

THE CHRIST COLLOQUY Andrew Grattan

Book I *Commedia*

CANTO IV 94-146

‘Tell, high-minded and most
Spiritual of men, tell, lest the memory
Fade, of that encounter which coloured your

Whitening countenance eternally, you, first
Recognizant, of your beloved Beatrice,
Seen that beauty, distant, no distance setting?’

Then, such richness of a softening of features,
Flashed across the momentary angry of his
Face, that Dante relaxed before me, as at a

Solemn music, within his own, most courteous
Of sensibility. ‘I hear tell of one, who, native
To your isle, who would bring, all panoply

Of ability, to the true delineation and
Description of that most exquisite of
Earthly creatures, towering his unearthing

Gifts, but, remains my tower ivory, polished bare
Of favour, for the cutting round of her spare
Presence, weak my whitening art, around

His massiness. *Incipit vita mea nova*. Be! She
Was cut, as the briefest unsully of her angelic
Appearance, so much so, that I set my anguish

Upon those wept upon pages - dizzying, her
Seen beauty, busy in the bustle, of my city’s
Piazza and castello. Her coterie of smiling

Friendships feminine, girded her as a Marian
Of tower ivory courtyarded pure,
Their every amiability, as comfort to her

Ephemeral effervescent of gooding
Spirit, transformed into the priming
Of these thinning leaves; under him,

Loosened canzone tied in *concatenatio*
Pulcra, - Guido, nursed up my sinuous rills,
Till doleful signore, of the remembered

Childhood eight, -I- nine, -she-, ninth, on
May Day dance of Folco, and white day
In Florence and perceived screen of church

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Lady, swimming within my burn of
Ardent attention, grew the mock of ill
Weakness, and chirurgically attention;

Art settlement, my bilateral symmetry
Of construction and frequency of
Divisio textus; a ringing of numeracy

Mingles from the travelling, my bridge,
Pythagoras and Augustine, as '*ecce deus*
Fortior me, qui veniens dominabitur mihi';

And '*apparuit iam beatitudo vestra*',
Spun the sequential contemplations
Of sonnets, from 'To every

Captive soul' and 'Beyond the widest'; till,
I had resolved upon a resolution of silence
Until, I could 'compose concerning of her,

What has never been written in rhyme of any
Woman, as of, *la donna gentile*'.