

"Loveforsaken, from the land banished": The Complexity of Love and Honor in Tolkien's *Fall of Arthur*

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In reading Tolkien's recently released *Fall of Arthur*, you may have sensed the sinking feeling of love crushed by the grim circumstances of reality, the lovers trapped in a situation that's gone terribly wrong. Finding himself saddled with a Guinevere who seems unsatisfied with life away from the advantages of court, Tolkien's Lancelot is uneasy and unhappy about life with the woman he has promised to love forever. This is not the first time readers have seen the influence of Arthurian themes, motifs and characters in Tolkien's fiction, but this new text is, of course, the one most directly indebted to Arthurian tradition. The Arthurian love story is conventionally depicted as a complex triangle in which each of the principal agents struggles among conflicting sets of powerful codes—marriage and feudal bonds for Arthur, marriage and "courtly love" bonds for Guinevere; courtly love and feudal bonds for Lancelot. But although Arthurian elements pervade his major works, and although romantic love is, for Tolkien, a significant theme throughout his oeuvre, in his version of the Lancelot/Guinevere story, courtly love is ultimately pictured as an inferior, even a broken system, while feudal bonds, conceived by Tolkien as the embodiment of what he called the "northern heroic code," are the superior model for noble conduct.

Tolkien composed the bulk of his poem in the mid-1930s, about the time of *The Hobbit*, and abandoned it immediately prior to commencing *The Lord of the Rings*. He seems to have picked it up briefly again in the mid-1950s, after publication of that text, for in a letter to Houghton Mifflin in 1955, Tolkien remarked that "I write alliterative verse with pleasure" and that "I still hope to finish a long poem on The Fall of Arthur in the same measure" (Carpenter 219). Thus Tolkien was, as Verlyn Flieger has written,

re-visioning Arthur even while en-visioning his own myth, and it would hardly be surprising if the two mythologies overlapped. There can be little doubt that Tolkien was not only aware of the overlap, he was consciously exploiting it in *The Lord of the Rings*. (131-32)

Conscious or not, this exploitation seems to have shown itself in both character and theme. One of Tolkien's characters often singled out as Arthurian in inspiration is Aragorn. Claire Jardillier remarks that "Their overall heroic qualities as fighters and kings' sons deprived of their kingdoms, their love for a beautiful, regal lady for whom they must accomplish great deeds in a distinctly courtly pattern, obviously

marks them as members of a same family" (4). Jardillier goes on to argue that Aragorn's love story is similar to Lancelot's and that, further, "he...has the same ability to attract undesired love," comparing Eowyn's ill-fated love of Aragorn to Elaine of Astolat's even worse-fated love for Malory's Lancelot (4).

As for theme, one Arthurian motif often observed in Tolkien's work is the theme of *fin amors* or "courtly" love. Aragorn's aforementioned resemblance to Lancelot is observed mainly in Aragorn's relationship with Arwen, which seems to many critics a courtly love situation. Jennifer Wollock calls their situation "something like" courtly love, since they "eventually marry and reign after a long separation and many chivalric exploits on Aragorn's part" (239). Rogers and Rogers call their attachment "one kind of courtly love: not the pining, fainting kind, but that in which the thought of his *haulte amie* ('lofty beloved') upholds the lover through dangers and discouragements" (103). Similarly, Jardillier asserts of Aragorn and Arwen that "their separation and the many trials and battles that Aragorn must undertake before he can marry her and make her his queen are consistent with the classical pattern of courtly love to be found in medieval romances" (8).¹

Such claims may seem far-fetched to the casual reader of Tolkien, many of whom, like the author of "*The Hobbit: Why Are There No Women in Tolkien's World?*"—a review of the first *Hobbit* film published in *Time*—believe that "Tolkien seems to have wiped women off the face of Middle-earth" (Konigsberg). It is certainly true that for cavalier readers Aragorn's marriage to Arwen might come as something of a surprise at the end of *The Return of the King* (an impression alleviated in Peter Jackson's film version). It is also true that Tolkien himself disparaged the idea of courtly love in some of his letters, such as his defense of Eowyn and Faramir's courtship wherein he states "The tale does not deal with a period of 'Courtly Love' and its pretences; but with a culture more primitive (sc. less corrupt) and nobler" (Carpenter 324).

On the other hand a close scrutiny of Tolkien's whole corpus and, indeed, his personal biography reveals a true weakness, even a reverence, for idealized romantic love: Readers of his biography are aware of his youthful attachment to Edith Bratt, his defiance of his guardian's wishes in pursuing her, and his frantic trip from Oxford to Cheltenham on the eve of his 21st birthday when, free from his guardian's control, he convinced Edith to break her engagement to another man and to marry him. This romantic streak colors major

events in his fiction, such as the story of Beren and Lúthien Tinúviel in the *Silmarillion*, one of the central myths of his entire legendarium: when the mortal Beren sees the elvish princess Lúthien singing and dancing in the forest, he falls instantly in love. The same motif occurs earlier in the same text when the elf Thingol (Lúthien's father) becomes so enamored of the Maia Melian that, instead of crossing the sea to Valinor with the rest of his kin, he stands enchanted in the forest for long years, until he marries Melian and founds the hidden elven kingdom of Doriath. Both of these events are fictional remembrances of Tolkien's own experience when, home recovering from trench fever in 1918, he watched Edith whimsically singing and dancing under the trees in a grove at Holderness—an image he never forgot.

Aragorn and Beren, and Tolkien himself, all experience love at first sight, but all were to face a significant barrier to their love's consummation: for Beren and Aragorn, the barrier involved the love of mortal humans for undying elves; for Tolkien, the barriers included his guardian's forbidding his relationship with Edith before completing his education, as well as concerns of Edith's friends about her marrying a Catholic. In the cases of Beren and of Aragorn, the woman's father sets a nearly impossible quest that must be accomplished before he will part with his daughter—Beren must wrench one of the Silmarils from the iron crown of Morgoth; Aragorn must regain his kingdom, lost for an entire age of Middle-earth. Tolkien himself had a somewhat easier task, though one that may have seemed Herculean to a young man in love: he was forced to refrain from contact with Edith until he came of age. The stories parallel the common features of medieval romance, motivated by an idea of *fin amors* come straight from medieval literature to influence modern Western social mores.

How, then, can Tolkien characterize the courtly tradition as “corrupt,” full of “pretenses,” and lacking in nobility? Concerning love, the questions we need to deal with are, first, what does Tolkien actually *understand* by the term “courtly love”; and, second, what is his real *attitude* toward that phenomenon?

The most influential scholarly examination of courtly love has been C.S. Lewis's classic *The Allegory of Love*. While aspects of Lewis's 1936 work have long since been superseded by other critical studies, Tolkien's own comments suggest that his understanding of the phenomenon was similar to that of his friend and fellow Inkling. Lewis says that the characteristics of courtly love “may be enumerated as Humility, Courtesy, Adultery, and the Religion of Love” (Lewis 2). Concerning Humility, Lewis emphasizes the lover's self-image as the unworthy servant of his socially superior lady, for whom he will perform any task. By Courtesy, Lewis refers to the noble virtues of courtliness: “It is only the noblest hearts which Love deigns to enslave, and a man should prize himself the more if he is selected for such service” (Lewis 32). Love was ennobling, the argument went, and only the truly noble could love—thus Gottfried von Strassburg, for example, dedicates his romance of *Tristan* to the *edele herzen*—the “noble hearts.” Ironically the lover

demonstrates this through his humility: The lover, performing deeds of valor or courtesy for the sake of his beloved, proves his worth to her, and proves the nobility of his love to others.

As for Adultery, Lewis is writing to describe the phenomenon, not to condone it. He characterizes noble marriages in the high Middle Ages as business, political, and family alliances, and notes that “Any idealization of sexual love, in a society where marriage is purely utilitarian, must begin by being an idealization of adultery” (Lewis 13). As opposed to such traditional marriages, courtly love must remain secret, must be illicit, because some barrier exists to the lovers' happy union—most often this barrier takes the form of a husband.

Finally, the “Religion of Love” to which Lewis refers is an idealization of the lady as a semi-divine creature, the lover's adoration of her taking on a spiritual dimension that lifts it above mere lust or everyday love. Anticipating Tolkien, Lewis offers as an example of this phenomenon the character of Lancelot in Chrétien de Troyes' *Knight of the Cart*, widely regarded as the first real courtly love narrative: “he is represented as treating Guinevere with saintly, if not divine, honours,” Lewis remarks. “When he comes before the bed where she lies he kneels and adores her: as Chrétien explicitly tells us, there is no *corseynt* in whom he has greater faith. When he leaves her chamber he makes a genuflection as if he were before a shrine” (Lewis 29).

The views of Chrétien's contemporary, Andreas Capellanus, may have influenced Tolkien's conception of courtly love as well, as they did Lewis's. Though today, Andreas's *De arte honeste amandi* is often seen as an ironic parody, or at least a rhetorically ambiguous text, Lewis takes it seriously in 1936, calling it a “professedly theoretical work” on courtly love (32). It seems likely that Tolkien saw Andreas' text similarly. Thus when Andreas says “when a man sees some woman fit for love and shaped according to his taste, he begins at once to lust after her in his heart” (29), he underscores the popular notion of love at first sight. Tolkien was aware of the widespread use of this theme in medieval literary texts, such as the description of Troilus first catching sight of Criseyde:

And sodeynly he wax therwith astoned,
And gan hir bet biholde in thrifty wise.
“O mercy, God,” thought he, “wher hastow woned,
That art so feyr and goodly to devise?”
(Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, I. 274-277)

Andreas also pronounces that “The easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized” (185). For this reason, the beloved cannot be too easily attained. In courtly love affairs, this difficulty often takes the form of the woman's display of “daunger,” the cool aloofness that keeps the lover from becoming too confident and keeps the lady from appearing to be of easy virtue. In the Chaucerian lyric “Merciles Beaute,” for instance, the Lady will not grant the speaker her love because “Daunger halt

your mercy in his cheyne" (l. 16).

Further, Andreas declares that "A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved" (186). This is the kernel of the idea of constancy that is the foundation of *fin amors*: the true lover is not merely seeking physical gratification. The true lover will remain true after love's consummation—indeed, will remain true until death. Thus Troilus, truest of lovers, cannot bring himself to give up his love of Criesyede, even after she has clearly betrayed him:

...I ne kan nor may,
For al this world, withinne myn hert fynde
To unloven yow a quarter of a day! (V, 1696-98)

Like many another observer of social mores, both Lewis and Tolkien remark that much of this ingrained romantic idealization of love has survived into modern times: "an unmistakable continuity connects the Provençal love song with the love poetry of the later Middle Ages, and thence, through Petrarch and many others, with that of the present day," says Lewis (3). And in a letter to his son Michael in 1941, Tolkien wrote that "The idea still dazzles us, catches us by the throat: poems and stories in multitudes have been written on the theme, more, probably, than the total of such loves in real life.... In such great inevitable love, often at first sight, we catch a vision, I suppose, of marriage as it should have been in an unfallen world" (Carpenter 52).

Concerning marriage, Lewis ends his study of the history of courtly love with a discussion of Spenser's *Fairie Queene*, in which he argues that Spenser was instrumental in the process through which, as Gwenyth Hood puts it, "symbols of Courtly Love became an essential part of the marriage pageantry" (20). In that regard, Lewis contends that Spenser was "the greatest among the founders of that romantic conception of marriage which is the basis of all our love literature from Shakespeare to Meredith" (360). Specifically, in Spenser's Book IV, Lewis regards Britomart as the figure of "Chastity attained—the triumphant union of romantic passion with Christian monogamy" (345), while Amoret represents love, "wrongly separated from marriage by the ideals of courtly gallantry, and at last restored to it by Chastity" (344).

This romantic idealization of marriage is for Lewis a final development of the *fin amors* tradition, as Spenser comes at the end of the era, and as such it is an aspect of the convention that survives in modern notions about love and the "happily ever after" marriage. But Tolkien absolutely disregards Lewis's connection of marriage with courtly love in any form, while still retaining that romantic idealization of marriage—and this is where Tolkien's Lancelot most clearly parts company with any other modern survivals of the courtly love tradition.

Tolkien seems to have accepted the "love at first sight" motif as at least possible, and applauded the idea of absolute fidelity, but he makes it clear in his letter to Michael that two of Lewis's characteristics of the initial—and to Tolkien's

mind unchanged—character of courtly love (i.e. adultery and the "Religion of Love") were absolutely anathema to his ethical system. Idealization of love, he says, can be very good, since it takes in far more than physical pleasure, and enjoins if not purity, at least fidelity, and so self-denial, "service", courtesy, honour, and courage. Its weakness is, of course, that it began as an artificial courtly game, a way of enjoying love for its own sake without reference to (and indeed contrary to) matrimony. Its centre was not God, but imaginary Deities, Love and the Lady. It still tends to make the Lady a kind of guiding star or divinity... the object or reason of noble conduct. This is, of course, false and at best make-believe. (49)

The true ideal, Tolkien asserts in a draft of a letter intended for C.S. Lewis in 1943, is marriage: "*Christian marriage*—monogamous, permanent, rigidly 'faithful'—is in fact the truth about sexual behavior for *all humanity*," Tolkien declares. "[T]his is the only road of total health (including sex in its proper place) for all men and women" (60).

Tolkien brought this considerable knowledge of medieval literature, Arthurian legend and the courtly love tradition to his composition of the *Fall of Arthur* and his characterization of Lancelot and Guinevere. This fragmentary alliterative verse retelling of the Arthurian legend, assembled as usual by Tolkien's son Christopher from the handwritten drafts Tolkien left among his seemingly bottomless piles of notes and documents, is of a piece with the recent *Legend of Sigurd and Gudrun*: written decades ago, it is in Germanic-style alliterative verse and is compiled from several different sources, but is put together in a way shaped by Tolkien himself, and contains certain elements that deviate significantly from any of his sources.

Tolkien follows what scholars call the chronicle tradition of Arthurian legends to a large extent, particularly Layamon's *Brut* and the *Alliterative Morte Arthur*: here Guinevere is barely mentioned; further, following Geoffrey of Monmouth's narrative, in both Layamon and the Alliterative *Morte* Guinevere betrays Arthur in favor of his nephew and usurper Mordred. In *The Fall of Arthur*, Tolkien does make Lancelot and Guinevere major characters, and in this draws particularly from the Stanzaic *Morte* and, of course, Malory. But his depiction of the love affair departs radically from either of those sources. Guinevere (whose name Tolkien sometimes spells *Guinever*) receives the same rough treatment that she receives in the Chronicle accounts: even though she rejects Mordred in Tolkien's version, fleeing his lustful advances by escaping alone into the night, her motivations are selfish and materialistic, and she misjudges her influence on Lancelot even after she has left him to go back to Arthur. Indeed, in fragmentary notes that indicate Tolkien's ultimate plan for Guenivere in this incomplete text, she comes upon Lancelot, finally returned to Logres too late for Arthur's final battle with Mordred, and she is snubbed by her former lover. The last view Tolkien's completed text would have given us of her would have been of her watching from far off the sails of Lancelot's departing ship (167).²

But Lancelot is finally the character whose image suffers

most in Tolkien's version: living with Guinevere after their love has caused a rift with Arthur that compelled him to rescue her from the stake, he realizes the depth of his fault in their affair and is not unhappy to send her away. He cannot, however, reconcile with Arthur, and not, in this version, because of Gawain's enmity (as in Malory), but rather because neither he nor the king can bring himself to sue for the other's forgiveness. Tolkien's approach to the character of Lancelot in his *Fall of Arthur* is from the outset an unsympathetic one. He cannot be Chretien's perfect lover, unconquerable because his devotion to his lady is absolute;



he cannot be Malory's hero whose love ultimately leads him to a sanctified end. For Tolkien, Lancelot is the potentially great warrior whose glory is finally dimmed by his personal failure—specifically, his adultery.

Tolkien's poem opens with Arthur leading his knights into battle against the Saxons in the east, having left Mordred in charge of his kingdom. Tolkien makes Gawain the chief bastion of Arthur's army—as he is in the chronicle tradition exemplified by the two texts on which Tolkien most clearly models his own story (Layamon's *Brut* and the *Alliterative*

Morte Arthur). But Tolkien quickly departs from those sources in lines 44-45 of his book I, when he declares of Arthur "Lancelot he missed; Lionel and Ector, / Bors and Blamore to battle came not." No explanation is given at this point, but a reader familiar with the Arthurian tradition recognizes Malory's influence here: the story has opened after Lancelot has rescued the Queen from death at the stake, and forsaken Arthur's court. When word comes to Arthur that his kingdom is under enemy attack and that Mordred has usurped his throne, Arthur laments "Now for Lancelot I long sorely, / and we miss now most the mighty swords of Ban's kindred" (I, 183-85), and expresses his desire to send for Lancelot's help against Mordred. But Gawain is unwilling for the King to humble himself to his former knight, and declares "If Lancelot hath loyal purpose / let him prove repentance, his pride forgoing, / uncalled coming when his king needeth!" (I, 195-97).

In book II, Mordred, upon learning that Arthur is returning to make war upon him, visits the Queen—as in Malory, Guinevere has been returned to the King, but Lancelot has stayed in France. Mordred tells her that she can either be his queen or his thrall, but assures her it will be one or the other. Begging time to think it over, Guinevere escapes alone and on foot, seeking her father's kingdom. She is not seen again in Tolkien's text, except for that last encounter in his fragmentary notes, when she is spurned by Lancelot.

Lancelot finally appears in book III. Alone in Benwick castle, he is anguished: "He his lord betrayed to love yielding, / and love forsaking lord regained not" (III, 15-16). Tolkien compares Lancelot with Gawain, who loves no one or nothing more than his King. Having begun his text epic-like *in medias res*, Tolkien goes back in book III to the beginning of the story and presents Lancelot's love in retrospect:

To his lady only was his love given;
no man nor woman in his mind held he
than Guinever dearer: glory only,
knighthood's honour, near his lady
in his heart holding. (III, 41-45)

This is pure courtly love: the lover's lady becomes for him the Highest Good. Honor and nobility are also of extreme value—only the truly noble can truly love, remember, so the nobility is both the cause and effect of love, and truth in love becomes a keystone of the lover's honor. Following Malory, Tolkien goes on to describe the jealousy of Mordred and Agravain, the death of Agravain upon discovering Lancelot and Guinevere together, her sentence to the flames, and Lancelot's rescue of her, during which he accidentally kills Gareth and Gaheris.

But the retrospective takes an unfamiliar turn in Tolkien's poem: Although Lancelot's love for the Queen has not diminished, it has cooled. He sees her discomfort and regret and does not know how to alleviate her distress. For his own part, having brought the Queen to his own castle, Lancelot begins to repent his attack on the Round Table knights. Guinevere does not really understand his grief: "Strange she

deemed him / by a sudden sickness from his self altered” (III, 96-96). In an effort to heal his rift with Arthur, Lancelot works to restore her to the king, and although she finds mercy, Lancelot does not:

Loveforsaken, from the land banished,
From the Round Table’s royal order
And his siege glorious where he sat aforetime
He went sadly. The salt water
Lay grey behind him. (III, 120-124)

In his text, Tolkien implies that courtly love was the motive for his betrayal of the king—the breaking of his feudal bond with his liege lord—and that Lancelot’s real troubles began with his adultery. As long as he loved the Queen at a distance, his loyalty to the king made him the greatest of knights:

...High his purpose;
he long was loyal to his lord Arthur,
among the Round Table’s royal order
prince and peerless, proudly serving
Queen and lady. (III, 45-49)

But when Guinevere decided to claim him as her treasure, Lancelot’s truth—and honor—were at an end:

Silver and golden, as the sun at morning
her smile dazzled, and her sudden weeping
with tears softened, tender poison,
steel well-tempered. Strong oaths they broke. (III, 59-62)

Once alone in Benwick, of course, the couple must spend every hour together, and their love seems to decline swiftly from its passionate peak. Lancelot regrets his fury which, in rescuing the Queen from the fire, led him to kill his friends Gareth and Gaheris and thereby split the Round Table. As for Guinevere, she cannot stand living without her wealth and away from court. She

but little liked her lonely exile,
or for love to lose her life’s splendor.
in sorrow they parted. (III, 100-102)

When Lancelot hears rumors of war between Arthur and Mordred, he hopes for a summons from Arthur that might allow him to serve again his liege lord. But even more he hopes for a summons from the Queen, whom he would gladly save from any difficulty she might be in:

...When danger threatened,
if she sent him summons, swift and gladly
against tide and tempest trumpet sounding,
he would sail overseas, (iii, 168-171)

For this is what he is good at, and not the everyday grind of life in a remote castle trying to amuse a bored queen. He

would love to rescue her once again, since “Dear he loved her.” Although “in wrath she left him” (III, 165-66), his love for her persists. Like the true courtly lover—like Troilus after Criseyde’s desertion—his love for her is permanent, even though he has come to realize that their living together is disastrous.

But finally, neither lord nor lady sends for him:
But there came neither from king summons
Nor word from lady. Only wind journeyed
Over wide waters wild and heedless. (III, 174-176)

And though in book IV of Tolkien’s fragment, Mordred most fears that Lancelot has joined Arthur, he is heartened when he sees no banner of Lancelot’s flying in Arthur’s invasion fleet.

In the world view of Tolkien’s text (and in keeping with his alliterative verse form), Lancelot resembles much more the lordless warriors of elegaic Old English poems like *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* than the courtly lover of Chrétien or Malory. He is in exile. He is separated from his lord. He has no way to reclaim his glory. Compare these lines from *The Wanderer*:

He who has experienced it
knows how cruel a comrade sorrow can be
to any man who has few noble friends:
for him are the ways of exile, in no wise twisted gold. (50)

Unlike his close friend Lewis, Tolkien avoided recognizably Christian allusions or attitudes in his creative works, and so does not openly condemn Lancelot and Guinevere in his text for their violation of the bonds of Christian marriage, though his attitude toward those acts is clear from his letters and other comments. Instead, his deliberate allusion to the Old English elegiac tradition recalls the situation of a warrior who has violated what he called the northern Heroic Code. In “*Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics*,” written about the same time as this poem, Tolkien extols *Beowulf* as the quintessential expression of the Old English warrior culture, central to which is the Anglo-Saxons’ “theory of courage, which is the great contribution of early Northern literature” (20). This code involved most importantly an unswerving devotion to one’s liege lord, whom the warriors must protect to the last ounce of blood. In this world, where all causes are ultimately lost causes because none can escape death, this involved the determination to keep fighting even after all hope was gone. Lancelot, who has betrayed his lord and deserted him while Arthur was yet alive, is in the lordless state of the exile.

In Tolkien’s view, the “religion of love” is seriously flawed, since it replaces the true object of worship with a false idol, which it places above those things that truly ennoble one—in Lancelot’s case, his loyalty to his liege lord and to the Heroic Code. Love can indeed be eternal in Tolkien’s view, but only if it is bound by Christian marriage. For him, truth and fidelity—true nobility—were vital, and courtly

love and its modern incarnations drew one away from such things. Lancelot's continued love for the unworthy Guinevere is not a virtue in *The Fall of Arthur*. True love *could* be ideal, romantic, and ennobling, Tolkien believed, but only in marriage and only as one good part of a life lived in integrity, devoted to the Highest Good. This is the case with his Aragorn and Arwen. It is the case with Beren and Luthien. It was, in Tolkien's view, also the case of his own marriage to Edith. But it was not the case with Lancelot and Guinevere. Devotion to truth and integrity must come first. True love was not true love without true nobility, as Tolkien implied with his comments about Eowyn and Faramir. In the case of his Lancelot, love of Guinevere had replaced love of the Highest Good, and this can only lead to disaster. If this sounds like Chaucer, or Boethius, or some other medieval figure, it should be no surprise. This is Tolkien after all.

1. It should be noted that Christopher discusses another important connection between Tolkien's legendarium and Arthurian myth: Tolkien, he demonstrates, connected the Avalon of Arthurian legend with his own Tol Eressëa, the Lonely Isle, easternmost of the Undying Lands and home to many of the Eldar (162-63). In this way Tolkien seems to have contemplated linking King Arthur to Middle-earth, so that in the end of *The Fall of Arthur*, the King would be taken to that Avalon of the Eldar, whence Lancelot would seek to follow him in the end. However, since this theme does not relate directly to the courtly love motif, this paper will not concern itself with this fascinating aspect of the story.
2. Christopher discusses the notes Tolkien left concerning the later story of Lancelot and Guinevere on pp. 164-166 of his text. Summarizing those notes, he declares: "We learn of Lancelot after his return, too late, from France that he rode west from Romeril "along the empty roads", and that he met Guinevere "coming down out of Wales"...". In another note concerning their last meeting it is said that Lancelot had no love left but for Arthur: Guinevere had lost all her power over him. The words of the third canto are repeated: "In pain they parted", but now is added "cold and griefless"....He went to the sea shore and learned from the hermit who dwelt there that Arthur had departed west over the ocean. He set sail to follow Arthur, and no more was ever heard of him. (164-66)

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