

# Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

*Anonymous, late 14th century  
Adapted from the Middle English by Rob Bocchino*

## Part I

1

**Sithen** the siege and the assault was ceased at Troy,  
The **burg brittened** and **brent to brands** and ashes,  
The **tulk** that the **tramms** of treason there wrought  
Was tried for his treachery, the **truest** on earth.<sup>1</sup>  
**Hit** was Aeneas the **athel** and his **high kind**  
That **sithen depressed provinces** and **patrons** became  
Wellnigh of all the wealth in the West Isles.  
**Fro rich** Romulus to Rome **reaches** him **swythe**:  
With great **bobbaunce** that **burg** he **biggs upon** first  
And **nevens** it his own name, as it now has.  
Tirius **to** Tuscany and **telds** begins;  
Langobard in Lombardy lifts up homes;  
And far over the French **flod** Felix Brutus:  
On many **banks** full broad Britain he **sets**  
    with **wynne**,  
    Where war and **wrake** and wonder  
    **By sythes** have **wont** therein,  
    And oft both **bliss** and **blunder**  
    Full **skete** have **skyfted sin**.

after  
city | shattered | burnt | firebrands  
warrior | contrivances  
most faithful  
it | prince | noble | kindred  
afterwards | conquered | states | lords

now | mighty | marches | in force  
splendor | city | establishes | at the  
gives  
goes to | dwellings

channel  
hillsides | founds  
toil  
vengeance  
at | times | occurred  
prosperity | strife  
quickly | followed each other | since

2

And when this Britain was **bigged** by this **burn rich**,  
**Bolde bredden** therein, **baret** that loved,  
In many a **turned** time **tene** that wrought.  
More **ferlies** on this **fold** have **fallen** here oft  
Than in any other that I **wot**, since that **ilk** time.  
But of all that here **bult**, of Britain's kings,  
**Ay** was Arthur the **hendest**, as I have heard tell.  
**Forthi** an **aunter** in **erde** I **attle** to show,  
That a **selly** in sight some men it **hold**,  
And an **outrage** adventure of Arthur's wonders.  
If ye will **listen** this lay but on a little while,

established | man | mighty  
noble warriors | arose | strife  
ruinous | injury  
marvels | people | occurred  
know | same  
dwelt  
always | noblest  
therefore | episode | character | aim  
wonder | consider  
marvelous  
listen to

<sup>1</sup> Aeneas is the traitor. Perhaps he was "truest on earth" because he was a traitor to Troy, and so faithful to some higher justice.

I shall tell it **as-tit**, as I in town heard,  
 with **tong**,  
 As it is **stad** and **stoken**  
 In story **stiff** and strong,  
 With **lel** letters **loken**:  
 In **londe** so has been **long**.

as quickly as possible  
 tongue  
 told | gone  
 bold  
 faithful | preserved  
 our land | such | a long tradition

3

This king lay at Camelot upon Christmas  
 With many **lovely** lords, ladies of the best,  
**Rekenly** of the Round Table all those rich brethren,  
 With rich royal **orygt** and reckless mirths.  
 There tourneyed **tulks** by times full many:  
 Jousted full jollily these gentle knights,  
**Sithen** came to the court carols to make.  
 For there the **fest** was **ilyche** full fifteen days,  
 With all the meat and the mirth that men could devise,  
 Such **glaum** and **glee** glorious to hear,  
**Dear** din upon day, dancing on nights.  
 All was **hap upon high** in halls and chambers  
 With lords and ladies, as **leuest them thought**.  
 With all the **weal of** the world they **woned** there **samen**,  
 The most **kyd** knights **under** Christ himself,  
 And the loveliest ladies that ever life had,  
 And he the comeliest king that the court holds.  
 For all was this fair folk in her first age,  
**on sill**,  
 The **hapnest** under Heaven,  
 King highest man of **will**.  
 It were now great **nye** to **neven**  
 So hardy a **here** on hill.

excellent  
 courteous  
 celebration  
 warriors  
  
 and then  
 festival | held for  
  
 noise | merriment  
 noble  
 good fortune | in | the highest  
 most pleasant | to them | it seemed  
 joy | in | lived | together  
 famous | next to  
  
 at | the foundation  
 most fortunate  
 character  
 challenge | name  
 host

4

While New Year was so **yep** that it was new coming,  
 That day double on the dais was the **douth** served.  
**Fro** the king was coming with knights into the hall.  
 The **chauntre** of the chapel came to an end.  
 Loud cry was there **cast** of clerics and others.  
 “Noel!” **nayted** one, **nevened** full oft;  
 And singers **reached** forth running to rich **hansels**,  
 Gay **geres**-gifts on high, **yelded** them by hand.  
**Debated** busily **about** those gifts,  
 Ladies laughed full loud, though they had lost;  
 And he that won was not **wroth**, that may ye well **trow**.  
 All this mirth they made to the meat time.  
 When they had washed worthily they went to sit,

young  
 company  
 now  
 chanting  
 sounded  
 shouted | repeated  
 went | good-luck tokens  
 clothing | given  
 crowded | around  
  
 angry | trust

The best **burne ay** above, as it best seemed,  
 When Guenevere, full gay, **graythed** in the middle,  
**Dressed** on the **dear** dais, **dubbed** all about,  
**Small sendal besides**, a **silver** her over  
 Of **tried Tolouse**, and **Tars tapets** enough,  
 That were embroidered and beaten with the best gems  
 That might be proved of **price** with **pennies** to buy  
**in day**.

The comeliest to descry  
 There **glent** with **ygen** gray.  
 A **semloker** that ever he **sye**  
 Such might no man say.

5

But Arthur would not eat till all were served.  
 He was so **jolly of his joyfnes**, and somewhat **child-geared**:  
 His life liked him **light**; he loved the less  
 Either to long lie or to long sit,  
 So **busied** him his young blood and his brain wild.  
 And also another **manner** moved him **eke**,  
 That he through **nobelay** had **nomen**: he would never eat  
 Upon such a **dear** day ere **him** devised were  
 Of some adventurous thing an **uncouthe** tale,  
 Of some **main** marvel, that he might **trow**,  
 Of elders, of arms, or other adventures;  
**Other** some **segg** him **besought of** some **siker** knight  
 To join with him in jousting, in jeopardy to lay  
**Lede**, life for life, **leue echon** other,  
 As fortune would **fulsun** him, the **fairer** to have.  
 This was the king's **countenance** where he in court was,  
 At each **farand fest** among his **free many**  
**in hall**.

Therefore of face so **ferre**  
 He **stigtles stiff** in **stall**.  
 Full **yep** in that New Year  
 Much mirth he makes withal.

6

Thus there stood in the **stall** the **stiff** king himself,  
 Talking before the high table of **trifles** full **hende**.  
 There good Gawain was **graythed** Guenevere beside,  
 And Agravaing *a la dure main* on that other side sits,  
 Both the king's sister-sons and full **siker** knights.  
 Bishop Bawdewyn above **begins** the table,  
 And Yvain, Uryn's son, eats with himself.  
 These were **dight** on the dais and **dearworthly** served,

person | always  
 sat  
 set | noble | decorated  
 thin | fabric | alongside | silver cloth  
 refined | fabric | Tharsian tapestries

value | coins  
 of | the day

shone | eyes  
 more pleasing sight | saw

merry | in | youth | childlike  
 active

occupied  
 custom | besides  
 nobility | decreed  
 distinguished | for him  
 original  
 outstanding | trust

or | fellow | asked | for | hardy

his person | trusting | each  
 favor | advantage  
 custom  
 splendid | festival | noble | company  
 his hall  
 healthy  
 stands | fearless | court  
 lively

court | strong  
 stories | noble  
 seated  
 of | the | hard | hand  
 hardy  
 sits at the head of

arranged | excellently

And **sithen** many **siker segge** at the sideboards.  
 Then the first course comes with **cracking** of trumpets,  
 With many banners full bright that thereby hung.  
 New **nakryn noise**, with the noble pipes,  
 Wild **warbles** and **wight wakened lote**,  
 That many hearts full high **hef** at **her touches**.  
**Dainties drive** therewith, of full **dear** meats,  
**Fusion** of the fresh; and on so **fele** dishes  
 That **pine** to find the place the people before  
 For to set the silver that **sere** sauces **halden**  
 on cloth.

Each **lede** as he **loved** himself  
 There **laughed** without **lothe**.  
**Ay** two had dishes twelve,  
 Good beer and bright wine both.

afterwards | hardy | fellows  
 blaring  
  
 drums | sound  
 tunes | suddenly | occurring | sounds  
 lift up | their | hearing  
 delicacies | appear | excellent  
 abundance | many  
 they struggle  
 various | contain  
  
 person | wished for  
 rejoiced | reservation  
 each

7

Now will I of their service say you no more,  
 For each **wyge** may well **wit** no want that there were.  
 Another noise full new **neged bilive**,  
 That the **lude** might have leave **liflode** to **cach**.  
**For unethe** was the noise not a while ceased,  
 And the first course in the court **kindly** served,  
**There** haies in at the hall door an **aghlich master**,  
 One the **most** on the **molde on** measure high.  
 From the **swyre** to the **swange** so **sware** and so thick,  
 And his **lyndes** and his limbs so long and so great,  
 Half **ettin** in **erde** I **hope** that he **were**,  
 But **man** must I **algate mynn** him to **been**,  
 And that the **myriest** in his **muckel** that might ride:  
 For of back and of breast all were his body **sturne**,  
 Both his **wombe** and his waist were worthily small,  
 And all his features **folgande**, in form that he had,  
 full **clean**.

For wonder of his hue men **hade**,  
 Set in his **semblaunt** seen.  
 He **ferde** as **freke** were **fade**,  
 And overall **enker** green.

person | know  
 rang out | vigorously  
 company | food and drink | take  
 yet | hardly  
 duly  
 when there | awe-inspiring | person  
 greatest | earth | of  
 neck | torso | heavy  
 loins  
 giant | character | believe | was  
 human | in every way | think | have been  
 fairest | company  
 mighty  
 abdomen  
 similar  
 splendid  
 had  
 appearance  
 appeared | one that | fey  
 vivid

8

And all **graythed** in green this **gome** and his **wedes**:  
 A **strait** coat full straight, that **stek on** his sides,  
 A **meré mantle** above, **mensked** within  
 With **pelure pured** apart, the **pane** full **clean**  
 With **blythe blaunner** full bright, and his hood both,  
 That was **lagt** from his locks and laid on his shoulders;

arrayed | man | garments  
 tight | clung | to  
 splendid | cloak | adorned  
 fur | trimmed | fur lining | bright  
 shining | ermine  
 pulled back

**Heme well-haled hose** of that same,  
 That **spenet on** his **sparlyr**, and **clean** spurs under  
 Of bright gold, upon silk **bordes barred** full rich,  
 And **sholes under shanks** where the **schalk** rides;  
 And all his vesture overall was **clean verdure**,  
 Both the **bars** of his belt and other **blythe** stones  
 That were richly **railed** in his **array clean**  
 About himself and his saddle, upon silk **works**.  
**That** were too **tor** for to tell of **trifles** the half  
 That were embroidered above, with **bryddes** and **flyges**,  
 With gay **gaudi** of green, the gold **ay inmyddes**.  
 The pendants of his **payttrure**, the proud **crupper**,  
 His **molaynes**, and all the metal enmailed was then,  
 The stirrups that he stood on **stained** of the same  
 And his **arsounz** all after and his **athel** skirts,  
 That ever glimmered and **glent** all of green stones.  
 The **fole** that he **ferkkes** on **fine** of that **ilk**,  
     certain,  
     A green horse great and thick,  
     A steed full **stiff** to **strain**,  
     In **brawden** bridle quick:  
     To the **gome** he was **full gain**.

well-fitting | tightly pulled-up | stockings  
 clung | to | calves | shining  
 borders | ornamented  
 scales? | below | the legs | man  
 bright | green  
 ornamental bars | shining  
 arranged in lines | gear | bright  
 embroidery  
 it | difficult | decorations  
 birds | flying creatures  
 adornments | ever | in the middle  
 horse's breastplate | hind armor  
 bridle ornaments  
 colored  
 saddle bow | excellent  
 shone  
 horse | rides | superb | same kind

difficult | restrain  
 mailed  
 man | of highest | value

9

Well **gay** was this **gome geared** in green,  
 And the hair of his head of his horse **sweet**.  
 Fair **fannand fax umbefolds** his shoulders.  
 As much beard as a bush over his breast hangs,  
 That, with his **higlich** hair that **of** his head **reaches**,  
 Was **evesed** all **umbetorne** above his elbows,  
 That half his arms thereunder were **halched** in the **wise**  
 Of a king's **capados** that **closes** his **swyre**.  
 The mane of that **main** horse much to it like,  
 Well **creped** and combed, with knots full many  
 Folded in with **fildore** about the fair green,  
**Ay** a **herle** of the hair, another of gold.  
 The tail and his **topping** twins of a suit,  
 And **bounden** both with a band of a bright green,  
**Dubbed** with full **dear** stones, as the **dok** lasted,  
**Sithen thrawen** with a thong a **thwarle** knot **aloft**.  
 There many bells full bright of **brende** gold **rungen**.  
 Such a **fole** upon **folde**, nor **freke** that him rides,  
 Was never seen in that **sale** with sight ere that time,  
     with **yge**.  
     He looked as **layt** so light,  
     So said all that him **syge**.

richly | man | clad  
 beautiful  
 flowing | hair | envelops  
 hay-like | from | emanates  
 trimmed | about  
 covered | manner  
 cape | covers | neck  
 worthy  
 curled  
 gold threads  
 always | strand  
 top hair  
 bound  
 decorated | precious | hair  
 then | extended | intricate | above  
 refined | rang  
 horse | earth | warrior  
 hall  
 eye  
 lightning  
 saw

It seemed as no man might  
Under his **dinttez dryge**.

blows | survive

10

**Whether** had he no helm nor **hauberik** neither  
Nor no **pisan** nor no plate that **pented** to arms,  
Nor no **shaft** nor no shield to **shove** nor to smite,  
**But** in his one hand he had a holly bough,  
That is **greatest** in green when groves are bare,  
And an axe in his other, a huge and **unmete**,  
A **spetos sparthe** to **expound** in **spelle**, whoso might.  
The length of an **elngerde** the large head had,  
The **grain** all of green steel and of gold hewn,  
The **bit** burnished bright, with a broad edge  
As well shaped to shear as sharp razors.  
The **stele** of a **stiff** staff the **sturn** it **by** gripped,  
That was wound with **yarn** to the wand's end,  
And all **begraven** with green in gracious works.  
A **lace lapped** about, that **locked** at the head,  
And so after the **halme halched** full oft,  
With **tried** tassels thereto **tached** enough  
On **buttons** of the bright green braids full rich.  
This **hathel helds** him in and the hall enters.  
**Driving** to the **hedge** dais, **dut** he **no wothe**,  
Hailed he never one, but **hedge** he over looked.  
The first word that he **warp**, "Where is," he said,  
"The governor of this **ging**? Gladly I would  
See that **segg** in sight, and with himself speak  
**reason.**"  
To knights he cast his **yge**,  
And rolled them up and down.  
He **stemmed, and con studie**  
Who **walt** there most renown.

although | mail shirt  
neck covering | extended  
spear | charge  
yet  
most resplendent  
extravagant  
hard | weapon | describe | words  
ell-length girdle  
metal?  
blade  
  
stem | rigid | harsh blade | closely  
thread  
engraved  
cord | wrapped | was attached  
haft | looped  
separated | fastened  
knobs  
warrior | betakes  
proceeding | hall's | joy | never | wished  
the hall  
uttered  
company  
fellow  
words  
eyes  
  
stopped | did | study  
had

11

There was looking **on length** the **lude** to behold,  
For each man had marvel what it mean might  
That a **hathel** and a horse might such a hue **lach**,  
As **growe** green as the grass, and greener it seemed  
Than green **aumail**, on gold glowing brighter.<sup>2</sup>  
All studied that there stood, and **stalked** him near  
With all the wonder of the world what he **worch** should.  
For **fele sellies** had they seen, but **such** never **are**.  
**Forthi** for phantom and faerie the folk there it deemed.  
Therefore to answer were **arge** many **athel freke**,

at a | distance | visitor  
  
warrior | take on  
to grow  
enamel  
walked cautiously by  
do  
many | wonders | one like this | had  
therefore  
hesitant | brave | warriors

<sup>2</sup> That is, green enamel that glows brighter because it is set on gold.

And all **stouned** at his **steven** and stone-still sat  
 In a **swoghe** silence through the **sale rich**.  
 As all were **slipped upon** sleep, so **slacked** their **lots**  
**in high**.

I deem it not all for **doubt**,  
 But some for **courtasye**.  
 But let him that **all shield loute**  
**Cast** unto that **wigh**.

12

Then Arthur before the high dais that adventure beholds,  
 And **rekenly** him **reverenced**, for rash was he never,  
 And said, "**Wigh**, welcome **iwys** to this place.  
 The head of this **ostel**, Arthur, I **hat**.  
 Light **luffych adown** and long, I thee pray,  
 And whatso thy will is we shall **wit** after."  
 "Nay, as help me," quoth the **hathel**, "He that on high sits,  
 To **wone** any while in this **won**, it was not my **ernde**.  
 But **for** the **los** of thee, **lede**, is **lift** up so high  
 And thy **burg** and thy **burns** best are **holden**,  
**Stiftest** under **steel-gear** on steeds to ride,  
 The **wightest** and the worthiest of the world's kind,  
**Proof** for to play with in other pure **leiks**;  
 And here is **kidde** courtesy, as I have heard **carp**,  
 And that has **wayned** me hither, **iwys**, at this time.  
 Ye may be **seker** by this branch that I bear here  
 That I pass as in peace, and no **plight** seek.  
 For had I **founded** in **fer**e in fighting **wise**,  
 I have a **hauberck** at home and a helm both,  
 A shield and a sharp spear, shining bright  
 And other weapons to wield, I ween well also.  
 But **for** I would no war, my **weds** are softer.  
 But if thou be so bold as all **burns** tell,  
 Thou will grant me Godly the game I ask  
 by right."

Arthur **con answare**,  
 And said, "Sir courteous knight,  
 If thou crave battle bare,  
 Here fail'st thou not to fight."

13

"Nay, **frayst** I no fight. In faith, I thee tell,  
 It **arn about on** this **bench** but beardless children.  
 If I were **hasped** in arms on a **high** steed,  
 Here is no man me to match, for might so weak.  
**Forthy** I crave in this court a Christmas game,

gaped | voice  
 total | hall | splendid  
 fallen | into | slackened | faces  
 that | much  
 fear  
 courtesy  
 fully | his shield | honors  
 speak | man

courteously | addressed  
 sir | indeed  
 court | am  
 excellently | down  
 know  
 warrior  
 dwell | house | purpose  
 because | reputation | sir | raised  
 castle | people | considered  
 boldest | armor  
 bravest  
 worthy | games  
 famous | tell  
 brought | indeed  
 certain  
 hostility  
 set out | a host | manner  
 mail shirt

because | clothes  
 men

did | answer

seek  
 seems there are | all | around | seat  
 girt | tall

therefore

For **hit** is Yule and New Year, and here are **yep** many:  
 If any so hardy in this house holds himself,  
 Be so bold in his blood, **brain** in his head,  
 That dare **stiffly** strike a stroke for another,  
 I shall give him **of** my **gift** this **gisarme** rich,  
 This axe, that is heavy enough, to handle as he likes,  
 And I shall **bide** the first **bur** as **bare** as I sit.  
 If any **freke** be so **fell** to **fonde that I tell**,  
 Leap lightly me to, and **lach** this weapon.  
 I quit-claim it for ever. Keep it as his own.  
 And I shall **stand him** a stroke, **stiff** on this **flet**,  
**Elles** thou will **dight** me the **doom** to deal him another  
**barlay**,  
 And yet give him respite,  
 A twelvemonth and a day.  
 Now **hie**, and let see **tite**  
 Dare any herein aught say!”

14

If he them **stowned upon** first, **stiller** were then  
 All the **heredmen** in **hall**, the high and the low.  
 The **renk** on his **rounce** he **ruched** in his saddle,  
 And **runischly** his red eyes he rolled about,  
 Bent his **bresed** brows, **blycande** green,  
**Waved** his beard for to wait whoso would rise.  
 When none would **keep** him with **carp** he **coughed** full **high**,  
 And **rimed** him full richly and right, him to speak:  
 “What, is this Arthur’s house,” quoth the **hathel** then,  
 “That all the **rous renns** of through realms so many?  
 Where is now your **sourquydrye** and your conquests,  
 Your **gryndellayk** and your **greme**, and your great words?  
 Now is the revel and the renown of the Round Table  
**Overwalt** with a word of one **wigh’s** speech.  
 For all **dare** for dread without **dint showed!**”  
 With this he laughed so loud that the lord grieved:  
 The blood shot for shame into his **schyre** face  
 and **lere**.  
 He **wex** as **wroth** as **wynde**,  
 So did all that there were.  
 The king as **keen** by **kind**  
 Then stood that **stiff** man near,

15

And said, “**Hathel**, by Heaven, thine **asking** is **nice**,  
 And as thou folly hast **frayst**, **find** thee **behoves**.  
 I know no **gome** that is **gast** of thy great words.

it | clever  
  
 crazy  
 powerfully  
 for | Christmas gift | long-shafted axe  
  
 abide | stroke | unarmed  
 warrior | fearsome | withstand | what | describe  
 take up  
  
 withstand | from him | strong | floor  
 provided that | grant | right  
 according to pledge  
  
 hurry | quickly  
  
 astonished | at | more silent  
 men of court | the hall  
 row | charger | traversed  
 mysteriously  
 shaggy | shining  
 shook  
 engage | talk | shouted | loudly  
 drew himself up  
 warrior  
 fame | is heard  
 arrogance  
 fierceness | wrath  
  
 overturned | man’s  
 remain silent | a single blow | struck  
  
 bright  
 beautiful  
 became | angry | a tempest  
  
 brave | nature  
 mighty  
  
 warrior | request | foolish  
 sought | to find it | befits  
 man | frightened

Give me now thy **geserne**, upon God's **halve**,  
 And I shall **baythen** thy boon that thou bidden hast."  
 Lightly leaps he him to, and **lagt** at his hand.  
 Then fiercely that other **freke** upon foot lights.  
 Now has Arthur his axe, and the **halme** grips,  
 And **sturnely stirs** it about, **that** strike with, it **thought**.  
 The **stiff** man him before stood **upon** hight,  
**Herre** than any in the house by the head and more.  
 With stern **schere** there he stood. He stroked his beard,  
 And with a countenance **dry** he drew down his coat,  
 No more **mate** nor dismayed for **his main dints**  
**Than** any **burne** upon bench had brought him to drink  
 of wine.

Gawain, that sat by the queen,  
 To the king he **can** incline:  
 "I beseech now with **sages seen**  
 This **melly** might be mine."

16

"Would ye, worthy lords," quoth Gawain to the king,  
 "Bid me **boge** from this bench, and stand by you there,  
**That** I without villainy might **void** this table,  
 And that my liege lady liked it not ill,  
 I would **come to** your counsel before your court **rich**.  
 For me think it not seemly, as it is **sooth** known,  
 Where such an **asking** is **hevened** so **high** in your **sale**  
 (Though ye yourself be **talenttyf**) to take it yourself,  
 While many so bold you about upon bench sit,  
 Than under Heaven, I hope, none **hagerer** of will,  
 Nor better bodies on **bent** where **baret** is **rered**.  
 I am the weakest, I **wot**, and of wit feeblest,  
 And least loss **of** my life, who **laytes** the **sooth**.  
 But for as much as ye are mine **em**, I am only to **praise**.  
 No **bounty** but your blood I in my body know.  
 And **sithen** this **note** is so **nice** that **naught** it you **falls**,  
 And I have **frayned** it **at** you first, **fold**s it to me.  
 And if I **carp** not **comelily**, let all this court **rich**  
**bout** blame."

**Riche** together **con roun**,  
 And **sithen** they **redden** all **same**,  
 To **rid** the king with crown  
 And give Gawain the game.

axe | for | sake  
 grant  
 grabs  
 warrior  
 haft  
 vigorously | swings | as to | seemed  
 at his full  
 taller  
 aspect  
 steady  
 daunted | Arthur's | powerful | strokes  
 than if | person

did  
 words | plain  
 adventure

rise up  
 so that | leave

abide | by | noble  
 truly  
 request | raised | haughtily | court  
 willing

warlike  
 field | fighting | waged  
 know  
 would be | seeks | truth  
 uncle | be praised  
 virtue  
 since | matter | foolish | hardly | befits  
 asked | of | grant  
 speak | appropriately | noble  
 escape  
 nobles | did | whisper  
 then | advised | together  
 excuse

17

Then commanded the king the knight for to rise.  
 And **he** full **radly** uprose, and **ruchched** him **fair**,  
 Knelt down before the king, and **catches** that weapon.  
 And **he** **lovelily** it him **laft**, and lifted up his hand,  
 And gave him God's blessing, and gladly him bids  
 That his heart and his hand should hardy be both.  
 "**Kethe thee**, cousin," quoth the king, "that thou on **kirf set**.  
 And if thou **redes** him **right**, **redly** I **trow**  
 That thou shall **biden** the **bur** that he shall **bede** after."  
 Gawain goes to the **gome** with **giserne** in hand,  
 And he boldy him **bides**, he **bayst never** the **helder**.  
 Then **carps** to Sir Gawain the knight in the green,  
 "**Reform** we our **forwards**, ere we **fyrre pass**.  
 First I **ethe** thee, **hathel**, how that thou **hattest**,  
 That thou me tell truly, as I trust may."  
 "In God's faith," quoth the good knight, "Gawain I **hatte**,  
 That **bede** thee this **buffet**, whatso befalls after,  
 And at this time twelvemonth take **at** thee another,  
 With what weapon **so** thou **wilt**, and **with** no **wigh** else  
 alive."  
 That other answers again,  
 "Sir Gawain, so **may** I **thrive**  
 (As I am **fairly fain**)  
 This **dint** that thou shall **drive**."

Gawain | promptly | prepared | well  
 seizes  
 Arthur | graciously | gave  
  
 command | yourself | cutting | focus  
 deal with | properly | truly | believe  
 abide | blow | strike  
 man | axe  
 awaits | is dismayed | none | more  
 says  
 restate | agreement | further | go  
 entreat | knight | are called  
  
 am called  
 strike | blow  
 from  
 as | wish | from | one  
  
 shall | survive  
 of this | very | confident  
 blow | strike

18

"By God," quoth the Green Knight, "Sir Gawain, me **likes**,  
 That I shall **fange** at thy fist what I have **frayst** here.  
 And thou hast **redily** rehearsed, by **reason** full true,  
**Cleanly** all the covenant that I the king asked,  
 Save that thou shalt **siker** me, **segge**, by thy **troth**,  
 That thou shalt seek me thyself, whereso thou **hopes**  
 I may be found upon **folde**, and **foch thee** such wages  
 As thou dealest me today, before this **douthe riche**."  
 "Where should I **wale** thee?" quoth Gawain. "Where is thy place?  
 I **wot** never where thou **wonest**, by Him that me wrought.  
 Nor I know not thee, knight, thy court nor thy name.  
 But teach me truly thereto, and tell me how thou **hattest**,  
 And I shall **ware** all my wit to **win me** thither,  
 And I shall swear thee for **sooth**, and by my **seker troth**."  
 "That is enough in New Year, it needs no more,"  
 Quoth the **gome** in the green to Gawain the **hende**.  
 "If I thee tell truly, when I the **tap have**,  
 And thou me **smoothly** have smitten, **smartly** I thee teach

it pleases  
 receive | asked  
 wisely | speech  
 fully  
 pledge to | knight | on | covenant  
 believe  
 the earth | take for | yourself  
 company | noble  
 seek  
 know | live  
  
 are called  
 use | take | myself  
 truth | pledged | covenant  
  
 man | noble  
 light blow | have received  
 softly | right away

Of my house, and my home, and mine own name.  
 Then may thou **frayst** my **fare**, and **forwards hold**.  
 And if I **spend** no speech, then **speedest** thou the better,  
 For thou may **leng** in thy land, and **layt** no further.

But **slokes!**

Take now thy grim **tole** to **thee**,  
 And let see how thou **cnokes**.”  
 “Gladly, sir, **forsooth**,”  
 Quoth Gawain; his ax he strokes.

19

The Green Knight upon **ground graythely** him **dresses**.  
 A little **lut** with the head, the **lere** he **discovers**.  
 His long lovely locks he laid over his crown,  
 Let the naked neck **to** the **note** show.  
 Gawain gripped to his axe and gathers it on high.  
 The **kay** foot on the **folde** he **before sets**,  
 Lets **it** down **lightly ligt** on the **naked**,  
**That** the **sharp** of the **schalk schyndered** the bones,  
 And **shrank** through the **schyre grease**, and **scade** it in twain,  
 That the **bit** of the **brown** steel **bot on** the ground.  
 The fair head from the **halce hit** to the earth,  
**That fele** it **foyned** with their feet, where it forth rolled.  
 The blood **brayd** from the body, that **blykke** on the green.  
 And neither faltered nor fell the **freke** never the **helder**,  
 But **stythly** he starts forth upon **stiff shanks**,  
 And **runischly** he reached out, there **as renkkes** stood,  
**Lagt to** his **lovely** head, and lifts it up **sone**,  
 And **sithen bogs** to his **blonk**. The bridle he catches,  
 And his head by the hair in his hand holds.  
 And as **sadly** the **segge** him in his saddle sets  
**As** no **unhap** had him ailed, though headless he were,  
 in **stead**.  
 He **brayde** his **bulk** about,  
 That ugly body that bled.  
 Many a one of him had **doubt**,  
 By **that** his **reasons** were **read**.

20

For the head in his hand he holds up **even**.  
 Toward the **dearest** on the dais he **dresses** the face.  
 And it lifted up the eyelids, and looked full broad  
 And **meled** thus much with his mouth, as ye may now hear:  
 “**Loke**, Gawain, **thou** be **graythe** to go as thou **hettest**,  
 And **layte** as **lelly** till thou me, **lude**, find,  
 As thou hast **hette** in this hall, **herande** these knights.  
 To the Green Chapel thou **chose**. I charge ye to **fotte**

ask | path | covenant | keep  
 utter | farest  
 remain | go  
 enough  
 weapon | yourself  
 strike  
 indeed

the ground | straightaway | prepares  
 bowed | flesh | uncovers

ready for | occasion

left | ground | in front | plants  
 the axe | swiftly | descended | naked flesh  
 so that | blade | man | cleaved  
 cut | bare | flesh | cleft  
 blade | shining | bit | into  
 neck | flew  
 so that | many | kicked  
 spurted | shone  
 man | more  
 sturdily | strong | legs  
 fiercely | where | knights  
 grabs | at | fair | promptly  
 then | goes | horse

firmly | man  
 as if | mishap  
 fact  
 moved | body

fear  
 the time | words | spoken

straight  
 noblest | turns

said  
 see to it | that you | ready | promised  
 seek | faithfully | knight  
 promised | in the hearing of  
 go | receive

Such a **dint** as thou hast dealt. Deserved thou hast  
 To be **gederly golden** on New Year's morn.  
 The Knight of the Green Chapel men know me many.  
**Forthi** me for to find if thou **frayst**, failest thou never.  
 Therefore come, **other recreant** be called thee behoves."  
 With a **runisch rout** the reins he turns,  
**Haled** out at the hall door, his head in his hand,  
**That** the fire of the flint flew from **fole** hooves.  
 To what **kith** he **became**, knew none there.  
 Nevermore then they **wist** from **whethen** he **was wonnen**.

What then?

The king and Gawain there,  
 At that **green** they laugh and **gren**.  
 Yet **breved** was it full **bare**,  
 A marvel among those men.

21

Though Arthur the **hende** king at heart had wonder,  
 He let no semblance be seen, but said full **high**  
 To the comely queen, with courteous speech,  
 "Dear dame, today dismay you never.  
 Well becomes such craft upon Christmas,  
**Laying** of interludes, to laugh and to sing,  
 Among **this, kind** carols of knights and ladies.  
 Nevertheless to my meat I may me well **dress**,  
 For I have seen a **selly**, I may not **forsake**."  
 He **glent** upon Sir Gawain, and **gainly** he said,  
 "Now sir, hang up thine axe, that has enough hewed."  
 And it was **done** above the dais, on **doser** to hang,  
 Where all men for marvel might on it look,  
 And by true title thereof to tell the wonder.  
 Then they **boged** to a **board** these **burnes** together,  
 The king and the good knight, and **keen** men them served  
 Of all dainties double, as **dearest** might **fall**,  
 With all manner of meat and minstrelsy both.  
 With **weal walt** they that day, till **worthed** an end,  
 in **londe**.

Now think well, Sir Gawain,  
 For **wothe** that thou not **wonde**  
 This adventure for to **frayn**,  
 That thou hast tak'n in **honde**.

**blow**  
**promptly** | **repaid**  
  
**therefore** | **ask**  
**or** | **coward**  
**violent** | **jerk**  
**rushed**  
**so that** | **horse**  
**country** | **returned**  
**knew** | **where** | **had** | **come**

**green man** | **grin**  
**discussed** | **openly**

**noble**  
**loudly**

**playing**  
**this company?** | **courtly**  
**attend**  
**marvel** | **deny it**  
**gazed** | **graciously**

**put** | **tapestry**

**went** | **table** | **men**  
**bold**  
**noblest** | **deserve**

**joy** | **spent** | **it drew to**  
**the land**

**peril** | **avoid**  
**fulfill**  
**hand**

**Part II**

1

This **hansel** has Arthur **of aventurus on first**,  
 In **young** year, for he yearned **yelping** to hear,  
 Though **them words** were **wane**, when they to seat went.  
 Now are they **stoken of sturne** work, **stafful** their hands.  
 Gawain was glad to begin those games in hall.  
 But though the end be heavy, have ye no wonder:  
 For though men be merry in mind, when they have **main** drink,  
 A year **yernes** full **gerne**, and **yelds** never **like**.  
 The **form** to the **finishment folds** full seldom.  
**Forthi** this Yule **over-yede**, and the year after,  
 And each season **serlepes sued** after **other**.  
 After Christmas came the crabbed Lent,  
 That **fraystes** flesh with the fish and food more simple;  
 But then the weather of the world with winter it **threps**.  
 Cold **clengs adown**, clouds uplift.  
**Schyre sheds** the rain in showers full warm,  
 Falls upon fair **flat**. Flowers there show.  
**Both grounds** and the groves, green are their **weds**.  
 Birds **busken** to build, and **bremlish** sing,  
 For **solace** of the soft summer that **sues** thereafter  
     **By bonk;**  
 And blossoms **bolne** to **blow**,  
 By **rowez** rich and **ronk**.  
 Then **notez** noble **enow**,  
 Are heard in wood so **wlonk**.

good fortune | by | chance | at | the start  
 the new | battle boasting  
 among them | such words | lacking  
 charged | with | serious | completely full  
  
 strong  
 passes | swiftly | turns out | as expected  
 beginning | end | corresponds  
 therefore | passed  
 in turn | followed | the other  
  
 replaces  
 contends  
 fades | away  
 brightly | falls  
 meadows  
 of both | fields | raiment  
 hasten | gloriously  
 joy | follows  
 on | the hill sides  
 swell | bloom  
 hedgerows | luxuriant  
 notes | many  
 lovely

2

**After** the season of summer with the soft winds,  
 When Zephyrus **syfles** himself on seeds and herbs.  
**Wela-wynne** is the **wort** that **woxes** thereout,  
 When the **donkande** dew drops off the leaves,  
 To **bide** a blissful **blush** of the bright sun.  
 But then **hies harvest**, and hardens him **son**e,  
 Warns him **for** the winter to wax full ripe.  
 He dries with drought the dust for to rise,  
 From the face of the **folde** to fly full high.  
**Wroth** wind of the **welkyn** wrestles with the sun,  
 And all **grays** the grass, that green was ere.  
 Then all ripens and rots that rose **upon** first,  
 And thus turns the year in yesterdays many,  
 And winter winds again, as the world asks  
     **No fage.**  
 Till Michaelmas **mone**

afterward is  
 gently blows  
 very lovely | plant | grows  
 moistening  
 await | gleam  
 hastens | autumn | quickly  
 in preparation for  
  
 earth  
 angry | heavens  
 turns gray  
 at  
  
 in | truth  
 moon

Was come with winter's **wage**;  
Then thinks Gawain full **some**  
Of his **anious voyage**.

promise  
quickly  
difficult | journey

3

Yet until **All-Hal-Day** with Arthur he **lenges**,  
And **he** made a **fair** on that **fest**, for the **freke's** sake,  
With much revel and **rich** of the Round Table,  
Knights full courteous and comely ladies.  
All for love of that **lede** in **longing** they were,  
But nevertheless not the **later** they **nevened but** mirth:  
Many **joyless** for that **gentle** japes there made.  
**For** after meat, with mourning he **meles** to his **eme**,  
And speaks of his passage, and pertly he said,  
"Now, liege lord of my life, leave I you ask:  
Ye know the **cost** of this **case**, **keep** I no more  
To tell you how **tens thereof-never but** trifle;  
But I am bound to the **bur** **barely** to morn,  
To seek the **gome** of the green, as God will me **wise**."  
Then the best of the **burg boged** together,  
Yvain, and Erik, and others full many,  
Sir Dodial de Savage, the Duke of Clarence,  
Launcelot, and Lionel, and Lucan the Good,  
Sir Bors, and Sir Bedevere, big men both,  
And many other **menskful**, with Mador de la Port.  
All this company of court came the king near,  
For to counsel the knight, with care at their heart.  
There was much **derve dole driven** in the **sale**,  
That so **worthy** as **Wawan** should wend on that **ernde**,  
To **dryge** a doleful **dint**, and deal no more  
with **bronde**.  
The knight made **ay** good cheer,  
And said, "What should I **wonde**  
Of destinies **derf** and **dear**?  
What may man do but **fonde**?"

All Saints' Day | remains  
Arthur | feast | holiday  
splendor

knight | grief  
less fervently | made | only  
though joyless | noble knight  
then | talks | uncle

terms | agreement | wish  
it exists | only | because of a  
blow | without fail  
man | guide  
castle | came

noble knights

painful | grief | endured | hall  
worthy a knight | Gawain | journey  
suffer | blow  
sword  
ever  
fear  
harsh | pleasant  
face them

4

He **dwells** there all that day, and dresses on the morn,  
Asks early his arms, and all were they brought:  
First a **Tule tapit, tied** over the **flet**,  
And much was the gold gear that **glent** there aloft.  
The **stiff** man steps thereon, and the steel handles,  
**Dubbed** in a doublet of a **dear Tars**,  
And **sithen** a **crafty capados**, closed **aloft**,  
That with a bright **blaunner** was bound within.  
Then set they the **sabatouns** upon the **segg's** feet,

remains

Tolouse | carpet | spread | floor  
gleamed  
strong  
clad | precious | Tharsia silk  
then | well-crafted | cape | at the neck  
ermine  
steel shoes | knight's

His legs **lapped** in steel with **lovely** greaves,  
 With **polaynes piched** thereto, polished full **clean**,  
 About his knees **knaged** with knots of gold;  
**Queme** cuisses then, that **coyntly closed**  
 His thick **thrawen** thighs, with thongs **to-tached**.  
 And **sithen** the **brawden bryne** of bright steel rings  
**Umbeweved** that **wygh**, upon **wlonk stuffe**;  
 And well burnished **braces** upon his both arms,  
 With good **cowters** and **gay**, and gloves of plate,  
 And all the goodly gear that him **gain** should  
**that tide**.

With **rich coat** armor,  
 His gold spurs **spend** with pride,  
 Girt with a **bront** full sure,  
 With silk **sayn umbe** his side.

5

When he was **hasped** in arms, his **harness** was **rich**,  
 The least **lachtet other** loop **lemed** of gold.  
 So **harnessed** as he was he **hearkens** his mass,  
 Offered and honored at the high altar.  
**Sithen** he comes to the king and to his court **fers**,  
**Laches lufly** his leave **at** lords and ladies,  
 And they him kissed and **conveyed**, **bikende** him to Christ.  
 By **that** was Gringalet<sup>3</sup> **grath**, and girt with a saddle,  
 That gleamed full gaily with many gold fringes,  
**Aywhere nailed** full new, for that **note riched**,  
 The bridle **barred** about, with bright gold **bounden**.  
 The apparel of the **payttrure**, and of the proud skirts,  
 The **crupper**, and the **couertor**, **accorded** with the **arsouns**;  
 And all was **rayled** on red rich gold nails,  
 That all giltered and **glent** as gleam of the sun.  
 Then **hentes** he the helm, and hastily **hit** kisses,  
 That was stapled **stiffly**, and **stuffed** within.  
 His was high on his head, **hasped** behind,  
 With a light **urysoun** over the **aventayle**,  
 Embroidered and bound with the best gems  
 On broad silken border, and birds on seams,  
 As **papiays** painted **peruing** between,  
**Tortors** and **trueloves entailed** so thick,  
 As many **burde thereabout** had been seven winters  
 in town.

The circlet was more of price,  
 That **umbeclipped** his **crown**:  
 Of diamonds a device

enclosed | handsome  
 knee armor | attached | brightly  
 fastened  
 fine | elegantly | enclosed  
 muscular | attached  
 then | linked | coat  
 covered | man | splended | cloth  
 arm pieces  
 elbow pieces | fair  
 benefit  
 on that | occasion  
 a splendid | coat of  
 fastened  
 sword  
 sash | around

girt | armor | splendid  
 fastening | or | fashioned  
 arrayed | hears

then | companions  
 takes | graciously | of  
 escorted | commending  
 that time | made ready

everywhere | studded | occasion | prepared  
 decorated with bars | trim  
 horse's breast armor  
 hind armor | cloth | matched | saddlebows  
 set  
 shone  
 takes | it  
 strongly | padded  
 fastened  
 silk band | mail neck guard

parrots | periwinkles  
 turtledoves | herb Paris | arranged  
 as if | ladies | about it

surrounded | head

<sup>3</sup> Sir Gawain's horse.

That both were bright and **brown**.

6

Then they showed him the shield, that was of **shire gules**,  
 With the pentangle **depaint** of pure gold hues.  
 He **braids** it by the **bauderyk**, about the **hals kestes**,  
 That beseemed the **segge** seemly fair.  
 And why the pentangle **appends** to that prince noble,  
 I am intent you to tell, though tarry it me should.  
 It is a sign that Solomon set some while,  
 In betokening of **truth**, by **title** that it has.  
 For it is a figure that holds five points,  
 And each line overlaps and locks in other,  
 And **aywhere** it is endless, and **English** it call  
**Overall**, as I here, the endless knot.  
**Forthi** it **accords** to this knight, and to his **clear** arms,  
 For **ay** faithful in **five** and **sere** five **sythes**,  
 Gawain was for good known, and as gold **pured**,  
**Voided** of each villainy, with virtues adorned  
 in **moat**.

**Forthi** the pentangle **new**  
 He bore on shield and coat,  
 As **tulk** of **tale** most true,  
 And **gentlest** knight of **lote**.

7

First he was found faultless in his five **wits**,  
 And **efte** failed never the **freke** in his five fingers.  
 And all his **affiance** upon **folde** was in the five wounds  
 That Christ **kagt** on the cross, as the creed tells;  
 And wheresoever this man in **melly** was **stad**,  
 His **thro** thought was in that, through all other things,  
 That all his **forsnes** he **feng at** the five joys  
 That the **hende** Heaven's queen had of her child.  
**At** this **cause** the knight **comliche** had  
 In the inner half of his shield her image **depainted**,  
 That when he **blushed** thereto, his **belde** never **thayred**.  
 The fifth five that I find that the **frek** used  
 Was **franchise** and fellowship **for-be** all things;  
 His **clannes** and his courtesy crooked were never,  
 And pity, that passes all points. These pure five  
 Were **harder** **happed** on that **hathel** than on any other.  
 Now all these five **sythes**, **forsooth**, were **fetled on** this knight,  
 And each one **halched** in other, that no end had,  
 And fixed upon five points, that failed never,  
 Nor **sammed** never in no side, nor sundered neither,

dark

bright | red  
 painted  
 takes | girdle | neck | hangs  
 knight  
 pertains

fidelity | valid claim

everywhere | the English  
 in general  
 therefore | is appropriate | bright  
 always | five ways | each way | times  
 refined  
 free  
 the castle  
 therefore | newly painted

man | word  
 noblest | speech

senses  
 second | knight  
 trust | earth  
 received  
 battle | present  
 steadfast  
 courage | received | from  
 gracious  
 for | reason | fittingly  
 painted  
 looked | courage | failed  
 knight  
 generosity | above  
 purity  
  
 more firmly | fastened | knight  
 groups | in truth | bestowed | upon  
 joined

came together

Without end at any **noke** I **owhere** find,  
 Wherever the **gomen** began, or **glod** to an end.  
 Therefore on this **schene** shield shaped was the knot,  
 Royally with red gold upon red **gules**,  
 That is the pure pentangle **with** the people called,  
 with lore.

Now **graythed** is Gawain **gay**,  
 And **lagt** his lance right **thore**,  
 And gave them all good day,  
 He **wende**, for ever more.

8

He **sperred** his steed with the spurs, and sprang on his way,  
 So **stiff** that the stone fire **stoke** out thereafter.  
 All that saw that **seemly** sighed in heart,  
 And said **soothly**, all **same segges** to other,  
**Carrande** for that **comely**, “By Christ, it is **scathe**,  
 That thou, **leude**, shall be lost, that art of life noble!  
 To find his **ferre** upon **folde**, in faith is not easy.  
**Warloker** to have **wrought** had more **wit** been,  
 And have **dight** yonder **dear** a duke to have **worthed**.  
 A **lowande** leader of **ledes** in **londe** him well **seems**.  
 And so had better have been than **britned** to naught,  
**Haded with** an elvish man, for **angardez** pride.  
 Who knew ever any king such counsel to take,  
 As **knights** in **cavillations** on Christmas games!”  
 Well much was the warm water that **waltered of** eyes,  
 When that seemly sire **sought** from those **wones**  
 That day.

He made no **abode**,  
 But **wightly** went his way.  
 Many a **wylsum** way he rode,  
 The book as I heard say.

9

Now rides this **renk** through the realm of Logres,  
 Sir Gawain on God’s **half**, though **him** no game it **thought**.  
 Oft, **leudless** alone, he **lengs on nights**,  
 Where he found not him before the fare that he liked;  
 Had he no **ferre** but his **fole**, by **friths** and downs,  
 Nor no **gome** but God, **by gate** with to **carp**,  
 Till that he **neged** full nigh in to the North Wales.  
 All the isles of Angelsey<sup>4</sup> on **left half** he **holds**,  
 And fares over the fords by the **forelonds**,  
 Over at the Holyhead,<sup>5</sup> till he had **eft bonk**

corner | anywhere  
 device | came  
 bright  
 a shade of red  
 by

prepared | fair  
 took | there

thought

struck  
 vigorously | flared  
 noble knight  
 truly | assembled | knights  
 grieving | fair man | a pity  
 sir  
 equal | earth  
 more prudently | acted | sense  
 prepared | noble man | become  
 brilliant | people | the land | suits  
 destroyed  
 beheaded | by | arrogant

knights provide | petty disputes  
 flowed | from  
 went | dwellings

resting place  
 resolutely  
 bewildering

knight  
 behalf | to him | seemed  
 companionless | stays | by | night

companion | horse | woods  
 one | on | the road | converse  
 approached  
 the left | side | keeps  
 headlands  
 again | reached the shore

<sup>4</sup> The Isle of Angelsey and other islands off the northwest coast of Wales.

In the wilderness of Wirral;<sup>6</sup> **wonde** there but **lyte**  
 That either God **other gome** with good heart loved.  
 And **ay** he **frayned**, as he **ferde**, at **frekes** that he met,  
 If they had heard any **carp** of a knight green,  
 In any ground thereabout, of the Green Chapel.  
 And all **nykked** him with nay, that never in their life  
 They saw never so **segge** that was of such hues  
 of green.

The knight took **gates** strange,  
 In many a **bonk unbene**.  
 His **cheer** full oft **con** change,  
 That chapel ere he might **seen**.

10

Many cliffs he **over-clambe** in countries strange;  
 Far **floten** from his friends **fremedly** he rides.  
 At each **warthe other** water where the **wighe** passed,  
 He found a foe him before, **but ferly** it were,  
 And that so foul and so fell, that fight **him behode**.  
 So many marvels by mount there the man finds,  
 It were **tore** for to tell of the tenth **dole**.  
**Somewhile** with **worms** he wars, and with wolves also,  
**Somewhile** with **wodwos**, that **woned** in the **knarres**,  
 Both with bulls and bears, and boars **otherwhile**,  
 And **ettins**, that him **a-nelede**, of the high **fell**.  
**Nade** he been doughty and **dryghe**, and **Drihten** had served,  
 Doubtless he had been dead, and **dreped** full oft.  
**For** war **wrathed** him not so much, that winter **nas** worse,  
 When the cold clear water from the clouds **schadden**,  
 And froze ere it fall might to the **fale** earth.  
 Near slain with the sleet he slept in his **yrnes**,  
 More nights than enough on naked rocks,  
**Whereas clattering** from the crest the cold **borne** runs,  
 And hung high over his head in hard icicles.  
 Thus in peril and pain, and plights full hard,  
**By** country **carries** this knight, till Christmas Eve,  
 alone.  
 The knight well that **tide**  
 To Mary made his moan,  
 That **ho** him **red** to ride,  
 And **wise** him to some **wone**.

lived | few  
 or | man  
 always | asked | travelled | of | persons  
 mention

answered  
 man

ways  
 hillside | drear  
 mood | did  
 see

surmounted  
 removed | as a stranger  
 ford | or | man  
 unless | unusual  
 he | had to

too difficult | part  
 sometimes | dragons  
 sometimes | forest trolls | lived | crags  
 at other times  
 giants | pursued | rock  
 had he not | enduring | the Lord  
 slain  
 yet | bothered | was not  
 fell  
 pale  
 armor

where | rushing noisily | stream

across the | rides

time

she | show where  
 guide | dwelling

<sup>5</sup> A town near the Isle of Anglesey.

<sup>6</sup> A peninsula between the River Dee and River Mersey in England.

## 11

By a mount on the morn merrily he rides,  
 Into a forest full deep, that **ferly** was wild,  
 High hills on each **half**, and **holtwoods** under,  
 Of hoar oaks full huge a hundred together.  
 The hazel and the hawthorn were **harled** all **samen**,  
 With rough ragged moss **rayled anywhere**,  
 With many birds **unblythe** upon bare twigs,  
 That piteously there piped for pain of the cold.  
 The **gome** upon Gringalet **glides** them under,  
 Through many a **misy** and mire, man **all** him **one**,  
**Carande** for his **costes**, lest he not **keuer** should  
 To see the service of that **Sire**, that on that **self** night  
 Of a **burde** was born, our **baret** to **quell**;  
 And therefore sighing he said, "I beseech thee, Lord,  
 and Mary, that is mildest mother so dear,  
**Of** some **harbor**, where **hegly** I might hear mass,  
 And thy matins to morn. Meekly I ask,  
 And thereto priestly I pray my **Pater** and **Ave**  
 and Creed."  
 He rode in his **prayere**,  
 And cried for his **misdeed**,  
 He **signed** him **in sythes sere**,  
 And said, "Cross **Christ** me **speed**!"

marvelously  
 side | woods

tangled | together  
 hanging | everywhere  
 unhappy

man | passes  
 swamp | all by | self  
 concerned | religious duties | be able  
 Lord | selfsame  
 maiden | sorrow | end

for | haven | devoutly

Pater Noster | Ave Maria

prayer  
 sin  
 crossed | at | times | several  
 of Christ | help

## 12

**Nade** he **signed** himself, **segge**, but thrice,  
 Ere he was aware in the wood of a **won** in a moat:  
 Above a **launde**, on a **lawe**, **loken** under boughs  
 Of many **borelich bole**, about the ditches,  
 A castle the **comeliest** that ever knight **agte**,  
 Pitched on a **prayere**, a park all about,  
 With a **piked palays**, **pynd** full thick,  
 That **umbe-tege** many trees more than two mile.  
 That **hold** on that one side the **hathel avised**,  
 As it shimmered and shone through the **schyre** oaks;  
 Then **has** he **hendly** off his helm, and **hegly** he thanks  
 Jesus and Saint Julian, that gentle are both,  
 That courtesy had him **kydde**, and his cry hearkened.  
 "Now **bone hostel**," **cothe** the **burne**, "I beseech you **gette**!"  
 Then **gerds** he to Gringalet with the gilt heels,  
 And he full **chancely** has chosen to the chief **gate**,  
 That brought **bremly** the **burne** to the bridge's end,  
 in haste.  
 The bridge was **breme upbrayed**,  
 The gates were **stoken** fast;

no sooner had | crossed | the knight  
 dwelling

open space | mound | shut  
 massive | trees  
 handsomest | owned

meadow  
 spiked | palisade | enclosed  
 surrounded  
 stronghold | knight | observed  
 bright  
 takes | reverently | devoutly

shown  
 good | lodging | said | man | grant  
 digs in  
 luckily | rode  
 quickly | man

quickly | raised  
 shut

The walls were well arrayed,  
It **dut** no **windez** blast.

13

The **burne bode** on **blonk**, that on bank **hoved**,  
Of the deep double ditch that **drove** to the place.  
The wall **wod** in the water **wonderly** deep,  
And **eft** a full huge hight **hit haled** upon **lofte**,  
Of hard hewn stone up to the **tables**,  
**Enbanded** under the **abattlement**, in the best **law**,  
And **sythen garrets** full **gay gered** between,  
With many a **lovely loop**, that **locked** full **clean**;  
A better **barbican** that **burne blushed** upon never.  
And **innermore** he beheld that hall full high,  
Towers **telded** between, **trochet** full thick,  
Fair **filioles** that fitted, and **ferlily long**,  
With carven **coprounes**, craftily **slege**.  
Chalk-white chimneys there **ches** he enough,  
Upon **bastel** roofs, that **blenched** full white.  
So many pinnacles painted **was powdered anywhere**,  
Among the castle **carnels**, **clambered** so thick,  
That **pared** out of paper **purely** it seemed.  
The **fre freke** on the **fole** it fair enough thought,  
If he might **keuer** to come the cloister within,  
To **harbor** in that **hostel**, while holiday lasted  
**avenaunt**.

He called, and soon there **come**  
A porter **pure plesaunt**.  
On the wall his **ernd** he **nome**,  
And hailed the knight **erraunt**.

14

“Good sir,” quoth Gawain, “would you **go mine ernde**  
To the **heg** lord of this house, **harbor** to crave?”  
“Yea, **Peter**,” quoth the porter, “and **purely** I **trowee**  
That ye **be**, **wyghe**, welcome to **won** while you like.”  
Then **yede** that **wyghe gerne** and came **again swythe**,  
And folk freely him with, to **fonge** the knight.  
They let down the great **draught**, and **dearly** out **yeden**,  
And knelt down on their knees upon the cold earth,  
To welcome this **ilk wyghe** as worthy, **him** thought.  
They **yielded him** the broad gate, **yarked** up wide,  
And he them **raised rekenly**, and rode over the bridge.  
**Sere segges** him **seized** by saddle, while he **light**,  
And **sithen** stabled his steed **stiff** men enough.  
Knights and squires came down then,

feared | wind’s

man | stayed | his horse | stood  
led up  
stood | marvelously  
then | it | rose | the sky  
parapets  
projecting | battlements | style  
then | towers | splendid | arrayed  
handsome | were fastened | neatly  
castle wall | man | looked upon  
further in  
arranged | decorated  
pinnacles | exceedingly | tall  
tops | made  
spied  
inner | gleamed  
were | scattered | everywhere  
embrasures | clustered  
cut | truly  
good | knight | horse  
manage  
shelter | dwelling  
agreeably  
came  
truly | pleasant  
greeting | heard  
wandering

take | message  
noble | lodging  
by Peter | truly | think  
shall be | sir | stay  
went | gladly | back | quickly  
receive  
drawbridge | courteously | went

same | man | they  
let | him through | opened  
bade rise | graciously  
several | men | held | dismounted  
then | good

For to bring this **burne** with **bliss** into hall.  
 When he **hef** up his helm, there **hied** enough  
 For to **hent hit at** his hand, the **hende** to serve.  
 His **bronde** and his **blasoun** both they took.  
 Then hailed he full **hendly** those **hathels** each one,  
 And many proud men there **pressed**, that prince to honor.  
 All **hasped** in his **heg-wede** to hall they him **wonnen**,  
 Where fair fire upon **flet** fiercely **brenned**.  
 Then the lord of the **lede loutes** from his chamber,  
 For to meet with **menske** the man on the floor.  
 He said, “Ye are welcome to **welde** as you like,  
 What here is. All is your own, to have at your will  
 and **welde**.”

“**Grant mercy**,” quoth Gawain,  
 “**There Christ it you for-yelde**”  
 As **frekes** that seemed **fain**,  
 Either other in arms **con felde**.

15

Gawain **glygt on** the **gome** that goodly him greets,  
 And thought it a bold **burne** that the **burg agte**,  
 A **huge hathel** for the **nones**, and of high **eldee**.  
 Broad, bright was his beard, and all beaver-hued;  
 Stern, **stiff on** the stride on stalwart **shanks**;  
 Fell face as the fire, and **fre** of his speech.  
 And well him **seemed forsooth**, as the **segge** thought,  
 To **lead** a lordship in **lee** of **leudes** full good.  
 The lord him **charred** to a chamber, and **chiefly** commands  
 To **deliver** him a **leude**, him loyally to serve;  
 And there were bound at his **bode burnes** enough,  
 That brought him to a bright bower, where bedding was noble,  
 Of curtains of clean silk, with clear gold hems,  
 And coverlets full **curious**, with **comely panes**,  
 Of bright **blaunnier** above, embroidered **besides**;  
**Rudels** running on ropes, red gold rings,  
**Tapits** tied to the **woge**, of **Tuly** and **Tars**;  
 And under feet, on the **flet**, of **folgande suit**.  
 There he was **despoiled**, with **speeches** of **mirth**,  
 The **burn** of his **bruny**, and of his bright **weds**.  
 Rich robes full **rad renks** him brought,  
 For to **charge**, and to change, and choose of the best.  
**Soon** as he one **hent**, and **happed** therein,  
 That sat on him seemly, with **sailing** skirts,  
 The **ver** by his visage verily it seemed  
 Well nigh to each **hathel**, all **on** hues  
**Loande** and lovely, all his limbs **under**,

man | joy  
 lifted | hastened  
 take | it | from | noble man  
 sword | shield  
 courteously | knights  
 pressed forward  
 encased | armor | brought  
 hearth | blazed  
 company | comes  
 honor  
 use

disposal  
 thank | you  
 may | for it | reward  
 men | joyful  
 did | embrace

looked | upon | man  
 man | castle | owned  
 great | knight | occasion | maturity

strong | of | legs  
 noble  
 it befit | indeed | knight  
 command | protection | company  
 took | excellently  
 assign | man  
 command | men

well made | beautiful | panels  
 ermine | at the side  
 curtains  
 hangings | walls | Toulouse | Tharsia  
 floor | similar | sort  
 relieved | expressions | joy  
 man | mail coat | clothes  
 promptly | knights  
 put on  
 as soon | took | was clothed  
 flowing  
 springtime  
 knight | in  
 glowing | underneath

That a **comelier** knight never Christ made,  
 they thought.  
**Whethen** in world he were,  
 It seemed as if he might  
 Be prince **withouten** peer  
 In field where fell men fight.

16

A chair before the **chimney**, where charcoal burned,  
 Was **braithed** for Sir Gawain, **graythely** with **clothes**,  
**Whyssynes** upon **quiltedpoints**, that **koynt** were both.  
 And then a **mere** mantle was on that man cast,  
 Of a brown **bleeaunt**, embroidered full richly,  
 And fair furred within with **fells** of the best,  
 All of ermine in **erde**, his hood of the same;  
 And he sat in that **settle** seemly rich,  
 And **achaufed** him **chiefly**, and then his cheer **mended**.  
 Soon was **telded** up a table on trestles full fair,  
 Clad with a clean cloth, that clear white showed,  
**Sanap**, and **salure**, and silver spoons.  
 The **wyghe** washed at his will, and went to his meat.  
**Segges** him served seemly enough,  
 With **sere sewes** and **sete**, seasoned of the best,  
 Double **felde**, as it **falls**, and **fele kind** fishes:  
 Some baked in bread, some **brad** on the **gledes**,  
 Some **sothen**, some in stew, **sauered** with spices,  
 And **ay** sauces so **slege**, that the **segge** liked.  
 The **freke** called it a feast full freely and oft,  
 Full **hendely**, when all the **hathels re-hayted** him at once  
 as **hende**,  
 “This penance now ye take,  
 And **eft** it shall **amend**.”  
 That man much mirth **con** make,  
 For wine **in** his head that **wend**.

17

Then was **spied** and **spured upon spare wise**,  
 By **prove points** of that prince, put to himself,  
**That** he **beknew** courteously of the court that he were,  
 That **athe** Arthur the **hend holds** him **one**,  
 That is the **rich** royal king of the Round Table,  
 And it was **Wawen** himself that in that **won** sits,  
 Come to that Christmas, as **case** him then **lymped**.  
 When the lord had learned that he the **leude** had,  
 Loud laughed he thereat, so **lef** it him thought.  
 And all the men in that **moat** made much joy

more handsome

wherever

without

fireplace

prepared | promptly | coverings

cushions | quilts | beautiful

splendid

expensive fabric

skins

composition

seat

warmed himself | quickly | improved

set

overcloth | salt cellar

man

men

various | soups | excellent

portion | was fitting | many | kinds of

grilled | coals

boiled | flavored

ever | delicate

knight

courteously | regaled

courteously

then | be your salvation

did

to | went

inquired | asked | in a | tactful

subtle | questions

until | acknowledged

noble | gracious | rules | alone

great

Gawain | house

chance | befell

knight

delightful

castle

To appear in his presence **prestly** that time,  
**That** all **price**, and prowess, and **pure** **thewes**  
**Appends** to his person, and praised is ever.  
 Before all men upon **molde**, his **mensk** is the most.  
 Each **segge** full softly said to his **ferre**:  
 “Now shall we **semlich** see **sleights** of **thewes**,  
 And the **teccheles** terms of talking noble,  
**Which speed** is in speech, **unspured** may we learn,  
 Since we have **fonged** that fine father of **nurture**.  
 God has given us his grace goodly **forsooth**,  
 That such a guest as Gawain **grants** us to have,  
 When **burnes blythe** of **His** birth shall sit  
 and sing.

In **meaning** of manners **mere**  
 This **burne** now shall us **bring**.  
 I hope **that** may him hear  
 Shall learn of **love-talking**.”

18

By **that** the dinner was done, and the **dear** up,  
 It was nigh at the night **neged** the time.  
 Chaplains to the chapels **chosen the gate**,  
**Rungen** full richly, right as they should,  
 To the **hersum** evensong of the high **tide**.  
 The lorde **loutes** thereto, and the lady also.  
 Into a **comely closet coyntly** she enters.  
 Gawain **glides** full **gay**, and goes there **sone**;  
 The lord **laches** him by the **lapp**, and leads him to sit,  
 And **couthly** him **knows**, and calls him **his** name,  
 And said he was the welcomest **wighe** of the world.  
 And he him thanked **throly**, and either **halched** other,  
 And sat soberly **samen the service-while**.  
 Then **list** the lady to look on the knight.  
 Then came she **of her closet**, with many **cler burdez**.  
 She was the fairest in **felle**, of **flesh** and of **lyre**,  
 And of **compass** and color, and **costs** of all **other**,  
 And **wener** than **Wenore**, as the **wighe** thought.  
 She **ches** through the chancel, to **cherish** that **hende**.  
 Another lady her led by the left hand,  
 That was **alder** than she, an **ancient** it seemed,  
 And highly honored with **hathels** about.  
 But unlike on to look those ladies were:  
 For if the **young** was **yep**, **golge** was that other.  
 Rich red on that one **rayled anywhere**;  
 Rough wrinkled cheeks that other one **rolled**.  
 Kerchiefs of that one with many **clear** pearls

**promptly**  
 as | excellence | refined | manners  
**belongs**  
 earth | fame  
**knight** | neighbor  
 pleasantly | displays | courtliness  
**faultless**  
 what | excellence | unasked  
 received | good breeding  
**indeed**  
**He grants**  
 men | happily | Christ’s

**understanding** | noble  
**knight** | teach  
**he that**  
**lovers’ conversation**

**the time that** | noble company  
**approached**  
 made | their | way  
**rang**  
**devout** | occasion  
**goes**  
**handsome** | private pew | gracefully  
**hastens** | cheerful | immediately  
**takes** | fold of his gown  
**familiarly** | greets | by his  
**person** | in  
**heartily** | embraced  
**together** | during the | service  
**desired**  
 out of | pew | fair | maidens  
**appearance** | body | face  
**form** | qualities | over | others  
**fairer** | Guinevere | man  
**came** | salute | gracious man

**older** | ancient woman  
**knights**

**young one** | fresh | withered  
**appeared** | everywhere  
**had**  
**shining**

Her breast and her **bright** throat bare **displayed**,  
 Shone **shyrere** than snow, that **sheds** on hills;  
 That other with a gorget was **gered** over the **swyre**,  
**Chymbled** over her black chin with chalk-white veils,  
 Her **frount folden** in silk, **enfouled aywhere**,  
**Toreted** and **treleted** with **trifles** about,  
**That** naught was bare of that **burde** but the black brows,  
 The twin eyes, and the nose, the naked lips;  
 And **those** were **sour** to see, and **sellily** bleared.  
 A **mensk** lady on **molde** men may her call

**For** God!

Her body was short and thick;  
 Her buttocks **blag** and **brode**.  
 More **licorice** on to **lick**  
 Was **that** she had on **lode**.

19

When Gawain **glygt** on that **gay**, that graciously looked,  
 With leave **lagt of** the lord he **lent** them **against**.  
 The elder he hails, **haldande** full low;  
 The lovelier he **lappes** a little in arms.  
 He kisses her **comelily**, and knightly he **meles**.  
 They **call** him **of** acquaintance, and he it quick asks  
 To be her servant **soothly**, if **themselves liked**.  
 They take him between them, with talking him lead  
 To chamber, to **chimney**, and **chiefly** they **ask**  
 Spices, that unsparingly men **speeded** them to bring,  
 And the **wynnelich** wine therewith each time.  
 The lord **luflich** aloft leaps full oft,  
**Mynned** mirth to be made **upon** many **sythez**,  
**Hent** **hegly** off his hood, and on a spear hung  
 And **wayned** him to win the **worship** thereof,  
 That most mirth might **meue** that **Christmas-while**.  
 “And I shall **fonde**, by my faith, to **filter** with the best,  
 Ere **me wont** the **wede** with help of my friends.”  
 Thus with laughing **lotez** the lord it **tayt** makes,  
 For to gladden sir Gawain with games in hall

That night,

Till **that** was time  
 The lord commanded light.  
 Sir Gawain his leave **con nyme**,  
 And to his bed him **dight**.

white | set off  
 whiter | falls  
 clad | neck  
 wrapped up  
 forehead | wrapped | muffled | all over  
 embroidered | meshed | details  
 so that | lady

those eyes | unpleasant | extraordinarily  
 honorable | earth  
 before

swollen | broad  
 sweet | look  
 the lady that | in | tow

gazed | splendid lady  
 obtained | from | went | towards  
 bowing  
 embraces  
 courteously | speaks  
 ask | for his  
 truly | them | it pleased

fireplace | particularly | ask for  
 hastened  
 cheerful  
 courteously  
 urged | at | times  
 took | gaily  
 urged | honor  
 be had | Christmas time  
 try | contend  
 I | lose | garment  
 words | merry

it

did | take  
 took

## 20

On the morn, as each man **mines that time**,  
 That **Drihten** for our destiny to die was born,  
**Weal** waxes in each **won in world**, for his sake;  
 So did it there on that day, through danties many.  
 Both at **mess** and at **meal**, **messes** full **quaint**  
**Derf** men upon dais **dressed of the best**.  
 The old ancient **wife** highest **ho** sits;  
 The lord **lovely her by lent**, as I **trow**.  
 Gawain and the gay **burde** together they sat,  
**Even in-mydddez**, as the **mess meetly** came  
 And **sythen** through all the **sale**, as **them** best **seemed**,  
**By** each **grome** at his **degree graythely** was served.  
 There was meat, there was mirth, there was much joy,  
 That for to tell thereof it me **tene** were,  
**And** to **point** it yet I pained **me peradventure**.  
 But yet I **wot** that **Wawen** and the **wale burde**  
 Such comfort of their company **cayten** together,  
 Through their **dear dalliance** of their **derne** words,  
 With **clean** courteous **carp**, **closed** from **filth**,  
 That their play was **passing** each princely game,  
     In **vaires**.  
     Trumpets and **nakerys**  
     Much piping there **repairs**.  
     Each man tended **his**,  
     And they two tended theirs.

remembers | in that | season  
 the Lord  
 joy | home | the world

the buffet table | mealtime | dishes | fancy  
 hardy | prepared | in | best way  
 lady | she  
 courteously | near | her | sat | believe  
 woman  
 exactly | in the middle | where | food | fittingly  
 then | hall | to them | it seemed  
 near | man | according to | rank | promptly

difficult  
 if | describe | even | myself | as it happened  
 know | Gawain | fair | lady  
 had  
 pleasant | conversation | discreet  
 pure | talk | free | sin  
 surpassing  
 truth  
 kettledrums  
 makes  
 to his own business

## 21

Much **dut** was there **driven** that day and **that other**,  
 And **the** third as **thro thronge** in thereafter.  
 The joy of Saint John's day was **gentle** to hear,  
 And was the last of the **laik**, **leudes** there thought.  
 There were guests to go upon the gray morn;  
**Forthi wonderly** they woke, and the wine drank,  
 Danced full **dregly** with **dear** carols.  
 At the last, when it was late, they **lachen** their leave,  
 Each one to **wend** on his way, that was **wighe** strong.  
 Gawain gave them good day. The good man him **lachchez**,  
 Leads him to his own chamber, the **chimney** beside,  
 And there he **drags** him **on-dryghe**, and **dearly** him thanks,  
**Of** the **wynne worship** that he **him waived** had,  
 As to honor his house on that high **tide**,  
 And **embellish** his **burg** with his **bele cheer**.  
 "I-wysse sir, while I live, **me worthes** the better,  
 That Gawain has been my guest, at God's own **fest**."  
 "Grant mercy, sir," quoth Gawain, "in God's faith it is yours:

joy | made | the | next  
 on the | much | crammed  
 pleasant  
 entertainment | people

therefore | in good spirits  
 continuously | merry  
 took  
 go | man  
 takes  
 fireplace  
 holds | back | courteously  
 for | delightful | honor | on him | bestowed  
 occasion  
 grace | castle | gracious | company  
 indeed | to me | it redounds  
 festival  
 thank | you

All the honor is your own; the high king you reward.  
 And I am, **wighe**, at your will, to **worch** your **hest**,  
 As I am **halden** thereto, in **high** and in **low**,  
 by right.”

The lord **fast can him pain**  
 To hold longer the knight;  
 To him answers Gawain,  
 By no way **that** he might.

22

Then **frayned** the **freke** full fair **at himself**,  
 What **derve** deed had him driven at that **dear** time,  
 So **keenly** from the king’s court to **kayre** all **his one**,  
 Ere the holidays wholly were **haled** out of town?  
 “**Forsooth**, sir,” quoth the **segge**, “ye say but the truth:  
 A high **ernde** and a **hasty** me **had** from those **wonez**.  
 For I am summoned myself to **seek** to a place,  
 I **ne wot** in world **whitherward** to **wende**, it to find.  
 I **no**ld, **but** if I it **nigh might** on New Year’s morn,  
 For all the land **in-with** Logres, so me our Lord help!  
**Forthi**, sir, this **enquest** I **require** you here:  
 That ye me tell with truth, if ever ye tale heard  
 Of the Green Chapel, where it on ground stands,  
 And of the knight that it keeps, of color of green?  
 There was **stabled** by **statute** a **steven** us between,  
 To meet that man at that **mere**, if I might **last**;  
 And of that **ilk** New Year but **neked** now **wants**;  
 And I would look on that **lede**, if God me let would,  
**Gladloker**, by God’s Son, **than** any good **welde**!  
**Forthi**, **iwyse** by your **will**, **wend me behoves**:  
**Naf** I now to **busy** but barely three days,  
 And **me** as **fain** to fall **feye as** fail of mine errand.  
 Then laughing quoth the lord, “Now **leng** thee **behoves**,  
 For I shall **teach** you to that **term** by the time’s end,  
 The Green Chapel upon ground. **Grieve you** no more:  
 But ye shall be in your bed, **burne**, at thine ease,  
**While forth** days, and **ferk** on the first of the year,  
 And come to that **merk** at midmorn, to **make** what you like  
 in **spenne**.

**Dowellez while** New Year’s day,  
 And rise, and **raykez** then.  
**Man** shall you set **in** way  
 It is not two mile **henne**.

sir | do | bidding

bound | great matters | small

earnestly | did | himself | exert

to make him stay

asked | host | of | him

momentous | festive

boldly | ride | by | himself

passed

indeed | knight

purpose | urgent | took | houses

go

don’t | know | where | go

wouldn’t wish | except | near | might arrive

in

therefore | request | ask of

established | agreement | appointment

place | live

same | little time | is left before it arrives

man

more gladly | than I would have | thing

therefore | indeed | leave | take | myself | I must

have | achieve my goal

I am | eager | dead | as to

stay | must

guide | place

trouble | yourself

sir

for | the next few | travel

place | do

that place

remain | until

depart

we | on your

hence

23

Then was Gawain full glad, and **gomenly** he **laged**,  
 “Now I thank you thoroughly **through** all other things!  
 Now achieved is my **chance**: I shall at your will  
**Dwell**, and else do what ye **deem**.”  
 Then **seized** him the **sire**, and set him beside,  
 Let the ladies be **fette**, to **like** them the better.  
 There was **seem solace by themselves** still.  
 The lord **let** for **love lotes** so merry,  
 As **wyghe** that **would** of his **wit**, nor **wist** what he **might**.  
 Then he **carped** to the knight, crying loudly,  
 “Ye have **deemed** to do the deed that I bid;  
 Will ye **hold** this **hes** here at this **once**?”  
 “Yea, sir, **forsooth**,” said the **segge** true,  
 “While I **bide** in your **borge**, **be bayn** to your **hest**.”  
 “**For** ye have traveled,” quoth the **tulk**, “**towen** from **far**,  
 And **sithen waked** me with, ye are not well **waryst**,  
 Neither of sustenance nor of sleep, **soothly** I know.  
 Ye shall **lenge** in your **lofte**, and lie **in** your ease,  
**Tomorn while** the **mess-while**, and to meat **wende**,  
 When ye will, with my wife, that with you shall sit,  
 And comfort you with company, till I to court **torne**.  
 Ye **lende**,  
 And I shall early rise.  
**On** hunting will I **wende**.”  
 Gawain grants all **thise**,  
 Him **heldande**, as the **hende**.

merrily | said  
 above  
 goal  
 remain | advise  
 took hold of | lord  
 brought | please  
 excellent | pleasure | between | them  
 uttered | joy | sounds  
 a man | was bereft | senses | knew | did  
 spoke  
 decided  
 keep | promise | moment  
 indeed | knight  
 stay | castle | I shall be | bound | command  
 as | host | journeyed | far off  
 then | stayed up | recovered  
 truly  
 remain | room | at  
 tomorrow | until | meal time | go  
  
 return  
 stay  
  
 to | go  
 this  
 bowing | the noble man that he is

24

“Yet further,” quoth the **freke**, “a **forward** we make:  
 Whatsoever I win in the wood, it **worths** to **yours**;  
 And what **chek** so ye achieve, **change** me **therefore**.  
**Sweet**, swap we so, swear **with truth**,  
 Whether, **leude**, so **lymp lere other** better.”  
 “By God,” quoth Gawain the good, “I grant **theretill**.  
**And** that you **list** for to **layke**, **lef** it **me thinks**.”  
 “**Who** brings us this beverage, this bargain is made!”  
 So said the lord of that **lede**. They laughed each one.  
 They drank, and **daylyeden**, and **dalten untygel**,  
 These lords and ladies, while **that** them **liked**;  
 And **sithen** with **Frankish fare** and **fele** fair **lotez**  
 They stood, and **stemed**, and **stilly** spoke,  
 Kissed full **comelily**, and **kagten** their leave.  
 With many **leude** full **lygt**, and **lemande** torches,  
 Each **burne** to his bed was brought at the last,  
 full **soft**.

host | pact  
 goes | you  
 fortune | trade | for it  
 good sir | on | your honor  
 sir | it | turns out | worse | or  
 what you ask  
 if | it pleases | play | delightful | to me | seems  
 once someone  
 company  
 chatted | made | merry  
 it | pleased  
 then | courtly | behavior | many | words  
 stopped | softly  
 courteously | took  
 servants | eager | blazing  
 man  
 comfortable

To bed yet ere they **yede**,  
**Recorded covenants** oft;  
 The old lord of that **leude**  
 Could well **hold layk aloft**.

went  
 they recalled | their agreement  
 host  
 keep | a game | going

**Part III**

1

Full early before the day the folk arose.  
 Guests that go would, their grooms they called,  
 And they **busken** up **bilive**, **blonks** to saddle,  
**Tiffen** their **tackles**, **trussen** their **males**,  
**Richen** them **the richest**, to ride all arrayed,  
 Leap up lightly, **lachen** their bridles,  
 Each **wighe** on his way, where him well liked.  
 The **leue** lord of the land was not the last  
 Arrayed for the riding, with **renks** full many;  
 Ate a **sop** hastily, when he had heard mass,  
 With bugle to **bent** field he **busks bilive**.  
 By **that** any daylight **lemed** upon earth,  
 He with his **hathels** on high horses were.  
 Then the **catchers** that could coupled their hounds,  
 Unclosed the kennel door, and called them thereout,  
 Blew bigly on bugles three bare notes.  
**Braches** bayed therefore, and **breme** noise made,  
 And they **chastised**, and **charred**, on chasing that went;  
 A hundred of hunters, as I have heard tell,  
     of the best.  
 To **tristors vewters yod**;  
**Couples** hunters off **kest**.  
 There rose for **blastes gode**  
 Great **rurd** in that forest.

hasten | quickly | horses  
 prepare | gear | pack | bags  
 dress | in the | noblest raiment  
 take  
 man  
 dear  
 men  
 light meal  
 hunting | hastens | quickly  
 the time that | shone  
 men  
 huntsmen  
  
 hounds | fierce  
 whipped | turned back  
  
 hunting stations | deerhound keepers | went  
 leashes | cast  
 blasts | good  
 noise

2

At the first **quethe** of the **quest** quaked the **wild**.  
 Deer **drof** in the dale, **doted for** dread,  
 Hied to the **high**; but **heterly** they were  
**Restayed with** the **stable**, that stoutly **ascried**.  
 They let the harts **have the gate**, with the high heads.  
 The **breme** bucks also, with their broad **paums**:  
 For the **free** lord had **defended** in **fermysoun** time  
 That there should no man **meve to** the male deer.  
 The hinds were held in with “Hey!” and “War!”  
 The does driven with great din to the deep **slades**.  
 There might one see, as they **slipped**, **slenting** of arrows.  
 At each **wende under wande wapped** a **flone**

baying | hounds | game  
 fled | dazed | with  
 high ground | vigorously  
 turned back | by | beaters | shouted  
 go | their | way  
 splendid | antlers  
 noble | decreed | closed season  
 interfere | with  
  
 valleys  
 were loosed | flying  
 turn | in the | wood | flew | shaft

That bigly bit on the **brown**, with full broad heads.  
**What**, they **brayen** and bleed; by **banks** they die.  
 And **ay rachches** in a rush **radly** them follow,  
 Hunters with **high** horn haste them after,  
 With such a **crackande** cry, as cliffs had **brusten**.  
 What **wild** so escaped **wighes** that shot  
 Were all **to-raced** and rent at the **resayt**.  
**Bi** they were **tened at** the **high** and **taysed** to the waters,  
 The **ledes** were so **learned** at the low **trysteres**,  
 And the greyhounds so great, that **geten** them **bilive**,  
 And them **tofylched**, as fast as **frekes** might look,  
     **there right**.  
 The lord for bliss **abloy**,  
 Full oft **con launce** and **light**,  
 And **drof** that day with joy,  
 Thus to the dark night.

3

Thus **laykes** this lord by **lunde** wood's **eves**.  
 And Gawain the good man in **gay** bed lies,  
**Lurks** while the daylight **lemed** on the walls,  
 Under coverlet full clear, curtained about.  
 And as in slumbering he **slode**, **slegly** he heard  
 A little din at his door, and **dernly** open;  
 And he heaves up his head out of the clothes.  
 A corner of the curtain he **caught** up a little,  
 And **waits** warily thither-ward, **what** it be might.  
 It was the lady, loveliest to behold,  
 That drew the door after her full **dernly** and still,  
 And **boged** toward the bed. And the **burne shamed**,  
 And laid him down **lystyly**, and **let as** he slept.  
 And she stepped stilly, and stole to his bed,  
**Kest** up the curtain, and crept within,  
 And set her full softly on the bedside,  
 And **lenged** there **selly** long, to **look** when he wakened.  
 The **lede** lay lurking a full long while,  
**Compassed** in his **conscience to** what that **case** might  
 Mean **other amount**. **To** marvel **him thought**;  
 But yet he said to himself, "More seemly it were  
 To **espy** with my **spell** in **space** what she would."  
 Then he wakened, and **wroth**, and to her **ward** turned,  
 And **unlocked** his eyelids, and **let as him wondered**,  
 And **sayned him**, as by his **sage** the safer to **worth**,  
     with hand.  
 With chin and cheek full sweet,  
 Both white and red **in-blande**,

**brown hide**  
 lo | cry out | hillsides  
 ever | hounds | swiftly  
**loud**  
 ringing | burst  
 game | men  
 pulled down | receiving station  
 after | harassed | from | high ground | driven  
 men | skilled | stations  
 they caught | quickly  
 pulled down | men  
 right | there  
 was carried away  
 did | gallop | alight  
 passed

sports | linden | borders  
**fair**  
 lies snug | shone

slept | warily  
 saw it stealthily

raised  
 looks | to see what

softly  
 moved | man | was ashamed  
 craftily | let on | as if

drew

remained | very | see  
**knight**  
 pondered | mind | as to | situation  
 or | amount to | a | to him | it seemed

find out | speech | time  
 stretched | direction  
 opened | let on | as if | he | was surprised  
 crossed | himself | prayer | be

together

Full lovely **con** she **lete**,  
With lips small **lagande**.

4

“Good morning, sir Gawain,” said that fair lady.  
“Ye are a sleeper **un-slyghe**, **that man** may **slide** hither.  
Now are ye taken **astit**, **but truce us** may **shape**:  
I shall bind you in your bed, **that be ye trayst**.”  
All **lagande** the lady **lanced** those **bourdes**.  
“Good morning, **gay**,” quoth Gawain the **blithe**.  
“**Me** shall **worth** to your will, and that me well **likes**.  
For I yield me **yederly**, and **yege after grace**,  
And that is the **best**, by my **dome**, for me **behooves need**.”  
And thus he **bourded again** with many a **blithe** laughter.  
“**But** would ye, lady lovely, then leave me grant,  
And **depress** your prisoner, and pray him to rise,  
I would **boge** of this bed, and **busk** me better.  
I should **keuer** the more comfort to **karp** you with.”  
“Nay, for sooth, **beau** sir,” said that **sweet**.  
“Ye shall not rise from your bed, I **rich** you **better**.  
I shall **happe** you here **that other half** also,  
And **sithen karp** with my knight that I caught have;  
For I ween well, **iwysse**, sir **Wawen** ye are,  
That all the world worships, whereso ye ride.  
Your honour, your **hendelayk** is **hendely** praised  
By lordes, by ladies, by all that life bear.  
And now ye are here, **iwysse**, and we **both** are **one**.  
My lord and his ladies are **on length faren**;  
Other **burnes** in their beds, and my **burdes** also;  
The door **drawen**, and **dit** with a **derf hasp**.  
And **sithen** I have in this house him that **all** likes,  
I shall **ware** my **while** well, while it lasts,  
**with tale**.

Ye are welcome to my **cors**,  
Your own **won** to **wale**.  
Me **behooves** of **fine force**,  
Your servant **be**, and **shale**.”

5

“In good faith,” quoth Gawain, “**gain** it **me thinks**  
(Though I be not now **he** that ye of speak)  
To **reach to** such reverence as ye rehearse here.  
I am **wighe** unworthy, I **wot** well myself.  
By God, I were glad, **and** you good thought,  
In **sage other** in service that I **set** might  
To the pleasure of your **price**. It **were** a pure joy.”

did | appear  
laughing

unware | if | one | steal  
in a moment | unless | a truce | we | reach  
of that | certain  
laughing | spoke | jesting words  
gay woman | cheerful  
I | submit | pleases  
willingly | cry | for | mercy  
best thing | judgment | to | do  
jested | in return | cheerful  
if  
release  
get out | dress  
attain | talk  
fair | sweet woman  
from | will tell | something better  
tuck in | on that | side  
then | talk  
indeed | Gawain

courtliness | graciously

indeed | two | alone  
far | away | gone  
men | maidens  
closed | fastened | strong | pin  
since | everyone  
spend | time  
in | conversation  
company  
pleasure | take  
it behooves | pure | necessity  
to be | so I shall

an achievement | to me | seems  
such a man  
be worthy | of  
a man | know  
if  
word | or | devote myself  
worthiness | would be

“In good faith, sir Gawain,” quoth the gay lady,  
 “The **price** and the prowess that pleases all others,  
 If I it **lacked**, **other set at light**, it were little **daynté**.  
 But **it** are ladies enough, that **liefer** were now  
**Have** ye, **hende**, in **hor** held, as I thee have.  
 But I love that **ilk** lord that the **lyfte holds**.  
 I have **hit** wholly in my hand that all desires,  
     through **grace**.”  
 She made him so great cheer,  
 That was so fair of face.  
 The knight with speeces **skere**  
 Answered to **each a case**.

6

“Madame,” quoth the merry man, “Mary you **yelde**.  
 For I have found, in good faith, your **fraunchis** noble,  
 and **other** full **much** of other folk **fongen** by their deeds.  
 But the **daynté** that they **deal**, **for** my desert **nys even**.  
 It is the **worship** of yourself that naught but **well conns**.”  
 “By Mary,” quoth the **menskful**, “**me think it another**.  
 For were I worth all the **wone** of women alive,  
 And all the wealth of the world were in my hand,  
 And I should **cheapen** and choose to **cheve** me a **lord**,  
 For the **costes** that I have **known upon** the knight here,  
 Of beauty, and **debonerté**, and **blithe semblaunt**,  
 And that I have **ere** hearkened, and held it were true,  
 There should no **freke** upon **folde** before you be chosen.”  
 “**Twysse, worthy**,” quoth the **wighe**, “**Ye have waled** well better.  
 But I am proud of the **price** that ye put on me,  
 And, **soberly** your servant, my sovereign I hold you,  
 And your knight I become, and Christ you **foryelde**.”  
 Thus they **meled** of **much-what**, till mid-morn passed,  
 And **ay** the lady let **like as** him loved much.  
 The **freke ferde with defence**, and **feted full fair**.  
 “Though I were **burde brightest**,” the **burde** in mind **had**,  
 “The less **love** in his **lode**, for **lur** that he sought,  
     **boute hone**.”  
 The **dune** that should him **deve**,  
 And needs it must be done.  
 The lady then spoke of **leave**;  
 He granted **her full sone**.

7

Then she gave him good day, and with a **glent** laughed;  
 And as she stood, she **stonied** him with full **stor** words:  
 “Now he that **speeds** each speech, **this disport yield** you:

excellence  
 disparaged | or | treated | as | trivial | courtesy  
 there | more eager  
 to have | gracious man | their power  
 same | heavens | rules  
 it  
 His mercy

pure  
 every one | of | her points

reward  
 generosity  
 besides | many | shown to be worthy  
 honor | show me | to | is not | equal  
 recognition | favorably | shows  
 noble lady | to me | the matter | seems | otherwise  
 value

bargain | acquire husband  
 qualities | seen | in  
 courtesy | cheerful | disposition  
 previously  
 man | earth  
 indeed | noble lady | man | could have | chosen  
 value  
 seriously  
 reward  
 talked | many things  
 ever | on | as though she  
 man | was | on | guard | behaved | courteously  
 lady | fairest | lady | thought  
 love would be | journey | sorrow  
 without | delay  
 blow | fell

leaving  
 it to her | soon

glance  
 astonished | harsh  
 succeeds in | to this | jest | submit

But that ye be Gawain, it **gets** in **mind**.”  
 “Wherefore?” quoth the **freke**, and **freschly** he asks,  
**Feared** lest he had failed in **form** of his **castes**.  
 But the **burde** him **blessed**, and “**By** this **skill**” said,  
 “So good as Gawain **gainly** is **halden**,  
 And courtesy is **closed** so **clean** in **himself**,  
 Could not **lightly** have **lenged** so long with a lady,  
 But he had craved a kiss, by his courtesy,  
 By some **touch** of some trifle, at some tale’s end.”  
 Then quoth **Wowen**, “**Iwysse**, **worthe** as you **likes**,  
 And **fire** lest it displease you, so plead it no more.”  
 She comes nearer with that, and catches him in arms,  
**Loutes luflych adown**, and the **leude** kisses.  
 They **comely bykennen** to Christ either other.  
 She **dos her** forth at the door, without **din** more.  
 And he **riches** him to rise, and **rapes** him **sone**,  
**Clepes** to his chamberlain, chooses his **wede**,  
**Boges** forth, when he was **boun**, **blithely** to mass.  
 And then he **meved** to his **meat**, that **menskly** him **keped**,  
 And made merry all day till the moon rose,  
 with game.  
 Was never **freke** fairer **fonge**,  
 Between two so **dinge dame**,  
 The older and the **yonge**.  
 Much **solace set** they **same**.

8

And **ay** the lord of the land is **lent** on his games,  
 To hunt in **holts** and heath, at hinds barren.  
 Such a **sowme** he there slew by **that** the sun **heldet**,  
 Of does and of other deer, **to deem were wonder**.  
 Then **fersly** they flocked in **folk** at the last,  
 And quickly of the **quelled** deer a quarry they made.  
 The **best boged** thereto, with **burnes** enough,  
 Gathered the greatest of **grease** that there were,  
 And did them **dearly undo**, as the deed **asks**.  
**Searched** them at the assay, some that there were;  
 Two **fingers** they found **of** the **foulest** of all.  
**Sithen** they slit the slot, **seized** the **erber**,  
**Schued** with a sharp knife, and the **schire knitten**.  
**Sithen ritte** they the four limbs, and rent off the hide,  
 Then **brek** they the **bale**, the bowels out took,  
**Lystily for** loosening the **lere** of the knot.  
 They **gripped** to the **gargulun**, and **graihely departed**  
 The **wesaunt** from the wind-hole, and **walt** out the guts.  
 Then **scher** they out the shoulders with their sharp knives,

is | doubt  
 knight | quickly  
 afraid | manner | speech  
 lady | reassured | for | reason  
 rightly | accounted  
 contained | completely | him  
 easily | remained

hint  
 Gawain | indeed | let it be | wish  
 proceed

bends | lovingly | down | knight  
 fittingly | commend  
 takes | herself | ado  
 prepares | hurries | quickly  
 calls | clothing  
 goes | ready | cheerfully  
 went | meal | suitably | awaited

man | entertained  
 worthy | ladies  
 younger  
 pleasure | had | together

ever | away  
 woods  
 number | the time that | set  
 so as to | it were | a wonder  
 eagerly | throng  
 hunted  
 gentlemen | came | men  
 fat  
 neatly | cut | requires  
 examined  
 finger-breadths | in | poorest  
 then | took | gullet  
 scraped it | flesh | tied  
 then | cut off  
 cut open | belly  
 deftly | to avoid | grip  
 laid | hold of | throat | quickly | separated  
 esophagus | tossed  
 cut

**Haled** them by a little hole, to have whole sides.  
**Sithen britned** they the breast, and **braiden** it in twain,  
 And **eft** at the **gargulun begins** one then,  
**Rives** it up **radly**, right to the **bight**,  
**Voids** out the **avanters**, and verily thereafter  
 All the **rimes** by the ribs **radly** they **lance**.  
 So **ride** they off **by reason** by the **rigge** bones,  
**Ewenden** to the haunch, that hung all **samen**,  
 And heaved **hit** up all whole, and hewed **hit** off there;  
 And that they name **for** the **numbles**, by name as I **trow**,

**by kind**.

By the **bight** all of the thighs  
 The **lappes** they **lance** behind.  
 To hew **hit** in two they **hies**,  
 By the backbone to unbind.

9

Both the head and the **hals** they hewed off then,  
 And **sithen sunder** they the sides swift from the **chin**,  
 And **corbeles fee** they cast in a **greve**.  
 Then **thurled** they **either** thick side through, by the rib,  
 And hung then **either** by **hoges** of the **fourches**,  
 Each **freke** for his **fee**, as falls **forto** have.  
 Upon a **felle** of the fair beast feed they their hounds,  
 With the liver and the **lightes**, the **lether** of the **paunches**,  
 And bread **bathed** in blood, **blende** there amongst.  
**Baldly** they blew **prize**, bayed their **rachches**.  
**Sithen fonge** they their flesh, **folden** to home,  
**Strakande** full stoutly many **stiff** notes.  
 By **that** the daylight was done, the **douthe** was all **wonen**  
 Into the **comely** castle, where the knight **bides**  
 full **still**.

With bliss and bright fire **bette**,  
 The lord is come theretill.  
 When Gawain with him met,  
 There was but **weal at will**.

10

Then commanded the lord in that **sale** to **samen** all the **many**,  
 Both the ladies **on loghe** to **light** with their **burdes**.  
 Before all the **fold on** the **flette**, **frekes** he bids  
 Verily his venison to fetch him before.  
 And all **goodly** in **gomen** Gawain he called,  
**Teaches** him to the tales of full **tayt** beasts,  
 Shows him the **schire grease** shorn upon ribs.  
 “How **thayes** you this **play**? Have I **prize** won?”

extracted  
 then | cut up | pulled  
 again | esophagus | starts  
 cuts | promptly | fork of the legs  
 clears | edible neck viscera  
 membranes | quickly | loosen  
 clear | according to | correct procedure | back  
 trimmed | together  
 it  
 as | edible viscera | believe  
 as is | proper  
 fork  
 skin | fold  
 the carcass | hurry

neck  
 then | separate | backbone  
 raven's | portion | thicket  
 pierced | each  
 each | hocks | legs  
 man | portion | to him to  
 skin  
 lungs | lining | stomachs  
 steeped | mixed  
 vigorously | the successful hunt | hounds  
 then | took | turned  
 sounding | loud  
 the time that | company | come  
 fair | abides  
 quietly  
 kindled

delight | in | their minds

hall | gather | company  
 from | their dwelling | descend | maids  
 company | in | hall | men

courteously | merriment  
 regales | with | nimble  
 shining | flesh  
 pleases | sport | praise

Have I thoroughly **thanks** through my **craft served**?"  
 "Yes **iwyse**," quoth that other **wighe**. "Here is **wayth** fairest  
 That I saw this seven years in season of winter."  
 "And **all** I give you, Gawain," quoth the **gome** then.  
 "For by **accord** of **covenant** ye **crave** it as your own."  
 "This is sooth," quoth the **segge**. "I say you that **ilk**:  
 What I have **worthily wommen** this **wones** within,  
**Iwisse** with as good will it **worths to** yours."  
 And kisses him as **comelily** as he **couth advise**.  
 "Take you there my **chevicaunce**; I **checked** no more.  
 I **vouch** it **safe, finely though feler** it were."  
 "It is good," quoth the good man. "**Grant mercy therefore**.  
 It may be **such** it is **the** better, **and** ye me **breve** would  
 Where ye won this **ilk weal**, by **wit of yourself**?"  
 "That was not **forward**," quoth he. "**Frayst** me no more.  
**For** ye have taken what you **tides, trawe** no **other**  
 ye **mowe**."

They laughed and made them **blithe**,  
 With **lotes** that were to **lowe**.  
 To supper they **yede asswithe**,  
 With dainties new **enow**.

11

And **sithen** by the **chimney** in **chamber** they sat.  
**Wighes** the **wall** wine **weghed** to them oft.  
 And **efte** in their **bourding** they **baythen** in the morn  
 To **fill** the same **forwards** that they before made.  
 What **chance** so **betides**, their **chevysaunche** to **change**,  
 What **news** so they **nome**, at night when they meet.  
 They **accorded** of the covenants before the court all.  
 The beverage was brought forth in board at that time.  
 Then they **lovelich leghten** leave at the last;  
 Each **burne** to his bed **busked bilive**.  
 By **that** the cock had crowed and cackled but thrice,  
 The lord **was lopen of** his bed, **the leudes** each one,  
 So that the **meat** and the mass was **meetly delivered**.  
 The **douthe dressed** to the wood, ere any **day sprenged**,  
 to **chase**.

**Hey** with **hunt** and horns  
 Through plains they pass **in space**.  
 Uncoupled among the thorns  
**Raches** that ran on **race**.

accolades | skill | earned  
 indeed | man | meat  
  
 all of it | man  
 the rules | our agreement | may claim  
 knight | same thing  
 honorably | won | house  
 indeed | shall | become  
 graciously | was | able  
 winnings | achieved  
 grant | freely | and fully | even if | more  
 thank | you | for it  
 that | for the | if | tell  
 same | prize | your | own | cleverness  
 the agreement | ask  
 as | are owed | expect | more  
 may  
 merry  
 words | be praised  
 went | straightaway  
 enough

then | fireplace | the hall  
 men | fine | brought  
 again | jesting | agreed  
 fulfill | agreement  
 fortune | befalls | winnings | exchange  
 new things | took  
 agreed | to

courteously | took their  
 man | went | quickly  
 the time that  
 had | leapt | out of | and the | men  
 meal | fittingly | completed  
 company | went | dawn | broke  
 the hunt  
 eagerly | hunstmens  
 soon | after

hounds | the trail

12

Soon they call of a **quest** in a **kerr** side.  
 The hunt **rehayted** the hounds, that **hit** first **minged**.  
 Wild **words** **him** **warp** with a **wrast** noise:  
 The hounds that **hit** heard hastened **thither swithe**,  
 And fell as fast to the **fuyt**, forty at once.  
 Then such a **glauer** and **glam** of **gedered rachches**  
 Rose, that the **rocheres** rang about;  
 Hunters **hem hardened** with horn and with mouth,  
 Then all in a **semblé** **swayed** together.  
 Between a **flosche** in that **frith**, and a **foo** crag,  
**In** a **knot**, by a cliff, at the **kerr** side,  
 There **as** the rough rocks **unridely** were fallen,  
 They **ferden** to the finding, and **frekes** them after.  
 They **umbekesten** the **knarre** and the **knot** both,  
**Wighes** **while** they **wisten** well within them it were,  
 The beast that there **breved** was **with** the bloodhounds.  
 Then they beat on the bushes and bade him up rise,  
 And he **unsoundly out** sought **segges overthwert**,  
**One** the **sellokest swine swaged** out there,  
 Long **sithen** from the **sounder** that **sighed** for **old**;  
 For he was **breme** boar **alther** greatest,  
 Full grim when he **gronyed**. Then **grieved** many,  
 For three at the first **thrust** he **thright** to the earth,  
 And **sparred** forth **good** speed, **boute spit** more.  
 These others **hallowed**, “Hi!” full **high** and “Hey! Hey!” cried,  
**Haden** horns to mouth, **heterly rechated**.  
 Many was the merry **mouth** of men and of hounds,  
 That **busks** after this boar, with **bost** and with noise,  
     To **quell**.  
     Full oft he **bides** the bay  
     And maims the **mute** in **melle**.  
     He hurts **of** the hounds and they  
     Full **gomerly** yowl and yell.

for | search | marsh  
 encouraged | it | scented  
 cries | to them | they shouted | loud  
 it | there | quickly  
 trail  
 babble | clamor | assembled | hounds  
 rocky banks  
 them | encouraged  
 company | rushed  
 pool | wood | forbidding  
 on | rocky hill | marsh  
 where | in confusion  
 rushed | men  
 surrounded | crag | hill  
 men | because | knew  
 announced | by

unwisely | escape | through the line | of men  
 one of | most marvelous | boars | rushed  
 since | herd | had separated | old age  
 a fierce | of all the  
 grunted | were dismayed  
 charge | threw  
 sprang | at great | without | harm  
 shouted | loudly  
 put | vigorously | blew the recall  
 cry  
 hastens | clamor  
 kill  
 stands | at  
 pack | the middle  
 some of  
 piteously

13

**Schalks** to shoot at him **shownen to** then,  
**Haled to** him **of her** arrows, hit him oft;  
 But the points **payred** at the **pith** that **pight** in his **shelds**,  
 And the barbs **of** his brow bite none would,  
 Though the **schauen** shaft **schindered** in pieces.  
 The head **hipped** again, wheresoever **hit** hit;  
 But when the **dints** him **deared of** their **drighe** strokes,  
 Then, **brain-wod** for **bate**, on **burnes** he rushes,  
 Hurts **hem** full **heterly** where he forth hies,  
 And many **arged** thereat, and **onlyte drogen**.

men | pressed | forward  
 shot | at | with | their  
 failed | toughness | was | shoulders  
 into  
 smooth | shattered  
 rebounded | it  
 blows | hurt | by | ceaseless  
 frenzied | fighting | men  
 them | savagely  
 feared | back | drew

But the lord on a **light** horse **launces** him after.  
 As **burne** bold upon **bent** his bugle he blows.  
 He **rechated** and rode through **rones** full thick,  
**Suande** this wild swine till the sun **schafed**.  
 This day with this **ilk deed** they **drive on** this **wise**,  
 While our **luflich lede** lies in his bed,  
 Gawain **grathely** at home, in **geres** full rich  
 of hue.

The lady not **forgate**  
 Came to him to **salue**.  
 Full early she was him **ate**,  
 His mood for to **remue**.

14

She comes to the curtain and at the knight **totes**.  
 Sir **Wawen** her welcomed **worthly on** first,  
 And **ho him yelds** again. Full **gerne of** her words,  
 Sets her softly by his side. And **swithely** she laughs.  
 And with a loving look she **laid** him these words:  
 “Sir, if ye be **Wawen**, **wonder me thinks**,  
**Wigh** that is so well **wrast** always to good,  
 And can not of **company** the **costs undertake**;  
 And if **man kens** you them to know, ye cast them **of** your mind.  
 You have forgotten **yederly** what yesterday I taught  
 By **alder-truest token** of talk that I **cowthe**.”  
 “What is that?” quoth the **wighe**. “**Iwisse I wot never**.  
 If it be **sooth** that ye **beve**, the blame is mine own.”  
 “Yet I **kend** you of kissing,” quoth the **clear** then.  
 “**Whereso countenance** is **couthe**, quickly to claim,  
 That becomes such a knight, that courtesy **uses**.”  
 “**Do way**,” quoth that **derf** man, “my dear, that speech.  
 For that **durst** I not do, lest I **devayed** were.  
 If I were **werned**, I **were** wrong **iwisse**, if I **proffered**.”  
 “**Ma fay**,” quoth the merry wife, “ye may not be **werned**.  
 Ye are **stiff** enough to constrain with strength, if you like,  
 If any were so villainous that you **devaye** would.”  
 “Yea, by God,” quoth Gawain, “good is your speech.  
 But threat is **unthruande** in **thede** where I **lend**,  
 And each gift that is given not with good will;  
 I am at your commandment, to kiss when you like.  
 Ye may **lach** when you **list**, **leave** when you **think**,  
 in **space**.”

The lady **loutes adown**,  
 And **comlily** kisses his face.  
 Much speech they there **expoun**,  
 Of **druryes greme** and **grace**.

nimble | gallops  
 warrior | battlefield  
 sounded the call | bushes  
 pursuing | set  
 same | activity | pass | in | way  
 good | knight  
 pleasantly | clothes

forgetting  
 greet  
 with  
 influence

peeps  
 Gawain | courteously | at  
 her | he | receives | eager | for  
 robustly  
 said to  
 Gawain | strange | to me | it seems  
 a man | disposed  
 polite society | rules | follow  
 someone | teaches | from  
 already  
 the truest | knowledge | know  
 man | indeed | know | not  
 truth | say  
 taught | fair lady  
 wherever | favor | evident  
 practices  
 leave | off | brave  
 dare | refused  
 refused | would | indeed | had offered  
 in | faith | refused  
 strong  
 refuse

unworthy | country | dwell

take one | like | leave off | see fit  
 time  
 bends | down  
 graciously  
 share  
 love's | grief | joy

## 15

“I would **wit at** you, **wighe**,” that **worthy** there said,  
 “**And** you **wrathed** not therewith, what **were** the **skill**  
 That so young and so **yep** as ye at this time,  
 So courteous, so knightly as ye, are known **out**?  
**And** of all chivalry to **choose**, the chief thing **alosed**,  
 Is the **lel layk** of love, the **letrure** of arms;  
 For to tell of these **teueling** of these true knights,  
 It is the **tytelet token** and text of their works:  
 How **ledes** for their **lel** love their lives have **auntered**,  
 Endured for their **drury** doleful **stoundes**,  
 And **after venged** with their valor and **voided** their care,  
 And brought bliss into **bower**, with **bounties** their own.  
 And ye are knight **comlokest kid** of your **eld**.  
 Your **word** and your **worship walks anywhere**;  
 And I have sat by **yourself** here **sere** twice,  
 Yet heard I never **of** your head **held** no words  
 That ever **longed** to love, less nor more.  
 And ye, that are so courteous and **coint** of your **hetes**,  
 Ought to a **young think yearn** to show,  
 And teach some tokens of true love’s crafts.  
 Why! Are ye **lewed**, that all the **los welds**,  
**Other** else ye deem me too dull, your **dalliance** to **hearken**?  
 For shame!  
 I come hither **single**, and sit  
 To learn **at** you some game.  
 Do teach me of your wit,  
 While my lord is **fro hame**.”

## 16

“In good faith,” quoth Gawain, “God you **foryeld**!  
 Great is the good glee, and **gomen** to me huge,  
 That so **worthy** as ye would **win** hither,  
 And **thine you** with so poor a man, **as play** with your knight,  
 With **anyskinnes countenance**; it **keures** me **ease**.  
 But to take the **toruayle** to myself to true love expound,  
 And **touch** the themes of **text**, and tales of arms,  
 To you that, I **wot** well, **welds** more **slight**  
**Of** that art, by the half, **or** a hundred of such  
 As I am, **other** ever **shall**, in **erde** while I live,  
 It were a folly **fele-folde**, my **free**, by my **troth**.  
 I would your **wilning worche at** my **might**,  
 As I am highly beholden, and ever more will  
 Be servant to yourself, so save me **Drighthen!**”  
 Thus him **frayned** that **free**, and **fondet** him oft,  
**For** to have **wonnen** him to woo, **whatso** she **thought** else,

learn | from | sir | noble lady  
 if | were angered | do you think is | reason  
 sprightly  
 about  
 indeed | practice | to be praised  
 true | observance | knowledge  
 deeds  
 inscribed | title  
 men | true | offered  
 love | times  
 afterwards | avenged | expunged  
 a woman’s bower | virtues  
 noblest | known | age  
 fame | honor | are known | everywhere  
 you | on occasions  
 from | come forth  
 pertained  
 polite | vows  
 young person | be | eager  
  
 ignorant | renown | enjoys  
 or | conversation | hear  
  
 alone  
 from  
  
 away from | home

reward  
 pleasure  
 worthy a woman | come  
 trouble | yourself | as to | converse  
 any kind of | favor | gives | pleasure  
 hard task  
 touch upon | story  
 know | has | skill  
 in | than  
 or | shall be | earth  
 several times over | worthy woman | upon | word  
 desires | carry out | within | power  
  
 God  
 tested | noble lady | tempted  
 in order | caused | whatever | had in mind

But he defended him so fair, that no fault **seemed**,  
Nor no evil on neither **half**. Nothing they **wisten**

But bliss.

They laughed and **layked** longe;  
At the last she **con** him kiss.  
Her leave fair **con** she **fonge**  
And went her way **iwisse**.

17

Then **ruthes** him the **renk** and rises to the mass,  
And **sithen** their dinner was **dight** and **dearly** served.  
The **lede** with the ladies **layked** all day,  
But the lord over the lands **launced** full oft,  
**Swegh** his **oncely swine** that **swings** by the **banks**  
And **bote** the best of his **braches** the backs asunder.  
There he **bode** in his bay, till bowmen it broke  
And made him, **mawgref** his **head**, for to move **outer**.  
So fell **flones** there **flet**, when the folk gathered;  
But yet the **stiffest** to **start by stounds** he made,  
Till at the last he was so **mat** he might no more run  
But, in the **hast** that he might, he to a hole **wins**.  
**Of a rasse**, by a rock, there runs the **boerne**.  
He gets the bank at his back, begins to **scrape**.  
The froth foamed at his mouth **unfair** by the **wikes**,  
Whets his white tusks. **With** him then **irked**  
All the **burnes** so bold that him by stood,  
To **nye** him **on-ferum**. But **nege** him none durst

For **wothe**.

He had hurt so many **beforne**  
That all **thought** then full loath  
**Be** more with his tusks torn  
That **breme** was and **brain-wod** both.

18

Till the knight came himself, **cachande** his **blonk**,  
Saw him **bide** at the bay, his **burnes beside**.  
He **lights lufflich adown**, leaves his courser,  
**Braides** out a bright **bront**, and **bigly** forth strides,  
**Founds** fast through the ford, where the **fell bides**.  
The **wild** was **ware** of the **wighe** with weapon in hand.  
**Hef** **highly** the **here**, so **hetterly** he **finast**,  
That **fele** feared for the **freke**, lest **felle** him the worst.  
The **swine sets** him out on the **segge even**,  
**That** the burne and the boar were both **upon heaps**.  
For the man marks him well, as they meet first.  
**Set** **sadly** the **sharp** in the **slot even**,

appeared  
side | knew

amused themselves  
did  
did | take  
indeed

bestirs | knight  
then | prepared | splendidly  
knight | enjoyed himself  
galloped  
pursues | fearsome | boar | rushes | hillsides  
bit | hounds  
stood  
despite | desire | into the open  
many | arrows  
bravest | flinch | at | times  
exhausted  
fastest way | gets  
in | bank | stream  
paw the ground  
hideously | corners  
of | wearied  
men  
harass | from afar | approach  
danger  
before  
were  
to be  
fierce | frenzied

urging on | horse  
stand | men | beside him  
dismounts | graciously | down  
pulls | sword | mightily  
hastens | fell beast | waits  
wild beast | aware | man  
he raised | high | bristles | fiercely | snorted  
many | knight | befall  
boar | rushes | man | straight  
so that | in a | heap  
he set | firmly | sharp blade | breast | directly

Hit him up to the hilt, that the heart **schindered**.  
 And he **yarrande** him **yelde**, and **yedown** the water,  
 Full **tit**.  
 A hundred hounds him **hent**,  
 That **bremely con** him bite.  
**Burnes** him brought to **bent**,  
 And dogs to death **endite**.

19

There was blowing of **prize** in many **breme** horn,  
**Heghe hallooing** on high, **with hathels** that **might**.  
**Brachets** bayed **that** beast, as **bidden** the masters,  
 Of that **chargeaunt** chase that were chief **hunts**.  
 Then a **wighe** that was wise **upon** wood crafts  
 To **unlace** this boar **luffly** begins.  
 First he hews off his head and on high sets  
 And **sithen** rends him all **rough** by the **ridge after**,  
**Braids** out the bowels, **brenns** them on **glede**;  
 With bread **blent** therewith his **braches rewards**.  
**Sithen** he **britnes** out the **brawen** in bright broad **chelds**  
 And **hats** out the **hastlets**, as **highly** beseems.  
 And yet them **halches** all whole the halves together,  
 And **sithen** on a **stiff stange** stoutly them hangs.  
 Now with this **ilk swine** they **swengen** to home.  
 The boar's head was borne before the **burne's selven**,  
 That him **forferde** in the ford, through force of his hand  
 so strong.  
 Till he saw sir Gawain,  
 In hall **him thought** full long.  
 He called and he came **gain**,  
 His **fees** there for to **fonge**.

20

The lord full loud with **lote** and laughter merry,  
 When he sees sir Gawain with **solace** he speaks.  
 The good ladies were **geten** and gathered the **many**.  
 He shows them the **schelds**, and **shapes** them the tale  
 Of the **largesse**, and the length, the **lithernes** also  
 Of the **were** of the wild **swine**, in wood where he fled.  
 That other knight full **comely** commended his deeds  
 And praised it as great **prize**, that he proved had.  
 For such a **brawn** of a beast, the bold **burne** said,  
 Nor such sides of a **swine**, saw he never **ere**.  
 Then handled they they hog's head. The **hende** man it praised,  
 And **let lodly** thereat the lord for to hear.  
 "Now Gawain," quoth the good man, "this **gomen** is your own,

burst  
 snarlingly | yielded | went down in  
 quickly  
 caught  
 fiercely | did  
 men | the battlefield  
 brought him

the capture call | loud  
 loud | shouting | by | men | could  
 hounds | at that | commanded  
 hard | huntsmen  
 man | in  
 cut up | eagerly

then | roughly | backbone | afterwards  
 takes | burns | hot coals  
 mixed | hounds | he feeds  
 then | cuts | flesh | slabs  
 takes | entrails | fitly  
 fastens  
 then | strong | pole  
 same | boar | hasten  
 knight | himself  
 had killed

to him | it seemed  
 straightaway  
 payment | receive

speech  
 joy  
 brought | household  
 slabs | tells  
 great size | fierceness  
 fighting prowess | boar  
 graciously  
 excellence  
 flesh | man  
 boar | before  
 courteous  
 expressed | horror  
 prize

By **fine forward** and **fast, faithfully** ye know.”  
 “It is sooth,” quoth the **segge**, “and as **siker** true.  
 All my **get** I shall **you** give again, by my **troth**.”  
 He **hent** the **hathel** about the **halse**, and **hendely** him kisses,  
 And **effe-sones** of the same he served him there.  
 “Now we are even,” quoth the **hathel**, “in this eventide.  
 Of all the coventants that we **knit**, **sithen** I came hither,  
     by law.”  
 The lord said, “By saint Gile  
 Ye are the best that I know.  
 Ye **ben** rich in a while  
 Such **chaffer and ye drowe**.”

21

Then they **teldet** tables trestles **aloft**,  
**Kesten clothes** upon. **Clear light** then  
**Wakened** by **woghes**, waxen torches,  
**Segges** set and served in **sale** all about.  
 Much **glam** and glee **glent** up therein,  
 About the fire **upon flet**, and **on fele wise**.  
 At the supper and after, many **athel** songs,  
 As **coundutes** of Christmas, and carols new,  
 With all the mannerly mirth that men may of tell.  
 And ever our **lufflich** knight the lady beside.  
 Such **semblaunt** to that **segge seemly** she made,  
 With **still stolen countenance**, that **stalworth** to please,  
 That all **forwondered** was the **wighe**, and wroth with himself.  
 But he **bolde** not for his **nurture nurne** her **again**,  
 But dealt with her all in **dainty**, howsoever the **deed** turned  
     **towrast**.  
 When they had played in hall  
 As long as their will **hom** last,  
 To chamber **he con** them call  
 And to the **chimney** they passed.

22

And there they drank and **dalten**, **deemed eft** anew  
 To **norne** on the same **note**, on New Year’s even.  
 But the knight **craved** leave to **kayre** on the morn,  
 For it was nigh **at the term** that he **to** should.  
 The lord him **letted** of that, to **lenge him resteyed**,  
 And said, “As I am **true segge**, I **siker** my troth,  
 That shall **cheve** to the Green Chapel, thy **charres** to **make**,  
**Leude**, on New Year’s **light**, long before prime.<sup>7</sup>  
**Forthy** thou lie in thy **loft**, and **lach** thine ease,

<sup>7</sup> The hour of prime, or six a.m.

ratified | agreement | binding | truly  
 knight | surely  
 gains | to you | word  
 clasped | lord | neck | courteously  
 again immediately  
 knight  
 made | since

will be  
 trade | if | carry on

set up | upon  
 put | coverings | bright | lights  
 kindled | walls  
 men | hall  
 merrymaking | sprang up  
 in | the hall | in | many | ways  
 noble  
 traditional songs

gracious  
 demeanor | knight | sweetly  
 secret | stealthy | looks | stalwart man  
 astonished | man  
 could | good breeding | repel | in return  
 courtesy | affair  
 amiss

might  
 the lord | did  
 fireplace

talked | decided | again  
 bargain | terms  
 asked | depart  
 upon | time | go  
 dissuaded | stay | upon him | prevailed  
 a faithful | man | pledge  
 get | business | attend to  
 knight | morning  
 therefore | chamber | take

And I shall hunt in this **holt**, and **hold** the **towches**,  
**Change with** the **chevisaunce**, **by that** I **charre** hither.  
 For I have **fraysted** thee twice, and faithful I find ye.  
 Now ‘Third time proves best’ **think** on the morn.  
 Make we merry while we may, and **minne** upon joy,  
 For the **lur** may man **lach**, when so man likes.”  
 This was **graiethely** granted, and Gawain is **lenged**.  
**Blithe** brought was him drink, and they to bed **yeden**,  
 with **light**.

Sir Gawain lies and sleeps,  
 Full still and soft all night.  
 The lord that his **crafts keeps**,  
 Full early he was **dight**.

23

After mass a morsel he and his men took.  
**Merry** was the morning; his **mounture** he **asks**.  
 All the **hathels** that on horse **should helden** him after  
 Were **boun busked** on their **blonks**, before the hall gates.  
**Ferly** fair was the **fold**, for the frost **clenged**.  
 In red, **rudede** upon **rack**, rises the sun,  
 And full clear coasts the clouds of the **welkyn**.  
 Hunters **unhardeled** by a **holt** side.  
**Rocheres rungen** by **rys**, for **rudde** of their horns.  
 Some fell **in** the **fute**, where the fox **bade**.  
 Trails oft a **traueres**, by **traunt** of their wiles.  
 A **kenet** cries thereof; the **hunt** on him calls.  
 His fellows fall him to, that **fnasted** full **pike**,  
 Running forth in a rabble, in his **right fare**.  
 And he **fiskes** them before; they found him **soon**.  
 And when they saw him with sight, they **sued** him fast,  
**Wregande** him full **weterly** with a **wroth** noise.  
 And he **trantes** and **tornayes** through many **tene greve**,  
**Hamlounes** and **hearkens**, by hedges full oft.  
 At the last by a little ditch he leaps over a **spenné**,  
 Steals out full **stilly** by a **strothe rande**,  
**Went** have **wild of** the wood, with wiles from the hounds.  
 Then was he **went**, ere he **wist**, to a **wale trister**.  
 There three **thro at** a **thrich thrat** him at once,  
 all **gray**.  
 He **blenched** again **bilive**  
 And **stiffly start onstray**.  
 With all the woe on **live**,  
 To the wood he went away.

forest | hold to | agreement  
 exchange | for | winnings | with | which | return  
 tested  
 remember  
 think  
 sorrow | find  
 promptly | made to stay  
 cheerfully | went  
 lights

affairs | attends to  
 dressed

pleasant | mount | asks for  
 men | were to | follow  
 ready | mounted | horses  
 wondrously | earth | clung  
 fiery | clouds  
 sky  
 unleashed the hounds | wood  
 rocky banks | rang | the woods | the noise  
 to | trail | abode  
 went from | side to side | dint  
 small hound | hunter  
 panted | hard  
 very | track  
 scampers | quickly  
 pursued  
 denouncing | loudly | fearsome  
 dodges | doubles back | a rough | thicket  
 waits | listens  
 thorny hedge  
 stealthily | thicket | edge  
 hoped to | escaped | out of  
 come | knew | fair | hunting station  
 fierce hounds | in | rush | attacked  
 greyhounds  
 swerved | quickly  
 boldly | started | away  
 earth

24

Then was it **list** upon life to **listen** the hounds.  
 When all the **mute** had him met, **menged** together,  
 Such a **sorge** at that sight they set on his head,  
 As all the **clamberande** cliffs had clattered **on** heaps.  
 Here he was hallooed, when **hathels** him met.  
 Loud he was **gained**, with **yarande** speech;  
 There he was **threted**, and oft thief called,  
 And **ay** the **titleres** at his tail, **that** tarry he **ne** might.  
 Oft he was run at, when he **out rayked**,  
 And oft **reeled** in again, so Reynard<sup>8</sup> was wily.  
 And yea he led them **by lagmon**, the lord and his **many**,  
 On this manner by the **mounts**, **while mid-over-under**,  
 While the **hende** knight at home **wholesomely** sleeps,  
 Within the **comely** curtains, on the cold morn.  
 But the lady for love **let** not to sleep,  
 Nor the purpose to **pare**, that **pight** in her heart,  
 But rose her up **radly**, **raiked her** thither  
 In a **merry** mantle, **mete** to the earth,  
 That was furred full fine with **felles**, well **pured**.  
 No hues good on her head, but the **hager** stones  
 Traced about her **tressour**, by twenty in clusters.  
 Her **thriven** face and her throat **throwen** all naked,  
 Her breast bare before, and **behind eke**.  
 She comes within the chamber door, and closes it her after,  
**Waves** up a window, and on the **wighe** calls,  
 And **radly** thus **rehayted** him, with her **rich** words,  
 with cheer:

“Ah, man, how may thou sleep?  
 This morning is so clear!”  
 He was in drowsing deep,  
 But then he **con** her hear.

25

In **dreg** drooping of dream **draveled** that **noble**,  
 As **man** that was **in mourning of** many **thro** thoughts:  
**How** that destiny should that day deal him his **wyrde**,  
 At the Green Chapel, when he the **gome** meets,  
 And **behoves** his **buffet abide**, without debate more.  
 But **when** that **comely** he **covered** his wits,  
**Swenges** out of the **sweuens**, and **swares** with haste.  
 The lady **luflich** came **lagande sweet**,  
**Fell** over his fair face, and **fetly** him kissed.  
 He welcomes her **worthily**, with a **wale cheer**.

joy | listen to  
 pack | joined  
 curse  
 as though | clustering | in  
 men  
 greeted | chiding  
 reviled  
 ever | relay hounds | so that | never  
 in the open | came  
 turned  
 at | his heels | company  
 hills | until | afternoon  
 gracious | soundly  
 fair  
 allowed herself  
 weaken | was fixed  
 quickly | took | herself  
 gay | reaching  
 skins | trimmed  
 well-wrought  
 hair net  
 fair | were  
 her back | also

raises | man  
 sternly | rebuked | noble

did

heavy | muttered | noble knight  
 a man | beset | upon | by | oppressive  
 the way | fate  
 man  
 must | blow | endure  
 at the time | properly | recovered  
 he comes suddenly | dreams | answers  
 lovely | laughing | sweetly  
 bent | daintily  
 courteously | fair | manner

<sup>8</sup> Reynard is a standard name for the fox in medieval stories.

He sees her so glorious and gayly attired,  
 So faultless **of** her features, and of **so** fine **hues**.  
 With **wallande** joy warmed his heart.  
 With **smooth** smiling and **smolt** they **smeten** into mirth,  
**That** all was bliss and **bonchef**, that **broke** them between,  
 and **winne**.  
 They **lanced** words good;  
 Much **weal** then was therein.  
 Great peril between them stood,  
**Nif** Mary of her knight **minne**.

26

For that princess of **price depressed** him so **thick**,  
**Nurned** him so nigh the **thread**, that **need** him behoved  
**Other lach** there her love, **other lodly** refuse.  
 He **cared for** his courtesy, lest **cretin** he were,  
 And more for his **mischief**, if he should **make** sin,  
 And be traitor to that **tulk**, that that **teld agt**.  
 “God **shield**,” quoth the **schalk**. “That shall not befall!”  
 With **love-laging** a **light**, he **laid** him **beside**  
 All the speeches of **specialty** that sprang **of** her mouth.  
 Quoth that **burde** to the **burne**, “Blame ye deserve,  
**Yif** ye love not that life that ye lie **next**,  
**Before** all the **wighes** in the world, wounded in heart,  
**But** if ye have a **lemman**, a lover, that you likes better,  
 And **folden** faith to that **free**, **fastened** so **hard**,  
 That you **lausen ne list**, and that I **leue nouthe**.  
 And that ye tell me that, now truly I pray you,  
 For all the loves upon **live**, **layne** not the **sooth**,  
 for guile.”  
 The knight said, “By Saint John,”  
 And **smethely con** he smile.  
 “In faith I **weld right** none,  
 or none will **weld the** while.”

27

“That is a word,” quoth that **wight**, “That worst is of all.  
 But I am **swared for sooth**, that **sore me thinks**.  
 Kiss me now **comely**, and I shall **catch hethen**.  
 I may not mourn upon **molde**, as **may** that much loves.”  
**Sykande** she **swege** down and seemly him kissed.  
 And **sithen** she **severs** him from and says as she stands,  
 “Now, dear, at this departing, **do** me this **ease**:  
 Give me **somewhat of** thy gift, thy glove if it were,  
 That I may **minne** on thee, man, my mourning to lessen.”  
 “Now **iwysse**,” quoth that **wighe**, “I would I had here

in | such | colors  
 welling  
 courteous | gently | fell  
 so that | happiness | was shared  
 joy  
 spoke  
 delight  
 unless | take care

great worth | pressed | hard  
 urged | limit | it  
 either | accept | or | rudely  
 attended | to | a boor | seem  
 own welfare | commit  
 man | castle | owned  
 forbid | knight  
 playful | light laugh | set | aside  
 fondness | from  
 lady | man  
 if | next to  
 more than | women  
 except | mistress  
 have pledged | free woman | pledged | firmly  
 break faith | do not | desire | believe | now

earth | hide | truth

gently | did  
 have | at all  
 have | for a

lady  
 inclined | to | believe | painful | to me | seems  
 graciously | go | hence  
 the earth | may a woman  
 sighing | bent  
 then | departs  
 give | consolation  
 something | as  
 think  
 indeed | man

The **leuest** thing for thy love that I in land **welde**.  
 For ye have deserved, **forsooth**, **sellily** oft  
 More reward by **reason** than I **reach** might.  
 But to **deal** you **for drurye** that **dawed** but **neked**.  
 It is not your honour to have at this time  
 A glove for a **garysoun**, of Gawain's gifts.  
 And I am here **an errand** in **erdes uncouth**,  
 And have no men with no **males**, with **menspful** things.  
 That **mislikes** me, lady, for **love** at this time.  
 Each **tulk** must do as he is **tan**, take **to** not ill,  
 nor **pine**."

"Nay, **hende** of high honours,"  
 Quoth that **lovesome** under **line**,  
 "Though I had naught of yours,  
 Yet should ye **have** of mine."

28

She **ragt** him a rich ring of red gold **works**,  
 With a **starande** stone, **stondande aloft**,  
 That **bere blushande** beams as the bright sun.  
**Wit** ye well, it was worth **weal** full huge.  
 But the **renk** it **renayed**, and readily he said,  
 "I **will** no gifts for God, my **gay**, at this time.  
 I have none you to **norne**, **ne** naught will I take."  
 She **bede** it **him** full **busily**, and he her **bode wernes**,  
 And **swere** swift by his **sooth**, that he **hit seize nolde**.  
 And she **sore** that he **forsook**, and said thereafter,  
 "If ye **renay** my ring, to **rich for** it seems,  
**Ye** would not so **highly halden** be to me,  
 I shall give you my girdle, that **gains** you less."  
 She **lagt** a **lace lightly**, that **leke umbe** her sides,  
**Knit** upon her **kirtle**, under the **clear** mantle.  
**Geared** it was with green silk, and with gold **shaped**,  
**Naught** but **around braiden**, **beten** with **fingers**.  
 And that she **bede** to the burne, and **blithely besought**  
 Though it unworthy were, that he **hit** take would.  
 And he **nay** that he **nolde neghe** in no **wise**,  
 Neither gold nor **garysoun**, ere God him grace send,  
 To achieve **to** the **chance** that he had **chosen** there.  
 "And therefore, I pray you, displease you naught,  
 And **let** be your **business**, for I **baythe** it you never  
 to **graunte**.

I am **dearly** to you **behold**,  
 Because of your **semblaunt**,  
 And ever **in hot and cold**  
 To be your true **servaunt**."

best | have  
 in truth | exceedingly  
 right | provide  
 give | as | a love token | would achieve | little

keepsake  
 on a | mission | regions | strange  
 bags | valuable  
 displeases | your sake  
 man | given | it  
 grieve  
 gracious man  
 lovely lady | linen

have something

offered | workmanship  
 blazing | set | on top  
 cast | shining  
 mark | a fortune  
 knight | refused  
 wish for | good lady  
 offer | and  
 offered | to him | earnestly | gift | refuses  
 swore | honor | it | take | would not  
 grieved | refused  
 refuse | costly | because  
 if you | deeply | indebted  
 profits  
 took | a belt | quickly | was fastened | around  
 tied | gown | bright  
 fashioned | trimmed  
 nowhere | at the edges | embroidered | set | stones  
 presented | cheerfully | asked  
 it  
 said | would not | touch it | way  
 treasure  
 success in | adventure | undertaken

leave | aside | urging | consent  
 grant  
 deeply | obliged  
 behavior  
 for | better | or | worse  
 servant

29

“Now **forsake** ye this silk,” said the **burde** then,  
 “**For** it is simple in itself? And so it well seems!  
 Lo! So it is little, and less it is **worthy**;  
 But whoso knew the **costs** that knit are therein,  
 He would it **praise** at more **price**, peradventure.  
 For **what gome** so is girt with this green lace,  
 While he **hit** had **hemely halched** about,  
 There is no **hathel** under heaven to **hew** him that might.  
 For he might not be slain, **for slight** upon earth.”  
 Then **kest** the knight, and it came to his **heart**,  
 It **were** a **jewel for** the jeopardy, that **him iugged** were,  
 When he achieved to the chapel, his **chek** for to **fetch**.  
 Might he have **slipped** to be unslain, the **slegt** were noble.  
 Then he **thulged** with her **threpe**, and **tholed** her to speak;  
 And she **bere** on him the belt, and **bede** it him **swithe**  
 (And he **granted**, and him **gafe** with a good will)  
 And **besought** him, for her sake, **discover** it never,  
 But to **lelly lain** from her lord. The leude him **accords**  
 That never **wighe** should it **wit**, **iwyssse**, but they twain,  
     for **nogte**.  
 He thanked her oft full **swithe**,  
 Full **through** with heart and thought.  
 By **that** on **thrinne sithe**,  
**Ho** had kissed the knight so **togt**.

refuse | lady  
 because  
 of value  
 virtues  
 esteem | value  
 whatever | man  
 it | neatly | fastened  
 man | slay  
 by | any means  
 pondered | mind  
 would be | talisman | against | to him | assigned  
 fortune | meet  
 escaped | device  
 was patient | insisting | allowed  
 pressed | offered | earnestly  
 consented | surrendered  
 she implored | to reveal  
 loyally | conceal it | agrees  
 anyone | know | indeed  
 any reason  
 heartily  
 earnestly  
 the time he did so | three | times  
 she | brave

30

Then **lachches ho** her leave, and leaves him there,  
 For more **mirth of** that man might she not get.  
 When she was gone, sir Gawain **geres** him **sone**,  
 Rises, and **riches** him in array noble,  
**Lays up** the lovelace, the lady him **ragt**,  
 Hid **hit** full **holderly**, where he **hit eft fonde**.  
**Sithen chevely** to the chapel **choses** he the way,  
**Prevely** approached to a priest, and **prayed** him there  
 That he would **list** his **lif**, and **learn** him better,  
 How his soul should be saved, when he should **seye hethen**.  
 There he **schrof** him **schirly**, and **showed** his misdeeds,  
 Of the **more** and the **minne**, and mercy beseeches,  
 And **of** absolution he on the **segge** calls.  
 And he absolved him surely, and **sette** him so **clean**,  
 As doomsday should have been **dight on** the morn.  
 And **sithen** he makes him as merry among the **free** ladies,  
 With **comlich** carols and all **kinnes** joy,  
 As never he did **but** that day, to the dark night,  
     with bliss.

takes | she  
 pleasure | from  
 dresses | immediately  
 clothes  
 puts | away | had given  
 it | carefully | it | again | might find  
 then | quickly | finds  
 privately | beseeched  
 hear | confession | teach  
 go | hence  
 confessed | fully | recounted  
 greater | lesser  
 for | man  
 made | pure  
 appointed | for  
 then | noble  
 pleasant | kinds of  
 except on

Each man had **dainty** there,  
Of him, and said, "Iwysse,  
Thus merry he was never ere,  
Since he came hither, ere this."

31

Now **him lenge** in that **lee**, where love him **betides**.  
Yet is the lord in the **land**, leading his games.  
He has **forfaren** this fox, that he **folged** long.  
As he **sprent** over a **spenné**, to spy the **shrew**  
(Where as he heard the hounds that **hasted** him **swithe**,  
Reynard came **richchange** through a rough **greve**,  
And all the rabble in a rush, right at his heels),  
The **wighe** was **ware** of the **wild**, and warily **abides**,  
And **braides** out the bright **bronde**, and at the beast **casts**.  
And he **shunt for** the **sharp**, and **should** have **arered**.  
A **rach rapes** him to, **right ere** he might,  
And right before the horse feet they fell on him all,  
And worried he this **wily** with a wroth noise.  
The lord **lights bilive**, and **laches** him **sone**,  
**Rased** him full **radly** out of the **rach** mouths,  
**Holds** high over his head, halloos **fast**,  
And there bay at him many **brath** hounds.  
Hunters hied them thither, with horns full many,  
**Ay rechatande aright** till they the **renk segen**.  
By **that** was come his company noble,  
All that ever bore bugle blew at once,  
And all the others hallooed, that had no horns.  
It was the merriest **mute** that ever men heard,  
The **rich rurd** that there was raised for Reynard's soul,  
with **lote**.  
**Hor** hounds they there reward;  
**Her** heads they **fawn** and **frote**.  
And **sithen** they take Reynard  
And **tirven** off his coat.

32

And then they **helden** to home, for it was nigh night,  
**Strakande** full **stoutly** on their **store** horns.  
The lord is **light** at the last at his **lef** home,  
Finds fire upon **flet**, the **freke** there beside,  
Sir Gawain the good, that glad was withal.  
Among the ladies for **love** he **ladde** much joy.  
He wore a **bleaunt** of blue, that **bradde** to the earth.  
His surcoat **seemed** him well, that soft was furred,  
And his hood of that **ilk** hung on his shoulder.

courteous treatment  
indeed

let him | stay | comfortable place | befalls  
field  
killed | pursued  
leaped | thorny hedge | villain  
harried | eagerly  
making his way | thicket

man | aware | animal | waits  
pulls | sword | strikes  
swerved | because of | blade | would | retreated  
hound | rushes | just | before

wily beast  
dismounts | quickly | takes | right away  
snatched | quickly | dogs'  
holds him | loudly  
fierce

always | blowing recall | correctly | lord | saw  
that time

noise  
great | outburst  
clamor  
their  
their | stroke | rub  
then  
strip

turned  
sounding | loudly | mightly  
arrived | beloved  
hall | knight

friendship | had  
silk tunic | hung  
suited  
same material

**Blande** all of **blanner** were both all about.  
**He** meets **me** this good man in **myddes** the floor,  
 And all with **gomen** he him greets, and goodly he said,  
 “I shall **fill** upon **first** our **forwards** now,  
 That we **speedly** have **spoken**, when spared was no drink.”  
 Then **acoles** he the knight, and kisses him thrice,  
 As **sauerly** and **sadly** as he **hem set** could.  
 “By Christ,” quoth that other knight, “ye **cach** much **sele**,  
 In **chevisaunce** of this **chaffer**, if ye had **good cheaps**.”  
 “Yea, **of** the **cheap no charge**,” quoth **cheffy** that other.  
 “As is **pertly** paid the **cheaps** that I **agte**.”  
 “Mary,” quoth that other man, “mine is **behind**.  
 For I have hunted all this day, and naught have I gotten,  
 But this foul fox **fell**, the Fiend take the goods.  
 And that is full poor, for to pay for such **price** things,  
 As ye have **pright** me here **thro**, such three kisses,  
     so good.”  
 “Enough,” quoth Sir Gawain.  
 “I thank you, by the **rode**.”  
 And how the fox was slain  
 He told him, as they stood.

33

With mirth and minstrelsy, with **meats** at their **will**,  
 They made as merry as any men might,  
 With laughing of ladies, with **lotes** of **bordes**,  
 Gawain and the good man so glad were they both,  
**But** if the **douthe** had **doted**, **other** drunken been **other**.  
 Both the men and the **many** made many **japes**,  
 Till the **season** was **segen**, that they **sever** must;  
**Burnes** to their bed **behoved** at the last.  
 Then **logly** his leave of the lord first  
**Fochches** this **free** man, and **fair** he him thanks.  
 “For such a **selly** sojourn, as I have had here,  
 Your honour, at this high **fest**, the High King you **yeld**!  
 I **yef** you **me** for one of **yours**, if yourself likes  
 (For I must needs, as ye **wot**, **meue** tomorn)  
**And** ye me **take** some **tulk**, to teach, as ye **hight**,  
 The **gate** to the Green Chapel, **as** God will me **suffer**  
 To **deal**, on New Year’s day, the **dome** of my **wyrdes**.”  
 “In good faith,” quoth the good man, “with a good will.  
 All that ever I you **hight**, **halde** shall I **rede**.”  
 There assigns he a servant, to set him on the way,  
 And conduct him by the downs, that he no **drechch** had,  
 For to **ferk** through the **firth**, and **fare** in the **gaynest**,  
     by **greve**.

adorned | with | ermine  
 Gawain | him | the middle of  
 joy  
 fulfill | as the | agreement  
 in good fortune | entered  
 eagerly | firmly | the kisses | plant  
 enjoy | good fortune  
 receipt | merchandise | a good | bargain  
 about | bargain | it is no | matter | quickly  
 openly | goods | received  
 inferior

skin  
 valuable  
 bestowed upon | warmly

cross

food | pleasure

words | jest

as | company | lost their wits | or | else  
 company | jests  
 time | come | part  
 men | had to go  
 humbly  
 takes | noble | courteously  
 excellent  
 festival | reward  
 give | myself | your men  
 know | leave  
 if | assign | man | promised  
 way | then | allow  
 receive | outcome | fate

promised | readily | grant

delay  
 travel | wood | proceed | shortest way  
 the thicket

The lord Gawain **con thonk**;  
 Such **worship** he would him **weave**.  
 Then of the ladies **wlonk**,  
 The knight has ta'en his leave.

did | thank  
 honor | show  
 noble

34

With care and with kissing he **carps** them **till**.  
 And **fele thryuande** thanks he **thrat** them to have;  
 And they **yelden** him again **yeple that ilk**.  
 They **bikende** him to Christ, with full **cold** sighs.  
**Sithen** fro the **many** he **menskiy** departs.  
 Each man that he met he gave him thanks,  
 For his service, and his solace, and his **sere pine**,  
 That they with **business** had been about him to serve.  
 And each **segge** as **sore**, to **sever** with him there,  
**As** they had **wonde worthily** with that **wlonk ever**.  
 Then with **ledes** and lights he was led to his chamber,  
 And **blithely** brought to his bed, to be at his rest.  
 If he **ne** sleep soundly, say **ne** dare I,  
 For he had much on the morn to **minne**, if he would,  
     in thought.  
 Let him lie there still;  
 He has **near** what he sought.  
**And** ye will a while be still;  
 I shall tell you **how** they **wrought**.

speaks | with  
 many | hearty | pressed  
 returned | promptly | the | same  
 commended | sad  
 then | company | courteously  
  
 special | trouble  
 care  
 man was | pained | part  
 as if | lived | honorably | noble man | always  
 servants  
 joyfully  
 did not | so  
 think about  
  
 nearby  
 if  
 what | did

**Part IV**

1

Now **nighs** the New Year, and the night passes.  
 The day drives out the dark, as **Drighthen** bids.  
 But wild **weathers** of the world **wakened** thereout.  
 Clouds **kesten kenly** the cold to the earth,  
 With **nighe** enough from the north, the **naked** to **tene**.  
 The snow **snitered** full **snart**, that **snaythed** the wild.  
 The **werbeland** wind **wrapped** from the **high**,  
 And drove each dale full of drifts full great.  
 The **leude** listened full well, that lay in his bed.  
 Though he **locks** his lids, full little he sleeps.  
 By each cock that crowed, he knew well the **steven**.  
**Deliverly** he **dressed** up, ere the day **sprenged**,  
 For there was light of a lamp, that **lemed** in his chamber.  
 He called to his chamberlain, that **cofly** him **swared**,  
 And bade him bring him his **bruny**, and his **blonk** saddle.  
 That other **ferks** him up, and fetches him his **wedes**,  
 And **grathes** him sir Gawain **upon** a **great wise**.

draws nigh  
 the Lord  
 storms | arose  
 cast | sharply  
 bitterness | ill-clad | torment  
 came | bitterly | nipped  
 shrill-blowing | rushed | heights  
  
 knight  
 shuts  
 time  
 quickly | got | broke  
 shone  
 promptly | answered  
 mail coat | horse to  
 gets | clothes  
 dresses | in | splendid | manner

First he clad him in his clothes, the cold for to **were**,  
 And **sithen** his other **harness**, that **holdely** was kept.  
 Both his **paunce**, and his **plates**, **piked** full **clean**,  
 The rings **rolled** of the rust, of his **rich bruny**.  
 And all was **fresh** as **upon first**, and he was **fain** then  
 to **thank**.

He **hade upon** each piece  
 Wiped full well and **wlonk**.  
 The **gayest here** to Greece  
 The **burne bade** brought his **blonk**.

2

While the **wlonkest wedes** he **warp** on himself,  
 His coat, with the **conysaunce** of the **clear works**,  
**Ennurned** upon velvet **virtuous** stones,  
 About **beten**, and **bounden**, emroidered seams,  
 And **fair** furred within with fair **pelures**.  
 Yet left he not the lace, the lady's gift:  
 That forgot not Gawain, for good of himself.  
**By** he had belted the **brond** upon his **balge haunches**,  
 Then **dressed** his **drurye** double him about,  
**Swythe swethled umbe** his **swange sweetly**, that knight,  
 The girdle of the green silk, that **gay** well **beseemed**,  
 Upon that royal red cloth, that **rich** was to show.  
 But wore not this **ilk wighe** for **weal** this girdle,  
 For pride of the pendants, that **tholyst** they were,  
 And though the glittering gold **glent upon** ends,  
 But for to save himself, when **suffer him behooved**,  
 To **bide bale** without **debate** of **bronde** him to **were**,  
**other** knife.

By **that** the bold man **boun**,  
**Wynnes** thereout **bilive**.  
 All the **many** of renown  
 He **thankez** oft full **rive**.

3

Then was Gringalet **graythe**, that great was and huge,  
 And had been **sojourned saurely**, and in a **siker wise**.  
**Him list prik** for **point**, that proud horse then.  
 The **wighe wins** him to, and **wites** at his **lire**,  
 And said soberly **himself**, and by his **sooth** swears,  
 "Here is a **many** in this **moat**, that on **menske** thinks.  
 The man them maintains, joy may they have.  
 The **leue** lady, on life **love** her **betide**.  
 If they for charity **cherisen** a guest,  
 And hold honour in their hand, the Hathel them **yelde**.

ward off  
 then | armor | carefully  
 stomach armor | armor plates | polished | bright  
 rolled free | splendid | mail coat  
 as clean | when | it was new | eager  
 give thanks  
 put | on  
 lovely  
 handsomest | from here  
 knight | ordered | horse

noblest | clothes | put  
 showing | excellent | workmanship  
 set | potent  
 set | adorned  
 well | furs

when | sword | smooth | haunches  
 bound | love-token  
 quickly | wound | around | waist | happily  
 the good knight | suited  
 splendid  
 same | man | show  
 polished  
 gleamed | at the  
 submit | he | had to  
 await | death | benefit | sword | defend  
 or  
 the time that | was ready  
 he goes | quickly  
 company  
 thanks | much

prepared  
 stabled | well | secure | way  
 he | was ready to | gallop | all the resting  
 man | goes | looks | coat  
 to himself | word  
 company | castle | courtesy

dear | all her | may regard | befall  
 entertain  
 Lord | reward

And if I might life upon **land** lead **any while**,  
 I should **rech** you some reward readily, if I might.”  
 Then stepped he into stirrup, and **strides** aloft.  
 His **schalk showed** him his shield. On shoulder he it laid,  
**Gordes on** Gringalet, with his gilt heels,  
 And he **starts** on the stone; stood he no longer  
 to prance.

His **hathel** on horse was then,  
 That bore his spear and lance.  
 “This castle to Christ I **ken**.  
 He give it **ay** good **chance!**”

4

The bridge was **braide** down, and the broad gates  
 Unbarred and **borne** open, upon both **halves**.  
 The **burne blessed** him **bilive**, and the **bredes passed**,  
 Praises the porter, **before** the prince kneeled,  
**Gave** him God and good day, that Gawain he **save**,  
 And went on his way, with his **wighe one**,  
 That should teach him to **tourne** to that **tene** place,  
 Where the **rueful race** he should receive.  
 They **bogen** by banks, where **boges** are bare.  
 They **clomben** by cliffs, where clings the cold.  
 The **heaven** was up **halt**, but **ugly** thereunder.  
 Mist **muged** on the moor, **malt** on the mountains.  
 Each hill had a hat, a **mist-hakel** huge.  
 Brooks boilded and **broke**, by banks about,  
**Schire shattering** on shores, where they down **showed**.  
**Wela wille** was the way, where they **by wood should** go,  
 Till it was soon **season** that the sun rises,  
 That **tide**.

They were on a hill full high;  
 The white snow lay beside.  
 The **burne** that rode him **by**  
 Bade his master **abide**.

5

“**For** I have **wonnen** you hither, **wighe**, at this time.  
 And now **nar** ye not far from that **note** place,  
 That ye have **spied** and **spuryed** to specially after.  
 But I shall **say** you for sooth, **sithen** I you know,  
 And ye are a **lede** upon **life** that I well love:  
 Would ye **worch by** my **wit**, ye **worthed** the better.  
 The place that ye **prece** to, full perilous is **halden**.  
 There **wones** a **wighe** in that waste, the worst upon earth.  
 For he is **stiff**, and **sturne**, and to strike loves,

earth | for any | length of time

mounts

man | gave

spurs | to

springs forward

man

commend

ever | fortune

let

laid | sides

knight | crossed | quickly | planks | traversed

who before

wished | keep safe

man | only

go | perilous

grievous | stroke

traveled | branches

climbed

cloud layer | high | threatening

drizzled | melted

mist-cloak

foamed

brightly | dashing | pressed

all | meandering | through the | must

time

time

man | with

wait

now | brought | sir

are not | noted

sought | asked

tell | since

man | earth

acted | on | advice | would fare

hasten | considered

dwells | man

strong | grim

And **more** he is than any man upon middle-earth;  
 And his body bigger than the best four  
 That are in Arththur's house, Hector **other** other.  
 He **cheves that chance** at the Chapel Green  
**There** passes none by that place, so proud in his arms  
 That he **ne dinnes** him to death, with **dint** of his hand.  
 For he is a man **methles**, and mercy none **uses**,  
 For be it churl **other** chaplain that by the chapel rides,  
 Monk **other** mass priest, **other** any man else,  
**Him think** as **queme** him to **quell**, as **quick go** himself.  
**Forthy** I say thee as sooth as ye in saddle sit:  
 Come ye there, ye be killed, **may** the knight **rede**.  
**Trow** ye **me** that truly, though ye had twenty lives  
 to spend.  
 He has **woned** here full **yore**.  
 On **bent** much **baret bend**;  
 Against his **dintez sore**  
 Ye may not you defend.”

6

“**Forthy**, good sir Gawain, let the **gome one**  
 And go away **some** other **gate**, **upon** God's **half**.  
**Caires** by some other **kith**, where Christ might you **speed**.  
 And I shall hie me home again and **hete** you **firre**,  
 That I shall swear by God, and all his good **halghes**,  
 As help me God and the **halydam**, and oaths enough,  
 That I shall **lelly** you **layne**, and **lance** never tell,  
 That ever ye **fondet** to flee, **for freke** that I **wist**.”  
 “Grant mercy,” quoth Gawain, and **gruching** he said,  
 “**Well worth thee**, **wighe**, that would'st my good,  
 And that **lelly** me **layne**, I **lieve** well thou would'st!  
**Founded** for **ferde** for to flee, in **form** that thou tellest,  
 I were a knight coward; I might not be excused.  
 But I **will** to the chapel, **for chance** that may **fall**,  
 And **talk** with that **ilk tulk** the **tale** that **me list**,  
**Worth it** weal **other** woe, as the **wirde likes**  
 it have.  
 Though he be a **sturn knape**  
 To **stigtel** and stand with **stave**,  
 Full well can **Drighten shape**,  
 His servants for to save.”

7

“Mary!” quoth that other man, “Now thou so much **spell**  
 That thou wilt thine own **nye nime** to thyself.  
**And thee list** lose thy life, thee **lette** I **ne keep**.”

**greater**  
  
**or**  
**causes | to | occur**  
**that there**  
**does not | strike | blow**  
**violent | shows**  
**or**  
**or | or**  
**he | thinks it | pleasant | kill | alive | be**  
**therefore**  
**if | has his way**  
**believe | of me**  
  
**lived | long**  
**battlefield | strife | caused**  
**blows | harsh**

**therefore | man | alone**  
**by some | path | for | sake**  
**ride | land | protect**  
**promise | further**  
**saints**  
**holy relics**  
**faithfully | protect | the secret**  
**decided | because of | any man | know**  
**reluctantly**  
**good | luck | to you | sir**  
**faithfully | protect | believe**  
**deciding | fear | the manner**  
  
**will go | whatever | outcome | occur**  
**exchange | same | man | words | I | wish**  
**be | it for | or | fate | will**  
  
**fearsome | fellow**  
**deal with | club**  
**God | bring about**

**as say**  
**harm | take**  
**if | you | wish to | hinder | do not | wish**

**Have** here thy helm on thy head, thy spear in thy hand,  
 And ride you down this **ilk rake**, by yon rock side,  
 Till thou be brought to the bottom of the **breme** valley.  
 Then look a little on the **launde**, on thy left hand,  
 And thou shalt see in that **slade** the **self** chapel,  
 And the **borelich burne** on **bent**, that it keeps.  
 Now fare well **on** God's **half**, Gawain the noble.  
 For all the gold upon **ground** I  **nolde** go with ye,  
 Nor **bear** thee **fellowship** through this **frith** one foot **firre**."  
**By** that the **wighe** in the wood **wends** his bridle,  
 Hit the horse with the heels, as hard as he might,  
 Leaps him over the **launde**, and leaves the knight there,  
 all **one**.

“By God's self,” quoth Gawain,  
 “I will neither **grete** nor groan.  
 To God's will I am full **bayn**,  
 And to him I have me **tone**.”

8

Then **girds** he to Gringalet and **geders** the **rake**,  
**Shoves** in by a **shore** at a **schage** side,  
 Rides **through** the rough **bank**, right to the dale.  
 And then he **waited** him about, and wild it **him thought**;  
 And saw no sign of **resette**, **besides** nowhere,  
 But high banks and **brent**, upon both **halves**,  
 And rough, **knokled knarres**, with **knorned** stones.  
 The **skwez of** the **scowtes skayned him thought**.  
 Then he **hoved**, and withheld his horse at that time,  
 And oft changed his **chere**, the chapel to seek.  
 He saw none such on no side, and **selly him thought**,  
 Save a **little** on a **launde**, a **lawe** as it were:  
 A **balz berg**, by a bank, the **brim** beside,  
 By a fork of a **flood**, that **ferked** there.  
 The **borne** bubbled therein **as** it boiled had.  
 The knight **catches** his **caple** and comes to the **lawe**,  
**Lights** down **luffily**, and at a **lind taches**  
 The reins and his **rich**, on a rough branch.  
 Then he **boges** to the **berg**. About it he walks,  
 Debating with himself what it be might.  
 It had a hole at the end, and on either side,  
 And overgrown with grass in **glodes anywhere**,  
 And all was hollow within, **nobot** an old cave,  
 Or a **crevice** of an old crag, he could it **naught deem**  
 with spell.

“**We**, Lord,” quoth the gentle knight,  
 “Whether this be the Green Chapel?”

take  
 same | path  
 wild  
 glade  
 valley | same  
 strong | man | battlefield  
 for | sake  
 the earth | would not  
 keep | company | wood | further  
 with | man | turns

field  
 alone

weep  
 obedient  
 committed

puts the spurs | starts down | path  
 makes his way | hillside | small wood  
 over | slope  
 looked | to him | seemed  
 shelter | about there  
 steep | sides  
 rugged | crags | gnarled  
 clouds | by | rocks | were touched | it | seemed  
 halted  
 viewpoint  
 a strange thing | to him | it seemed  
 little way off | field | mound  
 smoothly rounded | barrow | water's edge  
 stream | ran  
 stream | as if  
 urges on | horse | mound  
 gets | quickly | tree | fastens  
 noble steed  
 goes | mound

patches | everywhere  
 nothing but  
 fissure | not | judge  
 words  
 alas

Here might about midnight  
The Devil his matins tell!”

9

“Now **iwysse**,” quoth **Wowain**, “**wisty** is here.  
This **oritory** is ugly, with **erbes** overgrown.  
Well **beseems** the **wighe wruxled** in green  
**Deal** here his devotion, in the Devil’s **wise**.  
Now I feel it is the Fiend, in my five wits,  
That has **stoken** me this **steven**, to **strye** me here.  
This is a chapel of **mischance**; that **check** it **betides**.  
It is the **corsedest kirk** that ever I came in!”  
With high helm on his head, his lance in his hand,  
He roams up to the roof of the rough **wones**.  
Then heard he from that hill, in a hard rock,  
Beyond the brook, in a bank, a **wonder breme** noise.  
**What!** It clattered in the cliff, as it cleave would,  
As one upon a **grindelstone** had ground a scythe.  
**What!** It whirred and **whette**, as water at a mill.  
**What!** It rushed, and rang, **rawthe** to hear.  
Then “By God,” quoth Gawawin, “that **gear** as I **trowe**  
Is **riched at the reverence**, me, **renk**, to meet,  
by **rote**.  
Let God **worche** ‘We loo’;  
**Hit** helps me not a **mote**.  
My life though I **foregoo**  
Dread **dotz** me no **lote**.”

10

Then the knight **con** call full **high**,  
“Who **stigtles** in this **stead**, my **steven** to **hold**?  
For now is good Gawain **going** right here.  
If any **wigh aught will**, **winne** hither fast,  
**Other** now **other** never, his **needs** to **speed**.”  
“Abide,” quoth one on the bank, above over his head,  
“And thou shalt have all in haste that I thee **hight** once.”  
**Yet** he **rushed** with that **zurde**, **rapely** in **throwe**,  
And with whetting **a-wharf**, ere he would **light**.  
And **sithen** he **kevers** by a crag, and comes **of** a hole,  
Whirling out of a **wro**, with a fell weapon,  
A Danish ax new **dight**, the **dint** with to **yelde**,  
With a **borelich bit**, **bent** to the **halme**,  
**Filed** on a **fylor**, four foot large.  
It was no less, **by** that **lace** that **lemed** full bright.  
And the **gome** in the green **geared** as first,  
Both the **lire** and the legs, locks and beard,

indeed | Gawain | desolate it  
chapel | weeds  
it suits | man | clad  
to perform | manner

imposed on | appointment | destroy  
ill fortune | omen | signifies  
most accursed | church

dwelling

wondrously | loud  
lo  
grindstone  
lo | ground  
horrible  
behavior | believe  
prepared | out | of | respect | the knight  
as is | proper  
say  
it | bit  
forego  
makes | noise

did | loudly  
rules | place | appointment | keep  
present  
person | anything | wishes | let him come  
either | or | business | conduct

promised  
still | continued | noise | quickly | time  
turned aside | come down  
then | makes his way | out of  
nook  
made | blow | repay  
massive | blade | curved | shaft  
sharpened | grindstone  
measured by | thong | shone  
man | was dressed | as at  
face

Save that **faire** on his foot he **foundez** on the earth,  
 Set the steel to the **stone**, and stalked beside.  
 When he **wan** to the water, there he wade **molde**.  
 He **hipped** over on his ax and **orpedly** strides  
**Bremly brothe** on a **bent**, that broad was about,  
     on snow.  
 Sir Gawain the knight did meet,  
 He **ne lutte** him nothing low.  
 That other said, “Now, sir sweet,  
**Of steven man** may thee **trow**.”

11

“Gawain,” quoth that green **gome**, “God thee **mot look!**  
**Iwysse** thou art welcome, **wighe**, to my place.  
 And thou hast timed thy **travail** as **true** man should;  
 And thou knowest the covenants **kest** us between:  
 At this time twelvemonth thou **took** what **thee falled**,  
 And I should at this New Year **yePLY** thee **quite**.  
 And we are in this valley, verily **our one**.  
 Here are no **renkes** us to **ride**, **rele** as **us likes**.  
**Have** thy helm off thy head, and have here thy pay.  
**Busk** no more **debate** than I thee **bede** then,  
 When thou **wipped** off my head at a **wap one**.”  
 “Nay, by God,” quoth Gawain. “That me **ghost lante**.  
 I shall **gruch** thee no **grwe**, for **grem** that **falls**.  
 But **stigtel** thee **upon** one stroke, and I shall stand still,  
 And **warp** thee no **werning**, to **worch** as thee likes,  
     **no where**.”  
 He leaned with the neck and **lutte**  
 And showed that **schire** all bare  
 And **let as** he naught **dutte**:  
 For dread he would not **dare**.

12

Then the **gome** in the green **graythed him swythe**,  
 Gathers up his grim **tole**, Gawain to smite.  
 With all the **bur** in his body he bore it aloft,  
**Munt** as mightily as **marre** him he would.  
 Had it driven **adown**, as **dreg** as he **atled**,  
 He had been dead of his **dint**, that doughty was ever.  
 But Gawain on that **giserne glifte** him **beside**  
 As it came gliding adown, on **glode** him to **schende**,  
 And shrank a little with the shoulders, **for** the sharp iron.  
 That other **schalk** with a **shunt** the **schene** withholds.  
 And then reproved he the prince with many proud words:  
 “Thou art not Gawain,” quoth the **gome**, “that is so good **halden**,

firmly | walked  
 ground  
 came | would not  
 vaulted | boldly  
 fiercely | grim | field

did not | bow

as to | appointments | one | trust

man | may | guard  
 indeed | sir  
 journey | a true  
 made  
 accepted | to thee | befell  
 promptly | repay  
 by | ourselves  
 men | separate | we may fight | we | like  
 take  
 make | resistance | offered  
 struck | blow | single  
 soul | gave  
 bear | grudge | harm | occurs  
 limit | to  
 offer | resistance | do  
 in no | case  
 bent down  
 flesh  
 let on | as if | feared  
 recoil

man | prepared | himself | quickly  
 weapon  
 strength  
 mightily | destroy  
 down | fiercely | intended  
 blow  
 battleax | glanced | sideways  
 the ground | destroy  
 for fear of  
 man | jerk | bright blade  
 considered

That never **arged** for no **here**, by hill nor by vale,  
 And now thou **fles** for **ferde**, ere thou feel harms.  
 Such cowardice of that knight could I never hear.  
 Neither **fiked** I, nor fled, **freke**, when thou **mintest**,  
 Nor **cast** no **cavellation**, in king's house Arthur,  
 My head flew to my foot, and yet flew I never.  
 And thou, ere any harm **hent**, **arges** in heart.  
 Wherefore the better **burne me burde** be called  
 therefore."

Quoth Gawain, "I **shunt ones**,  
 And so will I no more.  
 But though my head fall on the stones,  
 I can not it restore.

13

"But **busk**, **burne**, by thy faith, and bring me to the **point**.  
 Deal to me my destiny, and do it out of hand.  
 For I shall **stand** thee a stroke, and **start** no more,  
 Till thine ax has me hit, **have** here my **troth**."  
 "Have at thee then," quoth that other, and heaves it aloft,  
 And **waits** as **wrothly** as he **wode** were.  
 He **mintes** at him mightily, but not the man **rines**:  
 Withheld **heterly** his hand, ere it hurt might.  
 Gawain **grathely** it **bides**, and **glent** with no **member**,  
 But stood stilly as the stone, **other** a stump either,  
 That **ratheled** is in rocky ground, with roots a hundred.  
 Then merrily **efte** did he **mele**, the man in the green,  
 "So now thou hast thy heart whole, **hit** me behoves.  
**Halde** thee now the high **hode**, that Arthur thee **ragt**,  
 And **keep** thy **kanel** from this **kest**, if it **keuer** may."  
 Gawain full **gryndelly** with **greme** then said,  
 "Ah! Press on, thou **thro** man, thou threat'nest too long.  
 I **hope** that thy heart **arge** for thine own self."  
 "For sooth," quoth that other **frekke**. "So **felly** thou speak'st,  
 I will no longer in **lite lette** thine **ernde**,  
 right now."

Then takes he him **strithe** to strike  
 And frowns both lip and brow.  
 No marvel that him **mislike**  
 That hoped of no **rescow**.

14

He lifts **lightly** his **lome** and lets it down fair,  
 With the **barb** of the **bit** by the bare neck.  
 Though he **homed** **heterly**, hurt him no more,  
 But **snirt** him on that one side, **that severed** the **hide**.

feared | army

flinch | fear

flinched | fled | struck

raised | objection

occurred | shrinks

man | I | ought to

flinced | once

hurry | man | end

take from | cringe

take | word

looks | fiercely | as if | mad

feints | touches

suddenly

duly | awaits | flinched | limb

or

entwined

again | speak

to strike

may protect | order of knighthood | gave

protect | neck | blow | manage

fiercely | anger

fierce

believe | fears

man | fiercely

delay | hinder | mission

stance

displeased

rescue

quickly | weapon

edge | blade

struck | fiercely

nicked | so that | was cut | skin

The **sharp shrank** to the flesh through the **schire grease**,  
**That** the **schene** blood over his shoulders shot to the earth.  
 And when the **burne** saw the blood **blenk** on the snow,  
 He **sprit** forth **spenne foot** more than a spear length,  
**Hent heterly** his helm, and on his head **cast**,  
**Shot** with this sholders his fair shield **under**,  
**Braides** out a bright sword, and **bremely** he speaks.  
 Never since **that** he was **burne** born of his mother  
 Was he never in this world **wighe** half so **blythe**.  
 “**Blinne**, burne, from thy **bur**, **bede** me no more.  
 I have a stroke in this **stead** without **strife hent**,  
 And if thou **rechest** me any more, I readily shall **quite**,  
 And **yelde yederly** again, and thereto ye trust,  
 and **foo**.

But one stroke here me **falls**  
 The covenant **schop** right so,  
**Fermed** in Arthur’s halls.  
 And therefore, **hende**, now **hoo!**”

15

The hathel **heldet** him from, and on his ax rested,  
 Set the shaft upon **shore**, and on the **sharp** leaned,  
 And looked at the **leude**, that on the **land yede**,  
 How that **doughty** dreadless **dervely** there stands,  
 Armed full **agtez**; in heart it him **likes**.  
 Then he **meles** merrily, with a **much steven**,  
 And with a **rykande rurde** he to the **renk** said,  
 “**Bold burne**, on this **bent** be not so **gryndel**.  
 No man here unmannerly thee **misboden** has,  
 Nor **kyd** but as covenanted, at king’s court **shaped**.  
 I **hight** thee a stroke, and thou it hast. **Halde** thee well paid.  
 I release thee of the remnant, of **rights** all other.  
 If I **deliver** had been, a **buffet paraunter**  
 I could **wrotheloker** have **waret**, to thee have **wrought anger**.  
 First I **mansed** thee **merrily**, with a **mint one**,  
 And **rove** thee with no **rofsore with** right I thee proffered,  
**For** the **forward** that we **fest** in the first night.  
 And thou **tristily** the **troth** and truly **me heldest**.  
 All the **gain** thou me gave, as **good** man should.  
 That other **munt** for the morn, man, I thee proffered.  
 Thou kissedest my **clear** wife, the kisses me **ragtest**.  
 For both two here I thee **bede** but two **bare mints**,  
**bout scathe**.  
 True man **true** restore,  
 Then there man **dread** no **wathe**.  
 At the third thou failed **thore**,

sharp blade | cut | fair | tissue  
 so that | bright  
 knight | gleam  
 leaped | feet | together  
 seized | quickly | put it  
 tossed | in front  
 pulls | fiercely  
 the time that | man  
 a man | happy  
 desist | blows | offer  
 way | resistance | received  
 givest | repay  
 reply | promptly  
 fiercely  
 befalls  
 said  
 confirmed  
 sir | stop

turned  
 the ground | sharp ax  
 knight | field | stood  
 doughty man | boldly  
 undaunted | pleases  
 speaks | loud | voice  
 ringing | sound | knight  
 man | field | fierce  
 ill used  
 behaved | agreed  
 promised | consider  
 claims  
 nimbler | blow | perhaps  
 more harshly | dealt | done | harm  
 threatened | in jest | feint | single  
 rent | wound | which by  
 according to | agreement | made  
 faithfully | compact | with me | have kept  
 profit | a good  
 feint  
 fair | gavest  
 offered | mere | feints  
 without | harm  
 must honestly  
 need fear | danger  
 there

And therefore that tap **ta'** thee.

16

“For it is my **wede** that thou wearest, that **ilk** woven girdle.  
 Mine own wife it thee wove, I **wot** well for sooth.  
 Now know I well thy kisses, and thy **costes** also,  
 And the wooing of my wife; I **wrought** it myself.  
 I sent her to **assay** thee, and soothly **me thinks**,  
**One** the **fautlest freke**, that ever on foot **yede**.  
 As a pearl than the white pea is of **price** more,  
 So is Gawain, in good faith, than other gay knights.  
 But here you lacked a little, sir, and **lewte** you wanted;  
 But that was for no **wilide** work, nor wooing neither,  
 But **for** ye loved your life; thee less I you blame.”  
 That other **stiff** man in study stood a great while,  
 So aggrieved for **greme** he **gried** within.  
 All the blood of his breast **blent** to his face,  
**That all** he shrank for shame **what** the **schalk** talked.  
 The first word upon **folde** that the **freke** **meled**:  
 “Cursed **worth** cowardice and **covetise** both!  
 In you is villainy and vice, that virtue destroys.”  
 Then he **kagt** to the knot, and the **kest** loosens,  
**Braide** **brothely** the belt to the **burne selven**:  
 “Lo! There the **falsing**, **foul** may it **fall**!  
 For **care** of thy **knock** cowardice me taught  
 To accord me with **covetise**, my kind to forsake,  
 That is **largesse** and **lewte**, that **longes** to knights.  
 Now am I faulty and false, and **feared** have been ever  
 Of treachery and **untruth**: both **betide** **sorge**  
 and care!

I **biknowe** you, knight, here **still**:  
 All faulty is my **fare**.  
 Let me **overtake** your will,  
 And **eft** I shall be **ware**.”

17

Then laughed that other **leude**, and **lovely** said,  
 “I **hold** it **hardily** whole, the harm that I had.  
 Thou art confessed so **clean**, **beknownen** of thy **misses**,  
 And hast the penance **apert** at the point of mine **edge**.  
 I hold thee **polysed** of that **plight**, and **pured** as clean,  
 As thou hadst never **forfeited**, **sithen** thou wast first born.  
 And I give thee, sir, the girdle that is gold hemmed.  
**For** it is green as my gown, sir Gawain, ye may  
 Think upon this **ilk threpe**, where thou forth **thingest**  
 Among princes of **price**; and **this** a **pure** token

take

garment | same  
 know  
 conduct  
 set it up  
 test | I | think you are  
 one of | most faultless | men | went  
 value

loyalty  
 treacherous  
 because  
 strong  
 grief | shuddered  
 went  
 as | entirely | at what | man | had said  
 earth | knight | uttered  
 be | greed

took hold | of | fastening  
 flung | angrily | man | himself  
 faith-breaking | ill luck | befall  
 fear | blow  
 greed  
 generosity | loyalty | belongs  
 afraid  
 disloyalty | bring | sorrow

confess to | privately  
 behavior  
 do  
 afterwards | on guard

man | pleasantly  
 consider | completely made  
 cleanly | absolved | faults  
 paid | sword  
 absolved | offense | purified  
 as if | sinned | since  
 as  
 same | contest | ridest  
 high worth | this may be | excellent

Of the **chance** of the Green Chapel, with chivalrous knights.  
 And ye shall in this New Year **again** to my **wones**,  
 And we shall **revel** the remnant of this **rich fest**,  
 full **bene**.”

There **lathed** him **fast** the lord  
 And said, “With my wife, I ween,  
 We shall you well **accord**,  
 That was your enemy keen.”

18

“Nay, for sooth,” quoth the **segge**, and seized his helm,  
 And **has** it off **hendely**, and the **hathel** thanks.  
 “I have **sojourned sadly**. **Sele** you **betide**,  
 And He **yeld** it you **yare**, that **yarkkes** all **menskes**!  
 And commend me to that **courteous**, your comely **fair**,  
 Both that one and that other, mine honoured ladies,  
 That thus their knight with their **kest** have **koyntly** beguiled.  
 But it is no **ferly though** a fool made,  
 And through wiles of women be **wonen** to sorrow.  
 For so was Adam on earth with one beguiled,  
 And Solomon with **fele sere**, and Samson **eft sones**.  
 Delilah dealt him his **wirde**, and David thereafter  
 Was **blended** by Bathsheba, **that** much **bale tholed**.  
**Now** these were **wrathed** by their wiles, it were a **win** huge  
 To love them well, and leave them not, **a leude** that could.  
 For these were **forne** the **freest** that **folged** all the **sele**,  
 Excellently **of** all the others, under **heaven-rich**,  
 that **mused**;  
 And all they were **be-wiled**,  
 With women that they **used**.  
 Though I be now beguiled,  
**Me** think **me burde** be excused.”

19

“But **your** girdle,” quoth Gawain, “God you **foryield**!  
 That will I **weld** with good will, not for the **winne** gold,  
 Nor the **saint**, nor the silk, nor the side pendants;  
 For wealth, not for **worship**, nor for the **wlonk works**,  
 But **in** sign of my **surfet** I shall see it oft,  
 When I ride in renown, **remorse** to myself  
 The fault and the frailty of the flesh **crabbed**,  
 How **tender** it is to entice **teches** of **filth**.  
 And thus, when pride shall me prick, for prowess of arms,  
 A look at this lovelace shall **lethe** my heart.  
 But **one** I would you pray, **displeases** you never.  
 Since ye be lord of the yonder land, where I have **lent** in,

adventure  
 come again | house  
 celebrate | noble | festival  
 pleasantly  
 invited | earnestly

reconcile

takes | courteously | man  
 stayed | long enough | may joy | befall  
 give | fully | grants | honors  
 courteous lady | fair wife

trickery | cleverly  
 wonder | though to be  
 brought

many | various ones | in the same | way  
 fate  
 deluded | he who | misery | suffered  
 since | brought to grief | gain  
 were there a | man  
 of old | noblest | achieved | success  
 above | heaven  
 lived  
 ruined  
 dealt with

I | I | ought to

for your | reward  
 wear | delightful  
 belt  
 honor | lovely | workmanship  
 as a sign | misdeed  
 remember in remorse  
 perverse  
 easy | spots | sin

humble  
 one thing | may it displease  
 stayed

With you with **worship** — the **Wighe it** you **yeld**  
 That **upholds** the heaven and on high sits —  
 How **norne** ye your right name, and **then** no more?”  
 “That shall I tell ye truly,” quoth that other then.  
 “Bertilak de Hautdesert I **hat** in this land,  
 Through **might** of Morgan le Fay, that in my house **lenges**,  
 And **koyntyse** of **clergy**, by crafts well learned,  
 The **maystres** of Merlin, many has taken.  
 For she has **dalt drwry** full **dear some** time  
 With that **conable clerk**, that knows all your knights  
 at **hame**.

Morgan the goddess  
 Therefore it is her name.

**Weldez** none **so** high **hawtesse**  
 That she cannot make full tame.

20

“She **wayned** me in this **wise** to your **winne** hall  
 For to **assay** the **surquidre**, if it sooth were,  
 That **rennes** of the great renown of the Round Table.  
 She **wayned** me this wonder, your wits to **reve**,  
 For to have grieved Guinevere and **gart** her to die  
 For **glothing** of that **ilk gomen**, that ghostly spoke,  
 With his head in his hand before the high table.  
 That is she that is at home, the ancient lady;  
 She is even thine aunt, Arthur’s half sister,  
 The duchess’s daughter of Tintagelle, that dear Uther **after**  
 Had Arthur upon, that **athel** is now.  
 Therefore I **ethe** thee, **hathel**, to come to thine aunt,  
 Make merry in my house; my **many** thee loves.  
 And I will thee as well, **wighe**, by my faith,  
 As any **gome** under God, for thy great **troth**.”  
 And he **nicked** him nay, he  **nolde** in no way.  
 They **acolen** and **kissen**, and **kennen** either other  
 To the prince of paradise, and parted right there,  
 on **cold**.

Gawain on **blonk** full **bene**  
 To the king’s **burg busks** bold.  
 And the knight in the **enker** green  
**Wither-ward** wherever he **wold**.

21

Wild ways in the world **Wowen** now rides  
 On Gringalet, that the **grace** had **geten** of his life.  
 Oft he **harbored** in house, and oft all **thereout**;  
 And **many** adventures in vales, and vanquished oft,

honor | Lord | for it | reward  
 rules  
 say | then I ask

am called  
 the power | dwells  
 skill | magical knowledge  
 arts  
 has had | a love affair | passionate | at one  
 excellent | wizard  
 home

there is | of such | pride

sent | manner | splendid  
 test | fame  
 exists  
 sent | befuddle  
 caused  
 fear | same | man

afterward  
 renowned  
 entreat | knight  
 household  
 sir  
 man | faithfulness  
 said to | would not  
 embrace | kissed | commended

cold ground  
 steed | fine  
 city | hastens  
 bright  
 goes forth | would

Gawain  
 gift | received  
 stayed | outdoors  
 he had many

That I **ne tight**, at this time, in tale to **remene**.  
 The hurt was whole, that he had **hent** in his neck,  
 And the **blikkande** belt he bore thereabout,  
**Abelef** as a baldric, **bounden** by his side,  
**Locked** under his left arm, the lace, with a knot,  
**In tokening** he was **tane** in **tech** of a fault;  
 And thus the comes to the court, knight all in **sound**.  
 There **wakened weal** in that **wone**, when **wist** he **great**,  
 That good Gawain was come. **Gain** it **him thought**.  
 The king kisses the knight, and the queen also.  
 And **sithen** many **siker** knights, that sought him to hail,  
 Of his **fare** that him **frayned**; and **ferlily** he tells,  
**Biknowez** alle the **costes** of **care** that he had:  
 The **chance** of the chapel, the **cheer** of the knight,  
 The love of the lady, the lace at the last.  
 The **nirt** in the neck he naked them showed,  
 That he **lagt** for his **unleute** at the **leude**'s hands,  
     for blame.  
     He **tened** when he should tell;  
     He groaned for grief and **grame**.  
     The blood in his face did **melle**  
     When he it should show, for shame.

22

“Lo! Lord,” quoth the **leude**, and the lace handled,  
 “This is the **bend** of this blame I bear in my neck.  
 This is the **lathe** and the loss, that I **lagt** have,  
 Of cowardice and **covetise**, that I have **cagt** there.  
 This is the token of **untruth**, that I am ta'en in,  
 And I must needs it wear, while I may last.  
 For man may hide his harm, but **unhap ne** may **hit**,  
 For where it once is attached, **twinne** will it never.”  
 The king comforts the knight, and all the court also,  
 Laughed loud thereat, and **lufily accords**,  
 That lords and ladies that **longed** to the Table,  
 Each **burne** of the brotherhood a baldric should have,  
 A band, **abelef** him about, of a bright green,  
 And that, for sake of that **segge**, in **sweet** to wear.  
 For that was **accorded** the renown of the Round Table,  
 And he honoured that it had, evermore after,  
 As it is **breved** in the best book of romance.  
 Thus in Arthur's day this **aunter betide**,  
 The Brutus books thereof bears witness.  
**Sithen** Brutus, the bold **burne**, **boged** hither first,  
 After the siege and the assault was ceased at Troy,  
     **Iwysse**.

do not | intend | recount  
 received  
 shining  
 across | fastened  
 secured  
 as a | sign | found guilty | commission  
 good health  
 arose | joy | castle | learned | the great king  
 a good thing | to him | it seemed

then | brave  
 journey | asked | of marvels  
 relates | experiences | hardship  
 adventure | behavior

hurt  
 received | disloyalty | man's

was pained  
 embarrassment  
 rush

knight  
 cause  
 injury | received  
 greed | acquired  
 unfaithfulness

remove | never | it  
 go away

graciously | agrees  
 belonged  
 man  
 wrapped  
 knight | similar fashion  
 granted for

told  
 adventure | occurred

since | warrior | came

indeed

Many **aunterez** here **beforne**  
Have **fallen such** ere **this**.  
Now **that** bore the crown of thorn,  
**He** bring us to his bliss!

strange events | before  
occurred | like this | now  
he that  
may he

Amen.

Hony Soyt Qui Mal Pence.<sup>9</sup>

## References

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<sup>9</sup> Shamed be the one who thinks evil of it.