

**Lecture Series on**  
**Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene***  
**Book I Canto I: Lecture 5**

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xviii

Much daunted with that dint, her sence was dazd,  
Yet kindling rage, her selfe she gathered round,  
And all attonce her beastly body raizd

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With doubled forces high above the ground:

Tho wrapping up her wrethed sterne arownd,

Lept fierce upon his shield, and her huge traine

All suddenly about his body wound,

That hand or foot to stirre he strove in vaine:

God helpe the man so wrapt in Errours endlesse  
traine.

- Explanation: The monster was dazed by the light from the Knight's shining armour. She leapt at him and wound her tail around him.
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xix

His Lady sad to see his sore constraint,  
Cride out, Now now Sir knight, shew what ye bee,  
Add faith unto your force, and be not faint:  
Strangle her, else she sure will strangle thee.  
That when he heard, in great perplexitie,  
His gall did grate for grieve and high disdaine,  
And knitting all his force got one hand free,  
Wherewith he grypt her gorge with so great paine,  
That soone to loose her wicked bands did her  
constraine.

- Explanation: Una was terrified to see the Knight in that condition. She cried out vehemently. She urged the Knight to kill the monster

xx

Therewith she spewd out of her filthy maw

A floud of poyson horrible and blacke,

Full of great lumpes of flesh and gobbets raw,

Which stunck so vildly, that it forst him slacke

His grasping hold, and from her turne him backe:

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 filthy parbreake all the place defiled has.

- Explanation: Meanwhile, the monster vomited a flood of poison, horrible and black, and she also vomited books and papers, along with loathly frogs and toads. It all stank terribly.



xxi

As when old father Nilus gins to swell  
With timely pride above the Aegyptian vale,  
His fattie waves do fertile slime outwell,  
And overflow each plaine and lowly dale:  
But when his later spring gins to avale,  
Huge heapes of mudd he leaves, wherein there breed  
Ten thousand kindes of creatures, partly male  
And partly female of his fruitfull seed;  
Such ugly monstrous shapes elsewhere may no man  
reed.

- Explanation: The poet here compares the monster to the river Nile, which, when it floods the Egyptian banks, leaves behind a trail of creepy creatures in its wake.

xxii

The same so sore annoyed has the knight,  
That welnigh choked with the deadly stinke,  
His forces faile, ne can no longer fight.

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Whose corage when the feend perceiv'd to shrink,  
She poured forth out of her hellish sinke  
Her fruitfull cursed spawne of serpents small,  
Deformed monsters, fowle, and blacke as inke,  
Which swarming all about his legs did crall,  
And him encombred sore, but could not hurt at all.

- Explanation: From the vomit emerged many small, black serpents. They were black as ink. They crawled onto the legs of the brave Knight.



xxiii

As gentle Shepheard in sweete even-tide,  
When ruddy Phoebus gins to welke in west,  
High on an hill, his flocke to vewen wide,  
Markes which do byte their hasty supper best;  
A cloud of combrous gnattes do him molest,  
All striving to infixe their feeble stings,  
That from their noyance he no where can rest,  
But with his clownish hands their tender wings  
He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their  
murmurings.

- Explanation: However, those filthy serpents were as incapable of causing any harm to the Knight as the many misquotes that swarm over shepherds returning home in the evening.

xxiv

Thus ill bestedd, and fearefull more of shame,  
Then of the certaine perill he stood in,  
Halfe furious unto his foe he came,  
Resolv'd in minde all suddenly to win,  
Or soone to lose, before he once would lin;  
And strooke at her with more then manly force,  
That from her body full of filthie sin  
He raft her hatefull head without remorse;  
A streame of cole black bloud forth gushed from  
her corse.

- Explanation: The Knight was by now very upset, and he resolved in his mind that he shall kill the monster. And as he beheaded the monster, blood, as black as coal, gushed forward.



XXV

Her scattred brood, soone as their Parent deare  
They saw so rudely falling to the ground,  
Groning full deadly, all with troublous feare,  
Gathred themselves about her body round,  
Weening their wonted entrance to have found  
At her wide mouth: but being there withstood  
They flocked all about her bleeding wound,  
And sucked up their dying mothers blood,  
Making her death their life, and eke her hurt their  
good.

- Explanation: As soon as the monster fell upon the ground, her younglings started feeding upon her body, and soon the monster was dead.