse deserves God's wrath and should not try to escape God's punishment, since doing so would only obstruct divine justice and prolong the physical and spiritual pain that is the consequence of his corrupt existence. But before Redcrosse can plunge the dagger into his chest that Despaire has given him, Una snatches it from Redcrosse's trembling hands and leading him away from Despaire reminds him of the efficacy of divine. Una tells Redcrosse that since he has believed that God has paid the penalty for his sins, he does not need to live in fear of punishment:

> Come, come away, fraile feeble fleshly wight,
>
> Ne let vaine words bewitch thy manly hart,
>
> Ne diuelish thoughts dismay thy constant spright.
>
> In heavnly mercies has thou not a part?
>
> Why shouldst thou then despeire, that chosen art?
>
> Where justice growes, there grows eke greter grace,
>
> The which doth quench the brond of hellish smart.
>
> And that accurst hand-writing doth deface. (1.9.53.1-8)

The greater grace that Una speaks of here does not merely overlook the offense of the lawbreaker. Grace operates in tandem with justice. As Una teaches Redcrosse, God gives grace to his children; He forgives them and saves them from their corrupt nature and reconciles them to Himself so that they can live in joyful harmony with Him. Because God has graciously taken the just punishment for his children's sins upon himself, Redcrosse and all who accept God's grace

no longer have to live under the penalty of the law, what Una calls "that accurst hand-writing" and what St. Paul in Colossians 2:14 calls "the hand writing of ordinances that was against vs" but that which Christ removed "and fastened . . . vpon the crosse" (84). Humphrey Tonkin explains that Spenser's divine or heavenly grace is "the means by which the spirit sloughs off" corruption (228), and thankfully for Redcrosse, that is exactly what happens to him after Una rebukes him for listening to Despaire. Redcrosse arises and leaves Despaire's "cursed place" (Spenser 1.9.53.9). Mounting his horse straight away, Redcrosse follows Una to the House of Holiness where he, with the help of Caelia and her family, mortifies his sinful nature—the fickleness and fraud and the pride and faithlessness that have bound him since the very beginning of his quest.

Because of God's grace, Redcrosse can now save Eden, for Redcrosse no longer lives under the power of his sins, which always kept him from walking in faithful love. This does not mean that Redcrosse will never sin again. Sin and weakness are part of the human condition, and Redcrosse will not completely lay these aside until he hangs his shield in the halls of heaven. But living free from the power of sin does mean that Redcrosse can rest assured that despite his past and future sins, divine grace will quicken his spirit and bring health to his body and soul.

Paradise Regained

Redcrosse and Una's departure from the House of Holiness marks the end of Redcrosse's spiritual journeys and the beginning of his struggle with the dragon. Redcrosse has climbed the ladder to divine truth, faith, and grace and has made their goodness a part of himself. Redcrosse's Christian armor is now truly a sign that Redcrosse is the saint of holiness, thoroughly committed through the power of divine grace to faithfully love heaven and earth. When Redcrosse meets the dragon in battle, Spenser reinforces the transformation that Redcrosse

has undergone by invoking the "sacred Muse," and asking her to help him sing of Redcrosse and the dragon's battle not in the warlike manner native to heroic tales but in the holy manner native to godly deeds:

O gently come gently into my feeble breast,
Come gently, but not with that mightie rage
Wherewith the martiall troupes doest infest,
And hartes of great Heroes doest enrage.

Fayre Goddesse lay that furious fitt asyde,
Till I of warres and bloody *Mars* doe sing,
. . . . . .
But now a while lett downe that haughtie string,
And to my tunes thy second tenor rayse,
That I this man of God his godly armes may blaze. (1.11.6.1-7.9)

In other words, the wrath of Achilles or the fierce rage kindled between Agamemnon and Priam's armies is not an appropriate comparison to the conflict between the dragon and Redcrosse since Redcrosse is "a man of God" (1.11.7.9). The heroes of old filled "heaven and earth. . . with horror" (1.11.7.5), and when their poets crafted tales about them, the heroes were revered for their terrible strength and pride. Yet, while such heroes with their strength and hubris inspire awe, by distancing the ancient heroes from Redcrosse, Spenser confirms Redcrosse's spiritual renewal while making way for a new definition of heroism. This new heroism of holiness needed to restore paradise has nothing to do with the old heroism—pride, rage, and

lust—that plagued Redcrosse for the first half of his quest. Instead, the new heroism finds its restorative power in truth, faith, and grace.

On the morning that Redcrosse slays the dragon and during the betrothal ceremony of Redcrosse and Una that soon afterward follows, Spenser brings Redcrosse's quest to a close by giving us two images that show us that Redcrosse has restored Eden. The first image is the image of Aurora, who heralds Redcrosse's imminent victory over the dragon:

> The ioyous day gan early to appeare,
> And fayre *Aurora* from the deawy bed
> Of aged *Tithone* gan her selfe to reare,
> . . . . . .
> Her golden locks for hast were loosely shed
> About her eares, when *Vna* her did marke
> Clymbe to her charet, all with flowers spred,
> From heuen high to chace the chearelesse darke. (1.11.51.1-8)

The second image of restoration that Spenser gives is the image of the angels who sing at Redcrosse and Una's betrothal:

> During the which there was an heauenly noise
> Heard sownd through all the Pallace pleasantly
> Like as it had bene many an Angels voice,
> Singing before th'eternall maiesty,
> In their trinall triplicities on hye. (1.12.39.1-5)

In the image of Aurora nature has experienced a return to the fruitful harmony that it had enjoyed before the dragon and the fall destroyed its access to the divine, and when the celestial voices, or

as Hamilton notes, "the music of the spheres in their ninefold harmony," which have "not been audible since the Fall," celebrate the betrothal of Redcrosse and Una, one is reminded of the loyal love of Eden's first couple, which was instituted and blessed by God, a symbol of Christ's relationship to his church, and a symbol long held in the Christian tradition as a picture of trinitarian love (154).

Paul Rovang contends that when Redcrosse fights the dragon and overthrows him after three days of vicious battle, Redcrosse does not just abstractly represent Christ, but actually "participat[es] with Christ . . . in [his] cosmic victory" (49) over the dragon of Revelations 12:7 which the Geneva gloss identifies as the dragon that "'Iesus Christ and his members, as Apostles, Martyrs, and the rest of the faithful'" overcome (qtd. in Rovang 49). This participation in Christ's divine glory and victory is "strongly indicated" when Una praises God for Redcrosse's victory which the knight has "atchieude" through "his might"—the unified power of Christ in Redcrosse (49). As Rovang notes elsewhere, Spenser shows through Redcrosse's journey what St. Paul's words to the Galatians and Colossians might look like in the confines of Faerie Land: "whome we preache, admonishing euerie man, and teaching euerie man in all wisdom, that we may present euerie man perfect in Christ Iesus" (Col 1:28); and "My litle children, of whome I trauaile in birth againe, vntil Christ be formed in you" (Gal 4:19). In these verses St. Paul speaks "of the growth of the Christian Everyman into Everyman in Christ," the same growth that Redcrosse experiences during his quest to Eden (Rovang 50). Redcrosse began his journey to Eden as the Christian Everyman, the young saint who is just getting used to his holy armor, but as his reformation at the House of Holiness followed by his sacramental victory over the dragon illustrate, when Redcrosse joyfully celebrates his betrothal with Una in Eden, he is no longer just a common Christian man tossed about by fickle loves, but a common Christian man who has

learned to climb above the wreckage of the world to the land of his heavenly sojourn in order that he might descend back into the world as a man of love—an everyman in Christ fit to participate in divine redemption. In the opening of *Paradise Regained*, Milton writes Christ as a hero, descending into the world, intent upon restoring Eden. Cannot the same be said of Redcrosse and his wanderings: St. George of merry England, the patron of true holiness, the little Christ?

> I who e're while the happy Garden sung,
> By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
> Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
> By one man's firm obedience fully tri'd
> Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
> In all his wiles, defeated and repuls't,
> And Eden rais'd in the wast Wilderness. (1.1-7)

Chapter 3

WHEN A CAUTIOUS KNIGHT SAVES A GARDEN: SIR GUYON AND THE LEGEND OF TEMPERANCE

Grace in Redcrosse's quest operates on the human and divine level. Arthur and Una, the human conduits of grace, demonstrate that earthly grace has both a masculine and a feminine nature and that this grace in both its forms is needed to help Redcrosse become holy. On an allegorical level, feminine grace befriends a sinful knight and pursues him despite his inconstancy, the lesson being that, in order for a knight to become holy, he must faithfully and lovingly serve grace, that earthly unearned favor that prompts him to live a life of godly love. Allegorically, masculine grace is a royal warrior who, for no reward, fights hellish enemies to free Redcrosse from the consequences of his unfaithfulness; in short, the picture of masculine grace shows us that grace is noble and magnificent, helping those it doesn't even know; grace gives a second chance to friends and strangers alike. Perhaps most notably, masculine and feminine grace lead Redcrosse to the House of Holiness, where Redcrosse finds divine grace, which frees him from the power of sin, enabling him to not only do good, but to be—to become—holy.

In Guyon's quest, Spenser gives us two more images of grace, showing us what this reappearing virtue looks like in the context of temperance. During Guyon's adventures, grace takes on the role of an angel, an angel that Spenser curiously compares to Cupid. In addition, Arthur again is an agent of grace. The picture of grace that Arthur casts, though, is a bit different from that in Book 1. While Arthur's actions in Redcrosse's pageant emphasize the absolute saving power of grace, in the legend of temperance Arthur shows how grace collects no debts

and is slow to wrath. These images of grace, divine compassion portrayed in a Cupid-like angel and forbearance and generosity modeled in Arthur, are important for Guyon because his mission requires him to reform—not destroy—the intemperate men who are prisoners of the promiscuous sorceress Acrasia.

Guyon Receives His Call

During the Faerie Queene's twelve-day feast—the same feast that Redcrosse attends—a holy Palmer, sober and sage, comes to the Queene's merry gathering with an urgent plea. Acrasia, "A wicked Fay," is working great woe upon a lovely island some distance from the Queen's court. There the fairy woman fools men with her "vaine delightes and idle pleasures"; once the men are under her spell, she pulls their souls from their bodies and gives them "monstrous" forms, which the poor men are forced to bear in her dark prison (Spenser 2.5.27.2-3). Some of Acrasia's victims even become foul beasts who guard the gates of her island. Upon hearing the Palmer's request, the Queene, moved to great pity, appoints Sir Guyon, the knight of temperance, one of her finest from the "most renownd Order of Maydenhead," to capture Acrasia and free the men held prisoner to the witch's lusts (2.2.42.4).

In short, the Queene commissions Guyon because she is about the business of mercy, as Guyon later notes along his journey to the island: "My Soueraine, / Whose glory is in gracious deeds" takes joy in showing mercy throughout the world (Spenser 2.2.43.6-7). The Queene's mercy is vast and deep, so she looks kindly upon the weak men who have wrecked their lives through intemperance. She does not condemn them, though she could; rather, the Queene wants to give them a second chance to live out their lives not as dead men, but as living men who are free to participate in the gentle joys of love and friendship, without the stings of wrath and incontinence. In the first proem of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser fashions a clear image of this sort

of harmony, a harmony that seems to be the argument of his entire poetic project. He asks Cupid to lay down his cruel bow of lust and to help him sing, along with Venus and Mars, who is now clothed in "loues and gentle iollities," of "fierce wars and faithful loves" and of the Faerie Queene who is Queen Elizabeth's "glorious type" (1.Proem.1.9, 4.7).

A. C. Hamilton observes that when Spenser asks for the aid of Venus, the disarmed Cupid, and Mars, he is implying that his poetic work will attempt to bring about a picture of "order and harmony in the universe" (30). In fact, the union of Mars and Venus, or war and love, which Spenser says "shall moralize" his work, in Renaissance philosophy "produces the goddess Harmony" (30). In light of Spenser's proem, then, the lost men on Acrasia's island who are frozen in their own rage and lust can be seen as part of the original chaos of a wild Cupid and Mars that Spenser hopes to transform through the love of the divine Cupid and Venus, mediated through the mercy of the Faerie Queene and the steady hand of Guyon. Guyon's mission from the beginning is not a mission fixed upon the condemnation of intemperate men and women or the destruction of sexual desire. Instead, it is fixed upon showing mercy to the intemperate so that they may learn how to bring order to their passions and health to their bodies and souls. While Acrasia divides the body from the soul, locking the soul up while the body becomes nothing short of a beast, Guyon is sent out to bring unity to the body and soul.

Acrasia's name means "badly mixed" and "want of self-command" (Hamilton 282), and Acrasia's chief lover Cymochles is a godless, lazy knight, whose only desire rests in being titillated in Acrasia's garden. Acrasia's and Cymochles' sexuality is perpetually self-centered and endlessly frozen in artificial time. Acrasia and Cymochles always want to get something out of their lovers. There is no thought of giving love away freely for their lover's own sake. Acrasia and Cymochles divorce sexual beauty from the sacred personhood of the individual, reducing

sexual beauty to a cold, wet, dream-like object that they can "feede" their eyes on (2.5.34.3). Thus Cymochles is first described as a knight who spends most of his time resting in Acrasia's garden, while a bevy of ladies entertain him with their charms. These "still waues of deepe delight" keep Cymochles enthralled, and like a tired animal who greedily eyes its prey, Cymochles lies sprawled upon the ground with his paramours:

He, like an Adder, lurking in the weedes,
His wandring thought in deepe desire does steepe,
And his frayle eye with spoyle of beauty feedes.
Sometimes he falsely faines himselfe to sleepe,
Whiles through their wanton lids his wanton eies do peepe,
To steale a snatch of amorous conceipt. (2.5.34.1-6)

When we see Acrasia for the first time, she too greedily feeds on her lovers, in the end extending Cymochles' cool languid greed to a cold vampiric hunger:

The faire Witch her selfe now solacing,
With a new Louer, whom through sorceree
And witchcraft, she from farre did thether bring
There she had him now laid a slombering.

With her false eyes fast fixed in his sight,
As seeking medicine, whence she was stong
. . . . . .
Through his humid eyes did sucke his spright,
Quite molten into lust and pleasure lewd. (2.12.72.2-73.8)

In addition to the self-centered sexuality that Acrasia and Cymochles display, Acrasia and her lover are consumed with trying to make fleeting passion an eternity. Perpetual sexual bliss becomes a priority. Cymochles spends every moment that he can possibly spare in Acrasia's pleasure garden, for he is "giuen all to lust and loose liuing, / When euer his fiers handes he free mote fynd" (2.5.28.3-4). It doesn't matter that he is a knight with a code that requires him to seek adventure in distant lands, for Cymochles believes that the only thing worth living for is for beds and bowers: "Hauing his warlike weapons cast behynd," Cymochles "flowes in pleasures, and vaine pleasing toyes, / Mingled emongst loose Ladies and lasciuious boyes" (2.5.28.7-9).

Acrasia sees her garden—the Bower of Bliss—as an answer to her tantalizing fantasy that passion can and should be sustained. In the Bower, the weather is always temperate, the flowers always in bloom, the vine always laden with grapes, and the people who live there always young, always beautiful, and always singing, dancing, or making love. Art adorns nature in the Bower. An ivory tableau of Jason and Medea is fixed on the Bower's gate, curious flowers fill the grassy fields, golden grapes mingle with real grapes, and golden ivy twines about the Bower's crystal fountain that is covered with carvings of Cupid. But not only does art adorn nature in the bower, art is in a sort of pleasant wrestling match with a wild and sober nature that is unaccustomed to manicured landscapes, gates, and painted walls. Art "lauishly adorne[s]" the fields with flowers "as half in scorne / Of niggard Nature" (2.12.50.6-8); art believes nature is stingy with its bounty, but through playful "cunning" art manages to hide "the rude / And scorned partes" of nature to produce a flawless, everlasting spring garden (2.12.59.1-2). Even nature, it seems, eventually aids art in its endeavor to create a perfect love garden by finally removing its sober guise and trying to imitate art: "so striuving each th'other to vndermine / Each did the others worke more beautify" (2.12.59.5-6). Though art and nature are opponents, this opposition produces art's

foremost desire: “So diff’ring both in willes, agreed in fine / So all agreed through sweete diuersity, / This Gardin to adorne with all variety” (2.12.59.7-9). Thus, through the mingling of the natural and the artificial, and the consistent presence of youthful vigor and sport, Acrasia’s garden produces an environment in which Acrasia and Cymochles and any of their guests might live in a state of eternal passion; other duties that a man or woman may have—caring for one’s children or elders or neighbors, having a job and ambition, all responsibilities which though good and noble inevitably bring difficulty and pain—all these are tossed aside by those who live in the Bower of Bliss for a manufactured reality that always promises to provide exciting, painless, beautiful, and sensual experiences.

Thus in the Bower of Bliss we find characters like Genius, Excess, and the Bathing Damsels who live solely for eternal ease or sensuality, and who make it their job to encourage the guests of the garden to follow their lifestyle. Genius is a master of “guilefull” sensuous “semblants” (2.12.48.6); Excess holds “ a cup of gold” full of “sappy liquor” emblematic of thoughtless abundance (2.12.56.1, 3); and the Bathing Damsels, by far the most lewd of Acrasia’s residents, conduct a strip-tease of sorts in the Bower’s crystal fountain. Perhaps it may seem a bit of an exaggeration to think that Acrasia and Cymochles’ hunger for endless sexual pleasure could produce the nasty and selfish sexuality that plagues them, and certainly not all who pine for sexual beauty are in danger of becoming incontinent. However, it is curious that Spenser places perverted sexuality and the desire for endless sensual pleasure next to each other in the characters of Acrasia and Cymochles, as if suggesting that a correlation exists between desire that is endless and desire that is ravenous. Those who desire passion above all else, who desire passion to be unnaturally extended, are those who soon pervert it to satisfy their own selfish appetites. Thus in the lovely Bower of Bliss, a place of romantic splendor and spring, lie

those who use whatever means they have at their disposal, including the innocent beauty of a pleasure garden, to corrupt sexuality—to place it outside of the confines of married love.

Discovering Forgiveness

Unlike Redcrosse's mission, which required him to rid Eden of a completely evil power, Guyon's quest is not quite as straightforward. Acrasia is certainly an evil being, and like the dragon, she keeps her prisoners fast in her power. Nevertheless, Acrasia is not Lucifer. For all Acrasia's perverseness, she isn't the source of evil or the chief corrupter of the earth. She is wickedly powerful, but it would be wrong to say that, like the dragon, everything about her is polluted and ugly. Though she uses her pleasure garden to enslave the passions of men, her pleasure garden is not essentially evil. The flowers and the fruitful land, the fountains, the finely crafted paintings, and the golden fruit are good and beautiful things in their own respect. Being made to bring delight to the world and its creator, nature and art in a temperate or well-ordered environment bring rest and a renewed desire to live a diligent life. In fact, this effort to balance nature and art is fundamental to the poetics of *The Faerie Queene*. Spenser says in his letter to Raleigh that the purpose of his allegory is to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" (714); in other words, Spenser hopes that his art or poetry will help make the natural man or woman temperate. Spenser's poetry operates like a pleasure garden: his poetry or art cultivates and adorns reality so that its visitors might be entertained and edified.

Even though Acrasia perverts sexual desire, in Spenser's Faerie Land this desire is not an animalistic passion to be avoided at all costs. At the end of Book 1, Redcrosse is betrothed to Una, and a great and holy celebration is held in honor of their union. Caelia's daughters Fidelia and Speranza are engaged to be married, and Charissa is happily married and a mother of many children. Furthermore, these examples of desire are not merely glossed over or treated as a

commonplace. Instead, Spenser gives special poetic attention to these moments, working to create beautiful and passionate images of sexual desire. At Redcrosse and Una's ceremony we get a lovely picture of what is going on behind the scenes: the servants are preparing the new couple's bedroom, sprinkling the bed posts with wine and filling the chamber with torch-light and frankincense. No prudish nicety hinders Spenser when he describes Charissa's body, for we see that Charissa is a fair and confident woman, charming and full of grace:

She was a woman in her freshest age,
Of wondrous beauty, and of bounty rare,
. . . . . .
Her necke and brests were euer open bare,
That ay thereof her babes might sucke their fill.

And on her head she wore a tyre of gold,
Adorned with gemmes and owches wondrous fayre,
Whose passing price vneath was to be told;
And by her syde there sate a gentle payre
Of turtle doues, she sitting in an yuory chayre. (1.10.30.1-31.9)

In Guyon's adventure, these good images of sexuality are continued, notwithstanding the many evil images that Acrasia and her cohorts provide. In Alma's House, arguably the most comprehensive picture that Guyon receives of the temperate body and soul, Alma's ladies are "courted" by "many a iolly Paramoure / In modest wise," while amongst them all "little Cupid play[s] his wanton sportes" upon all the ladies and their lovers as they enjoy each other's coy

games, as opposed to the armed Cupid who fills lovers with fear and blinding desire (2.9.34.3-4, 6).

In light of these examples of good sexuality, it will be Guyon's job as he goes to free Acrasia's prisoners to remember that his mission is not to vanquish the culmination of all evil or the demonic offspring of a cruel spirit, but to realign a desire that has lost its original shape, that has exceeded its boundaries of gentleness and responsibility. This will require Guyon to be about the business of forgiveness and patience. Instead of using a sword to bring revenge and condemnation, Guyon will need—in a sense—to use his hands to straighten what has become bent. Guyon, however, as temperate as he may seem from the start, is in need of a patient forgiveness that will enable him to endure perversion long enough to reform it, for not long after Guyon begins his journey to Acrasia's bower, he is confronted with the ugly consequences of profane love when he finds a young woman named Amavia languishing in the forest beside her child and dead lover.

When Guyon happens upon this broken family, he finds that Amavia has stabbed herself for grief, and her child, too young to comprehend the tragedy that has taken place, happily playing in his mother's blood. Grieved and terrified at the pitiful spectacle, Guyon rushes over to keep Amavia from dying, and as he does what he can to staunch the knife wound, Amavia tells Guyon her and her knight's story. Mordant and Amavia are two lovers who had the ill fortune of becoming entangled in Acrasia's deceitful enchantment. Mordant, whose name means "death," is reckless; he leaves Amavia to look for adventures to build his name, and while he is off being a knight errant, he is enticed into Acrasia's "chaines of lust and lewde desyres ybownd" (Spenser 2.1.54.3). Amavia, heavily pregnant with Mordant's child, after much pain finds and frees Mordant from Acrasia's enchantment. However, Mordant's freedom is only temporary. Just

before Amavia takes Mordant from the witch's garden, Acrasia deceives Mordant into drinking a poisonous wine, which will kill him as soon as Mordant drinks from a pure well. Sure enough, on their way back to their country, Mordant drinks from Diana's well and dies. Not long after Amavia finishes telling Guyon about Mordant's doom, Amavia dies, but before her death Guyon promises to avenge her and her family. With "many teares" Guyon and the Palmer bury Mordant and Amavia, and this time with an oath, Guyon swears to bring "dew vengeance" on Acrasia (2.1.61.7). Amavia's child is now an orphan, and Guyon affirms in his oath that it is his duty to "defend" orphans since they cannot defend themselves against their enemies.

Guyon's response to Amavia and her family's tragic situation is quite natural and to be expected of a Christian knight in the chivalric tradition. As Paul Suttie points out, "Sir Guyon sees revenge as an appropriate response to the unjust suffering of others because he is part of an aristocratic tradition which champions strength of love and battle" (127). It is easy to imagine Guyon following in the tradition of Malory's knights from *The Morte Darthur* or perhaps Chaucer's heroes from *The Knight's Tale* who, with eloquent oaths and fierce wrath, eagerly seek to strike down the enemies of their friends and lovers. However, as seemingly noble and glorious as revenge sounds to a young brave knight of Faerie Land, rightfully angry at Acrasia for despoiling Mordant and his family, temperance ought to warn him against anchoring his mission on an emotion that is opposed to the purpose of his quest—the salvation of incontinent men and the reformation of sexual desire. Vengeance completely destroys its enemy; vengeance does not seek middle ground, and vengeance has no interest in mending broken people or desires. Amavia's fierce grief leads her to take her own life, and Guyon's fierce anger in response to Amavia's despair leads him to forget the nature of his quest. Intemperance begets intemperance, and intemperance when it matures becomes a deadly force of decay.

But temperance seeks to bring order to men and women broken by passion, anger, or grief. As both Guyon and his Palmer conclude after discussing Mordant and Amavia's tragedy, temperance "can measure out a meane" between "bolde furie," "raging passion," and "dolefull tene" (Spenser 2.1.57-58). Temperance helps a person act rationally even when "wrath, gelosy, griefe, and loue" make "strong warres" against a person's mind or "fort of Reason" (2.4.34). It shows a person how to filter imagination through sound thinking—reasoning based on a healthy enjoyment of both the soul and the body—and a good memory that learns from the past mistakes of one's countrymen. When Guyon and the Palmer stay at Medina's castle right after rescuing Amavia's child, Medina, the sober lady of the castle teaches Guyon and her sisters that "Louely concord, and most sacred peace" is the fruit of temperance which "Doth nourish vertue, and fast friendship breeds" (2.2.31.1-2). At Medina's house, strife is a commonplace because Medina's sisters Perissa and Elissa and their lovers Sans Loy and Sir Huddibras are continually bickering and fighting amongst each other. Sans Loy seeks to get the best of Sir Huddibras to please Perissa, and Sir Huddibras seeks to get the best of Sans Loy to please Elissa; love becomes jealousy, and ambition becomes malice. Yet despite her family's discord, Medina maintains that temperance strengthens the weak and "strong things does increase," so that the only battle that temperance fights is the battle against "yre and pride" (2.2.31.3, 6), the source of "Reuenging rage," "the bitter fruites of warre," and the "furies" of the "wrathful sword" (2.2.30.6-7).

After Guyon and the Palmer leave Medina's castle, Guyon once again is confronted with vengeance's vicious consequences. While traversing a great plain, Guyon finds the hag Occasion harassing the intemperate squire Phaon, doing her very best to stir up "vengeance" in the captured man while she provokes him with her "outrageous talke" (2.4.5.3-4). Guyon soon learns that Phaon is a singular example of a man who has allowed vengeance to ruin his life, and once

Guyon rescues the bedraggled squire, Guyon learns how Occasion and her partner Furor ended up capturing Phaon in the first place. It all began when, consumed with jealousy, Phaon murdered his fiancée Claribell because he believed that she had betrayed him with another man; however, Phaon's agony soon becomes compounded when he discovers not only had his fiancée not betrayed him, but his so-called friend Philemon had planned the entire fiasco to ruin him. Repeating the cycle of rage and vengeance, Phaon soon murders Philemon and seeks to murder the servant woman Pyrene who aided Philemon in his schemes. Consumed with vengeance, Phaon becomes prey for Occasion and Furor who easily capture him and gleefully beat him with many blows. In short, Phaon is a glaring example of a person who has allowed his wrath at a seemingly unjust situation to turn into revenge, murderous anger that blinds one from making a judgment based upon reason and mercy. As the Palmer tells Phaon, "Wrath is a fire, and gealosie a weede, / Griefe is a flood, and loue a monster fell"; but those who "thus delay" the desire to gratify these warring passions will soon find reason giving them the strength to "quench" their wrath, to "dry vp" their grief, and to "cleane away" their lust (2.4.35.1-2, 6, 8).

From these examples Guyon needs to learn that, regardless of his feelings, revenge is not the solution to the tragedy of Amavia, Mordant, and their child, nor is it the solution to freeing Acrasia's captives and bringing order to her pleasure garden. Temperance requires forgiveness because in order to put the self or the life of another in order, to help a person change from chaos to temperance, one must be willing to overlook the chaos long enough to help that person reform his or her behavior. However, if a person lets revenge become the motivation for his or her response to intemperance, the very goal of temperance in the first place—to restore reason to irrationality and sickness to health—is lost. Temperance is like a good doctor: it always aims to bring healing to the infirm. If Guyon wants to be a good patron saint of temperance, he must

learn that, as Medina said, concord, friendship, and health are not brought about by the sword, but through patient words and a forgiving spirit.

Discovering Humility

In order for Guyon to have a forgiving nature, he must put on humility, for he will not be able to forgive or surrender his right to get even if he is primarily concerned with his glory and his reputation. Forgiveness requires a person to cancel a debt out of love for the debtor, and forgiveness requires a person to love the offender enough to believe that the offender is worth being given an opportunity to reform. Thus, the only way a person can find this will to bestow mercy on the guilty is if love becomes more important than reputation and comfort.

A glance at Guyon's predecessor Redcrosse and his time spent in penance reveals that the first person that the sin-burdened Redcrosse meets at the House of Holiness is the kind old porter Humiltá:

> He was an aged syre, all hory gray,
> With lookes full lowly cast, and gate full slow,
> Wont on a staffe his feeble steps to stay,
> Hight Humiltá. They pass in stouping low;
> For streight and narrow was the way, which he did shew. (1.10.5.5-9)

All the residents of the House of Holiness make it their mission to offer forgiveness and healing to knights and pilgrims who are mired down in all sorts of sin, and so it is worth noting that the first person—or virtue—needed to begin the process of redemption is Humiltá. With kindness, Humiltá welcomes all who come to his gates for healing. He does not treat others as if he is superior to them. He is not disdainful, and he finds no greedy pleasure in his own virtuous behavior. His greatest joy is not to seek glory for himself, but to help lowly travelers like

Redcrosse who have stumbled into pride and sexual sin to find happiness and peace through forgiveness and virtuous discipline.

Likely Spenser's source for Humiltá, St. Paul's definition of humility in the epistle to the Philippians is modeled on Christ and his descent from heaven to earth as a suffering servant: Christ "made him self of no reputation, and toke on him the forme of a servuant, and was made like vnto men, and was foude in shape as a man. He humbled himself, and became obedient vnto the death, euen the death of the crosse" (Phil. 2:7-8). St. Paul, who explains what Christ's humility looks like in the life of a believer, states that those who practice humility are free of "contentio" or "vaine glorie" or self-conceit. Instead, the humble "in mekeness of minde . . . esteeme others better than [themselves]" (Phil. 2:3). Like Spenser's Humiltá, Paul's humble man doesn't bother about his own welfare but enjoys thinking of others: "Lok not euerie man on his owne things, but euerie man also on the things of other men" (Phil. 2:4). Humiltá and those who follow his model, then, are no longer just good people but little Christs, since like Christ they have taken on the role of servants, becoming men or women of little fame who obediently give their lives for the redemption of others. Humility then is a prerequisite for offering forgiveness because humility enables one to show compassion to the unlovable.

Guyon, however, is not a very humble knight, and in addition to struggling with revenge, Guyon struggles to lay aside his pride and his thirst for personal glory. Probably the best extended example of Guyon's vainglory and pride occurs when Guyon stumbles upon Mammon's Cave. Up until this point in his journey to Acrasia's lair, Guyon has encountered great success. He has rescued Amavia and Mordant's child Ruddymane and has turned the child over to the care of the temperate lady Medina. Next, Guyon has delivered the miserable squire Phaon from the hag Occasion and her terrible son Furor, and along with his Palmer, instructed

the squire in the discipline of temperance. Following his victory over Occasion, Guyon battles the hot-tempered knight Pyrochles, who has become infuriated after learning that Guyon has bound Furor and Occasion. Pyrochles is fiercely strong and is as terrifying as a "cruel tygre" (2.5.8.9). Nevertheless, Guyon conquers Pyrochles with little trouble, using his patient hand and "wary wise" mind to confound his blustering enemy (2.5.9.6). Once Guyon has disarmed Pyrochles, Guyon in good chivalric fashion grants his foe mercy, but Guyon does not stop there—no, like the upstanding temperate knight that he is, Guyon urges Pyrochles to "fly the dreadful warre" between "Outrageous anger, and woe working iarre, / Direfull impatience, and hartmurdering loue" (2.5.16.1, 3-4). In short, Guyon gives his vanquished foe a short sermon on temperance.

Following his victory over Pyrochles, Guyon again masterfully navigates his way through two other trials: Merth's or Phaedria's lascivious folly and Cymochles' vicious attack. While preparing to ford a large river, Guyon accepts the lady Phaedria's invitation to ferry him across only to find out once in her gondola that Phaedria has no intention of taking him to the other side of the river but to her wandering island on the Idle Lake. On their way to the wandering island, Guyon conducts himself with dignity, happily enjoying the lady's "honest merth" but soberly refusing to enjoy the lady's "toy, and gibe," her graceless humor which lacks true joy because it lacks modesty:

> Yet seemed, nothing well they her became [her stories];
> For all her wordes she drownd with laughter vaine,
> And wanted grace in vtt'ring of the same,
> That turned all her pleasaunce to a scoffing game. (2.6.6.6-9)

Once on the island, Guyon does not get sidetracked by Phaedria's beautiful garden or her fair poems and songs, and though he remains courteous toward Phaedria, he always remains aloof to her charms.

When Guyon meets Cymochles on Phaedria's island, Cymochles attacks Guyon. However, as with Pyrochles, Guyon does not allow Cymochles' lack of temperance to cause him to lose his wits, and even though Phaedria in the end intervenes and begs Guyon and Cymochles to sheath their swords, Guyon never once acts intemperately. Calmly laying aside his weapon out of respect for Phaedria, Guyon follows Phaedria back to her boat prepared to take him to the mainland, and even though Cymochles' herald Atin continues to shout insults at Guyon, Guyon does not grant him satisfaction:

> With that he [Atin] stifly shooke his steelhead dart:
>
> But sober Guyon, hearing him so rayle,
>
> Though somewhat moued in his mightie hart,
>
> Yet with strong reason maistred passion fraile,
>
> And passed fayrely for. (2.6.40.1-5)

Thus, in view of these moral victories, it is not surprising that when Guyon arrives at Mammon's Cave, he is quite proud of his virtuous deeds and moral hardihood. In fact, as Patrick Cullen has noted, it seems reasonable to believe that when Guyon accepts Mammon's offer to experience the dark and glittering curiosities of the gnome's underworld, Guyon does so because he wants to prove that he is the most temperate knight, even though doing so has nothing really to do with capturing Acrasia and freeing her prisoners (85). After such a long line of victories, Guyon sees an adventure with Mammon as an exciting way to extend his moral achievements and personal glory:

So *Guyon* hauing lost his trustie guyde [Palmer],

Late left beyond that Ydle lake, proceedes

Yet on his way, of none accompanyde;

And euermore himselfe with comfort feedes,

Of his owne vertues, and praise worthie deedes.

So long he yode, yet no aduenture found,

Which fame of her shrill trompet worthy reedes;

For still he traueild through wide wastfull ground,

That nought but wildernesse shewed all around. (2.7.2.1-9)

From this stanza we see that Guyon is very proud of his previous virtuous accomplishments. Not only is he merely happy or content about his good character, Guyon actually finds comfort in feeding or feasting on his good works. One can almost feel a sense of a delicious revelry about Guyon here as he tramps alone in the great plains of Faerie Land[10].

However, Guyon's pride in his own virtue is out of place since he is a Christian knight whose code calls him to prudently evaluate his actions and not think too highly of himself. In addition, Guyon is a bit too concerned about his own glory. Instead of focusing on his mission to defeat Acrasia, Guyon, after he leaves Phaedria, wanders about Faerie Land looking for more adventures that will bring him fame. This is not to say that Guyon has completely forgotten his purpose. It is quite possible that Guyon is merely looking for adventures while on his way to Acrasia's island; in this scenario Guyon is still relatively focused but doesn't mind fulfilling his responsibility at a slower pace if it will enable him to add to his achievements. In either case, however, Guyon's desire for glory is not entirely prudent, and his desire, as the final lines of the

[10] Guyon loses the Palmer—his guide who helps him keep his passions under control—when Guyon enters Phaedria's boat.

passage seem to bode, will likely lead him into temptation. All alone in a vast wilderness, far from good counsel, in a place where the ground is dry and "wastfull," Guyon's moral pride and vainglory are now at liberty to entice him. Thus, it is not surprising that when he encounters Mammon in this barren wilderness, Guyon soon shows signs of pride and vainglory.

In a gloomy glade, Guyon finds Mammon greedily counting his gold, which is scattered about the entrance to a small cave. Struck by Mammon's hideous appearance and large quantity of gold, Guyon approaches the strange creature, who upon seeing Guyon endeavors to hide all his gold from the knight's sight. Guyon, though, firmly intercepts Mammon's mad rush to hide his treasure and asks Mammon who he is and why he is hiding his gold from "right vsaunce" (2.7.7.4). Mammon, angry that Guyon has disturbed him, turns sharply toward the knight and coldly tells him that he is "Great Mammon, the greatest god below the sky" (2.7.8.2). However, as angry as Mammon may seem, he is shrewd. Eagerly desiring to make Guyon his next victim, Mammon tries to persuade Guyon to serve him, telling the knight that he is the god of wealth, the source of all "riches, renowme, and principality, / Honour, estate, and all this worldes good," who bountifully bestows these "graces" on all without favoritism (2.7.8.5-6). If Guyon will but "deigne to serue" Mammon, "all these mountaines" and more will belong to Guyon (2.7.9.1-2).

Like a good temperate knight, Guyon immediately refuses Mammon's offer, reasoning that to give in to Mammon would be "to attend / Regard of wordly mucke . . . / And low abase [any] high heroicke spright" (2.7.10.4-6). However, despite a sharp refusal to serve Mammon, Guyon's subsequent response to the wily god reveals that the knight is on shaky ground, and that his love of "his owne vertues, and praise-worthies deedes" will prove a snare to him. Gold is "worldly muck," Guyon tells Mammon, but "crownes, and kingdomes to contend" for and "faire shields, gay steedes, [and] bright armes" are "my delight"—these "be the riches fit for an

aduent'rous knight" (2.7.10.7-9). It seems, rather amusingly, that Guyon does not realize that Mammon's offer of gold is the primary means to achieving these knightly badges of success that Guyon values so highly. Picking up on Guyon's hypocrisy, Mammon half-mockingly calls Guyon a "vaine glorious Elfe" and reminds him that money is the key to achieving all the vainglory and all the prestige that Guyon wants. Still, even after Mammon's rebuttal, Guyon appears to remain immune to Mammon's logic, offering a little sermon to Mammon about the woes of wealth and the discontent that excess creates:

> The antique world, in his first flowring youth,
> Fownd no defect in his Creators grace,
> But with glad thankes, and vnreproed truth
> The gifts of soueraine bounty did embrace
> . . . . . .
> But later ages pride, like corn-fed steed,
> Abused her plenty, and fat swolne encreace
> To all licentious lust, and gan exceed
> The measure of her meane, and natural first need. (2.7.16.1-4, 6-9)

Nevertheless, regardless of his own sermon and reasoning, when Mammon offers again to give Guyon a surplus of his gold, Guyon accepts on condition that Mammon shows him where the gold is made so he might make certain that the gold is not ill-gotten. This is an interesting response on Guyon's part, especially when we consider how Guyon first resisted Mammon's offer, and also when we consider how Guyon will soon relentlessly refuse all the wealth and privilege that he finds in Mammon's Cave. Guyon is clearly torn between his vainglory and his temperance. On the one hand, Guyon accepts Mammon's offer, revealing that the knight may see

Mammon's gold as a real means to help him achieve all the fame that he has wanted. On the other hand, once underground Guyon stoutly rejects Mammon's offer, revealing that while Guyon may be vainglorious, he curiously has enough temperance about himself to stoutly refuse all of Mammon's temptations of wealth and power. This double-pronged response of Guyon's, his joint desire to acquire power and wealth for honor's sake while at the same time remaining free of its corrupting effects, is reflective, as Hugh MacLachlan argues, of Guyon's "indebtedness . . . to that of Aristotle's . . . magnanimous man in *The Nicomachean Ethics*. There the virtuous man 'is thought to be proud [magnanimous] who thinks himself worthy of great things, being worthy of them'" (98). Like the magnanimous man, Guyon is "seeking to be advanced for his own meritorious works" (100), and, also like the magnanimous man, Guyon above all seeks "honor [or as MacLachlan later calls it "personal glory"] . . . not only by doing great moral deeds but also by inheriting or acquiring, and then using for honorable purposes, other internal and external goods including nobility, wealth, and power" (98).

Once in Mammon's Cave, Guyon's thirst for personal glory is reinforced when Mammon tempts him to marry his daughter Philotime. As MacLachlan further notes, Philotime's name comes from the Greek word meaning "desire for honor," and Philotime is none other than the goddess of glorious ambition who is fully capable of raising Guyon's status in Faerie Land—what Guyon has earnestly desired ever since his wandering in the wilderness (100). Even though Guyon withstands Mammon's temptation and refuses to marry Philotime, his refusal is not confident. Unlike his previous encounters with temptations in Mammon's Cave, here as MacLachlan notes, "Guyon's tone changes . . . [the temptation] touch[ing] very close to home, the god [Mammon] having properly sorted out Guyon's priorities" (100).

Comparing Guyon's deferential response to Philotime to his dismissive response to Mammon when the god of the world offers Guyon the gold from his forge shows how strong Guyon's desire for personal glory is. To Mammon's offer, Guyon responds:

> Certes (he sayd) I n'ill thine offered grace,
> Ne to be made so happy doe intend;
> Another blis before mine eyes I place
> . . . . . .
> I in armes, and in atchieuments braue,
> Do rather choose my flitting houres to spend,
> And to be Lord of those, that riches haue
> Then them to haue my selfe, and their seruile slave. (2.7.33.1-3, 6-9)

But a little while later, after he flatly refuses Mammon's offer of gold, Guyon responds to the allure of Philotime, and instead of scorning her offer as he did with the allure of gold, Guyon refuses with a sort of reverence:

> Gramercy *Mammon* (said the gentle knight)
> For so great grace and offred high estate,
> But I, that am fraile flesh and earthly wight,
> Vnworthy match for such immortall mate
> My selfe well wote, and mine vnequall fate. (2.7.50.1-5)

Unlike the gold of Mammon's forge, Philotime, to Guyon, isn't a reward that one should outright despise. Philotime is a beautiful woman who is powerful and of great noble birth. Whereas Mammon's gold can buy Guyon riches, Philotime, because she is a noble woman of vast influence, can give Guyon what he proudly declared to Mammon that he wanted: "to be Lord of

those, that riches haue" (2.7.33.8) and to increase his prowess through combat and adventures. MacLachlan states that Guyon ultimately refuses Philotime because he dislikes that she is mistress of a court poisoned by "malicious ambition" (100). According to MacLachlan, Guyon turns down Philotime because it "would demand that Guyon reject his serene belief in virtue as the central ingredient of the magnanimous life"; in short, to accept Philotime would mean gaining "honor" through vice, a proposal that a virtuous knight would not entertain (100).

However, as temperate as Guyon has been thus far, Guyon's motive for refusing Philotime has less to do with Guyon's disgust of Philotime's court, where "euery one did striue his fellow downe to throw" (2.7.47.9), and more to do with not breaking faith with the lady he is already betrothed to. Throughout Guyon's response to Philotime, Guyon does not once say that he refuses her hand on the grounds that she is the leader of a cruelly ambitious court, but only because first he is not at liberty to marry outside of his station, and second he has already given his love to another. Obviously these two reasons are not bad, the first reason revealing that Guyon, like a good medieval subject, has proper reverence for the high-born, and the second admirably revealing that Guyon is committed to his betrothed. Yet Guyon's response does not reveal that he understands the danger behind selfish ambition, and ultimately this lack of recognition makes us wonder what Guyon would have done had he been single and of higher birth. Would he have taken Mammon's bait? Would he have broken the Stygian laws and in so doing damned himself to die in Mammon's lair? Given Guyon's boasting in the wilderness and his attraction to Philotime, it appears so. Fortunately, at the end of three days, Guyon emerges from Mammon's Cave unscathed; however, even though Guyon has quite manfully resisted the god of the world, he has not found the humility that he so desperately needs to liberate Acrasia's captives. Vainglory is still very much a part of Guyon, as is his vengeance, all of which, as

Humiltá teaches Redcrosse, are impediments to forgiveness and humility, the necessary virtues needed to bring restoration to men and women who are broken by their passions.

Discovering Grace

Guyon faints soon after he emerges from Mammon's Cave, and as "the life did flit away out of her nest [Guyon's heart]," all Guyon's "sences [are] with deadly fit opprest" (2.7.66.8-9). Alone and in a deep swoon, Guyon is especially vulnerable to attack from the evil forces in Faerie Land. Pyrochles and Cymochles soon find Guyon fainted upon the wayside, and it is not long before they draw their blades and prepare to despoil the fallen knight. Though the Palmer does find Guyon before the Paynim brothers do, Guyon's lot is still dire since the old Palmer is no match for the wicked knights[11]. Guyon entered the wilderness of Faerie Land assured of his own virtue and eager to bring lasting fame to his name; but now, in the middle of his adventure against Acrasia, we can see that all that Guyon's vainglory has brought him is a painful trip into a hellish underworld, a deadly faint, and two merciless enemies.

Yet like Redcrosse, Guyon, despite his blunders, finds favor with God, who in an act of grace or reckless love sends an angel and later Prince Arthur to protect him. As Spenser makes clear in the opening stanza of Canto 8, Guyon really doesn't deserve to be rescued; in the world of natural law, Guyon ought to pay the price for his overweening pride; in a word, a man reaps what he sows, and if he sows seeds of folly he will reap a harvest of trouble; if he is not virtuous enough to finish his quest, that is his fault and no one else's—he, like it or not, must suffer defeat. However, in the kingdom of grace, vices are forgiven and sinful knights are given an opportunity to put off their folly and to put on the virtues that will enable them to complete their quest and live lives of forgiveness and humility:

[11] "The Paynim brothers" is another name for Pyrochles and Cymochles.

But O th'exceeding grace

Of highest God, that loues his creatures so,

And all his workes with mercy doth embrace

That blessed Angels, he sends to and fro,

To serue to wicked man, to serue his wicked foe. (2.8.1.6-9)

Gillian Hubbard notes that the kind of grace that Spenser describes is tied to humility. Like Augustine and many reformed theologians like John Calvin, Spenser describes divine grace as a loving descent from heaven to earth; in addition, divine grace is associated with the care of a mother bird for her chicks: "in Calvin's exposition of Psalm 91:4 . . . Calvin's point is that the tenderness and humility of biblical metaphor is a path to participation in the grace that comes from divine humility" (110). As Hubbard continues, Calvin shows how the psalmist's image of God as a protecting bird complements St. Matthew's image of Christ as a mother bird eager to gather her chicks under her wings: the God of all glory is not ashamed to don flesh if it will enable him to rescue his children (110). Similarly, Spenser shows through Guyon's faint that divine grace always involves compassion and celestial descent. As Hubbard notes, when God comes to Guyon, he first comes in all his glory, as "highest God, that loues his creatures so" (Spenser 2.8.1.6). However, it is not long before God cloaks his majesty and sends his grace to Guyon through one particular angel. This angel, who is like the gentle Cupid who has "laid his cruell bow away" (2.8.6.1), guards unconscious Guyon, and like Christ, promises to protect Guyon from his enemies while urging the knight's fearful Palmer to watch and pray. Once Guyon's angel disappears, life begins to return to Guyon, and the Palmer, overjoyed to find that Guyon's pulse has returned, "courd it tenderly, / As chicken newly hatcht, from dreaded destiny" (2.8.9.8-9). Like divine grace to the Psalmist and St. Matthew, heavenly grace has humbly

descended and has wrapped Guyon in its wings: as Hubbard puts it, "Christ's grace . . . as the source of Guyon's spiritual 'deare safety' (2.8.8.2) is suggested both by this action of 'couring' and by the echoes of the angelic annunciation in the Palmer's response to the angel, 'of feare and wonder, that he nought could say (2.8.7.2)'" (Hubbard 110).

The image of divine grace manifests again when Prince Arthur appears. After the angel leaves, Prince Arthur rather miraculously happens to be in the same part of Faerie Land as Guyon and the Palmer. When Arthur spies the Paynim Brothers—Pyrochles and Cymochles—leering about Guyon and his guide, preparing to despoil him, Arthur intervenes, and like the good knight that Arthur is, the prince does his best to convince the angry knights not to inflict further harm on Guyon. Though Arthur inevitably has to draw his sword to defend Guyon and the Palmer (and himself), Arthur regrets having to do so, having preferred the Paynim Brothers to have listened to his courteous words. Even after Arthur defeats the Paynim Brothers in battle, slaying Cymochles unavoidably in combat, Arthur still does not wish to cause further harm. While Pyrochles, after his defeat, writhes upon the ground in "vile disdaine . . . [and] sad melancholy," Arthur offers to spare the wretched knight's life, for Arthur is "full of princely bounty" and, "casting wronges and all reuenge behind," finds it more glorious "to giue life, then decay" (2.8.51.1, 3-4). Though in the end Arthur slays Pyrochles since the wicked knight refuses to surrender, Arthur does so regretfully: "Wroth was the Prince, and sory yet withall, / That he [the pagan knight] so willfully refused grace" (2.8.52.5-6). Grace to Arthur is a lifeline, a bountiful pardon that gives life to the wrongdoer; grace is an opportunity to enjoy the good things of both earth and heaven, like love, family, nature, and spiritual communion. Furthermore, Arthur shows that grace is absolutely free. Once Guyon revives from his faint after the death of the Paynim knights and realizes that Arthur has saved him from an ugly death, Guyon is

overwhelmed with gratitude and immediately feels indebted to Arthur: “What may suffise, to be for meede repayd” Guyon exclaims, “Of so great graces, as ye haue me shewd, / But to be euer bound” (2.8.55.7-9). However, Arthur tells Guyon that there is no need for him to feel bound to him like a slave, for “Good turnes to be counted, as a seruile bond” (2.8.56.2-3). Grace instead is one of those curiously beautiful acts that finds its reward in the happiness and freedom of the other.

Not long after Arthur rescues Guyon, Guyon goes with Arthur to lady Alma’s castle: the House of Temperance. At Alma’s house, Guyon and Arthur both rest from their trials. Rest at Alma’s house is not just a matter of sleeping, eating, and drinking, nor is it only a matter of divine contemplation: rest at Alma’s house is a pleasant combination of both. Here, Guyon meets Diet, Appetite, Concoction, and Digestion, all cooks and ministers of Alma’s kitchen who illustrate for Guyon how good food and hygiene bring a person rest. Next, Guyon observes a bevy of ladies and their lovers in Alma’s privy chamber—at the heart of Alma’s house—happily sparring and flirting with each other. Finally, Guyon meets Phantastes, Reason, and Memory in the turrets of the castle; this is a very special place in Alma’s House, likened to “that heavenly towre, / That God hath built for his owne blessed bowre” (2.9.47.4-5). Out of the “three honorable sages” (2.9.47.9), Guyon spends the most time with Memory, who gives him the history of his people to read before Guyon crosses the sea to Acrasia’s island.

It may seem that Alma’s House is an odd place for Spenser to send Guyon right after his catastrophe with Mammon. Considering Guyon’s foolish pride and eagerness for revenge, wouldn’t it make more sense to pack Guyon up and send him to the House of Holiness as he did Redcrosse, where his pride and revenge would certainly be stamped out of him? The simple answer to this question is yes. It would be fitting for Guyon to go to the House of Holiness. As

Redcrosse himself learned, Caelia and her daughters Fidelia, Speranza, and Charissa are instructors who bring love where there is pride and peace where there is anger or revenge. Yet there is also something very important about the House of Temperance that Guyon needs that is not expressed in the same way in Caelia's house: the ability to fortify the whole self, both body and spirit, against incontinence, while at the same time giving the self the strength to fortify others. In short, the House of Temperance is a delightful and practical mental picture of a healthy body and soul for Guyon to feed his mind upon; this will help him save Acrasia's victims. To internalize the lessons of the House of Temperance, though, will require Guyon to throw away his vainglory and revenge, but it will do so in a way that will remind Guyon not to be overzealous, to remember that the body and its common pleasures, like eating or sleeping, or its higher pleasures, like sexual desire or reasoned imagination, are good. This is the extended result of the divine grace that Guyon has been given, the grace that Guyon needs to live a temperate life.

How does Alma's House remove revenge and foster forgiveness? First, Alma herself is a good example of a person who lives a life marked by forgiveness. Alma is described as a woman who is not lustful, but who is happily "wooed of many a gentle knight" (2.9.18.3). Not surprisingly, Alma wears a "robe of lily white," emblematic of her pure heart (2.9.19.1). She is a woman "full of grace and goodly modestee / That euen heuen reioyced her sweete face to see" (2.9.18.8-9), and also a good host who entertains Guyon and Arthur with "gentle court and gracious delight" (2.9.20.3). Since Alma is the governor of the House of Temperance, she is the primary example of what temperance looks like; she shows how temperance is a virtue that creates harmony. Love, grace, modesty, hospitality, and purity of heart are all characteristics that

make the heart inhospitable to revenge. But Alma's temperance gives and sustains life; it, like Alma, has its face lifted toward the grace of heaven.

Another example of harmony in the House of Temperance is Alma's love court. Here Cupid is disarmed, and here the men and women enjoy each other's company with good affection:

> And eachone sought his Lady to aggrate:
> And eke emongst them litle *Cupid* playd
> His wanton sportes, being retourned late
> From his fierce warres, and hauing from him layd
> His cruel bow, wherewith he thousands hath dismayd. (2.9.34.5-9)

Though some of the ladies are bashful and some are coy or envious, these strong feelings are well tempered, and, instead of producing anger, produce humor and diversity. If revenge entered Alma's love court, all the happiness that comes from being able to be gentle and free would be ruined, and any chance that the House of Temperance may have had to show an incontinent man or woman what healthy sexuality looks like would be lost.

Alma's House fosters humility through the cooperation of her three wise sages Phantastes, Reason, and Memory. Balance is important for Guyon because it shows him why Alma and her house are able to operate harmoniously, why pride does not affect them. Phantastes, Alma's first advisor, gives her advice via the imagination; he is a man of "sharpe foresight and working wit" who takes great stock in dreams and prophecies (2.9.49.8). Reason, on the other hand, is a man of "lawes" "artes" "science" and " philosophy" (2.9.53.7-9). Memory is a "man of infinite remembraunce" who preserves all historical records, even the very ancient, and from his library Memory shares with Alma the wisdom of the past (2.9.56.1). Now

if Alma or her sages were inordinately interested in their own glory, or if they quite vainly puffed themselves up with their own virtues, each would miss the benefit of the other's perspective—the wild beauty of the imagination, the logical principles of reason, or the quiet voices of the past. Like a man who idly leaves his coat and walking stick behind on a long journey and becomes mired down in the rain and snow because of his own foolishness, so Alma and her counselors would lose their external and internal order if they vaingloriously decided to govern the castle and themselves on their own. In short, Alma and her sages teach Guyon that humility brings about temperance, and temperance brings about good thinking, good loving, and good living.

Guyon in the Bower of Bliss

After Guyon and his Palmer leave the House of Temperance, Guyon and his guide cross the vast and treacherous sea that separates the mainland from Acrasia's island. Once on the sorceress' island, Guyon and his guide confidently enter her garden—the Bower of Bliss—and with great austerity punish the false Genius and the alluring woman Excess; Guyon breaks Genius' staff and crushes Excess' grapes. Though Guyon nearly succumbs to the charm of the damsels bathing in Cupid's fountain, his ever-sober Palmer rebukes him sharply and pulls him back to their search for Acrasia. Thankfully for Guyon and his Palmer, Acrasia is not far from Cupid's fountain, and when they find her sucking the soul from her latest victim Sir Verdant, they deftly cast a net over the witch and her knight. Binding Acrasia and releasing Verdant along with the other victims whom they find, Guyon and his guide may now rest—at least for a little while—from their labors. Guyon has completed his quest and has extended the mercy of his Faerie Queene to not only the beastly prisoners, but also to the witch herself: Guyon never slays

Acrasia. She is only made the prisoner of his queen. Yet before Guyon leaves Acrasia's island, he destroys all the vegetation and buildings on the island:

> But all those pleasaunt bowres and Pallace braue,
> *Guyon* broke downe, with rigour pittilesse;
> Ne ought their goodly workmanship might saue
> Them from the tempest of his wrathfulnesse:
> Their groues he feld, their gardins did deface,
> Their arbers spoyle, their Cabinets suppresse,
> Their banket houses burne, their buildings race,
> And of the fayrest late, now made the fowlest place. (2.12.83.1-9)

Guyon's ferocious wrath comes as a surprise, once we consider his merciful response to Acrasia and her prisoners.

Looking at his initial response to the witch and her thralls, it seems that Guyon finally has internalized the lessons of grace and humility given to him at Alma's House. It seems that Guyon now understands how his quest is a mission of mercy given to him by his queen not to reject sexuality but to restore it to its proper shape, how fundamentally his quest is not a mission of revenge but forgiveness and humility. What, then, should we make of Guyon's seemingly intemperate treatment of the Bower of Bliss? From Alma's House we have seen how sexuality and sensuous delights are placed within orderly but enjoyable boundaries set by Alma and her three sages, which (it is important to remember) includes not only the sober Reason but the enigmatic and playful Phantastes. Unlike Guyon's wrathful response to sensuality, Alma shows how true temperance embraces sensuality as a healthy part of the human body and mind. Considering Guyon's response, it seems that the destruction of the Bower is Guyon's way to at

least satisfy part of his revenge and thus unforgiveness for Acrasia for her evil treatment of Amavia and her family.

Nevertheless, Guyon is not a terrible knight, and in a very real way his outrage expresses the pain, anger, and confusion that comes with trying to come to terms with the sexual trauma and loss that naive people experience. While his response may not be perfect, Guyon does not inhabit a world where all the villains are giants or dragons. As James Nohrnberg explains, whereas Redcrosse's journey is more "high-minded" or idealistic like a romance, Guyon's journey is built upon the "experience" that comes with living in a complex "fallen world," and the struggle that comes with trying to find "the expertise needed to cope" justly with fallen nature (285-87). It would be harsh to say that Guyon failed his quest because he destroyed the Bower of Bliss. After all, he did attempt to teach Verdant how to live temperately, and he did spare Acrasia's life. Instead, it would be better to say that Guyon succeeded as well as a good but flawed knight can do in a complex world in which good and evil are often delicately intertwined. On the other hand, Guyon's partial failure as an exemplum of temperance reveals that despite all of the joy and strength that divine grace has to offer, divine grace will not force Guyon to follow its method or internalize its wisdom. Divine grace leaves heaven to instruct Guyon, and uses Arthur and the House of Alma to teach Guyon, but if Guyon will not heed divine instruction and curb his revenge and conceit, divine grace will not stop Guyon from being intemperate.

Grace is a gift which enables a person to love, and since love is only possible if the beloved has the freedom to choose whether to receive or reject love, grace, too, only makes sense in the context of free will. Without free will, grace becomes a piece of machinery ready to be attached to a person like a new tire is attached to an old vehicle, and without free will love is reduced to the reactions of an automaton. In a Faerie Land without free will, where grace is

forcefully applied to the individual, Guyon wouldn't have destroyed the Bower; he would have been a perfect example of temperance, and the Faerie Queene's mission of mercy would have been completed. However, Spenser allows Guyon to struggle with grace, ultimately demonstrating that grace—even divine grace—cannot transform a person who does not willingly and routinely submit him- or herself to its method.

Chapter 4

WHEN CUPID'S MAN COURTS VENUS' DAUGHTER: SIR SCUDAMOUR AND THE LEGEND OF CHASTITY

The grace that Guyon experiences in Book 2 is best described as gentle and practical. Guyon's Angel like the unarmed Cupid is gentle and kind, happy to rest and laugh with his mother Venus and his sisters the Three Graces, and Guyon's friend Arthur demonstrates grace's generosity and patience. In Books 3 and 4 of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, narratives about the blessings and dangers of romantic love, grace again plays a central role in the spiritual maturity of its characters. In both books Spenser tells of Sir Scudamour's quest to win the love of Amoret, the daughter of Venus. Scudamour and Amoret's adventure, though, is not told in chronological order. Instead, Spenser begins Scudamour's quest *in medias res*: Scudamour is introduced in Book 3 when he loses Amoret, and it is not until the latter half of Book 4, as Scudamour continues his desperate search for his beloved, that one learns in retrospect how Scudamour first met and pursued Amoret.

In order to be bound in happy love with Amoret, Scudamour must learn to be chaste—the primary image of grace in his quest—which will require him to learn that friendship and service are the fundamental building blocks of romantic love. Scudamour proves that he is unchaste when he discovers that he is incapable of rescuing Amoret from the lascivious magician Busirane. Like many of Spenser's knights, Scudamour finds himself in need of grace, which in its simplest form is unearned favor that will enable him to restore his marriage with Amoret. Unfortunately, in Spenser's second ending to Scudamour's quest, Scudamour does not trust the grace given to him: he does not believe that Britomart, the knight of chastity, can rescue Amoret,

causing his reconciliation with Amoret to be deferred indefinitely. Thus, because Scudamour rejects grace, he fails to gain chastity and thus fails to be reconciled to Amoret. Grace, however, is not so easily put off, and fortunately for Scudamour and Amoret, Arthur helps them when Britomart no longer can.

Scudamour's Calling

Scudamour's quest to marry Amoret begins at the court of the Faerie Queene. Here during one of the Faerie Queene's sumptuous feasts, Scudamour catches sight of the beautiful and gentle Amoret, the adopted daughter of Venus. Like the rest of the young men at the Faerie Queene's court, Scudamour finds himself bewitched by Amoret's beauty. His heart, like the others', has been pierced "with loues cruel wound" (Spenser 3.6.52.9). As the feast continues, Scudamour manages to meet Amoret, and to his great happiness he is not disappointed, for Amoret's conversation is marked by grace, modesty, and cheerfulness. She is kind and gentle, and even though she has many suitors, she is not proud. Scudamour wonders what he must do to win Amoret's love; he sighs bitterly to himself when he thinks that she may favor another. Scudamour, however, is not one to allow the fear of rejection to stop him, and so, throughout the remainder of the feast and the following days that Amoret spends in Faerie Land, Scudamour does his best to woo her. Happily, by the end of her time at the Faerie Queene's court, Amoret finds herself in love with Scudamour:

> But she to none of them her loue did cast,
>
> Saue to the noble knight Sir *Scudamore*
>
> To whom her louing hart she linked fast
>
> In faithfull loue, t'abide for euermore. (3.6.53.1-4)

Nevertheless, even though Scudamour and Amoret have a mutual affection for each other, because Amoret is the daughter of Venus, Scudamour will have to prove that he is worthy to marry Amoret by completing a series of difficult tasks. First, Scudamour must find Venus' island, where Venus and Amoret live. Next, once on the island, Scudamour must take up Cupid's shield and fight twenty knights who guard the gates of the goddess of love's castle. If Scudamour defeats these knights, he will be allowed to enter the castle, where he must contend with the charming words of Delay and the club of the fierce giant Daunger. If Scudamour can survive Delay and Daunger, he will be able to march through Venus' castle unharmed and so proceed to the final adventure, which, if mastered, will allow him to marry Amoret. The last perilous threshold that Scudamour must pass over is the entrance to Venus' Temple. Here Lady Concord stands between Love and Hate, and here Scudamour must trust Lady Concord to keep him from the angry fists of Hate and instead lead him on Love's side into Venus' Temple where Amoret and her ladies often stay.

When Scudamour learns at the Faerie Queene's court what he must do to gain Amoret, he boldly sets off to find Venus' island. Having discovered the island, Scudamour quickly finds Cupid's shield fastened to a marble stone on which he reads a short message written in gold: "*Blessed the man that well can vse his bliss: / Whose euer be the shield, faire Amoret be his*" (Spenser 4.10.8.8-9). Seizing the shield, Scudamour smiles and eagerly attacks the posse of knights who dash out of Venus' castle. Scudamour now has Cupid's shield, and so he is confident that Amoret will soon be his. Scudamour manfully defeats the rest of his foes—Giant Daunger and Hate—and as Concord bids him to enter Venus' Temple, Scudamour spots Amoret at the foot of her mother's altar with her friends. Immediately, Scudamour strides up to Amoret and seizes her hand, and though Amoret's friend and counselor Womanhood rebukes Scudamour

"for being ouer bold," declaring that "it was to [a] Knight['s] vnseemely shame, / Vpon a recluse Virgin to lay hold," Scudamour brandishes Cupid's shield in Womanhood's face, and confidently declares that because he has won Cupid's shield, he is Amoret's rightful mate (4.10.54.2-4). Upon seeing Cupid's shield, Womanhood relents, and Scudamour, holding Amoret's hand in "pledge of faith," leads her from Venus' island to his house for a merry wedding celebration (4.10.55.7).

Curiously, though, on the way from Venus' Temple, Amoret at first resists Scudamour. For Amoret the relationship has gone too fast, and though she loves Scudamour, Scudamour's boldness frightens her. As Scudamour leads Amoret away from the Temple, "She often prayd, and often [him] besought, / Sometimes with tender teares to let her goe, / Sometime with witching smyles" (4.10.57.1-3). Amoret knows that her life is going to change dramatically as soon as she becomes Scudamour's wife, and as a young virgin, the thought of giving her body and soul to another—even a man whom she dearly admires—makes her a bit nervous. Scudamour, however, finds Amoret's nervousness ridiculous, and so instead of taking Amoret's feelings seriously, Scudamour ignores them: "but yet for nought, / That euer she to me could say or doe, / Could she her wished freedome from me wooe" (4.10.57.3-5). She, he says, is "his glorious spoyle of beautie," and like Orpheus, he will lead Amoret, his Eurydice, safely past all the dangers of Pluto's lair (4.10.58.3-5). In other words, he is Amoret's capable savior and lover and thus the last person she should be afraid of.

Unfortunately, Scudamour and Amoret's conflict on the steps of Venus' Temple is only the beginning of their troubles. During the wedding feast, Scudamour and his friends become intoxicated with wine and, because of their drunkenness, are unaware that the "vile Enchauntour Busirane" has slipped into the wedding party. "All bent to mirth before the bride is bedded,"

Scudamour cheers when Busirane decides to bring in his troop of actors to perform a "mask of loue" for him and Amoret (4.1.3.1, 5-6). After the Masque, Busirane, confident that Scudamour and his friends are too drunk to oppose him, orders his actors to seize Amoret. Once Amoret is bound, Busirane flees with her to his castle where he keeps her as his prisoner. There in his castle, adorned with golden art, Busirane tortures Amoret: he ties her to a pillar and by enchantment removes her heart "because to yield him loue she doth deny" (3.11.17.3).

Scudamour tries to rescue Amoret from Busirane, but every time that he tries to break through the wall of sulfurous fire that surrounds Busirane's castle, he is repulsed: "Not by any witt or might" can the wall be breached (3.11.23.7). Scudamour knows that Busirane guards his house and Amoret with "strong enchauntments and black Magicke"; he knows that Busirane keeps Amoret "in a dungeon deepe . . . / And many dreadfull feends hath pointed to her gard" (3.11.16.7-9), but what Scudamour does not know, despite all his efforts, is what incantation or power may reverse Busirane's magic. And so, for seven months, Amoret remains Busirane's prisoner. Unlike Redcrosse's and Guyon's adventures, for which Spenser chronicles each knight's journey from the beginning of his quest to his battle with his foe, Spenser does not allow us to follow Scudamour over his seven-month quest to free Amoret. We do not know what wise men or women he consults or what champions he petitions to help him conquer Busirane, but what we may safely assume is that Scudamour does not allow despair or fear—at least not at first—to freeze him into cowardly inaction. Considering how boldly Scudamour had pursued Amoret, how he had won Cupid's shield, defeated twenty knights, and beat back the Giant Daunger all for Amoret's sake, it is natural to imagine that Scudamour painfully toils seven months to find a spell or a weapon that would save his beloved. Further proof of Scudamour's long trials is seen in Scudamour's state of mind after seven months of failing to breach

Busirane's wall: "There an huge heape of singulfes did oppresse, / His struggling soule, and swelling throbs empeach / His foltring toung with pangs of drerinesse" (3.11.12.1-3). Such is Scudamour's sorrow that it appears that his grief will overwhelm him to the point of death. In addition, Scudamour's prayer for his beloved after her seven month imprisonment shows the soul of a man who bitterly regrets his inability to defeat the evil that cruelly binds Amoret:

> O souerayne Lord that sit'st on hye,
> And raignst in blis emongst thy blessed Saintes,
> How suffrest thou such shamefull cruelty,
> So long vnwreaked of thine enimy?
> Or hast thou, Lord, of good mens cause no heed?
> Or doth they iustice sleepe, and silently?
> What booteth then the good and righteous deed,
> If goodnesse find no grace, no righteous no meed? (3.11.9.2-9)

Scudamour then finishes his prayer by demanding why, "if good find grace, and righteousnes reward, / is Amoret in caytiue band" (3.11.10.1-2). If Scudamour hadn't earnestly tried to save Amoret, it seems unlikely that he would be as crushed in spirit as his agonizing prayer reveals. These aren't the words of a half-hearted lover, but of an honest man who has fought too long against the cruel realities of a fallen world.

Like Redcrosse and Guyon, though, Scudamour finds grace in his crisis. The lady Britomart, the patron of chastity, happens to find him as he lies in a forest not far from Busirane's castle, exhausted from grief and ready to give into despair. Upon finding Scudamour in his last extremity—"his haberieon, his helmet, and his speare" as well as his shield bearing "the winged boy in colours cleare" angrily cast on the ground—Britomart immediately asks

Scudamour what she may do to ease his grief, and as soon as Britomart learns from Scudamour about Amoret and Busirane's impenetrable wall of fire, Britomart agrees to help Scudamour. At the gates of Busirane's castle, Britomart attacks its fiery bars fearlessly, and to Scudamour's great astonishment, Britomart's spear pierces right through the flames like "a thonder bolt / Perceth the yielding ayre, and doth displace / The soring clouds into sad showres" (3.11.25.6-8). With the gates breached, Britomart runs into the courtyard of Busirane's castle, but oddly enough, Scudamour is unable to follow Britomart, for as soon as Britomart passes into the magician's palace, the flaming wall returns and forces Scudamour to retreat once again in defeat. Now hot with sorrow and anger for again being cruelly denied a part in his beloved's rescue, Scudamour collapses: "With huge impatience he inly swelt, / More for great sorrow, that he could not pas"; then to make matters worse, Scudamour, throwing himself upon the grass, " Did beat and bounse his head and brest ful sore" (3.11.27.1-2, 6).

Discovering Chastity: Love as Friendship

Scudamour never visits a house of learning like Redcrosse and Guyon do to master his virtue, but it seems clear from the lady Britomart's ability to pass through Busirane's wall unscathed that Scudamour lacks a quality that Britomart has in abundance, and that if Spenser had patterned Scudamour's adventure after that of Redcrosse or Guyon, he would have had Scudamour visit a house of chastity or love. In Scudamour's adventure, however, chastity is learned through observing Britomart and her foils like Malecasta, Paridell, Hellenore, and Malbecco. Through observing Britomart we are able to see what chastity is made up of, and thus what Scudamour must do in order to protect Amoret and himself from the Busiranes of Faerie Land.

The first prong or pillar of chastity that Britomart models and defines is a love that is rooted in friendship rather than mastery. At the beginning of her quest to find her destined husband Sir Artegall, Britomart rescues Redcrosse from six knights, who represent a different stage in the process of romantic attraction, and who attempt to force Redcrosse to serve their lustful queen Malecasta. Britomart makes rather quick work of Malecasta's champions, and happily for Redcrosse, Britomart prevents Malecasta and her minions from forcing Redcrosse to betray Una. All love or sweet affection is faithful, Britomart tells Redcrosse: "For knight to leauve his Lady were great shame, / That faithfull is, and better were to dy"; however, in addition to faithfulness, Britomart tells Redcrosse that love is always free: "Ne may loue be compeld by maistery; / For soone as maistery comes, sweet loue anone / Taketh his nimble winges, and soone away is gone" (3.1.25.3-4, 7-9)[12].

Spenser illustrates how Britomart embodies chastity as opposed to mastery when he describes her face. Upon entering Malecasta's house, Britomart lifts her visor and reveals a face like "fayre Cynthia" shining forth through the "darkesome night" and "noyous cloud[s]" (3.1.43.1-2). Like the moon, Britomart's face "Breakes forth her siluer beames, and her bright hed / Discouers to the world discomfited"; her light, like the moon's, brings cheer to "the poore traueiler, that went astray"; and now the pilgrim, brimming "with [a] thousand blessings" for the moon, may walk safely back to the path (3.1.43.4-7). Britomart is not a greedy lover who demands affection from her beloved, but a good friend who freely offers to bless her beloved with her companionship. Like the light of the moon, her companionship is beautiful as well as virtuous; because of her free friendship the traveler or beloved will be kept from folly. This

[12] Hamilton notes that Britomart's response to Redcrosse is based on Chaucer's doctrine of love from the *Franklin's Tale*: "Love wol nat been constreyned by maistrye / Whan maistrie comth, the God of Love anon / Beteth his wyinges, and farewel, he is gon!" (293).

edifying mutual love, though, would not be possible if Britomart compelled her friend to admire her or forced her friend to heed her advice. Her presumed friend or beloved would only recoil from Britomart's advances in fear and anger, and possibly hurt himself in his flight from Britomart's over-bold spirit.

For Busirane, love is a form of mastery. Besides the obvious fact that he is trying to compel Amoret to love him, Busirane's Masque of love as well as his golden idol of Cupid are vivid examples of his twisted romantic love. In his Masque of love, Busirane's Cupid stands in a chariot pulled by "a lion raueneous," by which he subdues all men and women "to his kingdome tyrannous," and like Satan in Lucifera's parade of the seven deadly sins, Cupid rides behind his troupe surveying each member with cruel glee: "He look[s] round about with sterne disdayne; / And did suruay his goodly company / And marshalling the euill ordered trayne," Cupid lifts up his darts into the air and shakes them fiercely as he claps his beautiful wings (3.12.23.2-4). All who see him are afraid. Cupid's attention is particularly fastened upon the last few members of his troupe, a young unnamed damsel who is being tortured in a fashion similar to Amoret by "two grysie villeins" Despight and Cruelty. The poor woman is forced to walk with a dagger in her chest while Despight and Cruelty prod her mercilessly. It seems odd that such a hideous spectacle would be included in a Masque that is supposed to depict love, but as Busirane and his wicked Cupid demonstrate, love or desire that only considers its own needs will inevitably become hatefully possessive and harmful. In Busirane's house, the golden statue of Cupid stands in a room adorned with intricate tapestries depicting the fall of Jove and his fellow gods and goddesses by Cupid's darts of selfish desire. Once Jove and the other deities are wounded by Cupid, they show little to no kindness to the poor men or women whom they believe they are madly in love with. Jove masters Helle and Europa, Danaë, and even the Trojan boy whom he

snatches up in his eagle claws; the mastery or fierce desire of Jove is devoid of morality. Rachel Eisendrath illustrates just how corrosive Busirane's "romantic" art is:

> Just as the metamorphosing gods seduce mortals, so too, can art seduce its viewers. Through the verisimilitude of its representations, the poetry ensnares the subject in the object and obviates their distance. In describing Jove's transformation into an eagle and his abduction of Ganymede from Mount Ida, for example, Spenser considers the shepherds looking at the rape, who inevitably reflect the audience looking at the tapestry. . . . In Spenser's lines, the similarity between the gazes of the audience and the shepherds reveals a difference: our ecstatic pleasure as spectators of the tapestry contrasts with the shepherds' genuine concern for the boy. (136-37)

The idol of Cupid is blindfolded, which signifies his irrationality, and stands upon "a wounded dragon" that he has shot through both eyes with his golden shaft. Quite fittingly, the dragon, as A. C. Hamilton observes, represents "the guardian of chastity who protects the golden fruit of the Hesperian tree" (396) whom lustful mastery, embodied in the statue of Cupid, has defeated.

While it would be a gross exaggeration to assert that Scudamour is controlled by a lustful mastery as insidious as Busirane's or his Cupid's, Scudamour's behavior toward Amoret at the Temple of Venus, followed by their disastrous wedding, indicates that Scudamour, unlike Britomart, behaves as if love requires the mastery of the beloved. Instead of a love rooted in friendship—friendship that is by definition kind and free—Scudamour's love for Amoret smacks of self-centered desire. A. Kent Hieatt notes that Scudamour's over-bold behavior toward Amoret at the Temple of Venus is the primary reason why Busirane is able to ruin Scudamour and Amoret's wedding. Drawing on Spenser's familiarity with Chaucer, Hieatt contends that Scudamour makes Amoret vulnerable to Busirane because of "his own practice of an aggressive

mastery in the Chaucerian sense. He does not understand the love which depends on mutual freedom of choice and concord, as in *The Franklin's Tale*" (509). However, "what he does understand is the imperious force of the love deity who is imaged, for instance, in *The Knight's Tale*, in the Masque itself, and on [Scudamour's own] shield" (509). Consider how Scudamour refers to Amoret as he leads her away from Venus, and how despite her tearful pleas, he continues to pull her through the gates of the Temple, as earlier cited:

> She often prayd, and often me besought,
> Sometime with tender teares to let her goe,
> Sometime with witching smyles: but yet for nought,
> That euer she to me could say or doe,
> Could she her wished freedome fro me wooe;
> But forth I led her through the Temple gate. (4.10.57.1-6)

With Amoret securely by his side, Scudamour prides himself on his conquest: Amoret, he noted was his "glorious spoyle of beautie" (4.10.58.3). Amoret was *his* prize, *his* object, *his* possession. There wasn't any talk of friendship or freedom (at Venus' gates) between Scudamour and Amoret, and even though Scudamour does seem to admire such relationships as his comments concerning the friendly lovers on Venus' island proves, he doesn't seem to understand that his boldness or mastery will only hinder his ability to develop a truly loving relationship with Amoret, a relationship which would thrive on gentleness and mutual respect.

James Broaddus argues that one can't judge Scudamour too harshly for his behavior toward Amoret since, after all, the Lady Concord, a symbol of cosmic harmony in Spenser's poetry that forces "hate" to yield "to love," allows Scudamour to take Amoret from Venus (85). Speaking of his parting friendship with Concord, Scudamour says, "But that same Ladie which

me friended late / In entrance, did me also friend in my retrate" (Spenser 4.57.8-9). Broaddus' observation does temper the tendency to read a cruel Busiranian tone in Scudamour's behavior toward Amoret. Scudamour may be over-bold, but if he is friends with lady Concord he certainly isn't sinister—foolish, yes, but not wicked. As Rebecca Yearling puts it, "Scudamour [is] still the too bold adolescent unable to understand a love that involves positive surrender rather than violent conquest" (142). And yet, though it is reasonable to assert that Scudamour is no villain, Scudamour's disastrous wedding (demonstrated primarily in his drunkenness and inability to stop Busirane from stealing Amoret) is a good indication on Spenser's part that Scudamour's way of relating to Amoret is seriously flawed; in the end, it shows that *mastery* in romantic relationships rather than loving friendship results only in fearful separation.

Discovering Chastity: Love as Service

The second pillar of chastity that Scudamour needs if he is to save Amoret and enjoy a happy marriage with her is the principle that true love consists of serving others; chaste lovers are concerned not only with their needs but also the needs of their community. Faithfully married, the lovers should work as a team pursuing virtue, and because of their commitment to each other's good, those who are around them are blessed. Britomart once again serves as Spenser's model for this kind of virtuous love. In her relationship with her future husband Artegall, Britomart demonstrates that chaste love is like a village garden that never fails to produce beautiful, nourishing fruit. True chaste love, Spenser notes, finds its origin in divine nature. Love is a "sacred fyre that burnest mightily / . . . ykindled first aboue, / Emongst th'eternall spheres and lamping sky" (3.3.1.1-3). It is "not that same, which doth base affections moue, / In brutish mindes, and filthy lust inflame"; rather, chaste love is eager to pursue beauty and virtue: love is a "sweete fit, that doth true beautie loue, / And choseth vertue for his dearest

Dame" (3.3.1.5-8). Finally, the fruit of chaste love is "all noble deedes and neuer dying fame" (3.3.1.9). Following his definition of love, Spenser shows us how Britomart and Artegall are providentially destined to marry and become king and queen of Britain, and through their rule and offspring bring peace to Britain and the surrounding nations. Because of Britomart and Artegall, "eternall vnion shall be made / Betweene the nations different afore, / And sacred Peace shall louingly persuade" the contentious "to Learne her goodly lore" (3.3.49.1-4).

In line with Spenser's definition of chaste love, the affection that Britomart and Artegall have for each other is based in divine love because their affection results in virtue: serving others by bringing justice and peace to the British people. As Merlin prophecies to Britomart, Artegall is "the man whom heauens haue ordaynd to bee" her husband (Spenser 3.3.26.1), and who with her help will valiantly "ayde his countrey, to withstand / The powre of forreine Paynims, which invade [her] land" (3.3.8-9). The beauty that they find in each other's faces, the loveliness and strength that they are drawn to in each other's form, becomes a divine means to obtaining virtue. Through a longing for beauty that is rooted in faithful marriage, Britomart and Artegall experience mutual joy and contentment, which cannot help but overflow as acts of service into the lives of their friends and subjects. Britomart and Artegall show that chaste love is kinetic; it moves passionately but gracefully between husband and wife, and like a heavenly sphere that bestows its sacred light upon the earth, it brings health to all who will accept its virtue.

Scudamour and Amoret's relationship, on the other hand, lacks a romantic love that transcends the immediate pleasures of the bedroom. Scudamour is madly *in love* with Amoret's beauty; she is, as he states, his "glorious spoil of beauty" (4.10.58.3). To Scudamour's credit, though, he does admire more than just Amoret's physical body. He knows that she has a faithful and gentle character. She is, as he asserts, the most "bounteous creature" ever to have faired "on

foot, vpon the face of liuing land" (3.11.10.3-4), and she shines not only "with beauties light" but with "heauenly vertues grace" (4.10.52.9). In short, Scudamour has married one of the finest ladies in Faerie Land, a woman who was raised successfully by Venus and Psyche "to be th'ensample of true loue alone, / And Lodestarre of all chaste affection" (3.6.52.4-5). However, despite Amoret's chastity, and despite the fact that Scudamour respects Amoret for her chastity, Scudamour's love for Amoret is not marked by virtuous service.

Unlike Britomart and Artegall's mutual love, Scudamour's love for Amoret does not encourage his friends or neighbors to act virtuously—to live lives free of discord. Instead, self-centered pleasure mars the primary example we have of Scudamour's love for Amoret. Whereas Scudamour and Amoret's wedding should have been a model of the pleasures and joys of chaste love, their wedding became an example of lust. Not only did Scudamour become intoxicated with his friends, but his intoxication led him to accept Busirane and his horde into his wedding celebration. Virtue is sabotaged by vice, and the chaste love that Scudamour should have modeled becomes in a sense locked away with Amoret in Busirane's sinister dungeons of gold. In the end, the initial sensual attraction that Scudamour did gain from Amoret is lost once he fails to yoke his passion with chastity.

Discovering Grace

It has been noted how Britomart offers grace to Scudamour when she agrees to save Amoret from Busirane. Upon finding Scudamour in the last stages of despair because of his inability to rescue his beloved, Britomart comforts Scudamour and gives him hope; Scudamour will find his joy again, and Amoret will be restored. Grace will reconcile Scudamour and Amoret and bind up their broken spirits. But while Britomart is an agent of grace to save Amoret,

Scudamour will experience chastity as a form of divine grace—a grace that has the power to defeat the cruelest of lusts and restore vibrant love to withered marriages.

After listening to Scudamour pray and grieve over the loss of Amoret, Britomart urges him to take heart, because even though it may appear that God has forgotten him, he mustn't let despair convince him that God is indifferent to his sufferings. By God's help, she will fight for Scudamour; she will bring God's grace to him:

> Ah gentle knight, whose deepe conceiued griefe,
> Well seemes t'exceede the powre of patience,
> Yet if that heuenly grace some good reliefe
> You send, submit you to high prouidence,
> And euer in your noble hart prepense,
> That all the sorrow in the world is lesse,
> Then vertues might. (3.11.14.1-7)

Under divine law, Scudamour doesn't deserve to have Amoret back. He did not break faith with Amoret like Redcrosse did with Una, but still, Scudamour has willingly allowed lust and drunkenness to sever his relationship with Amoret. And yet, as with Redcrosse and even Guyon, divine grace—personal, concerned compassion—does not depend on Scudamour's character or performance. Despite Scudamour's selfishness toward Amoret and despite his despair, God cares about Scudamour and wants to see him and Amoret happily in love again. As outlandish as it might sound that God cares about Scudamour and Amoret's romantic life, Britomart's words to Scudamour assert that God is interested in not just restoring Scudamour's eternal life, but his earthly life as well. It may not seem that virtue is stronger than sorrow and sin, but Britomart declares that goodness will outwit evil, and that God's grace will be the means of doing so.

Through divine grace, Amoret will not only be saved from Busirane but will be reconciled to Scudamour; divine grace, through the virtuous arm of chastity, makes dead things live and ugly relationships into beautiful melodies.

Britomart, true to her word, saves Amoret from Busirane. After cutting through the fiery gates of Busirane's house, Britomart enters, and after searching the house for three days, finds Amoret tied to a pillar while Busirane pierces her heart with enchantments. Immediately, Britomart seizes the sorcerer and, after a short but desperate fight, forces him to break all the dark spells that bind Amoret to his will. Lauren Silberman explains:

> Britomart thwarts Busirane's design when she discovers his authorship of the Masque and reveals the enchanter "Figuring straunge characters of his art" (III.xii.31). Although the pageant seems intended for Britomart in that she is the only spectator, Britomart is also clearly destined to be Busirane's most violent critic. For Britomart, the Masque of Cupid is not just a spectacle but the scene of battle in her quest to liberate Amoret from Amor and define her own chastity. (221)

With Amoret unbound, Britomart then chains Busirane to his own pillar and leaves him to die by his own devices. Busirane's Masque has been destroyed, and all the lewd and cruel art erected to honor the wicked Cupid has vanished. Virtue has conquered vice through grace, and grace has found its power through chastity; Britomart extends grace to Scudamour, and because of that grace—unmerited favor—which is rooted in Britomart's chaste heart, false love is defeated.

Scudamour and Amoret

If we consider the first (1590) ending of Scudamour's adventure, there is good evidence that once Britomart returns Amoret to Scudamour, the couple live joyfully together for the rest of their days. It would seem that because of Britomart's single act of grace, Scudamour is

transformed from an over-bold, selfish lover to a husband who is well on his way to becoming his wife's friend—a friendship whose mutual love inevitably blesses others. Spenser describes Scudamour and Amoret's reunion in terms of "a faire" Roman "Hermaphrodite" (Spenser 3.12.46.2). Laurel L. Hendrix, echoing C. S. Lewis, points out that the image of Scudamour and Amoret locked in a hermaphroditic embrace is a picture "of matrimony uncorrupted by the fall . . . . Amoret and Scudamour stand as a clear antitype to . . . [the] armed Cupid, figuring [instead] prelapsarian marriage which God had ordained in Eden (Genesis 2.24), a coupling which makes two into one" (44). In the image of the hermaphrodite, "'the union of Cupid's man' and 'Venus' mayd,'" Hendrix states, "spiritual and sensual love" find a fitting "synthesis," a "paradise" where love is reciprocal (45):

> Lightly he clipt her twixt his armes twaine,
> And streightly did embrace her body bright,
> Her body, late the prison of sad paine,
> Now the sweet lodge of loue and deare delight:
> But she faire Lady ouercommen quight
> Of huge affection, did in pleasure melt
> And in sweete rauishment pourd out her spright. (3.12.45.1-7)

Bound together in chaste love, Scudamour and Amoret do not speak; they instead experience heavenly bliss: "No word they spake, nor earthly thing they felt / But like two senceles stocks in long embracement dwelt" (3.12.45.8-9). To further confirm the sacred nature of the couple's union, Spenser sets their reunion on the eve of the Sabbath: "Now cease your worke, and at your pleasure play / Now cease your worke; to morrow is an holy day" (3.12.47.8-9). Though we are never privy to what happens after Scudamour and Amoret's embrace, it seems safe to assume

that Scudamour will no longer try to "master" Amoret or see his relationship with her as something that only benefits him. Divine grace has reconciled Scudamour to Amoret, and chastity will keep Scudamour and Amoret friends as well as lovers as they pursue sacred beauty and service together.

The second ending (1596) of Scudamour's quest, unfortunately, does not end pleasantly. Instead of waiting for Britomart to return with Amoret, Scudamour despairs and believes that Britomart must have perished in Busirane's flames. Overwrought with fear, Scudamour flees to find aid but is waylaid by Duessa and her friend Ate, the mother of all discord. Duessa and Ate falsely accuse Britomart of taking advantage of Amoret, which only further ignites Scudamour's anger and despair. While searching for Amoret and Britomart, Scudamour tries to rest at the House of Care, a noisy smithy run by a bitter and gnarled man; the house is emblematic of Scudamour's inner self, for Scudamour's face shows "signes of anguish" and "gealous dread" (4.5.45.9). Though Scudamour is eventually reconciled to Britomart and learns that Duessa and Ate only slandered Britomart, Scudamour is not reconciled to Amoret. Having wandered from Britomart, Amoret is captured by the churlish man Lust and has to be rescued a second time; this time, however, it is not Britomart who saves Amoret but Prince Arthur and his squire.

In Spenser's second ending, Scudamour does not initially accept the divine grace that is offered to him through Britomart, and because he ultimately rejects her grace out of fear, he is made vulnerable to Duessa and Ate, who convince him that Britomart (or chastity) is just another vile person like Busirane. Now seeing chastity as the villain, Scudamour is doubly hindered from enjoying a happy marriage with Amoret: his only lifeboat has been cast aside through guile, and his journey to discovering true love will be painfully slow. On an allegorical level, when Scudamour is eventually reconciled to Britomart, one could say that Scudamour has perhaps

finally accepted divine grace and chastity as his means to recovering Amoret. Nevertheless, Scudamour must still endure the consequences of his decision to reject grace and chastity. And yet, despite Scudamour's repeated blunders, grace is never far from him, as Arthur's heroic role alludes to:

> Whom [the ladies] when the Prince beheld, he gan to rew
> The euill case in which those Ladies [Amoret, and Æmylia] lay;
> But most was moued at the piteous vew
> Of Amoret, so neare vnto decay,
> That her great daunger did him much dismay.
> Eftsoones that pretious liquour forth he drew,
> Which he in store about him kept alway,
> And with few drops thereof did softly dew
> Her wounds, that vnto strength restor'd her soone anew. (4.8.20.1-9)

Miraculously, grace sustains Scudamour's still incomplete quest for Amoret. First in the person of Britomart, grace confronts Scudamour's despair, captures Busirane, and frees Amoret; like a lion, or a bolt of lightning, grace quickly enters the battle, and boldly cuts its way through to freedom. However, even when grace in all its strength and beauty is rejected, it does not forsake Scudamour or Amoret, for grace is long suffering and appears again in the dark forests of Faerie Land so that Scudamour will learn that chastity is trustworthy and so that Amoret will find her husband and once again be preserved from false love's greedy hands.

Scudamour rejects grace because he is afraid that it is not strong enough to save both Amoret and himself; in the face of Busirane, grace seems nearly defenseless, and so Scudamour, relying on his fears, uses his free will to cast aside the one virtue that could bring him peace.

Nevertheless, Spenser demonstrates through Scudamour's failed quest that grace remains available even if one initially rejects it. While grace will not compel a person to accept its wisdom, this does not mean that grace will not continue to pursue the wayward.

Chapter 5

SPENSER'S METHOD OF GRACE: THE CONCLUSION

From his *Letter to Raleigh*, we know that Spenser intended the Faerie Queene and her court of knights to represent Elizabeth and her councilors: "In that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceiue the most excellent and glorious person of our soueraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land" (716). Furthermore, we know that the purpose of Spenser's poem, as he tells Raleigh, is "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" through "Allegoricall deuises" as opposed to virtue expressed "in way of precepts" or sermons (716). Thus, when we examine the characters and quests of Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour, we naturally should ask: what lesson is Spenser presenting to Elizabeth and her court, and his broader audience? What is Spenser trying to teach his audience about grace, the virtue that is necessary for each knight's quest? In retrospect, Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour are all knights who are self-reliant. They all believe that they are equal to any physical challenge, and they all—at least initially—believe that they are virtuous and quite capable of withstanding any vice. Yet these faerie knights are not as strong as they think they are, and as their adventures unravel, Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour run up against their own spiritual inadequacies and find themselves in need of grace, divine compassion that is often mediated through human agents. As we have observed, however, whereas grace can bring about a glorious victory in the case of Redcrosse, grace will not force a person to accept its blessings. Grace is a free gift; it is persistent as Scudamour's quest demonstrates, but it never encroaches on the freedom of another; grace, as with love, knows that its beauty and power rests in a person's earnest and free desire to live virtuously.

In each knight's quest, grace is paired with its counterfeit. Despaire offers Redcrosse a false grace. He argues that since Redcrosse's sins are so great, Redcrosse should commit suicide; death to the sinner is a gift, an act of grace that enables the sinner to escape further suffering and shame. In addition, Despaire compares helping a sinner commit suicide to helping a man cross a great flood:

> Who trauiles by the wearie wandring way,
>
> To come vnto his wished home in haste,
>
> And meetes a flood, that doth his passage stay,
>
> Is not great grace to helpe him ouer past. (1.9.39.1-4)

In contrast to Despaire, Una offers Redcrosse saving grace, divine grace that cancels sin and enables a person to be holy—strong and full of love, filled with passion to save life and destroy evil.

Mammon, too, offers Guyon false grace; at the entrance to his gold-filled cave, Mammon contends that his treasure-horde will satisfy Guyon's desire for fame, that his moneys will save Guyon from obscurity and all the anxieties that follow poverty; Mammon promises that his grace will bring Guyon temporal peace:

> Thou that does liue in later times, must wage
>
> Thy workes for wealth, and life for gold engage.
>
> If then thee list my offred grace to vse,
>
> Take what thou please of all this surplusage. (2.7.18.4-7)

Guyon, though, argues that the true grace that brings temporal peace is from God who has given us the earth to steward. Creation and all its resources are God's gift to mankind, and men and

women should “with glad thankes, and vnreproued truth” joyfully receive these “guifts of soueraine bounty” (2.7.16.3-4).

Scudamour does not have an outside enemy that tries to convince him to accept false grace, but he does have an internal enemy, a battle within his conscience that tries to persuade him that grace is a lie; because of Amoret’s long captivity, Scudamour doubts that God has grace for righteous people like Amoret, or even good people like himself who have at least tried to live uprightly: “If good find grace, and righteousnes reward / Why then is Amoret in caytiue band” (3.11.10.1-2). To make matters worse, because Scudamour doubts divine grace, he immediately doubts divine justice. If God is good, why should Busirane live, and how can “heauenly iustice . . . withstand / The wrongfull outrage of vnrighteous men” (3.11.10.5-6)? Britomart, however, implores Scudamour not to give way to unbelief. The world is fallen and life is often wretched, yet still the best course of action is to patiently wait for “heuenly grace” since “vertues might” will defeat evil in the end (3.11.14.3,7).

In the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, divine grace paired with its counterfeits illustrates for Spenser’s audience how grace is a comprehensive solution for one’s spiritual and physical self. Redcrosse’s victory over the dragon, Guyon’s destruction of the Bower, and Scudamour and Amoret’s deferred reconciliation on a broad level demonstrate the efficacy, freedom, and persistence inherent in divine grace, but on a particular level the false images of grace reveal to us how the process of becoming holy, temperate, and chaste is always marked by particular obstacles that authentic grace provides an escape from. If a person is to become holy, he or she will have to come face to face with his or her sin and the despair that follows. If a person is to become temperate, he or she will have to come to terms with wealth and fame; the person will have to decide whether humility and forgiveness are more important than the

materialistic life that Mammon offers. And if a man or woman desires to be chaste, he or she will soon find that lust and broken relationships often make divine assistance in these matters seem weak or imaginary.

The good news in Spenser's romance, though, is that divine grace is strong enough to defeat each false image of grace that puts itself in the way of attaining a virtuous life. Divine grace offers salvation from spiritual death and freedom from broken relationships and twisted passions; and yet as the adventures of Redcrosse, Guyon, and Scudamour demonstrate, access to the blessings of grace is only available to those who admit their shortcomings and willingly accept grace's wisdom. One's spiritual, physical, and sexual needs are met in the application of holiness, temperance, and chastity, and through patience, free will and divine grace work together to fashion virtuous men and women.

Works Cited

Bergvall, Ake. "The Theology of the Sign: St. Augustine and Spenser's Legend of Holiness." *Studies in English Literature*, *1500-1900*, vol. 33, no. 1, 1993, pp. 21-42.

Broaddus, James W. *Spenser's Allegory of Love*. Associated UP, 1995.

Chang, Heran. "Queen Elizabeth's Court and Spenser's Fiction." *Shakespeare Review*, vol. 19, 1991, pp. 49–61.

Cullen, Patrick. *Infernal Triad: The Flesh, the World, and the Devil in Spenser and Milton*. Princeton UP, 1974.

Doran, Susan. "Virginity, Divinity, and Power: The Portraits of Elizabeth I." *The Myth of Elizabeth*, edited by Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman, Palgrave, 2003, pp. 171-200.

Eisendrath, Rachel. "Art and Objectivity in the House of Busirane." *Spenser Studies*, vol. 27, 2012, pp. 133-161.

Groves, Beatrice. "The Redcrosse Knight and 'The George.'" *Spenser Studies: A Renaissance Poetry Annual*, vol. 25, 2010, pp. 371-376.

Hackett, Helen. *Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*. Palgrave, 1995.

Hadfield, Andrew. *Edmund Spenser: A Life*. Oxford UP, 2013.

Hamilton, A. C. *Spenser: The Faerie Queene*. Routledge, 2013.

Hendrix, Laurel L. "*Pulchritudo vincit*?: Emblematic Reversals in Spenser's House of Busirane." *Spenser Studies*, vol. 16, 2002, pp. 23-55.

Hieatt, A. Kent. "Scudamour's Practice of Maistrye upon Amoret." *PMLA*, vol. 77, no. 4, 1962, pp. 509-510.

Hubbard, Gillian. "'Send your angel': Augustinian Nests and Guyon's Faint." *Spenser Studies*, vol. 27, 2012, pp. 107-133.

Levin, Richard A. "The Legende of the Redcrosse Knight and Una, or of the Love of a Good Woman." *Studies in English Literature*, *1500-1900*, vol. 31, no. 1, 1991, pp. 1-24.

MacCaffrey, Isabel G. *Spenser's Allegory: The Anatomy of Imagination*. Princeton UP, 1976.

MacLachlan, Hugh. "The Death of Guyon and the Elizabethan Book of Homilies." *Spenser Studies*, vol. 4, 1983, pp. 93-114.

Maley, Willy. "Spenser's Life*." The Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser*, edited by Richard A. McCabe, Oxford UP., 2010, pp. 13-30.

May, Steven. *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets*. Pegasus Press, 1999.

Milton, John. *Paradise Regained*. Everyman's Library, 2003.

Monta, Susannah. *Martyrdom and Literature in Early Modern England*. Cambridge UP, 2009.

Mulcaster, Richard. "The Passage of Our Most Dread Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth." *Elizabeth I and Her Age*, edited by Donald Stump and Susan Felch, Norton, 2009, pp. 91-108.

Nohrnberg, James. *The Analogy of* The Faerie Queene. Princeton UP, 1976.

Panja, Shormishtha. *Sidney, Spenser and the Royal Reader*. Cambridge Scholars, 2017.

Reid, Robert Lanier. "Sansloy's Double Meaning and the Mystic Design of Spenser's Legend of Holiness." *Spenser Studies*, vol. 29, 2014, pp. 63-74.

Rovang, Paul R. "A Spenserian in Space: *The Faerie Queene* in C.S. Lewis' *Perelandra*." *Mythlore*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2014, pp. 37-52.

Silberman, Lauren. "The Hermaphrodite and the Metamorphosis of Spenserian Allegory." *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1987, pp. 207-223.

Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Queene*, edited by A.C. Hamilton. Routledge, 2013.

---. *Mother Hubberds Tale*, *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*, edited by Anne Lake Prescott and Andrew Hadfield, Norton, 2014, pp. 551-82.

---. *Ruines of Time*. *Luminarium*, www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/ruines.html.

Strong, Roy. *The Cult of Elizabeth*. Thames and Hudson, 1977.

Stump, Donald, and Susan Felch. "A Changing Court and Aging Queen (1592-1597)." *Elizabeth I and Her Age*, edited by Donald Stump and Susan Felch, Norton, 2009, pp. 435-338.

Suttie, Paul. "Moral Ambivalence in the Legend of Temperance." *Spenser Studies*, vol. 19, 2004, pp. 125-133.

The Geneva Bible: *A facsimile of the 1560 edition*. Wisconsin UP, 1969.

Tonkin, Humphrey. *Spenser's Courteous Pastoral*. Clarendon Press, 1972.

Yearling, Rebecca, "Florimell's Girdle: Reconfiguring Chastity in *The Faerie Queene*." *Spenser Studies*, vol. 20, 2005, pp. 137-144.