

**Stories from the  
Faerie Queene**



"She nigher drew, and saw that joyous end:  
Then God, she prayed, and thank't her faithfull knight  
That had atchiev'de so great a conquest by his might."

**Stories from the  
Faerie Queene**

by

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# The Red Cross Knight

*“Right faithful true he was in deed and word”*



## *The Court of the Queen*

ONCE upon a time, in the days when there were still such things as giants and dragons, there lived a great Queen. She reigned over a rich and beautiful country, and because she was good and noble every one loved her, and tried also to be good. Her court was the most splendid one in the world, for all her knights were brave and gallant, and each one thought only of what heroic things he could do, and how best he could serve his royal lady.

The name of the Queen was Gloriana, and each of her twelve chief knights was known as the Champion of some virtue. Thus Sir Guyon was the representative of *Temperance*, Sir Artegall of *Justice*, Sir Calidore of *Courtesy*, and others took up the cause of *Friendship*, *Constancy*, and so on.

Every year the Queen held a great feast, which

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

lasted twelve days. Once, on the first day of the feast, a stranger in poor clothes came to the court, and, falling before the Queen, begged a favour of her. It was always the custom at these feasts that the Queen should refuse nothing that was asked, so she bade the stranger say what it was he wished. Then he besought that, if any cause arose which called for knightly aid, the adventure might be entrusted to him.

When the Queen had given her promise he stood quietly on one side, and did not try to mix with the other guests who were feasting at the splendid tables. Although he was so brave, he was very gentle and modest, and he had never yet proved his valour in fight, therefore he did not think himself worthy of a place among the knights who had already won for themselves honour and renown.

Soon after this there rode into the city a fair lady on a white ass. Behind her came her servant, a dwarf, leading a warlike horse that bore the armour of a knight. The face of the lady was lovely, but it was very sorrowful.



## *THE COURT OF THE QUEEN*

Making her way to the palace, she fell before Queen Gloriana, and implored her help. She said that her name was Una; she was the daughter of a king and queen who formerly ruled over a mighty country; but, many years ago, a huge dragon came and wasted all the land, and shut the king and queen up in a brazen castle, from which they might never come out. The Lady Una therefore besought Queen Gloriana to grant her one of her knights to fight and kill this terrible dragon.

Then the stranger sprang forward, and reminded the Queen of the promise she had given. At first she was unwilling to consent, for the Knight was young, and, moreover, he had no armour of his own to fight with.

Then said the Lady Una to him, "Will you wear the armour that I bring you, for unless you do you will never succeed in the enterprise, nor kill the horrible monster of Evil? The armour is not new, it is scratched and dented with many a hard-fought battle, but if you wear it rightly no armour that ever was made will serve you so well."

Then the stranger bade them bring the armour and put it on him, and Una said, "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the SPIRIT, which is the word of GOD."

And when the stranger had put off his own rough

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

clothes and was clad in this armour, straightway he seemed the goodliest man in all that company, and the Lady Una was well pleased with her champion; and, because of the red cross which he wore on his breastplate and on his silver shield, henceforth he was known always as “the Red Cross Knight.” But his real name was *Holiness*, and the name of the lady for whom he was to do battle was *Truth*.

So these two rode forth into the world together, while a little way behind followed their faithful attendant, *Prudence*. And now you shall hear some of the adventures that befell the Red Cross Knight and his two companions.

### *The Wood of Error*

The first adventure happened in this way. Scarcely had the Red Cross Knight and the Lady Una started on their journey when the sky suddenly became overcast, and a great storm of rain beat down upon the earth. Looking about for shelter, they saw, not far away, a shady grove, which seemed just what they wanted. The trees here had great spreading branches, which grew so thickly overhead that no light could pierce the covering of leaves. Through this wood, wide paths and alleys, well trodden, led in all directions. It seemed a truly pleasant place, and a safe shelter against the tempest, so they entered in at once.

At first, as they roamed along the winding paths they found nothing but pleasure. Deeper and deeper into the heart of the wood they went, hearing with joy

## THE WOOD OF ERROR

the sweet singing of the birds, and filled with wonder to see so many different kinds of beautiful trees clustered in one spot. But by-and-by, when the storm was over and they wished to go forward on their journey, they found, to their sorrow, that they had lost their way. It was impossible to remember by which path they had come; every way now seemed strange and unknown. Here and there they wandered, backwards and forwards; there were so many turnings to be seen, so many paths, they knew not which to take to lead them out of the wood.

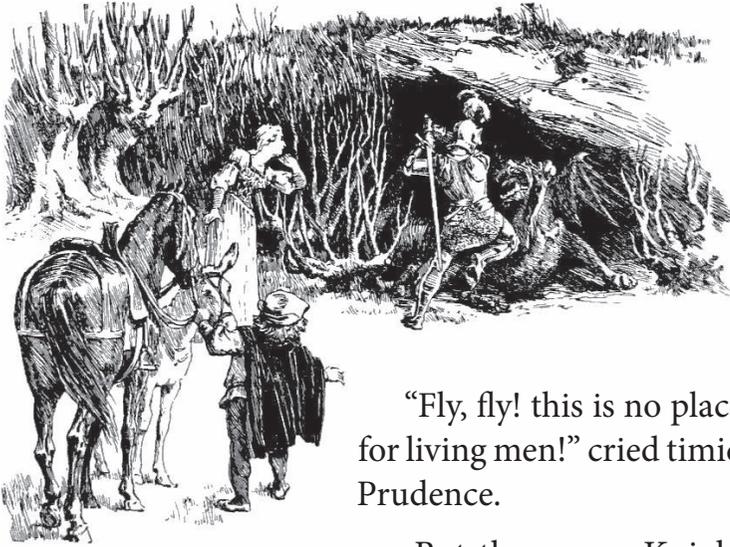
In this perplexity, at last they determined to go straight forward until they found some end, either in or out of the wood. Choosing for this purpose one of the broadest and most trodden paths, they came presently, in the thickest part of the wood, to a hollow cave. Then the Red Cross Knight dismounted from his steed, and gave his spear to the dwarf to hold.

“Take heed,” said the Lady Una, “lest you too rashly provoke mischief. This is a wild and unknown place, and peril is often without show. Hold back, therefore, till you know further if there is any danger hidden there.”

“Ah, lady,” said the Knight, “it were shame to go backward for fear of a hidden danger. Virtue herself gives light to lead through any darkness.”

“Yes,” said Una; “but I know better than you the peril of this place, though now it is too late to bid you go back like a coward. Yet wisdom warns you to stay your steps, before you are forced to retreat. This is the Wandering Wood, and that is the den of Error, a horrible monster, hated of all. Therefore, I advise you to be cautious.”

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT



“Fly, fly! this is no place for living men!” cried timid Prudence.

But the young Knight was full of eagerness and fiery courage, and nothing could stop him. Forth to the darksome hole he went, and looked in. His glittering armour made a little light, by which he could plainly see the ugly monster. Such a great, horrible thing it was, something like a snake, with a long tail twisted in knots, with stings all over it. And near this wicked big creature, whose other name was *Falsehood*, there were a thousand little ones, all varying in shape, but every one bad and ugly; for you may be quite sure that wherever one of this horrible race is found, there will always be many others of the same family lurking near.

When the light shone into the cave all the little creatures fled to hide themselves, and the big parent Falsehood rushed out of her den in terror. But when she saw the shining armour of the Knight she tried to turn back, for she hated light as her deadliest foe, and she was always accustomed to live in darkness, where

## THE WOOD OF ERROR

she could neither see plainly nor be seen.

When the Knight saw that she was trying to escape, he sprang after her as fierce as a lion, and then the great fight began. Though he strove valiantly, yet he was in sore peril, for suddenly the cunning creature flung her huge tail round and round him, so that he could stir neither hand nor foot.

Then the Lady Una cried out, to encourage him, "Now, now, Sir Knight, show what you are! Add faith unto your force, and be not faint! Kill her, or else she will surely kill you."

With that, fresh strength and courage came to the Knight. Gathering all his force, he got one hand free, and gripped the creature by the throat with so much pain that she was soon compelled to loosen her wicked hold. Then, seeing that she could not hope to conquer in this way, she suddenly tried to stifle the Knight by flinging over him a flood of poison. This made the Knight retreat a moment; then she called to her aid all the horrid little creeping and crawling monsters that he had seen before, and many others of the same kind, or worse. These came swarming and buzzing round the Knight like a cloud of teasing gnats, and tormented and confused him with their feeble stings. Enraged at this fresh attack, he made up his mind to end the matter one way or another, and, rushing at his foe, he killed her with one stroke of his sword.

Then Lady Una, who, from a distance, had watched all that passed, came near in haste to greet his victory.

"Fair Knight," she said, "born under happy star! You

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

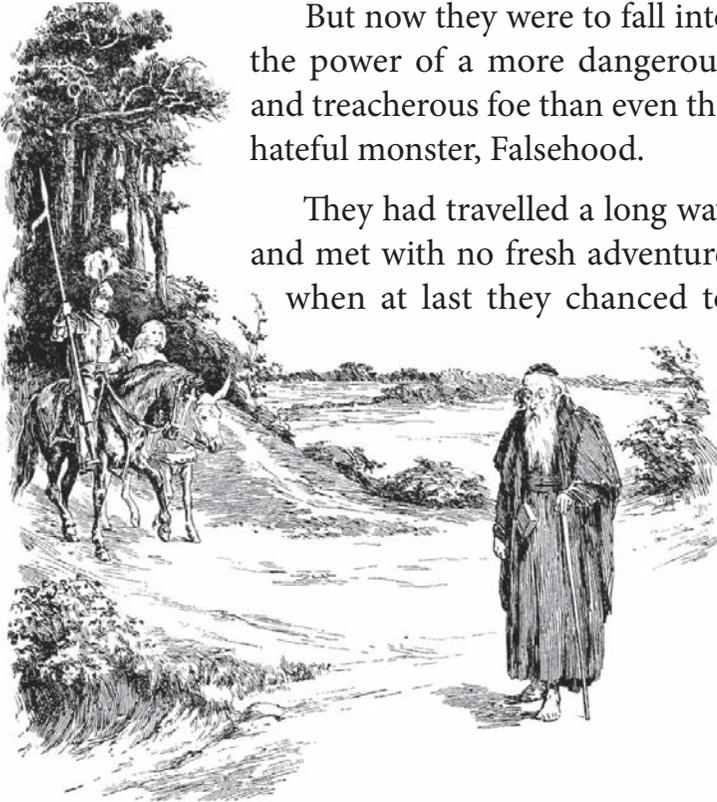
are well worthy of that armour in which this day you have won great glory, and proved your strength against a strong enemy. This is your first battle. I pray that you will win many others in like manner.”

### *The Knight Deceived by the Magician*

After his victory over Falsehood, the Red Cross Knight again mounted his steed, and he and the Lady Una went on their way. Keeping carefully to one path, and turning neither to the right hand nor the left, at last they found themselves safely out of the Wood of Error.

But now they were to fall into the power of a more dangerous and treacherous foe than even the hateful monster, Falsehood.

They had travelled a long way, and met with no fresh adventure, when at last they chanced to



*THE KNIGHT DECEIVED BY THE MAGICIAN*

meet in the road an old man. He looked very wise and good. He was dressed in a long black gown, like a hermit, and had bare feet and a grey beard; he had a book hanging from his belt, as was the custom with scholars in those days. He seemed very quiet and sad, and kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and all the time, as he went along, he seemed to be saying prayers, and lamenting over his own wickedness.

When he saw the travellers he made a very humble salute to them. The Red Cross Knight returned the greeting with all courtesy, and asked him if he knew of any strange adventures that were then taking place.

“Ah, my dear son!” said the hermit, “how should a simple old man, who lives in a lonely cell, and does nothing all day but sorrow for his own faults—how should such a man know any tidings of war or worldly trouble? It is not fitting for me to meddle with such matters. But, if indeed you desire to hear about danger and evil near at hand, I can tell you about a strange man who wastes all the surrounding country.”

“That,” said the Knight, “is what I chiefly ask about, and I will reward you well if you will guide me to the place where he dwells. For it is a disgrace to knighthood that such a creature should be allowed to live so long.”

“His dwelling is far away from here, in the midst of a barren wilderness,” answered the old man. “No living person may ever pass it without great danger and difficulty.”

“Now,” said the Lady Una, “night is drawing near, and I know well that you are wearied with your former

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

fight. Therefore, take rest, and with the new day begin new work.”

“You have been well advised, Sir Knight,” said the old man. “Day is now spent; therefore take up your abode with me for this night.”

The travellers were well content to do this, so they went with the apparently good old man to his home.

It was a little lowly hermitage, down in a dale by the side of a forest, far from the beaten track of travellers. A small chapel was built near, and close by a crystal stream gently welled forth from a never-failing fountain.

Arrived at the house, they neither expected nor found any entertainment; but rest was what they chiefly needed, and they were well satisfied, for the noblest mind is always the best contented. The old man had a good store of pleasing words, and knew well how to fit his talk to suit his visitors. The evening passed pleasantly, and then the hermit conducted his guests to the lodgings where they were to spend the night.

But when they were safely asleep a horrid change came over the old man, for in reality he was not good at all, although he pretended to be so. His heart was full of hatred, malice, and deceit. He called himself Archimago, which means a “Great Magician,” but his real name was *Hypocrisy*. He knew that as long as Holiness and Truth kept together, no great harm could come to either of them; so he determined to do everything in his power to separate them. For this purpose he got out all his books of magic, and set to work to devise cunning schemes and spells. He was so clever and wily that he could

*THE KNIGHT DECEIVED BY THE MAGICIAN*

deceive people much better and wiser than himself. He also had at his bidding many bad little spirits, who ran about and did his messages; these he used to help his friends and frighten his enemies, and he had the power of making them take any shape he wished.

Choosing out two of the worst of these, he sent one on a message to King Morpheus, who rules over the Land of Sleep. He bade him bring back with him a bad, false dream, which Archimago then carried to the sleeping Knight. So cunningly did he contrive the matter, that when the Knight awoke the next morning he never knew that it had only been a dream, but believed that all the things he had seen in his sleep had really happened.

In the meanwhile, Archimago dressed up the other bad spirit to look like Una, so that at a little distance it was impossible to tell any difference in the two figures. He knew that the only way to part Holiness and Truth was to make Holiness believe by some means that Truth was not as good as she appeared to be. He knew also that the Red Cross Knight would believe nothing against the Lady Una except what he saw with his own eyes. Therefore he laid his plans with the greatest care and guile.

Now we shall see how he succeeded in his wicked endeavour.

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

### *The Knight Forsakes Una*

The next morning at daybreak the Knight awoke, sad and unrested after the unpleasant dreams that had come to him in the night. He did not know he had been asleep; he thought the things that troubled him had really happened.

It was scarcely dawn when Archimago rushed up to him in a state of pretended sorrow and indignation.

“The Lady Una has left you,” said this wicked man. “She is not good as she pretends to be. She cares nothing at all for you, nor for the noble work on which you are bound, and she does not mean to go any farther with you on your toilsome journey.”

The Red Cross Knight started up in anger. This was like his dream, and he knew not what was true nor what was false.

“Come,” said Archimago, “see for yourself.” He



## THE KNIGHT FORSAKES UNA

pointed to a figure in the distance whom the Knight took to be Una. Then, indeed, he was forced to believe what the wicked magician told him. He now took for granted that Una had been deceiving him all along, and had seized this moment to escape. He forgot all her real sweetness and goodness and beauty; he only thought how false and unkind she was. He was filled with anger, and he never paused a moment to reflect if there could be any possibility of mistake. Calling his servant, he bade him bring his horse at once, and then these two immediately set forth again on their journey.



Here the Red Cross Knight was wrong, and we shall see presently into what perils and misfortunes he fell because of his hasty want of faith. If he had had a little patience he would soon have discovered that the figure he saw was only a dressed-up imitation. The real Lady Una all this time was sleeping quietly in her own bower.

When she awoke and found that her two companions had fled in the night and left her alone behind, she was filled with grief and dismay. She could not understand why they should do such a thing. Mounting her white ass, she rode after them with all the speed she could, but the Knight had urged on his steed so fast it was almost useless to try to follow. Yet she never stayed to rest her weary limbs, but went on seeking them over hill and dale, and through wood and plain, sorely grieved in her tender heart that the one she loved best should leave

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

her with such ungentle discourtesy.

When the wicked Archimago saw that his cunning schemes had succeeded so well he was greatly pleased, and set to work to devise fresh mischief. It was Una whom he chiefly hated, and he took great pleasure in her many troubles, for hypocrisy always hates real goodness. He had the power of turning himself into any shape he chose—sometimes he would be a fowl, sometimes a fish, now like a fox, now like a dragon. On the present occasion, to suit his evil purpose, it seemed best to him to put on the appearance of the good knight whom he had so cruelly beguiled.

Therefore, Hypocrisy dressed himself up in imitation armour with a silver shield and everything exactly like the Red Cross Knight. When he sat upon his fiery charger he looked such a splendid warrior you would have thought it was St. George himself.

### ***Holiness Fights Faithless, and Makes Friends with False Religion***

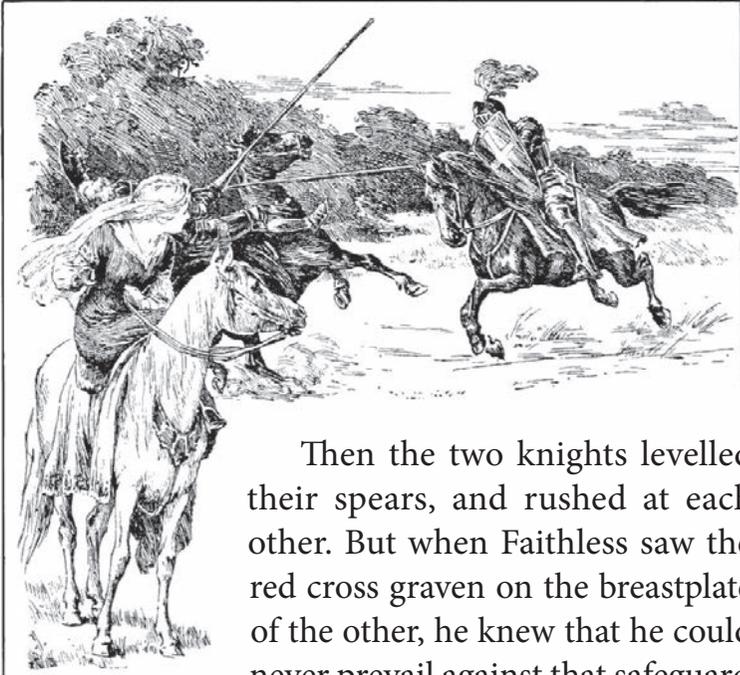
The true St. George, meanwhile, had wandered far away. Now that he had left the Lady Una, he had nothing but his own will to guide him, and he no longer followed any fixed purpose.

Presently he saw coming to meet him another warrior, fully armed. He was a great, rough fellow, who cared nothing for God or man; across his shield, in gay letters, was written “Sans Foy,” which means *Faithless*.

He had with him a companion, a handsome lady,

## *HOLINESS FIGHTS FAITHLESS*

dressed all in scarlet, trimmed with gold and rich pearls. She rode a beautiful palfrey, with gay trappings, and little gold bells tinkled on her bridle. The two came along laughing and talking, but when the lady saw the Red Cross Knight, she left off her mirth at once, and bade her companion attack him.



Then the two knights levelled their spears, and rushed at each other. But when Faithless saw the red cross graven on the breastplate of the other, he knew that he could never prevail against that safeguard. However, he fought with great fury, and the Red Cross Knight had a hard battle before he overcame him. At last he managed to kill him, and he told his servant to carry away the shield of Faithless in token of victory.

When the lady saw her champion fall, she fled in terror; but the Red Cross Knight hurried after her, and bade her stay, telling her that she had nothing now to fear. His brave and gentle heart was full of pity to see her in so great distress, and he asked her to tell him who

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

she was, and who was the man that had been with her.

Melting into tears, she then told him the following sad story:—She said that she was the daughter of an emperor, and had been engaged to marry a wise and good prince. Before the wedding-day, however, the prince fell into the hands of his foes, and was cruelly slain. She went out to look for his dead body, and in the course of her wandering met the Saracen knight; who took her captive. “Sans Foy” was one of three bad brothers. The names of the others were “Sans Loy,” which means *Lawless*, and “Sans Joy,” which means *Joyless*. She further said that her own name was “Fidessa,” or *True Religion*, and she besought the Knight to have compassion on her, because she was so friendless and unhappy.

“Fair lady,” said the Knight, “a heart of flint would grieve to hear of your sorrows. But henceforth rest safely assured that you have found a new friend to help you, and lost an old foe to hurt you. A new friend is better than an old foe.”

Then the seemingly simple maiden pretended to look comforted, and the two rode on happily together.

But what the lady had told about herself was quite untrue. Her name was not “Fidessa” at all, but “Duessa,” which means *False Religion*. If Una had still been with the Knight, he would never have been led astray; but when he parted from her he had nothing but his own feelings to guide him. He still meant to do right, but he was deceived by his false companion, who brought him into much trouble and danger.

*Una and the Lion*

All this while the Lady Una, lonely and forsaken, was roaming in search of her lost Knight. How sad was her fate! She, a King's daughter, so beautiful, so faithful, so true, who had done no wrong either in word or deed, was left sorrowful and deserted because of the cunning wiles of a wicked enchanter. Fearing nothing, she sought the Red Cross Knight through woods and lonely wilderness, but no tidings of him ever came to her.

One day, being weary, she alighted from her steed, and lay down on the grass to rest. It was in the midst of a thicket, far from the sight of any traveller. She lifted her veil, and put aside the black cloak which always covered her dress.

“Her angel's face,  
As the great eye of Heaven shined bright,  
And made a sunshine in the shady place.”

Suddenly, out of the wood there rushed a fierce lion, who, seeing Una, sprang at her to devour her; but, when he came nearer, he was amazed at the sight of her loveliness, and all his rage turned to pity. Instead of tearing her to pieces, he kissed her weary feet and licked her lily hand as if he knew how innocent and wronged she was.<sup>1</sup>

When Una saw the gentleness of this kingly creature,

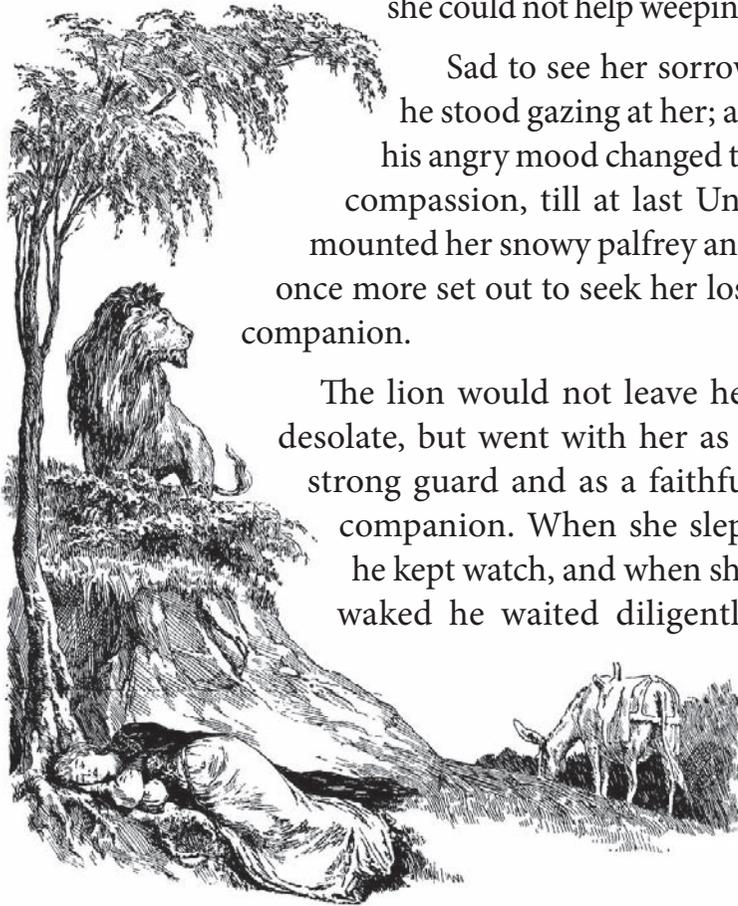
<sup>1</sup>The figure of the lion may be taken as the emblem of *Honor*, which always pays respect to *Truth*.

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

she could not help weeping.

Sad to see her sorrow,  
he stood gazing at her; all  
his angry mood changed to  
compassion, till at last Una  
mounted her snowy palfrey and  
once more set out to seek her lost  
companion.

The lion would not leave her  
desolate, but went with her as a  
strong guard and as a faithful  
companion. When she slept  
he kept watch, and when she  
waked he waited diligently,



ready to help her in any way he could. He always knew from her looks what she wanted.

Long she travelled thus through lonely places, where she thought her wandering Knight might pass, yet never found trace of living man. At length she came to the foot of a steep mountain, where the trodden grass showed that there was a path for people to go. This path she followed till at last she saw, slowly walking in the front of her, a damsel carrying a jar of water.

## UNA AND THE LION

The Lady Una called to her to ask if there were any dwelling-place near, but the rough-looking girl made no answer; she seemed not able to speak, nor hear, nor understand. But when she saw the lion standing beside her, she threw down her pitcher with sudden fear and fled away. Never before in that land had she seen the face of a fair lady, and the sight of the lion filled her with terror. Fast away she fled, and never looked behind till she came at last to her home, where her blind mother sat all day in darkness. Too frightened to speak, she caught hold of her mother with trembling hands, while the poor old woman, full of fear, ran to shut the door of their house.

By this time the weary Lady Una had arrived, and asked if she might come in; but, when no answer came to her request, the lion, with his strong claws, tore open the wicket-door and let her into the little hut. There she found the mother and daughter crouched up in a dark corner, nearly dead with fear.

The name of the poor old blind woman was *Superstition*. She tried to be good in a very mistaken way. She hid herself in her dark corner, and was quite content never to come out of it. When the beautiful Lady Una, who was all light and truth, came to the hut, the mother and daughter, instead of making her welcome, hated her, and would gladly have thrust her out.

Trying to soothe their needless dread, Una spoke gently to them, and begged that she might rest that night in their small cottage. To this they unwillingly

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

agreed, and Una lay down with the faithful lion at her feet to keep watch. All night, instead of sleeping, she wept, still sorrowing for her lost Knight and longing for the morning.

In the middle of the night, when all the inmates of the little cottage were asleep, there came a furious knocking at the door. This was a wicked thief, called "Kirkrapine," or *Church-robber*, whose custom it was to go about stealing ornaments from churches, and clothes from clergymen, and robbing the alms-boxes of the poor. He used to share his spoils with the daughter of the blind woman, and to-night he had come with a great sackful of stolen goods.

When he received no answer to his knocking, he got very angry indeed, and made a loud clamour at the door; but the women in the hut were too much afraid of the lion to rise and let him in. At last he burst open the door in a great rage and tried to enter, but the lion sprang upon him and tore him to pieces before he could even call for help. His terrified friends scarcely dared to weep or move in case they should share his fate.

When daylight came, Una rose and started again on her journey with the lion to seek the wandering Knight. As soon as they had left, the two frightened women came forth, and, finding Church-robber slain outside the cottage, they began to wail and lament; then they ran after Una, railing at her for being the cause of all their ill; they called after her evil wishes that mischief and misery might fall on her and follow her all the way, and that she might ever wander in endless error.

## UNA AND THE LION

When they saw that their bad words were of no avail, they turned back, and there in the road they met a knight, clad in armour; but, though he looked such a grand warrior, it was really only the wicked enchanter, Hypocrisy, who was seeking Una, in order to work her fresh trouble. When he saw the old woman, Superstition, he asked if she could give him any tidings of the lady. Therewith her passion broke out anew; she told him what had just happened, blaming Una as the cause of all her distress. Archimago pretended to condole with her, and then, finding out the direction in which Una had gone, he followed as quickly as possible.

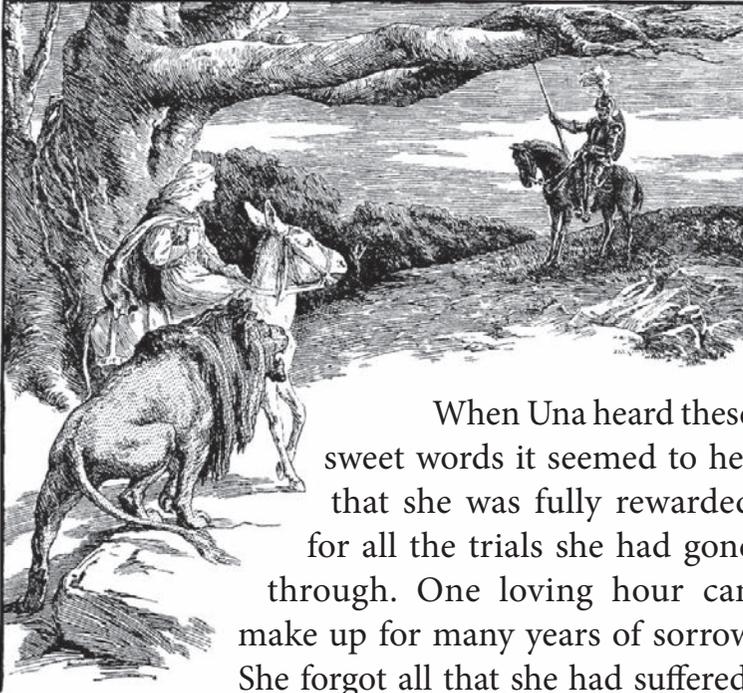
Before long he came up to where Una was slowly travelling; but seeing the noble lion at her side, he was afraid to go too near, and turned away to a hill at a little distance. When Una saw him, she thought, from his shield and armour, that it was her own true knight, and she rode up to him, and spoke meekly, half-frightened.

“Ah, my lord,” she said, “where have you been so long out of my sight? I feared that you hated me, or that I had done something to displease you, and that made everything seem dark and cheerless. But welcome now, welcome!”

“My dearest lady,” said false Hypocrisy, “you must not think I could so shame knighthood as to desert you. But the truth is, the reason why I left you so long was to seek adventure in a strange place, where Archimago said there was a mighty robber, who worked much mischief to many people. Now he will trouble no one further. This is the good reason why I left you. Pray

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

believe it, and accept my faithful service, for I have vowed to defend you by land and sea. Let your grief be over.”



When Una heard these sweet words it seemed to her that she was fully rewarded for all the trials she had gone through. One loving hour can make up for many years of sorrow. She forgot all that she had suffered; she spoke no more of the past. True love never looks back, but always forward. Before her stood her Knight, for whom she had toiled so sorely, and Una's heart was filled with joy.

### *In the Hands of the Enemy*

Una and the Magician (who was disguised as the Red Cross Knight) had not gone far when they saw some one riding swiftly towards them. The new-comer was on a fleet horse, and was fully armed; his look was stern, cruel, and revengeful. On his shield in bold letters

## IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY

was traced the name “Sans Loy,” which means *Lawless*. He was one of the brothers of “Sans Foy,” or Faithless, whom the real Red Cross Knight had slain, and he had made up his mind to avenge his brother’s death.

When he saw the red cross graven on the shield which Hypocrisy carried, he thought that he had found the foe of whom he was in search, and, levelling his spear, he prepared for battle. Hypocrisy, who was a mean coward, and had never fought in his life, was nearly fainting with fear; but the Lady Una spoke such cheering words that he began to feel more hopeful. Lawless, however, rushed at him with such fury that he drove his lance right through the other’s shield, and bore him to the ground. Leaping from his horse, he ran towards him, meaning to kill him, and exclaiming, “Lo, this is the worthy reward of him that slew Faithless!”



Una begged the cruel knight to have pity on his fallen foe, but her words were of no avail. Tearing off his helmet, Lawless would have slain him at once, but he stopped in astonishment when, instead of the Red Cross Knight, he saw the face of Archimago. He knew well

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

that crafty Hypocrisy was

skilled in all forms of deceit, but that he took care to shun fighting and brave deeds. Now, indeed, had Hypocrisy's guile met with a just punishment.



“Why, luckless Archimago, what is this?” cried Lawless. “What evil chance brought you here? Is it your fault, or my mistake, that I have wounded my friend instead of my foe?”

But the old Magician answered nothing; he lay still as if he were dying. So Lawless spent no more time over him, but went over to where Una waited, lost in amazement and sorely perplexed.

Her companion, whom she had imagined was her own true Knight, turned out to be nothing but an impostor, and she herself had fallen into the hands of a cruel enemy.

When the brave lion saw Lawless go up to Una and try to drag her roughly from her palfrey, full of kingly rage he rushed to protect her. He flew at Lawless and almost tore his shield to pieces with his sharp claws. But, alas! he could not overcome the warrior, for Lawless

## IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY

was one of the strongest men that ever wielded spear, and was well skilled in feats of arms. With his sharp sword he struck the lion, and the noble creature fell dead at his feet.

Poor Una, what was to become of her now? Her faithful guardian was gone, and she found herself the captive of a cruel foe. Lawless paid no heed to her tears and entreaties. Placing her on his own horse, he rode off with her; while her snow-white ass, not willing to forsake her, followed meekly at a distance.



### *The House of Pride*

Now the Red Cross Knight, because of his lack of loyalty to Una, fell into much danger and difficulty. His first fault was in believing evil of her so readily, and leaving her forlorn; after that he was too easily beguiled by the pretended goodness and beauty of Duessa. All who fight in a good cause must beware of errors such as these. If matters do not go exactly as we wish, we must not lose heart and get impatient; even if we cannot understand what is happening, we must trust that all will be well. We must keep steadily to the one true aim set before us, or else, like the Red Cross Knight, we

## *THE RED CROSS KNIGHT*

may be led astray by false things that are only pleasant in appearance, and have no real goodness.

Duessa and the Knight travelled for a long way, till at last they saw in front of them a grand and beautiful building. It seemed as if it were the house of some mighty Prince; a broad highway led up to it, all trodden bare by the feet of those who flocked thither. Great troops of people of all sorts and condition journeyed here, both by day and night. But few returned, unless they managed to escape, beggared and disgraced, when, ever afterwards, they lived a life of misery.

To this place Duessa guided the Red Cross Knight, for she was tired with the toilsome journey, and the day was nearly over.

It was a stately palace, built of smooth bricks, cunningly laid together without mortar. The walls were high, but neither strong nor thick, and they were covered with dazzling gold-foil. There were many lofty towers and picturesque galleries, with bright windows and delightful bowers; and on the top there was a dial to tell the time.

It was lovely to look at, and did much credit to the workman that designed it; but it was a great pity that so fair a building rested on so frail a foundation. For it was mounted high up on a sandy hill that kept shifting and falling away. Every breath of heaven made it shake; and all the back parts, that no one could see, were old and ruinous, though cunningly painted over.

Arrived here, Duessa and the Red Cross Knight passed in at once, for the gates stood wide open to all.

## THE HOUSE OF PRIDE

They were in charge of a porter, called "Ill-come," who never denied entrance to any one. The hall inside was hung with costly tapestry and rich curtains. Numbers of people, rich and poor, were waiting here, in order to gain sight of the Lady of this wonderful place.

Duessa and the Knight passed through this crowd, who all gazed at them, and entered the Presence Chamber of the Queen.

What a dazzling sight met their eyes! Such a scene of splendour had never been known in the court of any living prince. A noble company of lords and ladies stood on every side, and made the place more beautiful with their presence.

High above all there was a cloth of state, and a rich throne as bright as the sun. On the throne, clad in royal robes, sat the Queen. Her garments were all glittering with gold and precious jewels; but so great was her beauty that it dimmed even the brightness of her throne. She sat there in princely state, shining like the sun. She hated and despised all lowly things of earth. Under her scornful feet lay a dreadful dragon, with a hideous tail. In her hand she held a mirror in which she often looked at her face; she took great delight in her own appearance, for she was fairer than any living woman.

She was the daughter of grisly Pluto, King of Hades, and men called her proud Lucifera. She had crowned herself a queen, but she had no rightful kingdom at all, nor any possessions. The power which she had obtained she had usurped by wrong and tyranny. She ruled her realm not by laws, but by craft, and according to the



"Lo! underneath her scornful feet was layne  
A dreadful dragon with an hideous train;  
And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,  
Wherein her face she often viewed layne,  
And in her self-loved semblance took delight."

## THE HOUSE OF PRIDE

advice of six old wizards, who with their bad counsels upheld her kingdom.

As soon as the Knight and Duessa came into the presence-chamber, an usher, by name *Vanity*, made room and prepared a passage for them, and brought them to the lowest stair of the high throne. Here they made a humble salute, and declared that they had come to see the Queen's royal state, and to prove if the wide report of her great splendour were true.

With scornful eyes, half unwilling to look so low, she thanked them disdainfully, and did not show them any courtesy worthy of a queen, scarcely even bidding them arise. The lords and ladies of the court, however, were all eager to appear well in the eyes of the strangers. They shook out their ruffles, and fluffed up their curls, and arranged their gay attire more trimly; and each one was jealous and spiteful of the others.

They did their best to entertain the Knight, and would gladly have made him one of their company. To Duessa, also, they were most polite and gracious, for formerly she had been well known in that court. But to the knightly eyes of the warrior all the glitter of the crowd seemed vain and worthless, and he thought that it was unbecoming so great a queen to treat a strange knight with such scant courtesy.

Suddenly, Queen Lucifera rose from her throne, and called for her coach. Then all was bustle and confusion, every one rushing violently forth. Blazing with brightness she paced down the hall, like the sun dawning in the east. All the people thronging the hall



"... This was drawne of six unequall beasts  
On which her six sage Counsellours did ryde."

## THE HOUSE OF PRIDE

thrust and pushed each other aside to gaze upon her. Her glorious appearance amazed the eyes of all men.

Her coach was adorned with gold and gay garlands, and was one of the most splendid carriages ever seen, but it was drawn by an ugly and ill-matched team. On every animal rode one of her evil Councillors, who was much like in nature to the creature that carried him.

The first of these, who guided all the rest, was *Idleness*, the nurse of Sin. He chose to ride a slothful ass; he looked always as if he were half asleep, and as if he did not know whether it were night or day. He shut himself away from all care, and shunned manly exercise, but if there were any mischief to be done he joined in it readily. The Queen was indeed badly served who had *Idleness* for her leading Councillor.

Next to him came *Gluttony*, riding on a pig; then *Self-indulgence* on a goat, *Avarice* on a camel, *Envy* on a wolf, and *Wrath* on a lion. Each in his own way was equally hideous and hateful.

As they went along, crowds of people came round, shouting for joy; always before them a foggy mist sprang up, covering all the land, and under their feet lay the dead bones of men who had wandered from the right path.

So forth they went in this goodly array to enjoy the fresh air, and to sport in the flowery meadows. Among the rest, next to the chariot, rode the false *Duessa*, but the good Knight kept far apart, not joining in the noisy mirth which seemed unbecoming a true warrior.

## THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

Having enjoyed themselves awhile in the pleasant fields, they returned to the stately palace. Here they found that a wandering knight had just arrived. On his shield, in red letters, was written the name "Sans Joy," which means *Joyless*, and he was the brother of *Faithless*, whom the Red Cross Knight had slain, and of *Lawless*, who had taken Una captive. He looked sullen and revengeful, as if he had in his mind bitter and angry thoughts.

When he saw the shield of his slain brother, Faithless, in the hands of the Red Cross Knight's page, he sprang at him and snatched it away. But the Knight had no mind to lose the trophy which he had won in battle, and, attacking him fiercely, he again got possession of it.

Thereupon they hastily began to prepare for battle, clashing their shields and shaking their swords in the air. But the Queen, on pain of her severe displeasure, commanded them to restrain their fury, saying that if either had a right to the shield, they should fight it out fairly the next day.

That night was passed in joy and gaiety, feasting and making merry in bower and hall. The steward of the court was *Gluttony*, who poured forth lavishly of his abundance to all; and then the chamberlain, *Sloth*, summoned them to rest.