

THE DEFENCE OF GUINEVERE(1) The Meeting of Launcelot and Guenevere.X *Newcastle*

It chanced upon a day that Launcelot came
 To dwell at Arthur's court: *at ----- the queen*

Christmas and whitened winter passed away,
 And over me the April sunshine came,
 Made very awful with black hail clouds, yea
 And in the Summer I grew white with flame,
 And bowed my head down; Autumn, and the sick
 Sure knowledge things would never be the same,

Do I not know now of a day in Spring?
 No minute of that wild day ever slips
 From out my memory; I hear thrushes sing,

And wheresoever I may be, straightway
 Thoughts of it all come up with most fresh sting;

I was half mad with beauty on that day,
 And went without my ladies all alone,
 In a quiet garden wall'd round every way,

----- In that garden fair

Came Launcelot walking; this is true, the kiss
 Wherewith we kissed in meeting that Spring day,
 I scarce dare talk of the remember'd bliss,

Part (1)

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When both our mouths went wandering in one way,
And aching sorely, met among the leaves;
Our hands being left behind strained far away.

Never within a yard of my bright sleeves
Had Launcelot come before; and now, so nigh!
After that day why is it Guenevere grieves?

X

(2) The Fight between Launcelot and Mellyagraunce

-----Did you see Mellyagraunce
 When Launcelot stood by him? what white fear
 Curdled his blood, and how his teeth did dance
 His side sink in? as my knight cried and said:

-----Rise you, sir, who are so fleet
 At catching ladies, half-arm'd will I fight,
 My left side all uncovered! then I weet,
 Up sprang Sir Mellyagraunce with great delight
 Upon his knave's face;-----

The fight began, and to me they drew nigh;
 Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,
 And traversed warily, and ever high

And fast leapt catiff's sword, until my knight
 Sudden threw up his sword to his left hand
 Caught it, and swung it; that was all the fight,

-----Mellyagraunce was shent,
 For Mellyagraunce had fought against the Lord;

(3) The Love ~~and Accusation~~ of Launcelot and Guenevere

Oh true as steel come now and talk with me,
I love to see your step upon the ground
-----good friend so dear
To me in everything come here to-night
Or else the hours will pass most dull and drear;

If you come not, I fear this time I might
Get thinking overmuch of times gone by
When I was young, and green hope was in sight,

For no man cares now to know why I sigh;
And no man comes to sing me pleasant songs
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers that lie

So thick in the gardens; therefore one so long
To see you, Launcelot; that we may be
Like children once again, free from all wrongs

Just for one night. Did he not come to me?
What thing could keep true Launcelot away
If I said, Come? There was one less than three

In my quiet room that night, and we were gay;
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and sick,
Because a bawling broke our dream up, yea

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I looked at Launcelot's face and could not speak,
 For he looked helpless too, for a little while;
 Then I remember how I tried to shriek
 And could not, but fell down; from tile to tile
 The stones they threw up rattled o'er my head
 And made me dizzy, till within a while
 My maids were all about me, and my head
 On Launcelot's breast was being soothed away
 From its white chattering, ~~until Launcelot said:~~
~~By God! I will not tell you more to-day,~~
~~Judge any way you will: what matters it?~~
 You know quite well the story of that fray,
 How Launcelot still'd their bawling, the mad fit
 That caught Gauwaine: all, all, verily,
 But just that which would save me; these things flit.

4 w/1+
2 X
 All I have said is truth, by Christ's dear tears.

-----HHHHHHHHHH-----

X Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
 Whatever may have happen'd these long years,
 God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie!

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Love one another, but make not a bond of love;
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup:
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous,
but let each one of you be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone
though they quiver with the same music.
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping,
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together, yet not too near together;
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,
and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,
and let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another, but make not a bond of love.

Kahlil Gibran.

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