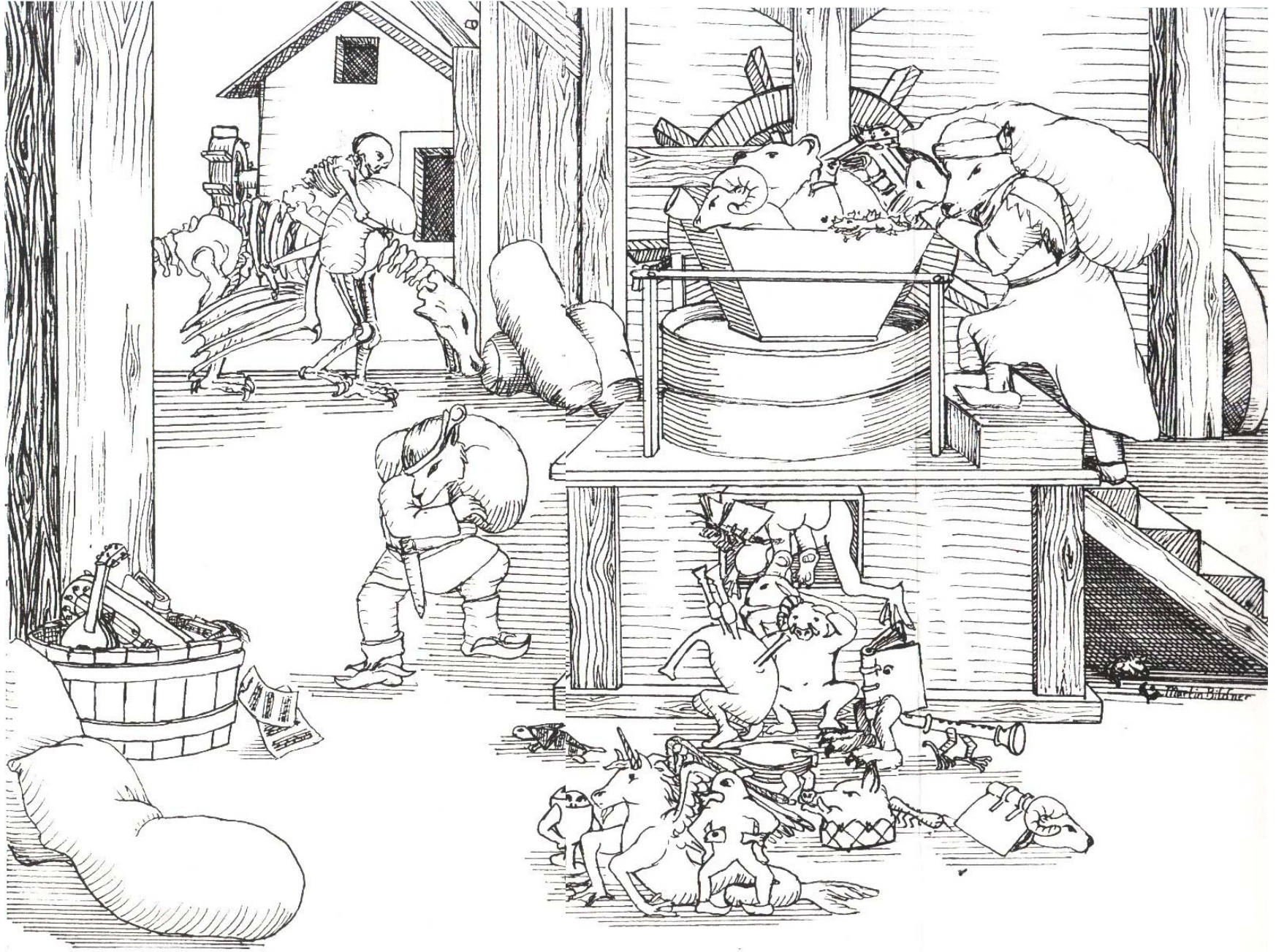


# Cry of the Wolf IV





# Cry of the Wolf IV: Our Stories



Published by the Bardic College of Ealdormere  
May A.S. XXXVII

*Diane Harper is a diplomat, currently serving at the Canadian Embassy in El Salvador.*

Yoshikuri Nagayo Dono is a samurai from the late 1500's. The son of a powerful Daimyo, he came to Europe to find the assassin of his father and restore his family's honour.

*He is known in modern times as Brendan Smith.*

Cry of the Wolf, Volume 4 Issue 1  
Our Stories

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[www.bards.ca](http://www.bards.ca)  
[Ealdorbards@yahoo.com](mailto:Ealdorbards@yahoo.com)

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275 King St. East, Suite 29, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5A 1K2

Edited and layout by Laird Colyne Stewart (Todd Fischer).

Cover Art by Lord Martin Bildner von Wismar (Robert Schweitzer).

## Contributors

been actively writing poetry and songs for a short time since she discovered the joys of the Bardic Arts at Pennsic XXIX. She has been avidly learning what she can from other bards and honing her skills and abilities whenever possible.

*Helen Marshall is a student at St. Christopher Secondary School. She lives in Sarnia with the rest of her family who are participants in the SCA. In her spare time, she actively writes short stories and one day hopes to be published. She also role-plays when she has an opportunity and loves to read whatever books happen to be lying around in her house.*

Hector of the Black Height is a west-islands Scotsman who has lived in the Barony of Septentria for seventeen years. An occasional fighter and hopeful poet, he currently carves bone under the tutelage of Corwyn and Domnhaill Galbraith. He has many sons and daughters who are his pride. *Arthur McLean is a civil servant and the father of a SCAdian almost-six-year-old.*

Lady Ivanna is a gypsy in 1470's Russia. Named after Ivan the Great, the first ruler to allow gypsies freedom within his borders, she has never lived anywhere else. As a result she has been an avid collector of tales from all visitors and has a multi-cultural collection of stories to tell. Although she is still learning, she has begun supplementing the clan's income as a budding poet and storyteller.

*Laurie Woodward also tends to be like a gypsy. Having been an E.C.E. assistant, a daycare dietary manager, and a portrait photographer, among other things, she is presently, managing a party and play center in Oshawa. The mother of a seven-year-old boy who helps keep her creative side active, she enjoys painting, writing, sewing, and many other forms of crafting.*

Marian of Heatherdale is a Scottish alliance-bride who was shipped to France to seal a political arrangement against the tyrant Edward Longshanks. She has adapted well to a life filled with fine wine, love-struck troubadours, and pleasant French weather.

*Heather Dale is a Modern Celtic singer-songwriter and performer, whose music is inspired by the past. She has been writing an ongoing series of stories about King Arthur's Camelot for her monthly e-newsletter... drop by [www.HeatherDale.com](http://www.HeatherDale.com) to read more and to join her mailing list.*

Siglinde Harfnerstochter is a housewife and mother from the city of Metz. Depending on her mood, she lives there during the 7th or 14th C. Despite being illiterate, she loves contributing to the Skraeling Althing Chronicle.


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# Editor's Note

Wassail and well met! Welcome to the fourth installment of the Cry of the Wolf series, published by the Bardic College of Ealdormere. Within these pages you will find many tales of our lands, and lands beyond our fair borders. Some are humorous, some are allegorical, still others are cautionary. Most are told in standard prose, while some are story-poems. All cover a wide range of subjects and show just what a diversified and strong Kingdom we inhabit.

This issue of Cry of the Wolf was produced by Amphisbaena Music with proceeds to the Bardic College of Ealdormere (contact information is on the inside front cover). Please do not reproduce any of the stories without first obtaining permission. (I'm sure the author's would not mind if these stories were told, as long as proper credit was given.)

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I hope that you enjoy the tales we have to tell.

In service to my Kingdom, Khan and Khatun,

LCS

## Contributors

*play, test-play and sleep when he can find the time.*

Garraed Galbraith is a wealthy land-owner living on the Isle of Gigha, in the bottom of the Scots Hebrides chain, in the 11th Century. He is the (nominal) head of a large merchant household, which continues to be governed by the Brehon Law system. He has reached the rank of filidh (the professional class of the bard) and has some education under the brehon (lawyer/law speaker) traditions. He would prefer the former, and since his divorce from Bronwyn has been making additional efforts at his studies under his Ollagh, Eachuinn.

Garraed Galbraith is the figurehead of House Galbraith, one of the largest familial households in Ealdormere. He is the Beltbound Oathson (i.e.: apprentice) to Hector of the Black Height (called Eachuinn) and therefore related to way too many people. His passion within the Society is the culture of the SCA and it's people (as a form of modern mythology), and he enjoys both singing and writing about this interest. He is a huge supporter of the Bardic Arts within Ealdormere, and recently had the honor of hosting the Knowne World Bardic Congress in Oct 2000, and coordinating the Pennsic XXX Bardic Arts Exhibition. He is honoured to act as a teacher to Lady Gwerydd verch Rhys (and occasionally others).

*Tim Jennings is the General Manager for a mid-sized theatre company in Toronto (www.roseneath.ca). He has taught Theatre Production at several Colleges and Universities, and is part of an advocacy group for workplace safety in the Live Performance Industry. Tim is an avid collector of traditional Brit-trad and Can-trad folk music, and enjoys the three R's (reading, writing and role-playing). He recently moved into a lovely new old house in Fergus, Ontario which he shares with two housemates, Kol (Jason) and Grimaldi (Doug). He denies the existence of anything supernatural in the basement.*

Lord Gerrard Carpentarius is a Toy Maker by trade, who hales from Whitshire England. He also enjoys the bardic art of story telling, especially children's stories.

*Gerry Dowsell often becomes inspired by the strangest things such as an old mirror and sometimes by fate itself. He loves being inspired and often finds himself having no will of his own when it comes to writing.*

Gwerydd verch Rhys is daughter of Rhys ap Gwion, a Welsh trader, and Grainne ingen Diarmait Finn, an Irishwoman. She was brought up in an Irish household and listened to the tales of bards. At an early age, she came to the lands of Ealdormere since when she has been adopted by Gerard Carpentarius and assists him in his toy making. She has been fostered out to Evelyn and John Harris along with her sister Eleanor. She has

## Contributors

Aeden o Kincora was Baron of Septentria for ten years and Lord Lieutenant of Ealdormere, a Master of the Pelican and the Laurel now inactive within the SCA.

*Malcolm Jenne is a businessman in the Toronto area. For information about his writing, please contact Arthur McLean (Master Hector of the Black Heights).*

Alyce de Sheppey is a noble woman of the Middle Ages. She was born on the Isle de Sheppey and has travelled far and wide exploring her Norman roots and tasting the pleasures of other places.

*Danute Dorion is a contract worker whose experience is as diverse as her Medieval pursuits.*

Anne le Gris was born in 1452 at Wilton House in Somerset. After spending her formative years in Paris, she now lives with her artist husband in Venice. She fills her days with managing his atelier.

Among her other SCA projects, Anne is currently studying modal music composition and how to make her pieces sound more period.

*Ann Graham owns Silver Writing, which offers technical writing and editing services to both the high tech and manufacturing businesses in the Ottawa area.*

Chiara da Montepulciano is the late 15th c. daughter of an Italian wine merchant from Tuscany. She and her brother run a successful trading business and have connexions with Sultan Mehment II of Istanbul. Lady Chiara is the owner and commander of the dread Ship Iron Trillium, which sails the Great Inland Seas, and holds a letter of Marque from their Excellencies Skraeling Althing.

*Elyse Tera, BA, D.Ac., is an acupuncturist and shiatsu therapist practicing in Ottawa and at various events in the Kingdom.*

Colyne Stewart is a 14th C. Scottish gallowglass currently leaving Europe to escape the Black Plague. He has served in Scotland, Ireland, France and England.

Colyne is the Head of the Games Guild of Ealdormere and a founding member of the Septentrian Performing Arts Troupe. Currently he and his Lady wife Thorfinna gra'feldr are honoured to serve as the Baronial Bards of Septentria and as members of the Isengesitha (the army of Septentria).

*Todd Fischer works by day in the Recording Studio at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in Toronto. He likes to write, draw, role-*

## Introduction

When I was asked to write the introduction to this edition of Cry of the Wolf, I didn't quite know what to expect. Any good anthology should find some unifying theme, and given the wonderful diversity of culture, style and experience now active within Ealdormere, I wondered just what common ground could be found?

I needed not wonder, nor should you, gentle reader. The common ground selected by writers and editors and assembled for your delight is simple and powerful; myth. In your hands is a collection of myths, created and expanded upon by some very imaginative and insightful artists.

Consider the breadth of the mythologies assembled; trolls, the infamous Japanese badgers (must be a Naga story!), Arthur and his court, Minos of Crete, even Temujin.

Consider the myths of our own culture set on display: the sheep raids of Ramshaven (our own Táin Bó Cúalnge? That's how these things probably start...), Ouen in An Tir, the warriors of Castel Rouge, the creation and destruction myth of Ealdormere itself.

All these and more are assembled herein. Each has its own charm, its own resonance, its own relevance to the reader and to our individual participation in the great game. Each offers entertainment, literary merit and perhaps a moral. Each approaches myth from a different direction, takes it a different place and leaves the reader with a very different impression. Yet all are myths, all draw upon the power myth carries with it. All help build our rich, shared culture. Some of the stories stand on their own; others seem to await elaboration. At least one begged a sequel... but that would be telling.

And on that note, I leave you to two pleasures; this edition of Cry of the Wolf, and the hope of a future collection that will build on what has been accomplished thus far.

Enjoy.

eachuinn

called Hector of the Black Height

*The Missing Piece*

And Ealdormere said, "The one piece of her former heart my sister would not share was the bitterness that cast her from you. I lack that bitterness, but bear all her other attributes. I am not complete; but I am whole, thanks to her. She is as you made her, and as you made me. She is a hero, and thanks to her sacrifice we all may grow."

And so Spring came and the Northlands bloomed, and in the night skies her sentinel heard Ealdormere singing again by the fires, and the stars shone brighter for the joy of it.

# The Missing Piece

Master Hector of the Black Height

Many years passed, and the tales of Ealdormere spread, and the people kept their pieces of her secret heart and shared them. Finally, so many tales spread and so many pieces were treasured that, of their own accord, the people resolved to challenge the Fates and assemble the secret heart again.

From far and wide the people came together in the depths of winter's darkness, and they brought forth their pieces. The oldest and the youngest handed over their treasures, and those who remembered past days were amazed to see that they had received all the pieces of the secret heart and more besides, enough it seemed for two hearts.

With care and compassion the people assembled two hearts, and found there was but one piece missing from the pair. The people rejoiced at their good fortune, and then wondered at the one piece that denied them a second hero's heart.

And the stars twinkled and Ealdormere spoke and said, "I will take back the complete heart, and leave the incomplete with you; give what remains with you a home." And Ealdormere took the complete heart into the stars, and it was never seen again by mortal man. The people were confused by this selfishness, but they obeyed her command and made a home for the second heart.

This home was beautiful and pure, yet humble. It had strong arms for the sword and bow, and gentle hands for the young and hurt. Its eye was clear and its voice was sweet. Its memory was long but its imagination vast. Despite a missing piece the second heart fit, and Ealdormere seemed to walk the land again.

The Three Sisters again knew that someone walked the world without their consent, and they resolved to punish Ealdormere once more, but from the skies Ealdormere hailed the Sisters and said, "I am here. I am punished. Your curse holds me. You cannot read my *wyrd* twice." And the Sisters were still, for they saw that the heart that walked the earth was incomplete, and they did no more in consequence.

And the people were glad, but their gladness was held in check by the knowledge of Ealdormere's selfishness. The new hero sensed the reservation of the people, and she asked what grieved them so.

The people said, "Your twin, who was so generous and kind, saw that when your hearts were assembled there was one piece missing, and she took that piece and left you lacking. This we do not understand, for she was a hero."

# Yali and the Troll

Garraed Galbraith

So it was, in the days when Old Syr Cordigan was Baron, that the Trolls returned to the lands called Ramshaven<sup>1</sup>. Now here, before this story even begins, I must draw you back to correct another, more famous tale.

In the ancient days, while animals still spoke, there existed three wise Rams<sup>2</sup>, who have, somewhat unreasonably, been given the title "the Three Billygoats Gruff". They were, to my mind, neither gruff, nor billygoats, but strong and noble Rams and they were the leaders of a great herd and sought a new land of peace in which to live.

When they had defeated the Troll who lived under the bridge leading to this new land<sup>3</sup>, they went and brought the rest of their flock to settle, and thus was "Ramshaven" created. (The bridge, by the way, is still visible, and lies between Der Welfengau and Bryniau Tywnnog<sup>4</sup>.)

In any case, Man soon followed and settled the area. As a gift, the three wise Rams gave unto the people of the Wolf a great sword called "TrollBane", whose hilt was carved from the horn of the largest and wisest Ram. Now, this sword was magical, for it could easily penetrate the dense hide of any Troll...and thus it was that no troll would enter these lands, though they haunted much of the Northern Woods, for such was their fear of it.

It is chronicled early in the histories of Eoforwick, that a great sorcerer, known only as "the Wizard of the Tower", did steal the fabled sword of Eoforwick from Count Finnvar de Taahe. Gillian, First Baroness of the lands of the Bear did, through secret means and with the help of several valiant questors, retrieve the sword, and thus has Septentria ever been spared the ravages of Trolls<sup>5</sup>. What was not recorded in those chronicles is that it was this selfsame Wizard who stole Trollbane from its' keeper. It is believed by many that the Wizard feared the presence of such powerful weapons in the Northlands, and thus hid the blade where no man might find it.

Now the Trolls, upon hearing this, did begin to move into the lands so

1. The Barony of Ram shaven is one of the Five Baronies of the Kingdom of Ealdormere, and takes into account the areas including Der Welfengau, Bryniau Tywnnog and the surrounding areas.
2. In the days of Cordigan and Dianne, the three wise Rams were often seen. See Foote the Potter for details.
3. See the folktale "The Three Billygoats Gruff" ...sigh...for details.
4. C.f.: Cambridge – The bridge over which they came.
5. See "The Chronicle of Eoforwick" by Etienne de l'Isle; scribe to Duke Finnvar de Taahe. Oct – A.S. X

*Vali and the Troll*

long denied them. Word of the Troll encroachment did fly south, and thus it was that the Dragon King of the Middle was inspired to send a brave knight, Viscount Syr Cordigan d'Arnot, to guard the land against possible Troll attack.

Trolls are smarter than you might think. They knew that it would be folly to attack so brave and feared a knight when there was much of the Northern Wood that still had no such protector. So they stayed to the lonely places...and waited, for they knew also that one day Cordigan would grow old, and then they might attack the land without worry of the knight's prowess.

Years went by. Ramshaven grew into a stalwart Barony under the wise rule of Cordigan and Dianne, his wife. The people thrived and all seemed well. Many even forgot about the Trolls, though mothers sometimes used them to scare naughty children. "Be good, or the Trolls will get you".

It came to pass in the last years of the reign of Cordigan and Dianne, that a Great Troll, a cousin to the troll King itself, did decide that enough time had passed and that Cordigan posed to him no threat. Out of the great Northern Woods he came, leading many lesser trolls behind him. But of all the trolls, it was by far the fiercest. It's skin was like Oak, with arms like tree trunks and it little feared the swords of men.

Brave Cordigan sent out his best knights to deal with the threat, and he too rode out to face the foe. The knights fought well. It is rumoured that Earl Syr David Failsworth did slay over a dozen single handedly in the months that followed and great Sir Belgar was known to have killed many more. Sir Cordigan and his squires hunted down the rest, and all would have been well, but for the Great Troll itself.

No sword could pierce its awful hide. No spear, even in Sir Cordigan's hands, could bring the creature down. Many died in the attempt, but none could end its rampages. All seemed hopeless...

Now one of Cordigan's squires was a brave young Northman, well acquainted with the Woods and the lore of the North. His name was Vali<sup>6</sup>, and he had already made for himself a reputation as a mercenary sergeant. Cordigan knew that Vali was both a cunning and a daring warrior and so sent word for him to come to Ramshaven, that they might discuss the land and it's future.

Vali, upon hearing the call, did gather his arms and ride at speed to Cordigan's side. There they spoke, and while the details of that conversation are not known, the subject of Trolls was at the heart of it.

Vali had learned much of Trolls while in the Northern woods, and

*The Doom of Ealdormere*

ous hand, that she might always have friends; the last and bitterest dark gift was this: Though she might have a multitude of friends, yet none would stand by her in her hour of extremity.

This is the tale of her birth and many more are told of her youth; how when she could barely walk she had grown too large for any house, and that while still a maid she had followed her King to war and done valiant deeds.

They tell how her people loved her, for she was not haughty, but noble and worshipful; and her honour was bright like a mirror, wherein they saw their own honour reflected bright.

Of her end no one knows the true tale, but only that on a day in that season when the hint of Spring first raises hopes and the fast following frost dashes them, word came from the king that Ealdormere was no more.

Some say that in her youthful rashness, she sounded her challenge before the gates of the bright gods themselves and was cast down in ruin; but one among the gods took pity on her brave heart and her beauty and raised her to the heavens. They say that on a winter night, when the clear sky brings biting frost, you can see her high in the southern sky, her sword at her side, guarding the borders of the land that she loves.

Others say that she was not slain at all, but laid under an enchantment of sleep, wherein she does not age, and at their hour of greatest need she shall awake and lead her people.

However true these tales may be we cannot know, but we do know that one thing is true. Before Ealdormere left, she drew forth her secret heart, and breaking it into a multitude of pieces, she gave a bit to each of her people to safeguard. And whenever a person is moved to speak of Ealdormere, and whenever the listeners are moved by what they hear, it is one piece of her secret heart that speaks, and the others listen.

6. Vali is pronounced "Vaul - ee", with the stress on the second syllable. Called Val.

# The Doom of Ealdormere

Aeden o Kincora

Many tales are told of the young hero Ealdormere, but the strangest tale told is the tale of her birth; for they say that she did not come to be in the usual way, but that this was the way of it:

The wise and mighty of the land desired to draw together the people, to make their land strong and glorious. For this they needed a hero, yet none was in evidence, and the omens foretold none to be soon born. Thus they resolved to create their own.

They drew her spirit and flesh from the land itself, from its wide skies and waters, from its forests and fields, and from its hard, enduring stone and soft, fertile earth. Each woman and man of them gave of their own strength, and at length a perfect infant lay before them.

All the people were called to her naming, and from the highest lord to the lowest churl they came. Not only the people, but also the hare, the wolf, and the bear came to represent the beasts of field and forest. Then each gave a gift that suited their means. The hare gave her cunning and fleetness of foot, the wolf gave his unstinting loyalty, and the bear gave his slow wisdom and great strength.

But while the people rejoiced, the first of the Three who sit by the well and work the loom of the World called to her sisters, saying, "Look, here is a hank laid ready for spinning that I never carded. Someone is joggling our elbows." Then they grew angry, and cast about for the mischiefmaker.

At length they noticed the people celebrating, and marked the newborn babe. The youngest of the Three said, "Here are those who would make themselves our equals. Sisters, let us teach them a lesson. I see that they are giving gifts. Let us each give a gift also, and gifts that they shall rue."

Thus it came about that Ealdormere received three bright gifts and three dark gifts all on the same day.

The first bright gift that the wise and mighty gave was a good mind and a steady hand, that she might be a great artisan; the first dark gift that the Three gave was this: Though she might create great wonders, yet nothing she did would outlast her.

The second gift was a strong back and a keen eye, that she might be a great archer; the second dark gift the Three gave was this: However true her shafts might fly, they would never diminish the number of her enemies.

The third gift the wise and mighty gave was a glad heart and a gener-

*Vali and the Troll*

knew that no sword forged by man would penetrate the hide of a Great Troll. He knew also that Trolls were not like men, for they are closer to the trees of the forest, and thus are easily burned by fire, and best chopped like wood.

Gathering his axe and his shield, he set out into the lonely fens to seek the Great Troll. He traveled many leagues, through forest and swamp, hill and valley. But nowhere could the great troll be found. Always he saw the ruin it left, and was saddened by it. The summer passed, and Vali became discouraged.

One autumn day, while riding through the northern wood, he came across a young woman, standing outside the remains of an ancient hall. Her bearing was regal, and she stood dressed in the armour of a northern warrior. She smiled and invited him in by name, saying "Be welcome in my House, noble Vali. Sit and take council with me".

"How do you know me?" he asked gruffly, though not displeased at being called noble by so beautiful a woman.

"I know much of the people of the North. The bloodline of Northern Kings flows within me, and I am kin to your knight, Cordigan. I know your quest and I can help you with it".

Vali considered. "How can you help me to find the Great Troll, when it has eluded even the greatest of hunters? It leaves no tracks, and knows the woods better than any man"

"I am skilled in many arts. In the reading of the Runes I have looked for it... Now, at last, I have discovered wherein it makes its lair. Will you take my help?" She asked again.

Now Vali was a good Northman, and he did not truck with sorcery. But this woman seemed a good and noble soul, and she had claimed the old blood of Northern Kings, so who was he to gainsay her.

"I will," he said cautiously, "But you must first tell me your name, so that I know you are no fell spirit, come to lure me to my death with your art and beauty"

She smiled then, and picking up her sword replied "I am called Ragnheithr<sup>7</sup>, and you may rest assured, I am no spirit." With that she drew forth the iron blade from its sheath and kissed it that he might know she spoke the truth<sup>8</sup>.

They talked at length, and ate what stores she had. In the morning they journeyed together into the woods, and for many days the wandered, guided only by her Runes. Each night she cast them anew, that they would not be deceived if the Troll moved on.

At last they came to the mouth of a large cave, and about it were

7. Ragnheithr – pronounced "Rog – N'hay-ther" – called Heitha

8. Faerie and spirits, it is well known, cannot abide the touch of iron.

*Vali and the Troll*

strewn the bodies of many warriors and beasts...or rather parts of them. Trolls, as you must know, will eat anything, even rocks in the hard times. But the times had not been hard for the great Troll. He had feasted well upon brave men, and so it was that he rested in the cave and his snoring could be heard like distant thunder. Vali reigned in his steed and, dismounting, he took from it his axe and shield and quietly entered the cave. There he found the troll sleeping, and being no fool, he chopped off its head and arms where it lay.

Now, had this been any ordinary troll, the tale would end here. Vali left the cave and began to walk back to Ragnheithr, explaining how he had dispatched his foe. But this was a Great Troll, and after a few moments, it used its magick to reattach its head and arms.

Out from the cave it came, its eyes a storm of fury. Ragnheithr called a warning to Vali, and he turned just in time to shield himself from its enormous, razor like claws. Vali and the Troll exchanged blow after blow, but soon Vali's shield began to splinter. Knowing that he would not be able to withstand the Trolls onslaught if his shield gave out, he called for Ragnheithr to bring him fire.

Ragnheithr had in this time been preparing a fire with which to burn the Troll's remains, for she also knew that Trolls will burn like wood. She brought forth a brand, and ran to Vali's aid, brandishing the blazing torch like a sword.

Vali, his shield almost gone, fainted first left, and then right. The Troll, believing that the battle was at an end, and brimming with overconfidence, followed the axe blade, and seeing an opening, struck with the force of battering ram. Vali's shield was torn from his grasp, splintered into kindling. But he had expected as much and, with a great cry, he struck the Troll upon the head with all his might. It split down the middle like cordwood, falling neatly into two pieces before him.

Ragnheithr wasted no time, quickly setting the creature alight. But, no sooner had she touched the torch to its body than it did burst into an enormous flame, which could be seen throughout the whole Kingdom. Thus it was in later days, that Ragnheithr, like the Northern princess whose name she bears, did become known as the "Blaze of Autumn", although for different reasons<sup>9</sup>.

The Great Troll slain, the two did return to the keep of Old Syr Cordigan, and there Vali did regale the assembled mass with the tale of their exploits. The hall was filled with the cheers of the people, and well did they think on the heroic couple. They were, of course, married thereafter

---

9. Ragnheithr reigned with Thorbjorn Osis Brandson called Shield-Hewer, as the third Oathbound Prince and Princess of Ealdormere. She is called "The Blaze of Autumn" in the Line of the North.

*The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale*

Duke: O, fellow, thy affectation cannot hold the bent;  
For rabbits are as goons, whose trickery  
Being once display'd doth fall that very hour.

Sir Toby: Wit, an't be thy will, put me into good fooling! The hare that thinks it can have the mouse doth very often prove the goon: and I that am sure I lack the mouse may pass for a hare! For what says Quinapalus? "hare today, goon tomorrow."

<sup>iv</sup> "And in the grove, at tyme and place yset, This bunny Fewfew and this field maus be met. To chaungen gan the colour in hir face" etc.

*The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale*

Alas, alas, ik be sae shrewed  
 In great sclaundre ik be,  
 To bestes of the fielden growth  
 And fowles in the skye.  
 For alle folke afearen me  
 No honest cure iboune  
 For sith the Faerie Queene she  
 Dide execucioun.

This nifel an ensample be  
 Woot justice is expowne,  
 For if thee fareth folily  
 Thou too shall malisoune.  
 Per consequens if thee ha' care  
 Mescheef thou mak'st namo,  
 The moral of this nifel: Hare  
 Today and goon tomorrow.

warning

**sae shrewed** cursed  
**sclaundre** disgrace  
**fielden growth** growing  
 fields  
**fowles** birds  
**afearen** afraid of  
**honest cure** self-respect  
**iboune** I have

**Dide execucioun** carried out  
 the law

**nifel** silly story **ensample**  
 example  
**woot** know **expowne** ex-  
 pounded  
**fareth folily** behave foolishly  
**malisoune** to be cursed  
**per consequens** conse-  
 quently  
**mescheef** mischief **namo** no  
 more

## NOTES

<sup>i</sup> It is known that the Montepulciano family, a great merchant household that found success with its vineyards during the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, fell into hard times after the death of Ferrente da Montepulciano in 1584. The running of the estate fell to the incompetent Roberto, who within two years almost ran the family into bankruptcy with his gambling and lechery. After Roberto broke his neck after drinking and riding, the daughter, Chiara, was able to reclaim the family's fortunes by winning exclusive rights to trade with the Sultan Mehmet II in Istanbul.

<sup>ii</sup> "Clear wells spring not, sweet birds sing not, Green plants bring not forth their dye/ Herd stands weeping, flocks all sleeping, Nymphs back peeping fearfully/ For Rabbitt Foofoo hath killed a mouse."

<sup>iii</sup> Sir Toby: How sayest' thou, my lord, that bunny frou-frou a pestilence doth bring upon these shores? Wherefore cometh he? How be't it the field-mice now?

*Vali and the Troll*

in a quiet woodland ceremony.

Syr Cordigan and Dianne soon retired to other duties. The King, knowing that Vali and Ragnheithr were beloved of the people (and quite adept at dealing with Trolls), did command them ascend the Baronial seats of Ramshaven, and thus did they become protectors of the land in both name and deed.

In the years that have passed since, no Trolls have been seen in Ramshaven. Ragnheithr was made principal of the order of the Laurel for her knowledge of the ways of the people of the North, and Vali commanded a knighthood for his service to the crown, and prowess on the field.

And here at last my tale ends. If I have exaggerated any part of it, it was only to enhance the reputation of my baron and baroness. But I tell you this if you do not believe me; Look to Vali and you will see that he alone of all the Knights of Ealdormere will carry no sword, but only his axe and upon it the image of a headless troll.

# The Badger and the Magic Fan

Traditional Tale interpreted by Yoshikuri Nagayo

Once, long ago, there lived a badger. He was smarter than average and was constantly trying to find a way to make himself a better life. He was thinking on this, one day, when he happened upon a group of five tengu children playing with a magic fan. When they waved the fan on their faces with their right hands, their noses would grow. When they used their left hands, their noses would shrink. They were having great fun with this game.

The badger wanted the fan, so he changed himself into a tengu child and carried a tray of seven jelly buns to them. They all ate a bun, leaving one left. The Badger suggested that they all close their eyes and whom ever kept them closed the longest, got the last bun. The tengu agreed and closed their eyes and the badger ran off with the fan. He had not gone far when he spotted a girl in a Shinto shrine, fast asleep. She was the daughter of a powerful warlord. The badger waved the fan over her face, causing her nose to grow, then went into the woods again. When the girl woke, she was very upset and ran home. Her father was equally upset and took her the local witches. They made a special pepper that, once sprinkled on the girl's nose, would cause magic sneezing that would shrink the nose to its normal size. They sprinkled once and the girl sneezed, but the nose stayed the same. They sprinkled twice, three and four times, but no amount of sneezing restored the nose. The warlord was angered by the failure and chased the witches all over Japan, sprinkling the pepper on *their* noses and making *them* sneeze.

When he got back, he took his daughter to the thinkers of Japan, the smartest men around. They thought and thought and thought and thought. Then they thought and thought and thought. When they were finally done thinking, they thought some more. They suggested that the girl tie her nose in decorative knots and bows. It would not shrink, but at least it would be aesthetically pleasing. The warlord did not like this idea either, so made a proclamation that the person that could shrink his daughters nose would win her hand in marriage.

The badger heard this and jumped at the opportunity. He introduced himself to the warlord as a magic nose shrinker, then waved the magic fan over the girl, using his left hand and shrank the nose. They were married that day.

As the badger snored loudly on his wedding bed, the tengu children came in the window, drawn by the horrible sound. They took the fan and waved it, causing the badgers' nose to grow and grow, such that it reached the

## The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale

### APPENDIX ONE

The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale: A 12<sup>th</sup> Night Winterlude  
Transcribed, edited and abridged, with glossary by Chiara da Montepulciano

Ike was a sturdy Skraeling hare  
Disporteth through the Greene  
Ik scoopen-up the fielden mice  
And smacken 'em on the heede  
And wo' – oh wo' the tragedye  
That I ha' comen to,  
For I was caught by the Fayerye  
Queene  
And now I am a goon.

Twas in the merrye month of May  
That nones je dy vous.  
In fielden and in forest trae  
The sely bestes iroone.  
Zephyrus with his sleighte breathe  
Eek maken stryf for me;  
Ik ken 'twould be fair playynge  
To maketh subtiltee.

Anon, anon the Elfe-Queene come  
With ernest countenance;  
“Oh Skraeling whennes doth delight  
In thy mysgovernance?  
Tormentrie-not the caytyves  
Desist thy ways sae crule,  
For I be the Elfen-Fairye Queen  
And thee shalt be a goon!”

She tolden me once, she tolden me  
tweye,  
She chydeth me fair of thre.  
“Why dost thou scoopen fielden mice  
And smacken them on the heed?  
Oh Skraeling I have warned thee thrice  
Demeth thee I shall doon,  
For sith thou didst deny my plea  
Now thou shalt be a goon!”

**capul** small riding horse  
**ike I Skraeling** barbarian  
**disporteth** amuse oneself  
**heede** head

**goon** ugly mythical thug

**nones...vous** this I tell you  
**trae** track, path  
**sely** foolish, hapless **bestes**  
animals  
**iroone** run **Zephyrus** the  
West Wind  
**sleighte** trickery.  
**eek maken stryf** is making  
trouble  
**ik ken** I thought **playynge**  
fun  
**subtiltee** trickery

**ernest countenance** fair of  
face  
**whennes...delight** why do  
you enjoy  
**mysgovernance** misbehav-  
iour  
**tormentrie** torture  
**caytyves** wretched creatures

**tweye** twice  
**chydeth** scolded **thre** thrice

**demeth** judge **doon** do  
**for sith** because  
**deny my plea** ignore my

*The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale*

the gardens of the house in Genoa, and allowed bunnies to run free in the vineyards – Chiara believed that the rabbits kept the vermin away, and that their droppings secured the excellent health and high quality of the Abruzzo grapes, for which the Montepulciano label is still famous.

Perhaps of primary importance in this find is the never before seen addition to the Canterbury Tales, “The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale”. Diagnostic tests on the manuscript, ink, and handwriting show that the fragment is quite definitely written by Chaucer, despite the fact that there are many aspects of the story that differ dramatically from other of the Canterbury tales. The most notable difference is the scansion: Chaucer's rhyme scheme is generally 10 syllable verses of AABB. “The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale” is verses of 8 lines, with a rather unusual rhyme scheme: Verse one is abbbbcbc, while the following 5 verses follow the ababcdcd scansion. It was as if the first verse was written choppily after Chaucer had imbibed too much ale... or else plagiarized it from a children's nursery rhyme that has not survived.

As well, the story is told from the perspective of a talking horse – in no other story does Chaucer use an animal to tell a tale. In fact, there is no reference anywhere in Middle English literature of a story being told from the perspective of an animal. And yet, in a text that accompanies the Italian translation, Chiara sites numerous stories of animals with voice, primarily Greek and Roman myths, and the stories of Aesop, the 12<sup>th</sup> century Persian, which she would have heard in the courts and harems of the Sultan.

*The Badger and the Magic Fan*

heavens themselves. It just so happened that there were two builders building a bridge between clouds when the nose jutted out. They thought it would make a wonderful pole in their bridge and hauled the badger up and up and up.

The badger was never seen again.

# A Short Tale of Temujin

Lady Ivanna the Oblivious

*This tale is intended to be told aloud.*

Greetings my good Lords and Ladies.

My name is Toregene, I hail from the great city of Zhongdu under the rule of our "Precious Warrior" Chengis Khan. Have you not heard him called thus before? Precious Warrior is the meaning of Chengis in the Mongol tongue.

Even at his birth it was foretold that he would achieve such. He was born with a blood clot clutched in his hand, and of course, we all know that as an omen of a heroic warrior.

Of course he was not named Chengis at birth, he earned that name as he did that of "Khan of Khans", but even as a young man, he showed his skill in outwitting his adversaries. Why, even before he married his wise and lovely wife he had begun to gain a reputation. Have you not heard of his early exploits? Well then, perhaps you would allow me the priveledge of telling you my favorite tale?

When Temujin (for that was the name to which he was born) was about 15 or 16 years old he was already leading as hard a life as any. He had been exiled from his clan for daring to declare himself clan leader after his father's death ( they thought him only a child, you see) and was slowly forming a clan of his own. It was on a hunting trip for his clan that he was most evilly ambushed by an enemy clan. He had been tracking a trail which led into a vale surrounded by rocky hills when down from the hills came a cry, and five men or more came rushing at him. He made a valiant effort to defeat them but, alas, he had only his hunting bow and no sword with which to defend himself.

Sadly, he was captured, and none of his clan knew what had become of him. His enemies bound him tightly and dragged him to their camp; it seemed that he was doomed but he remained quiet and they believed him to be cowed by their prowess. As the night fell and the men began to relax at the fire he called out to one. He said he would do them no good for ransom or slavery if they let him starve and he wailed in such a manner that they must either feed him or slay him to gain any peace. One of the captors, (the villainous beasts!), did have him unbound but for his feet and gave him of their supper. He sat and ate and was quiet and compliant until all but his guard was asleep. The wise Temujin feigned sleep and as the thief leaned in to be sure, he used the rope which had held his hands and strangled the cur without making a sound. Temujin slipped into the night

# The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale: Exegesis On A Lost Manuscript

Until recently hidden in what was once a wine cellar of the ruins of the convent of the Sisters of Santa Chiara, a discovery was made that may change the face of the English literary canon for all times.

The Villa Mandragore is an upscale B&B in Southern Italy's Tuscany region. Recently bought by an American high-tech magnate, the Villa Mandragore underwent renovations in the late 1990's where, buried deep in the dusty basements, a plumber digging space for a Jacuzzi came across a dusty wine barrel – containing an unusual bundle of manuscripts.

The manuscripts – 37 in number – date primarily from the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and are mostly correspondence between members of the Montepulciano family – a merchanting family with lands in the Tuscany hills and a small fleet of ships that made Genoa its home port. Most of the letters were written by Chiara, the daughter of Ferrante da Montepulciano, and include business as well as personal correspondence – it appears that Chiara was the main merchant/businesswoman of the family, and organized much of the trade between her family's business and Sultan Mehmet II of Istanbul.

However, four of the manuscripts are of importance to English literature: Two manuscripts attributed to Shakespeare, including a hitherto unknown sonnet and a unique fragment (Act II, Scene ii) of the play 12<sup>th</sup> Night; and two fragments from Chaucer's the Canterbury Tales – a small fragment of "The Knight's Tale", and most unual, an altogether new tale, "The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale" (*app. 1*).

Another interesting manuscript, though, is in Chiara's own hand – a translation into Italian from the Middle English, complete with glossary, of "The Nun's Priest's Capul's Tale". Unfortunately the page is badly damaged – apparently due to wine stains – and all that is truly legible is the transcription of the story and a glossary.

A definite theme is evident in these fragments: they all either make reference to, or have as the subject, that ancient legend or fairy tale, "Little Bunny Frou-frou". Why these particular fragments were found together becomes blatantly clear in the form of a number of personal letters written by Chiara to her younger brother Octaviano, who maintained the Montepulciano lands while she was in Genoa: It appears that Chiara had a passion for all things cute, cuddly and furry. As children, Chiara and her brothers were fond of playing "hide the bunny" and other children's games. They would hop around the fields and smack each other about the face and neck, all the while twitching their noses and making little bunny sounds. Later, Chiara and Octaviano maintained a rabbitry in

# Introduction to

## The Nun's Priest's Gapul's Tale

*The following essay and story were written for a bardic competition for Skraeling Althing's 12<sup>th</sup> Night. The theme was to create a piece about the founding of the barony. Our heraldic beast, the Hare Salient, was inspired by the legend of "Little Rabbit Frou-Frou", and the following essay and story were inspired by the competition.*

*Because it was written for a 12<sup>th</sup> Night, there are a number of practical jokes hidden within both the essay and the story itself. For instance, Aesop's Fables are not period; there are two or three made-up words in the story (this by the way, is a period action: Chaucer himself was known to make up words in order to have a line fit a rhyme scheme or scansion); a couple of deliberate grammatical errors have been made; and there are one or two contemporary cultural references.*

*- Chiara da Montepulciano  
MKA Elyse Tera  
January 2002*

### *A Short Tale of Temujin*

and he was not seen by those faithless dogs again. They did search, of course, but his skill at survival was such that he was able to keep himself alive and hidden until he could, once again, rejoin his clan. And that my dear Ladies, (and most noble Lords), was the beginning of the most glorious Khan our people shall ever known.

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# The Three Tests

Lord Gerrard Carpentarius

*(An anytime story for children of all ages.  
Answers to the challenges are at the end.)*

There once lived a great and noble widowed Queen who had ruled her kingdom wisely for many years. Queen Neleh knew the people and the lands very well, as often she would disguise herself as peasant or as merchant or as a fishing net mender. She experienced all the things that the people experienced. Sometimes her experiences were wonderful and some times they were terrible. Sometimes they were strenuous and other times leisurely. Queen Neleh was in fact a student of life. However, it was now time to choose a successor to wear her crown.

Queen Neleh had three children, all fully-grown. In fact they were triplets. She had two sons and one daughter each worthy of ruling the kingdom. The boys were called Brayok and Carltay and her only daughter was called Aural. Each had been educated by the most worthy of scholars. Queen Neleh summoned her children before her. She explained that now was the time for choosing. She also explained that she had decided on giving three tests. Whichever of her children performed them the best would wear the crown. Well, all three of the children were competitive and loved a good challenge and the prize of being ruler of the lands was extremely tantalizing. The first challenge was to take place immediately. Queen Neleh rose from her throne and described the first challenge.

“Your first task is related to the fact that our kingdom flourishes. It flourishes to the point where it has become difficult to keep track of all the produce that our lands and seas can offer. Your first challenge therefore will be to produce the largest number that will represent any number of items or things. You will all return here in four months time.”

The two sons immediately ran to consult with their scholars. Prince Brayok was advised that since the grape harvest was now at its peak that this would truly represent the largest number of items. Prince Carltay had been advised by his tutors that since this was the season for sardines that this harvest would truly represent the largest number of items. Princess Aural however did not consult with her tutors; she was content to tend her small garden. Both sons gathered as many servants as they could and off they went one gathering grapes the other gathering sardines, both laughing at their sister for tending to her garden. However try as they both did the collecting and counting of all those grapes and all those sardines took such a very long time that both began to spoil. In fact much of what they had

## *Fighting in the Woods*

There in the dark he stands alone,  
A hundred foes strong still about.  
He dies, 'neath the crush, upon broken stone,  
Fallen bravely, the last, in the rout.

Now, safe by our hearths, remember the call  
Of Finnvar: “With honor we cannot lose!”  
Remember well the House De Taahe, Rowanhall  
And the men of Castel Rouge.

*Fighting in the Woods*

There will be no death within broken walls.  
 Cried Finnvar: "With honor we cannot lose!"  
 Over fallen stone comes De Taahe, Rowanhall  
 And the brave men of Castel Rouge.

Finnvar stands on the rock with spear in hand,  
 A line of his shield men before.  
 One the other side Beausoleil takes his stand  
 With the rest of the shields to the fore.

The dead at their feet steadily grow,  
 The hot stone wall at their back.  
 The enemy come, still more, row on row,  
 As the skies slowly turn black.

Then Alyce, who had first spotted the foe,  
 Does stagger and fall to her knees.  
 For a spear takes her legs out from below,  
 A spear to her head pays death's fees.

Brave Beausoleil falls in a flurry of steel,  
 Swinging the broken shaft of his spear.  
 The enemy falters, for a moment does feel  
 The cold flashing panic of fear.

Finnvar stands tall on a scarpment of stone,  
 Broken spear tossed to the side.  
 With two swords from dead claimed, standing alone,  
 In the last of the sunlight to die.

From Castel Rouge, James Erec of York,  
 Like a live bird of steel, sword does fly.  
 The blood from his wounds flows black in the dark.  
 The second to last one to die.

Then at the end stands Thoralf the Young,  
 A stripling just new to the war.  
 There is no count of the helmet's he's rung  
 Or the chinks and the gore on his sword.

*The Three Tests*

they sold to some unknown buyer in desperation to pay for what they had gathered. So the two sons gathered what they could and stood before the Queen with what little they had collected. Prince Brayok summoned his servants to bring in bag after bag of the now rotting grapes. Prince Carltay summoned his servants to bring bag after bag of now rotting sardines. Princess Aural did not summon any servants and did not seem to have anything with her.

Queen Neleh approached her three children and repeated the challenge. "Your first task was related to the fact that our kingdom flourishes. It flourishes to the point where it has become difficult to keep track of all the produce that our lands and seas can offer. Your first challenge therefore will be to produce the largest number that will represent any number of items or things. You will all return here in four months time. I see that two of my children have been somewhat successful save for the stench. Therefore I shall hear what their solution is first."

Prince Brayok exclaimed that he had originally collected 10,000,000 bushels of grapes each containing 100,000 grapes. Unfortunately, most of what he had gathered was now rotting. His tally now stood at the total of 10,000,000.

"Prince Carltay what have you provided as answer to my challenge?"

Prince Carltay explained that he too had collected the same number of sardines but because of spoilage most of what he had collected had also begun to rot. His total also stood at 10,000,000.

Queen Neleh now stood before her only daughter. "Princess Aural you stand before me empty-handed. Have you forfeited your solution to this first challenge?"

Princess Aural simply smiled and waved her hand and servant after servant entered carrying bag after bag after bag of dried raisins. With a wave of her other hand servant after servant brought forth bag after bag after bag of salted sardines.

"These things number 10,000,000 times 100,000 times two. This however is not my solution to the first challenge." Princess Aural reached to the pouch that hung at her side. She then proceeded to open the pouch, spilling its contents on the floor. "This," she said, "represents but a small portion of the un-numberable grains of sand that outlines our kingdom and all kingdoms. However, I believe that the challenge was to produce the largest number that will represent any number of articles or things. I now welcome my two brothers to consult with their most worthy tutors to jointly arrive at a new solution."

The two brothers seeing what their sister had brought and done, gathered all of the tutors, and after many debates arrived at yet another solution to the first challenge. Prince Brayok wrote out onto a slate as many numbers as he could possibly fit onto it. There this must be the greatest

*The Three Tests*

number ever they exclaimed. Queen Neleh studied the slate and proclaimed that this truly was a great number. She handed the slate to her daughter and asked if she could produce an even larger number. The Queen then displayed the slate to the two Brothers and proclaimed that princess Aural had successfully completed the first challenge. This truly infuriated the two brothers.

Queen Neleh then pronounced that the next challenge was to begin. She led all three of her children to the great hall. Now the great hall measured some 100 feet square. It had been cleared of everything except a very huge carpet that ran almost from edge to edge. In the center of the carpet in the center of a tall cylinder was a three-sided pyramid precariously balancing on one of its corners. Queen Neleh spoke, "Your second challenge is to retrieve the object on the cylinder in whatever manner you can. However you may not walk on or touch the carpet and the object must not fall to the carpet. The object measures one foot by one foot by one foot. You have but one day to solve this challenge."

The two brothers were both frantic and determined to solve this challenge. They consulted every great tutor and scholar that they possible could. However, princess Aural simply stood at the edge of the carpet with a contemplative look on her face. Soon she arose and retired to her bedroom for a good night's sleep. The next day the Queen summoned her children to the great hall.

"I shall repeat the challenge," announced the Queen. "Your second challenge is to retrieve the object on the cylinder in whatever manner you can. However you may not walk on or touch the carpet and the object must not fall to the carpet. The object measures one foot by one foot by one foot. You have had but one day to solve this. Who shall be first?" asked the good Queen.

Prince Carltay insisted that he would go first. Prince Carltray stood at the edge of the carpet with a great pole that had a basket attached onto its end; beside him stood many tutors and scholars. He began extending and extending the great length of pole with the basket attached on its end until it hovered just slightly above the precariously balancing one foot by one foot by one-foot pyramid. Unfortunately the great length of pole made control very difficult and soon the pole and basket began to waver. Suddenly the basket touched the balancing object causing it to topple. The prince tried to catch it in the basket as it fell. However he was not quick enough and the object fell to the carpet. He had not been successful.

Queen Neleh, after many attempts, reset the pyramid as before. Now stood prince Brayok grinning with his many tutors and scholars. Beside him he held a great contraption that crisscrossed and crisscrossed like so many scissors, at its end was attached a set of large pliers. He began to squeeze the crisscross sections and the contraption extended outward and

*Fighting in the Woods*

Finnvar smiles and steps aside,  
Reveals a broken door.  
And enter all their time to bide  
Knowing, perhaps, they will leave no more.

It grows hot, the sun climbs its arc,  
The rank smell of death creeping through.  
No cricket song nor no bird chirp  
As oppressive silence grows.

Flies drone their cloud beyond the wall  
And carrion feed on natures' dues,  
Waiting only for De Taahe, Rowanhall  
And for the men of Castel Rouge.

The sun crosses the sky this day,  
Death settles herself to wait.  
In the still silence each one does pray  
For a miracle, small or great.

As fires Hell, heat wearies their eyes  
And sleepy death creeps through the stone.  
Eyes grow heavy under merciless skies  
And sleep claims them one by one.

Alyce stands watch in the afternoon haze,  
Sword weighs heavy in her hand.  
Sweat stung eyes through fly swarms gaze  
And catch sight of the enemy band.

"We've got foe coming straight up the hill,  
A force of a hundred or two!"  
The enemy shout: "De Taahe banner still?  
"This day will be one that they rue!"

From within the ruin of the crumbling tower  
In answer comes an echoing cry:  
"Feel the source of Ealdormere's power!  
"Watch as all of their foes as they die!"

# Fighting in the Woods

Lady Alyce de Sheppey

*Here is a True Tale of what happened in the Woods the Year of the Friendship War. Written for the people of Castel Rouge who cried "We have no songs to our glory as fair Ealdormere has to hers."*

The woods lie silent in summer heat  
Caught within sweltering hand  
Bold band of fighters turn from retreat  
And march 'cross forest land.

The enemy are many and wide-spread,  
Move swift through forest and glen  
With silent danger threaten  
The small band of valiant men.

Till at last they reach a rocky hill  
Where stands the tower Leone Gras  
And blowing in the hot wind still  
The tattered banner of De Taahe.

The dead are many at their feet  
At least three bodies deep  
And walls lie broken in defeat  
Strewn remnants of broken Keep.

And standing bold above the day,  
Where the De Taahe banner flies,  
Stands Finnvar, Duke, and Beausoleil  
As though from rock they rise.

"Hail, well met," does Finnvar call.  
"Come you as foe or come as friend?"  
"For know that all our foes must fall  
"And friends, stand with us till the end."

"Well met, Duke Finnvar," the answer came.  
"Here, we know which side we choose,  
"For you well know us by our name –  
"House Rowanhall and the men of Castel Rouge!"

## The Three Tests

outward, until the pliers held the pyramid firmly in its grasp. His eyes filled with glee and his tutors and scholars cheered. The cheering continued and prince Brayok stood gloating with his prize at hand. Unfortunately the moment the prince went to retract the scissors-like device the pliers opened up and once again the pyramid fell to the carpet. Prince Brayok had also failed.

Queen Neleh once again reset the pyramid and turned toward her daughter. Princess Aural stood at the edge of the carpet totally alone. She had no devices beside her. Queen Neleh approached her daughter and stated once again that she appeared to be unprepared to solve the second challenge. Princess Aural simply smiled at her mother and once again reached into her pouch and withdrew an item and retrieved the pyramid.

This made both brothers furious, and both claimed that she had cheated. This time Queen Neleh laughed, and then in a scorn-full voice looked at both of her sons and simply exclaimed that the final challenge would be in three days and that they would have only one hour in which to solve it. For three days both brothers plotted and even sent out spies in hopes of learning the nature and of the solution to the final challenge. However, no one seemed to have any knowledge of this or of any of the challenges. On the third day the Queen summoned her children to the thrown room. All that she had with her were three identical flat pieces of wood.

Queen Neleh stated, "Each flat pieces of wood represented a square foot of land In my other hand I have several grains of wheat. Whomever can plant the most seeds on their square foot of land will have succeeded in this final challenge. The only restriction is that all seeds must be of equal distance from one another."

This time both brothers insisted that their sister go first; that way they would have more time in which to come up with a solution or add to whatever solution that their sister could arrive at. Queen Neleh then turned over a great hour-glass and all watched as the sands of time fell through.

Princess Aural sat on the floor starring at the square for some time. Finally she asked if she could measure the square. The Queen stated that all might measure their squares. The princess left and was gone for quite some time. Meanwhile the two brothers, seeing that the sands of time were beginning to dwindle, became anxious, and first prince Brayok took the bag of seeds and distributed one seed in each corner of the board. "There," he exclaimed. "These are all the same distance apart."

But Prince Caltray only laughed to himself. He new that the distances of the seeds from corner to corner diagonally was not the same distance as the distance of the seeds horizontally or vertically. He took out three seeds and placed them in the shape of an equilateral triangle. This he claimed was the most seeds that could be planted at equal distance from one an-

other.

Suddenly Princess Aural entered the thrown room. She did not carry any measuring device; in fact once again it seemed as though she was not prepared to solve the challenge. Queen Neleh approached her daughter and asked if she had an answer to this final challenge before the sands of the hourglass stopped falling. Princess Aural stood watching the sands of time falling to such an extent that it appeared that there would not be time enough to solve this challenge. Then she calmly walked over to her square and also placed three seeds in the shape of an equilateral triangle. Then with a wave of her hand one of her servants entered carrying an item which she used to the great consternation of her siblings.

The day came for coronation. I am certain that you know whom it was that Queen Neleh chose as her successor. Queen Neleh could not resist asking now Queen Aural how she had come to solve the three challenges so well, and which of her tutors had shown her such wisdom. Now Queen Aural turned and laughed and then smiled. She looked into her mother's eyes and simply said, "Why it was you, dear mother. When you worked in the fields as peasant in disguise, there in a distant plot so worked I. When you tended nets, I also tended nets. When you plied your wares as merchant so I followed. Although it is true that I learned much from my tutors the most valued lessons that I learned, I learned from you."

- 
1. In the first challenge, Princess Aural simply wiped away any of the smaller numbers, and replaced it with a larger number. Even if all of the numbers were nines then all that she would have needed to do was to erase one and substitute two, thereby increasing the amount. The key to this challenge lies in the fact that numbers are infinite. Only the last person that took this challenge would be successful in winning. However, Princess Aural not only bested her brothers by producing the largest number that could represent any number of articles or things, she also bested them in how to collect any produce that had a tendency to spoil. These were lessons she had learned from actual life experiences. She had worked with both grape grower and fisherman and knew what they did when they could not sell all of their fresh produce.
  2. Princess Aural only needed to put on a pair of gloves and then carefully roll up the carpet until such a point that she could easily reach the delicately balancing object. She had seen other merchants roll up carpets in order to move or acquire an object or an underlying carpet.
  3. Princess Aural placed three seeds in an equilateral pattern and since the flat piece of wood was one foot square, the greatest distance between the seeds could only have been one foot. You may recall however that one of her brothers had also chosen this answer. So why did she summon one of her servants and what did that servant bring? Well, the servant brought in the one foot by one foot equilateral pyramid from the previous challenge and then carefully placed 3 of any one of the sides on top of the seeds. She then wet the tip of the equilateral pyramid and attached a fourth seed. How did she come to solving this challenge? What life experience had taught her to think in 3-dimensional terms? Well to tell you the truth I haven't the faintest idea. Do you? Perhaps .... Just perhaps someone had told her a most interesting and thought provoking story...

closely followed by Sophron.

While all the discussion was taking place in the palace, Karpos and his henchmen were down at the beach with the prisoner, standing by an open cave which had a large stone in front of it. Karpos asked Chloe if she wanted to have a poison to drink which would make her drowsy, causing her to die painlessly in her sleep. She said no, but he put the flask in the cave anyway and then moved away so that his men could roll the stone into place. As they sealed the tomb, they could hear Chloe singing a lament for Icarus -- and how she would join him soon in the land of the dead.

After their work was done, Karpos and his men decided to broach an amphora of wine at a tavern in town. Executions were always an unpleasant business, even when bloodless.

A short while after Karpos and his men had left, Theron and Sophron rushed onto the beach and started trying to push the rock away from the mouth of the cave containing Chloe. Unfortunately, the two of them alone couldn't move it, and when they paused to get their breath, they decided to look for Karpos and his men to help them.

They looked and looked, and finally Sophron found them, but they were just drunk enough that they didn't believe his story about the stay of execution. It wasn't until Prince Theron appeared on the scene, that they finally believed there had been a reprieve, and they hastily accompanied the Prince back to the seashore to release Chloe.

But when they arrived and rolled away the stone it was too late. Chloe, despite her earlier intentions, had taken the poison and was drifting into a deep sleep. Theron carried her out of the cave and set her down on the beach where he told her of his love for her. Within a few moments of their arrival, she died.

Prince Theron returned to the palace where he vehemently cursed the King -- that Minos would be humiliated by his wife falling in love with a bull, and that Minos, himself, would live to see the fall of Knossos and the destruction of his magnificent palace by earthquake and fire. Then Theron left Knossos and set out to wander the world, lamenting the needless death of Chloe until he, too, died and joined her in the realm of shades.

*The Tragedy of Chloe*

No one was willing to defend her, in case they should be forced to take her place.

Karpos led her away to be imprisoned but allowed her to stop and pick a flower when the King wasn't looking.

Meanwhile, Minos dismissed all the courtiers but one: his most trusted advisor, Philokrates. They strolled through an olive grove and, thinking that they were alone, the King spoke freely about the punishment he would inflict on Chloe as an example to the rest of the slaves. Minos told Philokrates that, because of his clever way with words, he would be leading the questioning of the prisoner at her trial that afternoon. Unfortunately for the King and his advisor, Sophron, personal servant of Prince Theron, had hidden himself nearby and hear the whole conversation. After the plotters returned to the palace, Sophron left the grove and immediately ran off to find Prince Theron who had gone hunting that morning with a few of his friends from the court

Later that day, Karpos led Chloe from the tower to the palace for her trial. On the way, Chloe burst into tears and told Karpos about how she had seen her beloved Icarus fall from the sky into the sea. Never had she felt so helpless. She had cried out for someone to take a boat to rescue him, but no one had heard her and he drowned.

As they entered the court, the king looked formidable, indeed, upon his throne. Under Minos' harsh stare and the relentless questioning of Philokrates, Chloe was completely bewildered. She kept trying to explain and only ended up contradicting herself. Her story became hopelessly muddled as Philokrates continued to insist that she had been an accomplice in Daedalus' plan, thereby causing the King to lose a valuable tool. Poor Chloe! She wasn't very good at staying out of the verbal webs that Philokrates was spinning and, realising that she was doomed, began crying again. Finally, Minos declared her tears to be an admission of her guilt and delivered the judgment that Chloe should be entombed in a cave on the very seashore where Daedalus and Icarus used to take their walks accompanied by guards.

Karpos led the shattered young woman away to her fate. A few moments after they left, Prince Theron rushed in, still muddy from hunting. He pleaded with his uncle to release Chloe, arguing that such a perfect face and body could never harbour an impure soul. After some discussion, Minos, who had a soft spot for his nephew, rescinded the penalty and ordered Chloe's release. Elated, the Prince ran from the court to find her,

## Sir Gareth of the Kitchen

Mistress Marian of Heatherdale

*Part of a series of Arthurian stories. This story is Part VII.*

The storyteller speaks...

Through the years, King Arthur's court at Camelot grew in fame and many flocked to join the brotherhood of the Round Table. For who would not want to sit among the bravest Knights of the land: Sir Gawain, Sir Bors, even Sir Lancelot? One such young man, a tall youth with dark hair and the accent of the Northern Kingdoms, presented himself one day before the King and begged of him two boons -- one to be answered now, and the remaining boon a year hence. Arthur thought well of the young man's composure and granted his first request, which was for nothing more than food and drink at Arthur's hall. The King would have agreed to much more, for rival and friend alike were never turned away from Camelot, but at the young man's insistence Arthur called forward Sir Kay his Seneschal and gave the youth into his keeping. But sour Kay thought little of this strange boy, who firmly but most courteously refused to give his name.

"Well then," sneered Kay, "I must assume you are some lazy peasant's son, here to stuff yourself at the King's table. For look at your soft hands! Not a day's hard labour ever marked them. I shall call you Beaumains, on account of your fair hands, and you shall work in the kitchen to pay for your lodging here!" And so for month after month, Beaumains slaved away in the hot kitchen with nary a complaint. The more honourably he served, the more angry Sir Kay became with him, for he would not admit that he had erred in his assumption.

At the great feast of Pentecost, a noble damsel came rushing into the hall in the midst of the merriment and threw herself at the King's feet, crying, "I am Lady Linnett, Your Majesty. I beg that you give leave for Sir Lancelot to rescue my sister, the Lady Lionors, who is besieged in her very own keep by an evil Knight!" And this she said with a good many tears, so that the Queen herself looked upon her with pity. But first to answer her was Beaumains, who stepped forward and, still holding a platter of meat, claimed this adventure as his second boon of King Arthur. Upon hearing this, the maid leapt to her feet and protested indignantly, but Arthur would not be swayed from his word. "Then I shall carry the shameful news that Camelot has no better help to send than a mere kitchen knave!" And she stormed from the hall.

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For days Beaumains rode after her, bearing only a fine sword -- not even a shield or helm to protect him. He always rode a bit behind, for Lady Linnett was a constant source of derision and mockery of his lowly estate. But three times they were challenged on the road, and three times Beaumains vanquished their foes. The first, a dread knight in black armour, did not even offer honourable challenge but thundered from the forest to attack. Beaumains slew him with one stroke, taking the black armour for his own. But Lady Linnett did not praise him for his valour. "Fuagh! Thy stench appalls me, scullion, even hidden behind that armour! Ride behind!" And this Beaumains did, without complaint. The second, known as the Knight of the Green Field, lost in a fair joust. Beaumains spared his life, telling him to go hence to Camelot and offer his service to King Arthur on behalf of the Knight of the Kitchen. This feat Lady Linnett looked upon in wonder, and held her tongue. And so too did the next knight fall in joust, a knight all attired in blue, and was also sent to Camelot.

Lady Linnett could hold her peace no longer and asked, "Who are you that you fight so honourably? Surely you are more than I had first assumed." Her knight only bowed and said, "I am Gareth of Orkney, son of King Lot and Queen Morgan La Fay; Arthur's own nephew and Gawain's brother, though they recognized me not. I shall not fail in this quest I have undertaken for you." And so it was that Lady Linnett regretted her rash words, and Sir Gareth forgave her joyfully.

Soon they came to the castle of Lady Lionors, all ringed round with armies of the evil Knight who sought her lands. They stopped beneath the boughs of a great oak tree, into which the heads of defeated knights had been strung like fruit; there Sir Gareth made ready to blow his ivory hunting horn. But Lady Linnett cast herself at his feet and begged him to wait, saying: "This Red Knight's strength waxes and wanes with the sun, and by eventide he will be no stronger than a mortal man and easily defeated." But Gareth would not wait to fight a weakened foe, and blew a loud blast upon his horn. The Red Knight answered the call and the two clashed in a mighty joust -- as all the army gathered round to watch the outcome. And at the height of midday, Sir Gareth struck such a resounding blow that the Red Knight fell dead from his saddle, to the great rejoicing of those who watched from the castle walls. As the Red Knight's army fled the field, Lady Lionors herself rode from the gate to meet her saviour.

"Pray tell who has delivered us this day?" she asked imperiously, from high upon her palfrey.

Gareth knelt humbly before her and replied, "I am known as Beaumains, and I serve in Camelot's kitchen."

"What?!" she cried, appalled. "Then you have my thanks, but nothing more. I will not waste a high feast on one so lowly born." And with that

*The Tragedy of Chloe*

shift.

That night the stars fell thick and fast from the sky. Many members of the court, including the King, watched in awe from the palace windows. The next day a storm blew in from the sea and Minos, taking both of these events as portents of evil, postponed his visit to the prisoners until a more auspicious time. By late afternoon the weather cleared and the king, advised by his courtiers, decided to see Daedalus the next day. That night even more stars fell from the sky, but Minos decided to continue with the visit anyway.

The following day was warm and sunny. Theron decided to go hunting with some of the other young men of the court, rather than visit the inventor.

On such a beautiful day, Chloe was light-hearted as she took breakfast to the prisoners. When she emerged, she told Karpos that she was certain that she was starting to win a place in Icarus' heart, because he smiled at her and said 'Thank-you' for his food.

Suddenly, the King's retinue arrived at the tower and Chloe was about to hurry out of the way with her tray of dishes, when one of the courtiers shrieked and pointed at the sky. All eyes turned heavenwards and pandemonium reigned when they realized that the strange-looking birds flying away from the island, were none other than Daedalus and Icarus, using the feathers that they had so painstakingly gathered and formed into wings. The King was furious. He stormed up to the stupefied Karpos and demanded to know who was the last person who had been in the prisoners' company. Karpos pointed to a stunned Chloe, who was unable to look away from the flying men. Minos ordered Chloe brought to him. Only when two of the guards had grabbed her arms, causing her to drop the tray and dishes with a crash, did she tear her horrified gaze away from the sky and become aware of the people around her.

When brought before the King, Chloe was stunned to learn that she was being blamed for the prisoners' escape. Minos said that she should have reported the unusual activity in the tower to the guards. Chloe tearfully replied that she hadn't noticed anything -- except that Icarus had been polite to her.

Minos ordered her to be shut in the tower prison until he could decide what to do with her. He was so angered by the escape of his prize that he was looking for some one to serve as a scapegoat.

# The Tragedy of Chloe

Anne Le Gris

A long time ago, on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea, lived a King named Minos who had commissioned the famous architect, Daedalus, to build the most magnificent palace in the world in the city of Knossos. The palace was so huge that the local people referred to it as 'The Labyrinth' because it seemed to have hundreds of rooms and halls that went on forever. Since this project took many years to complete, Daedalus brought his son Icarus to live with him in Crete.

After the palace had been completed, the King was so proud of the new structure, that he imprisoned Daedalus and Icarus in order to prevent Daedalus from building anything more magnificent. But the King was a canny man. He wanted the most magnificent palace in the world, but he also wanted to keep Daedalus alive, because he was renowned for his genius in other fields as well as architecture. So, he imprisoned the father and son together in a tower by the sea, where they could see the water and the sky, but could not escape. King Minos set one of his most trusted servants, Karpos, to organize the guard for the prisoners, with instructions to bring him word if Daedalus was seen working on anything that might prove useful.

One of the palace slave girls, a beautiful Athenian, was given the daily tasks of bringing food to the prisoners and cleaning the tower. Her name was Chloe and although she was beautiful, she wasn't very smart. She soon fell in love with Icarus, but he never seemed to notice her much. She did not despair, however, and quietly went about her business, telling only her good friend, Karpos, of her feelings for the handsome young prisoner.

Another young man did notice her, though -- Prince Theron, nephew and heir of King Minos. Theron was afraid to declare his love to her because if his uncle ever learned of it, he could easily have her removed or even killed. So he, too, went about his business, trying to pretend that all was right with the world. The only person who knew of the Prince's passion was his faithful servant, Sophron.

One day, Karpos sent word to the King. Daedalus, who had been collecting feathers from the seashore for months on his daily walks, was finally making something with them. Minos replied that he would visit the prisoners the next day, so Karpos arranged to be with the guard for that

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she turned to leave -- but Lady Linnett rushed after her, catching hold of her stirrup.

"You do this man great wrong, sister," said Linnett, "for he is Sir Gareth of Orkney and the most steadfast knight in all the land."

Upon hearing that he was a King's son, Lady Lionors made loud exclaim over Sir Gareth and offered him all hospitality in the hopes that he might pay court to her. But Gareth was not fooled, and returned instead to Camelot with Lady Linnett, who became his wife. And from that day onward, Sir Gareth of the Kitchen was ever known as one of the greatest of the Round Table.

# Wulfgang's Progress

Laird Colyne Stewart

Wulfgang is a wanderer, a traveler. Anyone that has met him can tell you so. From the pilgrim's staff, hung with tokens, clasped in his calloused hands, to the dust on his boots, all of his appearance proclaims him to be a traveler.

Before Wulfgang found his way to Ardchreag he would wander from place to place, meeting new people, partaking in new experiences, but never staying anywhere for long. One day, he found himself following a dirt trail that led towards the great lake that separates Ealdormere from its parent Kingdom of the Middle. Along this path he met a man heading in the opposite direction. As he drew near the stranger's garb declared him to be a man of importance, though Wulfgang did not recognize his device.

When they came face to face, Wulfgang hailed the man, who grew enraged.

"How dare you speak to me!" he thundered. "You will address me as Your Royal Majesty Duke Sir Master Master, and speak only when spoken to! Now kneel and do me homage!"

Now Wulfgang knew the man to be Peer Fear, and he laid his staff against a tree, picking up a spoke from a wagon wheel lying by the road. With this weapon Wulfgang chased Peer Fear through trees, up hills and down valleys, beating him severely, until finally the man crawled away whimpering.

Collecting his staff, Wulfgang continued on his way. Soon he met a beautiful woman sitting in a throne by the side of the road. Her clothes were resplendent, and her throne was studded with jewels. Sacks of gold lay spilled at her feet, and a pile of scrolls sat on a plinth to her left.

"Hail traveler," she called to Wulfgang as he approached. "I greet you, and wish you well." She held out a ringed hand which Wulfgang kissed. She then asked him to fetch her an apple from a tree a good distance away. Wulfgang was about to accept her task when she added, "If you do, I'll give you a scroll." She then began to recite a list of chores for him to do, and the rewards he would get for doing so, and Wulfgang realized that this was Promise of Reward.

Wulfgang went to the tree and found a wormy windfall apple which he brought back to the lady. "This," he said, "is what you get when you only do something for the reward." He left her as she sat rigid in her throne, sputtering in anger.

Walking on, he met another woman, this one dressed in an exquisite gown who, once he had drawn near, began to criticize his clothes, his hair,

*Ouen and the Giantess*

for.

Burgess, Glyn S., and Busby, Keith. The Lais of Marie de France. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1986. This is a prose translation of twelve French poems found in a 13<sup>th</sup> C manuscript. The poems relate unexpected adventures of one or more people and may originally have been sung to the accompaniment of a harp or other instrument.

Margaret of Navarre. The Heptameron. London: n.p., 1880. This is a collection of stories first published in 1558, but written some time before 1549. Like the Decameron, they are divided into groups by theme.

Robinson, F.N. (ed). The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin company, 1957. This contains the Canterbury Tales, written some time between 1387 and 1400, as well as his other poems, stories and essays. Some of the tales related in the Canturbury Tales were copied from The Decameron or used a similar source.

Spears, Richard A. Slang and Euphemism. Middle Village, New York: Jonathan David Publishers, Inc., 1981.

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eyed giantess had seen the foolish lad being led away to his certain fleeing and took pity on him for his sweet smile. She thundered from the alehouse, a seven foot tall Amazon, and brandishing daintily scented fists the size of hams, sent the thief running as though the very demons of hell were after him. Ouen was speechless at the giantess' great beauty, generosity and strength, the like of which is rarely seen in one maiden. Yet being a courteous lad, he quickly found his tongue and thanked her prettily. And so my lords and ladies, Ouen's purity was preserved, although he was no longer so innocent. He returned to Caldrithig shortly thereafter, wiser and filled with the wonder of his encounter with the kind and lovely giantess.

## Documentation - Ouen and the Giantess

This tale is told in the style of a tale from the Decameron. This style of story was used from at least the 14<sup>th</sup> C through the early 17<sup>th</sup> C and formed part of several collections. It has a brief synopsis, an introduction to the audience, a short adventure and a conclusion which draws the audience back into the story. The tale itself has a few characters who are described briefly. Most characters are no more than caricatures, without so much as a name. The important element is an amusing anecdote which, as in many tales of the Decameron, has a moral of sorts. Like some of the Decameron tales, the story line has racy elements which are implied more by the intonation and gesture of the teller than by the words on the page.

As explained in the story, this is indeed a true adventure which befell Ouen atte Thorne during his visit to An Tir last summer.

All the words used date from the 1300's or earlier. For clarity, I have avoided archaic synonyms and used only words which are still in fairly common use.

\_\_\_\_\_. Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford: Oxford Press, .

Basile, Giambattista. *Il Pentamerone*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1943. This is a collection of fairy tales first published in Naples in 1637. The stories are from folklore and may predate the collection by many years.

Boccaccio, Giovanni. *The Decameron*. Garden City: International Collectors Library, 1930. This is a collection of short stories first published in 1348 or shortly thereafter. They are divided into various serious and comical themes. The second group of ten tales are of those who after passing through various adventures reach a happy end they had not hoped

*Wulfgang's Progress*

his staff, and all other aspects of his appearance. And Wulfgang knew at once that he faced Authenticity's evil offspring Intolerance. Calmly he asked her if that was a watch he saw poking out from under her sleeve, at which point Intolerance turned bright red and exploded.

Humming a tune, Wulfgang's feet carried him farther along the trail where he found an old man mired in a bog, his load spilling from his back. Without a second thought Wulfgang waded into the mud and helped the man extricate himself. Once freed he sat the old man on a large rock and went back for the man's load.

When he had gathered all the man's belonging, and repacked them in his sack, the old man placed his gnarled hand on Wulfgang's shoulder.

"My name is Commoner," he said, "and the load you help me carry are my troubles. By your aid I know you, for you are Chivalry and Courtesy, the true aim of all who live in these lands."

The man's words pleased Wulfgang more than any other reward could, and the two of them walked on, carrying the bundle between them.

# The Ramshaven Sheep-Raid

Lady Gwerydd verch Rhys

*Based on a True Story*

Come Mere-Dwellers	to catch chronicled
the strange account	of our sheep raiding.
Such was the morn,	the sun's delight,
that we, sword-men,	weapons gleaming,
sought some pursuit	to spend the day.
Heroes' leisure	was longed for then.
Mead and feasting	soon meant nothing.
Names were not forged	for feeding girths,
nor skops' praises	summoned for sloth.
Bravest exploits	earned those rewards.
So Baethun,	bold Long-Runner,
green companion,	greeted his Thane:
Vali the Black,	brave blade-brother.
"Day's gleam is wasted	with deeds waiting
so linger not,	Lord of the Rams.
Collect your tithes	and claim your taxes
from rogue herd-men	hiding your due.
Lambs they owe you	but they lack payment.
Suffer no shame	from sheep watchers
who, lacking titles,	laugh at your laws."
Hearing such words,	the wise ruler
found his speaking	full with the truth.
He gave consent	and summoned companions,
Ordering Baethun,	bright thought-shaper,
To plan their march.	Grimaldi of the North,
Cynred's song-smith,	did claim a place
in Vali's raiding,	lordly bear's man.
Then D'Arnot's son	sent for Gwerydd,
scop of the West,	and woman Cymric,
to keep record	and recall their courage.
They gathered blades,	great anvil-born,
and shining mail,	scales of iron.
Shields and helmets,	soldier's attire
were fitted well.	Furnished for war,
the rime raiders	with raiment bright
began their quest:	granting justice

# Queen and the Giantess

Siglinde Harfnerstochter

A tale wherein a young innocent is taken in by a villain while on a journey, but is rescued by a giantess.

My lords and ladies, I would tell you a cautionary tale so that others as sweet and pure as our hero may avoid a similar fate. Every word of this scandalous tale is true and I hope that by paying heed you may never be as foolish as the youth of my tale, but always be as lucky.

It happens that there was a certain young man of Caldritch, one Ouen by name. Ouen was a handsome lad, barrel chested and adorned with a head of jet and silver curls. Although not overly modest, yet he did not have too high an opinion of himself, and his friends valued him for his humorous tongue. Sadly, his wit was not always matched by common sense, a failing which he would soon rue.

One day, Ouen resolved to visit the great city of Lion's Gate in the distant kingdom of An Tir. Despite the dangers of the road, he arrived in the city without major incident. Upon reaching An Tir, which was filled with rich merchants and great buildings, he ran about as gape-mouthed as any rustic. Each night he would dine in a different inn and meet new friends. Each day he would resume his tour of all the city's shrines and pilgrimage sites.

As time went on, Ouen wearied of the common delights of An Tir and determined to visit those places where greater adventures beckoned. He had heard only the vaguest rumours, but those told of taverns frequented by the city's most colourful and outrageous wantons. Unknown to Ouen, these were in truth the lairs of thieves. One evening, he entered one such alehouse, known as the Blue-Feathered Cockerel. It was presided over by a slim-hipped giantess as artfully painted as any bawd. For further height, this fair maiden wore chopines that would make the harlots of Venice blush with envy. Young Ouen immediately fell in with a handsome youth who began to flatter him and ply him with ale. They talked and drank, and became quite friendly. After a time, the youth proposed moving to a quieter place to continue their conversation away from the noisy rabble. Ouen was by this time quite merry with drink and fair words, and agreed without further ado.

As they reached the street, the rascal put his arm around Ouen in a friendly manner, then began to tug on his wallet, for he was no other than a cutpurse! Poor Ouen stood stunned with ale and the revelation that his friend was false. Suddenly there was a roar from the tavern. The sharp-

*The Ramshaven Sheep Raid*

Such was the reward	of wolf-named victors,
and grim ram-friends	grown rich with grain.
Thus soldiers were praised,	proud shield-holders,
and fortune won	by wolf-warriors.

*The Ramshaven Sheep Raid*

to roguish churls.	Charged with fervour,
they made their way	oe'r wide domains
until foothills	finished their march.
The high mountains	held before them,
barring passage	with peaks of stone.
Heavy were their hearts	at having rocks
delay reprisal.	Lengthening shade
recalled their time,	as thought Vali
under the crest---	courage called him
to carry on.	The cliff conqueror,
rich in courage,	climbed o'er the rocks.
His strength was great,	gallant wolf-friend.
Baethun, next,	was beckoned then
by Thane's glory.	Going behind,
he followed fast	fighting the stones
dislodged by his lord,	Vali of the Axe.
Grimaldi rose,	met the challenge,
and Gwerydd climbed,	clumsy her garb
when fighting mountains.	She fell often
until the Thane,	towering lord,
held out his axe,	haft towards her,
so she might grasp	the strong handle
and be helped upwards	over the edge.
Deadly the axe,	when drawn 'gainst foes,
but better spent	to save hearth-friends.
The raiders went on.	They roamed the land
by Baethun's	busy guidance.
Hours they spent	searching meadows.
They found little,	farmsteads empty
of sheep still owed.	Only cattle
grazed the lowlands	but Vali ordered:
"Touch no livestock	lacking the sheep.
Bandits and thieves	take anything
while we are lords.	Lambs are our due,
and wool-bearers,	while bulls are loot
not properly ours.	Pilfer no kine!"
Then Baethun	brought his report.
Bitter it was;	though broad the land
no sheep were found.	Following words
that Vali spoke,	they spared cattle
and returned to their	hearths heavy in spirit.
As night's shadow	stole o'er Heaven

*The Ramshaven Sheep Raid*

the ring-giver	gathered his skops.
"Let failure be	fast forgotten
in song's glory.	Sooth their sorrow
with chosen words	wrought in thought's drink."
A fire was built;	beer set flowing
and foamy mead	filled ev'ry cup.
Skops shared word hordes	and soldiers brave
showed their talent	with tales of war.
Then, the young ones,	tired with the hours,
sought to return	to stark dwellings. stead
Kolbjorn stood,	skilled ram-fighter,
and drew his axe.	He offered his aid
to guard children	against all threats.
The bear-sworn rose,	his blade to add.
Gwerydd joined them,	judging her words
spent for the night.	The stars were bright
lighting their way,	lanterns holy.
Much they marvelled	at the mirrors of God
that guided them soundly,	the sailors' map.
They brought their charges	from bandits guarded
then found the fire	earlier left.
Legend-telling	and long epics
filled the circle	but cattle-sounds
drowned their stories.	His shame recalled,
Baethun cried:	"Brave warriors,
we hear legends	and loud praises
for courage and	strength, but children-guards
have we become,	warr'ors for babes,
while shepherds foil us,	steal from our Thane."
Then shame stung them	and their spirits fell.
Kolbjorn growled,	growing angry:
"Let us find them,	and finish the deed!"
Grimaldi stood	and moved forward.
"I go with you,"	Gwerydd shouted
but the Ram Lord said:	"Raiding is good,
worthy of rings,	but women sleep.
I shall shield them	and stay the night."
The wolf-feeders stood,	waiting no more
and left their Thane	on long journey.
 The sun's sister	 spread her gleaming,
lighting the way	for the warrior band.
Fast they travelled	finding the fields

*The Ramshaven Sheep Raid*

cloaked by shadows.	The scop-bane spoke:
"No scoundrel I,	sneaking in gloom.
Silence is the mask	made for outlaws."
He took his mug,	the mead vessel,
and tossed it forth.	Finding the trees,
it shattered apart.	Their presence known,
they voiced challenge.	"Come, you peasants,
we number few	but nevertheless,
shall deal justice."	The darkness was still,
no answer came.	The company lingered
in hopes of response	but held for naught;
the sheep were gone,	stolen by churls.
Vali's orders	still owned the band
so Cynred's man,	clever oath-bound,
noticed the fields	filled with harvest.
Grimaldi spoke	to share musings:
"The tax remains	but mutton are gone
and cattle banned.	Bold perseverance
shall win plunder:	the wheat and grain.
Those thriving crops	shall exchange payment."
The group agreed	and gathered quickly
the farmer's fruits.	The furtive wolf-friends
cartered their load	on looted wains.
Great was their joy	at gaining spoils
to placate the Thane	and tribute secure.
The wolf-coated,	wagon-bearing,
silently went.	The sea of beasts
they marked with tracks	while the merry Cymric
lit their pathway	with lantern bright.
The mountains bowed	n obeisance to them.
The slope seaweed,	sighing in praise,
sheltered the band.	The storm's housing
was lined with clouds:	lordly pennants
that proclaimed triumph	of the courage-filled.
War-spoils were brought	to the wealth-giver.
To honour the deeds	of heroes present,
a mighty blaze,	bane of forests,
was set burning	to banish shade.
Great was the light,	gorged on timber,
that bantams thought	the beacon of God
had risen early	and roosters crowed
in strident chorus	to celebrate
the morning's birth,	break of the day.