

Guy of Warwick

anon

a Middle English romance

*the second or fifteenth century version, retelling the early-thirteenth century Anglo-Norman romance *Gui de Warewic**

Translated and retold in Modern English prose

by

Richard Scott-Robinson

This story has been translated and retold from the Middle English verse romance *Guy of Warwick* (itself a translation of an early-thirteenth century Anglo-Norman French romance) found in Cambridge University Library MS Ff. 2.38, edited by J Zupitza for the Early English Text Society, Extra Series 25 and 26, 1875-6.

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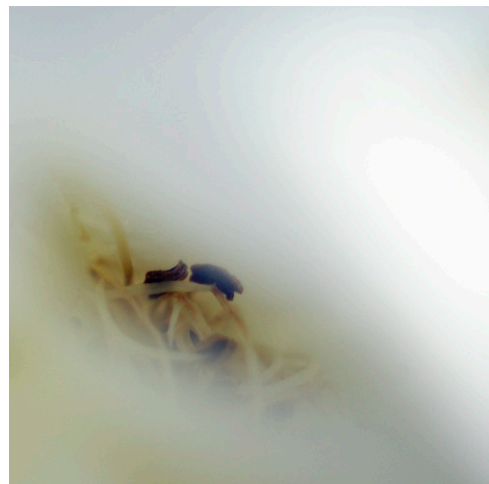
Guy of Warwick

anon

the second or fifteenth century version

Sythe þe tyme þat god was borne · and Crystendome was set and sworne · mane aventewres hathe befallē · that yet be not knowen alle · Therefore schulde men mekely herke · and thynke gode allwey to wyrke · and take ensawmpull be wyse men – Since the time that God was born and Christendom established, many adventures have taken place, not all of which are known about yet. Men should therefore listen closely and be prepared to learn from the wise men who have gone before them, for their marvellous adventures, their honesty, their suffering and their struggles have all been recorded. When the lives of these great men are recounted, we should learn from their great accomplishments for, as a result, we will become wise ourselves, and it is considered a great achievement to leave ignorance behind and become wise.

So I shall tell you about an earl, and no one could tell of a better one. This earl had a good and faithful steward who had a son, and I shall tell you how this good man's son fell in love with the earl's beautiful daughter. The earl was English and he controlled Warwick; he was wealthy and mighty, very courteous, noble in countenance, rich in gold and silver, finely dressed and he possessed many strong castles and fine cities. There was no one to equal him in the whole of England and nobody dared to rise against him, for he would seize them at once and throw them into his prison. He loved horses and distributed fine gifts and rewards, so that everybody respected him and held him in great affection. He was the Earl of Warwick, and lord over Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire as well, and his name was Sir Rohald.



Sir Rohald and his countess had a daughter, a very beautiful girl. Listen to me and I'll describe her for you: she was as white as the flowers in a meadow and very well proportioned, with a fair and healthy complexion, an attractive nose and mouth, a smooth forehead and flaxen hair. Such beauty was unsurpassed, she was a joy to behold, intelligent, well-spoken and under the guidance of several teachers, the wisest in all of England; they taught her astronomy, arithmetic, geometry, music, grammar, logic and fine speaking and she learnt her lessons well and was very highly praised, for she possessed both intelligence and common sense.

Dukes and earls from many lands had come to win this young lady's hand in marriage, but she had spurned them all. Her name was Felice the Beautiful. Of all maidens she bore the flower, she stood head and shoulders above them all.

But let us now turn to the steward. Earl Rohald's steward was from a wealthy family, he was strong and courageous, and no mightier warrior could be found in any fight. He had been born in Wallingford, in Oxfordshire, and this was where his lands were; there was no more powerful man in that part of England and if anybody dared to go against the earl, they soon found themselves in difficulty on a battlefield, and if they fled into Scotland, he would follow them. He knew enough of noble service to be indispensable to any nobleman; he defended his lord's land with great honour and maintained the peace, so that a man could keep gold with no fear of being robbed.

This steward's name was Segward and he had a son named Guy. A fairer young man could not have been found anywhere, amongst the nobility or the common people; he was courteous, knowledgeable and loved by everybody. When he was old enough, he went to serve Earl Rohald, and the earl grew to love him very dearly.

Guy served the earl with his goblet of wine in the knights' chamber, and the earl was very pleased with his excellent squire. Guy lived in Warwick, and there was no young man of his age to equal him. There was not a squire, nor a knight, who did not hold him in the highest regard. And Guy was very generous, which increased his popularity even more. He was strong and handsome and his family were very proud of him. He was not known for losing his temper and he was a good swordsman, and very capable on a horse.

Guy had as his tutor a knight named Sir Hereward of Ardurn who was a well-respected nobleman, and he taught him well.

One Whitsuntide, the Earl of Warwick made a great feast, with many lords in attendance, knights, earls and barons from many districts, and ladies with their maidens. The knights sat in the hall, whilst the ladies retired to a chamber. When the meal was served, Guy attended upon the earl. The earl called to Guy (who was wearing a silk gown) and instructed him to go to his daughter and to serve her.

He looked very handsome as he made his way to the chamber. He went down upon his knees and greeted the fair maiden: 'Madam,' he said, 'may God be with you. My lord has asked me to greet you on his behalf and he has told me to attend upon you today.'

This romance has been described as a novel and it is certainly a full-length work, amounting to nearly twelve thousand lines. The first seven thousand or so contain very little in the way of the strange or inexplicable, but thereafter, things change a lot, and all following Guy's sudden decision, shortly after his marriage, to travel alone to the Holy Land. Perhaps it was reckoned that at this point, ecclesiastical censors would have been satisfied and stopped reading.

Prior to Guy's new life as a pilgrim (and new life it may indeed be) his greatest friend was Tirry, the son of Earl Aubrey of Gormaz, with whom he shared many adventures. Sir Tirry is by now the husband of the daughter of the Duke of Lorraine, but is himself wandering penniless, in search of Guy. When the two meet, Tirry does not recognise Guy, and he continues not recognising him through an entire sub-plot, in which Guy retrieves a sword from a grave mound and uses it to defend Tirry in a trial by combat. Tirry expresses astonishment – yes astonishment – when Guy tells him at last who he is.

If this is not weird enough, there are fights with giants, a journey across the sea on a bed, a fight with a dragon, a weasel emerging from Tirri's mouth as he sleeps, and at the end of this romance, an account of Guy's son Reynbrun entering the Otherworld through a tunnel into a hillside, like Sir Orfeo, in order to release back into this world a friend of his father's who was considered to be dead.

The second or fifteenth century Middle English version of Guy of Warwick is a faithful translation of the Anglo-Norman romance Gui de Warewic and is found also in Cambridge University Library MS Ff. 2.38.

Felice asked him who his father was.

‘My father is Segward, your father’s steward.’

‘Segward is a good man, and I’m sure that all of his family are as well,’ she said. Then the maiden asked for water to be brought; all the maidens washed and went to sit at the tables.

Guy did his best to please this maiden all day, and he did a fine job. There were thirty maidens in that chamber, and they were all very taken by this young squire who had been sent to serve their mistress. But their amorous glances meant nothing to him, for already his affections lay elsewhere; the beautiful Felice had already captured his heart.

Early in the evening, after supper, Guy took his leave and went back to his lodgings, with a heavy heart.

Now he is beside himself with sorrow and doesn’t know what to do. He sighs and weeps, and can’t sleep at night. The nights are the worst. He languishes in misery and his health is suffering. Love has given him such a wound that he wrings his hands and can hardly stand. ‘Alas, that I was born!’ he wails.

This went on for a fortnight. Guy was sorely missed in the earl’s court and in the King’s Hall, for he was usually asked to carve the earl’s meat for him; he would give all who were there a generous portion, from the servants to the nobility.

When the festivities were over and the noblemen had all returned home, Guy returned to court in a very sorry state. At the first opportunity, he fell before Felice and said: ‘For love of you I must quickly die!’ She looked sternly at Guy and said angrily: ‘Are you not Segward’s son Guy? Who made you so foolish as to test my romantic feelings towards you? By Jesus above, if I tell my father what you’ve just said, he’ll have you hanged and drawn! That will be the punishment awaiting you. You’ve made a grave error. No one has ever done this to me before. Get out of my sight or you will die, I give you my word!’

When Guy had listened to this, he went back to his lodgings. Now a new sorrow took hold of him.

Guy was truly in love. Night and day, he languished in such pain that he could not sleep and often wished that he was dead. He took to his chamber and wouldn’t come out; the room became a prison to him. When the earl learned of the state that Guy was in, he felt sorry for him and ordered physicians to go to attend to him. But they couldn’t come up with a satisfactory diagnosis. They asked Guy to describe his symptoms, but he lied to them: ‘My head feels cold and I start to shiver violently, then I feel hot all over and start to sweat profusely. It feels as though I’m burning up, I’m as hot as coal, everywhere. There’s no respite from it, it goes on day and night. I get no sleep at all.’

The physicians could offer no help and thought that prayers might be the best answer. So Guy remained there, sorrowful and lethargic, until one day, he managed to make his way to the castle. And as he wandered about outside, he glanced up into the tower where

Felice had her rooms. 'In there,' he said to himself, 'is the most beautiful creature, the one I mourn for day and night,' and with this he felt so weak and helpless that he fell to the ground in a heap, tore at his clothes, pulled his hair, drew blood and fainted many times. Love had driven him insane with despair.

He got to his feet again, pale, his face drained of blood, and with a new resolve he said to himself: 'I shall have another go at winning this maiden's love. The worst that she can do is to tell her father and have me killed, and then I will die for love of her, which will be no hardship at all. I shall declare my love to her and die today.'

So, weeping and sighing, he made his way to the castle gates. As he walked in the garden, he found Felice there, with a single maiden in attendance. When he saw her, he ran to her and fell upon one knee. 'Have mercy upon me!' he cried. 'I'm to blame, I'm here without your permission, I know, and I know that you don't want to see me, and I know that when your father learns the truth, that I love you, he will have me killed, but I don't care, it will be an honour to have it read or sung that I died because I loved such a noble maiden as you.'

When he had said these words, he lay on the ground. Felice instantly felt sorry for him and asked her maiden to go over and help him back onto his feet. The maiden went over, took Guy into her arms and stood him before Felice.

'You are being very foolish,' she said to him. 'Soon you will be put to death.'

'I know, and I don't care,' he said.



'If my father was a king or an earl,' interrupted Felice's maid, 'and I was as pretty as you are, madam, and he the poorest fellow imaginable, if he loved me as much as he seems to love you, I wouldn't threaten him with death for it!'

'Then let's forget that this ever happened,' said Felice.

Guy fell to the ground once more. Felice looked at him and then went down and took him into her arms. 'Guy,' she said, 'listen to me. I have rejected

knights and earls who have come seeking my hand in marriage. If I were now to accept a young knave like you, how could my honour remain intact? When you are dubbed a knight, and have proved yourself on the battlefield, then, I swear, I will consider offering you my love, I promise.'

When Guy heard this, he fell to his knees in joy. Then he rose to his feet and took his leave from the young maiden.

Guy went back to his lodgings, and the next morning, fit and well again, he made his way to the earl's court. Guy greeted the earl on bended knees: 'Sir,' he said, 'I beg you to

make me a knight. If you will do me this honour, I will serve you for as long as I live.'

'The earl granted his request. 'You shall be made a knight very shortly,' he said.

Guy went off, and with twenty other squires he went into a chamber where each of them was to be dubbed a knight. Each wore a milk-white silken shirt, and over this a coat of purple silk. They all wore hose but went barefoot, and carried garlands of precious stones and pearls. When they had all assembled, the earl went into a room and instructed a squire to carry new swords into the chamber. Each of the knights-to-be grasped one of these swords by the point. On every sword hilt was hung a pair of spurs, newly gilt. They knelt before the altar until it was gone midnight, and then the earl entered the room with two other knights.

'Dear lords,' he said to these knights, 'lend a hand here, for there is need.'

The noble knights knelt at each end of the altar, and the earl stood in the middle. First he approached Guy and took the spurs off the sword; Guy placed them on his feet and knelt before the earl. Then the earl placed the point of the sword above Guy's heart and then placed the blade against his neck, and invited him to become a knight. All the other squires were dubbed in a similar fashion.

The next morning the earl put on a feast. When the new knights had eaten, in the company of many noblemen, and had been sitting at the boards for a long time, they all got up and retired to the chamber. Guy went straight to see Felice.

'Darling, for your sake I have taken the order of knighthood,' he said. 'Now do as you promised.'

'Do what?' she asked. 'You haven't won any glory yet. The first thing that any knight should do is to joust or fight with other good warriors. Go and do your chivalry! Then you can lie beside me. Then you shall have my love and my body shall be yours.'

Guy took his leave and went back to the hall. He found the earl there and fell upon his knees before him. 'Sir,' he said, 'give me leave to travel to other countries where I can find conflict and perform deeds of arms.'

'If this is what you wish, then, by all means, do it,' replied the earl.

Guy took his leave at once. Then he left for his lodgings. His father was there. Guy went down on one knee before him and said: 'Father, listen to me. If you will allow it, I would like to go overseas to test my strength and valour at tournaments.'

'You are very young still,' replied his father. 'You haven't yet developed the strength of a man and I would advise you to wait here at home for a year or two and practice your jousting and your swordsmanship.'

Guy was not pleased with this reply.

'Well, since you have set your heart upon it,' his father relented, 'you shall not go alone,

nor shall you go empty-handed. Go with as much of my gold as you wish, what is mine is yours.'

Segward gave his son a great deal of money and three knights to accompany him. He instructed Sir Hereward, Sir Torald and Sir Uri to look after his son to the best of their ability, and to keep him safe.

Guy accepted his father's blessing and departed. They found a good ship ready to sail and the four of them boarded it. The sails were unfurled, the wind was good, and they sailed into the open sea without needing to use the oars. Soon England had vanished below the horizon. There was nothing to see except for salt water and powerful waves. They sailed all that day, until it was nearly dusk, then land was sighted and they made for it. Quickly, they disembarked and rode into Normandy.

As darkness descended they came to a city where they planned to stay for the night, and arrived at the house of a well-regarded burgher. As they sat at supper (some were eating, some only drinking) the conversation flowed freely and Guy asked the good man if there was any news of a tournament or a joust, or anything of that sort, nearby.

'As it happens, there is!' exclaimed the good man. 'The Emperor of Germany has a daughter, and the emperor has recently announced that a tournament will take place, the greatest that has ever been seen! Every knight from that country will be there, and every knight from Spain as well, and from every district from here to the coast of Brittany. And there is something else I should tell you: the knight who shows the greatest valour there will win a great honour, because the emperor's daughter will be watching and the knight who is adjudged to have won the prize will receive a white gyrfalcon, the finest in all the world, three magnificent warhorses, each as white as snow, two greyhounds, each the fastest ever seen, and in addition, he will win the love of this fair maiden, the emperor's daughter, if he isn't already betrothed or married.'

Guy was very pleased when he heard this: 'When morning comes, with God's grace, we shall quickly make our way there,' he said to his companions.

Guy gave his host a riding horse, and at daybreak he set off with all his knights and squires. Before morning had ended, they arrived at the place where knights were gathering for the tournament.

Guy found himself at once to be amongst like-minded young men who were eager to test themselves. Out of the lists rode a magnificent knight. Guy asked someone who was standing next to him who this knight was and he answered: 'It is Gayerer, the emperor's son, a very powerful fellow who's ready to fight anyone brave enough to go out and challenge him.'

When Guy learned this, he armed himself and rode out to meet him, followed by many other knights who were eager to take up the challenge as well. Then the jousting began.

Gayerer hit Guy so hard on the shield with his lance that it splintered into two pieces, but Guy's armour held firm and Guy's blow knocked Gayerer from his horse. Guy leapt quickly upon Gayerer's steed and let his own canter away.

Mounted on his new horse, Guy took on all-comers. He felled all who stood in his way; he did brilliantly, defeating many knights, and broke so many spears that everyone was astonished. No knight was so strong that a blow from Guy didn't send him sprawling onto the grass.

The valiant Duke Otoun of Pavia, in northern Italy, was well put out by this and determined to test himself against Guy. Guy's lance went right through his shoulder bone and sent him tumbling injured from his horse.

Duke Reignier of Saxony came galloping up, not the slightest bit in awe of Guy. 'Stay where you are!' he cried. 'Why have you injured my uncle Otoun? You shall pay for this!'

They galloped together and both lances broke with the impact. Guy hit Duke Reignier so hard on the shield that the blow sent it flying away; it landed on the grass, followed quickly by the duke himself. Guy seized hold of the duke's horse: 'Sir duke, have your steed back. When you see an opportunity, you can repay me the complement.'

The duke rose up and ran quickly towards Guy. 'Sir knight, tell me, what is your name and where are you from?'

'I am called Guy of Warwick, and I was born in England.'



But the Duke of Louvain was approaching; he galloped towards Guy with a spear sharpened to a fearsome point. Guy turned in surprise and it was not long before both their spears splintered into fragments. They drew their swords and fought together with both hands. Hereward came galloping towards Duke Myrander, and knocked him from his horse, and then he felled Duke Waldenere in the same manner; he gave a good account of himself, and so did Sir Torald and Sir Uri.

By now, the fighting was in full swing, with great strokes and blows being exchanged all over the place. Many lances were splintered and many knights toppled from their horses. There is no detailed account, but all the knights who were there agreed that Guy was the best. Guy was awarded the prize that day, and the next day as well.

'Everybody, listen to me,' said Duke Reignier on the third day, when all the knights were due to depart. 'Bring me the horses and the falcon, and the greyhounds. If I say anything that is not truly justified, please correct me, but it is with good reason, and fully

deserved I believe, that I give these to the man who has won them, and this is Sir Guy of Warwick.'

Everyone agreed. 'We accept this judgement!' they all cried, and the entire place rang with enthusiastic assent.

Guy had already returned to his inn and taken off his armour. The combat had exhausted him. A squire came riding up, a noble, intelligent and well-spoken young man, and he made his way to Guy's room. 'God save you, Sir Guy,' he said. 'The prize of the tournament is yours! The horses, the gyrfalcon and the greyhounds are sent to you by the maiden Blancheffleur, the daughter of an emperor, along with the love of this young maiden also, if you have no other sweetheart.'

'God's thanks to you, and mine,' replied Guy. 'I shall receive it with goodwill, and her love with even greater delight. I shall serve her with all my might, always, as her own true knight. Fellow, listen to me. I shall knight you here and now. You and your three servants shall have some rich gifts from me, if you will return with this message. I shall reward you handsomely.'

They all replied: 'We didn't expect presents, but God reward you for it. We will inform Blancheffleur about the gifts that you have given us immediately, and the honour that you give to her.'

The messenger returned at once. Guy called two servants to him and instructed them to go as quickly as they could to England with the presents, and to take them to Earl Rohald and to say that they came from Guy: 'Tell him that Guy has sent them.'

They set off at once, crossed the sea and made their way to Warwick, where they found the earl. They gave him the gyrfalcon, the three steeds and the beautiful greyhounds, and told him that they were from Guy. They explained how a great tournament had just taken place, so that the emperor's daughter Blancheffleur, that sweet thing, could see for herself who was the most courageous and accomplished in battle, and who could give the best account of himself on the tournament field, and how Guy had won these fine gifts, and the love of this noble maiden.

When the earl heard this, he was very pleased that Guy was becoming so well thought of. Guy's parents were very proud of him when they were told.

Guy rode to new tournaments, to earn men's adulation. In Germany and in Lombardy, in France and in Normandy, there was no jousting anywhere that did not see him win all the accolades.

While they were in Rome, Hereward said: 'Why don't we return home now? We may as well, by God! Let's go back to England and earn the love of King Edgar and all his noblemen.'

'I think that's a good idea,' replied Guy. 'We'll set off tomorrow morning.'

They found a good ship and sailed over the briny troughs and swells until they arrived back in England. King Edgar and all his noblemen were very pleased to see them. Then they made their way to Warwick and went before Earl Rohald who was very pleased to see them also. The earl gave Guy gold and silver, and vowed to make him a rich man. Guy's mother and father were delighted when they saw their son again.

At the first opportunity, Guy went to see Felice, for he was still very much in love with her. 'God protect you, darling,' he said. 'I have done what you wanted me to. I have accepted the order of knighthood and gone overseas and proved myself to be a doughty knight. Have I done enough to earn your love now, for this is the only thing that I truly want?'

Felice replied: 'You are not yet of such strength and valour that there are not others in this country who are better than you are. You are skilful and strong, courageous also, but if I granted you my love now, you would be so filled with amorous desire and so jealous of other men that you would hang up your spurs and let your armour rust, and your fame and honour would suffer because of it. This would be a great shame. So I will not grant you my love yet. I will not do so until you have proved yourself to be the boldest knight in the world, the strongest, the most skilful and the most valiant, not until you can excel in every battle and carry off the prize at every tournament. Only when you have achieved all this, and there is no finer knight in the whole world, will you have my love. Then I will marry you.'

When Guy heard Felice say this, he thought his heart would break. 'You are being very unfair,' he said. 'I can never hope to be the best in the whole world! I will go abroad once more, then, to seek out conflict and tournament and if I die, it will have been for you.'

Weeping, he took his leave and went back to his lodgings. He was minded not to remain in Warwick and went straight to see the earl. 'Sir,' he said, 'good day to you. I intend to go abroad again, to seek fame as a great warrior and to be praised for my skill at arms. It can only be to your credit to have men of high honour, and you will be respected even more because of it, in every land.'

'Are you short of money? Has anyone angered you?' replied the earl. 'Sir Guy, put away these thoughts and stay here with us. We will chase deer together and go hawking by the river. Then later on, perhaps next year, you can go overseas again.'

'Sir,' replied Guy, 'there is nothing at the moment that will persuade me to stay. My mind is made up.'

Guy took his leave and went straight to see his father. 'Sir,' he said, 'I intend to go abroad again. The man who is capable of performing great feats on a battlefield should do so whilst he is young, so that when he is old he may be known as a great warrior and be respected for it.'

'Sweet son, don't say these things. What reason is there for you to go overseas again so soon?'

‘Listen to your father,’ implored his mother. ‘Stay with us for a year. Then you can go off on your travels again. You are all we have, my sweet son, and if you are killed, we have no other heir. Who will then look after our lands when we are gone?’

‘Father,’ said Guy, ‘God protect you. And dear mother, goodbye, for I must go,’ and he began to weep.

Soon Guy was back in Normandy, and he at once began to display the prowess at arms that he had shown before. He went to Brittany, and then on to Spain, where he jousting at tournaments nearly every day.

Now he leaves Spain and arrives in Germany, and from here he makes his way to Lombardy. Through his strength and valour he wins the love and admiration of many men, and his generosity is such that he is honoured like a king wherever he goes.

A tournament near Beneventum, in the very south of Italy, however, saw Guy grieved and in pain from a wound, and his journey away from that tournament was a painful and uncomfortable one. As soon as Duke Otoun of Pavia learnt that the wound that he had seen Guy sustain at this tournament was a bad one, he called Earl Lambert to him, along with fifteen other strong and trusted knights. He told them to ambush Guy at a certain ford across a river that Guy would soon be approaching.

‘Lords,’ he said, ‘you are my men, and your first responsibility is to advance my interests. Go quickly and take revenge for me on Guy and his three companions who have entered my lands. He will bring war to this country. He is wounded; let’s make sure that he dies. Ride quickly to the forest surrounding this ford and capture him, and make sure that you kill his three companions. I shall cast him into my prison and set no ransom. He will suffer a great deal, and then I will cause him to die.’

They armed themselves in iron and steel, rode to the forest beside the river and set men on both sides of the ford.

Guy approached on an ambling mule, in great pain from his wound. He went straight to the ford, heard the neighing of horses, then saw helmets shining on the hillside.

‘Hereward, here is treason! We are dead men!’ he shouted. He dismounted from the mule and got onto his steed, gathered up the reins and turned his horse like the skilful knight that he was. ‘Fight well, or we are done for,’ he cried to his companions.

‘You need to seek safety. You cannot fight!’ replied Hereward. ‘I swear by sweet Jesus, we will cross this river, however many knights try to prevent us, but it is better that you are saved than that you are killed along with us.’

‘I shall not flee,’ replied Guy, defiantly.

A Lombard suddenly appeared: ‘Guy, surrender to me. By my head, you have no other choice.’

Guy attacked this Lombard with his lance, and the shaft passed right through him. That

was the end of him! Guy attacked another knight and the man's head flew away from his body. Sir Hereward galloped towards a third knight and ran him through with his sword so that his hand was covered with the man's blood. Sir Torald rode into the attack and launched his anger against a Lombard who was barring his way across the ford; he gave him such a stroke with his sword that it sent the man's head flying onto the sand on a beach beside the river. Sir Uri came into the attack and quickly despatched another of these dastardly knights.

Now a full battle ensued. Every knight engaged another with great strokes upon shields, raining blows so hard that pieces flew from the knight's helmets onto the ground. Earl Lambert galloped into the attack and killed Sir Uri. Hereward rode at Earl Lambert with his lance lowered and impaled him on it. Sir Torald was killed by a cousin of Duke Otoun, and when Sir Hereward saw him fall his anger knew no bounds; he hit Sir Torald's killer so hard upon the helmet with his sword that the blow nearly cut the man in half, which gave Sir Hereward much pleasure. But then Sir Hereward was himself struck by a fine sword whose edge was sharp enough to deliver a fearsome wound, and Sir Hereward fell bleeding to the ground.

When Guy saw his three companions lying dead, he was beside himself with grief. Overcome with rage, he struck a Lombard so hard with his sword that the man lay in two pieces on the ground. There were only two Lombards left alive now. Guy managed to deliver a blow with his sword that cut through the backbone of one of them. The remaining Lombard, a man named Segward, now faced Sir Guy alone.

'Guy, yield to me!' he shouted. 'You have no other choice. I can see your shield scattered in pieces across the ground, and over there is part of your helmet. Your wounds are deep and bloody, and I can see by the expression on your face that you can no longer fight.'

'No,' said Guy. 'I shall exchange no words with Duke Otoun while I still have the strength to stand and I shall not yield to you while there is any breath left in my body.'

Segward aimed a blow at Guy and hit him on the helmet with his sword. The helmet shattered into four pieces, but miraculously, by the grace of God, Guy was not hurt by the blow. Summoning his remaining strength and refusing to give in, Guy struck blows in return, injuring the man badly on the shoulder. Segward reined his horse backwards, turned and made good his escape.

Guy went over to attend to the bodies of his companions.

Segward galloped back to Pavia, wounded and bloody. As the duke returned from hunting with a host of other men, he saw this knight approaching with his right arm hanging limp at his side.

'Tell me!' exclaimed the duke. 'Who has done this to you? Where is Guy? Has he been captured?'

‘We killed all his men, but he escaped us,’ the man replied. ‘My companions are all dead, and I have received this mortal wound.’

‘Where is Sir Hewchon?’

‘Dead,’ replied Segward.

‘Earl Lambert?’

‘Sprawled out, his clothes soaked in his own blood.’

‘Alas!’ exclaimed the duke. ‘What has happened?’

Guy went to where his own men lay dead. He stood and looked at the bodies, cold and motionless, lying in blood. ‘Alas, that this day has dawned,’ he cried. ‘What can I do now? I was a fool to say that I would come out here again. Felice, it is through you that these three men lie dead! Let this be a lesson to every man. I have lost Hereward, the finest of knights. I cannot leave you here. I wish it was me who was dead. May those Lombards be hanged for being so cowardly as to let me escape and not killing me as well! Why have they left me here, alone?’

‘Ah,’ he said, ‘if only I had stayed for a year with Earl Rohald, and only then gone overseas, this would never have happened. I didn’t listen to his advice, or the advice of my father, or my mother.’

Guy then fell heavily to the ground and fainted. When he rose up again, he thought it best to ride quickly to a nearby hermitage.

‘Hermit,’ he cried when he arrived, ‘I’ll give you this valuable horse if you will carry back for me two dead bodies and give them an honourable burial, for they were men of great valour.’

‘Sir, I’ll come at once,’ said the hermit. ‘Lead on, and I’ll follow.’

Guy lifted the bodies of Sir Torald and Sir Uri onto the horse that he had given to the hermit, then leaped onto his own horse and carried the body of Sir Hereward with him. He left all the other corpses to rot where they lay.

Guy went to an abbey that was not far away and soon found the abbot. ‘God save you!’ said Sir Guy. ‘For charity’s sake, and in the name of the Trinity, will you take this body here and bury it with due ceremony? He was, today, a courageous knight and was slain a short while ago in battle. God will reward you for it, and so shall I, when I can.’

‘I will be happy to bury this body here. But tell me: who are you, and where are you from?’

‘I am a knight from foreign parts. Today, as I was riding along, sixteen thieves set upon us. I am the only one of our group remaining alive; all my companions are dead. They

were killed by these criminals. I myself have deep wounds on my right side.'

Guy left the abbey and cantered off. He went to a hermit that he knew, and who was his friend, and in a relatively short time his wounds were healed.

Whilst the body of Hereward was laid out in a chamber, a good and trustworthy man who knew about medicine came to see it; he knelt and inspected the injuries that Sir Hereward had sustained and declared that none of them were deadly. 'I can soon make this knight well again,' he declared, and immediately began to do all in his power to salve and to dress his wounds.

Now Guy is fit and well once more. His wounds are all healed. He said goodbye to the hermit and took the road to Apulia. There he went to the king, who was very happy that he had come and had silver and gold sent to him, which was very gratefully received. Guy stayed long enough for everybody to grow to love him, and at every joust he was declared the winner. Then Guy travelled to Saxony, to the noble Duke Reignier, who welcomed him with enthusiasm.

Guy has so much experience of tournaments now that he wins the prize wherever he goes. And the thought occurs to him one day that it might be a good thing to do to begin to make his way home. He didn't want to remain in Saxony any longer, so he travelled to Burgundy.

Duke Mylon was delighted to receive Guy: he was given a warm welcome in all his castles, throughout his entire land, and at every joust and every tournament Guy won all the accolades. He quickly became well-loved throughout that duchy and knighted all those who were strong, courageous and worthy, or gave them arms. Ladies longed to marry him, but he seemed to have no desire in this regard, however hard they tried to make him fall for them. As far as generosity went, or the giving of gifts, good looks and prowess on the battlefield, there was no knight in the whole of continental Europe who surpassed him, but for all the sorrow that she had caused to him, he still loved Felice above all else.

Guy went hunting one day and as he rode along a path, he met a pilgrim. 'My good man, tell me, where are you from?' he asked.

'I've journeyed from Lombardy,' the man replied. 'To my great shame, and through the treachery of Duke Otoun of Pavia, I lost my dear lord there, who was a knight of great valour. I will spend the rest of my life travelling as a pilgrim, searching for news of him.'

'Who was your lord, whom you loved so dearly?' asked Guy.

'His name was Guy of Warwick,' the man replied. 'He was a peerless knight.'

'Guy caught his breath as he heard this. 'Good man, what is your name?' he asked.

‘Hereward, men call me. My name is Hereward of Arduin.’

Guy leapt quickly down off his steed and embraced Hereward. He wept for joy, to see Hereward standing there. ‘Sir Hereward,’ he said, ‘tell me, why do you not recognise me? I am Guy!’

There was unbridled joy between the two of them as they caught up with each other’s news. They mounted their horses and rode towards the city. Then Guy had Hereward bathed and gave him new clothes to wear, some fine and expensive clothes, trimmed with grey fur. When he was beautifully dressed, he introduced him to Duke Mylon and explained everything to the duke.

There was nothing that could have saddened the duke more than to see them go, but they were determined to sail to England. He tried to persuade them to change their minds, but to no avail. So off they went, singing as they rode, and were soon in Flanders. They found lodgings, intending to set off for the coast as soon as it was daylight.

Guy went to a window to see which direction the wind was blowing in, and saw a pilgrim coming to the inn, seeking his supper. Guy said politely: ‘Pilgrim, it is night, you cannot walk any further. You would do well to stay here.’

‘God protect you, and may Saint Martin do so as well,’ replied the pilgrim.

Guy asked him where he was from, which country, and whether he knew of any conflict anywhere.

‘Sir, I can tell you about a fierce and deadly war.’

‘Tell me.’

‘Sir, at all started at a tournament. The noble Duke Segwin was there, the lord of Louvain. Many other knights were there as well, including Saddock, the nephew of the Emperor of Germany, his sister’s son. He was a courageous but rather a foolhardy young man. When the tournament was over, Saddock was riding away; he was tired from the jousting and had cast off his coat of mail and rode unarmed, but he was a proud man and when he came upon Duke Segwin he cried out: “Sir duke! Turn around and joust with me, just once! You are a bold knight and a valiant warrior, so let’s see it now!”

‘The reason for this was that Duke Segwin had killed a good and valiant knight at the tournament and Saddock envied his fine horsemanship. “Saddock,” replied Duke Segwin, “stop this provocation. I wouldn’t do this if my life depended on it. I love you as much as any knight and it would pain me to joust with you now. You are my lord’s nephew and it would be a great shame for me to do you any harm. You are unarmed, for God’s sake! It would be a cowardly thing for me to do.”

“Then it’s you who are the coward!” Saddock cried. “So God help me, if you do not joust with me at once, I shall attack you whether you want me to or not. I’ll bring as

much shame to you as I can, and injure you if I can, and consider you to be my greatest enemy for not wanting to joust with me.”

‘Then Saddock rode at Duke Segwin with great anger. The duke reluctantly turned his horse to face him. They came together and the duke’s spear hit its target, sliding through Saddock’s body and giving him a mortal wound. Duke Segwin took the body and carried it to an abbey, where he had it quickly buried in a marble tomb.

‘Now the duke has fled, with three of his knights, to his city of Argonne. He’s repaired all the walls, knowing that a siege is imminent, and ordered all the castles in the country to be prepared and readied and made secure. He’s sent messengers to all of his noblemen to tell them what’s going on, and to ask them to come to him and to help him, for he knows that the emperor will send powerful warriors to invade his land and he intends to try to defend his city for as long as he can.

‘But a great host has already entered his country, burning and destroying wherever they go. They have killed his men, burnt his towers, destroyed his castles and are doing great harm. There is only one city left standing, the city of Argonne.’

When the pilgrim had finished, food and drink was brought to him. Guy had listened carefully to everything he had said, and when he understood what was going on, he thought it would be a fine idea to go to help Duke Segwin.

‘Hereward, what do you think?’ he asked. ‘Advise me. Shall we go to help the duke, or shall we go to England? Give me your opinion, for I value it greatly.’

‘Sir,’ he replied, ‘I am your man and I shall be honest with you. I advise you to don your finest armour, dress in iron and steel and gather around you five hundred of the finest men. Let’s go to help the duke! You could win enough fame in this war to last a lifetime!’

‘Thank you, sir,’ replied Guy. ‘Now I know that you love me, to give me such advice as this. We will go quickly to the city, with as many knights and horses as we can.’

Sir Guy assembled five hundred knights, the finest in the whole of France, and they made their way to Argonne. When they arrived, they entered the city and found lodgings for themselves.

The next morning Guy arose and went to hear Mass and Matins, then went back to his inn. On the way there, he saw men running, with terror in their eyes; they were carrying shields and spears as though they were going to do battle, but they were running in the wrong direction. Guy called out to someone nearby: ‘What are these men doing? Why this urgency? Tell me!’

‘The emperor’s steward has appeared outside the city walls, with an army,’ he replied. ‘No one can be found brave enough to go out to face him.’

Guy asked for his armour and, like the courageous man that he was, he prepared him-

self for battle. His knights followed his lead. Then they all sallied out in formation. As they went from the city they could clearly see the emperor's steward. Guy rode towards him.

When the steward saw Guy approaching, he called out to him, to make himself known. Then, eyeing up any possible winnings, he said to his companions: 'Over there is a knight coming towards us who seems ready for a fight. He is riding a valuable horse, I can see. It will not be his for very much longer I think! May God never forgive me my sins if I don't soon win that horse off him.'

He spurred his horse in Guy's direction, fully looking the part of a valiant warrior. They clashed and both their spears sent pieces of the other's shield flying to the ground. Guy hit the steward with a falchion and the steward tumbled off his horse and lay on the ground in a distressed state. Then Guy, as the situation demanded and much to his great honour, claimed him as his prisoner; he drew his sword and captured him.

When the Germans saw that their lord had been captured, they were keen to rescue him, but Guy rode happily once more into the attack. His knights rode alongside him and they soon caused great carnage amongst the Germans, sparing no one.

All the men in the city who could see the way things were going rode out at once to lend Guy a hand, for they were brave and honourable men. There was fighting everywhere as knights laid into one another with spear and sword, cries rang out and knights fell from their horses onto ground which was already strewn with the badly wounded and the dead. Soon, five hundred lay motionless on the grass.

The Germans were overcome, with many killed and many others captured. Guy had done magnificently, everyone in the city said so. There was no doubt about it at all. Guy and his companions led some noble and high-ranking prisoners into the city. Then he made his way to his inn, with all his fellows. Through their skill and bravery, they had won the battle. Guy rested for a while, and took off his armour.

When the duke learned how many of the enemy lay dead and was told that the emperor's steward had been captured, he leapt onto a horse and made his way to Guy's chamber.

'Welcome, Sir Guy!' he greeted enthusiastically. 'And welcome to your friends as well. Sir Guy, I wish to bestow upon you the freedom of my country. All my castles and my towers are open to you. My people will do what you tell them to. You shall be lord and master wherever you go, your commands will be obeyed by all, wherever you choose to send them. I will be wholly under your guidance while I continue this offensive.'

'You are very courteous,' replied Guy. 'Sir duke, thank you. I will continue to help you with all my strength, with all my wisdom and energy, and with sound strategy, I hope.'

So Guy has been given control over all the duke's lands. He advised the duke that it was vital to try to reach an agreement with the emperor. They discussed every detail of this plan, and then Guy called a messenger and instructed him to go into all the sur-

rounding countries for reinforcements. Very quickly, another five hundred knights were gathered.

When the emperor learnt that Guy was with Duke Segwin and how things had gone so far, how his steward was now in the duke's prison and that a great number of his knights had been killed, he was very upset. 'Lords,' he asked his noblemen, 'what is your advice? For myself, I shall never rest easy until I have avenged myself on Guy for the death of these men.'

'Sir,' said Duke Otoun of Pavia, 'unless I seize this traitor for you and bring him to your castle, so that you can throw him into your deepest dungeon, may I never enjoy the company of my wife and children for the rest of my life.'

'You are a man of great honour,' replied the emperor. 'Sir, send word to the constable Waldenere, and to the Duke of Saxony, who possesses a very large number of knights. Then, when they are assembled, go quickly with them to Argonne and capture the duke, and bring back Guy as well. If you can do this for me, I shall be ready to help you in turn, wherever my support may be useful to you.'

'Sir,' replied Duke Otoun, 'It shall be done.'

Duke Otoun arrived at the city with his army, two thousand all told. When the men in the city saw this host of warriors outside, they quickly rang the bells. The duke called Guy over to him and asked if it wouldn't be a bad idea if Hereward was given five hundred knights and sent out at once to confront them.

'You have spoken well,' replied Guy. 'Let's do that.'

When Guy ascended to the highest point in the city, which was the church, the first man he saw on the field of battle was Duke Otoun.

Hereward prepared to be the first to mount an attack. He shouted to Duke Otoun: 'Do you remember the villainy that you did to me and my lord in Lombardy? I was taken for dead, do you remember? We shall take a sweet revenge for it today, with God's grace!'

They came together with their lances lowered. There was little in the way of play about it. Then they drew their swords and a fierce battle began, for neither of them had any inclination to withdraw. Hereward repeatedly struck Duke Otoun with such savagery that the duke fell from his horse. Hereward stood ready to kill him, but Otoun's men came racing up and rescued him, or else he would have been dead. They placed him back onto his horse again.

Then a great battle ensued, knight on knight, and Sir Hereward was tireless on the battlefield. He made another assault on the duke, and slew a hundred men in all. The duke was grief-stricken when he saw so many of his men lying dead. He cried out in a rage: 'Lords, can you see what this criminal has done! For the sake of your own honour, stir yourselves! Unless you take revenge at once, I'll never speak to any of you again!'

They all gathered themselves and sprang into action once more. Hereward was now in trouble; he was hard pressed, his companions were all engaged in fierce fighting and he had lost contact with them. But help was at hand. With his spear broken and his horse hampered by a wounded knee and scarcely able to carry him at a canter, Hereward suddenly saw Guy appearing from out of nowhere, galloping quickly.

‘Turn round!’ cried Guy. ‘Where are your men? Are they all killed?’

‘No,’ said Hereward, ‘they are fighting hard.’

‘Come on then!’

When Guy saw Duke Otoun, he shouted to him: ‘Duke, do you remember the road through your forest that crossed that river? Make no mistake; I intend to avenge that treason. I’ll never be happy until I do so.’

Guy turned the head of his horse and they both rode into the attack. The duke hit Guy so hard on the shield that his lance broke into three pieces.’

‘By God, that was a powerful impact,’ shouted Guy, and he turned his horse and laid into the duke with his sword with all the strength that he possessed. The duke was quickly aided by a hundred valiant knights who tried to surround Guy, but Guy defended himself like a lion. He went back for a little while to give encouragement to his own knights, and to Hereward, and then he rode back into the attack again. Many knights died that day; they took their last breath on that field. But Guy fought with such resolution because he was determined to take revenge for the deaths of Sir Uri and Sir Torald and to kill Lombards with sword and lance, or to capture them. Soon the place was full of corpses.

Suddenly the Duke of Saxony and the constable Waldenere appeared, with a large number of fighting men. They spotted Guy in a valley and quickly made towards him. Guy led his knights onto higher ground.

‘Gentlemen,’ he said. ‘Listen to me. Those men that you can see over there are the Duke of Saxony and the Earl of Cologne. They have a large number of knights with them and they have us trapped. We cannot pass them without taking losses. But it is better to die with honour than to be captured and hanged, therefore it is fitting that every man tries his best to fight whilst he is able to; it will bring him great honour, and his bravery will be remembered for a long time.’

They all replied with one voice: ‘May God send his aid to every one of us who is prepared to fight, for as long as he is able to hold a weapon in his hands.’

A great battle then began. Guy hit Duke Reignier of Saxony and knocked him from his horse. He hit another knight and the knight fell to the ground, impaled upon his spear. He toppled Waldenere from his horse and quickly slew another knight. Of the Germans, many were soon wounded and captured, and a large number killed.

Duke Segwin's cousin Gilminer suddenly arrived to lend Guy a hand, and when Guy saw how the forces of the Duke of Saxony and the Earl of Cologne were being defeated by the ferocity and determination of his own small contingent, he cried out: 'Yield to me before you are all killed!' and galloped forwards, intending to finish off every man who did not surrender. None of Guy's companions had any intention of fleeing.

Duke Reignier of Saxony, who had now remounted, attacked Gilminer and gave him a nasty wound in the side, but Gilminer managed to gallop away to safety. Duke Segwin was very concerned when he saw his cousin riding up before him so badly injured.

'Sir!' exclaimed Gilminer. 'It is time for your men to enter the fray!'

When the duke heard this, he spurred his horse into a gallop and rode as quickly as he could, regardless of the terrain; he came galloping up and began attacking the Germans at once, struck a knight, skewered another on his lance and beheaded many a valiant knight before he managed to reach Guy. His forces met up with Guy's contingent and they engaged the Germans with shield, lance and brute strength. Arrows and spears were exchanged, the fighting was fierce on both sides, strong shields were broken and coats of mail shattered, sending pieces flying onto the ground, along with hands, arms, shields, spears, legs, feet. Many good knights died in this encounter, wealthy noblemen's sons, talented young men who had come only to win honour for themselves. It was a great shame and a great sin that this happened, and their fathers were all very upset when they heard about it.

Guy toppled Duke Reignier again; he defeated a hundred men of great valour in this battle. Duke Segwin defeated Waldenere and took him prisoner. The Lombards were vanquished, the Germans slaughtered. The ground was strewn with dead men.

Guy and Duke Segwin gave chase as the Germans retreated, but when the fleeing men met with Tirry of Gormaz, this valiant knight cried: 'Lords, why are you running away? Turn around and fight them! Face your enemies and leave this cowardice behind! Follow me!'

He made them turn back, and a new engagement began. And the sheer weight of this counterattack by the German knights, led by Tirry of Gormaz, resulted in many more wounded and many more killed. When Duke Segwin saw that the tide of battle was turning against his forces, he was angry and shouted to Guy: 'It is a great shame to us that a single knight should be causing us so much harm.'

'Turn around and give battle to him, then,' replied Guy. 'It is better to be killed than to be seen running away like a coward.'

Guy parried new blows from Sir Tirry and a great fight ensued. They turned their horses and attacked one another again, coming together so fast that their lances shattered with the impact. Then they took out their swords and fought together hand to hand. Guy cut off pieces of Tirry's helmet and shield and scattered them across the grass. Tirry gave Guy a blow with his sword but, as God willed, the sword turned in his hand and it

broke. Tirry reined his horse around and fled, since he was now helpless against Guy.

Seeing this, the Germans fled with him, their swords still in their hands.

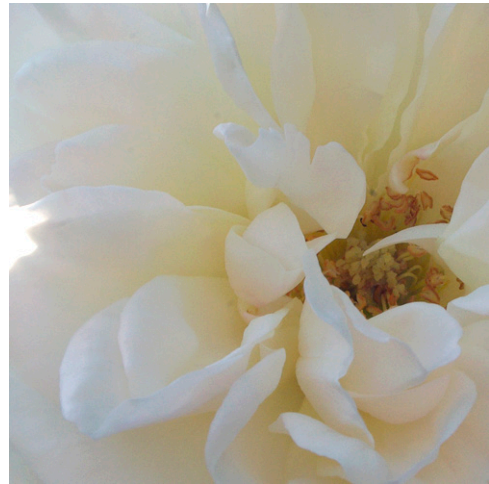
Duke Segwin, accompanied by Sir Guy of Warwick and all his men, rode back towards the city, leading behind them, shackled and chained, all the dukes, earls and barons whom they had captured.

All the people in the city gave thanks to God.

The duke went into his tower and treated his prisoners honourably: he made sure that Duke Reignier of Saxony, Earl Waldenere of Cologne and Gauter, the emperor's steward, were quickly untied and served with supper before sitting down to a meal himself.

The duke asked his sister: 'Take these wealthy prisoners and make them feel at home, and especially Duke Reignier, for I am very fond of him.'

'Sir,' she replied, 'I shall do my very best for them.'



The emperor was unaware of this setback. He was playing chess with a king when Tirry came galloping in with his broken sword in his hand, his helmet all askew and blood running from a wound in his side.

'Sir emperor, understand this: your barons are lying dead on the field of battle, others have been taken prisoner. Duke Reignier himself has been captured, Earl Waldenere as well. Duke Otoun has a bad wound caused by a spear through his side; he fears that he may die and has no hope of ever riding a horse again.

The emperor listened carefully to everything that Tirry told him, and was very angry. He ordered the assembly bell to be rung. His men came at once. He swore to them by God almighty that he would never smile again until he had taken the city of Argonne, seized all the traitors in it and executed them by due process of law. Knights and men-at-arms poured into Duke Segwin's land with spears, shields and coats of mail, and made straight for the city.

The men in the city saw the Germans approaching; the countryside sparkled with the light from shining helmets and shields.

'Guy, give me your opinion,' said Duke Segwin. 'Shall we give battle to those men over there, or defend our walls and stay inside the city.'

'Sir,' replied Guy, 'I can see the emperor's son, Gayerer, surrounded by a great company of well-armed knights. They have been sent as an advance guard, I think, to put fear into us through their sheer magnificence. We should take a hundred knights and attack

them at once.'

So a hundred knights were assembled, and they went off to attack Sir Gayerer. Guy delivered a blow which knocked Gayerer from his horse, and through sheer strength and fortitude Guy's men managed to capture him. Then they turned their attention to the other knights, who were beginning already to turn tail and run. They pursued them with such ferocity that the hearts of those being chased were near to bursting; some were captured, some wounded, some escaped, but most were killed.

When the main body of the army saw their advance force galloping back towards them in disarray and learnt that Sir Gayerer had been captured, they advanced quickly towards the city themselves and a great battle began, with many slain and many captured. Duke Segwin gave a good account of himself, but the Germans at last managed to surround him, with spears and shields. They wounded him and he suddenly found himself in great danger. When Guy saw that the duke was in difficulty, he spared nobody but drew his sword and struck everybody within reach, trying to drive them away. He killed many men that day.

Up spoke Sir Gione: 'Duke, listen to me. We must retreat back into the city. We cannot defend ourselves here. Another five hundred knights are making ready to attack us.'

They retreated back into the city, manned the walls and made ready to defend themselves.

When the emperor learnt that his son had now been captured: 'Assemble at once!' he cried. 'Advance everyone! We'll throw everything into this next assault.'

They advanced quickly to the city and set up machines of war to hurl giant spears and darts over the walls. They used crossbows and set ladders against the walls, constructed ballistas and trebuchets to hurl stones against them. But those inside the city defended the walls resolutely and a fierce resistance ensued. Many Germans lay dead before evening fell.

Every day, the emperor made his men continue with the siege. But Duke Segwin, Guy and Hereward made many successful sorties outside the city walls and brought grief to the enemy many times, which began to annoy the emperor immensely.

One summer's day, as the siege dragged on, the emperor called his huntsmen to him after dinner and declared his intention to chase the deer early the next morning in the forest nearby.

A spy was there and he heard every word of this conversation. Out of the court he went and quickly made his way to Duke Segwin. 'Sir duke, listen to this news,' he said. 'Emperor Reignier will chase the deer tomorrow out in the forest, with only a small group of people around him. I'm telling you the truth.'

When he had said all that he had to, the duke laid his hand on his shoulder. 'If what you say is true, I'll make you a knight, and you shall have a hundred besants of gold for your trouble. Guy and Hereward, do you hear this? Come closer, everyone. Rofaran, where are you? Lords, what is your advice?' for he was keen to hear what they had to say. Rofaran was reputed to be the wisest man in Germany. 'Lords, what do you think we should do? Our lord the emperor will go hunting tomorrow with only a small number of men with him. That's what I've been told.'

'Sir duke,' said Guy, 'If I can take a hundred knights with me, I think that your cause will be best served if I'm as courteous as I can be to the emperor. I will ask him to come to dine with you here. We should treat him hospitably. I advise that you stay here in the palace, because it will be shameful for you to capture your own liege lord. Have the palace properly prepared for a banquet and make sure that dinner is ready to be served when we arrive back. If he will not come to terms because he loves you, he may if he is in awe of you. With a mixture of friendliness and strength we will achieve what we want.'

'This is a very good plan,' said the duke. 'Go to the forest with a hundred knights and pin him down where you'll have the greatest advantage over him. Don't let anything stop you from bringing him back here.'

Guy armed himself and quickly made preparations.

The emperor rose early, and so did Guy. When they arrived in the forest, the emperor's huntsmen quickly found a wild boar, a strong and vicious animal; soon it had killed many dogs. The huntsmen chased him and the emperor followed with his mace. They had scarcely covered a mile when they saw flashes all around them, like the gleam from helmets.

'Tirry, my dear friend, come and see what I can see,' said the emperor. He looked all around him. 'Can you see them? We are surrounded I think.'

'Go back the way we came, calmly and with dignity,' replied Tirry. 'I will fight with my sword while I still have the strength to stand. By the time they are able to kill or capture me, you will have been able to make your escape.'

'No,' said the emperor. 'I will not allow that dishonour to befall me.' He armed himself and leaped onto his steed.

Guy came galloping up. In his hand he held a branch of olive, a clear indication that his intentions were peaceful. He pulled back his hood and greeted the emperor respectfully:

'Sir emperor, may he who made this world bring you salvation,' said Guy. 'May God maintain your honour, and may he give your barons here the wisdom to advise you well. I come this morning with a message from Duke Segwin. He asks that you come, if you wish, to stay in his city, you and all those who are with you now. You will be treated like honoured guests and his whole city will be placed at your disposal. If he has done

anything wrong, then he will quickly make amends for it.'

When the emperor heard this and understood that Guy meant him no harm, he called to the King of Hungary and the earl, Sir Tirry, and to the Earl of Wekelwold and a knight, Sir Grimbold: 'Lords,' he said, 'what do you think?'

'We will follow your lead in this, of course, but I think that it would be wise for you to go,' said Sir Tirry.

'Then I shall do it, by God!' cried the emperor. 'I will take note of the views of my barons and do as you advise, for good or for ill.'

So they all went to the city, their thoughts full of peace and reconciliation. They entered the gates to a joyous reception, to music, dance and entertainment. Guy took them to the duke's magnificent palace and the emperor was made to feel at home. All who had come with him were served with spiced wine and sweets, with swans and herons, with hearts and with brawn. Guy served the emperor himself and did his best to make him happy. There was no one who didn't receive, if he was hungry, the finest food that the country could produce, and as much of it as he wanted. But Duke Segwin was hesitant to appear. He feared the emperor's wrath and chose to eat with the prisoners.

The emperor rose early the next morning and went to church. The duke rose early as well, and said anxiously to his prisoners: 'My lords, I implore you, plead for me and ask my lord the emperor to calm his anger towards me and to forgive me, for I have not deserved his wrath.'

They all said: 'We will help you, by all means.'

Duke Segwin took off all his clothes, except for a shirt and some trousers, and everyone who saw him pitied him as he meekly made his way, with an olive branch in his hand, towards the church. He walked barefoot along the street and many wept for him as he made his way in company with the high-ranking prisoners that he had captured.

When they arrived at the church, they found the emperor there. 'Sir emperor,' said Segwin. 'You have suffered much because of me. Take this sword and cut off my head with it. Take my lands and my rents and taxes, my cities and my castles. I give them all to you unreservedly, for I have wronged you. When I killed your nephew, it was in self-defence. The Duke of Cologne will corroborate what I say.'

'Dear father,' said Gayerer. 'Have mercy on the duke here. He will be able to help you, whatever you are doing, in any land, far or near. Forgive him, or you will never enjoy my love again.'

'You ought to hold him in great affection,' said Duke Reignier, 'for he has offered his life to you, to save or to take as you wish. When he killed your nephew, he was defending himself, I assure you. If there is any knight who wishes to say that I am lying, then let him fight with me and I will defend myself with all my strength.'

‘Sir emperor,’ said Earl Waldenere, ‘I must tell you that I love the duke more than anyone. We are comrades. If you deny him justice, I shall go back to my country and gather an army to invade your lands.’

‘The duke is a valiant man and has acted with the utmost honour,’ said the steward. ‘Look favourably upon him. To do him harm will bring you no credit.’

‘Lord, for your great honour, now hear my plea,’ said Guy. ‘Have mercy on Duke Segwin and I will promise to be your man, wherever you are. I will further your interests in every land and serve you in every country, tirelessly, if you will forgive the duke and be friends with him.’

‘Lord, have mercy upon the duke,’ said Earl Tirry. ‘If you’ve lost your nephew Saddock because of him, then Duke Segwin will take his place and serve you with no lesser loyalty.’

‘My lords,’ said the emperor. ‘All of you seem to be unanimous in urging me to forgive the duke for killing my nephew. Saddock was a valiant knight and I loved him more than any other, but I can see that Duke Segwin is contrite and so I will forgive him. He shall be dear to me from now on.’

Dukes, earls, everyone cried: ‘Sir emperor, thank you!’ and they all fell to their knees for joy. The emperor kissed Duke Segwin, and then many returned to their lodgings.

Later, Duke Otoun approached the emperor. ‘Sir emperor,’ he asked, ‘have you lost your mind? Who is going to be in awe of you now? You have let it be known that you are likely to forgive the most egregious of crimes. If you have the duke hanged and then pulled apart by horses, all would fear you. He has wronged you!’

Guy overheard this conversation and his simmering hatred boiled to the surface: ‘Duke Otoun, you are lying!’ he shouted, ‘and I will prove this upon you! You are a criminal, this is the truth, and I will prove it by reminding everyone how you betrayed me and killed all my men in your country. If you insist upon lying, then I challenge you to a duel and may the grace of God be denied me if I don’t cut off your head with my sword!’

Guy threw his glove down, in front of all the noblemen, but Guy and the duke were separated too quickly, before either of them had a chance to do the other any harm. The emperor swore that if one of them injured the other he would be quickly hanged for it. Peace had been declared and it was to apply to everybody. No one dared to speak out against this.

Duke Reignier approached Duke Segwin with the greatest goodwill and asked him for his sister’s hand in marriage. Duke Segwin was very happy to grant this. Duke Reignier married that beautiful maiden with much festivity, and then took her back to his own country. One morning, not long afterwards, the emperor called Duke Segwin to him. ‘Sir, come over here,’ he said. ‘I would like you to take my daughter to be your wedded

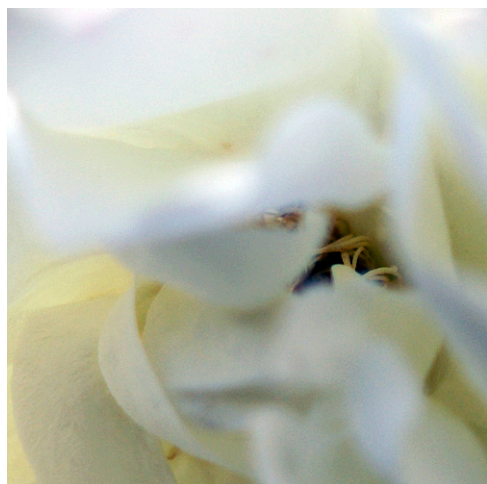
wife.’

The wedding took place, and it was the most beautiful ever seen.

Guy went to see Duke Segwin, in order to take his leave. ‘Sir duke,’ said Guy, ‘I can stay here no longer, but if any man threatens you again, send for me and I will come to help, you can depend on it.’

‘I will give you castles, a share in my property and wealth from my city if you will stay,’ said the duke. But Guy took his leave. The duke wept, I dare say.

The emperor departed for Germany taking Guy and Hereward with him. All the men of that country praised Guy for his looks and his demeanour, and the emperor offered Guy castles and wealthy cities, valuable lands and the great honour that came along with them, but Guy had no concern with wealth. He liked to go to the forest to chase the deer, and to go to the river with his hawks.



One day, as Guy was out hunting by the coast, he saw a vessel out at sea, making for the shore. He quickly rode to where the ship was landing and asked what they were doing, what language they spoke and where they were from, what they were looking for and what manner of merchandise they had in their hold.’

A mariner came forward, who was fluent in many languages: ‘We’ve come from Constantinople,’ he said. ‘We are merchants of that city, but there is no castle, tower or city in our land that has not already been burned and destroyed by the Sultan of Icomium. The emperor has fled into Constantinople with all his forces, to try to defend it, but he is weakened by incessant fighting. You can travel a hundred miles from there and find no Christian man living. It’s a miracle that we got away alive! We’ve arrived here with furs and glass, gold, silver and precious stones, cloth-of-gold and many other things of value.’

When the merchant had explained all this, Guy embraced him and greeted him warmly, then went back to his men.

‘Hereward, what do you think?’ he asked. ‘Give me your advice. I’ve a mind to say farewell to the emperor and travel to Constantinople, to help the emperor there. The heathens are destroying all his castles and cities and grieving all of Christendom in that land.’

‘Sir,’ replied Hereward, ‘then I advise that we go there, by God!’

They went to the emperor and took their leave with great honour. He was sorry to see them go and offered them gold and rings to take with them, but they declined, being sure that they would be amply rewarded when they fought for the emperor in Constan-

tinople.

Guy chose a hundred valiant knights to go with him and they set sail at once. They had a favourable wind and arrived in good spirits.

The Emperor of Constantinople was delighted at Guy's arrival and sent an earl at once to bring Guy to him. 'Welcome, Guy of Warwick,' he said. 'There is no one like you in the whole world. I have heard your praises sung in so many countries that I'm sure you will be a great asset and an immense help to me. The Saracens have overrun my land and left me neither town nor city except for this one. I beg you, for the sake of Mary's son Jesus, and for the cross that he was crucified on, help me to return my country to Christendom. As a reward, I shall give you the hand in marriage of my dear daughter, and all my lands, far and near.'

'Sir, thank you!' replied Guy. 'I will stay here with you, certainly, and serve you tirelessly. I give you my word as a true knight.'

Guy took his leave and went to his lodgings. He had rested for only a short while, however, when he looked out and saw armed men in the street outside.

'What's going on?' he shouted.

'An Englishman shouted back: 'It is Emir Coldran, the sultan's nephew. His lance is smeared with a deadly poison. He has already killed the emperor's son, and there is no knight in all the land brave enough to take him on. The King of Turkey is with him as well.'

'Quickly, arm yourselves!' cried Guy to all his companions. 'We'll give the Saracens some of their own medicine. We'll match them blow for blow!'

Every one of Guy's knights quickly armed themselves, then leapt onto their steeds and made their way out of the city to do battle. Guy attacked the emir and neither chainmail nor shield was of any use to him. Guy took the emir's head and got a man to take it to the emperor.

When the emperor received this trophy, he was overjoyed.

Hereward struck the King of Turkey and gave him a wound that pierced him so deeply that the man fell dead to the ground. Guy continued to kill Saracens left, right and centre, and so did Hereward. A Saracen named Astadart killed the bold Sir Tebaward by ferociously swinging his sharp sword at him. Aulart, a bold Saracen, let loose a throwing spear that struck Sir Gylmyn, knocking him off his horse and killing him stone dead. Hereward saw this and rode angrily into the attack, striking the man's head from his body. When Astadart saw this, he angrily struck Hereward and they both fell from their horses. There, with their swords drawn, they fought ferociously like the powerful warriors that they were, breaking shields and spears and striking each other on the helmet

so hard that the fire flew out as though from flint. Astadart began to retreat backwards, but then help arrived, a hundred Saracens, and Hereward suddenly found himself in difficulty. They had almost killed him when Guy rode up, his sword in his hand; Guy whipped off the head of one Saracen, killed another, then another, and lifted Hereward back onto his horse, thus saving his life.

Guy killed many Saracens in that battle, and when the Saracens fled for safety, Guy pursued them mercilessly. He spotted Astadart and galloped after him.

‘Astadart!’ he cried. ‘Turn around and joust with me! By the faith that I hold dear, I promise that I am alone. It’s just you and me.’

‘By Mohammed, I have promised your head to my lady. She is the sultan’s daughter,’ replied Astadart.

He turned his horse and rode at Guy. Neither of them showed any fear. Astadart hit Guy with his lance, piercing armour and flesh. Guy had never been struck so savagely before, but he returned a blow that neither chainmail nor shield was able to withstand; his spear went right through Astadart’s body. Astadart galloped quickly away and Guy tried to follow, but his heavier horse was unable to keep up, much to Guy’s annoyance.

Guy re-joined his companions and they rode back into the city. Everyone within the walls was celebrating the Saracen’s defeat.

Astadart rode back to the ranks of the Saracen army, his pride deflated and with a large piece of wood sticking out of his body. He held his hand awkwardly on his saddle, his helmet was askew, his shield torn to tatters and he was bleeding profusely. He felt close to death as he made his way to the sultan.

The sultan saw how covered in blood Astadart was, and how badly injured, and said: ‘What’s wrong? Tell me, who has done this to you?’

‘I bring you dreadful news,’ replied Astadart. ‘Emir Coldran is dead, and so is the King of Turkey.’

‘Are you telling me the truth? How can this have happened? Has the emperor received reinforcements?’

‘Yes, he has: a powerful and merciless knight. His name is Sir Guy of Warwick. No man can survive a blow from him, were that man as strong as an oak. Guy has a hundred knights with him too, the best in all of Germany. He has given me a deep wound that I think will be my death.’

The sultan swore by Apollo and by Mohammed that he would never be happy again until he had taken the city. This was overheard by a spy, who went quickly to tell Guy what the sultan planned to do.

The emperor, meanwhile, sent for Guy and received him with great honour. ‘By Saint Roger,’ he declared, ‘you shall have my daughter’s hand in marriage! It is fitting that you

should be made emperor. I shall make sure that all of my subjects bow before you.'

The steward sat listening to this and began to harbour jealous thoughts.

The emperor was so pleased that Saracens had been killed in such great numbers that he called for his falconer and said that he wanted to go to the river to exercise his hawks. All his men went along with him.

A short while later, the steward Mordagower approached Guy.

'Sir Guy,' he said, 'by God, I am so fond of you! I have castles and wealthy cities, broad lands and reliable incomes, and I would like you to have them all, for I desire above all else to have your friendship and your love. Let's go together to find somewhere to play chess, or backgammon or to tell each other stories. How about we go to the bedside of that fair maiden, for she loves you very much?'

They went into her chamber. The emperor's daughter was standing before her bed. 'Sir Guy,' she said. 'Welcome. Would you like to kiss me?'

Guy kissed her courteously, and they spoke a few friendly words together. Then the chess board was laid down in front of the maiden's bed. Guy was very good at chess and won the first game, then the second, and then the third. The steward rose then and said: 'Guy, you stay here and look after the maiden. I'll be back in a moment.'

Mordagower left Guy in the maiden's room and soon found the emperor.

'Steward, how are things?' asked the emperor. 'Is there any news of the Saracens?'

'Sir, you have a knight in your retinue who is nothing but a knave! It is Sir Guy of Warwick. He has broken into your private chambers and forced himself upon your daughter and violated her! If you don't believe me, go quickly, he's still in her room. If you throw him into your darkest prison, then sentence him to be hanged, men will respect and fear you the more for it and you'll be safe from such treachery in the future.'

'I don't believe a word of it!' exclaimed the emperor. 'Guy wouldn't do this to me. I've promised him my daughter and I'm not going to break my word on that now.'

When Mordagower saw how much love the emperor had for Guy, he thought up another plan. He went back to the room where Guy was alone with the emperor's daughter and took him aside.

'Guy, I must warn you of impending danger,' he whispered. 'I advise you to flee from here as quickly as you can. The emperor has been told that you have broken into his private rooms and had sex with his daughter. He is not happy! Flee from here at once and don't stop until you are well away from the city. If you are found, you will be executed, and all your men will be as well.'

'Alas!' cried Guy. 'Is this the reward I get for all that I have done? Who can read anything into fair words and friendly demeanour? A short while ago he promised me land and

great wealth. It is a travesty that he should believe the words of a liar and would now have me killed.'

Guy stormed out of the chamber and made his way to his lodgings, where he called together all his knights.

'Lords, arm yourselves,' he said, 'this is no place for us. By God, before we are captured and killed, many of them will die, and then they'll know for certain that I have been falsely accused!'

They quickly armed themselves and mounted their horses. Then Guy rode angrily, with his knights, out of the city. They rode towards the sultan, to see if he might have any use for their services.

The emperor returned home from hunting. The weather was fine and it was still light, and when he saw the gleam of helmets in the distance he asked who those armed men were that he could see. Someone from the city said: 'It is Sir Guy; he is leaving the city in a great rage.'

When the emperor heard this he rode off at once, spurring his horse mercilessly, jumping mounds and ditches until: 'Sir Guy!' he shouted. 'Who has angered you so much that you want to leave me? Tell me the truth, for whatever it is that has annoyed you, it shall be remedied at once.'

'Sir,' replied Guy, 'I will never be a traitor. I've been told that you have no need of me now, and that you don't want to see me again. So I'm off to where my service may be appreciated. Otherwise, I wouldn't fight against you, not for all the gold in Christendom.'

'My dear friend,' said the emperor, 'turn around. You shall have whatever you want, whatever it may be. Nothing that anyone can say gives me the slightest cause to doubt you.'

They kissed and were friends again. Guy guessed that the steward had been behind it all, but he kept this to himself and said nothing.

'Sir emperor,' said Sir Guy, 'listen to me. I have learned that we are going to be besieged by a vast army soon. We'll be completely surrounded by Saracens and it's going to be very hard to withstand them. The sultan has sworn by Apollo that everybody in the city will be put to the sword.'

'Then do whatever you think fit. I give you full command,' said the emperor.'

Guy called the constable to him: 'Tomorrow morning we are going to be attacked,' he said.

'Shall we defend the city, or take the offensive and fight them out in the open?' asked the constable. 'If we occupy the surrounding hills before they do, we'll be able to cause them some difficulty, I believe.'

'I agree,' said Guy. 'Let the cry go out throughout the city that every man should prepare himself for battle, and may God forsake any man who lingers behind through fear.'

The next morning, twenty thousand white shields could be seen in the fields outside the city. 'Gentlemen,' Guy shouted to this assembled army, 'listen to me, all of you who believe in the Holy Trinity. We will defeat these Saracens. Nothing can stop us from doing this. By your strength and your valour you will be defending God and Christianity, as well as your property and your lands. They have killed our dear friends, and it is our responsibility to make sure that our friends do not go unavenged. So let us go boldly to meet the enemy and to fight them valiantly, for if we flee, we will be quickly killed.'

They all shouted: 'Lead on!'

They made their way to some higher ground, where they could see that all the countryside for miles around was crawling with grim-looking Saracens.

'Take twenty thousand men with you,' said the sultan to one of his top commanders, 'and go quickly to that high ground and kill everybody you find there.'

With much noise and ostentatious display, this proud king set off with his forces to take the hill.

But I have a suspicion that they won't succeed all that well.

Seeing this advancing army approaching, Guy cried: 'Everybody, prepare yourselves at once!' They cast stones and sharp spears towards the enemy, and shot arrows tipped with steel. They fought with sharp swords. Guy was very courageous; he controlled the enemy as though they were sheep, driving them into his spears and his arrows and with the advantage of the slope, he caused those who were retreating, or falling dead, to crush those behind them, so that in a short while ten thousand had been slain.

When the King of Tyre saw this carnage, he rode forward with anger and determination, his long sword drawn. He hit a knight on the head and killed him instantly. Guy saw this and gave the king a massive blow in return that split his head in two. Guy slew Saracens to left and to right, until the hillside was thick with corpses.

The King of Nubia ascended the hill, but the Greeks defended themselves valiantly against now overwhelming odds; they cut off feet and hands, shoulders and arms with their battle axes. The fighting was intense.

Guy retreated not an inch and fought valiantly. The pagans assaulted him relentlessly and he hit them in front and behind, so that within a short while there lay close by him on the ground over a hundred dead bodies; they were piled so high that Guy was starting to have difficulty moving around. He did so well that day that it was remembered for a long time afterwards.

Hereward also gave a good account of himself. He fought like a wild boar and cut off

many heads with his sword. He killed two hundred Saracens that day, before the battle was finished. The King of Charters was captured, along with many other Saracens. Those on top of the hill cast down great stones that had been gathered for the purpose, an enormous quantity of them, stones that were as great as any man could lift; they rolled these stones down the slope and very few Saracens managed to get out of the way of them.

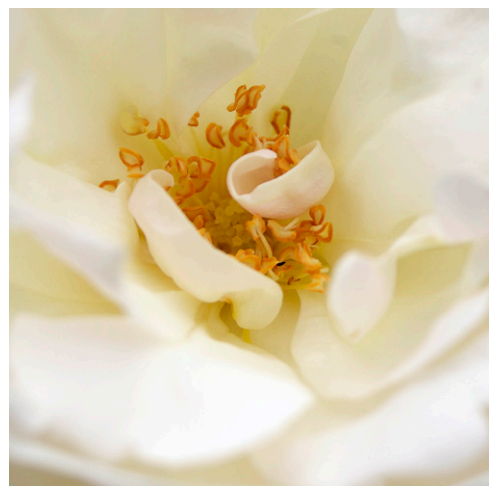
Night has come. The Saracens lie slain on the field; so many that men might walk a mile using the bodies as stepping stones, and not have to touch the ground once.

‘Sultan, can you not see the dead and injured on the battlefield?’ cried a newly knighted warrior, who was badly wounded. ‘The gods have abandoned us! We ought to burn them in a fire! Ride back to your pavilion and order that all the injured be gathered up, for there are some who may yet survive.’

The Saracens collected their dead and injured. The sultan took out his gods and, hoisting them harshly before him, said: ‘Ah gods, may the devil hang you all by the neck! I have done you many favours and you reward me with this? You are false gods!’ He took a bludgeon made of apple wood and beat all three of his gods with it, breaking off legs and arms. ‘You are worth no more than the stone you are made of!’ he shouted, and he grasped them by the feet and threw them as far as he could. Then he leapt onto a fast Arabian horse and instructed a messenger to ride from there to the Red Sea to gather all the men who owed him allegiance and to instruct them, for their honour, to come to Constantinople as quickly as they could.

Guy called his own men to him and joyfully, they rode home, although every man had wounds to show for his valiant effort.

Sir Mordagower, that treacherous villain, began to think up another trick to deceive Sir Guy with. Guy was now very powerful and everybody in the city loved him. The emperor loved him very much, I can tell you, because he expected to win back his lands because of him.



Mordagower approached the emperor and choosing his moment, said: ‘Sir, if you value my advice: the sultan has sent his messenger throughout all his lands, far and near, to tell every man that he can find to come to join him in the siege of your city. You have here a knight who seems to be the most valiant in the world. Why don’t you arrange to tell the sultan that if he wants to gain control over all your lands by force of arms, then he should send a knight to fight your champion in single combat. If it so happens that your knight gains the upper hand, then you will keep all your lands in peace, in their entirety, but if his own knight wins the contest, then you will pay him tribute every year and do him homage, and hold your lands from him.’

'I shall broach this plan to my noblemen, and see if anyone is willing to carry such a message,' replied the emperor.

The emperor called for his noblemen. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I am seeking a messenger to go to the sultan. I would rather have peace than war and I would like to hold my lands lawfully and justly. If the sultan can find a worthy enough knight, I will find my own champion and then let them do battle together with one another in single combat. If my man is overcome, I shall yield all my lands to the sultan, and if his champion gets the worst of it, as I pray to God he shall, then he must leave my lands immediately. Whoever dares to take this message to the sultan for me shall earn my undying love.'

When the emperor had said this, not a single person felt inclined to say a word in reply.

'Sir emperor,' said the constable at last, whose name was Christopher (his beard hung to his waist, but he had been a strong man when he was young). 'I shall speak my mind. To send a man to his death is just plain stupid. You may as well just kill him here and now! I don't think you will find anybody willing to deliver this message for you. I don't say this through cowardice; if I had the strength and endurance that I had even nine years ago, I would offer to do it myself. The fear of death would not stop me. But I am old, my hair is white and my strength has gone. I am able to give advice, though, and this is it.'

Hereward looked at Sir Guy and considered volunteering, but feared that Guy might be angry if he did so.

Guy waited to see if anybody was bold and courageous enough to put themselves forward, and having stood as still as a stone while listening to all this, he burst out suddenly:

'Sir, I will go to the sultan and deliver this message for you. I shall ring it out so clearly that even the tiniest pageboy in the furthest corner of the sultan's hall will hear it. I will not shrink from making this journey, I shall see it through and meet my death, if need be.'

God, who suffered so much on the cross, give Guy the grace to do well and to escape this with his life!

Guy arrived at his lodgings and found his companions all eager to accompany him, but he wouldn't hear of it.

'Let me go with you,' implored Hereward. 'To die with you will be an honour.'

'Hereward, if you come, it will not be with my blessing.'

Guy had himself armed, he put on a coat of chainmail, then put his helmet on his head and quickly laced on his armour. Then he put on a circlet of gold weighing a hundred pounds, full of precious stones and pearls, and then strapped on his sword, which was worth a great deal of land. He put his shield around his neck and selected a spear. Then

he mounted a good horse and rode out of the city. Everyone watching him felt very sorry for him. Some wept with pity, for they all believed that this was the last they would see of him.

Guy now makes his way towards the sultan's encampment. He doesn't slow or pause but rides up and down the lines of pavilions, searching for the one he is looking for.

Guy quickly spotted the sultan's pavilion because it had an eagle of gold above and a stone that gave out so much light that it lit the camp up when it was dark; it gave out as much light as the sun! When he came to this pavilion, he went straight in and found the sultan eating a meal with fifteen kings.

'That king who sits in heaven,' shouted Guy, 'and who made the Earth and the seven planets and put sturgeon in the sea, may he send you, sir sultan, his deepest insults and his foulest regard, to you and to all those whom I see here, who believe in the power of Mohammed. The Emperor of Constantinople, who is a man of great valour, wishes you to know that you should not remain in his lands any longer. If your challenge has any merit, then you should send a knight who is prepared to fight to the death in single combat. If our champion is defeated and killed, then the emperor will send you annual tribute and regard you as his rightful lord. But if his knight is given the grace to overcome yours, then you should leave his lands at once and make good all the harm that you have done. Let the matter be settled like this. If you don't like the idea, then tell me what you do like. I am here to represent my lord. If anyone here is brave enough to take on this single combat, I will defend my lord's lands myself.'

'Who are you?' exclaimed the sultan. 'Never before has any knight dared to speak to me like this.'

'I will tell you my name. I am Guy of Warwick.'

'You are Guy of Warwick? You killed my nephew Coldran! Your lord can have no fond regard for you if he sends you here alone. Seize him!'

The sultan commanded that Guy be thrown into a pit. Guy was quickly surrounded by Saracens. He dug his spurs into his horse's flank and cried: 'Sultan, you shall be the first to pay!' and swung his long sword at the sultan's head. The head fell and rolled across the table. Guy snatched the head in his hands and raced his horse out of the palace, cutting off the heads of many more men in the process, before they had a chance to relieve him of his trophy.

Guy carried the sultan's head safely nestled in his lap, as he galloped through the enemy ranks on his excellent horse, followed by a throng of Saracens. He quickly rode to a defensible position, a rocky place, then turned and fought, fending them off and killing many. Never before has any man dared to fight alone against such a multitude of armed knights.

But let us turn to Hereward. He is so worried about Guy that he thought his heart would

break. As he wept, he fell asleep on his bed and dreamed a strange dream: he saw Guy on his horse with a sharp spear in his hand, being attacked by lions and leopards, his shield broken in two, his coat of chainmail damaged and in such difficulty that it was as much as he could do to stay alive. When Hereward awoke he called to his companions:

‘Arm yourselves, everybody! Guy is fighting for his life and needs our help!’

They quickly armed themselves, mounted their horses, then rode like the wind and soon spotted the crowd of Saracen warriors who were trying their best to kill Sir Guy; they were attacking Guy on every side and he was defending himself bravely, furiously, breaking the back of every man who came close enough, but now they had hold of his horse’s bridle and were trying to haul him off his horse.

Sir Hereward came riding up and attacked a Saracen at once, hitting him high upon the head with his sword and slicing him down to his chest. Mohammed was no help to this man! Hereward expected no divine punishment for it either! His companions killed two or three Saracens as well, and there was a fierce battle. The Saracens began to retreat in disarray and Guy joyfully turned with his men towards the city, their spirits high. When the people in the city saw the sultan’s head, the bells rang, priests and clerics broke out in song and everyone declared: ‘Now there will be peace. Thanks be to God!’

Guy ascended the tower and presented the head to the emperor.

‘Sir, this is the head of the great sultan. I killed him myself.’

When the emperor saw the head, he couldn’t stop himself from weeping. He kissed Guy a hundred times, and no man can express the joy that he felt. They all thanked the King of Heaven that the war had been brought to an end.

Guy had a marble pillar constructed that was large and shiny with a brass head at the top that contained the head of the sultan in it. He had it placed in the centre of the city, so that everybody seeing it might be forewarned, if they contemplated doing the city any harm.

Emperor Hernis said: ‘Guy, listen: I would like to do you a great honour. Take my daughter to be your wife.’

‘Sir, thank you, but I don’t deserve this, honestly,’ said Guy.

The emperor rose early one day, very swiftly went to hear Matins and Mass, then leapt onto a brown mule and declared that he had decided to go hunting. He took Sir Guy with him, and all the dukes and earls who were present in court. The weather was hot and sunny.

As Guy rode along, he saw a lion approaching; it seemed exhausted and hardly able to take another step. The lion opened his mouth and roared, as though in desperation. Behind him was a dragon; its head was huge, its mouth agape, its eyes burning like fire. It looked wild and terrifying and Guy thought that it must be the very devil of hell!

‘Stay here,’ he said to his men.

Guy took a spear in his hands and leaving his companions behind, went quickly to give the lion some aid. When the dragon saw him coming, he left the lion alone and turned his attention to Guy. Guy very quickly chose a place to plunge his spear into the dragon and threw the weapon under its wing. The spear went right through the dragon’s body, the dragon fell to the ground and Guy drew his sword and cut off its head. The body stank.

As Guy rode back to where his men were waiting, the lion followed close behind him. The lion looked to be in a playful mood; he brushed Guy with his tail, licked his feet and leapt around his horse’s neck. Guy got down off his horse and stroked the lion’s back, and laid his hand on the top of its head. The lion rolled about on the ground in front of Guy, like a friendly dog. They played with each other like this for a while, then Guy leapt back onto his horse and the lion followed him, and continued to follow him, with a great deal of obvious affection.

Guy rode back to the emperor, with the lion at his side. He recounted his battle with the dragon, and everybody was astonished to see how much Sir Guy was clearly loved by this lion.

One day, the emperor travelled with his entourage to a city. Guy and the emperor went into the city’s tower and Guy rested in his chamber in the company of his good lion. Wherever Guy went, the lion followed him, he followed him everywhere. He lay beside Guy’s bed at night and Guy was very happy that this should be so.

When the land had been fully restored from the deprivations of the sultan’s invasion, castles, cities, towns and boroughs, the emperor quickly returned to Constantinople and called Guy to him. ‘Guy,’ he said, ‘get your finest clothes prepared, for tomorrow you are going to marry my daughter. The time has come. The wedding must be delayed no longer.’

‘Whatever you desire is fine by me,’ replied Guy, as a true knight.

The next morning Guy dressed like a nobleman and made his way happily to the church, and all his friends and companions merrily accompanied him. He arrived at the church and saw a multitude of people there, kings, dukes, barons, the most exulted nobility of the entire region, and there were wealthy bishops in attendance, waiting to preside over the service.

‘Guy,’ said Emperor Hernis, ‘I will give you my daughter and half of my land, and all of it when I am dead. You shall be emperor after me. I promise you this in the presence of all my lords and barons here.’

Everybody was very pleased to hear this. Guy thanked the emperor for his generosity.

A bishop appeared in his finest regalia, carrying the rings. When Guy saw these rings, though, he was reminded of the beautiful Felice: ‘Ah, Felice,’ he thought to himself, ‘I

have forgotten you. I have loved you with all my heart. Am I to abandon you now for the sake of all this wealth?’ Guy was suddenly so distressed that he fell to the ground.

‘Sir emperor,’ he cried, ‘for the love of Our Lady, let us postpone this wedding until I’ve recovered. I have a dreadful pain in my side.’

‘I’ll be very disappointed to see the wedding delayed any longer,’ replied the emperor.

The emperor was not happy at the postponement, and his daughter was particularly upset. She thought her heart would break in two. Nothing could console her and she spent the entire day lying on her bed in tears. Guy lay on his bed as well, he lay motionless in his chamber for three days and no one can imagine the thoughts that were running through his head, the fears and regrets. His lion was very subdued as well, and didn’t touch any meat throughout the entire three days.



On the third day, Guy called Hereward to him. ‘Tell me; what’s your advice?’ he asked. ‘Do you think that I should marry, or should we return to England? In England there is a maiden, she is Earl Rohald’s daughter and her name is Felice. You know her of course. There is no one in the whole land as dear to me as she is, and no one in the whole world so faithful and true.’

‘Sir,’ said Hereward, ‘I advise you to take the emperor’s daughter. She will make you rich, and when her father dies you will be emperor in his place. God has piled a huge amount of honour upon you. No one will be as rich and powerful as you. You will have twenty times more wealthy earldoms than the good Earl Rohald could ever dream of possessing. You would be mad to refuse such an honour.’

‘Shut up, Hereward. You cannot love me if you give me such advice as this. You’re telling me to abandon Felice?’

‘Sir, forgive me.’

‘But is that what you’re asking me to do?’

‘Sir, I can clearly see how much she means to you. Forgive me. Now that I understand how you feel, then I advise you that if you love this maiden so deeply, then you would be wise not to forsake her.’

Guy got up and went straight to the court, with his lion following along. Everybody was pleased to see Guy in good spirits once again and the emperor invited Guy to eat with him in the hall. The lion roamed at will through the palace. The steward was jealous of this.

When the meal was over, Guy went off with the emperor while his lion strolled merrily

about, unmolested. The lion went into the garden and lay down to sleep in the sunshine, as was his custom, and Guy went to sleep as well, in his room.

The steward looked out from a window and wondered whether he might kill the lion as he slept. He took a spear, went out into the garden and stabbed the animal mercilessly with it. The lion woke with a start, but he was badly wounded and ran into a road with his guts trailing behind him; he ran until he came to the lodgings where Guy was living.

The whole thing was witnessed by a maiden, in a chamber which overlooked the garden.

Guy was asleep on his bed. The lion fell at Guy's feet and licked them tenderly. When Guy saw how mortally injured his friend was, he wept for him. 'Almighty God, who has done this?' he cried.

Guy watched his lion breath his last. 'Now I have sorrow!' he exclaimed. 'God, give me the grace to avenge this wrong! If I knew who it was, he would quickly pay for it.'

Guy strapped on his sword and strode angrily out into the city. Inside the hall, he cried out: 'Lords, I ask you all, if anybody knows who has killed my lion, tell me and I will give him rich gifts and support him in whatever he does. Fifteen hawks and fifteen good horses, along with a hundred besants of gold shall be his, as a token of my gratitude.'

But everybody said that they had no idea, so Guy asked every knight and every squire that he met, going from chamber to chamber until he came to the room of the maiden who had witnessed the outrage.

'It was Mordagower,' said the maiden. 'I saw him stab your lion in the garden.'

When Guy heard this, he hurried out of the chamber. Searching hard for the steward, he found him at last in a room playing chess with a cousin of his. 'I'll see your guts trailing behind you!' he cried, angrily, drew his sword and cut the steward's head clean off his shoulders.

The steward's cousin seized a spear, but Guy fended him off and returned blows of his own, cutting off one of the man's arms, then made his way to the emperor.

'Sir,' he said, 'for your honour I have served you with all my strength, but my reward has been a poor one. Your steward has killed my lion. I have paid him back in full, but beware of any servant of yours whom you cannot guarantee a guest in your city protection from! I will go back to my own country now. It will be lovely to see my friends again. I shall set off at once. But if any man threatens to harm you, in peace or in war, then send word to me straight away and I shall do all that I can to help you.'

When the emperor saw how angry Guy was: 'Sir Guy, for God's mercy! Tomorrow you shall be married!'

'Sir, I think not,' replied Guy. 'I have no desire to take a wife. If I married your dear

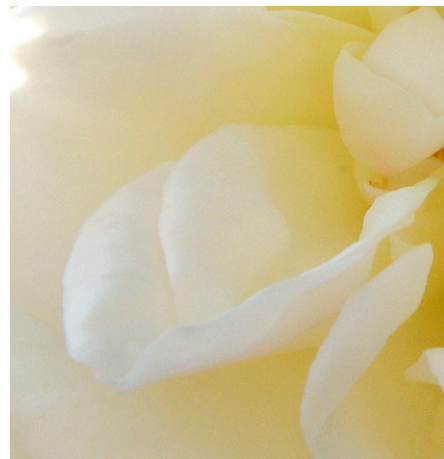
daughter and you allowed me to rule here alongside you, your men would grumble and complain that you had elevated a lowly bachelor knight to be emperor; they would soon regard it as an insult, to themselves and to you. It is better that I leave with my honour intact than to live here under a cloud. So I say to you, sir emperor, farewell, and may God shield you from all sorrow.'

When the emperor heard this, he openly wept, and so did everybody else. The emperor offered Guy fifty horses to take with him for his services, but Guy had seized enough from the Saracens to satisfy all his desire for wealth, and he had no need for any more. So, as the gracious lord that he was, the emperor gave gold to Guy's men, as much as they could carry, and they all complemented the emperor and spoke nothing but praise of him.

The emperor called Sir Hereward to him and asked if he would stay with him in the city; he would make him a rich man if he agreed to do so, and he'd give him the most beautiful lady in the land to be his wife. 'Sir,' replied Hereward, 'thank you, but no.'

Knights and squires wept bitterly when Guy rode away. Wives, maidens and children also wept, for while he was with them, they knew that they were safe from war.

Now Guy is sailing away, may God's grace protect him. He caught a fair wind and they arrived at last in Germany. Guy made his way quickly to the Emperor of Germany, who was very pleased to see him. The emperor welcomed him with great honour and gave fitting recognition to all his men. But Guy soon resolved to head back to England, so they quickly prepared for the journey and set off.



Soon, they came into Lorraine, where they were all nobly received for their great horsemanship. And one day, in the month of May, when every bird is singing merrily, Guy and his company were riding through a forest near a city, making their way towards the coast, when Guy was so filled with the joys of the season that he invited his men to make their way into the city to take lodgings in familiar surroundings, while he stayed in the forest for a short while to listen to the birds and to enjoy the spring flowers.

So Guy's men set off towards the city, leaving him alone in the forest. As he lay on the ground, listening to the delightful sounds around him, he heard something that caused his mood to change. He walked further into the woodland, where many wild animals lived, and as he roamed in that solitude he heard the sound of someone who was obviously in pain. Quickly making his way towards this sound, he found lying under a hawthorn tree a man who was bleeding heavily, like a knight who has been badly wounded in conflict. Guy looked closely at him. His beard was a span in length but his face was

pale and drained of blood from all the wounds that he had received. He was clothed in a scarlet robe and had a dreadful wound through his body. He wore fine hose and shoes, and was certainly a knight.

This man had a shield lying at his head, and Guy looked at him with pity and asked him: 'Knight, what is your name? Who has done this to you? I promise to do you no harm but to help you in any way that I can.'

'Sir knight, ask me no more, for I am weary. I can't explain. Go away, sir. You won't learn anything from me today; unless you can promise me something. Give me your word. Promise me that you'll lend me your help, with all your strength. If you'll do this, I'll tell you everything. Otherwise, just go away.'

Guy considered whether to be bound by this promise, but his curiosity was aroused. 'Sir knight,' he said, 'I pledge to help you. So tell me the truth. Who has done this to you?'

The wounded man replied: 'Thieves. But it is a long story: The Duke of Lorraine has a daughter, a delightful girl, in all the world there is none so beautiful. I loved her and did not hide it from her, and she returned my love and promised to love me more than any other man. To earn her love I sought knighthood, I received it and resolved to travel to distant lands in search of conflict, into France and Burgundy, Germany and Saxony. There was no jousting competition or tournament in any of these lands where I did not succeed in carrying away the prize. I was praised to the rafters for my prowess and my accomplishments on the tournament field.

'Then I was told of a war in a far country. Saracens, in great numbers, were bringing Christianity to its knees; so I travelled there to boost my reputation even further. I managed to kill many Saracens. My valour and my skill at arms were judged to be the greatest in all that land. I killed a Saracen king and brought the war to an end.

'Then a message arrived with evil news: how Duke Otoun of Pavia was intent upon doing me the utmost grievance. A day had been arranged for him to marry Ozolde, the fair maiden whom I love, and there were only six days left before the wedding was to take place. The message urged me to return as quickly as I could to help that maiden, while there was still time.

'I travelled as quickly as I could, with a large number of companions. We rested neither day nor night until we arrived at this city. There we found many a knight and many a good baron with the Duke of Lorraine, ready and waiting to make their way to the church for the wedding. I dug my spurs into my horse and galloped through the crowd until I saw the maiden being led by two lords, one on either side of her. I grabbed her from them, set her behind me on my horse and we rode away like the wind.

'Soon they were pursuing me, swearing to bring about my death. I fought them off valiantly with the men who were with me, there was a huge battle, but many of my men were killed and in the end I was left alone. Almost mad with grief and anger, I struck out with all my strength and in a short while I had killed twenty men. Save for Sir Guy

of Warwick, I don't think there is anybody in the world who could have done so well and survived for so long, all by themselves. But then I saw a fresh host of men from Lorraine and Lombardy descending upon me, so I took a firm hold of my lady and galloped away. They chased after me, but I managed to escape from them, until I came to a wide expanse of water.

There was no ship to be found, and they were still close behind me, but the water was broad and deep, and there was nothing else for it so I urged my excellent horse into it and we crossed safely, by the grace of God. None of them had the courage to come across to where I was.

'So I made it into this forest, with the maiden whom I love the best. I thought we were safe, so I rested on this ground and fell asleep. I tied my horse to a tree, and the damsel sat beside me as I slept.

'Then I was stabbed. Stabbed as I slept! Thieves, fifteen of them! I am dead, as you can see. They stole my horse and carried Ozolde off with them. There, I've told you everything. My name is Tirry, the son of Earl Aubrey of Gormaz. I care nothing for my death but I am dreadfully worried about Ozolde. Go at once to that hill over there. That's where the thieves have taken her. If you can overcome them, then you shall win the fairest maiden in this entire land, and also the best horse that a knight has ever ridden. I won him from a Saracen in a heathen land. I have been offered fifteen castles in exchange for him, fifteen cities and many horses laden with gold; all this was offered to me by a Saracen king for that horse.

'Now you know everything. In God's name, you gave me your word. As soon as I am dead, take me to a church or an abbey before wild beasts eat my body. But go now to help the maiden. Think upon your promise, and do your best. Take my shield and my spear, and may God help you to take rightful revenge.'

When Guy saw that it was the bold knight Sir Tirry he was speaking with, whom he had fought against and then befriended in Germany, he was sorely aggrieved at the man's misfortune and knew that he would never rest again until he had taken revenge on Tirry's behalf. He took up the shield and the spear, and with his sword at the ready he made his way up the mountain.

In a short while, he came across a large wooden building and saw Tirry's horse tethered in front of the main doorway. Guy leapt from his horse, drew his sword and burst in.

'You thieves! May the devil hang you all!' he cried. 'You have killed a valiant knight and you will pay for it, I give you my word!'

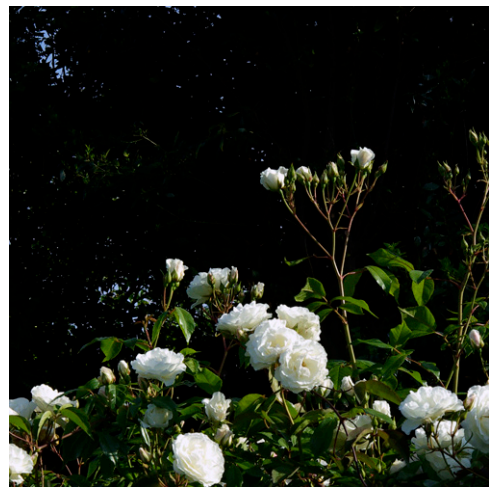
The first thief to meet with Guy lost his head to the sword, then a second, then a third, a fourth and a fifth, and still more. He killed them before they had a chance to gather their weapons. Soon there was only one of them left, for all the others were lying dead. The man managed to escape, but did so carrying a mortal wound.

Guy went to the young maiden and said: 'Don't be upset. Rise up and come with me. I'll take you back to Sir Tirry.'

Guy set the maiden on a mule and they descended back into the forest. But when they came to the hawthorn tree, Sir Tirry wasn't there. Fearing that wild beasts of the forest may already have dragged him away, Guy set the maiden down and quickly followed marks on the ground, but it was clear to him straight away that the prints he could see were those of horses, not wild animals. After a while he saw knights in the distance, leading Sir Tirry behind them. Guy soon managed to catch up with them and addressing them courteously, he asked them to hand the wounded knight over to him.

'I have given him my word that I will bury him properly when he is dead, in some good place, so I ask you now, for charity, please deliver him to me.'

A Lombard turned his horse around. 'Who are you?' he cried. He was steward to Duke Otoun of Pavia, and he, along with three of his companions, had crossed the water in a boat in pursuit of Sir Tirry. 'You have little love for yourself, coming here and demanding this man like this,' he said. 'Are you a friend of his? I shall lead you to Duke Otoun as well, you can be chained together if you like. You'll both be hanged high upon a gallows tree!'



'Sir, you are wrong,' cried Guy, 'and yet, I shall not run from you. I would quite like to fight with you all!'

Guy gave the steward a blow on the head with his sword that soon made empty air of all of his boasts. Then he struck another, cutting the man's head clean off his shoulders so that it fell onto the grass. Another attacked so clumsily that he broke one of his stirrups and Guy was able to cut him into two pieces quite easily. The fourth fled: he was a little overawed by the situation, I believe.

Guy took up Sir Tirry and set him in front of him on his horse, then rode back to the hawthorn tree, but now there was no sign of the girl!

We must leave Sir Guy for a moment and speak briefly of this maiden. We must return also to Guy's companions, for they had gone into the city and prepared a meal for Guy, but were puzzled when he didn't appear and wondered why he had not caught up with them yet. So Hereward returned to the forest with some companions and they searched the entire woodland, but could find no trace of him. But then they heard a gentle sobbing, a woman's voice, like a lady weeping for a child, and Hereward made his way to where the sound was coming from. He found the maiden beneath a hawthorn tree, weeping and alone. Hereward asked her her name and what she was doing there, but all she could reply was that she was weeping for her lord, and asked that no one should see

her like this, but that she might be taken to somewhere where she could be alone. So they returned quickly to the city with her, for they had found no sign of Guy.

So now let us return to Guy. When he came to the hawthorn tree and found nobody there, he looked all around and, discovering no sign of the maiden, made his way to the city and to his inn. Guy sent quickly for physicians to help Sir Tirry, and as he stood beside the knight he thought he heard a rueful cry.

‘What is that noise that I can hear?’ he asked his chamberlain. The man replied that there was a maiden in there: ‘Sir Hereward found her in the forest, sir. She is the most beautiful young woman I’ve ever seen.’

‘Send for her quickly, by God!’ exclaimed Guy.

‘There’s no need to be upset,’ Guy reassured her when he saw the look on Ozolde’s face as she stood watching the physicians tending to Sir Tirry. ‘Your man will soon be healed.’

But when the maiden saw the extent of his dreadful wounds: ‘Tirry, my darling,’ she said, ‘you look so pale. It was an ill-fated thing indeed if meeting me has been the cause of your death. If you die, I shall kill myself. God give me the grace that this should be so! I will never leave you.’

She lay down beside him and kissed his mouth and his face, and became as grey as lead. Guy took that sweet damsel into his arms and lifted her up. A physician assured them that Sir Tirry would recover. Guy comforted her.

‘My dear, sweet thing, stop this! Your lord is going to get better.’

Sir Tirry was soon on the mend and back on his feet, and Guy looked after him well. He told no one where the knight came from, nor who he was, but Guy made sure that he had the finest physicians. Soon they were the greatest of friends. They both remained in the city until Tirry’s wounds had healed fully and he was strong enough to ride a horse again. Then they had a lot of fun hunting with hounds and with hawks. They would go into the forest and to the river, and have a great time together.

Whilst they were returning from hunting one day, Guy said to Tirry: ‘I have taken so much trouble over your recovery because you are very dear to me. Why don’t we swear fellowship to one another? We can promise each other that, while we live, we’ll each help the other, always, wherever we are.’

Sir Tirry replied: ‘Sir, thank you. This is a great honour that you do me.’

They kissed one another and then, like true brothers, made their way happily back to the city, like men without a care in the world.

They came to their inn, and Guy got everything ready, for he intended to travel to England and he wanted to take Tirry with him. He wanted many others to accompany him

also, and he wanted to leave at once, for he was sure that the king would reward him with great honour and many fine castles.

Guy stood at a window speaking with Sir Tirry about his impending voyage, and of his intention to visit his own country, when a knight came riding up looking as though he had been on quite a hard journey. Guy asked him at once where he was from, what news he carried and where he was bound for.

‘I am seeking Sir Tirry, the son of the Earl of Gormaz,’ the knight replied. ‘I have been looking for him in many lands. Tirry seized the daughter of Duke Loyerer of Lorraine by force and carried her away with him, and now the duke is taking it out on Tirry’s father. Duke Otoun of Pavia is supporting him with many men from Lombardy, for he was the one who was going to marry the maiden, and whether Sir Tirry is dead or alive now I’ve no idea, but I’ve been searching many countries for him. Duke Loyerer and Duke Otoun have already destroyed the countryside for miles around Gormaz and taken everything they can. Unless I can find Sir Tirry that land will be lost for certain; his father is white-haired and old, and hasn’t the strength to defend it.’

‘By God almighty, if you stay with me tonight I’ll tell you all that I know about the whereabouts of Tirry of Gormaz,’ said Guy. He commanded his men to make the knight welcome.

‘Have mercy upon my father,’ said Tirry to Guy, later. ‘We have sworn fellowship together, so lend your strength to him now. He is in great need of us.’

‘Tirry, say no more,’ replied Guy. ‘As long as I can ride a horse, I will never fail you.’

‘Thank you,’ said Tirry.

Guy sent a messenger into Germany and the emperor sent him knights at once, five hundred in all.

‘Tirry,’ said Guy, ‘quickly make yourself ready to help your father.’ They hastily prepared, then rode day and night until they came into the land surrounding the city of Gormaz.

When they came up to Gormaz itself, they heard a lot of noise and activity. They entered the city at once, for the apparent dangers held no fears for them. Earl Aubrey was delighted to see his son, and also to see Sir Guy. They kissed, and the earl wept.

‘Dear father,’ said Tirry, ‘give Guy the honour that he deserves. I want you to know that we have sworn fellowship together. He saved my life.’

‘May God reward him for it,’ replied the earl. ‘He shall have the freedom of my lands: cities, castles, town and tower shall be his to command as he sees fit. I am too old for all this.’

They rose the next morning and everybody gathered before Earl Aubrey. A great shout rang out as Duke Loyerer appeared before the city. Guy addressed his fair company: 'Gentlemen, arm yourselves, if you please. We are going to ride out at once against these men.'

'Sir, we are ready!' came the reply. Guy went off to his inn and was soon fully armed. When they were all prepared and had assembled with their helmets shining, Guy said to Tirry: 'Take two hundred knights with you and make an attack upon the men of Lorraine. See that your hearts do not fail you!'

Tirry rode off with his knights, went out of the city and soon encountered the hostile army. An enemy knight came boldly out to challenge him. Tirry struck him with his spear so hard that the knight tumbled from his horse. Then he gave a deep wound to another knight. He fought valiantly and so did all of his men, but soon many of them had been killed or captured, many a brave and noble soul, and it distressed Tirry to see this. But he fought on, like a lion, for he was reluctant to flee.

'Hereward said to Guy: 'Can you see Sir Tirry? He must be the most valiant knight here, apart from you, of course. Let's go and help him!'

Guy and Hereward rode into the fray and threw themselves into the fighting. Guy struck Duke Loyerer's nephew Gayerer with his lance, toppling him from his horse, and took him prisoner, as the rules of war permit. Then Guy rode at another and impaled him with his lance, then attacked another and another. No knight had any thoughts of retreat or of mercy, and many brave knights met their end here.

At last the men of Lorraine were forced to retreat. Tirry and Guy gave chase and the enemy were all killed or wounded, scarcely thirty of them managed to escape. Tirry, Hereward and Guy made their way home victorious.

Duke Otoun rose early the next morning, stepped out of his pavilion and rode quickly to Gormaz with a thousand knights. As Guy was walking through a churchyard, he looked over the city wall and saw the host that the duke had brought with him, approaching beside a hill. He called Tirry and showed him what was happening. 'Duke Otoun of Pavia is my old enemy,' he said.

They had the bells rung immediately. Gathering their companions, the mood was one of deadly seriousness as they rode out of the city. They advanced at once, and soon many lances were shattered. Swords were drawn and the fighting was intense. Many were slain on both sides, but the Lombards had the worst of it. Duke Otoun began to gallop away in fast retreat, but Hereward spotted him and rode swiftly into the attack. But the duke was galloping so fast that Hereward had difficulty catching him up. 'Turn around!' he shouted. 'There is no one here but you and me. Defend yourself against me, for that gross villainy you did to us in Lombardy!'

The duke pulled up his horse. They struck each other on helmet and shield. Sparks flew from every blow, for neither cared to give an inch. Helmet and chainmail shattered and

blood flowed from their bodies, the effort was intense, the fighting ferocious. 'I shall be avenged, or I shall die,' thought Hereward. 'One or the other,' and he hit the duke so hard that a piece of the duke's helmet broke away and the sword ran on down through the duke's shoulder, plunging half a foot through his flesh before coming to a stop. The duke fell to the ground. Hereward delivered another blow, with great anger; he intended to cut off the duke's head, but his strength momentarily failed him. At once, a hundred knights appeared.

Hereward was able to defend himself from them, but luck was against him. He would have retreated back into the city but his horse had received a nasty wound and the Lombards were beginning to overwhelm him with their spears; they broke his coat-of-mail and his helmet and he was very soon close to death. A Lombard sprang on him like a leopard and gave him another deep wound. Hereward defended himself, another head went tumbling to the ground from the edge of Hereward's sword as he swung it ferociously, but the blade dug into the front of the man's saddle and, in trying to release it quickly, it broke in Hereward's hand.

'Alas!' he cried. 'Now I am a dead man!'

Another cowardly Lombard attacked Hereward. Hereward struck out at him and broke the man's neck with his fist. 'I would rather die here than be taken prisoner,' he thought. But then a French knight appeared, one of the duke's professional horsemen.

'Hereward, yield to me,' he cried. 'No harm will be done to you by the duke or his men, you have my word.'

'Sir,' replied Hereward, 'since it appears that I now have no other choice but to appear before the duke, alive or dead, I agree to these terms.'

They set Hereward upon a horse and led him towards the duke's forces, and the duke's army was very happy to see their new captive.

But let us turn again to Sir Guy, and to the bold Sir Tirry.

'Where is Hereward?' asked Sir Guy. 'What's happened to him?'

'I saw him on a white horse chasing after Duke Otoun,' said one.

'Alas!' cried Guy. 'I'll see if I can find out what's happened to him. Everybody else, go back to the city.'

Guy and Tirry searched ridges and furrows, open spaces and rough ground to see if Hereward was lying dead or injured, and when they could find no sign of him they galloped in the direction of the duke's pavilions and quickly saw Hereward being led by the duke. He looked to be wounded and in a bad way.

'Alas,' said Guy. 'Hereward has been taken prisoner. Tirry, will you help me?'

‘Of course I will,’ replied Tirry.

Guy and Tirry galloped at the Lombards with their spears levelled, then drew their swords and killed many a doughty knight with the blows that they wielded. Guy soon battled his way to where Hereward was standing and threw him a good sword, extolling him to defend himself with it. The fight that ensued was immense. The three knights fought so magnificently that Duke Otoun fled back towards the safety of his encampment and Guy galloped after him. Guy caught up with him when they were within a bow shot of the enemy pavilions and at once attacked him with his sword. But the ferocious blow that he delivered missed the duke and inflicted a grievous wound to his horse instead.

Guy was quickly surrounded, but managed to escape the confines of the camp. The Lombards were close behind him as he re-joined Hereward and Tirry, who were very pleased to see him, since his sudden disappearance had puzzled them both. ‘It’s time to go!’ cried Guy to his fellows, and they galloped off towards the city.

Everybody gave thanks to God that Hereward was still alive. Guy summoned the best physicians to attend to him, and through their efforts, Hereward’s injuries were soon healed.

Duke Otoun returned to Pavia with great shame and embarrassment. Physicians were called to attend to his injuries and when his wounds were healed, he went to see Duke Loyerer in Lorraine and told him how badly things had gone. ‘The city has proved to be impregnable,’ he said. ‘They have imprisoned all your knights and killed many of your friends. If you will take my advice, we will resort to cunning in order to take revenge, for men should by all means avenge themselves upon their enemies.’

‘Send friendly greetings to Sir Tirry and say that you will gladly give your dear daughter in marriage to him. Invite him to come to this city, and when he, his father, Hereward and Guy have set off and are a day’s journey away from Gormaz, set an ambush and have them all seized. Try them in your court and sentence them to be hanged from a tree. But I ask, please give Guy to me, and Hereward and Tirry. I’ll take them with me to Pavia and they’ll die in a deep prison. Then I shall marry your dear daughter.’

‘Don’t be so sour and vindictive, Otoun,’ replied Duke Loyerer. ‘I won’t have Tirry deceived like this, nor so badly treated; he has given me good service and helped me, and neither would I want Guy or Hereward tricked either.’

‘Why so much affection for these villains?’ asked Duke Otoun. ‘Earn ransom for them, at the very least. Make them pay for what they have done.’

So Otoun dreamed up another deceit. He approached Duke Loyerer with such words and entreaties that the duke agreed to send a messenger to Gormaz to explain to the earl that he and Duke Otoun were eager for reconciliation. They managed to so convince a bishop of their sincerity that he left that same day, with a great entourage, to undertake this embassy and to deliver this important communication. Before three days were out,

the bishop arrived in the city of Gormaz, where he found Earl Aubrey and kissed him courteously.

‘Duke Loyerer greets you with great affection,’ he confided, ‘and invites you to travel to his city in friendship and reconciliation. If you will agree to this, he will give his fair daughter in marriage to your son Tirry. Bring all your noblemen along with you; all your knights as well, as many as will make you feel safe on your journey. Both sides shall meet for a parliament at a camp midway between our cities and there the reconciliation can take place, on equal terms, one with another.’

Everybody replied enthusiastically: ‘Blessed be God and Saint Roger! Let’s take this opportunity and be reconciled with our lord.’

‘Are you sure that this isn’t a trick?’ asked Guy.

‘Have no fear,’ said the bishop. ‘There is no deceit in any of this, I assure you.’

The bishop set off to travel back to Lorraine. Sir Tirry was very happy.

When it was time to set off, every knight, young and old, dressed in his finest clothes and they made their way to the parliament. Earl Aubrey arrived there with Tirry, Hereward and the good Sir Guy, along with five hundred valiant knights, all clothed in costly gowns and resplendent in scarlet. Each rode a magnificent horse and riding along with them was the fair young maiden; for they suspected nothing.

They made their way to the parliament, intending to agree to the reconciliation. When they arrived, they saw many foreigners there as well, who had come to attend the wedding. Duke Loyerer of Lorraine was surrounded by all his nobility and there were many bachelor knights, all there to witness the marriage of their lord’s daughter. Duke Otoun of Pavia was in attendance, with many earls of Lombardy.

‘Lords,’ said Duke Otoun, ‘listen to me. You are well aware how Tirry carried out a criminal act against his lord, who loved and cherished him. Tirry served in Duke Loyerer’s court for a long time while he blossomed into manhood, and the duke regarded him so highly that he knighted him, and the only thanks he got for this was for him to run away with his daughter. And yet, I ask that the duke uses this parliament publically to forgive Sir Tirry and to give him his daughter’s hand in marriage. Then we shall be forever friends, and I will return to my country. For God’s love, Duke Loyerer, grant us this today.’

‘I shall grant everything that you have just said,’ replied Duke Loyerer.

‘Furthermore, I ask you all,’ said Duke Otoun, ‘to do your best to persuade Sir Guy of Warwick of our sincerity. With a promise of reconciliation, let him kiss me here, and we shall become friends.’

‘Sir duke, this has gone far enough!’ replied Guy, ‘I have no desire to kiss you. You betrayed me when I was in your country and you killed three of my knights. But it is not

the time to recount this here, so let us speak of other things instead. Kiss Earl Aubrey if you like, and make friends with his son Tirry. I will not stand in your way.'

They all kissed one another with joy and enthusiasm but Sir Guy drew back; he had no intention of kissing Duke Otoun. He went straight over to kiss Duke Loyerer.

Duke Loyerer,' said Earl Aubrey, 'I present to you my son Tirry. I offer you a fine young knight; he goes with my blessing, always.'

Shortly afterwards, the earl set off back to Gormaz. Duke Loyerer prepared to set off as well, accompanied by all his knights, and Hereward rode with the fair maiden Ozolde, for her father was happy for her to stay with him. Guy, Hereward and Tirry rode along, singing merrily. They were in good spirits and had no idea that they were in any danger. But before the sun had reached its zenith, their song was to change.

They rode quickly, and the duke invited them all to dismount, to rest their horses for a while. It was a hot day and they had been following the route for quite a while. But when they had all alighted, Duke Otoun suddenly stood up and shouted: 'Listen! Men of Lorraine and Pavia, listen to me! I command you to seize these traitors! Bind them securely and tie their hands behind their backs. We shall bring them to Lorraine and condemn them all to hang upon a gallows, and if anyone objects or refuses to help, he shall suffer the same fate.'

The Lombards jumped enthusiastically to their feet. They were as numerous as sheep in a fold and they were joined by many knights of Lorraine who were equally happy to obey this command. Tirry was quickly surrounded and seized; he was captured, and so was Hereward.

'Duke Loyerer, why do you allow this treason!' exclaimed Guy. 'Have we not kissed and cemented our friendship before all the barons?'

Duke Loyerer was embarrassed and upset. He couldn't speak a word, but just rode away; he could stay there no longer.

An angry knight darted forwards, seized Guy by his robe and tried to pull it off, breaking the cord that fastened it into three pieces. Guy turned around angrily and punched him with his fist. The man fell to the ground and didn't move. The Lombards pulled Guy's robe into shreds, every man had a piece of it in his hand but Guy was agile and strong and managed to fell many of those who were trying to assault him. He quickly made it to his horse, leapt up onto it and urged it forwards, striking its flanks as he frantically galloped off.

When Duke Otoun saw that Guy had escaped, he cried to his men: 'Leap onto your horses! What's the matter with you? Go after him!'

Many knights joined the chase, two hundred in all. Guy galloped ahead of them, alone and unarmed. One knight was wearing a helmet and carried a spear and rode at Guy with this weapon levelled; the spear glanced between Guy's arm and his side, grazing

his skin a little too closely for comfort. Guy turned his horse and struck the knight so hard that the man fell from his horse. Guy galloped off at once, but another knight was wielding a long sword with a sharp blade that embedded itself into Guy's saddle. His pursuers were not giving up.

At last, Guy saw a man carrying a stout staff and pulled his horse to a standstill. 'Give me that pole, dear friend and as I am a gentle knight, I shall repay you quickly, as soon as I can.'

'Gentle knight, take it at once. I can see the trouble that you are in.'

Guy took the staff and defended himself with it. The first man that he met he hit so hard that he broke his neck. Guy seized the man's horse and took it to the owner of the staff. 'Have this horse in payment, it's a fitting reward.'

'Thank you!' exclaimed the man, and he leapt up and rode off. Guy galloped off too, sparing for nothing. He managed to fend away all his pursuers until he came to a river. Without hesitating, Guy entered the water and urged his horse across. None of his pursuers dared to follow. The current was so strong that they all turned around and went back. Duke Otoun was furious when he learnt what had happened.

'That villain has got away,' he told Duke Loyerer. 'Let's return to Pavia. I shall marry your daughter there and I'll throw Tirry and Hereward into my prison. You can decide what you want to do with them after I've finished with them.'

'No,' said Duke Loyerer, 'by Saint Roger, that's not going to happen. Take Sir Tirry with you and make sure that you look after him well until I've decided what to do. Hereward shall come with me. I'll put him in my prison. I don't want you to have him. You'll kill him, I know.'

They parted respectfully. Duke Loyerer set off for Lorraine, taking a reluctant Hereward with him. Duke Otoun made for Pavia with Tirry and with the maiden Ozolde.

Tirry was placed on a riding horse with his hands tied behind his back; he made for a very unhappy sight and Ozolde couldn't bear to see him treated in this way. They hadn't gone far before she fell from her horse in distress.

'Woman, are you mad! Why make such an exhibition of yourself? The man is a scoundrel!' shouted Duke Otoun. 'I swear to you, by Saint Roger, if you carry on like this in front of me I shall kill him before your very eyes! Dear sweetheart, be merry. We shall soon be married. In Pavia you shall be married. Then I'll make Tirry comfortable and see that he is well looked after, I promise, if only you will cheer up.'

'As you wish,' said the maiden. 'But I would ask you one thing: that you give me forty days to rest and to come to terms with things, and then I will be ready in my chamber and willing to become your wife.'

'I grant you this, my sweet maiden,' replied the duke.

With that, they continued onwards to Pavia. But Ozolde's mind was racing. Only one thing gave her comfort: that Guy had managed to escape unhurt, and she clung on to the hope that he might be able to come up with some plan to rescue Tirry and herself.

When they arrived in Pavia, Duke Otoun threw Tirry into the deepest pit of his darkest dungeon. In the blackness, Tirry had no idea whether it was day or night, and he was given no food or water.

Guy is very worried about his friend, so let's turn to him now. When he had crossed the river, he looked about and saw that he was alone: 'Lord, how can I carry on?' he cried. 'Hereward and Tirry are prisoners and I know full well that they will be killed. Alas! Duke Loyerer, how could you do this to us? And as for Duke Otoun, he is a villain through and through! Lord, what will the Emperor of Germany think? I won't be able to show my face at his court again! When I set out for this country, he sent some fine knights to accompany me, and now they are all prisoners.'

Guy rode all day, for miles and miles, until he came at last to a castle beside a lake. It looked like a good place to spend the night, and he was exhausted. At the gate stood a courteous and well-dressed knight, surrounded by three other knights, and Guy was uncertain which of them to address.

'God save you,' said Sir Guy. 'I am a knight from a far country and would crave hospitality for the night.'

'Sir, you are welcome here,' answered the lord, heartily. He asked someone to take Sir Guy's horse to the stables. 'Look after this horse as well as you would my own,' he instructed.

The lord was courteous and led Guy into his hall. He took a red robe and cast it over Sir Guy as a mark of honour. Then he said: 'Sir, I implore you, tell me your name? Who are you and where are you from?'

'My name is Guy of Warwick,' Guy replied.

'I know you,' said the lord. 'You were once my friend. I was then your squire and you were very kind to me. You knighted me yourself and afterwards you led me into many lands, to jousting and to tournaments, and I became an accomplished warrior. But then I married, as you can see. My name is Amis of the Mountain.'

'As soon as Guy realised who he was, he embraced him heartily.

'Why are you on your own?' asked Amis. 'Where's Sir Hereward?'

'I'll tell you everything,' said Guy, and he related the whole story; how he'd found Sir Tirry injured in the forest and how they went to help Tirry's father Earl Aubrey at Gormaz and how they were both betrayed and how he had now managed to escape but had had to leave Tirry behind, and also Hereward, who was now, like Tirry, a prisoner: 'And

with them were five hundred valiant knights who were given to me by the Emperor of Germany,' said Guy, 'all taken prisoner, and whether they are alive or dead, I have no idea.'

When Guy had related the whole sorry tale: 'There is no tower or castle in my land that is not at your disposal,' said Amis. 'I can bring five hundred knights to help you. We can destroy Duke Otoun, burn his castles and his towns and you will be well avenged. We shall not leave his lands until he has been captured and killed.'

'Sir,' said Guy, 'thank you. But there is no time to gather an army. I need to act quickly.'

Guy spent six days there, in great distress. Amis tried to lift his spirits and wanted to go with him, but Guy wouldn't hear of it: 'I need to get back before my friends are killed. I'm not afraid to die in the attempt,' he said. So Amis remained behind as Guy set off.

Guy arrived at Pavia. Before entering the city, he smeared his face and his fair hair with a black ointment, so that he looked dirty and dishevelled and nobody would recognise him.

'Sir duke, may God protect you,' said Guy when he found Duke Otoun. 'You are a rich and powerful man, and I have come from a far country in order to see you. I have brought you the finest horse that any knight has ever ridden. He was taken from a Saracen and I acquired him off my cousin. There is no horse in this world so swift or courageous. He would swim across the sea if you asked him to. If you don't believe me, I can prove it to you, whenever you like. But he is very ill-tempered and has an evil manner. No man can go near him without him trying to kill that man, unless I'm looking after him.'

'Thank you,' said Duke Otoun. 'This is a worthy gift. You can stay to look after your horse. Gold and silver shall be your reward. I have need of such a steed. Of all my enemies, I have taken most of them but one has escaped me, and now I feel that his time is up, and a swift horse will be a great asset to me. Under better circumstances this man would be hanging by his neck already.'

'Sir,' said Guy, 'by the Holy Trinity, who is this?'

'My friend, this villain's name is Guy of Warwick. He is a great danger to me.'

'Sir, I know Guy very well. I wish to God that he was standing here now. He killed my brother in battle and I would love to get my revenge for it; on both he and a friend of his named Tirry. Do you know him? They slew my dear brother less than six months ago. May God allow me to live long enough to avenge his death.'

'My friend, I have Tirry in my prison,' replied the duke. 'Would like you to be his jailor? You have my permission to give him as much grief as you like.'

'Sir, thank you! I shall do as you say! He'll wish he'd never been born.'

Duke Otoun gave Guy the keys and made him his jailor. The duke asked him his name and Guy said: 'John.' John was assigned a spacious room and given a servant.

Little does Duke Otoun know who he's entrusting the keys to his prison to! For the love of Saint Thomas of Canterbury, charge your goblets and make merry, for now Guy has everything he wants!

The prison was forty fathoms deep and strongly built. Guy could hear in the distance the sound of a man in distress.

'Who are you?' he called out.

'A wretch,' came the reply. 'Earl Tirry was my name. I am in a dungeon and I'm shackled by a weight of iron that is so heavy my body feels as though it's made of lead. No man has ever been made to suffer like this. I haven't eaten for three days. I'm going to die of hunger, I know.'

'Be still,' replied Guy. 'Listen to me. I am Guy. I will get you out of here.'

'For God's love are you Guy!'

'Guy?' cried a Lombard who had overheard them. 'You'll both be hanged!'

'What will you gain from it if we are shamefully killed?' said Guy, turning to face the jailor. 'I'll become your man. I'll serve you as my lord. Then I'll make you a noble knight when this is all over. I give you my word.'

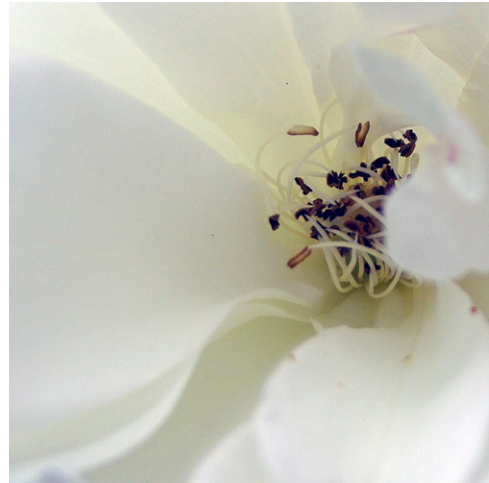
'Away with you!' shouted the Lombard. He ran out of the dungeon towards the court. Guy followed, and when he caught up with him, he hit the man on the head such a marvellous blow that he fell dead to the ground. There he lay; he would tell no tales now.

'What have you done!' exclaimed Duke Otoun. 'How dare you kill one of my men in front of my very eyes?'

'My lord, let me explain,' said Guy. 'I was walking around, exploring my new surroundings, when I came across this traitor speaking with Tirry in the prison. He was giving him plenty of food, and wine and ale, and when I challenged him about it he threatened to kill me. When I said I was coming to tell you what was going on, he punched me with his fist and ran away. I ask you, therefore, please forgive me this insult to your court. I did it to uphold your honour. You need someone in your prison who is prepared to defend your authority, not flout it entirely.'

The duke swore: 'By heaven's king! Are you telling me the truth?'

'Yes, by the grace of God.'



'I forgive you, then,' said Duke Otto.

Guy thanked him. Then he went into the city and bought a lot of food. He did this almost every day and smuggled it into the dungeon until Tirry had regained most of his strength, and he removed all the iron chains and shackles from his friend as well.

One day, Guy came across Ozolde. She seemed very downhearted and was dressed very plainly. 'I am Guy of Warwick,' Guy told her, 'although I don't look like him at the moment I know. But I've come to this city and no one knows who I am.'

Ozolde fell down weeping for joy. Guy took her up at once and said: 'Don't be silly! We mustn't attract attention like this.'

'Have pity on me,' the maiden cried. 'The wedding is to take place in only three days' time. I intend to kill myself with a knife rather than marry Duke Otoun.'

'Wait! Listen,' said Guy. 'Do everything that he wants you to do. He won't achieve his aim, I promise, he'll fail before he ever gets to the church. I'll kill him before he arrives. Then you can make your escape with me.'

Guy hurried to the prison. 'Tirry,' he said, 'it's time for you to escape. Go as quickly as you can, travel day and night until you reach Amis of the Mountain, in a castle in Spain. Greet him courteously, for he's an honourable man, and stay with him; he is your friend. Stay there until I arrive, or until I send word.'

'I'll go as quickly as I can,' said Tirry.

Guy led Tirry to the main road and they said goodbye to one another. Guy kissed him, and then Tirry sped off, leaving Guy on his own. Guy returned to the prison, then went to see the maiden, and gave her all the comfort that he could.

As Tirry hurried away from the city, he travelled over a vast landscape of hills, woods and wide fields, but at last, after a long journey, he arrived at Amis's castle. He found Amis in the hall, playing chess, and there were thirty knights around him; they were staying in the castle and serving their lord, for there was war in the land.

'Sir,' said Tirry, 'God protect you. But may I speak with you alone and in private?'

'Sir, if you wish,' replied Amis. 'We can speak alone.' Amis rose and led Tirry to a window.

'Amis,' said Tirry, 'I carry greetings from Sir Guy. He has sent me to stay with you, if this is alright, until he arrives in person or sends word of his intentions. He is going to confront Duke Otoun.'

'Sir,' replied Amis, 'absolutely! It will be a great honour! My dear friend, what is your name?'

‘Sir, my name is Tirry. I am the son of Earl Aubrey of Gormaz.’

‘Sir, you are very welcome.’ Amis embraced and kissed Sir Tirry, but as he looked at the filthy and tattered clothes that Tirry was wearing, tears came to his eyes and he quickly brought him some fine garments, the best in all the land, clad him in rich silk and a purple robe and made him feel very much at ease, and he instructed his knights to do the same. He assured him that he was welcome to stay for as long as he wanted, until they heard again from Guy.

But let us return now to speak of Duke Otoun. The duke instructed that it be announced that all men, all those in Lombardy and all those in the city of Pavia, should make themselves ready to attend his wedding. The duke was very happy that his wait would soon be over. He went to the maiden in very light-hearted mood and said: ‘Darling, get into your wedding clothes. Today you are going to be married!’

‘Sir,’ she said, happily, ‘I’ll do anything you want me to.’

She put on a beautiful dress, to please the duke, then mounted a riding pony and made her way through the city towards the church, accompanied by her husband-to-be. He firmly believed that he was going to marry this maiden.

Guy armed himself in steel; he had no lack of such equipment. Duke Otoun rode towards the church, with Ozolde riding obediently beside him, or so he imagined. Guy mounted his steed and, fully armed, rode quickly out of the castle. He spurred his horse through the city and overtook the wedding procession.

‘Duke, stand still!’ Guy shouted. ‘I command you, don’t move! Have you forgotten the treason that you once committed against Sir Guy, when we were at a ford across a river? All my men were killed. And you have insulted me yet again by betraying Sir Tirry. This is Guy you are looking at, and you will pay for it all, by Saint Roger!’

Guy drew his sword and held it naked in his hand. Then he struck the duke so hard upon the head that the blade sliced down through his body.

‘Sirs,’ he shouted, ‘by my loyalty, if anybody chases after me, he shall quickly lose his head!’ and he set the maiden on his horse beside him and galloped quickly away with her.

A great cry was raised throughout the city, but they couldn’t catch him; not one of them was able to get near Guy and Ozolde except for a single man whose name was Barrard, Duke Otoun’s nephew, for he was riding a fast horse. He followed Guy relentlessly with a spear in his hand, and when Guy had covered five miles: ‘Guy,’ this man shouted, ‘wait a while! For the love of Christ, joust with me.’

Guy turned his steed and, lifting the maiden down onto the ground, he took up his spear and rode hard at his adversary. Barrard managed to strike Guy a damaging blow with his

lance. Guy felt it; he marvelled at the man's skill and turned his horse about for another attack. This time he struck Barrard such a blow on the shield that it caused damage to the man's armour and sent his horse stumbling to the ground. Barrard jumped to his feet and drew his sword angrily. Then he swung it at his horse's back, killing it instantly.

'May the devil take you!' he cried. 'You're so frail that you cannot stand a blow from a knight! Guy! Dismount and fight with me! This day shall determine which of us is best, and may the grace of God be taken from me if I cannot cut off your head!'

'My friend, stop this,' said Guy. 'I will fight with you no more. We may meet again in battle, at a more appropriate time.'

Guy rode off and travelled all that day. Barrard walked back to the city.

They quickly brought Duke Otoun to church and buried him with every honour. Barrard carried news of the duke's death to the Emperor of Germany. The emperor conferred upon Barrard the duchy of Pavia, and gave him all the arms that he wanted; in fact, he gave him everything he asked for, and in addition, he made him his steward, the steward of Germany. Many people were very pleased when they heard this.

Guy travelled onwards with the maiden, but she was anxious and her fears were increasing. 'Sir Guy,' she said, 'what's going to become of me? Will I ever see Tirry again? He will die if he stays in that prison. I want to turn back, so that I can help him.'

'Don't worry,' said Guy. 'No harm will come to him, only good. I spoke with the jailor, and he will keep him safe.'

They rode hard for so long that they came to the castle on the mountain at last. When they arrived, they made their way quickly to the hall. Amis spotted Guy at once. 'By Saint Michael, welcome!' he said.

When Tirry saw Guy with the beautiful maiden by his side, he ran to her and took her into his arms and kissed her. 'Welcome, my darling,' he said. Then he turned to Sir Guy and kissed him as well. 'Welcome to you both; you are both so very welcome, you and my darling Ozolde. May God be thanked that you have both arrived safely, and may it please God that we are never parted from one another again.'

When the maiden caught sight of Tirry, whom she loved so very much, she fainted with joy, for she'd had no idea that he would be there. Tirry lifted her up into his arms and said: 'Lady, be happy now. Our sorrows have turned to joy.' They spent many happy hours together.

One day, Guy's thoughts turned to Hereward. He called Tirry and Amis to him and said: 'Listen to me my friends; wouldn't it be a good thing if we travelled to Gormaz to visit the noble earl? Your father must be worried about us, Tirry. He'll be happy to see us,

I'm sure. And he might be able to help us to gain revenge on Duke Loyerer and bring about the release of my men, whom the duke has so unjustly imprisoned with such great treason.'

'I'm sure he will be very happy to help you,' replied Tirry. 'Otherwise, he will lose my love entirely, because he owes this much to you at least. As long as there is breath in his body, I don't think there will be any question.'

'I'll go with you as well,' said Amis. 'I shall bring along five hundred knights, and a thousand squires, and you can command them as you wish.'

'Sir, thank you,' said Guy.

Amis sent for his knights and when they were ready, they all set off on swift horses towards Gormaz, passing through Lorraine that same day, destroying all that they could find and killing everything that they came across. Earl Aubrey fainted with joy when he saw them arrive at Gormaz; he hadn't expected to see his son ever again. All the men in the city welcomed them and celebrated their arrival.

Tirry told his father how Guy had rescued him from prison and killed Duke Otoun with his own hands: 'And he took my lady away with him to safety,' explained Tirry, 'and now his thoughts are all upon waging war against Duke Loyerer and avenging all the wrongs that he has done to him.'

When Duke Loyerer heard that Guy was intending to visit his land with an army and that he had already done great damage to it and that his daughter Ozolde was with him, and with Tirry, and happy to be so, he was, perhaps surprisingly, very pleased. When Hereward heard that Guy was intending to come, and Tirry as well, and understood that Amis of the Mountain would be with them, along with all the men of Spain, he was very pleased as well; he was happier than he had ever been in all his life and thanked God many times.

'Hereward,' said Duke Loyerer, 'I want you to be my messenger. You shall go to Earl Aubrey, to Guy and to Tirry as quickly as you can, and ask them if we cannot be reconciled. I am willing to right all the wrongs that have been done. I will give my daughter's hand in marriage to Tirry, along with half my lands while I live, and all of them when I die. Please convey these words just as I have said them, and bear witness that they come from me personally.'

'Sir,' said Hereward, 'I'll be delighted to carry this message for you, and I'll do all that I can to persuade them to accept your offer.'

The duke had the constable summoned and instructed him to let loose the prisoners. They were set free and all their equipment was returned to them. Soon, none of them was missing so much as a rivet or a spur. Then the duke let them all travel with Hereward, to lend him their support in trying to sue for peace.

Guy and Amis went one day with Tirry out into the countryside to amuse themselves

when they looked across the landscape and saw knights moving *en masse*. Fearful of treason, Amis said to Sir Guy: 'Do you see? Over there is a force of some sort. I've no idea who they are, but they seem to be coming our way. I shall go and find out, if I can, whether they are hostile or not.'

In his hand he took a spear and galloped off quickly to confront the encroaching knights. Standing up in his stirrups, he scrutinised them all. Hereward recognised him immediately.

'Amis!' he cried. 'Where is Guy? Why are you in such a rush?'

'You can see Guy as soon as you like, Hereward,' replied Amis. 'I left him on that hill over there. He'll still be there with his men.'

'Then let's all of us go there at once,' said Hereward.

They rode a good pace. Guy stayed where he was until they came near to him. Then: 'Lord God almighty!' exclaimed Guy. 'It's Hereward! And all my men are with him!' When they had all dismounted, Guy, Tirry and Hereward embraced and made a great fuss of one another.

'Sir,' said Hereward, 'if it will please you, I have come as a messenger from Duke Loyerer, whom I ought to love as a brother since he has honoured me, and I tell you for your own honour that he wishes to be reconciled with you. He will give his dear daughter to Tirry to wed, and all his lands as well, in complete peace and security. He has sent me with this message to you, Sir Guy, and to Sir Tirry, and he instructs me to say that he will do everything he can to make amends for the wrongs that he has done to you. Whatever you want shall be yours. I can guarantee that this is what he desires, for I have heard it from his own lips.'

All the freed prisoners begged Sir Guy and Sir Tirry to agree to this reconciliation. Guy made his way to the city and told Earl Aubrey, and the next morning they made themselves ready to journey to Lorraine.

Duke Loyerer was very pleased to see them when they arrived. They put all their differences aside and there was great joy in the city, particularly now that Tirry was so much in Duke Loyerer's favour again. The duke gave his daughter in marriage to Tirry, along with the greater part of his lands, and he confirmed this in front of all his noblemen, repeating it in many languages so that all who were there would understand. The wedding was arranged with great honour, and no more beautiful ceremony has ever been seen; it surpassed that even of a king or an emperor.

When the wedding feast was over the knights all took their leave and went home to their own countries. Earl Amis said farewell and went back to his castle, but Guy stayed on; he was enjoying himself too much to leave just yet!

One day, Guy went off to hunt deer with some dogs, in the company of Duke Loy-erer, Tirry and many other brave knights. They entered some ancient forest and soon disturbed a wild boar. All the dogs ran after him and the boar killed a great many as he tried to escape from them; more than twenty dogs were killed, the boar would charge at them, then turn and try to outrun them, but they pursued him relentlessly. He sped through the forest, the dogs pursued and the knights galloped their horses after them as fast as they could, until exhaustion overcame their mounts. No dog dared to confront the beast alone and the few dogs that still lived turned for home at last, too weary to carry on the chase; all but three, these three hounds continued valiantly until they came into Brittany. There was no knight or huntsman following them now except for Guy alone; he galloped his horse after them, blowing his horn as he went.

By now, the boar was very hot and thirsty. He plunged into a marshy stream and began rooting around with his snout, and when Guy saw what the boar was doing, he dismounted and made his way towards it on foot. He drew his sword; the boar spotted him and prepared to charge. He raced ferociously at Guy, who managed to strike a blow onto his back with his sword that cut the beast into two pieces and killed it stone dead.

Guy blew a long blast on his horn. He imagined that one of his companions would hear it, but he waited and no one came. He was alone in a far country and as he butchered the boar, he blew long and hard on his horn.

Earl Florentine heard the sound: 'What in God's name is that?' he asked. 'Who's hunting in my forest? They must have taken a wild beast!' He called his son to him: 'Go quickly and fetch this scoundrel back here,' he said. 'Regardless of whether he is a knight or a huntsman, bring him to me at once.'

The young man leapt upon a steed, rode quickly into the forest and soon came across Sir Guy. 'You villain!' cried the young man. 'Who do you think you are, coming into my father's forest like this without his permission?'

The young knight was carrying a long staff and clearly had it in his mind to use it against Sir Guy. 'Give me your horn,' he cried. 'I'm going to seize you by the scruff of the neck and take you to see my father!'

'Sir,' said Guy, 'I would happily go to see your father were you to moderate your tone a little.'

'No, I'm going to drag you there. I'm not going to let you get away!'

The young man caught hold of the bridle of Guy's horse and began hitting him with the stick that was in his other hand. The blows were quite severe and Guy was getting bruised.

'This is very discourteous of you,' Guy cried. 'These blows are wholly unwarranted!' and he hit the young knight on the head with his hunting horn, so hard that it fractured the young man's skull.

Guy rode off and looked for a way out of the forest, but he was completely lost, he hadn't the slightest idea where he was and hadn't eaten all day. He remembered passing a town somewhere but hadn't gone very far, scarcely more than a mile or so, when he saw a castle come into view, high up on a hill, so he rode quickly towards it.

Shortly, Guy came across one of the country folk: 'Sir,' he said, 'who owns that castle over there?'

'Earl Florentine,' the man replied. 'There is no better lord alive today.'

Guy rode to the castle gate and, finding no porter there, rode quickly to the hall and dismounted. He strode into the hall and saw, sitting at the high table, an old man, a grey and aged knight, but from the look of him he seemed still to be powerful and well-respected. Guy approached and greeted him courteously.

'Sir, I am a knight from far away. If it pleases you, I would like to ask for food. Just a single meal, and then I shall depart.'

'Sir, you are very welcome,' said the lord. He quickly instructed his men to fetch some food, the best that he had, and Guy tucked into it heartily when it arrived. Shortly, the bells began to ring. They rang out incessantly, and all those in the hall became very perturbed by the noise. 'Heaven's queen!' they cried out. 'What misfortune does this signify?'

Almost at once, men appeared in great despair, carrying the old man's son on a bier. They laid him down in the hall and the old man cried: 'Lord, is this my dear son?' He tore at his clothes and pulled his hair, it seemed that his heart was going to break with sorrow.

'Alas, my dear child! Who has killed you? If I knew, I wouldn't hesitate but I'd kill him now with my own hands.'

A squire spoke up: 'He's sitting here right now. I saw him do it.'

When the earl heard this, he leapt up from the high table and grabbed a spear. 'Traitor!' he cried, drawing his arm back with murderous intent. 'You shall die here!' and he flung the weapon at Guy so hard that the point embedded itself half a foot into a board that formed part of the table top, missing Guy by a whisker.

'Sir!' cried Guy. 'For God's mercy, stop! It was self-defence.'

But they all set upon Guy at once, all the brave knights in the hall. Guy managed to grab his shield and get hold of an axe. Then, with his back to a wall, he fended them off as best he could. The lord's steward stuck Guy with a sword; Guy took the blow on his shield and returned one with his axe and it did not miss; it cut the steward's head into two pieces. Guy defended himself well and managed to kill three more knights, then: 'Earl Florentine!' he cried. 'For love of the Holy Cross, if you kill me like this, you will be branded a man of great dishonour. Whatever the rights and wrongs, you will be vilified

for killing a man who is a guest at your table. Avoid this shame! Let me have my horse and open the castle gates for me.'

The earl withdrew a little, obviously affected by Guy's words, and when he saw his son and the other knights lying dead there, he didn't know what to do.

'Alas!' he cried, 'I've nothing now but a life of sadness to look forward to,' and he fainted over the body of his son lying on the bier. There was no one there who didn't feel pity for the old man.

When he had recovered, the earl commanded that no one should be so bold as to do any harm to Sir Guy. But as soon as Guy had left the castle, he was to be hunted down and killed like a dog. These were his instructions. Guy's horse was fetched and his equipment was handed to him.

Guy grabbed hold of his horse and leapt upon it, seized his sword and his spear, and rode as fast as he could out of the castle. He quickly found a road that led away, but by now, the earl was galloping in pursuit with a bevy of knights. Guy turned his horse to face them. He defended himself from one knight, then from another, then the earl approached angrily with a spear in his hand. Guy saw him coming and prepared to defend himself.

They attacked one another with their spears levelled, and before the weapons broke, the earl struck Guy a hard blow that pierced his shield. But Guy's blow toppled the earl from his horse.

Guy felt pity for this knight when he saw how strong he must once have been, and how he had just lost his son. It had been twenty winters since the earl had been properly able to bear arms or to take part in any serious conflict.

'Take your horse,' said Guy, 'and ride home as quickly as you can. It would be better for you to be in a church than fighting with me here. I will pay you for the meal that I received in your hall, so here is your horse back. I would have asked for nothing if I had known, even if I was so thirsty and hungry that I might have died. I will never come here again asking for food, and you'll not see me again in anything but perfect health, I hope.'

Guy galloped away and knights went after him, left and right, young men intent upon impressing their peers. The lie of the land was a help to them and they gave Guy a good chase. Guy rode hard through that land until he came to a great forest. Often, he would turn his horse around to engage one of his pursuers, and many were left with a nasty wound and many others were killed. But at last, he outrode them all and the earl's knights were forced to turn back. The earl took his son that same day and buried him in a holy place.

Fill my cup with your best ale or wine, for God's blessing, for Guy is riding quickly away!

Guy rode until nightfall. He had no intention of remaining in that land, and when dawn broke the next day he saw to his relief that he was back in Lorraine. He made his way to the city, where he found his men in a state of anxiety, fearing what may have happened to him. They were all delighted to see him back alive and well, and he quickly told them everything that had happened, and the peril that he had been in. They thanked Saint Michael that he had managed to extricate himself so well from such an unfortunate and dangerous situation.

It was not long afterwards that Guy expressed a desire, once more, to return to England.

‘Tirry,’ he said, ‘I intend to travel very soon to see how my mother and father are getting on and whether they are prospering or not. I don’t even know if they are still alive, for goodness sake! So I must go overseas. I haven’t seen them for seven years and I am to blame for this. If anything happens to you, no matter what, send for me and I will come at once. You have your noble wife with you now, and your conflicts have been resolved. Your land is at peace and no one will dare to rekindle war. I shall send messengers and remain in contact with you, and I beg you to do the same, my dear brother. I shall return some day to see you.’

‘Sir, thank you,’ said Tirry, ‘but this news fills me with sorrow. You have saved my life many times. If you go away now, I don’t know whether I will ever see you again. How will I defend my lands from the kinsmen of Duke Otoun? There are a lot of them, in many far-flung districts, and while we’re together here I have nothing to fear. If you’ll stay, I’ll give you castles and cities; the best in all the land, I promise. I’ll stay on here with Duke Loyerer and you can have Gormaz if you wish. I promise that I won’t claim back a foot of it.’

‘Tirry, stop my friend. This does nothing to lessen the sadness that I feel in having to say goodbye to you. I would love to take up your offer and would gladly do so, were it not for Felice. If it wasn’t for Felice, for your friendship I would stay here with you. But don’t feel so bad. I will return very soon, I promise.’ They embraced and kissed one another, and wept a little I believe.

There was not a dry eye when Guy finally got ready to leave for England. Guy took his leave from Duke Loyerer and asked him in the most friendly terms to take possession of all the booty that he had acquired, since he had no use for it now. Then he leaped upon a riding horse and set off for England.

Guy rode onwards until he came to the sea. He found a ship and had a comfortable journey across the water, then made his way to Winchester, where the king was in residence. When he arrived in that city, the king came out to welcome him. All the men who were there praised Guy for his looks and his bearing. The king grasped him tenderly around the neck and joyfully kissed him. Everybody was astonished that he had survived so many conflicts and ordeals.

One day, Guy was playing chess with the king when some knights arrived, all of them out of breath: 'Sir,' they said, 'we bring some news. A beast has come into the land and no one can stop it. It's come from Ireland and it is killing animals and men, anything it can find. It's a dreadful creature, its head is black and absolutely huge; it has a long tail, a black stomach and it's enormous! It has wings everywhere. A dragon! Its body is long and covered in scales so that no weapon can pierce it and its mouth is so large that a horse could walk into it. It has paws like a lion! No knight is able to tackle it. One swipe of its tail is enough to kill a man.'

When the king heard this, he could barely speak for fear.

'Sir,' said Guy, 'don't be upset. Don't worry, I shall go to this district and if people can tell me where the beast is, I will deal with it and then return.'

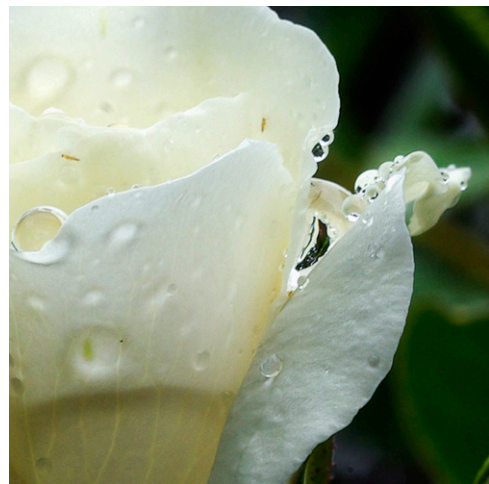
'No,' said the king to Guy. 'I won't let you leave this city without a hundred knights to accompany you, or two hundred even.'

'God forbid that!' exclaimed Guy. 'God forbid that a man should require so much support against a single beast.'

Guy got himself ready and set off. His companions wanted to come too but he wouldn't let anyone go with him except for Sir Hereward, and another two knights.

When Guy arrived at the place where the beast was last seen, he quickly armed himself and commanded his men not to come to help him, even if his life seemed in jeopardy. The dragon was lying at the foot of a hill. Sir Guy attacked it with his spear, but the weapon broke into pieces on impact; the dragon's skin was so thick that the point could not penetrate.

When the beast felt the blow, it lifted its head and lunged at Sir Guy, knocking down both horse and man. Guy was stunned and didn't know where he was for a moment. He'd never received a blow like this before. But he was able to get to his feet quickly.



‘Christ!’ he cried. ‘Almighty God, who made day and night and saved Sampson from a lion, protect me now from this dragon!’

Guy drew his sword and attacked the beast with all the strength that he could muster. He stood in front of it and swung at its head, but the edge of his sword would not bite. The dragon fought tirelessly, and as Guy made assault after fruitless assault he at last got so close to the dragon that the beast was able to attack him with its paws and damage his coat of chainmail. The scales seemed to be tipping in the dragon’s favour. Guy ran to a tree to catch his breath, to get a little protection and to weigh his next move. The dragon beat at Guy with its paws and its wings, and lashed at him with its tail, so hard that Guy’s shield was knocked from his grasp. As Guy lay flat on the ground, the dragon wrapped its tail around him and squeezed so hard that the force of it broke two of Guy’s ribs.

‘I am a dead man,’ thought Guy to himself. ‘Unless God can send me some help, or some inspiration.’

Guy swung his sword at the tail and cut it in two. In this way he managed to make his escape. But in great pain and still fearful for his life, he knew that no weapon made of steel would be able to cut through any other part of the beast’s hide. The dragon knew that it was injured, though, and gave out a dreadful roar. The sound was so loud that it was heard throughout the whole country; no one who heard that dreadful noise thought anything other than that Guy had just met his end. And yet Guy circled around the tree with no intention of trying to run away, although his coat of chainmail was in tatters, he felt as though his body had given its all and he knew that if he didn’t do something straight away, it would be too late.

As the dragon was turning, Guy managed to deliver a blow with his sword underneath and between its wings, giving the animal a dreadful wound. The dragon fell to the ground. Guy retreated as quickly as he could, for the nauseating stench was unbearable. He rested on the ground in great relief.

When Guy had recovered, he got up and went to measure the dragon: it was sixty feet in length. Everybody who came that way was astonished to see it lying there dead. Guy cut off its head, and a man carried it for him; Guy brought the head to York and presented it to the king, and he was taken into that city in a great procession. The dragon’s head was hung up for everyone to see.

Not long afterwards, Guy took his leave from the king, who was exceedingly grateful to him, and travelled to Wallingford. Guy’s father had been dead for a while, and there was no other heir except for Guy himself.

One day, Guy called Hereward to him, and gave him all the lands that he had inherited from his father, its castle and its fortifications, with great honour and gratitude. Then, to every knight who had been with him and fought alongside him, he gave a fitting reward for their service. Then he made his way to Warwick and went to see Earl Rohald.

The earl received him with every honour, and so did all the noblemen of that district. The earl sought his company every hour of the day and particularly liked to go to the woods and to the river with Guy, where they would amuse themselves by hunting and hawking.

Guy recounted to Felice all that had happened to him whilst he was abroad, how he had won the hand in marriage of the daughters of kings and emperors and would have received great honour by marrying any one of them: 'But I didn't want any of them,' he explained, 'because my hope has always lain with you.'

'Sir,' she said, 'thank you. I, too, have received many offers of marriage, from kings and dukes from far and near, but I have accepted none of them. I want to be yours, to do with as you wish.'

Guy joyfully kissed her. He had never been more delighted in all his life. Then he took his leave, a happy man indeed, secure in her love at last.

Not long afterwards, the earl called his daughter and explained: 'Daughter, I have no other heir but you, and never shall have. It is time you took a husband, someone to look after my lands when I am dead. Many dukes have come from distant countries to ask for your hand in marriage, but you have rejected them all. How long do you intend to remain a maiden?'

'Sir, give me three days and I will tell you.'

When the third day had come and gone, the earl went to see his daughter again.

'Daughter, tell me now, have you made up your mind?'

'Sir, I shall tell you my thoughts. I have loved Guy and I love him still, and if he will not accept me as his wife then I shall marry no other.'

'Daughter, may God reward you! He will maintain my lands as no other knight possibly could. I would give this entire city for Guy to agree to marry you! I shall sound him out for you and leave him in no doubt that you love him. Give me three days.'

Guy went with the earl one day to hunt in the forest, and they killed many deer. The earl took him aside and said: 'Guy, be honest with me. When are you going to get married?'

'Sir, I'll tell you. There's only one maiden I wish to marry and take to my bed.'

'Well, what about this for an idea?' said the earl. 'I have a daughter. She loves you very much and wants to be your wife. I will happily give her to you, and then you will be lord of all my lands, since I have no other living heir but her.'

'Sir, I would much rather feel the naked body of your dear daughter beside me in bed than the daughter of any king or emperor, however much land he possessed.'

The earl kissed Guy. 'I know that you have rejected the daughters of emperors in favour

of my own daughter, and I know beyond all doubt that you love me, by Saint Michael! I shall arrange for the wedding to take place in seven days' time. It will be in Warwick, and all the noblemen of the land shall be in attendance.'

'Sir, whatever you wish,' said Guy.

Warwick was soon filled with noblemen, dukes and earls from many countries, knights and squires from many noble families, and Felice was married to Sir Guy. The bridal feast lasted for fourteen days and nights, with minstrels singing beautifully enough to fill a man's ears with joy. There was no page so lowly that he did not receive a gift from Sir Guy; he gave robes to many, for he had no lack of gold and silver.

On the fifteenth day, everybody took their leave and went their own way. Guy had the most blissful time of his life when he took Felice to bed for the first time. But this joy was to last for only fifty days. It happened, however, that on their first night together Guy and Felice conceived a child, a baby boy who would grow up to be a fine young man.

Now, for all the good that God has brought to us let the cups be filled, for goodness sake!

One day in summer, Guy was very happy and contented. He had just returned from hunting and they had taken a lot of venison and were bringing it back into the town. In the evening he went up into a tower to enjoy the view. The weather was clear and the land looked beautiful, and Guy began to reflect upon how God, who sits in Trinity, had made him a man of great power and how he was complemented in every land because of what he had achieved on the battlefield, and how he had killed so many men and taken many castles and towns, and how in many distant lands he had been in dire peril and all for the love of Felice whom he had fought for day and night, and not in any way for God, his creator, who had given him all this honour in the first place.

Guy resolved to do his utmost to serve God from now on. He sighed, and with his thoughts racing, decided that it was time to change his life completely. It was time to leave this world's strife and to live and die in the service of God.

Meanwhile, Felice was looking for Guy and found him deep in thought. 'Sir,' she said, 'what's troubling you? Tell me, for Saint Charity!'

'Darling,' he replied, 'be still, and I will tell you. Ever since I have known you, my heart has been tormented because of you. I don't think there has ever been a knight who has been so terrified as I have been of losing the one that he loves because of failure in battle. In many distant lands I have killed many men, burnt abbeys and taken cities. I have done this relentlessly, and everything I have ever gained from it, all the booty and the riches and the lands, I have given to knights and to young noblemen. Had I been a little wiser and used half this wealth in the service of God, we'd both be sure of heaven when

we die. But I have done nothing for him, and therefore my song is a sad one. I have acted shamefully and God will punish me for it. So I shall forsake this world now and undergo penance for all my sins. I shall journey in the service of God, for anything else would be foolishness. You will benefit from this as well.'

'Sir,' she replied, without hesitation, 'do you now hold me in such contempt! You have a woman somewhere, don't you! You want to go to her now, and leave me here to rot!'

'Darling, calm yourself.'

'Alas, what will happen to me, a wretched woman, when my husband has left me? It would be better for me to kill myself!'

'Darling, stop. Don't say any more. I have made a promise to God and if I go back on it now, I'll pay a heavy price.'

'Then have abbeys built, and I will do the same, for your sake. Holy men can pray for you, day and night, and then you will be safe from peril in the afterlife.'

'That is just foolishness,' said Guy. 'I've made up my mind and nothing will deter me. If you want to keep my love, then stay here with your friends. Be happy for me, and go to your father for comfort.'

When she saw that it was no use trying to persuade him to change his mind, she cursed herself and fell to the ground: 'Alas, that I live!' she cried, and fainted with grief.

'Darling, don't worry about me,' said Guy, consolingly. 'I will return when I have completed my penance. If you love me, look for my sake as if you have nothing to care about, as though I am still here with you. Go to see your father often, and Hereward as well, that generous man, and all my other companions. Be good-humoured and friendly towards them. Look after our child until he can walk, and then give him to Hereward to bring up. He will happily look after him, and nourish him properly. There was never a more faithful knight on Earth than he has been to me. I love him with all my heart.'

'Take my sword and look after it for my son; there is no better sword on Earth and he will win a great deal of respect with it when he gets older.'

Then Guy kissed sweet Felice and could speak no more, for he was weeping too much. They were both very upset and their parting was very sorrowful. 'Sir,' she called, 'for charity, stay with me a moment and take this ring from me.' Guy graciously received the ring from her and then set off. He made his way out of the town and spoke to nobody, not even to Hereward, but began his journey to the coast, intending to make his way to Jerusalem and to many other places as well, where holy saints are honoured.

Felice found herself alone in the castle tower. 'Lord,' she asked, 'what can I do?' She wrung her hands, pulled her clothes and her hair and tore at the rings on her fingers until her fingernails bled. She remained like this all night. No woman has ever been so upset before. Often she moaned: 'Alas! Alas!' for she had lost her wonderful lord. She took

out a sword, set the point against her heart and thought to impale herself upon it; but then her thoughts turned wisely towards the child inside her womb, and how it would be foolish to do this because by killing herself she could not avoid killing the baby, and to kill the child would be a sin. And she thought of her dear father, and all her friends, and that they might think that Sir Guy had killed her before fleeing the town. So she resisted the idea; but were it not for these thoughts, she would have taken her own life.

For the entire night, Felice had no more rest than a wild beast. In the morning, she arose and went straight to her father. 'I've some dreadful news to give you, father,' she said. 'My lord has gone away. I'll never see him again.'

'Daughter, pull yourself together,' replied the earl. 'I can't believe that Guy would do such a thing. He's done it to test you, to see how strong your love for him is.'



'No, father, he's not coming back.'

The earl arose at once and searched the city, and when he could find no trace of Guy he had it announced that Sir Guy had gone away, and no one knew why. Everybody was very sad when they heard this. Hereward was particularly upset when the news reached him; nothing else would occupy his thoughts and he went to see the earl immediately.

'Sir, what can I say? Will I never see Guy again?' asked Hereward. 'Why don't we send messengers throughout this land? If he cannot be found in England, he will probably be in Lorraine with Sir Tirry, whom he holds in great affection.'

A messenger was sent off to scour the whole of England, but he could discover not a word of where Sir Guy might be, so he returned home and told the earl that he couldn't find any sign of him. So Hereward decided to look for Sir Guy in other lands. He appointed two messengers, a knight and a squire, gave them a great deal of money and asked them to journey across the sea and to visit every land and every town, to try to glean news of Sir Guy.

Hereward himself set off in the clothes of a pilgrim. But first he went to visit the Earl of Warwick to put all his lands into his care.

'I shall seek Guy near and far in the guise of a palmer,' he explained, 'and search for him in every land that he's ever been to.'

When the earl saw Hereward clothed like this: 'You are a true knight indeed,' he said, with sincere admiration.

Hereward left the earl and travelled quickly to the coast, where he found a ship and sailed to Normandy. Then he journeyed into France, to Burgundy, Germany and Saxony, but could find no trace of Guy anywhere, so he made his way back to England. Everyone

was very sorry that he'd brought no news of Guy; earls, barons and the king himself all lamented, for they firmly believed that they would never see him again.

But let us turn to Sir Guy, as we find it in our story. All that year, Guy travelled through many kingdoms until he came at last to Jerusalem. But he did not want to stay there for very long, for he wanted instead to journey further into heathen lands and especially wanted to visit the city of Antioch. It was a long journey, and on the way he came across a poor traveller taking shade beneath a hawthorn tree. The man looked very sorrowful, but he seemed to have come from a noble family; he had a strong face and large eyes, his head was not scorched by the sun, his beard was long and he seemed strong and courageous, but he was lamenting very loudly about something. The man was pulling at his beard and his hair, barely able to hold himself upright, and crying: 'Alas! Alas!' continually.

Guy took pity on him. 'Who are you, sir, giving expression to all this grief?' he asked. 'I can see that you are upset about something. Tell me what it is, in the name of the Trinity.'

'Sir,' said the pilgrim, 'since you've asked, I shall tell you. I was once a fine warrior and won much land for myself. My name is Earl Jonas. I had fifteen sons, all of them fine young men, brave and energetic, and I swear there's been no one since the birth of Christianity who's been able to boast of having so many magnificent sons on a battlefield at one time. There was one particular battle where I and my fifteen sons made the Saracens turn and flee, and we took seven emirs prisoner, and three kings.

'We pursued a king at the end of that battle, his name was Triamour. He retreated all the way to Alexandria and we followed him. But it was a stupid thing to have done, to ride for such a distance, for an ambush was waiting for us, in some woodland, two hundred knights or more; they burst out from their cover and surrounded us. We managed to strike many of them, we were not about to give up, but they were injuring our horses and the situation quickly became hopeless. At last our swords were broken and, seeing no other course, we surrendered to King Triamour. He gave us to understand that we would be ransomed.

'But that was only the start of it! I am searching for Guy of Warwick. Let me explain:

'King Triamour led us into Africa and put us in prison. That was twelve years ago. It happened that the sultan, who is King Triamour's overlord, put on a feast, and there were thirty kings in attendance, and forty emirs, all owing allegiance to the sultan. King Triamour went along with his son Faber, a strong young man who had been recently knighted.

'On the third day of this lavish feast, a young man got to his feet – he was the son of the Sultan of Persia – and he called: 'Faber, come and play chess with me.'

'Of course, at once,' said this young knight. They went to Faber's chamber and sent for a chess board and pieces. They sat down as friends, but Faber put the sultan's son into

checkmate and called that word out delightedly. The young man was aggrieved by this and burst out with expletives: he called Faber the son of a whore and smashed him over the head with a rock, cutting the young knight's head open. The wound bled profusely.

'That was a despicable thing to do!' shouted Faber. 'If you weren't the son of my lord, I would make you pay for that!'

'Are you threatening me?' the young man replied. 'You've made a big mistake if you are. It's your death warrant!' and he made as though he was going to punch Faber in the face, so Faber leapt to his feet: he was still holding a chess piece – the king I believe – and he struck the sultan's son as hard as he could with it, just beneath the ear. The young man fell to the ground with a fractured skull, stone dead.

'When Faber realised what he had done, he ran as fast as he could to where his father had lodgings and told him what had just happened. King Triamour recognised the seriousness of the situation and fearing for their lives, they both galloped off in great panic back to Alexandria.

'The Sultan of Persia, full of sadness and anger, buried his son with great ceremony in a lavish tomb, and then set his mind on how he could quickly seek revenge for the killing. He sent a message to King Triamour, commanding him to come at once to defend himself against accusations of wrongdoing that had been levelled against him, and to bring his son Faber with him.

'King Triamour got himself ready immediately to make the journey, and when he arrived, the sultan asked Faber how he had come to kill his son. The young man denied it. The sultan asked a Saracen to step forward and a meaner-looking man is hard to imagine – as black as pitch with a broad chest, he looked immensely strong, as powerful as a lion in his den. He was definitely not small! He's from the land of India and it seemed as though there were no more than three men in the world who could possibly survive a blow from him. He stood two feet higher than anybody else in the room, and the sultan said that if King Triamour wanted to defend his claim that he and his son had nothing to do with his son's death, then he would be acquitted if he manages to kill this giant in battle.

'In front of them all, King Triamour insisted once again that neither he nor his son knew anything at all about the death and accepted this offer of a trial by combat. A truce was declared, to last for a year and a month, to give the king time to find a champion able to take the fight on, on his behalf.

'King Triamour returned to Alexandria and sent messengers to all his barons, but no one was brave enough to put themselves forward to be King Triamour's champion. He summoned me from his prison to ask if I knew of anybody who might be prepared to fight against this giant. He would reward this man with half his kingdom, he said, and give him a great quantity of gold. I had no desire to be dishonest, so I said that I knew of nobody who might be prepared to take it on – unless, perhaps, Sir Guy of Warwick,

that knight whom everybody praises for his skill and bravery. 'If I could find Sir Guy,' I told him, 'or Sir Hereward perhaps...'

'Find them at once!' the king exclaimed, and he laid his hand upon me. 'Sir Guy is a fine warrior, I know. You shall go into England and look to see if Sir Guy is there. If you cannot find him, make sure that you bring Sir Hereward back with you instead. If you can do this for me, I shall release all your sons from prison. If you can be discreet and keep this to yourself, then I'll give you fifteen packhorses of gold to take home with you.'

'So I swore to be a faithful messenger, and I swore that I'd return.

'I went into Germany, from there into France, into Spain, Apulia, Burgundy, to Saxony and thence into England, and I asked everyone I came across where Sir Guy was, but when I arrived in Warwick, which is his own city, still I could find nobody who could tell me where he was. He has taken himself into exile apparently, as a pilgrim, to live a holy life. Hereward has followed after him to try to find out where he's gone, by Saint John!

'So I didn't stay very long in England, and I've been through many lands since, searching for him, but haven't come across anyone who can tell me where he is. So here I am, resting beside this road. It's been more than twelve months now since I saw King Triamour. I've given him my word that I'll return, and when I do, he'll kill me, I know, and all my sons as well. I don't care for myself, but my sons are all young and strong, they were valiant knights, all of them able to put on a good show in battle and if they had been able to live their lives and grow old they would have been a great asset to Christendom. But I will journey to Alexandria and accept my fate.'

With this, the earl fell to the ground in a fit of despair.

Guy felt great pity for him. 'Dear pilgrim,' he said, 'it should come as no surprise to anyone that you are so sorrowful, given the story you have told me. But there was a time, in my country, when I was judged to be a skilful and valiant knight. And for the love of God Almighty, who gave me such strength and fortitude, and for the sake of Guy and of Hereward, whom you cannot find, I will take on this battle for you, and with God's grace I will do my best to deliver you and your sons from prison.'

When the earl heard this brave offer, he looked Guy up and down. Guy was tall, he looked healthy and big-boned but he was thin and there was not much flesh on him. His beard was long and foul-smelling and, observing him closely, the earl said: 'May God reward you for this offer, sir, but you don't know the man you'll be up against. One stare from him would strike such fear into you that all thoughts of fighting him would flee in a moment.'

'God is a great protector,' replied Guy. 'Many have sought to do me harm in battle and I have never run away from them. My heart shall not fail. And God may give me the strength to kill this giant.'

‘Sir,’ said the pilgrim, ‘then thank you. May God grant you victory over him.’

‘Let’s go,’ said Guy.

They made their way to Alexandria and were brought quickly before King Triamour. ‘Earl Jonas, where is Guy, and Hereward?’ the king asked at once. ‘Have you brought either of them along with you?’

‘Sir, I shall tell you the truth. I have been to many countries and haven’t managed to find either Guy or Hereward. I’ve asked everybody I’ve met and I’ve learned that Guy has gone into exile, much to the misfortune of England, which is now beset by enemies. And they say that Hereward has gone off to look for Guy. But I have brought a noble knight who is courageous and strong and has agreed to fight this battle for you. With God’s help, he will defend you valiantly.’

‘Make sure that you are telling me the truth,’ said the king. ‘If I find myself in difficulty because of you, you shall be hanged, and so will all your sons.’

‘I accept this,’ said Earl Jonas.

The king called Guy to him. ‘Pilgrim,’ he said, ‘what is your name?’

‘John.’

‘John, my friend,’ said the king, ‘where have you been, in which country? Was there no food there?’

‘Sir, since receiving my knighthood I have been in many a fight.’

‘Are you English? I ought to hate you, as I ought to hate Guy of Warwick with a vengeance, for he killed my father, Clynant of Tyre, and also my uncle, when the late sultan was sitting one day at his meal. I saw Guy swipe off the sultan’s head with his sword and carry it off with him. He galloped away and managed to escape. We all chased after him but the devil saved him; we couldn’t kill him but he killed a great many of us. If only he was here now! If he would fight for me, then I would forgive him everything.’

‘Well, I know Guy and Hereward very well, both of them, and if either Hereward or Sir Guy was here now, you would have nothing to worry about, that’s for sure!’

‘So tell me, why are you so thin? You must have served mean men for a long time, to say farewell to them in such a state. Either that, or you’re a fool, for travelling in such destitution.’

‘You may well find out that there are things about me that you do not know,’ replied Guy. ‘I was once in good service and my lord loved me and was very generous. I was honoured and respected by kings and princes, and by maidens in their chambers. But I acted unwisely. I lost favour, so I have gone into exile.’

‘Then tell me, will you take on this battle for me? If not, I’ll find someone else.’

‘That’s why I’ve come here, for God’s sake! I shall take on this battle for you. But you must grant me this first: that Jonas and all of his sons will be released from prison forthwith.’

‘I agree to this, may Mohammed be your help, and Termagaunt.’

‘No, not those two, but Mary’s son, who died for us on the cross, may he be merciful and help me. Sir king, I tell you that Mohammed has no power to help anyone, neither you nor I.’

‘My dear friend, then I shall promise that if you kill this giant, then your god shall be mine also, and the Christian men whom I have captured shall all be released, every one of them. There shall be no Christians who will not be released from my prison. And as for you, and for the sake of your god, I shall decree that all Christians shall have safe passage through my lands, and if anyone has the temerity to do them any harm at all in the future, however rich or powerful he is, he shall be killed.’

‘Sir, thank you,’ said Guy. ‘That is very generous of you.’

The king ordered that a bath be prepared for Guy: ‘And give him robes, many of them,’ he commanded, ‘and see that he lacks nothing and wants for nothing.’ But Guy declined the robes: ‘Sir king,’ he said, ‘I am but a poor man and all I need is food and drink, that’s all I want.’ So the king just ordered that Guy be given whatever he desired.

When the time for the battle drew close, King Triamour dressed himself in his finest attire and, together with all his barons, made his way to the sultan as quickly as he could. Guy went along with him fully armed, as befitted a noble knight. He wore a coat of chainmail that had been very skilfully made in a distant land and given to the King of Jerusalem as a present, but then a thief had stolen it and taken it into Egypt, where an ancestor of King Triamour’s had bought it with much honour, for it was a great treasure. It shone as brightly as the sun, and in this hour of need, the king had given it to Guy. It had lain unused for thirty years, but was so clean and bright that it lit up the hall like a sunbeam.

On his head Guy wore a helmet that was of ancient design, decorated with gemstones on every side. He who wore it in conflict could be sure that he was well protected, for it had belonged to Alexander the Great, who had taken it as booty in one of his battles; the one in which he killed King Porus. The sword that Guy carried had once belonged to Hector, the Trojan prince, and it had been used to kill a great many Ancient Greeks. Guy carried a fine shield as well; it was large and very bright and there was nothing that could penetrate it, neither knife nor sword nor axe nor spear.

Many men looked on at Guy in wonder, and everyone asked who he was and where he could be from, to be so brave as to agree to take on this fight.

‘Sir,’ said the king to the sultan. ‘I have come here before you now in order to defend myself, by means of the knight who is standing here, against the false accusation that has

been made. Sultan, your dear son was not killed by my son, neither through my urging nor my complicity.’

‘Since you have brought your knight here, then we shall soon learn the truth,’ replied the sultan. ‘Bring forth the giant!’

The giant was brought forth; a heathen named Ameraunt and he was armed very splendidly. Everyone was in awe of him. He was huge! When Guy saw this mighty Saracen: ‘By Christ!’ he exclaimed to King Triamour, ‘that’s not a man, that’s the devil! How could a man survive a stroke from *him!*’

The giant looked outrageously strong. But off they went to do battle.

They went to an island beside the sea, where the fight was to take place. When they came to the field of conflict, they leapt upon their steeds and were very soon closing in upon one another at a fast gallop. Their lances shattered into pieces and flew past their heads, so they turned their horses and drew their swords. Ameraunt’s sword had once belonged to Hercules, who had worn it in every encounter that he had ever had. Ameraunt had won it in battle; it had been put into the water of hell and it was very sharp and deadly.

God of heaven, think of Guy as Ameraunt battles fiercely against him!

At last, Ameraunt’s strength began to tell. He hit Guy on the helmet so hard that all the ornamentation was sliced away. Guy’s shield was already cut in half – it had never suffered such damage before – and the sword carried down through Guy’s saddle, down through his horse, cutting the poor creature in half. The tip of the sword buried itself two feet into the earth. Guy found himself lying on the ground beside the remains of his dead horse.

‘Lord God almighty, shield me from humiliation this day,’ he cried. ‘Protect me, through your grace, and don’t let me be killed here.’

Guy got to his feet, like the warrior that he was, and angrily swung his sword once more at the giant. His stroke hit the giant on the head and the blade slid down the giant’s side and cut through the neck of his horse, decapitating the animal. The giant fell with his horse to the ground, but leapt up at once and, without a word, struck Guy as hard as he could, but Guy was able to withstand the blow. Neither of them gave an inch as they battled on with great anger. Sparks flew from their helmets as steel struck steel, their shields took a battering and pieces of chainmail flew into the air and onto the ground.

Ameraunt knew that he had never been in so hard a fight before, so he lifted his arms and delivered a blow with all the strength that he could muster. But Guy was strong and



agile and managed to parry the blow, like the skilful knight that he was. The giant gave Guy another blow to the head that sent all the pearls on Guy's helmet falling the ground. Guy fell to his knees, but got back onto his feet at once.

'Lord Christ, lend me your grace!' he exclaimed. 'Never in any battle has a blow ever forced me to my knees before!' Then he lifted his arms and delivered such a blow to Ameraunt's head that gold rained down onto the grass from the helmet's ornamentation and Guy's sword cut through chainmail, taking away the giant's face protection and his shield, as Guy's sword slid down as far as his belt buckle. The giant fell onto his hands and knees to the ground, his face covered in blood, but he recovered himself, lifted his sword and the exchange of blows continued. Sparks flew from their helmets, so ferocious was the fighting.

It was summertime, the morning after midsummer's day, and the weather was hot. Ameraunt took a step away from his opponent at last to hold his head in his hands, so it is told. Through sustained exertion and loss of blood, he was so thirsty that he knew he would expire if he didn't drink very soon.

'Are you Guy of Warwick, whom men say is invincible?' he asked suddenly. 'I would like you to be him, for he has killed many of my relatives, twenty thousand I believe. If I could see him lying dead, and his friend Sir Hereward as well, I would have killed the best two fighters in the world and I would laugh until I cried.'

'May the devil hang you!' cried Sir Guy. 'Has Guy ever done you any wrong?'

'No, but he has committed crimes against my kin. But let me tell you, Christian man, the weather is hot, and for the love of that Lord whom you believe in, and so that he may forgive you all your sins, let me go and drink some water. I have an evil thirst and if I am overcome at last by dehydration, it will do your reputation as a warrior no good at all if I die of thirst fighting you. Your reputation for honour will suffer also, for you will be shamed when it becomes known that you refused me water. I ask you this for the love of God's son, who made the sun and the moon, and who gave you the grace to achieve all that you have achieved. If you become thirsty, I shall return the favour and let you drink.'

'Go and drink in safety, then, so that I may do the same.'

Ameraunt ran to the stream, unlaced the protection over his mouth and drank his fill. Then: 'Knight,' he cried, 'surrender to me! This is your last day on Earth! Now I am fresh, and you shall die! I never fight so well as when I have been able to take a drink, for then I can really begin to enjoy myself!'

'I'm not frightened of you, and you will not receive any surrender from me,' Guy shouted back.

The blows rain down, as you can hear! Neither of them gave an inch. Blow followed blow and soon the marks of damage and injury on both of them were plain to see; their

shields were in tatters, their faces bloody from sword strokes. Ameraunt gathered himself to deliver a massive blow to the top of Guy's helmet: his blade hit the pommel, crushed it, glanced down onto Guy's shoulder and cut open his coat of chainmail, making a wide hole and giving him a nasty wound in the side. The point of the sword buried itself a foot into the ground. It is a blow that is remembered to this day! Guy was astonished. He knew that he had to finish the fight quickly, so he struck the giant an angry blow that pierced a foot or more into his shield, and then again, and again. But his blows were becoming weaker.

'I'm so thirsty that unless I can have a drink, I shall die,' shouted Guy at last. 'Honour the agreement that we made and let me drink.'

'No, I'm not going to let you drink.'

'Have mercy! If I die of thirst because of you, men will call you a coward!'

'You are keen, I'll say that much. The sultan has a cherished daughter, I love her and she loves me, and the sultan is going to give me her hand in marriage. So yield to me, surrender, unlace your armour and I will let you keep your life. If not, I shall kill you.'

Guy answered angrily: 'I will not, my dear sir! I would rather be pulled apart by horses than find myself ever in need of surrendering to such a devil as you!'

'Who are you, then? I'm minded to let you drink if you will tell me who you are. If you'll reveal your name so that people know who you are, then your exploits will be properly judged and applauded, don't you think?'

'Then listen: my name is Guy of Warwick, and I was born in England.'

When Ameraunt heard this, he was delighted. 'Guy, welcome!' he cried. 'Now I know that all that has been said of you is true. I shall cut off your head and present it to my darling. It shall be so, by Saint Mohammed! Even if men were to give me all of Hungary to let you drink. I'm certainly not going to let you do so now.'

The thought occurred to Guy to leap into the river anyway. He ran towards it and Ameraunt raced after him, brandishing his sword. Guy feared for his life, but he needed water.

Without God's help, Guy will be killed!

Guy entered the stream up to his waist, then ducked down so that his shoulders were covered; he drank, but Ameraunt attacked him at once and forced him down onto his knees. The water was cold, as it splashed around him.

'You have given me some ill-advised strokes,' cried Guy, 'and you have baptised me, to your shame! And yet, you have not changed who I am.'

Guy leapt out of the water and gave Ameraunt a blow with his sword. There was no question of coming to terms with him. Each wanted only to kill the other.

‘Foul fiend!’ shouted Guy. ‘May God be thanked, that drink of water has done miracles for me!’

They attacked each other once more, with swords and with insults. They fought from morning until evening, until the stars came out; they fought all day, with neither of them gaining an advantage. Then Guy managed to cut off Ameraunt’s right arm; the limb dropped onto the ground still warm. The giant was very aggrieved; he raised his sword, held it and then brought it down upon Guy with the anger of a lion that has gone without food for a fortnight. But Guy parried the blow, he didn’t step backwards an inch and Ameraunt was showing signs of exhaustion. Because of the blood that he had already lost, his blows were becoming weaker. Guy gave Ameraunt a crushing blow with his sword that severed his other arm at the shoulder. The giant fell forwards and Guy fended him off, then cut him to the ground, unlaced the chainmail around his throat and mouth and cut off his head.

Guy took a boat back to the shore and threw the head at King Triamour’s feet. The sultan absolved the king at once and forgave him everything. King Triamour travelled back to Alexandria with Guy, and the first thing he did when he arrived was to send for Earl Jonas, and when he came before him, he kissed him, and all his sons, and told them that they were free to go. Then turning to Guy: ‘Lord God who made you, let it be in your mind to stay here with me,’ he said.

‘I’ve no plans to do this,’ replied Guy.

The earl took his leave from the king, and asked that he be left in peace. He intended to go to Jerusalem, but before he left, he took Guy aside and said: ‘Tell me sir, what is your name? I beg you, for the love of the Holy Trinity, now that we are alone, tell me who you really are, so that we don’t have to continue calling you by a name that doesn’t belong to you.’

‘Earl Jonas, by Jesus Christ, then I beg you to make sure that you conceal it well. My name is Sir Guy of Warwick, but don’t tell this to anybody.’

When the earl heard that it was Sir Guy, he fell to his feet, and Guy had to lift him up.

‘Sir,’ said the earl, ‘for God’s mercy, why are you leaving us like this? There is no other knight like you! I, myself, will become your man, and all my sons will as well, every one of them, we will all be faithful to you and swear upon the Bible that you are our lord, and we will never challenge your honour or your dignity. Were it not for you, my sons and I would all be dead.’

‘Earl Jonas,’ said Guy, ‘thank you very much. But my hire would have been far too expensively bought if I were to take away your lands in payment. Make your way home now, with God’s blessing, and I will go home to my own land, for it is in my mind to do so.’

They kissed one another and the earl travelled to Durras, disappointed that Guy was not with him. Guy journeyed onwards, thankful to God for the honour that he had sent to him, and he sought out every holy place and every saint's shrine that he could find. He stayed in that noble land until he had done all this, then he travelled to Constantinople.

But let us now speak of Felice.

Since Guy's departure Felice has become the most charitable person on Earth, building abbeys and churches for Guy's sake, feeding the poor and clothing a great many. She hasn't laughed at all during this time, no matter what the activity around her, but this lady has a beautiful son; he had been christened Raynbrun and, as Guy had instructed, he had been given to Hereward to bring up. Hereward fostered the child, as his lord's son, and assigned two knights to look after the boy.

When the child was seven years old, he was healthy and strong, and able to show his courage even at that age. It happened that a contingent of merchants arrived from Russia, carrying gold and silver, copper, tin and brass, furs, including ermine, and clothes made of satin and silk. Their ships visited London where they sent a present to King Athelstan. Then they travelled further up the Thames, stopping off at many places until they came to Wallingford, ten miles from Oxford. It was a fine city in those days, protected by a stone wall, but has since felt the ravages of time and of war and is no longer the fine town that it once was.

The merchants were keen to be welcomed there, so they brought a present to Hereward, who received it with good grace and thanked them for it. When the merchants saw Raynbrun running playfully and energetically around the hall of Hereward's castle, they thought that they had never seen a fairer boy before in all their lives, and asked the knights whose child it was. The knights replied: 'It is Guy of Warwick's son.' The merchants were very complementary about the boy, but they quickly hatched a plot to steal him away, for they imagined that he would fetch a high price in a land where such trade was permitted, which might well be their next port of call. So they colluded with the porter and succeeded in carrying the child off.

The merchants returned to London, and sailed at once for Russia, but in sight of their homeland, with their thoughts filled with the joy of a safe homecoming, the sky became as black as pitch, the air was filled with spray and a gale sprang up which quickly became a tempest. The ship was tossed about so much that the crew feared for their lives. They had no idea which direction they were being blown in. The waves came over the ship so much that they were drenched from head to toe. All the ropes snapped, the mast broke, and they were soon convinced that nothing could save them. As the sea crashed around them, they prayed to omnipotent God that he might silence this fierce storm and save their souls from hell.

The ship was blown far out to sea, and before long the coast of Africa came into view. When the merchants realised that they were now far from home, they decided to take the child Raynbrun ashore and to give him as a present to the king of that land, in order to get permission to travel through that country so that they could buy and sell as they wished, in safety. So they chose two merchants who were able to speak the local language and the child was presented to the king, who received Raynbrun with kind and complementary words.

The king had a daughter; she was the same age as Raynbrun and she begged her mother and her father again and again to allow the boy to stay with her and be looked after by her own maids and to serve her as a pageboy. The king at last relented and agreed to this arrangement.

Back home in Wallingford, no one at first had any idea what had become of Raynbrun, but when Hereward realised that the boy had been stolen from him, he ordered men to search the town and then the entire country, and when he came to the conclusion that Raynbrun had been truly abducted, he was distraught. He had now lost both his lords, both Guy and Raynbrun. Hereward searched overseas, and when he could find no news of the boy, he was utterly devastated.

One day, King Athelstan summoned together all his noblemen, his earls and his barons, the wisest and the most intelligent in all the land, and Hereward of Arduin made his way there, for he was greatly loved by the king, more than any other man, because of his skill at arms. For this, there had arisen a certain amount of jealousy amongst the nobility and they complained to the king that he should not give such high honour to Hereward when he was only a poor knight. 'And he has not served his lord very well,' they added, with accusation and malice.

'Lords,' replied the king, 'listen carefully. King Anlauf of Denmark has been laying claim to this kingdom for many years. He is a fearsome warrior and he intends to descend upon us with an army, ravage the land and seize it by force, unless we can defend it in battle. So I'm asking you all for your advice. What do you think I should do?'

'We don't fear him, not one of us!' said Sir Hereward. 'In times past men have said that the Danes should own this land by right, but they have been defeated in battle and have therefore lost all right to it. So command all your noblemen, all those who possess castles and towns, to make themselves ready with horses and war gear to follow you into battle. Instruct all your knights to be ready at your command. Then, when everything is assembled, your men will be ready to fight valiantly, with the help of God Almighty, and we shall gain the upper hand.'

'Sir Hereward,' said the king, 'that is without doubt very good advice. I shall do everything that you have just said, to the utmost of my power.'

Duke Meroff jumped up angrily. He was the lord of Cornwall, white-haired with age but had been a fine warrior in his time. 'Sir king,' he said with acrimony, 'for your

honour, take no notice of this flatterer. Your noblemen have no desire to cause you any harm, but you seem to listen to him more than to any of us, even though we are much better placed to give you good advice; a fact that will be proved when put to the test. You can't trust this man. I must tell you that he has betrayed his lord, the man who knighted him and who gave him the wherewithal for command. He's returned all this favour with nothing but spite and evil. He's even sold his lord's son for money! He gave the boy to some Russians and got many a shiny coin for him I imagine! He will beguile you and your son as well, for this is what he is like.'

When Hereward heard this slander from such a well-respected old knight, he was so angry he could hardly speak. He leapt to his feet.

'You liar!' he shouted. 'I am guilty of no crime. By accusing me in front of my lord the king of such a grievous felony, you had better go away and arm yourself at once, because I will make you defend your words. You accuse me in front of the king of selling Raynbrun, the son of my lord? So help me God, I would never do such a thing! The merchants took him away by stealth and by villainy. No man has ever been as distraught as I was when I found that he had disappeared. I went with three others to Russia, looking for him, but there was no sign of him. I have found this very hard to come to terms with. But the accusation has been made and cannot be unmade, so I declare before the king, and give him my assurance, that I will travel overseas once again and never return until I have found my lord's son, if he is still alive.'

'Be quiet! May the devil hang you!' replied the duke.

A knight whose name was Sir Edgar had been listening to all this; he was the steward of Sir Hereward's land and he was so upset by what he was hearing that he leapt to his feet and turned angrily to the duke:

'Sir duke, by the King of Heaven, you are making false accusations. May God's grace be denied me if I don't cut off your head right now!'

The king commanded on pain of death that they both be silent, and made it clear that there was to be no bloodshed over the issue. And when he had instructed them all to make themselves ready for armed conflict against the Danes and to protect his lands, rather than stand there squabbling amongst themselves, they all dispersed back home to their districts and to their estates. Hereward returned to Wallingford, angry and upset that such a monstrous accusation had been levelled against him. All that the duke had told the king was a complete lie.

'Edgar,' he said, 'you stay here and look after my lands for me, my wife and my child, and my city, hold the peace here, for I trust you to do this above everybody else.'

'Sir,' he said, 'thank you. 'But I can go into distant lands for you. I spent seven years at sea as a mariner and there is no land in the whole of Christendom that I'm not familiar with. I shall search high and low until I have found the boy. You are white-haired and old, and you will find such a long journey very arduous and wearisome. So I beg you,

think again.'

'Edgar, say no more. I won't stop looking for the child, not for all of God's creation. I know full well that, when I am gone, my enemies will come and lay siege to you. There will be conflict. Promise me that you will defend my property and yourself.'

'Sir,' he said, 'if any come, we shall defend ourselves.'

Hereward set off, a most dispirited man. He found a ship and quickly crossed the sea, then began looking for Raynbrun everywhere: in Denmark and in Ireland, Norway and Scotland, in Germany, Russia, France and Turkey, he sought word of him night and day but couldn't discover any news of the boy at all. When Hereward thought that he had done everything that he could possibly do, he went to the coast to have one more try and determined to travel to Constantinople, but during the voyage a storm blew up and drove the ship across the sea to the coast of Africa. They made land near a magnificent city, but its walls had been flattened and destroyed.

'Lord,' said a mariner, 'we're not going to get much of a welcome here!'

'Whose city is this, then, that has been destroyed?' asked Hereward.

'Sir,' replied a shipman, 'it belongs to Emir Presane and he hates all Christians. He will have us killed if he sees us. He will be in a foul temper; King Argus has recently subdued him and destroyed all his lands.'

But the pagans on the shore had already seen the ship; they eagerly armed themselves, carried Hereward and the crew back to the beach and brought them before the emir. He ordered that they be cast into prison. This was quickly done, and they were given virtually nothing to eat and drink.

Back in England, when Duke Meroff became aware that Hereward had left the country, he gathered a host of knights and men of Cornwall and did his utmost to bring a great deal of grief to Sir Hereward's steward. But Edgar defended himself magnificently, as the valiant knight that he was. He hired men of Oxfordshire and paid them well, with gold and rich treasure, and protected his lord's land with great honour. All that year, from beginning to end, they fought tirelessly. Edgar gave battle to the duke and killed many of his men. A thousand of the duke's men were slain, and when the duke could see that he had nothing to show for his losses, he returned to Cornwall, leaving the dead behind.

But now we must speak of Sir Guy. He had visited all the shrines and holy places in Constantinople and begun at last to think that it was time to return home to England. So he set off, and with weary travel and harsh discomfort he came at last into Germany.

One day, in that wild country, Guy came upon a pilgrim sitting beneath a cross. The man seemed to be in some distress: 'Alas!' he moaned, 'my sorrow, my unbearable sorrow!'

Guy took pity on the fellow and said: 'In God's name, what's the matter? Stop all this moaning and tell me your name. Where are you from?'

'If I told you the truth, you couldn't help me,' the man answered.

'No, this is not so. I could comfort you, and maybe give you some advice. It is often the case that travellers are able to benefit one another with their advice, and share their experiences.'

'This is true. Then I shall explain to you,' said the palmer.

'I was once a knight, I was wealthy, my people respected me and I held all my possessions securely. There was no land in the whole of Christendom where I was not praised for my fighting qualities, I was noble, courteous, generous and had many friends. I had no shortage of gold either, I had castles and towers and many men under my patronage. But now I haven't a halfpenny to buy a loaf of bread with! I'm a penniless wretch. It's a wonder that I'm still alive.' At this point the man was so upset that he couldn't speak any more, as the tears fell down his cheeks.



'There you have it,' he said, after a long pause. 'Enough. Don't ask me my name, or where I come from, because it would be shameful for me to have to tell you. I would rather have something to eat, because I'm very hungry.'

'Pilgrim, for God's love, tell me your name and tell me the truth. I shall purchase food for us, if I have a penny about me.'

'Then I shall tell you,' he replied. 'My name is Sir Tirry. I was once rich, sir, and all of Lorraine was under my control. I had a friend whose name was Guy and no man has ever been born who was so loyal and true, not since God suffered his crucifixion. He was born in Warwick, and we swore our trust and loyalty to one another. We are sworn together in brotherhood. We bore great affection for each other and he loved me above everything. Twice he saved my life. Sir Guy killed the Duke of Pavia in front of all the duke's knights, so that I and the woman I loved could be together, and be married.'

'The duke's nephew was given Pavia to rule over in his place, a man called Barrard. He was then still only a young man, in the service of the emperor. The emperor loved him well, but he quickly became a ruthless tyrant, so bad that soon no one dared to go near him. Men would rather face a hundred knights than he alone. There's none so mighty

in the whole world now, nor so strong, and his power is matched only by his anger and stubbornness. One blow from his sword will break a man's neck in two. Barrard is so fierce a brute, and so strong and courageous, that there's no knight in all this land so keen or skilful with his sword that if Barrard was angry with him he wouldn't quake with fear and run away.

'The emperor made Barrard his steward and gave him lands and titles for his honour, and men are more in dread of him now than they ever were. If a duke or an earl comes into his presence, unless they bow to him at once, Barrard will rise from his seat and have them killed, or thrown into prison.

'Men also fear Barrard for another reason: if he develops a fondness for someone, whoever they may be, that man will prosper into great wealth and power, but if a duke, or an earl or a noble knight manages to aggrieve him in any way at all, he will reduce that man to poverty in an instant, without any compunction.

'One day, the emperor summoned all his earls, dukes and barons, and I was to attend, so I went along with a good contingent of my own people, including a hundred knights, and when I came before the assembly, Barrard questioned me about certain things. He said that Duke Otoun had been killed by my men. I defended myself vigorously from this accusation and threw my glove in front of him, saying that I was ready to fight to uphold my good name. The emperor accepted my challenge, and set a day for the fight to take place. But I could find no one at that assembly who would agree to be my guarantor, for fear of Duke Barrard's anger if they did so. So the emperor had me seized. I was loved by everyone there much more than Barrard was, but he was feared much more than I was, so all my friends abandoned me. Not one would be my guarantor.

'So I was led away to die in the emperor's prison. Barrard seized my lands and made threats against my wife, and, fearing that her life was in danger, she escaped away on horseback. I don't know where she is, or what has become of her.

I know what Barrard's plan has been: it is to lure Guy to him by using me as bait. I spent a long while in that prison, in great pain and discomfort. I could see no daylight, it was like night in there all the time, and I never had enough to eat. I had no company, no one to speak to.

'My friends did their best to persuade the emperor to have me released, they gave him many gifts, and they gave gifts to Barrard as well and made him an offer that if I was released, I would agree to travel from country to country looking for Guy of Warwick in every town that I came to, by day and by night, and would not rest until I had found him. And when I had found him, I would bring him to the emperor so that he could defend himself against the charge of treason that had been levelled against him, for performing such an outrage in front of all the noblemen who were present when he killed Duke Otoun on his wedding day, and to defend me as well from the slanderous accusations that had been levelled against me.

‘So I was duly released, and I have travelled to many lands, looking for Guy. I’ve been to England, and when I couldn’t find him there, I sought out Hereward, but he wasn’t there either, both of them have left the country. I was told that Hereward has gone looking for Guy’s son Raynbrun, who has been abducted by merchants, and that Guy is in exile. Not a single person I met could tell me where either of them was.

Since then I have sought Guy in many strange countries and haven’t come across anybody who can tell me anything about him. I can only think that he is dead.’

With this, he started weeping.

When Guy knew that it was Tirry standing before him, that valiant knight whom he loved so truly, but now as thin as a rake, his arms and legs now bare and covered in scrapes and filth, Guy fell to the ground. He was so overcome with pity to see the malnourished body that had once been clad in scarlet cloth that he could hardly speak. Tirry picked him up and said:

‘Be of good heart! I think you are affected by some illness. Tell me, how long have you been suffering like this? It’s the fainting sickness, isn’t it? It’s a dreadful thing, I hate it. It’s exactly a year ago since I set off in search of Guy, and since then I haven’t slept in the same place twice. I’ve been travelling all the time.

‘The Emperor of Germany is going to hold a council at Spire shortly. All his noblemen are obliged to attend. No one is exempt. This is the day on which my licence ends, and I must come with Guy, if I’ve been lucky enough to find him, or if I cannot bring him along with me because I cannot find him, I can never return, because if I do, I shall be killed. So I don’t know what to do.’

Guy listened to this and could hardly stay on his feet for grief. ‘Almighty Lord,’ he thought to himself, ‘why have I lived to see this day, to see Sir Tirry standing so impoverished before me, he who was once such a noble knight? A more faithful friend and companion has never been born of flesh and bone. But let me take a deep breath. Now I must think clearly. I shall kill Barrard, in whatever way that I can, and avenge my good friend Tirry; and if I can’t do this, may God never let me be happy, ever again.’

‘Pilgrim, don’t be upset,’ he said to Tirry. ‘It won’t help you in any way to be overcome by sorrow. No one can know what the future holds. Let’s both go to Spire and see what news we can gather, and, you never know, we may learn something to our advantage.’

‘Sir,’ said Tirry, ‘let’s do it, then.’

They took the way to the city. Tirry, however, continued to give expression to his sorrow and Guy tried to comfort him. He wept when he saw Tirry weeping, but tried his best to hide his emotion, so that Tirry would not know the pain he was suffering himself.

They had travelled only three miles along the road to the city when Tirry exclaimed: ‘Christ! I feel desperately tired. I don’t think I can go another mile.’

‘Sir,’ replied Guy, ‘lie down. Be still for a while. Sleep as much as you need to. For your love, I shall sit down at your head and take my own rest.’

‘Thank you,’ said Tirry. ‘You do me a great courtesy.’

Tirry lay on the ground and slept for a short while. As he lay sleeping, out of his mouth came a thing as white as an ermine, Guy saw it plainly. It scampered towards a mound and ran into a hole. It wasn’t there for very long before it emerged again and ran back into Tirry’s mouth. When Guy saw this, he marvelled at what he’d seen, and what it might mean.

Soon afterwards, Tirry woke up. He rose and groaned. ‘Ah, lord, heavenly king!’ he exclaimed. ‘I was dreaming that I was on a hill and I found a rocky place with hollows and it was full of red gold and there was a dead dragon lying there. Beside this dragon lay a bright sword, the best in all the world, and then I imagined that Sir Guy was here beside me and my head was in his arms and all my sorrows had vanished.’

‘My dear friend,’ replied Guy, ‘through the grace of God, because of Guy you shall win back all your lands, your castles and towns. So let’s make our way to Spire, but first of all, I suggest that we go over to that hill over there, for it may be where you thought the treasure lay. If we can find it, it may be a great help to us. It might give us the where-withal to succeed.’

‘Very well,’ said Tirry. ‘Let’s go and see.’

They went quickly to the mound and found the hole. And just as Tirry had described, they found the treasure and the sword. The sword looked more than serviceable when Guy drew it from its sheath. ‘God of heaven!’ he exclaimed. ‘No Christian man ever had a sword like this! This must have come from a distant land indeed.’

The sword was marvellously embellished in bright gold and Guy was delighted with it. He put it carefully back into its scabbard. ‘This treasure lying here, take it for yourself, it’s yours,’ said Guy. ‘But this sword stays with me!’



‘Whatever you wish,’ replied Tirry. ‘But I’ve no interest in treasure. Not the slightest. Let’s go to the city.’

They hurried off, but shortly, Tirry became concerned that he may have been recognised, and by the time they arrived in the city he was beset by anxiety. They found lodgings at the edge of the town and requested some food. Then Guy went out, leaving his sword with Tirry. He made his way to the citadel. The Emperor of Germany came out of the church and Guy greeted him very courteously as he emerged, as only a nobleman can.

‘God save you, Sir emperor,’ he said. ‘You are a man of great valour, and I am just a poor man from a distant country. For charity, I ask that you might give me something, for I need help, as you can see.’

‘By Saint Mary, I will gladly help you!’ replied the emperor. ‘Come to the palace with me, and you shall have food that will please you.’

When they arrived at the hall, the emperor and all his noblemen sat down to eat and Guy stood before them. ‘Pilgrim,’ said the emperor, ‘tell me, for your love – for you seem to be well travelled – where were you born and in which country?’

‘Sir,’ he replied, ‘you must understand that I have been in many places, in Jerusalem and Syria, and in Constantinople.’

‘Then pilgrim, for your loyalty, what do men say of me in these places?’

‘Sir, I shall tell you the truth. You have gained a poor reputation, you are judged to be ill-advised by listening to the wicked and unhelpful advice of your steward. Your honour is being questioned, for banishing Sir Tirry and many other knights without any justification. So you are not spoken of at all well. Not anywhere, really. You are mostly regarded with shameful ridicule, and you’ve brought much dishonour upon yourself by believing the words of such a villain.’

Barrard had been listening to this and came storming over, incandescent with rage. He would have struck Guy there and then had it not been for someone standing nearby who stayed his hand and prevented the blow.

‘You lie, you traitor!’ cried Barrard. ‘If it wasn’t for the dishonour I would do to my lord the emperor by killing a guest in his hall, I would shake your beard so hard that your teeth would fall out! You are an outrageous liar! If I find you anywhere in this town, from this moment onwards, I shall throw you into such a dark prison that you won’t know whether it is night or day for seven long years.’

‘Good sir, who are you?’ asked Guy. ‘You seem to be a nobleman but I’ve never seen you before. To do violence to a pilgrim will do your reputation no good at all. I only said – and the emperor will confirm this – that with sin and injustice Duke Barrard has disinherited the knight Tirry and chased him from his land, because he wrongly blames him for being implicated in the death of his uncle. I have heard it said many times that he is entirely innocent of this charge.’

‘By God who made water and fire!’ exclaimed Barrard angrily. ‘Are you prepared to fight for Earl Tirry then?’

‘Look, here is my glove,’ said Guy. ‘I am ready to fight for Earl Tirry, yes.’ Then Guy turned to the emperor. ‘Please take my coat, sir, for your honour. I will fight with this man, to uphold Earl Tirry’s honour.’

‘Pilgrim, without question, you are very brave to do this,’ said the emperor.

‘I am certain, without any doubt at all, that the devil of hell has summoned him and brought him here to do this,’ interrupted Barrard. ‘May the grace of God be denied me if I don’t cut off his head very soon.’

‘Sir emperor,’ said Guy, ‘please listen to me. I have come from a distant land, and there is no one here who knows me. I have no armour and no silver to buy any with. The order of knighthood decrees that you help the poor to uphold their rights; it would be greatly to your honour for you to do so now.’

The emperor took possession of their coats. Then he commanded them to be ready soon after dawn; he would oversee the battle himself. The emperor called his dear daughter to him and asked her to look after the pilgrim and to arm him well. The duke went off at once to prepare.

The emperor’s daughter led Guy to a room and did as her father had instructed. Guy asked her, for God’s love, to make sure that the armour she gave him was of the best. All who saw this pilgrim had great wonder, as well as pity, that he dared to take on this fight, and they prayed to almighty God that he might receive the grace to overcome Barrard.

The emperor rose early the next morning and heard Mass. Then he went to his palace, followed by all his noblemen. Barrard was there already; he looked as fierce as a leopard, mounted on a good steed. They led him into the court. The maiden had not forgotten to arm the pilgrim, and she gave him a good horse to ride, one that was brave and trustworthy. And neither did Guy forget his sword; he’d fetched it from Tirry earlier, in a way that no one would have been aware of, and he would have great need of it, as you will find out. It had been created with subtlety and much skill.

When the emperor’s daughter had armed her pilgrim well, she brought Guy before her father. He looked very handsome and courageous, and appeared, now that he was washed and in his armour, to look very much the part. Everyone had great wonder and swore by Saint Richard that this couldn’t possibly be the palmer they saw yesterday.

‘Lords, everyone,’ said the emperor, ‘these two knights who stand before you are men of great strength and valour. They have agreed to fight one another – you all know the circumstances and the reason why. This pilgrim will defend Earl Tirry from the accusation of treason: he will defend him from the charge that he was complicit in the murder of Duke Otoun of Pavia and he will take part in this trial by combat against Duke Barrard, who wishes to receive justice for his cousin’s death. We shall see by the outcome of this battle who is in the right and who is in the wrong. Do you all agree to this?’

‘We agree to it,’ said the noblemen. ‘We are happy that this is the right thing to do.’

They went at once to where the battle was to take place, on a hill outside the city. The book was brought to them, and when they had sworn their oaths, they made their way onto the hill and began to fight.

Each assailed the other with venom and savagery. They hit each other on their bright

helmets, damaged saddle and cloths, broke stirrup and strap, but their chainmail held firm and did not tear. They toppled each other from their horses, but anger drove them to leap back onto their steeds at once, neither fearing the other. They drew their swords and fought together for a long time. Pieces of shield flew to the ground.

Guy was well-armed, but Barrard had the greater protection: he was wearing two helmets and two coats of chainmail, richly set with precious stones. All who were watching said that Guy was no Earthly man, he must be an angel! But who would turn out to be the stronger, they had no idea.

All the people in the city had come out to watch the battle: men, women and children, and also friars and nuns. Young and old, rich and poor, all came to see who would win; all except for Earl Tirry, who was in a church by himself, praying to God, imploring Christ to help him. A priest came in, singing, and found Tirry lying there.

‘Pilgrim,’ said the priest, ‘why don’t you go to see those two knights fighting? One of them is a pilgrim and he is fighting for Earl Tirry.’

‘Who is the pilgrim?’

‘I don’t know, but he seems to be quite good at fighting. He’s broken the duke’s shield already.’

Tirry got to his feet and made his way to where the battle was taking place, but he could hardly bring himself to watch. Fearing what might happen, he looked at the ground for a while, but soon he could make out Barrard and saw that he was bleeding quite badly, which lifted his spirits a little. The pilgrim seemed to be more than a match for him, and at last Tirry said: ‘This can’t be the palmer I befriended on the road. When I was with him he seemed weak and feeble, old and hungry, in quite a bad way really, but now he is strong and energetic, not feeble at all. He seems to be no Earthly man! When I look at him now, I am reminded of Guy of Warwick. If Guy were not dead, I would say that it was him.’

Then he wept for Guy as he remembered times past, and made his way back to the church. Often he prayed to God that day to help the pilgrim as much as he could.

The battle went on and on, from morning until evensong. Both combatants refused to let up, and when evening fell, the light began to get so bad that they could no longer see properly. Messengers were sent to the emperor and it was explained that it was hard for them to continue in darkness. The emperor called four noblemen to him: ‘Lords,’ he said, ‘take Barrard and look after him properly and make sure that he is ready to fight again early next morning. I shall look after my pilgrim, then the battle will commence again tomorrow and men will see which of them shall have the victory, by Saint Mary!’

The emperor took Sir Guy and gave him food, and made him comfortable. But Duke Barrard, that treacherous villain, had dreamed up a dastardly trick: he secretly summoned four of his cousins and told them to go to the court and to kill the pilgrim when

they found him. So they were quickly armed and made their way to the court, then crept about until they came at last to where Guy was sleeping. He was in a proper bed, with a wooden frame, with sheets of cloth-of-gold spread over him. The men who were supposed to be protecting him were all sleeping soundly. The four villains each took hold of a corner of this bed and carried it to the sea, then the four men threw the bed into the sea. Sir Guy lay fast asleep through it all.

May God have mercy on Guy! Without God's help, he will soon be drowned! The bed rose and fell with the waves. Guy woke up at last, raised his head and saw the stars shining above him. There was no land to be seen but only a broad expanse of water.

'Almighty God!' he cried, 'what's happened? Who has done this to me? Lord, I fight for no other reward than the welfare of my true friend, not for gold nor for silver, but just to deliver Sir Tirry from peril and to bring his exile to an end. I took on this fight against Barrard in order to obtain justice for him, but he'll get no remedy from me now. This is the end. I am a dead man. This is all Barrard's doing!'

But then a fisherman appeared, in a boat, very close to Guy. The fisherman shouted to Guy to tell him who he was, and whether he was a Christian. Guy raised his head and called for mercy: 'My friend,' Guy shouted, 'have no fear, I believe in God, may he protect me now! Do you know about a battle between a pilgrim and a knight?'

'Yes, I saw it. I was watching until it got dark. The emperor parted them in the end. They're going to carry on in the morning.'

'I am the pilgrim,' said Guy. We were parted last night. I was very weary and went straight to sleep, and now I find myself here! I haven't a clue how I come to be here. My dear friend, please help me!'

The fisherman was very sympathetic; he transferred Guy into his boat and sat beside him. Then he took him to the shore and looked after him as well as he could.

The emperor rose early and hurried to hear Mass. Then he went into his hall, with all his barons, and commanded that Barrard and the pilgrim be brought before him. Four noblemen went off to fetch Barrard and soon returned with him. The emperor was informed that the pilgrim couldn't be found. Both he and his bed were missing. No one knew what had happened, and nobody knew where he was.

The emperor was very angry and swore by God and Saint Mary that those who had betrayed his pilgrim, and his guards, would be hanged, by Saint Martin! Then he spoke with great anger to Duke Barrard:

'Duke, I order you, without any more ado, to bring him here! Your life depends on it. Fetch that man that you have kidnapped or I shall judge that you be hanged! Bring him here at once, for whether he is dead or alive, I am sure that you are behind this.'

Barrard rose to his fullest height, without any fear, like the bold nobleman that he was, and said: 'Sir, now I can see that everything I've heard about you is true. I have served you, as you know, and protected your lands for you, and now you want to judge me like this? But I won't accept it, by God! If there is any man here so bold as to wish to settle this matter, let him stay here and try. And you, who have passed this judgement, listen to this: I shall go into Lombardy, gather my forces and then come back again through your land killing everybody that I see and destroying everything in my path. I shall bring your lands to ruin.'



The emperor listened carefully to all of this and was quickly beside himself with rage. He began to swear, and vowed that if Barrard attempted to flee the palace, he would have him seized and killed immediately.

The fisherman appeared: 'Sir, if you wish, please listen to me, I know where the pilgrim is.'

'Tell me, my friend, and if he is still alive, you shall have a hundred besants of red gold,' replied the emperor.

'I was out fishing late last night when I found a bed floating in the sea, and lying upon it was that pilgrim who has been fighting with Duke Barrard. I pulled him into my boat and took him back home with me. You can send for him if you like.'

'My friend,' said the emperor, 'great honour shall come to you.' He quickly had the pilgrim sent for, and very shortly Guy arrived. The battle was to commence immediately.

Blows began to rain down, stroke after stroke from swords of steel. It was the fiercest encounter between two knights that the world has ever seen. They fought until mid-morning, and everybody was astonished at their stamina.

The duke, utter villain that he was, swung his sword and caught Guy a glancing blow on the face and chin, taking the skin away from his cheek. The stroke hit Guy's shoulder and broke many links of chainmail. A quarter of Guy's shield was sliced off by a following stroke and Guy was forced momentarily onto his hands and knees. But he leapt up again like the spark from a coal and struck Barrard on the helmet so hard that a quarter of it broke away, leaving his inner helmet exposed. Guy delivered another stroke that cut through both of Barrard's coats of chainmail and sliced off his arm at the shoulder, then carried on down through his bowels as he fell to the ground, so that the point of the sword dug two feet into the earth. Barrard died shortly afterwards.

Everybody who saw it was amazed at this sword stroke, and said that no living man could possibly have delivered it.

Guy sat down on the ground. 'Barrard, you villain!' he cried. 'Now you have met your

match! Alas, that you were ever born! A bolder knight than you has never lived, nor one so skilled at arms. If you hadn't been such a disloyal traitor, you would have been a knight without equal!

Guy rested awhile beside the corpse. All who were standing around and watching said that he must be a knight from the Otherworld. Then Guy made his way to the emperor, and to the noblemen who were standing around him, and asked if Tirry might now be judged to be thoroughly vindicated, and whether he was now acquitted, and they all cried with one voice: 'Yes, by the holy cross! Yes, if our emperor agrees.'

'I grant that he be acquitted on all charges,' said the emperor quickly. 'I forgive Tirry everything and I shall return all his lands to him, and all the honours that he held, and if I knew where he was I would do this at once.'

'If I may, I will find him for you before the day is out,' replied Guy.

'Then do so, my friend, by all means,' said the emperor.

Guy went all around the city looking high and low for Tirry, and found him at last in a church, praying. 'Get up off your knees, the emperor has summoned you to appear before him,' he said.

Tirry looked up. 'Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me! Have you denounced me?' he cried. 'Alas, I shouldn't have told you who I am! What trust is there in the world now? You seemed a faithful friend, but now you have betrayed me. I imagine that you have earned a fine reward for informing upon me.'

'Tirry, there is some good news waiting for you. Duke Barrard is dead. A pilgrim defended you in battle and has killed him.'

But when they came before the emperor, Tirry was still uncertain how he was going to be received.

'Lo! Here is Earl Tirry,' announced Guy.

'I hear that a pilgrim has killed Duke Barrard, may he have God's thanks and mine,' said Tirry with trepidation. 'I think that God must have sent him here,' and then Tirry fell to his knees and cried: 'Emperor, have mercy!'

Dukes and a great many earls fell down with him, courteous men that they were, and pleaded for Earl Tirry. Tears trickled down the emperor's cheeks. 'Gentle baron,' he said, 'you have been through a great deal. Noble knight, I am in possession of much that is yours. Today I shall give it all back to you, all of your land, your castles and towers, and yet more still, for I shall give you the honour of being my steward, the steward of all my land. I give my land to you, to wield as you wish.'

The emperor kissed Sir Tirry and forgave him everything. Dukes and earls then quickly came over to kiss Sir Tirry in their turn.

‘For my love, tell me, who is the pilgrim?’ the emperor asked Tirry. ‘Is he your brother, or some close relative? He fought astonishingly well against Barrard to defend you against this accusation of felony. I didn’t think it possible that any knight would dare to take on Barrard in a trial by combat.’

‘Sir,’ replied Tirry, ‘the last half a year has dragged by. I haven’t stayed in the same place for more than a day at a time, but always travelling, far from home, I have been looking for Sir Guy of Warwick, should it be possible to find him. I’ve been through many a strange land, and I heard in England, where he was born and brought up, that he had gone into exile and that that country was in great peril because of it. But as far as I believe, and by the good faith that I owe to you, I have never seen the pilgrim before in all my life, at least not until we met on the road, and I had no idea until now that he had taken up the fight on my behalf. But now I hope and expect that God will reward him well for his trouble, for he has relieved me of much hardship and sorrow.’

The emperor courteously led Sir Tirry into a chamber and gave him a magnificent robe to wear. It was lined with the finest silk, and afterwards he gave him two or three horses, the best in all the land. Tirry quickly made arrangements to travel to Gormaz, and he took good Sir Guy along with him. When he arrived in that city he was received with great honour, but he still had no idea who the pilgrim was. He hadn’t the slightest inkling that it was Guy. Searching for his wife everywhere, in every corner of that land, he found her at last in the place where she had been hiding, for fear of Barrard.

Now Tirry is back to his old self, strong and confident, the mightiest in all the land. He wasn’t about to forget the treasure either, the one beneath the rocky hillside. He brought it back to Gormaz and found that it contained many valuable objects. He offered it all to the pilgrim, but Guy wanted none of it, he cared nothing for gold and silver and wanted only to serve God. ‘Give some of it to the poor,’ said Guy, ‘and put the rest aside for yourself.’

One day, Guy decided that it was time to say his farewells. With great sadness, he took his leave from Earl Tirry: ‘Sir, with your permission,’ he said, ‘I would like to depart. I can stay here no longer. But if you don’t mind, I would be grateful if you could accompany me for a short distance as I set off on my journey, for I want to tell you something that will astonish you. But it’s important that we are alone.’

‘Of course,’ said Tirry.

Tirry mounted an ambling mule and they went out of the city, just the two of them. When they had travelled only a mile, they sat down to rest. ‘You don’t know who I am, I know,’ said Guy. ‘If you were a little more perceptive, or had a little more understanding, you would know who I am. Can you not recall Guy of Warwick, who was once your friend, who killed Duke Otoun for you, and who rescued you from prison? I found you badly wounded whilst I was travelling through a forest and I killed fifteen thieves for you

and rescued your lady, and then I rescued you from four Lombard knights and carried you on my horse, and healed your wound, and then stayed in Gormaz with your dear father and helped him to defend your inheritance; and now I have killed that despicable rogue Barrard who chased you out of your lands. It is Guy whom you see here! You ought to recognise me.'

When Tirry knew that it was Guy, his heart felt as though it was going to break. He couldn't speak a word and fell to the ground.

'Guy,' he said, 'my dear brother! How could I not have known who you were?'

He knelt at Guy's feet and began to cry. Guy's legs, which had once been covered in the finest clothes, were dirty and bare. Tirry wept at the sight. Guy was equally upset and couldn't speak a word either, but he lifted Tirry into his arms and tenderly kissed him.

'My dear friend,' said Guy at last, 'now I shall go. You must stay here. I put you into God's keeping, may he look after you always. I have a child by my wife. He will be a man now, if he still lives. If ever he comes to you, please do everything you can for him.'

'My brother,' replied Tirry, 'for the love of God, stay here! All that I own, half shall be yours, half of everything, I promise. Please, don't say no. And if not, well, why don't I come along with you? I would rather be with you than stay here on my own. I would rather be with you than have all the riches in Christendom!'

'You can't come with me. Don't be silly. You're not thinking properly. Go out and serve your lord with honour and distinction once again, and do everything that you can to support him and to further his interests. I will go. You shall stay here, and may the grace of God be with you.'

They were both very emotional, but then they kissed one another goodbye and parted company, never to see each other again.

Earl Tirry returned home, went directly to his chamber and didn't eat or drink for three days. When the countess learned that it was Guy who had been staying with them, she became very upset and tearful herself, and complained to her husband: 'If you couldn't hold on to him through love and respect, you should have forced him to stay!'

Guy journeyed through many foreign lands, until at last he came to the coast of France and was able to take a boat to England.

In England, Guy asked many people where he might find King Athelstan, and they all replied: 'At Winchester, only twenty miles from Chichester. He has summoned a great host of noblemen, dukes, earls and barons, wealthy lords of many towns, all who can wield arms and fight. Bishops, archdeacons and abbots have all assembled in Winchester as well, the very best minds in the Church, the best in all the country, and they've decided to have it proclaimed that everybody, young and old, must fast for three days and

remain in prayer night and day, praying that God may send someone who is willing and able, courageous and skilful enough, with the help of God almighty, and for the sake of England, to take on a battle against a giant. For the situation is perilous. The King of Denmark has invaded. He destroys the countryside, burns towns and abbeys and he's brought a champion with him, an African who is immensely strong and merciless. This giant is feared more in battle than a hundred knights! His name is Colbrand, and no living man has the strength that he has. The King of Denmark has sent a message to our king, reminding him that he stares defeat in the face, and has given him an ultimatum that either he yields up England and swears fealty to the crown of Denmark, and sends tribute every year as a matter of course, and promises to do the King of Denmark's bidding, or else he finds a knight who will dare to defend the English crown by taking on the giant Colbrand in battle. He must set a day on which the battle will take place, or else he will forfeit the right to do so. He has set a deadline for the king to give an answer, and the time is nearly up.

'As far as we are aware, King Athelstan can find no one amongst his knights brave enough to take on this battle, whatever the king might plead or promise. The giant is so strong that nobody dares to fight with him. Therefore we believe that the land will be lost without a single blow being struck.'

'Where is Hereward?' asked Guy. 'He has never let anybody down!'

'He's gone away and he's not in England any more. He's abroad looking for Raynbrun, Guy's son, whom merchants have spirited away.'

Guy then wept with anguish and sighed with grief. 'How is Earl Rohald's daughter?' he asked.

'No woman has ever done so much good,' they replied. 'She feeds the poor in her own district and builds abbeys, has bridges and causeways constructed and prays that she might one day see Guy again. Whether he is alive or dead, her thoughts are always with him.'

Guy made his way to Winchester, and no one recognised him. It was near to midsummer's day and King Athelstan was there with all his nobility, everyone he trusted, bar none. He called them all together to discuss the situation:

'Lords, I urge you, all you earls and barons, understand that we must go to war with the Danes or else be utterly destroyed. So how best should we proceed? Colbrand intends to destroy the entire country; he thinks it's what the King of Denmark wants. Unless we agree to pay tribute to Denmark every year he will destroy us, he will pull down all my castles and towns, cut down my forests and woods and let loose all my deer. If there is any knight here who dares to fight with Colbrand, I'll give him half my land as a reward.'

Everybody sat stone still. Not a word was spoken. Nobody dared to move a muscle.

‘Ah!’ exclaimed the king. ‘Lord, if only I had Sir Guy of Warwick or Sir Hereward with me now! If I had had the foresight to give half of my lands to Guy, then my troubles would be over. There is great truth in the saying: “a small expense on maintenance saves a fortune in rebuilding.” Now my enemies are beating down my door!’

The Duke of Kent rose to his feet. ‘Sir king,’ he said, ‘you must send messengers into every corner of your lands, into every town, every city and borough, and urge everyone who can bear arms, sword, axe, shield or spear, to assemble before you on a certain day and tell them with every assurance that they will earn more wages fighting with you than they have ever dreamed of. Then we shall bring the King of Denmark to battle and overcome him. This is my advice.’

With this, they all departed, because nobody had anything else to say.

That evening, the king was brought to his bed, which was draped in golden bedclothes, and he lay awake all night, praying to Jesus that he might send him a man who would be able and willing to take the giant Colbrand on in single combat. As the king was sleeping restlessly, an angel came to him. The angel said: ‘King, are you sleeping? Here is a message from Jesus Christ: Tomorrow morning, when it is light, go to the north gate of the city and look to see who’s there. You’ll meet there with a pilgrim. Greet him in the name of God, walk with him a little way and ask if he will be prepared to take on this battle for you, in the service of God.’

The angel vanished. The king’s spirits lifted at once. He got up early and went to the north gate, in the company of two earls and the Bishop of Winchester. They waited there until mid-morning and saw many ordinary folk passing by, but then a pilgrim appeared. The king knew at once that he must be the one, so he put his hand on the pilgrim’s shoulder and said: ‘Pilgrim, please stay with me for a while.’

‘Leave me alone, please,’ replied the pilgrim. ‘I don’t want to go with you. I’m very hungry at the moment and I need to go to have something to eat. You’re holding me up.’

‘Pilgrim,’ said the king, ‘we ask you, please, stay a moment; a great need brings us here before you. The strong and ferocious King of Denmark has a giant who will cause me to lose my entire realm. Will you take on a battle for us? For the love of God who sits above in Trinity, please take on this battle, for the Lord’s sake.’

All who were watching would have seen the king and the bishop weeping openly.

‘Sir,’ replied Guy, ‘because you are all pleading with me like this, and for the love of God in Trinity, I shall take on this battle for you.’

Our king thanked him most sincerely and immediately sent a communication to the King of Denmark, informing him that someone had agreed to take Colbrand on. A day was set for the fight to take place, on an island in the sea.

King Athelstan commanded his armorers to get hold of the finest armour they could lay their hands on, for his champion, the pilgrim. They sent off messengers and searched eve-

rywhere they could, but when Guy saw that nothing sufficiently large or strong enough could be found, he went to see the king. ‘Sir,’ he said, ‘by the might of God, I have heard it said that there was once a knight living in the town of Warwick who was very tall and big of bone, and unless his armour will serve me, I don’t think that of anyone else in England will. So I urge you, please, ask Guy’s wife to send his armour down for me.’

The king did as Guy asked, and Felice sent it down to Winchester without any complaint. When the armour arrived, they examined it, laced the pilgrim into it, and found that it was a perfect fit. That noble lady had kept it in good condition since Guy’s departure.

When the time arrived for the battle to take place, Guy was armed with no expense spared. His helmet bore a cross of gold, and his circlet of gold was so exquisitely fashioned as to be priceless. Precious stones were set within it that gleamed and sparkled. Over the nose protection was a huge garnet that emitted so much of its own light that it made night into day, and on the helmet was a flower that was made of many colours. Guy was given a sword of fine steel, one of King Athelstan’s most-loved weapons, and then a horse was brought for him and there was none better in all the land for its courage in battle. He quickly mounted, and many men blessed him. Then Guy rode off, with his spear at the ready.

When he arrived at the place where the battle was to be fought, Guy dismounted, went onto his knees and prayed to Christ: ‘Lord, you who raised Lazarus from the dead and defended Samson from the lion,’ he said, ‘please shield me today from this giant.’



Quickly, a book was fetched and the King of Denmark swore upon it that if his champion was killed by receiving his death wound, or rendered incapable, by any other means, of continuing the fight, then he would never again claim any right of possession over England but would return home to Denmark and never more seek conflict with England for as long as he lived. And when he had finished, King Athelstan swore that if his man was killed then he would become a sworn vassal to the King of Denmark and hold all his lands from him and pay a yearly tribute to the Danish crown, and his heirs would do the same, in perpetuity.

When they had sworn to all this, and each had supplied a hostage, Colbrand was brought forwards. He was so large that no horse could bear his weight, so he always fought on foot, not caring for any other method of fighting. He had a great selection of arms and armour, so much that a cart could scarcely carry the weight of it all. They were all scattered about in one place, so that he could choose whichever of them suited the moment. His coat of mail was enormous, and it wasn’t constructed out of steel links but

in another way entirely: it was made of steel splints, in front and behind, all fastened together. His legs were similarly protected and he wore a great helmet and a long shield bound together with iron and steel that hung from his neck. His armour was as black as pitch, his lance was made of steel, his throwing spears were perfectly balanced and his iron maces were terrifying to look at. His battle axes and gisarmes looked particularly gruesome, with spikes protruding from them that would bite into steel like a chisel into wood, or a knife into butter.

The champions were brought together. Guy was very anxious; never before in all his years had he stood at the brink of battle fearing so much for his life. He pricked his horse with his spurs. The horse could gallop as fast as a bird in flight and it charged swiftly towards Colbrand, but before he could reach him, the giant launched three spears into the air; two missed but the third pierced Guy's golden shield and went straight through, passed between his arm and his side and stuck more than an ankle's depth into the ground. Guy delivered such a blow with his lance onto the giant's helmet that the lance splintered into five pieces. Colbrand drew his sword and struck Guy a great blow on the helmet in return. The edge of his sword slid down past Guy's shoulder, down his back, went through Guy's saddle and gave his horse its death wound. The animal collapsed to the ground in a bloody heap.

Guy leapt to his feet. He drew his sword at once and struck Colbrand so hard with it that sparks flew away. But he couldn't reach the giant's head! His sword was long, but he couldn't reach higher than Colbrand's shoulder with it. One of his strokes fell onto the armour protecting the giant's collarbone, took away a splint of steel and bit into flesh, causing blood to flow from a wound. Colbrand was ashamed that Guy had been the first to draw blood and struck Guy so heavily in return that the flower and the circlet on his helmet broke away and fell to the ground. Guy's shield was sliced into two pieces by the blow. Guy feared for his life, but he managed to deliver another stroke with such venom that his sword went deep into Colbrand's shield and stuck fast. Guy was dismayed. He tugged at it in order to try to release it and the blade snapped. Disaster!

The Danes gave out a great cheer and told one another that Guy was now done for; King Athelstan was as good as captured already.

'Knight,' called Colbrand, 'you have no weapon in your hand. You'll find it hard to fight with me now! Come to me and ask for mercy, and I will give you mercy, if you plead for it before me. I can see that you are a brave and mighty fellow. I shall take you to my king and you shall be reconciled with him to your great advantage I'm sure. He'll give you lands and titles.'

'Go to hell!' shouted Guy, 'I will never ask you for mercy. That would be a humiliation. You have lots of spare weapons, very good ones and plenty enough to be able to lend me one.'

'So help me Mohammed!' exclaimed Colbrand. 'Lend you a weapon? Why should I do that? No way! You'll have no weapon off me! I'd sooner have the head off you!'

But before the giant could turn around, Guy darted over to where Colbrand's maces and battle axes lay, grabbed one and attacked the giant with it. Colbrand advanced to meet the attack and swung a mighty blow, but Guy was able to dodge it, which was lucky because otherwise Colbrand would certainly have killed him. The sword dug deeply into the earth and as Colbrand angrily stooped to recover it, Guy swung the axe that was in his hand and lopped off Colbrand's arm. When Colbrand realised that he had been badly wounded, he quickly struggled to try to raise his sword, and realising that his other arm was of no use to him, attempted to lift the sword with his left hand only, and as he stooped to do so, Guy raised his axe high above his head, took a step forwards, and gave Colbrand such a massive blow on the back of his neck that his head flew off. Colbrand's headless trunk fell to the ground.

Guy was delighted! The Danish men were mortified. King Anlauf was thunderstruck, and so were all of his men. They made their way in great sadness to their ships, and sailed home.

King Athelstan couldn't have been happier, and neither could all of his noblemen. They took Sir Guy and led him back to Winchester, with much singing and celebration, and with many thanks to God. Guy removed his armour and then the king took him by the hand and asked him who he was and where he had been born, for soon he would be



famous! The king offered him rich gifts, and castles with deep ditches around them, but Sir Guy refused it all; he was content just to thank Jesus Christ that Colbrand had been defeated.

'Come on!' exclaimed the king. 'For the love of God, tell me who you are.'

'Only if you will do as I ask,' replied Guy. 'If you will accompany me, just you alone and nobody else, and ride with me for a mile or two beyond the town as I depart, then I will tell you everything.'

So the king and Guy left the city behind them, and it was not long before Guy turned to the king and said: 'Sir, stop for a moment. Since you are so keen to know who I am, I will tell you. But since you will then know my name, so that it won't become a nuisance and possibly harmful to me I must ask you to promise that for an entire year henceforth you won't repeat a word of what I tell you, or what has passed between us, to anybody. It shall be a secret between the two of us.'

The king agreed to this, and promised Guy, upon his honour and upon his crown, that he wouldn't tell a living soul. He gave him his word.

'Sir,' said Guy, 'my name is Guy of Warwick. I am one of your own knights, and you once held me in great affection.'

When the king heard this and understood that it was good Sir Guy standing before him,

he had never been so amazed in all his life. He got off his horse and fell onto his knees. 'Sir, mercy!' he cried. 'How is this possible? It has been over two years since I was told that you were dead! Blessed be Jesus, Mary's son! God must have sent you, for if you hadn't come, we would have been destroyed! You shall receive half the land of England in payment for the service you have done. This is what I shall decree.'

'Sir,' replied Guy, 'please, if you don't mind, this isn't what I want at all. I want none of your wealth, or your titles, or any of your land. I ask for only one thing: that, for God's love, if Hereward should ever return with my son, that you honour them both, for Hereward is greatly deserving of your trust. And now, with your consent, I will go. I shall pray for you, always.'

The king was not happy with this at all, but he kissed Guy many times and then went home. All his people came out of the city to greet him, and they all asked him who the pilgrim was. But the king wouldn't tell them anything. 'He has made me promise to say nothing,' said the king, 'and that is what I shall do. But when the year ends, then you shall know.'

Guy made his way onwards, often thanking God for all the favours that he had done to him during his many travels, in many lands, and he journeyed for so long that he came at last to the city where he was lord, but no one recognised him. He went up to the castle gate, but no one knew who he was. He positioned himself amongst the poor men, and looked helpless and pitiful.

Felice was in residence, and every day it was her custom to feed twelve or more of the poor men who were waiting outside, for the good of Guy's soul, so that God would look favourably upon him. She would offer them the same food and drink that she had for herself. It was noon, and the lady was eager to be at the table for her dinner. Her knights sat with her, and the poor men were fetched and seated in front of her. Guy was one of these twelve. He sat at the end, by himself. The countess looked at him and saw that he had a noble bearing and a confident manner – others noticed this as well – and the countess's thoughts turned to Guy, her good lord. She summoned a squire and said: 'Take some wine and some bread to that pilgrim over there and give him any sort of food that he wants, the best that is to his liking.'

The squire hurried off to do this. The countess invited the pilgrim to come every day, assuring him that he would not go short of wine and bread, and asked if he would come over to speak with her after the meal, and Guy replied, in a soft voice: 'Lady, since this is your desire, then I shall do so with great pleasure.'

When they had all finished eating and the boards and trestles had been cleared away, the pilgrim left and took his way out of the town. Not far from Warwick there lived a hermit, whom Guy had known for a long while. He occupied a house beside a river, at a place called Gibcliff, and had lived a holy life there. But the hermit was now dead and the place was deserted, and Guy decided that this was the place where he would end his days, serving God until the end of his life.

After the meal had finished, the countess said: 'Where is the pilgrim? Has he forgotten that he promised to speak with me?'

A knight replied: 'I'm sure I saw him leaving the town just a short while ago.'

Guy was quickly pursued, but he couldn't be found.

Guy now lives in the hermitage, spending his time as he wants. He knew a priest living nearby who was able to administer the Eucharist and hear his confession, and Guy admitted everything to him regarding his past life, and received absolution for it, and Guy led a holy life in this place, and forgot nothing that was owing to God.

Guy has now fallen ill, which will come to all of us when our time comes. One night, as he lay on his bed, listen to what happened: God's angel came to him and said:

'Guy. Guy! Are you asleep?'

'No,' Guy replied. 'Who are you?'

'I am Christ's messenger, Saint Michael,' the angel replied. 'I have come from my lord Jesus, who wishes to greet you through me. See that you make your final confession and make your soul clean, for you are going to die in eight days' time.'

With this, Guy came fully to his senses and saw the angel shining before him. 'God's friend, speak with me,' he said. 'Tell me, what will become of my son, and my wife?'

'They shall reside in Paradise,' replied the angel. 'Send for your wife quickly, and ask her to come to you. In forty days' time, Sir Guy, she will be with Our Lady.'

'As God wills,' said Guy, gently.

When the day of his death arrived, Guy called to his boy: 'Dear fellow, please will you go into Warwick for me. Take a message to the countess. Take this ring with you and greet her on my behalf, and say that the pilgrim she gave bread and wine to sends this ring in thanks. She will recognise it, be in no doubt. She will ask you many questions. You shall tell her that I am a hermit living in the forest and that I am about to die; you've seen this with your own eyes and although you can't stay for very long you must tell her that she should come to me quickly. Go now, and take Christ's blessing with you.'

The page set off towards Warwick. He soon arrived and found the countess in her hall, and he fell onto his knees before her and said: 'Lady, please listen to me. I carry a message from my lord the pilgrim, whom you gave bread and wine to in your hall. He wishes me to greet you on his behalf and to tell you that he is living now in the forest, surviving on herbs and roots and spending his life very wisely, replete with the grace of God. He gave me this ring to give to you.'

Felice quickly took the ring from him. 'Alas! Dear lord, mercy!' she cried. 'This was my lord's ring! It is Sir Guy's!' and she fell in a faint, her heart trembling. When she recovered: 'I recognise this token very well,' she said. 'For my love, hide nothing from me. I

will give you a great deal of treasure, I promise you, if you will tell me the truth.'

'He's living in the forest,' replied the page mildly, 'amongst the wild beasts, and he asks, for your love, that you arrange for his body to be buried properly, for he is lying there close to death, and also that you keep his identity hidden. This is what he asked me to tell you. And you yourself don't have long to live either; he has sent me here to tell you this, and to say that you can look forward to the greatest of joys in that bliss that lasts forever.'

At first, Felice was overcome with grief, but then her sorrow turned to joy as she knew that she would see Guy again. But then it swung once more, knowing that she would soon be looking at his dead body. Her heart felt heavier than lead. She mounted a riding pony and sped off, with many a knight, squire and page, and came shortly to the hermitage. There she dismounted, along with many other knights, earls, barons and abbots, bishops and archbishops as well. The countess hurried over in great haste, and when she saw her lord lying there, she let out a gentle, high-pitched scream. At the sound of this, Guy opened his eyes, looked up and called her name, and held up both his hands before that lady, as though asking for her mercy, for being the cause of so much of her suffering. They lay with their heads against each other, and gently kissed one another. Guy didn't say a single word, and then he died.

When his soul had departed, Saint Michael caught it up: it was in the form of a white dove and Saint Michael carried it up to God in heaven, where there was great joy and merry song, and the sound of: '*Gloria in excelsis deo!*'

That lovely lady, Felice the beautiful, remained in that chapel and often kissed Guy's mouth and face. 'These are the hands,' she said, 'that broke the ring in two.' The blood ran from her fingers, so great was her sorrow and anguish.

God paid great respect to Guy's body as it lay in that place. A sweet smell issued from him, as though all the spices and every sweet thing that exists in the world were together in that room, balancing one another beautifully. Such was the smell that came from Guy's body that the sick and infirm were healed by this aroma, and it remained in the air until the body was buried.

The intention was to take the body to Warwick, but no one was able to move it. Thirty knights were commissioned with the task but they found themselves unable to do it, for it was God's will that it remain. So they left the body where it was.

'Guy sent a messenger to me to say that he wanted me to bury him here,' Felice informed them, so they ordered that a stone sarcophagus be made to contain Guy's body and bones. Alms were distributed to young and old and thirty Masses were sung, and these observances continue to this day.

When the body was laid to rest, everybody quickly departed except for Felice. She spent her days there and wouldn't leave, she refused to go anywhere else or to do anything but serve God in that chapel, and she lived like this for forty days, and then she died and

was buried beside good Sir Guy. In one grave they lie together, may God shield their souls from harm. All who hear this story, may they receive God's grace and the blessing of eternal bliss.

Now, everybody, you have heard about Guy of Warwick, who was a magnificent warrior, and also of fair Felice, his wife, whom he loved above all other women. As I have related it, so their lives came to an end. Jesus Christ, the all-powerful, who is God and king – you the generous father, son and Holy Ghost, a Trinity, three people united into one – we beseech you, please grant us the assurance of bliss that Guy of Warwick received. And to mild Mary we pray that she will help every sinful man to earn God's forgiveness for all the sins that we fall prey to each and every day, and that our souls shall go to Christ when we depart from this world.

Now, everybody, listen to what happened afterwards.

Tirry of Gormaz was very upset when he heard that Guy had died, he wouldn't eat or drink a thing, and couldn't get any relief from his sorrow, so he went to the sea, as I understand it, made landfall at London and not long afterwards had an audience with King Athelstan. He explained to the king how he and Sir Guy had been good friends, how each had helped the other and how, because of this, they had sworn brotherhood together and pledged to come to each other's aid, and he asked very courteously if he could have Guy's remains, and the king granted his request. So Tirry took up Guy's body and with great worship he brought Sir Guy to the duchy of Lorraine and honoured him there with a new abbey, the finest to be built in that country, for the welfare of Guy's soul and for that of his wife, whom he had loved as much as his own life. In this way Tirry fulfilled his obligations as a true friend and brother. The abbey still stands, and prayers are said for good Sir Guy to this very day.



I must make an ending of this story of Sir Guy of Warwick; may I commend him to Christ and his mother Mary, and may we all be brought at last into heavenly bliss. But listen now and I shall tell you what I have found written on parchment about Sir Hereward, who still lies in prison in Africa, remember.

Hereward looks dreadful. He eats little and drinks even less, he worries constantly about the welfare of his lord's son, Raynbrun, and has much to complain about. He's convinced that he will die in this cell, there's no escape, and the injustice of it nags away at him as he remembers his wealth and his upbringing, his achievements and his valour.

The jailor heard all of Sir Hereward's complaints, voiced to his empty cell, and when he understood what he was revealing about himself, his strength and his courage, he went

to see the emir. 'Sir,' he said, 'do you have any idea who you are holding in your prison? He seems to have been a very brave and successful warrior, to judge by what he is saying as he rants and raves to himself.'

'I'll find out who he is,' replied the emir. 'Bring him to me. I have great need of good fighting men, if I can trust him.'

The jailor returned to the prison and brought Hereward out. He looked very weak and malnourished, and his beard was white and overgrown through neglect. No one would have recognised him, neither by looks nor by demeanour, not even his own mother! As he found himself being led towards the emir, he feared that his last moments had arrived.

The emir addressed Hereward and asked him who he was, where he came from and if he had the courage to fight in battle again, as seemed probable from all the things that his incessant ranting in his cell had led his jailor to understand. If he was trustworthy and could be relied upon, he would release him from prison and give him arms, so that he could fight in the emir's army and help to maintain his wars.

'Sir, I shall tell you the truth,' replied Hereward. 'My name is Hereward of Arduin, I am an English knight and at the moment I could manage neither strength nor endurance, but if my strength, that your prison has so cruelly sapped from me, was able to return, and if you found me some good armour, you could rightly put your trust in me, by he who was born of Mary!'

'You shall have the best armour that I can find, and anything else that you need!' exclaimed the emir at once. 'But since you were born in England, tell me, upon your oath, do you know anything of Guy of Warwick, whom I have heard praised so highly?'

'By God, I knew him well. I was his knight, and I remain so.'

'I wish Guy was standing there beside you,' replied the emir. 'He would be a great help to me, I can tell you. You well know that the arrogant King Argus is making war against me and that, out of all my great realm, he has left me only this city in which we stand. A newly knighted young man has taken it upon himself to burn and destroy all my lands and has very quickly caused me a great deal of trouble and harm. If you could do anything to stop him, or better still, if you can kill him for me, by Mohammed and Termagaunt, I'll reward you with great honour and privileges.'

'Sir, I shall do this if I can. May Jesus, Mary's son, let my strength return to me!'

The emir called his chamberlain, who was a knight and a noble fellow, and instructed him to give Hereward some fine clothes and to fetch some bright and shining armour for him.

Shortly afterwards, a messenger arrived with bad news. Another of the emir's castles had fallen and many of its defenders had been killed. 'No one has managed to escape,' the messenger said. The emir was very upset when he heard this and immediately com-

manded his constable and all his men to arm themselves at once. Hereward mounted a good horse, grasped a spear with a very sharp point and made his way out of the city, across the countryside, and came within a short while to where the enemy had last been seen besieging the castle.

Before them were shining helmets and horses in close formation bearing knights clad in iron, waiting for the command to repel this sudden appearance of the emir's army. The battle started at once: fierce blows were exchanged. Hereward hit a Saracen and the man fell dead from his horse, then he killed another, and then another. He used all his strength and showed no mercy. Soon the field was strewn with dead, and Hereward received the praise of all his new comrades. The enemy was sure that the devil had sent a fiend to fight against them!

King Argus's steward struck Hereward so forcefully with his sword that it cut right through Hereward's shield. They angrily exchanged sword blows, and then the steward broke off to engage other knights. Hereward lost many of his men, but he rallied all those who remained and they were able to overcome the steward at last and would have taken him prisoner, but he managed to evade capture. He flew quickly from the battlefield, strongly pursued by Hereward. The steward galloped away with blood flowing down his side, but Hereward was on a fast horse: he came alongside and struck the steward on the head. They exchanged some fierce strokes of the sword but Hereward got the upper hand and managed to capture his adversary at last.

Hereward rode back towards his companions, leading five prisoners along with him. They had captured all that they could handle, so they decided to return to the city, where a knight went directly to the emir and told him how marvellously Hereward had fought: 'There has never been so good a warrior in battle,' he said. 'He has captured King Argus's steward and we have gained a glorious victory!'

Hereward arrived soon afterwards, dismounted in front of the emir and quickly gave the steward over to him. The emir received his prisoner graciously. 'Hereward,' he said. 'My dear friend, I shall give you power over all this country. I shall make you my steward. I'm not joking. This is what I'm going to do.'

All those in the city, and those in the countryside around, found themselves in great awe of Hereward and didn't know whether to love him or fear him. But Hereward didn't stay for very long in the city, he soon rode off through the land to relieve the castles and cities that had been captured, and every one of them was retaken. And when King Argus heard what was going on, how a great many of his men had been killed and his steward taken prisoner, he was angry and insisted upon knowing how this could have happened.

'I shall tell you at once,' said a knight. 'The emir has enlisted the services of a mighty warrior, an old, grey-haired knight and a very bold one. There is no knight in all this land who can survive a stroke of his sword, however splendid his armour.'

The king was astonished; and very aggrieved. He immediately commanded that a hun-

dred thousand knights be assembled: 'The emir's time is up!' he declared. 'I shall have his head very shortly! I will not leave his lands until I have killed him, and hanged that old knight of his as well.'

An army was assembled and the king rode with it into the emir's lands, destroying castles and cities along the way. Those which Hereward had recently won back were lost once again. The emir called his own fighting men together. Hereward, who was the finest of all the emir's knights, was not slow to respond. Archers were given the equipment that they needed; they were organised, made ready and led forwards into the attack. Soon arrows were tearing through flesh and bone and the invading forces were in disarray. The emir's knights galloped over the field of battle and the army of King Argus found itself in great peril. Many of his finest men were killed. The king was incandescent with rage.

But the emir, also, had lost many of his knights. The battle was turning against him.

Now the emir has been toppled from his horse! His knights are being cut to pieces. They are in full retreat. But they manage to turn and regroup. They attack the king in open space and the king defends himself valiantly; all those who are struck by him fall to the ground.

Hereward rode at the front of his knights and, seeing the damage that King Argus was inflicting, tried to isolate him from his men and deliver hard blows of his own. But the king's steward was alert to this and came riding into the attack. Hereward defeated him and captured a fine horse, and rode back with it, to give to the emir.

King Argus was livid. His men were being driven onto soft ground and this convinced him that the battle was being lost and he decided to retreat. He galloped quickly away. Hereward saw this and sped off in pursuit, not sparing his horse at all. He would have captured the king or even killed him, had it not been for a young knight, a very noble-looking young man; he had seen the king fleeing with Hereward in pursuit and decided to ride to the king's rescue.

'You, old man!' he shouted. 'Are you as senile as you look? Do you think we're going to let you attack our king? You shall pay for all the harm that you have done. That fine horse that you're riding, I think I'll have it for myself.'

He aimed a blow at Hereward and followed it with many others, very good ones, with a sharp sword, and in the ensuing exchange they both fell from their horses. The blows continued, great sword strokes on helmets, great swings and impacts upon neck mail and gold ornaments, each trying to deliver a death blow to the other. Hereward suddenly drew away, not wanting to continue the fight: 'Knight, be sensible, yield to me before I do you any more harm,' he cried. 'You seem to be very young. It would be a great pity if I killed you. You look to be noble and good, so tell me – and may God almighty grant you salvation, but – where were you born?'

'So help me God, I'm not going to tell you that!' shouted the young man. 'You are old and grey, your powers are on the wane and it would bring me little credit, I admit, to

kill you here. So tell me first who you are, and where you come from, and wherever it is, you can go straight back there when I've finished with you!

'I'll tell you,' replied Hereward. 'The men of my country are such that when they are getting on in years they become stronger and more courageous, and before I go, you'll find me young enough!'

They resumed fighting and neither was in any way afraid of the other. They struck each other so forcefully that the sound reverberated down the valleys. The blood that came from their wounds was clearly visible from all directions.

'Sir knight,' cried Hereward at last. 'Wait a while. Put your sword down for a moment and tell me who you are. I've been in many good fights and taken many knights in battle, and if you knew how successful I have been and how well praised for my prowess, you would think it no disgrace to stop for a moment and tell me your name. So I ask you, sir knight, for the love of God, what is your name? Tell me who you are!'

The young man looked sternly at Hereward and took a step backwards. 'Knight, you seem very able and sure, valiant and skilful at arms. No amount of force will compel me to tell you who I am, but since you ask me as a favour and on equal terms, I will tell you. I was born in England, in Warwick, and my father was Sir Guy, one of the finest knights who has ever lived. When he went overseas, a knight whom he held in very high regard was chosen to be my foster father. His name is Hereward of Arduin; he taught me the arts of war and loved me very much.'

When Hereward knew that he was speaking to Raynbrun, he threw his sword down onto the ground, along with his shield, and held up his hands towards heaven.

'Lord, maker of the universe,' he cried, 'all praise be to you!' and he wept for joy and fell to the ground in a faint. Raynbrun took him into his arms, and when Hereward was back on his feet: 'Sir knight, mercy,' cried Raynbrun. 'Who are you?'

'You knew me very well once!' replied Hereward. 'You knew me in my principal city of Wallingford!'

When Raynbrun heard this, his heart shook until he thought that it would break inside him. He fell at Hereward's feet and cried: 'Hereward! Alas, have mercy on me!'

With a mixture of pity and joy they both fell to the ground, exhausted and lightheaded from their wounds, and afterwards they mounted their horses and made their way together towards the city. Raynbrun was very respectful to the emir and seemed genuinely pleased for Hereward's sake that the king had been defeated and his men killed and captured. They asked for permission to travel together to their own country, and although the emir tried to persuade them to remain with him, he could see how much they wanted to leave for England, and very graciously offered them gold and silver to take with them. They found a ship ready to sail, and departed that same evening on the first leg of their journey.

After a long voyage they made landfall, disembarked and spent the whole day looking for a town or a castle to spend the night in, but to no avail; until late in the evening they came upon a castle which was damaged and burnt and looked as though it had been ravaged by war. Hereward shouted to the porter: 'Speak with me, for Saint Richard! Who is the lord of this country? We ask only for food and shelter. In the morning the two of us will be on our way again.'

'I cannot say what has become of my lord,' replied the porter. 'But my lady is in the hall. She is very upset. She's grieving, and does so night and day. But I will go to her at once and tell her that you are here.'

The porter went into the hall and fell onto his knees before his lady. 'Madam,' he said, 'two fine-looking knights are outside, the one is young and the other old. They have come to ask you if they can rest here for the night, and they hope to depart early tomorrow morning as I understand it. They seem to have come in peace; they are very courteous, and by their clothing I would say that they are foreigners.'

The lady commanded that they be allowed entry.

The porter returned to the gate and quickly let Raynbrun and Hereward in. They dismounted at the hall door; sergeants at once approached, helped them to remove their armour, took their lances and their shields from them and put them safely away, then the lady greeted them very courteously and helped them to remove the rest of their armour. She invited them to the table where a meal was being laid out and set them to their supper. They were served attentively, and when they had had enough to quench their thirst and had eaten as much as they wanted, Hereward asked the lady her husband's name and who he was.

'Amis of the Mountain,' she replied. 'But the Emperor of Germany had a steward who was a criminal and because we were very fond of Sir Guy of Warwick, whom my lord received into his castle after the death of that treacherous Duke Otoun, we were forced to fly from that land and arrived in this country, which is full of elves. It is ruled by an elfish knight who has brought us a great deal of sorrow.'

'My lord fought with this elfish knight and gave him many harsh blows with his sword, for he has brought grief to many men, to yeomen, servants, squires and pages, and he received many blows in return, but my lord's armour is strong and this elfish knight chased my lord for half a day, all around the forest. And he has a curious device concealed in this woodland, a strange entrance, and anyone going into this entrance, unless he has God's express grace, will never be seen again. It has obviously been my lord's downfall, for I haven't heard anything of him since that day and I believe that I never shall.'

'Amis of the Mountain?' asked Hereward. 'Lord! He was my friend. We were companions. I would love to see him again. Ah, my dear son Raynbrun, how Amis loved your father Guy. They loved each other well, for they were often caught up together in some business or other. We must help him if we can, for it sounds as though he has great need

of it.’

‘With God’s grace, I shall go into that forest at once,’ replied Raynbrun. ‘And I shall never give up, madam, until I have found your husband.’

‘For Mary’s sake, don’t be so foolhardy,’ said the lady. ‘If you go inside that strange contraption, you’ll never be seen again.’

Their beds were prepared with every care, and they lay and slept all night. Early the next morning, they arose and made ready to depart. When Raynbrun was armed and ready to go, he mounted his good horse and rode out of the castle.

‘Hereward, you stay here and look after the lady,’ he called. ‘I shall do what I have pledged to do and rescue her lord from this strange place, through the might of Jesus Christ.’

Sir Hereward was eager to go with him, but Raynbrun was adamant that he should stay in the castle with the lady. Hereward feared greatly for the young man’s safety and as Raynbrun departed, he implored Christ to keep him safe.

Raynbrun made his way into the forest. He urged his horse in the right direction, for he had been given clear directions and knew what to look for, but he rode for a long while, until the sun was high in the sky, and then suddenly, he saw a hill with gates leading into it. He blessed himself with his right hand and rode into the hill.

The gates closed behind him. It was dark and he could see nothing. Raynbrun rode for about half a mile in complete darkness, and then he saw a light. He could see this light clearly and it cheered him immensely. Soon he was greeted by an expanse of water; it looked to be deep and broad and he rode quickly towards it. Beyond this water he could see a beautiful garden, with a lawn that was so wide and well-cared for that no king or queen can ever have possessed one like it, he thought. All sorts of flowers were growing there, everything that has virtue and is good to grow, and every sort of spice as well, and within this garden stood a palace. The posts and uprights of this palace were made of crystal, the spars were of cypress wood fastened together with metal ties and bolts and the walls were made with crystals of sapphire and emerald. Stones of fine coral and marble were carved everywhere into the shapes of flowers, and before the gates of the palace stood a tree, and in its branches were birds, singing all the time. More than this I cannot describe, for if I told you everything there is to tell about this wonderful hall it would take me far too long.

Raynbrun tried to figure out how he could possibly get across the water. He dipped his spear into its depths to see if his horse might be able to carry him across, but couldn’t find the bottom. He was uncertain what to do. But then he told himself that he hadn’t come this far only to turn back now. He wasn’t going to pass up the opportunity of finding out what that joy and that light was either, so he blessed himself once more with his right hand and then urged his horse forwards.

The water closed about him, from his feet up to his chin, and he fell deep into it, thirty feet or more, before rising again. He cried mercy to God! But his horse was good, it was intelligent and agile and it quickly launched itself towards the surface with great strength and managed soon to get a foothold on the opposite bank.

Raynbrun made his way to the palace and dismounted in front of the hall. Then he entered. There was no one to be seen. He went from chamber to chamber and came across much that was truly marvellous, and in one stone chamber he found a knight who was all by himself. He greeted him courteously and asked what he was doing there:

‘Sir knight,’ said Raynbrun, ‘in the name of Saint Martin, is this fine palace yours? Or is someone else in charge here? Whoever is, I’d like to make his acquaintance. Is he nearby? My dear friend, can you tell me your name and explain to me why you’re alone in this bare cell?’

‘My name is Amis,’ came the reply. ‘I own nothing of this, and that is the truth. But the lord here is an evil and ruthless man. He is from the land of elves. All that you see here is his, this palace and the wide forest outside, he owns it all; and the palace is of such a nature that a man could live here forever and never get any older, but remain the same age as he was when he arrived. I was brought here through treachery. I am in prison here.’

‘Sir Amis!’ exclaimed Raynbrun. ‘You’re the one I’m looking for! I’ve been searching for you all through the forest. I shall take you back to your faithful wife. She is very worried about you.’

‘Are you mad!’ replied Amis. ‘I’m amazed that you’ve managed to get this far! No man has ever made his way into this hill unless the lord here has brought him, and you have arrived without his permission. How do you propose to get us out of here? If the lord of this place was a thousand miles away, he’d know at once what we were doing and be here in an instant.’

‘Have no fear of that,’ replied Raynbrun. ‘We’ll be alright, I promise. Take courage and come with me. By God of heaven and Saint Mary, if any man is so bold as to hold us here against our will, I’ll give him some blows with my trusty sword.’

‘Stop all this! You don’t have the strength in your arm. But take that sword that is hanging on this pillar beside me; if you can deliver him his death wound with anything at all, it will be with that sword.’

Raynbrun drew the shining sword out of its scabbard and the room immediately filled with a bright light. He pushed the sword back into its scabbard. Then with great confidence he happily lifted Amis onto his feet and they both mounted Raynbrun’s horse and galloped away.

As they were riding hard, a knight approached them with a spear in his hand. ‘Sir knight,’ he said, ‘wait a moment. I think you are breaking the law. How were you so brave and foolhardy that you were able to cross the water and come into my palace, break into my

prison and release my prisoner? No man has ever done this before. No one comes here without my permission. You will both remain with me and you will never be released, I can tell you this for a fact.'

Amis made to protect himself, but Raynbrun rode in front of the elfish knight's horse leaving himself open to a stroke from the knight's sword, but managed to return a blow with interest. Then a great fight began. The elfish knight cut through Raynbrun's shield, through his coat of chainmail and quickly did similar damage to his steel helmet. Raynbrun's thoughts turned to his father, the noble Sir Guy, and he swung his sword with such effort that he dented the helmet of his adversary so badly that the steel caved in by a foot or more and the elfish knight fell to the ground. Raynbrun snatched the sword from the knight's hand and would have cut off his head, but the elfish knight cried:

'Sir Raynbrun! For God's mercy! I know well that you are the son of Sir Guy of Warwick, that noble knight. Don't kill me. I'll give you all my lands and release all those who are in my prison, everything that I possess, and I'll bring you out of this hill, safe and sound, I promise.'



'By Saint Michael!' exclaimed Raynbrun. 'I have no desire for your treasure, but I require you to release all of your prisoners.'

'At once,' replied the elfish knight. He went into the palace and delivered them all, young and old, without need of a penny, or even a farthing. He brought them all out of the wood and onto a plain, and then he disappeared.

Raynbrun was delighted to have released Sir Amis. Quickly, they rode back to the castle. When they arrived at the hall, everyone was very happy. The lady was overjoyed and thanked God many times that her husband was back with her, alive and well, for she had firmly believed that she would never see him again. Hereward thanked God almighty as well, that Raynbrun had come away from the place unscathed, through God's grace, and also that Amis was now reunited with his wife.

Hereward told Amis about his long incarceration in prison in Africa, and how he had spent many hard years before that looking for Guy's son Raynbrun, and how he had found him at last, and how it had been Raynbrun who had rescued him from the hill; and then he told him that Guy had gone into voluntary exile, and it had been a long while since anyone had known where he might be found. There was much good humour and friendship between them.

Not long after this, a knight arrived bearing good news: Duke Barrard had been defeated by a pilgrim who had taken it upon himself to defend Earl Tirry, and the pilgrim had managed to kill Barrard in single combat. No one knew who this pilgrim was, nor where

he came from, or anything about him at all, really. The emperor had subsequently asked many people if they knew where Amis was. 'If he can be found, he can have all his lands back,' the knight said.

When Amis heard that Duke Barrard was dead, he had never been so pleased in all his life. Everybody was delighted when they heard this news.

Hereward and Raynbrun stayed for three days, and early on the fourth day, they said their goodbyes and departed. Earl Amis did as well, for he was intent upon going home to his own lands. He did his best to persuade the others to come back with him to his own country, but they respectfully declined. So after friendly goodbyes, Amis made his way to Germany and to the emperor, where he was received with great honour and had all his lands returned to him. Hereward and Raynbrun made their way towards England. They had been a long time away and were happy to be returning home at last.

Soon they arrived in Burgundy, where Hereward was well known. All the land they could see was wasted and destroyed. Hereward met an ordinary man and asked him why everybody seemed to be full of fear, and the countryside in disarray.

'It's because of the arrogant Duke Mylon,' the man told them. 'He's a criminal. He's caused all the land around here to be set on fire and laid waste, and now he's holed up in the only remaining castle, high up on a rock nearby, with all his cronies. But all is not lost. There's a young foreign knight who's fighting on the side of the earl and has retaken most of the castles that were lost; he's a fine warrior and very young – not yet with a beard. He's been with the earl for a year now and he's had some notable victories. He's defeated the duke on three occasions and killed his men. All the castles that the earl had lost to the duke a while ago have mostly been recaptured now, and he pretty much controls the entire district again.'

'But the young warrior lives over there, on that hill, and many is the man who has come to regret going that way lately! A hundred men have been killed for daring to argue with him! The castle overlooks a pass, and whoever wishes to travel along it must offer a coat of chainmail or a shield in payment, if he wants to keep his life. So my advice to you is that you avoid that route and find another way to go.'

'If that brigand asks for anything at all from us, I'll tell him where to go in no uncertain terms,' cried Raynbrun.

So Hereward and Raynbrun continued on their way until they came to a hill and saw a knight there. He was fully armed. 'By my hand!' exclaimed Raynbrun. 'There he is! I'm longing to have a joust with him.'

'Off you go, then, and good luck,' encouraged Hereward.

Raynbrun keenly rode off and the other knight responded by advancing towards him. Their hearts swelled with pride and each declined to say a word to the other but galloped together with their lances levelled, and it was not long before they were both unhorsed.

They stood up, drew their swords and began to lay into each other with both hands.

Raynbrun suddenly stopped fighting: 'Sir knight, wait a little,' he said. 'Listen to me. Never before have I come across anyone who can withstand me like you can, nor match me blow for blow like this. Tell me, where were you born, in which country? What is your name? I propose, in the friendliest terms, that you yield to me right now and I promise that we will become firm friends if you do.'

'May God help me but you're wasting your breath,' replied the young knight. 'I'll not tell you anything, not for a favour nor for a sermon. I'll bring you to your death, that's what I'll do, and I'll kill that old fellow over there as well. I imagine he's your father, but he's proved how little he loves you when he sends you to fight against me. I'll send him back a gift that will please him. I'll give him your head. Then I'll shake his beard so hard that his neck breaks!'

When Raynbrun understood that there was no point in offering this young man the hand of friendship, he raised his sword as high as he could and brought it down heavily upon the young knight's head. A quarter of his helmet broke away and the knight was so stunned that he fell to the ground onto his hands and knees; but he got up again very swiftly and struck Raynbrun with great anger. They fought together with such venom that never before has there been such a brutal fight. It won't be very long before one of them is killed, that's for sure. Hereward knew this. 'It will be a very sad moment when this happens,' he thought.

So he stepped between them. 'Sir knight, for God's mercy!' cried Hereward to the unknown knight, 'put up your sword for a moment. Why don't you abandon this fighting and come to terms with this knight? He is wealthy and powerful, with lands and estates, and he'll give you a good share of it all, I'm sure, if you yield to him now.'

'Who are you, old man?' replied the young knight, defiantly, but then questioningly. 'So help me God and Saint Mary, just tell me who you are. What is your name? Tell me, because I'm shaking like a leaf on a tree. All my strength has gone. I haven't been frightened of anybody before, not since I first took up arms, so in the name of God, I command you, tell me why I feel like this! Are you the devil come to fetch my soul to hell? Or is there something else, good or bad? Tell me!'

'I'm not going to tell you who I am,' said Hereward. 'Not until you've told me who you are.'

'I'll not tell you through any fear of him,' said the knight, looking at Raynbrun, 'but only because I want to. I want to tell you. I was born in England, in Wallingford. My father's name is Hereward of Arduin and when he left England to search for his lord's son, the Earl of Leicester looked after me for seven years. He cared for me and loved me as his own, but when I was a young squire, if I ever did anything wrong or someone was angry with me, I would be rebuked for not going off to find my father, to learn if he has been killed or is languishing in prison somewhere, I always had to endure this, so one

day I made up my mind to do just that.

‘I rode to Wallingford and found my father’s armour and his horse, his shield, his sword and all his other equipment, and I went off on my own, without telling anyone, and I’ve been looking for him ever since. I’ve ridden to far countries and into foreign lands: into Lombardy and Spain, Germany and Saxony, and when I came at last to this land I found an earl waging war on his enemy. I found him taking refuge in a castle beside the sea with all his men, so I offered him my help. At that time he had only thirty knights with him. Now he has three hundred and his land is restored to him. But I often stand on this hill, barring the way to those who want to travel, so that I can ask everyone who wants to use the pass if they have any news of my father. But I’ve never found anyone who can tell me where he is. This often makes me angry and I’ve done some dreadful things.’

Hereward listened to all this, and tears ran down his cheeks. ‘Dear, sir knight,’ he said, ‘for God’s sake, tell me your name.’

‘It is Aslake.’

Hereward’s heart was near to breaking. He found it hard to utter a word. ‘Aslake, I am your father. You are my son. I am Hereward. Look, here is Raynbrun, the son of my lord Sir Guy of Warwick. You have been fighting with him! Both of you seem invincible, but fall down at his feet now, quickly, and while you are on your knees, yield up your sword and ask for his mercy.’

When Aslake knew that it was his father speaking to him, and that he had been fighting with Guy’s son Raynbrun just moments ago, he was overwhelmed with joy and fell to his knees. He yielded his sword to Raynbrun and asked him to do what was right under the circumstances.

‘Cut off my head, whatever you like,’ he said. ‘My crime has been egregious. Or else accept my homage and my promise that I will serve you as my lord.’

When Raynbrun knew that it was Hereward’s son kneeling there, he raised him up by the hand and kissed him, and the tears trickled down his cheeks. Then Aslake kissed his father Hereward, and there was immense joy amongst the three of them.

Aslake led Hereward and Raynbrun to meet the earl whose lands they were in. The earl was delighted to meet Raynbrun and made a great fuss of him, and he offered him honours of all kinds, fair castles and wealthy towns, but he refused them all. His intention was to travel back to England. So the three of them journeyed without stopping until they came to the sea, where they quickly found a ship and crossed over the water to England.

They made their way directly to London. All the nobility, as well as the mayor and aldermen, came out to welcome them. The king was in residence and he conferred gifts and titles upon them, and returned their lands to them, and much more besides, and they accepted it all with joy and gratitude. They stayed in London for three days, and on the

fourth day they took their leave, said their farewells and travelled to Warwick. The men of that town renewed oaths of allegiance and all the nobility were happy beyond words to see the three of them alive and well, and thanked God for it.

Hereward then went with his son Aslake to Wallingford, to be reunited with his wife, and she welcomed back her husband, and her son who had been all over the world seeking fame and fortune in battle.

God, with your seven names, grant us heaven when we die; give us the grace that this may be so.

Amen, amen for charity.