

Here begins the tale of the knights from the Serbian books, in particular the famous knights Tristan, Antsolot and Bovo, and many other valorous knights.

There was a king by the name of Klevdas; he had great affection for King Apolon, and because of their great affection, they stayed with each other for long [periods] coming with all their servants and their courts. And King Apolon came with his court to King Klevdas and resided with him for a year. King Apolon had a very beautiful queen.

King Klevdas's son was a very fine youth, a valorous knight; he was enamored of Apolon's queen with a great love; when he could not endure it any more, he told her about his great love for her. She did not want in any manner to allow that and said to him, "Are you not ashamed to tell me this?" Seeing that he could accomplish nothing, he waited till King Apolon departed from King Klevdas for his own kingdom; then the son of King Klevdas got ready, took in company with him some worthy youths, and sat in ambush in the forest near the road. When King Apolon came closer to him — they prepared themselves and were waiting for King Apolon — they attacked him and, catching him, wounded him brutally, so that from these wounds he could not live, and they destroyed all his party. King Apolon said to his queen, ["As I said to you yesterday], so it happened and this cruel death [came to me." She was] very sad and sorrowful and said, ["By God, I do not know how] this evil happened."

When the son [of King Klevdas returned] he came into a high chamber [where] the queen was ushered, and he

wanted to fulfill [his desire with her]. The queen saw that he had committed [much harm] because of her and said to him. "Oh, evil and wicked man, my lord came here [2] for your good honor, but you put him to death and wanted yet to shame me, but this will not be." And having said so, she disengaged from him and jumped out of the window of a very high castle and brought herself to death. When he saw this, he said, "I myself murdered the queen, the marvel of this world, [by my own] recklessness." And, crying, he ordered them to bury her, and he sent [word] to King Apolon to check his wounds; he was told that the king would not live and he ordered them to let him be.

After King Apolon died, he directed them that his body be thrown into the river and drowned. And when they threw it into the river, there was a greyhound, which never left the king's side, but swam after his master down the river; he found him in a very deep whirlpool, seized him by his hand and pulled him onto the bank with his teeth. He dug a hole with his paws and put his master into it and covered it with sand, so that no animal could reach him, and sat on this grave to guard it.

King Klevdas went on a chase and was riding along a river and caught many animals; he was riding toward a town when he came near Apolon's greyhound. The greyhound, seeing people, started to howl very loudly. When the king saw the greyhound he sent [some men] to see what it was. They went and, after having seen it, they reported to the king, saying, "It looks like a person was recently buried and a greyhound is standing on the grave and will not move from it." The king was very wise and went himself to see this [hound]. He said, "This is the greyhound of King Apolon, who [said about this hound], This is my greatest

friend.'" He told [them to open the grave] to see the dead body. [When they did so, he saw] that it was King Apolon; he [hit his chest and in a very loud] voice said, "I am now [lost disgracefully], because my greatest friend has died [treacherously in my home]; he should have been protected."

Crying, the king dismounted his horse and ordered he be taken to the town that was not far from there; and having dressed [3] the body of King Apolon as was proper, put him in a crypt. Then King Klevdas gave an order to announce [a decree] in every place to find out who murdered King Apolon; he was willing to bestow great gifts on whomever might [know] something certain about it. But if someone knew and did not want to tell the truth, he [would be] punished at the stake.

When the decree from the king came out, [one of Apolon's maid servants said, "My lord king, if you [keep your covenant], I know about King Apolon and what death [he died and I can] tell you everything; but, according to your pledge, I ask of you [one promise]." Said the King, "Whatever] you'll ask me I'll give it to you." And the girl recounted all in order: how his son was enamored of Apolon's queen but could not [have her in any way; how he sat] in ambush in a forest and killed King Apolon, her husband, and destroyed all his company, and how the queen killed herself from sorrow; and everything that happened was recounted to him in order. And King Klevdas said, ["My son] destroyed me and Apolon." He sent for Apolon's son and gave instructions to care for him until he was of age. Then he sent for his [son and when he] came before him, looked at him very severely and said, "Despicable person, you have murdered one of the best [kings and my greatest] friend in my house and thus you have [destroyed and shamed] me. But I will so

act that you will take a punishment that is suitable for such a vile deed."

And when he saw [the king's] bad will against himself, he cried out, "My lord, [have mercy]; but] the king did not succumb to any pity [and ordered them] to build a fire and to throw his son in it. The girl who had told this kneeled [before the king and said], "My lord king, now keep your vow as you promised me." [The king] said, "Tell me, girl." The girl said, "I beg for your son." The king said, "I am ready to give him to you but he must face his death." And he ordered him to be thrown into the fire, and he died instantly. The king said to the girl: "Take [him] with you; [this is my] will to [punish] such a disgrace; [take him and bury him.]"

[4] But let us leave this and return to Apolon's child, [whose] name was Kandlesh, and who was in the good care of King Klevdas until he became a valorous knight of great goodness. For his [prowess] he became the lord of Kornovalia and Eltonos, and everyone revered him. King Klevdas gave to him his daughter, whose name was [Krysila] and they lived with great love and tenderness and begat [many] children. They made the eldest the Kornovalian king and the youngest the Eltonian; the others went [wandering] into the world according to knightly customs and in this manner populated [many] countries, so that there was not [a place where they did not have] any blood relatives or subjects.

Then the Kornovalian [kingdom came] into the hands of King Pelish; he had a son by the name of Marko, for he had been born in the month of March, and another [son Perla]. When the king was near death, he crowned his son [Marko] for the Kingdom of Kornovalia. King Marko gave his sister

[Ellobela in marriage] to King Meliadush, who was [esteemed] in Eltonos. Queen Ellobela was very [beautiful], and they lived with great love for each other. Thus, it was strange that the queen, who lived with him for many years had no children; but later she carried their child in her womb. The entire kingdom of Eltonos was rejoicing, for the people wanted to have an heir [of King Meliadush].

The king went on a hunt with many [of his knights] and came to [a body of] water where a knight had died. [There also] came a maiden who had loved the king very much for many years, more than she loved herself, and because of [this love she] was able to find him. She said to him, "Many say [how good you are]. I wish to know this goodness: I want to take you to a place where you will see at night a marvelous thing which you have not seen for a long time." The king being a very good knight wanted to see this thing. She said, "I will guide you there." The king mounted his horse and said to the maiden, "Mount, and I will follow you." She rode along the road [through the evening], until night fell, and soon they saw a [very fine castle set high on a rock]. When they approached the place, the people there rejoiced. [5] Many came out and gladly took the king's horse and armor from him. This was the maiden's town; she led the king into a very beautiful chamber, and when he was in the bedroom his heart and his thoughts changed, and neither his queen nor his kingdom of Eltonos was on his mind, nor his people — only the maiden who had carried him off to this castle — since he had become enchanted.

The king's knights, seeing that the king had not returned for several days, rode searching for him but could not find him or hear any tidings of him. Then the queen, taking one handmaiden with her, went herself in search of King Meliadush, so that she might have some news about him. They

rode through a big forest and wandered far and wide, searching for the king in every direction until they encountered Merlin the prophet. Merlin greeted the queen and she responded respectfully. "Good man, if you should have any news of my lord, King Meliadush, who vanished without a trace, for God's sake, tell me whether he is alive." Merlin said, "Milady, truly, I will tell you that he is alive and healthy and very joyful, more than he ever was before; but you will not see him with your eyes again." Having said this, he vanished from her. She was very sad and began to grieve and cry, cursing the day of her birth and the hour in which she had been born. If someone had seen this, he could not have remained hardhearted, but would have cried watching her. The queen's grief so increased that she could not ride further, and she dismounted her horse. And because of this grief the time of giving birth arrived; she began to pray to God, saying, "My Lord, my God, set my [body] free and keep my soul in grace." And her maiden said to her, "Milady, how are you feeling?" The queen said, "Here is my end now; if only God would grace me with the delivery so that I can give birth, and may His holy mercy be over me." And the handmaiden said, "Milady, [could you] mount the horse; I will help you, so that we may ride to a place where we can have a fire." Said [the queen to her maiden, "This] [6] cannot be, here is my end, pray to God for me." The handmaiden began to cry bitterly and in her sorrow did not know what to do.

And in the morning at dawn the queen gave birth to a fine knight, but she was near death. She said to the handmaiden, who was holding the child, "Give me my child." The handmaiden gave it to her. The queen, having seen the most wonderful child that she had ever seen, said, "My son, I wished so to see you, but when I behold you, by God's grace, the most wonderful child I have ever seen born of

woman anywhere, yet your beauty will not do me any good — only my death from the torment that I have had with your birth. I came to this place sorrowfully, and with sorrow I gave birth to you; my sorrow changed into joy when I gave you birth, yet this is my end. You were born in sorrow, and so let your name be Sorrow. May the Lord God change your life into a joyful and a happy one and guide it." Having said that, she handed the child to the handmaiden and gave her soul to God.

At this hour was born the valorous knight Trishchan<sup>1</sup>, whose marvelous deeds and great chivalry I wish to recount to you, as well as how a maiden took hold of him.

And when the handmaiden saw her lady dead, she began to scratch her face and cry so that she was heard from afar; and two knights, who were close relatives of King Meliadush, approached the cries of this handmaiden. When they saw the handmaiden and the child covered with the queen's mantle and the queen dead, they said, "Since King Meliadush is missing and the queen is dead, let us kill this child so that we will be the lords of Elionos." Having heard that, the handmaiden approached them and said, "Knights, do not take a sin upon your soul and your mind before God; do not kill this child! I swear on my faith and my soul I will take him to another country, where nothing will be known about him."

The knights gave the child to the handmaiden and took the deceased queen and carried her to the town. And the people began to say: [7] "The queen was pregnant; where did the child disappear?" The knights denied that they knew of the child, yet could not disavow it.

Merlin the prophet came and told them, "You found the queen and her child and wanted to kill the child, yet the maid pleaded for him; you contrived this so that this land

would be left to you." And Merlin said further, "My lords, I will inform you of your king Melladush, who forgot himself and his kingdom and all of you, his people." They began asking Merlin, "We beg of you, for God's sake, tell us about our lord, King Melladush." Merlin said, "In three days you will see him."

Merlin noticed one youth, who was from the kingdom of Sulesh<sup>2</sup>: his name was Govornar, who had run away from home, fearing his father and brother; he was very brave and wise. Merlin said, "Master Govornar, take the king's son and guard him and teach him wisdom and chivalry, for he will come to much greatness and to knighthood; even if you do not want to, you must care for him." And the youth responded, "I don't know you; nevertheless, I will willingly take him under my instruction and my care; I want to keep him and care for him as best I can." Merlin said, "I am entrusting him to you."

Then they rode off together and the next day came to a stream by the name of Brykinia. If a woman drank from this stream, she would not be able to carry a child to term. By this stream there was a stone column, and on this column words had been carved long ago which said, "By this water three great knights will gather." Merlin reading the inscription asked, "What is this?" Said Govornar, "I can read the words but do not know who the knights are." Merlin said, "These are to be the greatest knights in the world: Galets, Antsolot<sup>3</sup>, and Tristan, who will be so magnanimous and chivalrous that the world will have high praise for them and much goodness because of them, and one of them will be the prince of all this kingdom. But be vigilant so that he does not perish under your guardianship. Govornar said, "He will not perish under my guard, so long as I am able." [8] They departed from there and rode to the handmaiden, who sheltered the child and already had

christened him, giving him the name that the queen had chosen. Merlin said to the girl, "Take the child to the town, for it is not proper to keep him here, and he can find his father there." The girl took him to Elionos.

Then Merlin went with the lords to the place of the lady who had enchanted King Melladush, and they seized her and said to her, "We will kill you if you don't release King Melladush to us." She used much cunning in order not to give him up, for she loved him much more than she loved herself; they pressed her fiercely and she said, "Come, I'll give you your lord, King Melladush." And they were very happy and joyfully came to Elionos and there, together with all the people, made a big feast. Then the maid came to Elionos with the child, and handed him to his father, the king. The king, who was very sad about the queen, rejoiced when he saw the child, since he assumed that he had perished with her.

When the lords saw Tristan they said, "We are all happy today." And they said about Merlin, "This prophet did you much good." Merlin said, "The good that I rendered you, I did more for the others than for you. And I am telling you now, take care of this child, since he will create great goodness for humankind and for the glory of this world."

The king, hearing this, marveled greatly, and, taking Merlin aside, begged him to reveal who he was. Merlin said, "I may reveal this to you, but you should not reveal me to anyone." The king promised him this; he said, "I am Merlin the prophet: I came to deliver you from the captivity in which the maiden held you enchanted; I did this for the love of your son." The king said, "Sir Merlin, tell me, what do you foresee for my son?" Said Merlin, "He shall be the best knight of the three knights, of great fortitude, and he will be needed by many; do not entrust him to anyone's care but to Govornar from Gallush; he is a very good and trustworthy

man who should guard him well. The king said, "Let it be as you command." Then Merlin departed; he did not want to yield to any pleas. And then the king went to the hand-maiden and asked [9] "Has the child been christened yet?" The maid said, "He has been." The king asked, "What is his name?" The maid replied, "Sir, his name is Tristan, which his mother gave him as she was dying." Afterward the king called Govornar and said to him, "Take my son under your instruction and care for him and guard him faithfully and wisely, so that you will not be disgraced; assign to him a wet nurse, as is proper for a prince."

Let us now talk about Marko, the Kornovalian king.

King Marko had a younger brother by the name of Perla, a good knight. At the time Tristan was born, envoys from Orlenda came to Kornovalia to demand tribute which had been due for seven years.

When this was reported to King Marko, he became very sad. His brother Perla saw that the king was frightened; there were many people in the hall. He said, "Come closer, everyone, and hear me." He added, "Do not be frightened, King Marko. Do not pay the tribute. But get out of it with your sword on the field, for if you die by the sword, you will die honorably." The king said, "We have paid the tribute previously — I cannot disengage myself from it now." Perla said, "If others acted foolishly earlier, should you also?"

The king knew his brother was a valorous knight, brave and well-liked by all good people. Marko planned to kill him, so that the other would not take his kingdom away from him; and he acted promptly. They both went on a hunt and becoming weary, came to a river. The king quenched his thirst and when Perla bent down to drink, the king took his sword and struck his brother Perla on the head very hard, and Perla died instantly.

The king killed his brother Perla treacherously with a

very hard blow on the head; and it all happened quickly. Immediately Merlin made everything known to Antsolot, the valorous knight; thereupon Antsolot accused him to his face, "You've treacherously killed the valorous knight, your brother."

But let us leave this and return to Tristan, whom Govornar took under his care from King Melladush.

King Melladush remained unmarried for a long time after Queen Eliobela [died]. Then he took a queen from the Little Land in marriage, who was quite beautiful. [10] When she came, Tristan was then seven years old. He was so extraordinary that in the whole world there was no equal to him, except Antsolot. His stepmother had a son, and when she watched Tristan growing up quickly, she being afraid that he might take the kingdom away from her son, who was one year old, thought this through and then said, "Even if I have to die, I must put Tristan to death." She could not do this any other way, only with poison.

Thereafter she prepared a poisoned drink in a silver flagon and put it at the head of Tristan's bed. The hand-maiden who carried around the prince, the queen's son, came into the chamber; the child began to cry, and the maid seeing the clear wine in the flagon, took it and gave it to the child to drink; when the child drank it he died instantly.

The girl uttered a loud cry; and many people ran over, saw the dead child, and said to the maid, "You deserve death, for you have killed the prince." When the queen came in and saw her son dead, she fell to the ground and fainted. When she came to herself, she said to the handmaiden, "What wrong have I done that you should kill my son?" The girl objected, "I did not kill him; the one who placed this poison here did."

They seized the girl and brought her before the king, who said to the girl, "You are guilty." She said, "The one who

prepared this poison is guilty." The king said, "Let her go, she did not prepare this poison, but some vicious one who hated this child did."

Govornar, who was very wise, said, "My lord, be advised that the poison was intended for you or for your son; now be watchful and know how to protect yourself. Tristan, who is in my care — leave him to me: God knows, he will be well guarded." The king, who understood well that the poison was prepared for one of them, had a privy council with his lords to find out who had done this. They advised him, "You and Tristan must be cautious."

The queen was very sorrowful for causing her son's death by her own recklessness; she wished herself dead and thought in her heart: "I only caused the death of my son [11] and what I have planned I did not accomplish." And she began to plot anew every day.

Govornar, who was very wise, saw her craftiness and her glances and began to realize that she was planning Tristan's death, and that she had prepared the poison. He told the boy, "If you would associate with your stepmother, you may encounter death; honor her and oblige her, but beware of eating or drinking anything from her hands; only what I give you should you eat and drink." And Tristan said, "I shall not disregard any of your instructions."

One summer day the king was sitting alone in his chamber, and he was thirsty; Tristan came to him and the king said, "My son, bring me something to drink." The boy opened an armoire where fine drinks were kept, picked up a goblet of pure poison and took it to the king; the queen came in at that moment, saw the goblet and shouted: "My lord, for God's sake, do not drink this beverage!" The king said, "Lady, what is this?" She did not dare tell him that it was poison and said, "It is not good for you to drink this."

The king said, "Why are you saving this?" She kept silent, and the king had a revelation and felt great wrath.

Tristan came and bowed at the king's knees with great reverence, asking him for a favor. The king loved him more than he loved himself and did not suspect that he might plead for the queen. The king said, "Do not ask, but take it freely, nothing is forbidden to you from me."

Tristan thanked his father very humbly and gratefully and said: "My lord, you gave me the queen's life; I beg you to calm the anger you feel for her. I do not wish to see my stepmother die in this manner." The king did not see the treachery from anyone but her, and he was not willing to pardon her. He said, "My son, who advised you of this?" Tristan said, "God knows, I did not confer with anyone, but justice and decency guided me; it would not please me for my lady to perish if I can save her life."

The king said to the queen: "Drink from this cup." She said: "I will not." The king said, "You have to die, since you wanted to poison Tristan or myself. Tell us quickly [12] for whom did you prepare this poison?" She said, "Not for you." The king said, "For whom, then? You ought to perish!" The queen began to cry: "My king, for God's sake, be merciful to me." He said, "Tell us quickly." He took his sword and said, "Tell us or you will die now." When she saw herself near death, she said: "I contrived this for Tristan." The king said, "On my faith, you contrived your own death, for Tristan did not offend you in any way."

He ordered her conducted to prison and assembled his lords, presented the case before them, and said to them: "On my faith, if you do not judge truthfully, death will be yours." They said, "It is proper that she should die, it cannot be otherwise, because she wanted to murder your son." The king said, "Your judgment is not going to be changed." When the lords knew this, they began to lament and carry

on with great grief, since their queen had to die, but they did not say anything.

The king said, "My son, Tristan, you faithfully wished her good, but she wished you evil and treachery and wanted to murder you; but the outcome was worse than she deserved. As you desire, let her be freed by you." Tristan thanked his father respectfully for this and saved his stepmother from death. All the good people of Ellinos said, "When he comes of age he will not lack great goodness." The queen remained in peace by the king, but the king had no love for her; he hated her with all his heart.

Then, after a short time, the king went on a hunt with his good retinue and with him went Tristan and Govornar, so that he could learn hunting. As they rode through the forest two knights arrived in full armor and inquired, "Who is the noble here?" They said, "This is our king with his son." Govornar said: "What are you saying? His son is not here; he left him at home." These knights approached and said to the king, "You have done us no harm, but someone from your house intends to destroy us and now we intend to slay him if we can."

They took out their swords and no one could protect the king from being wounded by a fatal blow to the head. Both of them, however, were killed instantly. They both were from the tribe [13] of the Prince of Norot, which was the largest tribe of Kornovalia. One soothsayer had predicted thus: "You will perish by King Meliadush's house." And in this they had taken the advice of the Kornovalian King Marko, for he was afraid that when Tristan came of age, he would dethrone him, as the soothsayer had predicted. And so when Tristan did come of age, he went with his companions and killed the Prince of Norot with his own hands and destroyed their town, so that there was no stone left upon stone.

When the barons saw their ruler dead, they did not know what to do and reflected among themselves, "No lord was ever so badly guarded by his people as our king by us." They cried and Tristan joined them. They hitched a litter to two horses and carried off the body of the king. When they were near the town, the people made a great lament for him; they buried him with honors, as is proper for such a lord.

When King Marko saw this, he began to reflect deeply about it. Then a youth came to him who knew more than other people except for Merlin about all that might happen; the king liked him much for this. He said to the king, "Your nephew Tristan is going to cause you much sorrow." The king asked, "How can Tristan achieve such valor?" The youth said: "In the whole world there will be no knight superior to him." The king became silent.

Govornar, seeing that the stepmother coveted the kingdom and still hated Tristan, took him aside and said, "My good friend, your stepmother hates you very much and plots to murder you. Let us go secretly to France to King Peremont; there you will learn bravery and you will be a distinguished person, and when they discover your worth, you will reach knighthood; then you can return to Ellinos, to your fatherland; no one will dare to say anything disrespectful to you." Tristan replied, "Master, wherever you order me, I will go, since I have found no one with more good-will than you." Govornar said, "Let us get ready and leave tomorrow at dawn." So he ordered [14] Tristan.

They equipped themselves with what was needed; they took enough gold and silver with them and departed that day to France. Govornar warned Tristan not to disclose who he was and where he was from. Tristan said, "I will listen to you gladly." When they came to King Peremont, the king received him graciously and ordered fine quarters to be given to him.

Tristan began to develop and improve himself, and in no time, so that they began to be amazed, he played chess and checkers better than the others; and no one sat on a horse as handsomely as he. And when he was twelve years old, he showed great virtue and wisdom in all things. Ladies and maidens and every man who saw him marveled; every lady and maiden would have been happy if Tristan were to fancy her. Tristan, indeed, served King Peremont courteously and honorably, and the king considered no other youths from his court a match for him; and yet no one knew who he was or where he had come from.

The king had a daughter, a very beautiful princess; she fell in love with Tristan, and said, "Human eyes have not seen such a marvelous youth as Tristan." Whenever she saw him her eyes and her thoughts were nowhere but with him. She loved him as she loved herself and could not imagine how she could obtain his grace and his love and how to satisfy her desire for him; so she thought about it: "If I let him know, he might not consent — he is too young; he will not be tempted to such love. But if he promised to love me, I would wait for him until his time; I would rather wait for him than to be the greatest queen of the greatest kingdom. But I am afraid that he would not be willing because of his youth and he would not dare to do this because of my father."

One day when she was sitting alone in her room, she ordered Govornar to be called, and said to him, "Sir Govornar, I love your Tristan more than I love myself; I beg you to persuade him to love me. [15] If he does not want to do this, I will cause him great shame." Govornar heard this and became sad. He did not know what to do about it, and thought for a long while: "If Tristan would do it, and the king learned of it, he would punish him dishonorably." And he said to her, "My gracious princess, for your grace I'll do

[16] I will tell him that he should fulfill your will; but he is young, if it does not happen promptly, do not be angry with him." She thanked him very gratefully. Then Govornar went to his quarters and was very sad and began reflecting, "If Tristan does it, it will be bad, but not doing it is also not good."

He asked Tristan, "What do you think you will do? The princess likes you enormously; if you do not want to love her, she wants to kill herself." Tristan answered him, "If she loves me with an excessive love I will not do it, let the excess be with her: I do not want to be a traitor to my lord, for all his kindness and honor he bestows on me, not even knowing who I am and where I came from." When Govornar heard that from Tristan, he was very surprised that for such a young age he was exhibiting such honor, for he was only thirteen years old at this time. Govornar tried some more and said to him, "Why don't you want to love such a beautiful princess?" Tristan said to him: "Her beauty can only bring me to treason; if I had agreed to what you suggested, you should have dissuaded me from it."

Next morning the princess called in Govornar and said to him: "Did you find out about Tristan?" He said, "Tristan loves you with a refined love; yet he does not want to do anything that would be treachery to your father." Said the princess: "Is Tristan rejecting me altogether?" She departed very sadly, damning the day she was born and she went to her bedchamber and cried very bitterly.

One day she was in her darkened chamber reflecting on her love for Tristan. Tristan passed by on his way to another room, not knowing that she was in there; and she, seeing him, jumped out and embraced him around his neck and started to kiss and show love for him, and he, fearing [16] that someone would see him, began to push her with both hands away from him. The princess, realizing that she

would not get what she wanted, cried out in a loud voice. Hearing it, the king's knights and the king did not recognize that this was his daughter.

The king's knights ran over and surprised them; she was holding Tristan by his neck and began to complain, "Lords, Tristan wanted to rape me." They seized him, took him to the king and related what they saw and heard from the princess. The king became very sad and said, "I honored you, which is evident to all people, but you brought me shame, causing thus your own death." And he told them to throw Tristan into a dungeon.

Govornar at that time was in his chamber, and when he learned that Tristan was in the dungeon, he was very distressed, and said to himself: "I am lost, nowhere will I find joy; I do not know what will become of me." Govornar went to the king, and all he met shamed him by saying: "Is this how you instructed Tristan? He has fallen into disgrace now." Govornar walked silently and came to the king and fell to his knees, and said, "My lord, for God's sake, have mercy; hear me speak." The king responded, "Talk." Govornar said, "My lord, we should be discreetly guarded. I want to talk to you privately." The king entered one room and Govornar followed him and told him everything in order: how the princess fell in love with Tristan, and confided in him in this matter, sending him to Tristan, and how Tristan had replied to her.

The king heard this but his heart did not begin to be moved favorably toward Tristan since he still did not trust Govornar in all this, and he said, "I want to uncover this promptly; if it is the truth, he will be acquitted, but if he is guilty, I'll deal with him as a guilty one." And Govornar departed from the king. The king sent for his daughter and said to her, "My darling daughter, what do you think about Tristan? I want to punish him badly and to vindicate your

shame." The princess did not dare to speak differently, but said: "My lord, it is fair that everyone should receive according to his deeds." The king said, "My daughter, if you desire so, you will be his wife, but if you do not, he will be killed." The princess began to shift her gaze, and the king realized that she was not Tristan's enemy.

He ordered them to bring in Tristan [17] and Millients, the princess's cousin, who had recently killed a man. When they were brought before the king, he took a sword and said, "My daughter, you see these two youths who are going to die; I will, however, set one free; whichever you want, you can free, and the other must die."

She did not know what to do and thought to herself: "If I free Tristan, the king will be sorry about Millients; if I free Millients, then my beloved Tristan has to die." She fell silent, and the king knew that she loved Tristan; he frightened her some more and said, "Daughter, take whichever you wish." And she, fearing her father, said, "Set my brother Millients free." The king said, "Then Tristan has to die." He took Tristan by the top of his head and swung his sword as if to kill him.

The princess, seeing this, could not contain herself and said, "My lord Father, let me have Tristan, and do what you want with Millients." The king said, "You chose Millients — Tristan must die." She answered, "My lord, no! I want to have Tristan, and do what you want with Millients." The king said, "You chose Millients, and Tristan, who is very guilty, must die." And he swung his sword as if to smite off his head; she, jumping over, protected him with her hand and said, "My lord, don't kill Tristan; kill me instead." And the king said, "It cannot be any other way — I must kill Tristan." The princess said, "My lord, give me the sword; let me kill him." And the king gave her the sword; having looked at Tristan, she said, "My lord, either set Tristan free,

"I'll kill myself with this sword." And the king said to her, "Why do you love Tristan so?" She said, "I love him more than I love myself, and if you kill him — I want to kill myself." The king said, "Daughter, you can have Tristan." And then he said to Tristan: "You are acquitted."

Tristan thanked the king and the princess very reverently, [18] and went to the main palace. When Govornar saw Tristan, he was very happy and asked him, "Why did the king let you go?" Tristan told him everything that had happened. Govornar said: "If you are forgiven, bow low before the king, so that he lets you go; because if you do not act according to the princess' will, she might do something evil to you." Tristan said, "Master, as you wish; where should we go now?" Said Govornar, "It seems to me, that we should go to the court of your uncle; if you would like to conceal yourself, no one will recognize you there, since you have grown a lot from the time we left Ellinos; we will serve there until the time comes to dub you a knight; and when you wish to be knighted, the king will dub you by his own hand." Tristan said, "Be it as you say."

The next day Tristan came before the king, bowed low, and said: "I wish to go to my land." And he thanked the king and the good people for their kindness; the king thanked him for his loyal service and promised his friendship.

When the princess saw that Tristan was going away, she became extremely sad and sent him an ambler and a hunting-hound with a servant. Tristan promised a gift to this servant of whatever he might ask. He said, "My lord, when you become a knight I want to be knighted by you." Later the princess sent a message to him, asking, "My lord, give me your sword, for me to cherish." Tristan sent her his sword, and she said, "I prefer to die by Tristan's sword than to be the greatest queen." And she pierced herself to death then and there.

Tristan departed with Govornar from France to Korno-valla to the court of King Marko where Govornar said: "Gracious king, this is a lord that came to serve you, so that you may knight him with your hand." The king gladly received Tristan and promised to knight him later, without recognizing him then. Tristan served courteously and nobly; and of everyone who saw him, all wondered who he was.

Later on Tristan wished to be knighted; the king ordered what was needed for a knight to be prepared and they arranged everything with great dignity. Tristan went to church, and the next day the king knighted him; there were many good people, and everyone who saw him said, "We have not seen a better knight."

While he was at this celebration, [19] four knights from Orlendea came to King Marko, and began to talk without any bowing: "King, good King Amurat from Orlendea sent us to you, saying: 'Give me the tribute which your Korno-vallian ancestors have always given to my Orlendeans ancestors; let it be ready in ten days. If you give it, we will promise peace, but if you do not give it, be aware that in a few days there will be not an inch of land left unspoiled.'" Hearing this, King Marko was extremely frightened and did not know how to respond. Tristan came forward, stood before the king and said to the messengers, "Come here, you who brought this boastful message, tell your lord: even if our ancestors by their foolishness gave tribute to your kingdom, you will not take any more; if your king wants to have it, let him come with a sword on the battlefield — he cannot have the tribute any other way than by my own hand."

The messengers said to King Marko, "Is it you who says this?" The king said, "If he wants to fight for the Korno-vallian freedom, I am saying so too." The messengers said to Tristan: "Who are you?" And he said: "I am a guest here; my name is Tristan." They said, "Pardon us, Amurat is not

going to fight with you if you are not a man of great parentage." Tristan said, "The fight will not be prevented for this reason: I am a son of King Meliadush of Elionos and a nephew of King Marko. I was concealing myself before but now I cannot conceal myself any longer."

The messengers rode away quickly and related to King Amurat what Tristan had replied. The king asked, "Who is he that took on this fight?" They said, "He is the son of King Meliadush, and a nephew of King Marko; he is a newly dubbed knight; we have not seen such a marvelous knight, for he took on a fight all by himself, without urging." Amurat said, "He will be sorry. A new knight wants a new death. Did you arrange where this fight should be?" They said, "No." He ordered, "Go again and arrange it; I do not want to delay this." His friend Garnot said, "I will keep you company; I would like to see this knight [20] whom they praise so."

They traveled by sea and by land and came to Kornovalia to King Marko and reported King Amurat's words. King Marko said, "Better if this fight takes place on Samson Island; they will come in their boats and each will be his own navigator." They arranged the fight to take place in two weeks.

The messengers came to Amurat and reported to him that they had arranged the fight on the Samson Island. Said Amurat, "This is pleasing to me." And he asked Garnot, "Did you see this knight?" He replied, "I saw him; and if you want to hear my advice, you would forgo this fight and make peace between you, because if the two of you battle, it will not be without great sorrow; if something happens to you, there will be great damage in Orlendea; and if something happens to him, great damage will be done to the entire world. In my days I have not seen a better knight; when he comes of age, he will be of great valor." Amurat

said to him, "There can be no peace if the tribute is not delivered," and he began to prepare himself.

King Marko and Tristan and all the knights, the king's maidens and ladies went to church and prayed to God to deliver them from Amurat. The next morning Tristan heard mass and went to the hall in full armor and with arms. All the lords came toward him. And King Marko said, "My dear son, why did you hide from me? If I had known about you, even if all Kornovalia was enslaved, I would not have allowed you to fight; for if something happens to you, I will never have any joy." Tristan said, "My lord, do not fret, for God in His mercy will not forget us; I hope that God will give us honor and help."

Then came the message that Amurat was already on Samson Island. Tristan said, "Hand me my helmet." And they gave him a good helmet [21] and the king himself strapped him and adjusted the arms, and checked and approved them; they also brought him a fine horse. Tristan went to his boat and soon was on the island.

Amurat wondered how this knight dared to take on a fight against him and, as he came ashore, asked him, "Why did you push away your boat?" Tristan said: "One of us will depart in your boat; the other will remain here." Amurat took this answer for courage and wished he had not asked him; he said, "Abandon this fight; I would not be glad to destroy you, I would rather have you for my companion and love you like my brother." Tristan said, "I will abandon the fight, if you will waive the Kornovalian tribute; but if you will not, you must fight." Said Amurat, "Then be prepared to fight." And Tristan said, "I have come for this."

[Tristan's Fight with Amurat.]

They both mounted their horses and struck so hard that if their good armor had not sustained them, they would have been dead; the poles broke and both men fell with

their horses to the ground, but immediately both, though wounded, leaped to their feet. Tristan was wounded in his thigh with a poisoned spearhead; Amurat was wounded by one without poison. They took their swords and began to slash very hard for a long time, hitting and wounding each other in many places; and they both recognized that they were very good knights. Amurat imagined that he was the greatest fighter in the world, but when he saw Tristan, he got a scare; they both got so weary that there was no alternative but for one to remain; therefore each one fought for victory; and all who saw them witnessed a great wonder. While fighting, they separated from each other and leaned on their shields. Amurat said, "If Tristan comes at me again with such force, I will not be able to withstand him." While they rested, Tristan began to slash on high with his sword, and began to cover himself with his shield and his sword. Amurat could not stand any more. Tristan saw this and got angry and hit him hard on the top of his helmet, slashing his head to the brain, so that a piece of the sword remained in his head.

Amurat felt himself fatally wounded and, leaving his shield and his sword, ran to the boat and headed [22] for the larger vessel, which was waiting for him. The servants received him very sadly and put him into the vessel. They began to sail away, crying. The Kornovalians who watched this began to shout: "Bad Journey to you! There is your tribute."

Said King Marko and the other Kornovalians: "God and the valor of Tristan gave us this honor." Seeing him alone on the island, many people hurried to him; they found Tristan badly wounded and very weak from bleeding, for he had lost blood and could not stand on his feet; none of the wounds bothered him as much as the one on his thigh, where he was wounded by the poisoned tip. They brought

him to the shore. The king came over and took Tristan and began kissing and embracing him, and asked, "How are you feeling?" Tristan said, "I am badly wounded, but with God's will I'll be well." The king escorted him to church to give praise to God, then conducted him to the palace with great joy and fanfare, for they had been delivered from slavery.

Then Tristan came to his chambers and became so ill from his poisoned wound that he could hardly stand; the physicians came and applied the best ointments so that he soon was cured from all his wounds except the one that was poisoned; they could not cure that: whatever they applied to this wound nothing helped. One night Tristan was suffering greatly, afflicted by this wound and nobody dared to come near, only Govornar, who never left his side and wept, seeing his master near death; nobody who had seen him before would recognize him now. The king began to cry very hard, and all good people were crying as if their son or brother were about to die: "O Tristan, honorable and valorous knight, marvelous youth, how dearly you bought the Kornovalian freedom! We remain joyful and you are dying a terrible death!"

Tristan was in his bed alone; only one woman was with him, who had come to see how wretched he was; she began to cry very sadly and said, "O, Tristan, I am amazed at you, how you [23] do not care about yourself; you could have found some medicine in another country! You have tried; in all Kornovalia there is no good physician!" Tristan said, "I cannot sit on a horse, nor be carried on a litter." She said, "I cannot advise you; He will teach you, Who created heaven and earth."

Tristan said to Govornar: "Take me up to the palace from where the sea can be seen." And Tristan watched for a long time and said to Govornar: "Call King Marko to me." The king came and asked, "My son, why did you call me?" Tris-

tan said. "I ask you, sir, to give me one thing that should not overburden you much." King Marko said. "Even if it costs much, I would do according to your wishes; there is nothing that I would not do for you." Tristan thanked him humbly for this: "I, my lord, cannot find a healer in this land; I suffered greatly and now I see clearly that my death is nearing. I want to go to some other country in the world; prepare a good vessel for me and equip it with what I will need, with food and drink and one sail<sup>4</sup> so light that one person can take it down; and cover the boat with a good cloth against rain and wind. I want to sail into the sea, where fortune will take me; maybe I will find a healer for the wound I am dying from; but if I do not find him, then I am dead." The king said. "Son, how can you depart, being so weak?" Tristan said. "If it is God's will, perhaps the sea and wind will drift me to my fortune. When the vessel is ready, put me in it and give me my harp and my other lute and from time to time I will play to myself to ease my grief and my pain."

Hearing this, King Marko began to weep very sadly and could not respond to him for a long time through his tears. When he composed himself, he said, "My son, Tristan, do you want to leave me altogether?" Tristan replied, "My lord, it cannot be otherwise now, but if I find a healer and when I am healed, I promise to return to Kornovalia." And when the king saw that it could not be any other way, he prepared the vessel as Tristan himself commanded and put in it all that was necessary. When it was ready, he ordered him to be brought, very weak, to the vessel. And seeing this, the Kornovalians began to cry [24] very bitterly; and the king and all his lords cried without ceasing. When Tristan saw this, he was greatly moved; he pushed away from the shore hurriedly and raised sail. The wind was favorable and they sailed swiftly but did not know where they were going.

And so they sailed two days<sup>5</sup> and good fortune drove him to a town in Orlenda where King Lenviz ruled. He had a wife, the sister of King Amurat, whom Tristan had killed, and he had a daughter by the name of Izhota. This young lady knew a lot about healing wounds; there was no wound that she was not able to heal. When Tristan was near the shore, he took his harp, tuned it and began to play the best he could.

King Lenviz saw this from the palace, and listened a long time; it seemed to him wondrous that he played so marvelously and sadly, his vessel covered expensively with brocade. He called the queen, and she saw the vessel and heard the harp and marveled a great deal. She said to the king, "I beg you, let us go to see this marvel." Both of them went down to the sea and listened. When Tristan stopped playing, he began to weep and cry from the pain he had. The king and the queen approached the vessel, saw Tristan and greeted him; Tristan returned the greeting and asked the king, not knowing that he was the king, "I beg you, sir, what is this country that we landed on?" Said the king, "You are in Orlenda." When Tristan heard this, he felt more faint from his wound than before, since he was afraid that if recognized, he would perish because of Amurat.

The king asked him, "I beg you, knight, tell me, where are you from?" Tristan said, "My lord, I am from Ellinos. I came here ill from a wound for which I could not find a healer. I have suffered such torture and pain that if it had been up to my will, I would have rather died long ago, but if the Lord God does not want this, I must endure, even though I prefer death to such a life."

When the king heard Tristan saying this, he [25] had mercy on him and believed that he was telling the truth. The king asked, "Are you a knight?" Tristan said, "I am." The king said, "Do not worry, knight, you came to such a

place where, God willing, you will be cured. I have a daughter who understands every wound better than all doctors; I know she will be happy to care for you, for God and for courtesy." Tristan thanked him very courteously and humbly.

The king and the queen returned to the palace and prepared him quarters in one of the bedchambers and ordered him to be brought up to the room where a place for him was arranged. Then the king sent for his daughter Izhota and said to her, "My dear daughter, come with me to look at a knight, our guest, who is very sick from a wound, and care for him for God's sake and mine, so that he will get well soon." She said, "My lord, I will be happy to fulfill your command and will labor the best I can."

And so she went to Tristan. When she saw the wound, she applied a herb that was suitable. Then Tristan sighed from the pain he had. The princess, who did not notice or suspect that the wound was poisoned, began to calm him and said, "Don't be afraid, knight; with God's help, I will make you well very soon." Tristan said, "O my God, I would not ask more."

For ten days the princess applied herbs she knew, but he still became worse. Izhota began to curse herself and said, "I do not know what to do; what is needed for this wound?" She started to examine the wound, and it occurred to her that it was poisoned. She said to herself, "If the wound is not poisoned, I must leave him alone, since I cannot help him." She ordered Tristan to be brought out to the sun and began to examine the wound with greater scrutiny. The wound started to pus, and Izhota said: "Sir, I see well what aggravated your wound and why you were unable to find the medicine: the iron you were wounded with was poisoned; and nobody realized this, but now that I discovered this, with God's help you will be cured." Tristan was happy

about this. The maiden started to draw out the poison from the wound, and began again to apply medicine to it. In a short time [26] Tristan felt improvement, yet he was no more than skin and bones. But in two months he was cured and was as beautiful and agile as he had been before. Then the thought came to him that he should go to Kornovalia as soon as possible, since he was afraid of being recognized; and he was reflecting about this.

At this time came three knights of King Artlush's Round Table by the names of Garnot, Kazhyn, and Bandemagul. These three knights had great valor and fame. Kazhyn was of lesser chivalry than the other two, but he was proud and outspoken; they had come to Orlendea for a maiden who wanted to be married and who had ordered a tournament called for this purpose.

Many good knights arrived, and whatever knight showed the most bravery at this tournament would receive her; if he did not want to receive her, she would have to give him a gift big enough for a dozen knights. This is why those three knights came to Orlendea. King Lenviz knew them and was happy to see them; they sat at the table, the king and the knights. When they saw Tristan, no one recognized him. Garnot had seen him before, but Tristan had changed from his sickness and because of this he was not recognized, despite his splendid looks. Tristan, however, recognized Garnot, who had come to Kornovalia with King Amurat's messengers; he was thus ever more afraid of being recognized. The three knights were looking at Tristan very attentively because he seemed like a guest, and asked the king about him. The king explained that Tristan had come from Eilonos: "There is no man in the world who, seeing him so afflicted, would not have pitied him; but by God's grace and by the labor of my daughter Izhota, he is well." And they talked and looked at him attentively.

Garnot came over to Tristan and, taking him aside, asked. "I beg of you, knight, tell me, if you please, who you are and where you are from." Tristan said, "I am a guest; you will not find out any more from me; I beg of you, don't hold this as evil against me." And Garnot left him at this.

Then the king said, "I want to go to the upcoming tournament, but I don't want to be recognized; I ask you not to disclose me if someone should inquire." Then the king asked Tristan, "Knight, how do you feel?" Tristan said, "Good, by God's mercy. Why do you ask me?" The king [27] said, "If you need arms and a horse, I will give them to you, and young men to serve you." Tristan replied, "My lord, I have not recovered my strength: I don't dare to labor much, but if you want to go, I will help you for all your kindness; and we will carry arms, for man never knows what might happen to him and where. The king said, "Be it as you wish, but I want very much for you to ride with me." Tristan promised him.

The next morning they went to the tournament and met Gavaon, the nephew of King Artlush, [and following him there was one youth]<sup>6</sup>, who carried his shield and his lance; it was the boy who had presented Tristan with an ambler horse and a hunting-hound from the daughter of King Peremont. He saw Tristan, ran to him, and began to kiss his feet. Tristan, afraid that the youth might reveal him, told him, "I want to pass by; don't tell a living soul about me."

The boy said, "Lord, do not worry; but I beg of you to grant me a boon, by your grace." Tristan said, "I am willing if the thing is givable." Said the youth, "Lord, many thanks; you remember what you had promised me; give me this." Tristan said, "I do not recall." "You promised to knight me when I presented you with the ambler horse and the hound from King Peremont's daughter. So, my lord, I want you to dub me tomorrow." Said Tristan, "Let it be as I promised to

you." Then Tristan inquired, "Who is this knight whose arms you are carrying?" Said the youth, "This is Sir Gavaon, the nephew of King Artlush; he promised to knight me when I wish; but when I saw your grace, I would rather be knighted by your hand." Tristan said, "As you wish; now go back to Sir Gavaon and carry his spears and arms, as you should." The youth said, "Let it be, my lord, as you advise." And he took Gavaon's arms and rode after him. Gavaon asked, "Who was that knight whom you greeted so touchingly?" Said the youth, "He is a guest, and a very brave one." Asked Gavaon, "What is his name?" The youth said, "My lord, you cannot know that yet." Gavaon let this matter be.

The king rode with a small retinue and no one recognized him, [28] including Gavaon. King Lenviz asked Tristan, "Do you know who this knight is who rides alone?" Said Tristan, "That is Gavaon, the nephew of King Artlush." The king said, "I have heard of him; he is courteous to ladies and maidens." But the king did not disclose himself to Gavaon. When evening was nearing, they met a knight carrying a black shield without insignia, with him there were two squires. The king rode in a very elegant, stately way and carried two swords. When they came nearer, Gavaon said, "Do you see that great knight?" The king said to him, "How do you know that he is great?" Gavaon said, "No good knight would dare to carry two swords unless he fought with two knights at once; only a good knight carries two swords." The king said, "On my faith, this knight acts very boldly, but I beg you, if there happens to be a knight who gets him alone, what will he do about it?" Gavaon said, "My lord, if it happens to be a single knight who is not from Londresh, the black knight will suffer not to carry both weapons for the entire year for his dishonor; but if a knight from Londresh defeats him, he will throw away one sword and

carry only one, since the knights from Londresh are the greatest." When the king heard this, he said, "Now I would not for the greatest thing miss seeing this tournament and this great knight." They stayed that night in a castle ten miles from the tournament.

Next morning Tristan made the youth a knight and he was brave and of great valor. He was a companion of the Round Table. Later Tristan, by misadventure, killed him by his own hand, because the youth followed Palamidezh, who loved the marvelous Izhota very much. This knight was named Berbesh.

Early the next morning the king and Tristan went to the tournament. Tristan, having made this youth a knight, gave him a horse and arms and they went to the tournament, which was assembled at a meadow by the castle. The tournament was widely attended by the people.

There came two kings: King Ianish from Lokva<sup>7</sup> and the other King [29] Artlush from Londresh, who had with him a hundred knights. He was in the service of Prince Gallot and governed the Western Islands<sup>8</sup>. The year the tournament was held in Orlendea, Antsolot was made a knight.

When the two sides met and presented the lances to each other, the fighting was very dense and heavy and the knights were falling from their horses to the ground. There were ten knights of the Round Table who performed very marvelously as they held one side against King Ianish from Lokva; they repulsed many knights, Garnot and Ivan, son of King Urian, and Gavaon, Geesh and King Bandemagul, Dondiel, Sogremor, Gviresh — these were very good knights. When they dashed into this tournament, they accomplished great wonders in no time, and all the others would have been defeated if the knight with two swords and a black shield had not been there. As he struck from the other side of the field, he began marvelously and unbe-

lievably to take off the helmets of the knights and to throw them off their horses to the ground. All who saw him said that he won this tournament, and because of his knightly skills all were frightened of him and could not stand against him. Gavaon was injured with two wounds, Garnot had three wounds, as did Ivan; others also had wounds and were thrown off their horses.

When the King of the Hundred Knights saw himself defeated, he was sad, almost crazed, for he loved beautiful Izhota with all his heart and worried lest she find out about this; and he began to plan revenge. Thus he had proclaimed in all places that there would be a second tournament in ten days; for he planned to arrive more prepared and better equipped than at the first. When the tournament was proclaimed and every one heard it, all departed, and King Lenviz too, to get ready for the second tournament.

When the [S]goski king saw that the knight with a black shield won this tournament, he took a great liking to him.

Palamidezh, the black knight, went to Orlendea and claimed this tournament in Izhota's honor. Tristan thought deeply about what to do to get even with this knight with a black shield and two swords [30] at the second tournament.

He became belligerent against Palamidezh, looking at him with angry eyes, because it seemed to him that he had caused great shame to the other knights; Tristan had an angry heart against him and wished him evil because he saw him such a handsome knight and worthy of great valor. It seemed to him that Palamidezh wanted to have Izhota, and that she loved him with all her heart.

And Tristan and Palamidezh thus began to be hostile. Izhota, however, did not know about this and was unaware that they both loved her. She had a handmaiden by the

name of Braginia, beautiful and wise, who realized that they both loved Izhota. And one day Braginia said to Izhota in jest, "My lady, just for fun, if these two knights loved you, which one of them would you want to love: Palamidezh or our knight, for they both love you?" Izhota laughingly replied, "I cannot forbid their love, even if my heart does not turn to them; but if it came to this, I would prefer to join Palamidezh, since he is the better knight. If ours was such a good knight, and of such noble birth as he looks, he would be the more valorous of the two." Palamidezh and Tristan heard all this talk while they were sitting in a room. When they left, Tristan went for a walk in the meadow and began to think, because his love for Izhota tormented him. He said to himself, "I will not win the favor of the beautiful Izhota, if I don't destroy Palamidezh's lostness; and I cannot do this without a good horse and good armor, and without great difficulty and labor, since Palamidezh is a great knight." With that heavy heart Tristan remained until the second tournament.

King Lenviz asked Tristan, "Do you want to ride to the tournament in our company?" And he told him, "Sir, I still am not feeling up to my strength." The king believed him and left it at that; but Tristan had responded thus because he wished to go to the tournament without being recognized. In three days the king went to the tournament with a small retinue; and Tristan remained very mournful, since he did not know how to accomplish what he intended [31].

While he was deep in thought, Braginia, who liked him very much, came to him and said, "My lord, what are you thinking of?" Tristan replied, "My maiden, if I knew that you might help me in my intentions I would tell you." She promised him: "I'll do whatever I can." He said, "Maiden, I would go to this tournament if I only had a horse and armor." She said, "Why did you not go together with the king?" Said Tristan, "I want to go secretly, so as not to be

recognized." And the maiden asked, "And therefore you remained behind?" Tristan said, "Indeed." She said, "Do not worry about the horse and the armor; you will not be prevented from being in the tournament." Tristan thanked her very kindly and then said, "My dear maiden, take care of me; I do not want to delay." She found him a good horse and good armor without an insignia and gave him her two brothers for his service. Tristan asked Braginia not to disclose him to anyone; he departed secretly and encountered many knights from many lands at the tournament.

When they saw Tristan there, all those who were knowledgeable praised Tristan, for he sat on the horse in so stately a way. He stood on one side, watching what was going to happen. Then came Palamidezh in the same armor and with the same elaborate regalia as before. When Gavaon saw him, having looked at the good knights, he said, "Now you have something to watch: see what the great knight will do; be on guard for his strike." Garnot said, "We have not yet seen an equal to him in the world." Palamidezh began to perform such marvels that there was no knight at the tournament who was not afraid of him; and he defeated many knights going left and right, and there was no knight to be found who would dare to face him. King Lenviz and the King of a Hundred Knights and all the great knights who had been holding the field very well finally had to abandon the field, though unwillingly, to Palamidezh. Palamidezh stood proudly at this time; and all began to shout: "He with the black shield and two swords has won the tournament for the second time!" [32]

When Tristan saw all this, he said, "This is Palamidezh." He recognized his banner and said, "Hand me a helmet; I want to meet with the good knight on the field." All the others ran to him, each one offering his helmet. When Tristan put a helmet on, they strapped it and checked him as

was proper to do, and then he took a lance and stood up against Palamidezh. When they saw each other, Tristan said, "Knight, I have some business with you." The other headed toward him and said, "Come here and see."

[The Fight of Tristan with Palamidezh]

And so they charged at each other and struck very hard. Palamidezh broke his lance, and Tristan hit him so hard that he fell to the ground with his horse. From this strike he became very confused and did not know what to do; he mounted his horse and wanted to go to the camp without casting his eyes here or there. Tristan, who was very angry with him, saw him running away, rode after him and overtook him. It was not enough for him that he caused him great shame by this defeat, he wished to bring him to a point so that he would never dare to appear before Izhota's eyes again. He overtook Palamidezh and shouted, "Knight, turn around and we will see which of us is more worthy of great chivalry and which of us is more deserving to love the marvelous Izhota." When Palamidezh heard this speech, he realized that it was Tristan and was very distressed because he had not believed that he was so good. So he turned to him and took his sword, realizing that he would not leave without an injury. Tristan approached very swiftly, and they began to hit hard. Tristan struck him with a hard blow on the helmet. Palamidezh could not stay on his horse but fell to the ground defeated. He lay there a long while, not knowing day from night. When Tristan saw this, he was joyous that things had befallen him well: he saw that he had accomplished the aim that he wished for the most. When he had defeated the good knight Palamidezh, whom he hated very much and put to such disgrace, he left [33] the tournament for his home.

As Lord Tristan rode through the leafy woods, he met a maiden with two squires who guessed that he had been at

the tournament, because she saw his battered armor. Stopping, she greeted him kindly. He returned the greeting very courteously. The maiden asked, "Sir, are you returning from the tournament?" Tristan answered, "What are you asking of me?" She said, "Sir, I wish you to tell me who won the tournament." Said Tristan, "My lady, if it is your wish, I will tell you: this tournament was won by the most beautiful maiden my eyes have seen to this day." She stood there for a while in reflection and said, "Knight, you are telling me a marvel; I beg of you: tell me the name of this maiden, so that I know what to say if I am asked." Tristan said, "This name you will not find out from me now." Said the maiden, "I beg of you, my lord, take the helmet off your head so that I can see your face and render you honor, since I am a messenger from King Artlush." Tristan took the helmet off his head and said, "Maiden, look at me as much as you wish." She said, "My lord, I see you very happily: now I can boast that I saw the best knight of all. I beg of you, lord, tell me your name." And Tristan said, "You cannot know my name now because it is hard to tell." The maiden said, "I have traveled many lands for your name; it is a pity for all my toil to have seen you and not to know your name." Said Tristan, "Know that I am not the one you are searching for." Said the maiden, "I beg you, before God, did you not conquer the Dolorous Guard and abolish the vile custom that dominated that town where many people died because of the lawlessness of the cursed rule?" Tristan said, "Maiden, I was not in that town at all, nor did I see it; but I beg you, maiden, is the Dolorous Guard taken?" Said the maiden, "I saw a knight penetrate the town with a few good companions, and no one but this knight accomplished it with his hand." Said Tristan, "I beg of you, maiden, did you see him without his armor?" "I saw him; he has the beauty and is the same age as you; and pre-

cisely because of this I assumed you were the knight; but I was deceived in this by my [34] senses." At the end of these words they separated.

Tristan went back to Braginia, who had rendered him a great service, while the maiden departed from Tristan very sadly, since she had not found out who he was. She went to the tournament, saw Palamidezh and approached him. He was crying very hard, cursing the day he was born and the day he mounted a horse; and the maiden was also crying because she had missed the tournament that she desired to see more pressingly than anything else.

Coming to him, she greeted him, though she did not know who he was. She found him very sad: he was grieving over his misadventure and cursing the day he was born and the hour he first mounted a horse. And she said, "Knight, God give solace to you." He responded: "God give his mercy to you." And Palamidezh said, "Maiden, have you encountered a knight in white armor?" She said, "My lord, I met him and spoke a few words with him; he is riding alone through the woods." Said Palamidezh, "If you know anything after talking to him, for God's sake tell me." She said, "I do not know, since I have not seen him before and could not find out his name. He is not from the Round Table nor from King Artush's court." Palamidezh asked, "Is this the truth?" She replied, "Indeed it is." He said, "O my God, I am even more humiliated and sorrowful than before." And he began to grieve and lament, throwing away his helmet, both swords, and his shield. He mounted his horse unarmed and rode off weeping and with great sorrow.

Seeing this, the maiden called after him very kindly: "For God's sake, knight, tell me why you are grieving so?" He told her all in order: "God honored me in the first tournament; in the second, I was above all in this honor, but along came a knight who so ferociously fought me, first

with a lance and then with a sword, that in the end he put me in great disgrace before the crowd. Because of this I cannot carry arms for the entire year; for if I was to carry it I would worry how to avenge him. [35] Now I am lost and wish to be dead." Said the maiden, "My lord, tell me your name." And he said, "I am Palamidezh." Having said so, he departed from her very hastily. She went her way in quest of the one who had conquered the Dolorous Guard. Actually, this was Antsolot from Lokva, who went through the realms in search of adventure and an equal to himself. Gavaon too was sent to look for him and he went everywhere that he heard were knightly assemblies. And the maiden, riding from the tournament, met Sir Gavaon. Said Gavaon, "I beg of you, maiden, tell me some news of the knight who is carrying white insignia and armor without other signs who recently left us." The maiden said, "I will tell you, if you inform me of the person I am searching for." Said Gavaon, "Whom are you searching for?" She said, "I am seeking news about the knight who conquered the Dolorous Guard." Said Gavaon: "I think, in fact, that it is the one you have met; I am also seeking him." The maiden said, "Really, he is not, because he has never been there, though he resembles the other in stature and in bravery." Said Gavaon, "If he is not the one, I am going from this land to Londresh in order to hear about him." Said the maiden, "I am going with you." They departed together and came to a place where Palamidezh had left his armor. Gavaon recognized it and said, "This is the armor of a very great knight." And he took the shield and hung it on a tree. Said the maiden, "If you only saw the one who left these arms, how he grieved and cried, you would be greatly astonished." She recounted to him all in order: what she had seen and heard. Gavaon said, "Would you know his name?"<sup>9</sup> She said, "He did not want to tell me." Gavaon

said, "I would be glad to know all the truth about him, to be able to relate this to King Artlush and to other kings' courts." Then they went to the king, embarking on a big ship.

Let us leave this, and return to Lord Tristan. When Tristan departed from the maiden, he rode swiftly and came to the castle, to Izhota's and Braginia's quarters. He came at night, in hiding. [36] Braginia met him, happy to know the result of the tournament. When she saw him she came to him, and having greeted him, asked: "My good and honorable lord, how did your affair go? Tell me about the tournament; who received the honors from it?" Said Tristan, "My dear maiden, I cannot tell you this now." Said Braginia, "Sir, tell me about Palamidezh, if it is he who won the tournament?" Said Tristan, "I cannot tell you about him, but know this well: he is one of the great knights, famous throughout the world, but it so happened now that he did not receive the honors at this tournament." She said smiling, "And how were you?" Tristan said, "I achieved my purpose, as I wanted, and I beg you not to ask me more." She left him at this, since she gathered that he did not want to talk about his defeat or accomplishment. She gave him good bedding and he went to sleep, for he was extremely weary and very swollen from blows. After he had rested to his contentment, the next day his face was swollen and black and blue from so many blows. When people began to talk about the knight in white armor, Tristan was modest, since he would not be happy if he were recognized.

On the third day King Lenviz came back with his retinue to his court and with him also the great knights Garnot, Lord Bandemagul, and Ivan. They did not talk about anything but the tournament and about the white knight and about Palamidezh; and they were amazed that the white

knight had left without a word. Bandemagul said to Garnot, "It looks to me as if this is the knight who conquered the Dolorous Guard: that knight always concealed himself." The king said, "I beg you, who is the knight you are talking about?" Said Garnot, "My lord, we are talking about the one whom my father<sup>10</sup> King Artlush knighted recently; he accomplished more chivalry by his hand than anyone ever saw, but there is no man who knows his name [37] or who he is." The king said, "If he won the fight but hides his name and does not want to be known, he is very valorous." And all these words Tristan took to himself.

Braginia was very wise and attentive, and she wondered: "Maybe it could be the knight to whom I gave the horse and armor and a shield?" She began to ask one and another about the white knight and discovered that, indeed, Tristan had been honored in the tournament; she was very joyous about it and wondered how she could find out his name and where he was from. One evening she went to King Lenviz and said, "Lord king, I deign to know about the white knight you are seeking who won the tournament." The king said, "Maiden, I wish this very much, since I saw with my eyes his great valor." And Braginia said, "Do not despair. I will put you on the right path." The king said, "If you are telling the truth, I will be very grateful."

The next day Braginia said to the king, "Come with me to the palace." He went there and she showed him the armor and the shield and said, "Could you recognize whether you saw it in the tournament?" Said the king, "Indeed, this armor and this shield were on the knight who won the tournament. But, by God, maiden, tell me if you know anything about him." Said Braginia, "My lord, be happy, for I am not going to hide it from you: this was the knight who is now in your court, whom you took in injured and sick, whom your daughter cured."

The king was very surprised and could not believe that

the knight was so great and began to question: "What do you know about him?" She told him all in order: how she gave him a horse and arms and how he returned to her. The king called in a few people who were with him at the tournament, and said to them, "Could you recognize this armor and shield?" They said, "Indeed these arms won the tournament." And the king was happy about this.

He came to Tristan and said to him, "My honorable knight, I am sorely disappointed that you were hiding your honor from me. [38] If it pleases you, tell me your name." When Tristan heard this, he was very frightened that he would be recognized, for he knew that here they wished him the worst evil, and he responded to the king. "My lord, you did much for me, and I do not owe as much to anybody as to you; as long as I live, I will return it to you with my services, wherever there will be a need for me." Said the king, "I don't ask anything now but for you to tell me your name." Tristan said, "My lord, I cannot tell you my name now." Said the king, "Tell me then if you were wearing the white armor that Braginia gave you at this tournament?" Tristan said, "I was wearing this armor; and I am sorry you know this." Said the king, "Knight, you should not be sorry, for you did me a great honor since a knight from my court won the tournament. For your chivalry and your friendship and your valor I grant you my friendship." Tristan thanked him very humbly.

Thereafter Tristan's chivalry became known throughout Orlendea, and he was greatly honored by the king and by all good people; and there was no lady or maiden in all of the king's court who would not have been happy to love him with her whole heart. They suspected that Izhota loved him secretly, but she had a modest heart. The king was grieved that she should love him, and he her, and that the youth should marry her, since the king knew that she

could not marry a better knight than he, but he was very sorry that he did not know his name, and would not dare to bother him or inquire further.

One day Tristan was bathing in a tub in one of the bed-chambers, and Izhota and many other maidens were serving him; each considered it a great privilege to wait on him. One man by the name of Kushyn<sup>11</sup> approached Tristan's bed and picked up his sword, and, taking it out, began to look at it. It seemed to him so fine and sharp that he could not get enough of it, and admiringly he brought it to the queen. She began to examine it and noticed [39] a dent in it, and said to Kushyn, "Tell me, whose sword is it?" And he told her. She said, "Carry it for me." He carried it and stepped in her chamber after her; she took from a chest a chip from a sword, matched it with the sword, and it fit. She saw that it was the sword that killed her brother Amurat. She slapped her face and said, "O, my God, my foe is in our house, the one who killed my brother, the good knight! It is Tristan — that is why he concealed himself; and this is the sword that made all of us sad and debased, and demeaned all of Orlendea." And she became very angry and, taking the sword, rushed to Tristan, and raised the sword to strike him. Tristan hid himself in the tub. She said, "Tristan, you will be killed here by the sword with which you killed my brother, King Amurat; now you will be killed from my hand." Tristan was not frightened, but a squire intervened and said, "My lady, beware, do not kill this knight by your hand: it is not worthy for a royal lady to stain her hands with the blood of a knight. If he is guilty, leave this revenge to the king: he will do what is just to him, and he will avenge your sorrow suitably." The queen, however, did not quiet down, and advanced to strike Tristan, but the squire held her by the hand and prevented the strike. Izhota, putting shame aside, since her love for Tris-

tan impelled her, shielded him with her hand very magnanimously. And the queen said, "Izhota, my daughter, what are you doing? This is Tristan, who killed your uncle Amurat."

The king approached and heard this clamor and said, "My lady, why are you so angry?" She said, "How could I not be angry? I found my greatest foe, Tristan, who killed my brother Amurat; that is why he was concealing himself in our court; either you kill him or I will. This is the sword with which he killed Amurat; let him die by the same sword!" The king, hearing this, reflected, for he was very wise, and he said, "Calm, my lady, leave this revenge for me: I will act as is lawful, and you will not be sorry." He took the sword from her and said, "Now, go outside." And she left. [40] The king questioned Tristan, and said, "My dear friend, did you kill Amurat?" Said Tristan, "I cannot conceal myself any longer, I did kill him. But no one should blame me, because it behooved me to kill him, or he would kill me; it could not have been otherwise." Said the king, "You are dead." And then he told him, "Dress yourself and come to me at the great hall." He left three squires to assist him.

Tristan dressed elegantly and with distinction and went to the main hall in great sadness, mostly because his sword was not with him. The place was full of good men and ladies and maidens; and when they saw him, they looked at him very attentively because of his beauty, valor, and chivalry; and they admired his great beauty and his marvelous deeds, his accomplishments and his courtliness. And maidens were telling Izhota: "If Tristan, who is the most marvelous man in the world, meets his death, all people will be sorry for him."

And all good men and knights were saying: "God knows, there is no such knight in the world; and it would be a great sin to kill him for one who cannot return." Then the

queen came and began to annoy the king with her tears, saying, "My lord, he is my enemy; take revenge upon him, while it is in your power, for if you let him go he will not be at your disposal."

The king loved his queen and did not know what he should do. He kept silent for a long while, and finally spoke for everyone to hear: "Tristan, you are very guilty in connection with me, but even if all the people hold it as evil against me, I want to let you go in peace, to deliver you from the death that you were supposed to have. First of all, I took you into my house, injured and sick, and restored your health; secondly, you are such a great knight that I do not know an equal to you in the world; thirdly, you have killed my brother-in-law Amurat, not treacherously, but in a knightly manner. For these three reasons I release you from death, but you have to do as I say: as it happens, you should as speedily as possible flee [41] from my land; do not linger anywhere, for if I find you, I will surely have to kill you if I can."

Hearing this, Tristan very humbly thanked first God and then the king, and took his leave. The king sent him off honorably, giving him a horse and armor. Braginia gave him her two brothers to serve him; she was very sad, but did not want to show it before the queen, since the queen was angry because the king had commuted his death. Izhota and the other maidens said, "It is better that Tristan is acquitted of the death of one who would not come back." Tristan rode with his retinue to the harbor, and people were talking and admiring his valor and courtliness.

While they sailed on the vessel, a good wind moved them toward Kornovalia swiftly. Tristan was very happy about this and rendered praise to God with all his heart. He rested there one day, asking about King Marko and other lords, and the next day rode to where King Marko was said to be.

When he arrived at King Marko's court, the king greeted him very gratefully, and there was a great merriment made by the king and the lords, as if the Father<sup>12</sup> had come to them. The king asked Tristan what had happened to him and Tristan recounted how fortune had taken him to Orlendea, where the king took him into his court and was kind to him, and how he had entrusted him to his daughter Izhota, who knew about wounds more than any doctors. He also recounted her beauty, and how he was recognized by his sword, and how the king acquitted him from death, and let him go honorably away. But he did not tell Marko how he defeated Palamidezh and won the tournament. Tristan was now honored in Kornovalia by the people as much as King Marko himself was. The entire Kornovalian kingdom was now liberated by him, and many countries were afraid of it.

At this time there was a lady, the daughter of a duke, the most wonderful lady in all Kornovalia. Recently one knight from Londresh [42] by the name of Seguradezh had married her for her beauty, for she was as a flower, like a rose. King Marko was so enamored of her that there was nothing on earth he would not have done for her if only he could have her at his will. She often visited the king's court for entertainment. One day she came to the court for a festivity and the king was very pleased with her arrival. When Tristan saw her, he began to look at her often, since she seemed to him the most wonderful being after Izhota; her heart attracted him, and he eyed her stealthily so that no one noticed it. When she saw Tristan, the most wonderful and the greatest knight, it came to her mind that if he wanted to love her, she would not want more, since she knew his valor; and all her thoughts were on him and how she could love him without dishonoring herself; her eye was nowhere but with Tristan. She forgot all the other people because of Tristan, and Tristan forgot Izhota; they looked at each other

very tenderly and one knew what was on the mind of the other. When evening came, the lady took leave of the king and approached Tristan very obligingly and said smartly, "Lord, I am yours, if you want me." Said Tristan, "Many thanks, my lady. I take you very gratefully as your knight." Having said only this to each other, the lady left for home, carrying Tristan in her heart; when she got home she sent a servant, whom she trusted very much, to Tristan, saying, "Go discreetly to Tristan and tell him secretly that he can come to me at dusk to talk with me; let him come dressed in full armor, since one never knows what might happen to him and where; both of you come to the meadow near the sea." The servant said, "My lady, I am ready to fulfill your wish." He went to Tristan and took him aside and relayed to him his lady's message. Tristan said, "I will be happy to act according to her wishes; and you do not go anywhere from the court: we will depart together." He called a squire and said, "Keep a horse saddled and arms ready at twilight, [43] and do not tell anyone."

King Marko, seeing Tristan talking alone with the servant, departed from his lords to a room and ordered everybody to leave. He said to the servant, "What were you discussing with Tristan, my nephew?" The servant Magush<sup>13</sup> said, "My lord, I cannot tell you this, but I can let you know that your nephew is neither cold nor warm." Said the king, "I want you to tell me, even against your wish." Said the youth, "It is not proper for me to reveal secrets, lest I become a traitor." Said the king, "You must tell, or you will die now." The youth became very frightened and said, "Master, I will tell you, only, for God's sake, do not tell anybody." The king promised him, and he recounted everything: how his lady had sent for Tristan and how he had ridden to see her.

The king heard this and was very sad about it, because he wanted to have her himself and she had resisted him.

not allowing it in any manner. As he sat there thinking hard, he said to himself, "Look at this: she refused me, a great lord; I could have done evil and good for her, but she gave herself to the one who cannot do anything for her, and he is not as good a knight as I am; really, she is a foolish woman and she will have great sorrow for this." But he did not let Magush know his thoughts; he considered himself a better knight than Tristan, and he was reflecting a great while and said to the Magush youth, "I am surprised that your lady is so quickly enamored of Tristan, who is still a child; I know a better knight than Tristan; he is a great lord like myself, who wants to love her very much, but she has refused him." Said Magush, "Sire, don't you know what often happens between men and women? One man will choose for himself someone lesser and more meager, though she could have been twice as pretty; just as a young woman might not prefer a good knight or a great lord." The king said, "I sought her myself, but she refused me; and for her foolishness I want to kill her and to destroy her house." When Magush heard this, he became frightened, because he knew the king to be a most treacherous man; he gathered [44] that the king would go instead of Tristan to have her for his desire. It would be better for his lady to perish than to do this, for then Tristan would be plotting something evil against the king. The king said to Magush, "What are you thinking?" And he told him the whole truth.

When the king realized that Magush wanted his lady for him rather than for Tristan, he was very glad about it: "You could do me much good, since I have your lady on my mind; for if she would have me once, then she would gladly have me always." Said Magush, "My lord, I will gladly do what I can, but what are you thinking about Tristan? I promised to go with him; if I lie to him, it will turn out badly for me." Don't worry about this; I will go with one armed squire and

will wait for you by the well as you pass; there I want to deal with Tristan, so that he will forget your lady's love. When I overcome him, I will then go with you and you will escort me instead of Tristan; and good will come to you because of this." Magush said, "I gladly do it at your will, but, by God, tell me how you plan to undo Tristan, the very valorous and strong knight. For God's sake, do not set out on such an adventure foolishly, because he is planning to ride armed." The king said to Magush, "It looks as if you consider Tristan to be stronger than I am? Do not fret. I want to disgrace him." And the king stepped out of the room with Magush. Tristan, seeing him, said, "I am ready to go." Said Magush, "Let's be quick."

The king called a squire: "Prepare for me a horse and armor at dusk, and do not tell anybody." He put his armor on, mounted his horse and rode with his squire to the place; the squire carried his shield and his lance. When they came to some water, the king dismounted and said, "We have to wait here for the one we have invited." While waiting, they saw Tristan riding up with one squire and Magush. The king mounted his horse and said to the squire, "Hand me my shield and my lance." The squire said, "My lord, what do you wish to do?" [45] The king said, "The one that I hate is coming; I won't be happy until I shorten his life." The squire said, "My lord, forgive me, but it does not look good to me, for if he is in your house, you can dishonor him in some other way and accomplish your wish, but you should not avenge him treacherously. If he wronged you, do not engage in such an adventure." The king said, "You watch and see." When Tristan was near, the king shouted: "Knight Tristan, on guard!" Tristan was surprised by this; he saw a knight waiting for him and took his shield and his lance.

[The Fight of King Marko with Tristan].

And they fought hard. The king broke his lance in many pieces; Tristan struck him in his chest and the king fell to the ground severely beaten. Then Tristan rode past him. When the king saw himself defeated, he was very distraught and wished himself dead rather than alive. The squire jumped off his horse and asked, "Sire, will you live?" The king said, "What is my life if I remain dishonored until my death and my sorrow does not end? Give me my horse and we will go home discreetly. Where did Tristan go?" The squire said, "I do not know; he rushed by." "It would be even worse if he recognized me." The youth said, "How could he recognize you? You are in full armor and the night is dark." The king rode on and said to himself, "O my God! If my armor had not sustained me, I would be dead." When Magush saw what had happened between the king and Tristan, he was glad on the one hand, and on the other hand sad.

The next day King Marko was sitting in the grand palace at the table with his lords and ladies and maidens and there were plenty of various decorations.<sup>14</sup> One knight came up very bravely and confidently to the grand palace, greeted the king and all the lords and knights, saying to King Marko, "By your grace, give me a boon that I will ask: I am an errant knight from the Round Table; if you refuse me, you will have no good fame." The king promised him and asked, "What is your name?" He said, "My name is Bleryzh. I am a relative of King Ban [46] from Banak, and not many know about my knighthood, for I was only recently knighted. You have promised me a boon which I will now demand of you." The king said, "I have promised you, even though it might be greatly damaging to me." He said, "Give me whichever lady or maiden I please." The king said, "This is a big request, but it cannot be otherwise."

Bleryzh then thanked him and approached where the knight Seguradezh was sitting, and with him sat his lady. He bowed to her, took her by her arm, and placed her in front of him and said to Seguradezh, "Knight, you can't have this lady if you don't win her by sword." Seguradezh jumped up and said, "Bleryzh, if you don't win her by sword, you are not going to have her." And he put his armor on, mounted his horse and rode after him. Catching up with him, he began to shout, "Bleryzh, take guard of me, or give up this lady!"

[The Fight of Seguradezh with Bleryzh]

They struck each other so hard that they broke their lances. Seguradezh fell to the ground, wounded in his side. It was a bad injury, since he was a very heavy man. Bleryzh rode off with the lady, who cried very much for her lord.

While King Marko was sitting in the coolness of his tent with his lords, two errant knights rode by. The king said, "I would be glad if they would tell me about King Artiush and about the knight who conquered the Dolorous Guard." Audret, the nephew of King Marko and Tristan's cousin from another sister, who was given to Orlendea with the first tribute to King Amurat — he was recently dubbed a knight and was envious of Tristan for his valor — said to the king, "If you order, I will go and bring them to you, so that they may talk with you." The king said, "Go, then, swiftly, so that I may question them about yonder matters." He departed without armor.

At that time there came a maiden before the king, who began to look over the people without saying anything and without greeting the king. The knights looked at each other and began to smile about her imprudence. The king said, "Maiden, you looked at us without saying a thing: what do you see in us?" [47] She said, "My lord, I do not see any evil, only goodness; I would gladly see one knight, though." Said

the king, "What is his name?" She said, "Tristan." The king ordered him to be called – he was playing chess. When he came, the maiden began to speak: "Tristan, evil and miserable knight, and most cowardly of all who carry weapons, you do not see your own unworthiness. I wonder how you dare to associate with good people, for you are not worthy to associate with knights. If they knew you were such a wretch they would be ashamed of you, because they are disgraced by you. I tell you this before the king and good people – let them all know your unworthiness; I have told you what I came here for." Tristan stood there, lost, and did not know how to respond. The king said, "Maiden, pray tell me, where did Tristan trespass so?" She said, "I do not want him to exonerate himself." And having said this, she rode away from them. Tristan, embarrassed, reflected a long while about these words, went angrily to his quarters, and very hurriedly began to put on his armor. Govornar came in and asked him, "Why are you dressing?" He told him all in order, what the girl had said in front of many good people. "I want to find out why she shamed me so, and what is my unworthiness? The arms I take, not because of the maiden, but because a man never knows what might happen to him and where." Said Govornar, "I would like to go with you too." Tristan said, "You may." And they rode off very quickly after the maiden. When they were in the field, they met Audret, who was returning from those knights. He had overtaken them and had greeted them: "My lords, from where are you coming?" They had said, "We are coming from King Artiush's court, seeking various adventures, since we are errant knights." And he had said, "Do you know that here is King Marko, who sent me after you to invite you to him for your honor?" They had responded, "We would gladly act according to his wishes, but we have other business and are asking you to excuse us

from this, as courteously as you can." Said Audret, "If you don't do it, you will cause disgrace to my lord, the king, [48] as if you consider him nothing; for this, many misfortunes could come to you." They had said, "This is nothing that you say, and we are not going there." Said Audret, "I will take you without your consent if you do not want to come." And he had grabbed one by the reins, the one named Sogremor. Sogremor, seeing that the knight was so audacious in wanting to take him by force, laughed and said, "Knight, you do not look wise to me, if you want to take me by force." Audret said, "Wait and see." Sogremor drew his sword and struck him with the flat blade over his head so hard that he fell to the ground and lost consciousness, blood running from his mouth. When he came to himself, he stood up, very sad, and could hardly mount his horse, and, having gone a short distance, met Tristan. When Tristan saw Audret all bloody, he felt great pity, since he liked Audret more than Audret liked him, and said, "Who injured you so?" He told him the whole truth. Said Govornar, "You are not very tactful for wanting to bring two knights by force." Tristan said, "I am very sad because of your disgrace, and I want to get revenge if I can: tell me where they went." He said, "I will turn back with you." When Govornar heard this, he said to Tristan, "You too are unwise to want to fight with two knights who are from the kingdom of Londresh. You think that they are like Kornovalian knights? I beg of you, leave in peace – these are select knights of great valor; they seek their actions in strange countries, wherever they hear about chivalry. For God's sake do not venture further." Tristan said, "Master, if they are select knights, it is even better, since they will be ashamed to fight together, but rather one by one. God willing, I do not expect to be shamed." Govornar said, "As you wish." Tristan caught up with them and called out, "Knights, on

guard!" They stopped. Sogremor said, "I would like to take him on." But Dondiel said, "Let me take him."

[The Fight of Tristan with Dondiel]

They faced each other, and struck each other so hard that Dondiel fell with his horse to the ground, and from this fall injured himself very much. Sogremor saw Dondiel defeated and said, "You will [49] pay at once for him, if I can help it."

[The Fight of Tristan with Sogremor]

He charged at Tristan as fast as his horse could gallop. Tristan struck him and Sogremor fell with his horse to the ground, wounded in his left side. When Tristan defeated both knights, he said to Audret: "You are now avenged, and you can go to the king and say, 'Those knights did not want to come back.' Do not tell him about our fight – there is no need." He said: "Let it be as you command." And Audret marveled that Tristan had fought against two knights; he did not expect Tristan to be such a strong man.

Sogremor, seeing himself defeated, said to Tristan, "I beg you, by God, tell me from what country are you?" He said, "From Kornovalia." And Sogremor said, "I cannot believe it." Said Tristan, "You do not believe me, but it is as I have told you." When Sogremor heard this, he began to grieve and cry. Tristan asked him, "Why are you grieving so?" He said, "I am not grieving for being defeated, I only grieve that I was defeated by a knight from Kornovalia, where never has there been a good knight. For this, I pledge to God not to carry weapons until I see other knights from the Round Table dishonored by inferior knights from Kornovalia." He cast off his shield and his lance and all his armor and began to weep very sadly about his misadventure and his shame. Tristan wondered at this and said, "Why don't you want to carry your weapons? Is it because I beat you?" He said, "I'll tell why: if I come back and it should be discovered that I was defeated by an ordinary knight from Korno-

valla, they would judge me unworthy to carry weapons, since in Kornovalia are the poorest knights. This is why I prefer to unarm myself and to judge myself rather than to be judged." Tristan marveled about this: he would have talked much more with him, but he was rushing after the maiden, and evening was approaching.

He left them and rode very quickly after the maiden. He met a servant and said, "Have you seen a maiden riding an ambler? I do not know whether she has a retinue or not, for I saw her alone at the court." He said, "I saw her riding with a knight [50] and a squire and with them there was a lady of great valor and beauty." When Tristan heard this, he was very happy and said, "This is the lady that was abducted from the king's court; now I can have what I wished." And he rode off to catch up with this lady and Bleryzh, who led her. He spotted them near a town, entering the gate.

Tristan, seeing that he would be unable to reach them outside the town where they were to spend the night, said to Govornar: "Master, what we have wished, we have found: the maiden who defamed me, and the lady and the knight who leads her. Because of her my uncle hates me. But the night came upon us; if only I had met them in the field, he would have had to either let the lady free or I would have fought with him until I could no longer strike my sword; but now, I do not know what we should do." Said Govornar, "Do you want to fight with this knight? On God's honor, if you want to fight with every knight who comes to Kornovalia, you will have many hardships. Do you know that this knight is not beholden to you; you cannot fight with him if he does not want it." Said Tristan, "Indeed I can, Master, because as you have heard many times, these knights have a custom that they can challenge each other to a fight and they don't consider this a disgrace. They had decided this, that the errant and select knights of similar valor should test other knights, so that their valor can be known."

Because of this I can have a fight with him and be glorified. Master, if I do not fight with good knights, I will not be renowned, and if you oppose me in this, I will know that you do not love me." Govornar, hearing this, said, "If you want to fight with Bleryzh, I will not hold you, but I beg you, be courtly." Replied Tristan, "Well said." That night he stayed on the premises of an old widow landowner, who had a young and brave son; that evening he began to look at Tristan very attentively: "My lord, don't be offended by what I want to say." Said Tristan, "Tell me what you want." He asked, "Were you in Orlenda?" Said Tristan, "What are you asking me for?" He said, "You seem to me like that knight who won two tournaments in Orlenda, about whose knighthood that whole country marveled." Said Tristan, "My brother, there are many people who resemble each other; I would be happy if I were so [51] good." The next morning Tristan heard mass, put on his armor and rode on after the knight. He caught up with him in the field and shouted, "Knight, on guard!" Bleryzh turned around and took out his shield and his lance; both knights looked valorous.

[The Fight of Tristan with Bleryzh]

They lunged at each other to show their courage, and struck so hard that both fell with their horses to the ground. They began to hit their helmets with their swords, and they soon saw that none was superior to the other; like two lions they chased around the field and in a short while both were wounded and their armor broken from hard blows. Both realized that one would receive humiliation or death from the other, and both were in need of a rest. Bleryzh stood back and put down his shield and his sword for a pause; he began to wonder and said, "It cannot be anyone else but Antsolot from Lokva." Tristan also rested. Bleryzh said, "Knight, I know that you are the first among

good knights; I beg you to tell me your name. I do not tell you this as if to praise you, only to know whom I have defeated or who will defeat me." Tristan said, "If you want to know my name, I am Tristan from Elionos, the son of King Meliadush." When Bleryzh heard this, he said, "In God's name, I do not want to fight with you, since I have heard much good about you; I would rather give myself up to you: you have won this fight." And he handed him his sword. Said Tristan, "O Sir, I did not earn this honor, since I too need to rest. If you want to stop the fight, I am glad, but you have to return the lady, because I did not come for any other reason but to win her." Said Bleryzh, "Sir, I cannot do this, since you know that I conquered her by the lance; but if you wish, we will do this: we will leave it to her choice, and let her go with whomever she fancies." Said Tristan, "Good." And they put the lady between them and said to her, "This fight was for you: love whomever you want; let the fight end." She thanked them and said thus, "Tristan, I was very happy to see you [52] and I have loved you, but if you are so wicked that you allowed a strange knight to carry me off from your uncle's court, for this I will never love you." And she turned around and went to Bleryzh.

When Tristan saw this, he was very sad; if he had been defeated, he would not have been so sad, since he loved this lady with all his heart; and his sorrow was so great he could not utter a word. He went to his horse and rode to King Marko's court.

King Marko heard from Audret how Tristan defeated those two knights; and the king greatly feared that Tristan would prove to be of great valor and become ambitious and take his land. He said to Tristan, so that all people could hear, "My dear nephew, I have heard much about you that I cannot believe; so that I don't brood about it, I beg you to swear to tell me, without concealment, whatever I ask of

you; and there will be no shame from what you say."

Tristan did not want to doubt his uncle, and Govornar told him to humor him in all as much as possible. So he said, "My lord, I am willing to recount all that will not disgrace me." The king said, "Then, swear to me." Tristan swore and the king said, "I beg of you, recount to me every time that I dubbed you a knight." Tristan said, "As you wish, since it is no hardship to me." And he began to recount to him in order and came to what he had accomplished in Orlendea. Here, they listened to him with great wonder; and they all stood oblivious; and he recounted all his deeds up to Bleryzh. The king and Audret were very sad, while all others were joyous. Tristan said, "My lord, nothing more did I accomplish, but, forget this, I consider it for naught." The king said, "I do not want to forget it in any fashion. God willing, you might become the greatest knight in the world; from this moment I am already more hopeful and joyous than before." And the lords said, "Now, Kornovalia, do not fret as long as Tristan is wholesome and with us." And the king said too: [53] "God give him health." But the king did not disclose his thoughts to anyone, that he was very sad; he began to fear Tristan and there was nothing on earth that he would rather do, than to somehow destroy Tristan cunningly, so as not to be found out. He began to ponder how it could be: "For I cannot please him in everything, and if I fail, I am dead; but if he was no longer in this world, I would not fear anything at any time." Finally, one thing came to his mind by which he could be happy and destroy Tristan.

One day there were some seneschals with him and they told him: "Gracious king, you are not acting wisely in not having a wife." And Tristan said, "My lord, it is very right for you to marry: all Kornovalia would be better regarded by

the surrounding neighbors." The king said, "My nephew, if you care so much, I will take a wife: no one else can help me marry but you; if you would care to, you can find me a beautiful and good wife, whom I could love." Said Tristan, "If it depends on me, you will have her, even if I should lose my life." He pointed to a church which he saw nearby and said, "God help me; I want to do all in my power." The king said, "Already I feel as if I have her with me; I'll relate to you the kind I want to have. You know that you described one maiden to me and praised her, saying that her beauty has no equal in the world – let this one be my wife, and no other – she is the Orlendeian princess, the beautiful Izhota. Do not linger. Go bring her to me and take what you need – as many lords and everything else that is necessary to you."

When Tristan heard this, he knew that his uncle hated him and was sending him to his death in Orlendea. But even though it might be unfortunate for him, he consented to this. The king said, "My dear nephew, promise me that you will carry it through with an upright heart." And Tristan said, "My lord, even if I were to die, [54] you will have her." The king thanked him and said, "Be ready and prepare yourself ceremoniously, so that you conduct this matter honorably; yet my heart will not rest until you return and Izhota is in my house."

Tristan would have been glad to refuse this journey, for he knew that he was being sent to his worst enemies because of Amurat, and he was rueful about it, but he did not refuse. He chose forty young lords to go with him; they were very sorrowful since they could not expect more disgrace from even their greatest foes; but even though they did not want to, they had to prepare for the journey. Soon the vessel and they were ready. Govornar was weeping and said to Tristan, "You can see how your uncle hates you; he

plotted it more for your death than for Izhota." Said Tristan, "Master, do not fret; even if he thinks evil, if I accommodate him in this and that, he will have to think and act well toward me." Said Govornar, "God keep you well."

Lord Tristan departed to sea in his vessel with his retinue, with abundance and riches. While sailing, they played and jested among themselves, as is common among knights and young people; but then they would remember where they were heading, and they would not know what to say. Tristan comforted them and turned distress into laughter, and they enjoyed themselves and trusted Tristan's chivalry and said, "With Tristan we will not get into trouble."

They encountered a strong wind, and the mariners got scared and fought it, but could not advance; they let the vessel go where the wind took it, and they began to pray to God: "O, God, have mercy and save us from death." This ordeal lasted a day and a night, and the next day, with the wind quieted down, the sea calmed, and they found themselves near a town called Damolot, the capital of King Artiush. Since it was luxurious and rich, it had been chosen over all other towns, and it was by the sea. And when they reconnoitered there, King Artiush was not there; he was in Karduel with a small retinue. Tristan asked his mariners [55], "Where are we?" They said, "We are in a Great Land."<sup>15</sup> Said Tristan, "Then we need have no fear. Let us give praise to God that we are on land; we will take a rest here and solace, praising God that He conducted us safely to land." They did so: they put up six large tents, and took out their shields and armor, led out their horses and camped in that place with games and enjoyment.

At this time two errant knights rode out who had met each other on the road, not having known each other before — each one with a squire — one knight was named

Iashchor, Antsolot's brother, the other Marganor. Iashchor recently had been dubbed a knight, some four weeks before, but he did not stay at the court a week: he went to seek his fortune, and much goodness came to him, since he was a good lancer and very big-hearted. Marganor was older in years and had never been defeated, but he did not have as big a heart as Iashchor.

When they came near Tristan's tents and saw the shields and helmets, they said, "Here are some errant knights sitting in the cool; they put up their shields in the Londresh manner, so that those riding by could compete with them. And those who would pass them by without venture will be shamed." Said Marganor, "We will joust, since they are waiting for us or for others. If we do not joust with them, we will be in disgrace." And Iashchor said, "In God's name, then!" And they prepared themselves as necessary.

There was a knight with Tristan who knew this custom since he had traveled through King Artiush's land. He said, "Tristan, see these two knights preparing themselves for a joust: they cannot ride by without a fight, seeing our shields by the tents." Said Tristan, "Is that their custom?" He said, "It is." Said Tristan, "God bless those who established this custom, and we should honor it: give me my armor." The others asked, "Why?" Said Tristan, "Do you see those two knights who would like to fight with us?" They said, "And if we do not want to?" Said Tristan, "If we are afraid [56] of these two knights, then we will not get Izhota from Orlendea, since we cannot obtain her otherwise."

#### [The Fight of Tristan with Marganor]

Tristan mounted his horse and rode a bit away from the tents. Said Marganor, "The knight is ready; if you will, let us ride up to him." Iashchor, being the younger, did not want to go ahead of him; so Marganor rode and struck Tristan very hard on his shield. His lance went to pieces, but

Tristan did not budge a bit and struck Marganor very hard, who fell on one side, while his horse fell on the other, if not wounded then very bruised from the fall.

[The Fight of Tristan with Iashchor]

Tristan defeated one and rode on toward the other, and Iashchor toward him; he struck Tristan, so that his lance went to pieces. With this strike he pierced through Tristan's shield and armor and slightly wounded him in his left side; Tristan, however, struck him so hard that Iashchor fell to the ground. Seeing himself stricken, he rose up, drew his sword and said, "Knight, you distinguished yourself with your lance. Fight now with your sword until one defeats the other." Said Tristan, "I do not want this. We were jousting because of the custom, but I do not want to fight." Said Iashchor, "Let us fight a bit." Tristan said, "I do not want to." Iashchor was very sad, and said, "God help you, who are you that you are so afraid of a sword-stroke?" Said Tristan, "I am from Kornovalia." Iashchor asked, "Are you King Marko's knight?" Said Tristan, "I am, and so are all those you see." Iashchor said, "Your arrival has brought an evil hour to this land, for I am now dishonored." Said Tristan, "Why so?" He replied, "Whoever hears that I was beaten by you will consider me a bad knight; I am unworthy to carry weapons." And he threw away his shield and his sword and began to lament and curse himself. Said Tristan, "What are you doing, I beg you?" Iashchor said, "I do not want to carry these weapons, nor to ride the horse on which I received such a disgrace from a knight; it suits me to go afoot. [57]" And he let his horse go free to the field. At this Tristan laughed and said, "Knight, it is shameful for me to let you go afoot; if you do not want this horse and these arms, take my arms and my horses." Said Iashchor, "God forbid, I would be even more dishonored if I were to dress in Kornovalian armor." And he went afoot, leaving his

horse and arms in the field; with him rode a very sorrowful Marganor. Tristan returned to his company and recounted to them Iashchor's deeds and they began to marvel.

The next day while they were stationed there, they saw a big vessel coming toward them into the haven. It landed, and on this vessel was Orlendean King Lenviz himself. They landed a shot away from Tristan's vessel, disembarked, put up a tent, and led out horses. The king mounted a horse and rode toward Tristan's tents. He asked, "Where is this company from?" They said, "From Kornovalia." Said the king, "What brought you here?" They said, "An evil hour." The king inquired if Tristan was there. They said, "He is; there he is, resting in the tent. But where are you from, that you are asking about Tristan?" The king said, "I am a knight from Orlendea; I am very happy to see him. I suspect he will be happy to see me too." They said, "What is your name, so we know what to tell him?" He said, "My name is Lenviz."

When Tristan heard Lenviz's name, he jumped up and said, "Where is he?" They said, "There, he is waiting for you." He ran to him very joyously and they embraced very tenderly. They were asking each other what had happened to them from the time they parted. Said the king, "I am very glad that I found you." Said Tristan, "My lord, what is your need for me? I had many honors at your court; then you recently delivered me from death, and I promised you that there was nothing in the world that I would not do for you, unless it caused disgrace."

The king said, "I will tell you why I came here, to the Londresh kingdom. There have been in Orlendea frequent tournaments after you, [58] for which many good knights came from Londresh, from Galiush and from other countries; and there were a few tournaments by the town where you defeated Palamidezh. To one came four knights, kinsmen and blood relatives of King Ban of Banak, and they

won that tournament. I invited them to stay in my house, and they, and many others, came to the town where you had stayed. While they were there, something sinful befell — which I was not aware of — one of them was killed in my house, which I cannot deny. But God knows that I am innocent of it. I was very sorry about it, so help me God, I would have rather lost my castle than to have this evil happen in my home. Seeing this, these three knights who were with him were angry with me but could do nothing to me in my own house. Then one of them, by the name of Blanor, said, 'King Lenviz, we came into your home as friends, but you acted like a foe and treacherously killed our brother in your house. Here, we cannot start anything with you, but you will answer to me with a fight at King Artiush's court.' Having said this, he departed; and the other knights who were there said the same, since all were distraught about it. And not long ago letters from King Artiush were delivered to me, summoning me and giving me a time to stand up before them and fight to refute the falsehood which Blanor accused me of because of the death of his relative. He let me know that if I do not appear I must perish as a traitor. I must respond to this summons since King Artiush is so powerful that he can destroy me; but among all my people there is no one who can fight with Blanor, neither do I feel as if I could exonerate myself from his slander, since he is one of the knights who are world-famous. For this reason I am in great distress and do not know what to do. For the kindness which you had in my home, I dare to ask you to fight for me with Blanor, and I am hoping for your [59] compassion."

When Tristan heard this, he was very joyous and said to himself, "Now, I will get Izhotka, for whom I came." He responded: "My lord, you did a lot for me, and I am ready to do this for you. But let us agree: if, God willing, I accom-

plish this, give me one boon that I will ask of you." The king promised him very gladly. Govornar and all Kornovalian and Orlendean lords began to talk, so that both parties standing there could hear: "Tristan is ready to fight with Blanor for the truth. The king promised Tristan a boon that he would ask if he accomplishes this task." And they said, "Is it so?" And Tristan said, "It is so." From both sides they struck the tambourines and sounded the trumpets, and there was great merriment, because the Orlendeans knew Tristan to be a very valorous knight and they said, "Blanor is surely dead if we have found Tristan for this cause." Kornovalians were saying, "And we have what we wanted." Tristan said to one and another, "If you leave me, do not say where I came from or that I will take on this fight." They said, "My lord, be it as you wish." And both Orlendeans and Kornovalians joined ranks together.

During that merriment, a maiden came to the tent carrying a fine shield; it was without an insignia, not like other shields; on it there were depicted a lady and a knight kissing. The shield was split in the middle, between the lips of the knight and the lady, and could not be joined. Tristan and the others began to marvel and asked the maiden, "Where are you from?" She said, "I am from a strange country; I was sent by one ladyship to another, a higher one." Said Tristan, "Tell me, if you please, why is this shield disjointed? Could it be joined in any manner?" Said the maiden, "Who are you who is asking me?" Said Tristan, [60] "I am a guest from a strange country." Said the maiden, "If you want to know something from me, tell me your name." He said, "My name is Tristan. I am a nephew of King Marko of Kornovalia." She said, "My lord, I have heard a lot of good about you from many people; therefore I will tell you. In this land there is one knight so great that there is none over him near or far; he loves one lady who is

very high in this land. He loves her more completely than he loves himself; and the lady loves him too, but they have not known a carnal love yet — they have only kissed. To show this love, the shield is devised as you see it; and it cannot be connected in any fashion until they join and have their great desire — then the shield will connect." Said Tristan, "Maiden, tell me the name of this knight." She said, "I will not tell you this." Said Tristan, "Maiden, is King Artiush in Damolot?" She said, "No, he is in Karduel; he left King Kardos and the king from [S]gotsea to oversee the fight that will be between the Orlendean king and Blanor. There are many good knights from the clan of King Ban of Banak at the court now who came for this fight." Tristan said, "How is the knight, whom the king will fight?" Said the maiden, "He is of very valorous peerage."

After that, the maiden rode off to Karduel, because she hoped to find there the one whom she was seeking. This maiden was with a lady from Lokva, who was a great soothsayer and enchantress, greater than some witches: she had learned this art from Merlin the prophet, who knew much about future things, but who could not handle this matter wisely, lest she, whom he loved with all his heart, would destroy him — he had entrusted her with everything; and she had locked him alive in an underground coffin, bewitching him so that he had no [61] will of his own. Great harm came from this, since so much wisdom was lost because of the woman. This lady from Lokva, about whom I am recounting to you, knew everything about Queen Velvera<sup>16</sup> and Antsolot. She wanted to know more about their affairs, so she sent to the queen this maiden with the shield and entrusted her with these words so that the queen would recognize the shield and would guard it, and also would keep the maiden by her until she joined with Antsolot, when they could learn whether the shield would then attach together. Let us leave this. Antsolot was at this time

at Sir Gallot's, who loved Antsolot very much; he would rather die than not to have him in his company. If Antsolot had to die, he and all the knights would grieve for him, since there was no stronger hand nor bigger heart.

Tristan went back to the Orlendean king and recounted to him all he had heard from the maiden, and about Blanor: how he had come to King Artiush's court, and how King Artiush had left two kings to oversee the fight. "You have to hurry," said the king, "God help us and make it honorable, as I am right." As they were talking thus, the maiden came back crying. Tristan forgot himself; he left the king and went quickly to the maiden and said, "What happened to you?" She said, "My lord, the shield that I was carrying was taken from me by a knight; I am destroyed and I do not know what to do — he almost killed me because I would not give him the shield. Now I dare not return, nor to walk where I was going." Tristan was in a furious mind and said, "The shield will be with you; tell me where he rode." She said, "Along the main road." Tristan put on the armor and rode hurriedly after him — with him went one squire — and promptly caught up with him. With this knight there were also two squires. When Tristan saw him, he called to the knight, "Return the shield to the maiden [62] or fight with me."

#### [The Fight of Tristan with Breus]

Breus charged Tristan and struck him with all his might and broke his lance; but Tristan struck him so that the lance went through his right shoulder and he fell to the ground. When Tristan withdrew his lance, the other knight fainted from pain. Tristan, wishing to know who he was, dismounted his horse and took the helmet off his head and said to him, "You are dead if you do not promise what I order you!" Breus saw his head uncovered and felt a deadly fear: he took his sword out and handed it to Tristan and

promised to do what he ordered. Said Tristan, "Mount your horse and follow me, having taken the shield." The other mounted and rode on. When they were near the tents, he handed the shield back to the maiden and said, "I am ready to repair my wrong to you." Tristan said, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Breus."<sup>17</sup> Said Tristan, "Are you Breus Without Pity?" He said, "So I am called by people." Said Tristan, "I have heard people speaking badly about you; and if I did not let you go in this way, I would have to avenge your evil and treachery. But go now in peace." The maiden thanked him very kindly and went her way. Tristan came to the king, and the king said, "Let us go where they await us." Said Tristan, "So be it." Then having prepared themselves nobly, they departed, and came to Damolot; they rode to the king's court, where many good people were sitting. Tristan was riding with his party in lordly fashion with his helmet on, for he did not want to be recognized; one knight carried his lance, the other his shield. At that time there were at the court many good knights, blood relatives of King Ban of Banak, and there were the two kings whom King Artlush had left to oversee the fight. When these clans saw the Orlendeian king, who came arrayed to be vindicated of the treachery that Blanor had accused him of, and when they saw that a youth was ready and outfitted, they were inquiring about him, but could not find out anything. King Lenviz approached the two kings and said, "My lords, I am ready, in the name of truth, to be vindicated of the falsehood that was thrown at me [63] by another." The clan of King Ban came forward and said, "We want to teach you something, since you treacherously murdered our nephew in your court." Said Blanor, who was one of their best knights, "I want to teach you with a sword, if God will let me." And he dropped his glove as a sign of battle. Tristan came forth to the two kings and said, "My lords, I am taking over for the

Orlendeian king, since he is not guilty in the death of the one who was killed in his house." And he took the glove. Said the kings, "Then go without delay, and so be the end of this matter." Blanor went to dress himself in the best of armor; they checked him over, gave him a big, fine horse, which belonged to Sir Galiot, the king. Bleryzh carried his shield, and another knight, his lance. Then they rode outside of the town with a great retinue, but not one of them was armed, only Blanor. When they were in the field, King Lenviz led Tristan out and said, weeping, "I beg you, for God's sake, keep yourself together and do not be afraid." Said Tristan, "If God, Who is truth, is willing, I want to deliver you from Blanor." He took his shield and his lance and stood courageously in the field. Said Bleryzh to Blanor, "There is the knight whom you will fight: one can see that he is valorous by the way he sits mounted and carries his armor. Think of this, that not one knight of our lineage was so bad that he did not receive honors; now, guard yourself, lest we be disgraced by you." Blanor said, "My brothers, do not despair."

#### [The Fight of Tristan with Blanor]

The opponents rode through the field until they saw each other, then rushed toward each other and struck: both broke their lances and fell with their horses to the ground; both were wounded and beaten. But they rose bravely and began to strike each other very hard over the helmets, not giving in to each other. All who were there marveled at their deeds. King Kardos said, "Dear God, it would be a great evil if these two should fall. I see how agile and strong they are." Yet the knights were fighting without pause; in a short while their [64] armor weakened and the handles of their shields fell off, and they were wounded in many places. Tristan marveled about Blanor, and Blanor also said, "No man has seen such a wonder." Both were afraid of death or disgrace. Tristan recognized Blanor as a valorous knight.

the likes of whom he had not seen in his days; he saw that he was striving with all his might, and that he could not endure much further. Tristan began to gain ground; the fight became fierce, and all were saying, "These knights are valorous knights." Bleryzh said to his kinsmen, "I see that this other knight has no equal in the world, not even Antsölot — I know by his strikes; watch Blanor, who will not be able to withstand him to the end." The Orlendean king, seeing Blanor's bravery against Tristan, had great fear. After much slashing, their strikes weakened. Tristan said, "I wish to see how long you can bear it." Then there was a need for them to rest. Blanor was no longer able: he put down his shield and his sword and lay down on the ground; he was afraid of death, as was Tristan. When they had rested a good while, Blanor, who saw himself in danger, thought, "If he does not tire a second time, I will not be able to withstand him." He said, "Knight, I know that you are the greatest knight in the world; for this reason I wish to know your name. I do not want to do you any good, only the greatest evil; yet let me know from whose hand I will perish or whom I will defeat." Said Tristan, "If you wish me evil, I will know it by the strikes of your sword, and will praise you; but you are not thinking of yourself, for you cannot gain anything but death — so know by whom you will die: I am Tristan, the nephew of Kornovalian King Marko." When Blanor heard this, he was very joyous and said, "I have heard your great fame through the world, so if you beat me, my relatives will not have shame, and if, God willing, I beat you, I will have great honor." He took his shield and his sword and said, "You see, you came here for your disgrace, if my right hand is well." Tristan responded, [65] "You will not be able to brag about my disgrace: you will find out with whom you have shared the ring." He dashed at him and a very fierce fight ensued, and all began to say: "If we had not

seen it, we would not have believed it." And so they went, taking the field from each other and striking a great while. Blanor could no longer lift his sword; seeing this, Tristan said, "Protect yourself, you need it; or think about yourself." Blanor could not respond. Tristan, seeing that he was abashed, struck him on his helmet so hard that he could not stand on his feet. Blanor fell to the ground and could not move his hand or his foot, and he said to Tristan, "Take my head off, I beg you; let it be the end of my shame." Tristan saw that he had a great heart and did not want to give in and would rather die than to say, "I am defeated." "If I let him go, and he does not hand me his sword, my fight is not won; but if I kill him, I will do evil by killing such a knight." He went to the kings and said, "My lords, we fought thus, as you saw yourselves, but one of us does not want to hand the sword and does not want to say 'I am defeated'; he would rather die than say it with his tongue. Where is the shame, if fortune did not serve him rightly at this time? If you see fit, make peace between us; let the Orlendean king be free from slander, for if there is to be a fight, it will be even worse, since one of us will have to give his life."

The kings understood that Blanor would die rather than give in, and they saw Tristan's valor: that he was not willing to kill Blanor, even though he had him in his power and could do to him whatever he wanted; they conferred about what they might do. It seemed to them that the fight should stop, and Blanor should not die, if such were Tristan's kindness and mercy. They said to Tristan, "We thank you for your courtliness, that you forgo Blanor's death. You may disarm now, if you wish. We so decide, that the Orlendean king is vindicated from Blanor's slander." Tristan thanked them. The Orlendean king said, "May we go freely where we want, all vindicated?" They said, "You may [go] [66] where you wish." Tristan put his sword in the sheath and his

shield on his shoulders, went to his horse, and mounted as lightly as if he was not wounded; and all marveled how he could sit on a horse, since Tristan jumped up so bravely, as if not stricken. Blanor's kinsmen, seeing him down, went to him, thinking that he was dead. King Lenviz saw Tristan departing, and said to the two kings, "My lords, let me go after my knight, so that he does not ride off, so that I do not lose him." They said, "Tell us the name of this knight; then go with God." He said, "I cannot tell you without fault, but I want to go, so as not to lose him: this is Tristan, the nephew of the Kornovalian King Marko, the greatest knight in the world." Having said so, he mounted his horse and dashed promptly after Tristan with his seneschals. And so was the chivalry of Tristan known for the first time in the Londresh kingdom at the court of King Artiush. When they reported to King Artiush how Tristan spared Blanor after defeating him — and how Blanor did not want to hand in his sword — the king said, "This is the greatest knightly deed that I have seen anywhere; the whole world would like to praise him for this, and it cannot be that he will not come to great glory, if at this young age he was able to show such valor."

When Tristan rejoined his company on the shore, they came toward him with great joy and asked him what had happened. He said, "With God's mercy, I delivered the king from Blanor and from sorrow." They praised God and said to him, "My lord, are you wounded much?" Said Tristan, "I am not without wounds, but I do not care about this: when we are not disgraced, we should be joyous, since we have gotten what we wanted." King Lenviz came with his retinue and, having dismounted, went to Tristan and began to embrace him, saying: "Tristan, you saved me by the sword. I and all I have is yours; but I want to know if you are wounded much?" Said Tristan, "If there is a good healer,

I do not fear death from my wounds." Said the king, "We will get the healer, now that we are freed from misery." The king [67] called the healers, who examined his wounds and did what was needed. Said Tristan, "My king, do you know our agreement?" Said the king, "I know, I have to give you whatever you want." Tristan thanked him very humbly and said, "I seek your daughter Izhota for my uncle, King Marko." Then he asked him, "My lord, where do we go from here?" Said the king, "I do not want to leave here until I see you well; then, we will go to Orlendea, as promptly as we can. But I am asking you, by your courtesy: let us go together; yet we shall remain here as long as you need." There was great merriment and friendship among the Orlendeans and Kornovalians, who before bore the greatest enmity toward each other.

Tristan labored all that night, and the king slept little. The next morning the king called a wise man and told him a dream he had. The sage said, "My lord, I would advise you: do not give your daughter to Tristan, because if she goes to Kornovalia, she will suffer very painful things that no maiden has ever suffered." The king said, "I cannot do this: I promised her to Tristan, who did much for me; if I did not give her, I would be a traitor, for I made this agreement when I needed him. I love my daughter very much, but it is not right for me to lose my honor for her. So, in God's name, I cannot hold her."

Lord Tristan rested and ordered his mariners to prepare the boat and sailed for Orlendea. At the king's court there were honor and great merriment; here were many knights, ladies and maidens, who were admiring a glorious knight, Lord Tristan, who had delivered them from Blanor's wretchedness.

And so, after the merriment, they departed from the king and the queen with great joy, taking with them beautiful

Izhota, and with her many fine ladies, richly dressed, as is suited for such a lady. The king was crying from joy, as were the queen and all good people. The queen called Govornar and Braginia aside and said to them, "Take this silver flask full of potion and save it: when King Marko and Izhota are in their bed, give them [68] this potion to drink first for the king, then to Izhota; and after they both drink, pour out the rest, for if someone else drinks this potion, much evil might happen, since it is called the love potion. After they both drink it, they will be very much in love: as long as they live, no one will be able to interfere maliciously between them." They promised to do so, and then took leave of the king and the queen, spread the sails, and sailed off with great joy; Izhota was near Tristan, but neither of them had ignoble thoughts about anything — only upright, good and honorable thoughts.

On the sea on the third day, Tristan played chess with Izhota. Tristan was wearing a brocaded tunic and vestment, and Izhota a green velvet skirt with bodice, yet it was summer and very sultry. Said Tristan, "We need to have a drink." Govornar went and poured a cup from the flask of love potion — an oversight, since there were many other vessels in the cabin — and gave it to Tristan; he gave another cup to Izhota. As soon as they drank the potion, they fell deeply in love with each other; as long as they lived, one would not leave the other. They began to look at each other and were not thinking of anyone else. They sat there as if mesmerized. Tristan was thinking about Izhota, and Izhota about him, forgetting King Marko. Tristan thought, "I wonder how this came over me so quickly — I did not feel this before." And they thought about each other and were saying to themselves, "Our thoughts are not loyal." But they were overcome by the drink. Tristan thought, "If I love Izhota, there is no wonder: she is the loveliest thing in the

world. I could not find a better lady; and I took her from her father's home — she was given to me — besides, our love can be concealed." Izhota thought, "If I love Tristan it is no wonder: he is my equal, of the same high peerage as I am, and there is no greater knight in the world." They realized in their thoughts that they loved each other with all their hearts; Izhota rejoiced in it and said, "If the greatest knight loves me, why do I need anything finer?" And Tristan said, "I have the great fortune that the most marvelous maiden loves me, [69] though I do not deserve it."

When Govornar realized that he had given them the love drink, he became frightened and stood there shocked; he began to wish himself dead, because Tristan loved Izhota, and Izhota him. He said to Braginia, "We are culpable, for we unknowingly let them drink the potion." Said Braginia, "We fell on evil ways and we are lost, and we have destroyed Tristan and Izhota too." He pointed to the flask and said, "Do you know what was in here?" She said, "This is the love potion." He said, "Badly did we oversee what was entrusted to us; we gave this to Tristan and Izhota to drink; now they are in love." Braginia began to cry and said, "We did a great wrong; it cannot be that because of this much evil will develop; now we need to be very wise, even if we are sad about it." But their sorrow was well hidden, so that the others would not know. Still Tristan and Izhota could not bear it; said Tristan to Izhota, "I love you with all my heart." She was very happy about this and said to Tristan, "I shall love no other thing in this world but you, as long as I live, God willing." Seeing that Izhota had the same mind as he, without further delay, they went to the cabin and consummated their desire. From then on to eternity their love did not abate, and because of this love they had great suffering. There was no knight who would take on such suffering because of love — only Tristan. And this was a great misfor-

tune since at that time there was almost no greater knight than he, who was the third best knight in the world.

Said Govornar to Braginia, "How does it look to you? It looks to me as if Tristan took Izhota's virginity: I saw them together." She said to Govornar, "We are lost if King Marko does not find her a virgin: he will destroy us all." Said Govornar, "Do not despair; since this happened because of our transgression, we ought to worry now that someone will find out about this matter." Said Braginia, "How can this be?" Said Govornar, "Leave this to me; I will resolve it." [70] She said, "That would be great, if God is willing!" Tristan and Izhota, however, perceived nothing that the others knew about them; since Tristan did not think of anything but Izhota, and Izhota of Tristan, they had nothing else on their minds – they were as if in Paradise, loving each other more than themselves. So deeply rooted was their love that they did not know how to abstain from each other as they were headed for Kornovalia without delay.

Then a great adversity happened to them: one day the weather changed – the sea swelled, the wind increased and took them violently that night where they did not want to go; the next morning they found themselves at a large, well-fortified town that was on an island in the sea; near it were many big islands which were called Lower Islands<sup>18</sup>; and on these islands there were plenty of fine people and all kinds of goods. The lord was Sir Galiot, whose homeland this was; other lands and countries he conquered through his valor. At that time Antsolot was in the land which was called Soreilons. Said Tristan, "Mariners, do you know where the Tearful Town is?" They said, "We do not know that, but this is Sir Galiot's town." Said Tristan, "I would not willingly find myself in it, since they have told me that it has an evil law." As they were talking thus, six armed men approached. When they saw that the others could not move anywhere

with their boat, they said to them, "Where are you from, who put into our harbor without our permission?" Said Tristan, "We are from Kornovalia, the messengers of King Marko; we are coming from Orlendea; an evil hour drove us here, and we are not guilty of doing you any harm." They said, "Wherever you are from, by our accord, you are our prisoners. Disembark, however many of you there are, and go into town and you will learn our law." Tristan said to his company, "What do we want to do? If we listen to them, we will be in their hands: they can do us evil." Some said, "We do not know what they intend – better to defend ourselves here as we can, even if we have to fight." The others said, "Our defense is of no help, since we are in their [71] hands; they can sink us with a vessel, or shell us with stones from the town; better we surrender to their hands." Said Tristan, "My lords, beware: this town has such an evil law that even if we give ourselves into their hands, they might destroy us or throw us into a dungeon. There our good will shall not be acknowledged by them, and their kindness of no use to us. I would say: let us defend ourselves as we can – better for us to die than to be at their mercy, since their mercy will not be beneficial to us." Said Tristan to Izhota, "What do you think of this?" She was overcome by fear and said, weeping, "O, Tristan, I don't know what to say about this, I was put into your hands and in your care; you took me out of my land, and if disgrace or death comes to us, it will be because of you." When Tristan heard this, he began to curse the day he was born and said, "Milady, do you want to remain on this vessel until they kill me, or shall we go up to their castle and surrender ourselves into their hands?" She said, "Let it be as you wish." Said Tristan, "Let us go up to them and endure what shall come to us from them, if we cannot defend ourselves from them." To this everyone consented. They disembarked from their vessel and went up to

the town and found in the castle many good people, knights, and squires, maidens, and servants. They were conducted into a large house which had many cells and in them were prisoners, whom they had captured; the court was enclosed by a very strong wall, so that no prisoner could escape. Having led them inside, they locked the gates. Said Tristan, "My lords, we are prisoners: we are lost since these people have an evil custom and are so unfeignedly that we will not get away from them without being killed, unless God delivers us." They all began to weep and grieve very deeply, but silently, since they did not want others to hear. So Tristan with his company was in prison that day and night, and no one attended them.

The next day six unarmed men came to them and said, "How are you?" Said Tristan, "As well as we could be in such an adventure, but I beg you, my lords, so help you God, are we going to stay in this prison? Tell us." Said one knight, [72] "This is a wretchedness from which no one ever exits: this is done for all who are put in here and will spend all their days in tears, for this is the Tearful Town." Said Tristan, "O my dear God, can it be the truth that no one survives who gets in here?" And the other said, "Indeed, no one, from the time this law was established; but if a knight of very great heart and chivalry is to be found, and a lady more beautiful than our ladyship, and they both came together — they would be our rulers, and those we are serving now would have to die."

When Tristan heard this, he rejoiced and said, "If we are justly judged, we will be freed from prison, since Izhota is the most wonderful lady in the world, and as for the knight — be it as God allows." And he said to the knight, "I beg you, tell me if there happens to be a knight who is greater than your knight, and a lady more beautiful than your lady, could we get out from bondage?" The other said, "This can-

not happen, since our knight is a lord of noble birth and of fortitude; he has no second in the world." Said Tristan, "And if there should happen to be a greater knight in the world, greater than Antsolot?" "We will find the equal to that one too." "But if he conquers your knight, will we be freed from prison?" He said, "You will be, if a lady should come together with him." Said Tristan, "I am telling you, we will be free if you do not do us any wrong — I could even say it at the court of King Artiush — since the knight you are talking about is not greater than ours is, and your lady is not more beautiful than ours is." The knight stood there as if in shock and said, "Where is the one that you are praising so?" Said Tristan, "If justice is done to us and we get out on the field, will you then maintain your law and justice? Bring forth your lady and your knight and give us fair judgment: if our lady is better and our knight is better, let us go free; but if one should not find it so, let them cut my head off." Said the knight, "Enough said, I want to go and report where I should." And so he left with those who were with him.

I will tell you now why this town is called Tearful: because it was founded on evil laws, in the years when [73] Joseph, by the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ, came to Great Lands and converted a multitude of people to the Christian faith. When he heard that the Far Islands were well populated, Joseph sent pious people there to turn them to God; and they converted all the islands, except one, which is called Orashy<sup>19</sup>. There were few other people on the island, the Orashy and their lord, who had twelve sons. When the Christians came to this island, the ruler was named Davlites, who had been sorely wounded by a wild bear and had turned away from Joseph's christening.

The knight went to Lord Brunor and his lady, and said,

"My lord, we have captured some young Kornovalian people and told them the custom of this town; a knight from their company claims to be better than you and a lady better than our ladyship; for this reason we came to let you know, since we cannot dismiss customs established by our ancestors: thus tell us what you will do." Said Brunor, "I did not establish the custom, nor can I dismiss it; call the ones who will judge which lady is more beautiful; she will hold the power, and the other must die. Prepare the fight — I am ready." His men said, "It cannot be otherwise." They came to Tristan and said to him, "If you are a champion knight, as you said, it might go well for you; get ready, for tomorrow you will fight." They freed them that day and night and gave to Tristan what was necessary; many knights came by, asking his name, but could not learn it. They were looking at Izhota, though she was concealing herself, but she was not able to hide, and the ones who saw her were saying among themselves, "We have lost our lady mistress, since this one [74] is superior."

The next morning Tristan was dressed; they were giving him a different sword, but he said, "Give me my sword." And they gave it to him. He mounted a very fine horse, while Govornar carried a shield and a lance for him; Izhota was dressed in very rich clothes and mounted an ambler; and Braginia and other handmaidens were with her. They went to the tents, and in the tents they saw the ones who were going to judge their beauty; the tents were full of good people who had come to see this fight. Tristan came with his retinue and, having dismounted from their horses, they sat down, since Brunor had not arrived yet. Then a man sounded the horn, which could be heard from afar; Brunor mounted his horse and came out of the town well-arrayed and with him came a few other knights and his lady, Galiot's mother. When Brunor approached the tents, he

said, "Where is this woman who is equal in beauty to our ladyship?" They pointed out Izhota to him; when he saw Izhota he was very alarmed and said, "In all my days I have not seen a better woman: I am afraid to lose the thing most dear to me because of the beauty of this lady." Galiot's mother came, who was of great beauty, and when she saw Izhota she was alarmed that she might die, because Izhota seemed to her the most wonderful woman in the world.

Tristan saw the lady, nodded to Izhota, came forward to the judges, and began to say, "My lords and ladies who are going to judge the beauty of these ladies: look, there they are standing together — judge fairly." The judges were silent, since they saw that Izhota was far more marvelous than the other lady. Tristan said, "I beg you, judge me rightly by your law." They responded sadly, "We have to do so, though we are very sorrowful." Addressing themselves to Izhota, they said, "My lady, you are superior and your beauty has saved your life; for your beauty we want to make you our mistress, but if someone better than you comes along, be sure that you must die, like the one who was so long among us, [75] whom we have held in great respect, but now she is sentenced to death. We are very sorry about this, but it cannot be otherwise, since we pledged to uphold this law. Cursed be the one who established this law in the first place." When they announced this, all uttered a great outcry, weeping with such sorrow that there was not a man who could see it without feeling pity.

Said Tristan, "My lords, great is your kindness; where is the one whom I am to fight?" They said, "There he is," and they indicated Brunor. Tristan said, "Take guard, for I do not want to postpone fate."

[The Fight of Tristan with Brunor]

He took his shield and his lance and charged at Brunor, and the other at him; they struck each other so hard and so

fiercely that the weapons and shields fell from their hands, and they both were wounded and fell off their horses. Tristan was slashed slightly in his side, and Brunor was very deeply wounded in his chest. Having broken their lances, they took out their swords, and began to strike very hard. Brunor recognized that Tristan was one of the world's best knights, and began to strive harder; and each slashed the other very fiercely and very often — each slashed with both hands, since for both the issue was life. Brunor realized that Tristan was the greater knight, and thus began to shield himself with his sword, so that Tristan would tire — but this did not happen — then he tried to hit Tristan in an unprotected spot, but Tristan was an expert; he knew how to safeguard himself. They fought a long time and both were wounded and exhausted, so that there was a need for them to rest; thus they recoiled each other and stopped, leaning on their shields and swords, observing each other, and remained so for a long while. Said Tristan, "My lord Brunor, I consider you a very valorous knight and very skillful — for this, God knows, I sympathize with you — I would not be glad if you had to perish; but I beg you, if you can, relinquish this fight with my honor and with freedom for my company, and I will gladly agree that you do not die." Said Brunor, "We are at the point where either you will kill me, or I [76] you, or we both will be dead — it cannot be otherwise." Said Tristan, "Where there is hate, there is no love, and if this is so, be on guard!" They began to slash, and all marveled at them. Finally Brunor could not bear it, dropped his shield and sword, and fell to the ground. Said Tristan, "Are you not able to fight any longer?" Brunor said, "Knight, I relinquish this fight to you — do not hold it badly against me, since I am not doing it of my own volition, yet I no longer can." Said Tristan, "I want to pardon you — give me your sword and say: 'I am defeated'." Said Brunor,

"I would be a wicked man, if I were to say this — that would be my disgrace; God forbid it to my death, which is near me!" Said Tristan, "Do you feel that you want to live?" Said Brunor, "Your sword did not give me any more time, my end is near already; if you do not believe me, now you will see for yourself." And having said this, he gave up his soul.

Tristan saw that he had died, took the helmet off his head, and threw it far away from him. He called the ones who had accompanied him and said to them, "My lords, did I do enough for my and my company's liberation?" They said, "You did enough; you conquered this town and the entire island, and you are our master; and the lady whom you brought is our mistress — but you have to undertake one more thing." Said Tristan, "What?" They said, "You have to cut off the head of our lady Brunorovitsa with your sword." Tristan looked at her; she was crying very bitterly. He felt great pity for her and said, "How could I kill a woman?" They said, "It cannot be otherwise." Tristan was angry and began to think hard. Said Tristan, "Cursed is the one who established such a law, and the ones who maintain this custom; if I have to do such a deed, I will never be happy for as long as I remember it." Yet he went and cut her head off and said to them, "You forced me into disgrace, since every good man who knows about this will consider it disgraceful." They said, "This is not your disgrace, but a disgrace for those who [77] established this law. Let us go up to the town, and there you will pledge to maintain the law of this land, as did the ones who were here before you." Lord Tristan was not happy about this lordship, but it could not be otherwise: he went with them to the castle. They said, "Tristan, here you should pledge to us." Tristan was not happy to pledge, but it could not be otherwise — and so he pledged to them. They directed him to stay with Izhota at the palace where Brunor had stayed with his lady.

They lived here in great love; Tristan had nothing on his mind but Izhota, and Izhota nothing but Tristan.

When Galiot's sister saw her father and mother dead, she was the most mournful maiden in the world. Being in such sorrow, she prepared a chest, took her father's head and her mother's, arranged the chest on a horse, and went with a small retinue to the Lower Islands to look for Galiot. Wherever she went, when encountering knights or youths, she asked everybody about Sir Galiot, and each one showed the way to where he was. While riding, she met a very valorous knight of great chivalry in full armor riding with a small retinue. She greeted him, and he returned the greeting very courteously. Said the maiden, "Knight, let me ask you, a lord and full of courtesy, if you have heard any news about Sir Galiot?" He said, "You have met the one whom you are seeking." She looked at him a long while, but did not recognize him, because he was in armor. When she recognized him, she hung on his neck, crying, not able to talk. When she could, she said, "Never have I heard of such a sorrow happening to so great a lord as you, which I, your poor sister, will relate to you." And having opened the chest in which there were the bones, she said, "These are the bones of the one who bore you, and this is the head of the one who carried you in her womb: [78] Tristan, the nephew of Kor-novalian King Marko, killed them both by his own hand. Because of this I went to look for you, so that you would learn of it, and know what to do about it, since you can do whatever you desire as a mighty man." said Galiot, "How did it happen?" She recounted to him everything, and Galiot understood that Tristan was not guilty, and he did not have a hard heart against him; he cried for his great sorrow and said, "My dear sister, this great evil happened to us for my sins. If I had suspected this, I would have long

ago abolished the evil customs which prevail on that island. Yet now, I will go and abolish those evil laws; and I will give Tristan what is due to him; if I fail to avenge him, I will have acted wrongly. As long as I live, I will keep on avenging him with all my might. Let us go back to Soreilons and there we will put to rest the remains of my father and my mother in an abbey; then we will discuss how we should go about the revenge." They all departed very sorrowfully, and no one could know that it was Galiot, since he rode with a small retinue.

They came to a town in which there was the King of a Hundred Knights. When he saw Galiot, he was very glad that Galiot had come, but it was not pleasing to him that he had come with a small retinue, and he thought, "This is not without cause." When Galiot divested of his armor, the king came to him and said, "My lord, how are you? Why are you so unhappy? For God' sake, tell me what happened?" Said Galiot, "It is no wonder that I am unhappy, since great suffering and sorrow have befallen me." And he began to recount how Tristan had killed his father and his mother. Said the king, "This, my lord, is a great sorrow; what are you thinking of doing about it?" Said Galiot, "I want to go to the island with a knight, two squires, a good horse, and armor, so that no one recognizes me, since I want to come as a guest and I want to fight with Tristan. If he kills me, it will be the end of my sorrow, but if I kill him, no one will consider it a disgrace, only knightliness. I compel you to gather an army of five hundred thousand good men, [79] and to go by sea to that island of the Tearful Town. I want to abolish those evil laws of capturing guests and holding them in dungeons, destroy them all and throw them into a swamp; let no man or woman remain; and if some guests are to be found, let them all go free." Said the King of the Hundred Knights, "My lord, as you order, all will be accom-

plished by me if I don't die. But how are you planning to fight with Tristan, who is the greatest knight — greater even than Antsolot of Lokva — who has no equal in all four corners of the knightly world? Do not engage in such a dangerous venture; I strongly advise you not to." "My lord, God gave you the lordship and such might that it is not right for you to seek vengeance or to take this matter lightly, for if evil happens to you, or death, all your countries will fall badly, and if he disgraces you, you will have great suffering. My lord, I always knew you to be a valorous man, but I advise you: leave this fight with Tristan<sup>20</sup>; he, seeing you in such sorrow, might take upon himself this vengeance. If the two of you take the field, and if Tristan does not defeat you — cut my head off!" Said Galiot, "I know you are telling the truth, and I have confidence in you, but if I avenge him through Antsolot or some other knight, I will be acting even worse. Thus, do as I have told you; even if I have to die, I shall do as I have planned, for I will not have peace until I see Tristan." The king was in great fear, since he was afraid that Galiot would not be able to withstand Tristan, and he was very sad, for he loved his lord Galiot with all his heart.

After these words, Galiot with many tears ordered that his father's remains and his mother's head be carried to an abbey and put into a magnificent tomb. He then left his sister greatly honored in the town, and himself departed to the sea with one knight, two squires and a horse, on which he depended very much; and he took with him very good armor and a sword which Antsolot had given him.

When he came to the sea with his retinue, no one recognized him, for he had not traveled with a small company before. He stayed there one day, while the boat was prepared for him, and when the time was good, he went to sea. When he was far from land, he told the mariners, "Head for the Tearful Town." They said, "God forbid. Better [80] for us

death, than to go there." Said Galiot, "It cannot be otherwise; you must go there." The mariners did not know how to act: "If we go there, we will be destroyed, but if we do not go, Galiot might destroy us." He said for the second time, "Go, do not be afraid: you can go there without fear." They said, "My lord, how can we not be afraid? Spare us, by God, if you do not want our and your own death, since you know yourself that no one will be spared from death. Do not send us there!" Said Galiot, "If you won't go where I order you, you will be dead on the spot." And he took his sword out and raised it as if to strike. They became frightened and said, "My lord, if it cannot be otherwise — we are in your hands; we will do as you order, only do not destroy us." He said, "Do not fret, nothing will happen to you." And they turned toward the island and the next day came to the Tearful Town.

The people from the high castle came down and said, "You are captured." Galiot said, "Though we are landed on your shores, it is not proper for you to hold us; furthermore, I am willing to uphold your law." They said, "Then you have to fight with Tristan, who is the greatest knight in the world." Said Galiot, "Even if he were greater than he is, I did not come for anything else but to fight with him." They said, "Come on then." They came out and the townspeople took the mariners to the dungeons. Said Galiot, "Leave me these two youths and the knight; let them keep me company up to the place where the fight will be." They asked him, "What is your name?" Said Galiot, "You cannot know my name yet; tell me where we are to fight." They said, "Do not worry about this — the fight will be soon." And they mounted their horses — fifteen horsemen — and Galiot with his retinue and rode to the place where the fight would be.

Tristan had stayed in the high castle in great joy with Izhota and Govornar and Braginia. Here Tristan was not conscious of anything but Izhota, and Izhota of nothing but Tristan; and that misfortune was very sweet to them, and they lived as with God. They did not think about King Marko nor about Kornovalia — they had lived there in joy for two<sup>21</sup> months. At the end of the third month a knight came before Tristan and said, "My lord, you can rejoice with Izhota today, but tomorrow you have to fight [81] with a knight who came here from King Artiush's court to fight with you; we left him at the place where you will fight." Said Tristan, "Do you know who this knight is by name?" He said, "We don't know — he did not want to talk about himself." Tristan thought that it might be Antsolot and said, "I know which knight it is; did you prepare the fight? If he came for this, he will have it; even if he came for my harm, greet him for me, for I understand he is a great knight." With this, the knight left him and went to Galiot and said, "Tomorrow you will fight; and Tristan greets you." Said Galiot, "Tristan greets me as an adversary, and I also greet him as an adversary." They discussed who he was, but could not recognize him. Govornar, listening as the knight was talking about the fight, said, "This is definitely Antsolot, who came from the court of King Artiush, seeking different and ferocious adventures." Govornar was very fearful of him, and he approached Tristan and said, "Tomorrow you are to fight." Said Tristan, "Do you know with whom?" He said, "I do not know, but I suspect that Antsolot came purposely to fight with you; he is the greatest knight in the world." "I am glad to joust with him, but if it comes to blows, and God be willing to favor me, or make us equal — I would not wish greater honor; but if he kills me, I would rather be defeated by him than by five other men." Govornar was frightened even more and said, "It is as you say,

but there are great fear and great danger." Said Tristan, "One should not fear death; you yourself know, Master, that we are always near it."

Hearing this, Izhota began to cry and grieve, saying, "Heavy is my heart; this is an evil adventure; in an evil hour was I born to this world. I have not yet had three months of fortune and joy, and already my suffering and the shortening of my life arrive, so that if a serious wound or death happened to me, it would be sweeter and better for me." Tristan consoled her, saying, "On my faith, he is not going to pull anything over on me." Said Izhota, "I ask only that you will be safe for me and not shamed by this battle, since I do not fear any other knight but Antsolot." And so they remained in this anxiety, but Galiot knew nothing of it. [82]

When it was night, one of the armed knights who was guarding Galiot came and said, "Let me tell you that the King of a Hundred Knights came with an army; they landed in the harbor, all armed and with horses. We have told them to disembark, wanting to enforce our law; when we wanted to capture them, they seized their arms and slew our people; many were slashed and stabbed. We could not withstand them and surrendered into their hands. We are, my lords, in their hands; they are from Soreilons, the people of Sir Galiot." When they heard the name Galiot mentioned, they all ran to their own pursuits. And Galiot stayed in his tent until morning.

At dawn, Tristan dressed in his great armor and having heard mass, rode out of town, and with him Izhota, Govornar and Braginia, and four squires. When he was near the tents, Galiot was already on his horse and, seeing Tristan coming near, took up his lance and shield. Tristan saw that he was ready, and said to Govornar, "Go to this knight and find out whether he is Antsolot — I want to establish friendship with him." Govornar went and greeted Galiot, and he

returned his greeting. Govornar said, "Knight, this is Tristan with whom you are about to fight, but he is asking you, for your courtesy, tell him who you are. You know already with whom you will fight, let him also know with whom he is going to fight." Said Galiot, "If he is Tristan, I am his mortal enemy, and rightly so, since he killed my father and my mother: I came to take revenge on him with all my might, if I only can. My name is Galiot from the Lower Islands - far and wide my name is heard." When Govornar heard this from Galiot, he became frightened, knowing that Galiot was the greatest lord in the world, and he told this to Tristan. Tristan heard this and said, "God be praised that the greatest lord and the greatest knight in the world is taking on a fight against me on the field. He, who is the flower of valor and bravery, lord over lords, came to fight with me, though being capable of sending on the field a hundred thousand soldiers armed with lances. Let it be the end of this matter."

[The Fight of Tristan with Galiot]

They charged toward one another as fast as their horses could gallop, and struck each other so hard that their lances broke; and they thrust so hard that both fell with their horses to the ground, and were wounded from this blow. [83] but both bounced back, as do men of great valor and high spirit, seized their swords and began to slash. Tristan was afraid; they both were great men and were fighting so fiercely that no man, seeing this, could not have fear. Tristan recognized his adversary; and Galiot said, "This is the greatest knight known to the world: here I will receive death or become a valorous man." They both struggled, showing each other their knightliness. Izhta dreaded the end of the one whom she loved more than herself; when he received such fierce strokes she was pale and would have given the whole world if he only were sound and free from this fight. When Galiot hit Tristan and he fell to

his knees, Izhta felt the strokes in her heart and paled like a ghost<sup>22</sup>, but when Tristan struck Galiot and gained the field, Izhta was joyous and her face became pink. They fought and Izhta took the strokes in her heart, but was sure that Tristan was putting up a good fight, for he chased Galiot all over the field at will. Galiot was wounded much and losing blood. Tristan was not much wounded. Galiot struggled against Tristan as much as he could and thought, "Let me see how long I can hold out against him." Galiot, being thus quite spent, uttered, "I cannot avoid death from Tristan."

Then the King of a Hundred Knights came with his armed men in aid of Galiot; they came swiftly, since the king saw that Tristan was defeating Galiot. When Galiot recognized his banner, he said, "Tristan, you are dead; you can see these are my people; since you have killed my father and my mother, if I do not take revenge upon you, all the world will hold me at fault." Said Tristan, "My lord, it cannot be that you would threaten me with your men; I know you as a valorous man; you would not have come to me if you had wanted to take revenge upon me through others. I do not have fear, nor do I guard myself from anyone but you; and, God knows, I am not guilty against you in the death of your father and mother, and you know it well yourself; but I am giving you this fight as won. Let me go free with my company. I acted badly when I drew my sword against you, the greatest knight known and, God knows, I am not saying this in fear, or as if [84] I am afraid of death." Then he came forth and handed him his sword. Galiot took the sword and said, "You have done such things to me that I should hate you with all my heart, but I am not acting that way because of your valor: you are the greatest knight in the world. It is not right to destroy you - I promise you my friendship." Tristan knelt before him and thanked him

courteously for his kindness. Galiot lifted him by the arms and said, "This is not right: even though I am a great lord, you are also a great man of good birth, and you are an even greater knight than I — there is no equal to you in the world."

The King of a Hundred Knights was advancing toward them with his lances aimed at Tristan. Galiot shouted at him as loudly as he could, "Stop! Retreat from Tristan if you value your life." The king, hearing this, stopped and recalled his army, rode alone to Galiot and inquired of him, "My lord, what happened to you?" Said Galiot, "Good luck, with God's grace, but not entirely." Said the king, "I told you so before." Galiot said, "But I am alive; besides, I very much wanted to fight with him, and I am glad that I encountered him; if it could happen, I would like to have him together with Antsolot, since these knights are as courageous as they are courtly and full of virtues." Said the king, "What do you think now?" Galiot said, "Let us all go to Tristan's home with him — there I will rest until I am well." Galiot, Tristan and Izhta, and all their retinue mounted very promptly, and when they came up to the castle, which was called Orash, they examined Galiot's and Tristan's wounds. Galiot had deep wounds and he had lost blood; the healers applied herbs to the wounds and marveled that he was alive; he could not move his body for an entire month. Tristan rested for fifteen days; his dungeon companions were with him, and they all gathered around Tristan. The people came with King Artiush,<sup>23</sup> who ruled over a hundred knights; they entered the Tearful Town, freed the prisoners, and burned the town, because the citizens were fighting with them about the cruel Laws of Iosif, which they had maintained for many years.

Galiot ordered, however, that no one should harm Tristan's people or the guests; and he would not let Tristan

leave his side until both were healed. Galiot said to Tristan, "I came to this island for your death, to avenge the death of my father [85] and my mother, but I know that you killed against your will; because of your chivalry, I forgive you. You have told me that you were taking this maiden to your uncle, as you have promised him; I will let you go with her, but I am very sorry that you cannot come with me, for I do not envision any more precious thing than seeing you together with Lord Antsolot. You can take leave of your uncle and come to me in the Sorellonean Kingdom or wherever I might be. Remember the courtesy you had from me and the abatement of my anger; come to me as quickly as you can; and I, as a knight — for I am not a king — promise you and Antsolot all the lands that I have amassed. If I had a friendship with you two and you with me, I could not wish for greater wealth." Said Tristan, "My lord, your grace is great; you did so much for me that I cannot return the service to you. If God gives me life, I want to see you soon wherever you are. I am telling you this before my company." When the sea was calm, Galiot accompanied him to his ship and implored him to act as he had promised. But then, a bit later, the news came to him that Galiot had expired; Tristan was very sorrowful about it.

When Galiot parted with Tristan, Galiot wrote a letter by his own hand and sent it to Queen Velivera, relating to her the abolishment of the evil law after the death of his father and mother, and how there were none greater in the world than two knights: "and between them I do not know who is greater, either Antsolot from Lokva or Tristan from Elionos, the nephew of King Marko." When Velivera read that letter, she was very pleased and said, "I would like to see the Maiden Izhta and Lord Tristan." At the court there was no true word to be heard about Antsolot, since he at that time was out of his mind and remained thus for two years; this

*Byelorussian Tristan*

happened when Millenets of King Ban and Bandemagul came to the court of King Artlush and captured Queen Velivera, who was in the care of seneschal Kenish, and took her to Londresh<sup>24</sup>.

When Lord Tristan came with Izhota and his retinue to King Marko in Kornovalia, there was great rejoicing: old and young made merry and amused themselves. When the king came to the festivities and it was time for Izhota to go to the wedding bed with him, Izhota was in great distress, since she could not forget the one [86] she loved. She said to herself, "I would rather be on Orash Island, where I had Tristan to myself." With this thought she lay in bed. Because of the loss of her virginity, she talked Braginia into sleeping with the king in the wedding bed this first night.

King Marko, having lingered a while, came to her in the chamber, where there was no one but Tristan, Govornar, and Braginia. As soon as the king undressed, Tristan blew out the candles, and the king said, "Why did you this?" Said Tristan, "There is a custom in Orlendea, when a great lord lies with a maiden on the first night, the candles are extinguished so that the maiden be not bashful. Her mother bade me, and I promised her this." Said the king, "You did rightly." Afterward Tristan, Izhota, and Govornar left the chamber, and Braginia lay in the bed instead of Izhota. Izhota had appeared before the king briefly, and then she remained in hiding until Braginia came out of the chamber for her. The king, having consummated marriage with Braginia, did not recognize she was not Izhota. Soon after they had slept together, Braginia left, and Izhota came in and lay down with the king.

When morning came, the king said to Tristan, "O, Tristan, my obliging, my adopted son, you brought me pure

*Byelorussian Tristan*

gold." Tristan was very happy about this. In his happiness King Marko commanded the knights to fill their hearts with joy, and said, "Tristan brought me pure gold." He ordered various instruments to be fetched: pipes, tambourines, trumpets, chess and checkers, and lutes and organs. He prolonged this merriment to make the knights feel brave. The maidens, seeing this revelry, danced in a circular dance<sup>25</sup> in Tristan's honor, saying, "Lord Tristan gave us the reason to sing and dance for the rest of our days." The blond Izhota looked with her bright eyes at the person of Lord Tristan; and Tristan also was glancing at Izhota. None of the knights and ladies and maidens knew about it, only Tristan and Izhota, Govornar and Braginia. And King Marko abided in conviviality with his knights.

Some time later a knight of King Marko came and said to him, "Gracious king, keep secret what I am about to tell you." And the king looked at the knight and said, "Tell me what you want." Said the knight, "You are a mighty lord, and your dishonor is not gratifying to me; I will tell you: Tristan has loved Izhota carnally." The king said, [87] "Can you prove this?" The other said, "My lord, indeed, I heard that they are to meet in the garden, behind the portico at the first night-watch." King Marko, wanting to investigate this, said to his knights, "We have to go away." Said Tristan: "Whom do you want with you?" He said, "O, honorable Knight Tristan, do not go with me now – wait for me here tomorrow." The king rode out far from his court, turned the knights away from him, and returned to the court; he entered the garden and climbed onto the apple tree.<sup>26</sup> The moon shone brightly that night, and because of this, he could not hide his shadow. As Lord Tristan had arranged with Izhota, she stepped out into the garden and stood near the apple tree, very joyous because of Tristan's love. Tristan

*Byelorussian Tristan*

came near Izhota and saw a man's shadow on the apple tree; he looked up, kneeled on one knee and said to Izhota: "O my noble lady, the crown of all women, I asked you to come out in the garden to tell you my thoughts. I am contemplating going to sea, for I heard that King Marko said, 'Tristan looks at Izhota in an amorous manner.' Thus, for God's sake, recount to the king my service: how I fought for him with fiery Blanor, the great knight, so as to get you for him; the king should not be angry with me." Izhota, who was very wise and bright in every way, understood that Tristan had noticed something; she looked around the garden and noticed the man's shadow on the ground and said without looking up the tree: "O my noble knight, the crown of all knighthood, who respects King Marko's lordship, the king knows your great service, that you freed all of Kornovalia, young and old; and all our neighbors have been moved by your great chivalry. It would be a great wonder if the king should forget your valor and trust some other knight; I will speak to the lord king about you; be assured that the king will trust me, his wedded wife. And if you are contemplating going to sea, linger a while until King Marko returns." Lord Tristan praised the glory of God, and thanked the fair Izhota for everything, bowed and went to the main palace, and Izhota to her chamber.

King Marko climbed down the tree and said to himself, "Tristan is without fault; if all this is the truth, it will be different now." It came to his mind that the knight had borne anger against Tristan since he had gone with Tristan after Izhota; and when they landed by the castle of Damolot in the Londresh kingdom, [88] which is in the possession of King Demagul<sup>27</sup>, and two knights, Iashchor and Marganor, confronted them. Tristan wanted to measure up to them, but the knight had restrained him, saying, "Tristan, we did not come to fight with these knights but to carry Izhota, the

*Byelorussian Tristan*

daughter of King Lenviz from the Bian Town<sup>28</sup>, from Orlendea for our lord King Marko." Then Tristan had said to him, "If you are afraid to joust in Londresh, do not go with us to Orlendea, since there we will find many good knights who will not give up Izhota to us without a fierce battle." And because of this, the knight was angry at Tristan; this animosity came to the king's mind now, and he doubted the knight.

King Marko returned to the palace and Izhota came to him and said, "My noble lord, I will tell you one thing. When you departed with your knights to the other court, and left Tristan here, he decided to go into the world; I asked him: 'Why are you going?' He told me: 'I recognize that the king looks at me with angry eyes.' I detained him until I heard from you. I beg you, my lord, for your consideration: you know yourself how Kornovalia was belittled until Tristan freed it; he killed the greatest Orlendeian knight Amurat on Samson Island and freed Kornovalia, from old to young. He did so that you might rule. He also conquered the great knight Blanor; he did this for you, obtaining me for you. And furthermore, if some knight came to your court from anywhere seeking an equal, and if he knew that Tristan was with us, he would not have a fight with him, but if he did, you would be elevated through Tristan; for when the knights came to my father's court, not one knight was to be found who could withstand Palamidezh, but when he fought with Tristan, Tristan threw him off his horse. For all this, my lord, do not let him go away from you." King Marko listened to her marvelous words and said to her, "Bad things were reported to me about Tristan, but I myself know him to be faithful to me and I love him with my heart, as I love myself."

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## [The King's Dream]

Then King Marko said to fair Izhota: "I had a dream; there was a very fine kingdom and within it grew a very pretty rose bush, with very beautiful flowers on it; some knights were saying: 'This is a good country for this beautiful rose.' The lord of this kingdom was saying: [89] 'The kingdom is mine, but the rose is not mine; whoever will pick the rose flower, will have the bush.' Many knights came to this kingdom, and every knight wanted a flower from this rose, but no one could take it; then came one knight and extended his hand to this bush and took away one rose-bloom. And the knights said, 'This is a wonder: for so long no one could take a flower from that bush, but this knight, as soon as he came, took the flower.' This knight was very happy about the rose, but when he wanted more flowers, he was not able to grab them. At this time I woke up from my dream." Izhota said, "My lord, it seems to me that knight who took the rose flower — the bush will be his." The king thought that no one would comprehend it, but Izhota was very wise and understood why the king was saying this; she thought that Braginia had recounted to him her and Tristan's love-making. Izhota was very angry with Braginia and thought that she should not be alive.

Tristan went into a virgin leafy forest to seek a joust, since for several days he had longed for it. And Izhota said to Braginia, "Lord Tristan went to seek a joust, and is bound to have some wounds there, but the plants to heal wounds are scarce, and so I or you should go and fetch some herbs." Said Braginia, "O honorable lady, it is not suitable for you to go instead of me; even if I have to go far

over sea and over land, I will go, and not only to the virgin forest but even further to bring the herbs for Lord Tristan. But I beg you: send two knights with me, so that no misadventure befalls me." Izhota ordered two servants called and told them to put on armor; when they had dressed themselves, she said to them, "Go with that maiden and put her to death, and I will plead to the king for you, so that he makes you knights."

When they came to the virgin forest, the men thought much, saying: "This maiden served Lord Tristan much in the Bian Town in Orlendea; she is wise — let us tell her why we are going. Maybe she will be able to do something so that we will be cleared from punishment and she from death." They said, "Maiden, do you know that you will receive death from us?" She said, "I cannot talk with you about anything until I see your faces." They took their helmets off and showed her their faces. Braginia recognized that they had come [90] for her death, and said, "Do not dare to do anything but what was ordered to you, but if you want, you can be freed from sin and act by Our Lord's commandments." They said, "O, good maiden, because of this we have told you, so that we might be free from sin, and you from death." The maiden said, "Lead me to the crossroads of the virgin forest; there is one very beautiful tree where there are always many wild animals; tie me to that tree — let me die from the animals." She spoke thus because it was seldom that there were no knights by that tree. The servants brought her and tied her to the tree and were looking in all directions where the wild animals might come from, and they saw the handsome Palamidezh Anuplitich<sup>29</sup> riding, followed by his servants. Braginia's heart was full of joy, since she recognized the handsome Palamidezh. Palamidezh, seeing her, said to his companions, "It is not happening according to my thoughts: I have come here so

that I might die from Tristan's hand, but he has met his death already, for if Lord Tristan was alive, this would not have happened to Braginia." He said to her, "God have mercy on you, maiden; by what death has Lord Tristan perished? For if he were alive, this calamity would not have happened to you." She said, "Knight, I know that you are the brave knight Palamidezh, son of King Anuplit, the greatest enemy of Lord Tristan. Let me die from wild mals, if I ever saw Lord Tristan more joyful than he was yesterday, when he went into the virgin forest seeking to joust with good knights, as he has wished to do for a long time." Said Palamidezh, "What is your transgression against the fair Izhota that has put you in such suffering?" She said, "It happened thus to me: I went with my mistress from one kingdom to another; she was bringing her flower and I was bringing my own — we were going by sea and by land. While going by sea, my lady drowned her flower, but I did not drown mine. Then she placed my flower where her flower should have had its place — because of that, this evil happened to me." Palamidezh said, "Does Lord Tristan know it?" She said, "He does not know." He said, "O my good maiden, you have served Lord Tristan well and transgressed much against me, but when I free you from your death, serve me too." She said, "It is befitting for every knight to wish honor for other knights and maidens." Palamidezh said, "Go with us to Kornovalia and tell me about the customs of your lord King Marko." [91] She said, "There is one good custom of our lord: when the knights come to the court and King Marko is informed that the knights came from another country to seek a joust, the king must send each of them a horse and armor if their own horses are tired, so that they may compete on the fresh ones." Palamidezh said, "How was this custom established thus, for it is a custom of King Artiush, who is the crown of Byelorussian Tristan

### Byelorussian Tristan

all the kings at all four corners of the world?" She said, "This custom was established when Lord Tristan came from Orlendea to Kornovalia." After freeing her, Palamidezh rode to Kornovalia. Palamidezh said, "Maiden, I do not want them to know anything about me for a while: who I am and from where."

When they came to the knights' quarters, the local knights led a horse and brought armor and said, "Are you knights who came here to seek a joust?" Palamidezh said, "Indeed, is Lord Tristan here?" They said, "He went on a hunt." Palamidezh said, "Is he not very much wounded?" They said, "He is wounded, but not too much." Palamidezh asked them, "Might Lord Tristan return soon?" They said, "We do not know. If he finds a joust there, he might linger, since he is the crown of all the knights who worship our lord King Marko." Palamidezh was very glad that they did not say that Tristan was present; he came out in front of the lodge and saw three maidens coming down the street, talking: "The king commands all knights and maidens to come to the main palace." Said Palamidezh to Braginia, "What do you see in this?" She said, "It seems to me that the lord King wants to inquire about me." He said, "When is the time for me to bow low before the king?" She said, "When the knights assemble by the king in the common palace." He said, "My dear maiden, watch for this." Afterward Braginia said to Palamidezh, "It is time for you to bow low before King Marko." He went, and his knights with him.

Thus, the handsome Palamidezh, with two swords and a black shield, went to the main palace to King Marko and bowed; the king greeted him very courteously. Then the king said, "If someone might know by what death maiden Braginia perished, I will reward him very greatly, yet if he declares her alive, anything that his hand might reach for [92] will not be denied him."

Palamidezh began to recount to him about King Artush. King Marko's heart was filled with joy; he commanded that chess be brought in and asked Palamidezh to play with him. When they sat down to play, the king said to Palamidezh, "I am telling you, knight, that no one is contesting me in playing chess." Said Palamidezh, "I know, my king, that you are shrewd. Do you want to play for these stakes: whichever of us wins, anything that his hand grasps, let him take." They both agreed to this. Palamidezh then won and said, "King Marko of Kornovalia, you said: Whoever will tell me about the maiden Braginia being alive may take anything that his hand might reach for, and furthermore, you said, 'Whoever wins in chess, anything that his hand grasps, let him take.' And a king's faith is a greater thing than even his kingdom. Please give me fair Izhota and I will give you the maiden Braginia." The king said, "Where is she?" He said, "At my quarters." Palamidezh said to his knight, "Fetch Braginia." The knight led her in; when King Marko saw her, he was very joyous and said to a maiden, "Go and tell Izhota: 'Get arrayed, you must go with Palamidezh.'" The fair Izhota was dressing very slowly, waiting for Lord Tristan to hurry back; then Palamidezh would not dare to claim her. But finally the marvelous Izhota came before the king, and King Marko said, "Knight, here is the lady for you." Palamidezh's heart was filled with joy; he gave praise to God, and thanked King Marko for Izhota. The beautiful Izhota said, "Knight, my transgressions led me to be given to King Marko of Kornovalia, and he commanded that I be given to you; you know yourself, when you had served for three years at my father's court for me, you could not earn me, but you have obtained me so quickly from King Marko; let us go to church and swear to God not to leave each other until death." Palamidezh was very irate about this and said, "Let us go, lady." They rode to the

*Byelorussian Tristan*

church, and Izhota dismounted and entered ahead of Palamidezh. In this church there was a rope ladder lowered down. Izhota climbed up this ladder to a high window, and when she was at the window, she pulled the ladder to herself. Then Palamidezh [93] Anuplitich entered the church very joyfully. When he saw his Izhota in the church window, he became very sad and said, "O, honorable lady, why are you acting so? Come down and we will swear to each other by God not to leave each other until death; you said so yourself, milady. I am telling you on my knightly faith: if King Marko gave you to me, I do not want to go without you." Said Izhota to the knight, "Go with God; there are knights of King Marko who went on a hunt, and if they find you in their church, you will have a fierce fight." Palamidezh said, "O, honorable lady, I am not afraid of any knight, since King Marko gave you to me."

Then Izhota looked in the direction where the knights had ridden off and saw that Lord Tristan was riding toward the church, for Tristan had the custom when going to the court or from the court of always stepping into this church; and Izhota said to Palamidezh, "Knight, go with God; a knight is coming at you." Palamidezh said, "Milady, why are you threatening me with a knight? If not one, let it be two! Come down, milady, you should go with me." Izhota said, "Knight, go with God, a knight is coming toward the church in a knightly manner; guard yourself from his strokes." Palamidezh said, "If not or ?, let it be three! Milady, come down, and let us pledge what we were saying." Said Izhota, "Knight, ride away from the church, for you will be shamed by the strokes of another knight, since the knight is near the church already, and he is riding at you." Palamidezh said, "If not one, let them be ten! I pledge on my knightly faith to wait for you three days and three nights. I will not go without you." Said Izhota to Palamidezh, "Not three, not

two, but one Tristan is coming!" Palamidezh jumped on his horse and rode away as fast as he could, since he knew that Tristan was skilled with his lance on horseback. Byelorussian Tristan  
Tristan saw that the knight was running away from the church, and recognizing him by his insignia, galloped after him as fast as he could, but could not catch up with him, for his horse was tired from the hunt, and he turned back. When Lord Tristan came to the church and saw the beautiful Izhota, he became very angry, and did not want to ask about Palamidezh, but only said, "Milady, mount the horse, to go to the king, since he gave me to Palamidezh." Tristan said, "O my honorable lady, how is it possible that he gave you to Palamidezh, [94] for King Marko likes many pleasures?" Izhota said, "Tristan, if pleasure was dear to him, why did he give me to an errant knight?"

After these words Tristan rode away from the church with Izhota into the world. They rode from Kornovalia to Damolot, where they met a maiden who said, "Knight, I do not know who you are, but I see you are a good knight; I fear your dishonor; however, if you will take this road, you cannot avoid disgrace." Lord Tristan said, "Maiden, blessed be you by all the knights for kindly forewarning a knight to prevent disgrace; I beg you, maiden, why are you restraining me from this road?" She said, "My good knight, ahead of you lives King Artiush with his Queen Zhenibra<sup>16</sup>; and many valorous knights, since every good knight worships King Artiush's lordship; so these knights, when they see the most beautiful lady with you, will want to take her away from you with a fierce fight. Knight, there will be not one or two, but many valorous knights to break their lances: you will have to give her up." Lord Tristan said, "Maiden, praised be you by all the knights and maidens for gladly drawing away a knight from his disgrace, but please know

Byelorussian Tristan  
that no one can divert me from this road." Then Tristan parted from the maiden.

When he saw King Artiush's tents — and they were very beautifully decorated — he was expecting an encounter there. Thus said Lord Tristan to fair Izhota, "Honorable lady, do you see the tent of King Artiush, which is stretched so close to the road? I know that there are many valorous knights there; if we ride straight toward his tent, I will face a hard fight, yet if we ride sidelong around King Artiush, I also expect a fight. They will say, 'There goes a fearful knight leading a most beautiful maiden.' Because of this, milady, I must go straight toward the tent of King Artiush. And I am telling you on my knightly faith, if you look anywhere but between my shoulders or between the ears of your horse, I will be very angry with you." Said Izhota, "O my honorable knight Tristan, if I traveled over sea and land, I would not see any greater knight than you; and as to the knights from the court of King Artiush, [95] I saw them all at the court of my father in Orlendea." And so Tristan rode to King Artiush's tent, which was pitched so close to the road that the cords were reaching across it. Tristan rode through the cords and with his horse touched them so that the entire tent shook. At that time the king was sitting at the table with Queen Zhenibra and his knights. Seeing this, the knights jumped over the tables to look, saying, "Who is so arrogant toward our lord King Artiush, the crown of all kings?" The fair Izhota and Tristan, hearing the sound of vessels in the tent — for the knights while jumping over the tables had broken some — became very frightened, fearing disgrace. When Artiush's men came out of the tent, they saw Tristan, the great knight, and the lady with him. There was Antsolot, the son of Dolot<sup>30</sup>, king of Lokva, Tristan's dearest friend, but he did not recognize Tristan in his armor<sup>31</sup>, though he seemed a very valorous knight. He said, "I

have traveled at sea and on land very much, but I never saw a knight who could sit on a horse so solidly, or who could keep his feet in the stirrups so handsomely, except for one, and I saw no lady as marvelous, except one.

There was a cupbearer of King Artiush named Geush, a recently dubbed knight, who had great courage but little might; this cupbearer saw the wonderful Lady Izhota, and his heart filled with joy; he gave praise to God, went into King Artiush's tent and knelt, saying, "O most mighty king of the crown of all kings, your lordship has no equal far or near; you said to me if I saw the most marvelous maiden in the world, you would give her to me. Now, my lord, if I traveled many years by sea and by land, I would not find a fairer maiden than the one with the knight who passed by your tent and did not bow before you — let me take the maiden from him, and I shall bring him to you." The king said, "Knight, if you bring me this knight, you can take only the maiden but anything you might want." The cupbearer thanked him very boldly, as if he had it in his hands already, and began very hurriedly to dress in his armor and rush after Izhota. Antsolci said to him: "Geush, do not be too eager to ride after this knight, [96] for I know how he sits on his horse and how he holds his feet in the stirrups, your horse will give us a spectacle, stepping on the bridle, before you bring him in. I am telling you truly: a fearful knight could not lead such a wonderful maiden, because someone else would have taken her away from him before us." Geush said, "It is not becoming for any knight to detract honor from another knight, and I am telling you, on my faith, when we join in combat I intend to exhibit only a little of my mastery over him." Lord Antsolot said, "Lord cupbearer, I am of the belief that when you join, little of your mastery will be displayed." And so the cupbearer rode after Tristan as fast as he could, with great assurance.

### Byelorussian *Tristan*

When Izhota and Govornar saw him, Izhota said to Tristan, "A knight is riding after you." Said Tristan, "How is he riding?" Izhota said, "As fast as his horse can take him." Said Tristan, "This knight is newly dubbed, and thinks he will display a little mastery over me, and so do I with him." Then display a little mastery over me, and so do I with him." Then Geush, the cupbearer, called out in a loud voice, "Knight, you who are leading that marvelous maiden, wait for me; let us see which one of us is more worthy to love her." Lord Tristan put his spear under his armpit before turning around and said, "Ride up and see."

#### [The Fight of Tristan with Geush]

When their spears joined together, Geush fell to one side and his horse to the other. Izhota and Govornar were watching what was going to happen between them, and they did not even notice Tristan's feet moving in the stirrups, let alone himself sliding in his saddle, because of the daring deeds of this knight. Lord Tristan jumped off his horse and took Geush's helmet off his head and wanted to deliver him of his soul, but Geush began to pray for his life. Lord Tristan said to him, "Do as I order you, and I will release you from a brutal death and from my sharp sword." The knight said, "O, my lord, you may send me far over sea and over land, if only you will spare my life." Said Tristan, "Knight, take off your armor and present your arms to the lord who sent you." He turned his back to him; the knight was content with this, and went away on foot, carrying his armor.

King Artiush was walking with his knights and Queen Zhenibra with her handmaidens, when the knights saw that a horse was coming, stepping on its reins, and a bent knight was following; the knights, who were friends of the cupbearer, said to King Artiush, "Milord, how brave your [97] cupbearer is, our friend Geush; we believe that he killed the knight with the maiden and is carrying his armor,

for we never before saw such marvelous armor as was on that knight." Lord Antsolot said, "O my God, how inaccurately you are informing our lord King Artiush, for if our knight defeated that knight, why would he abandon his horse? I am telling you, on my knightly faith, our knight came carrying his armor in a bundle, and approached the king and said, "My lord, accept me alive, rather than dead; I preferred to act thus than to lose my head; I will tell you though, that there is no knight who could withstand him." The king was very sad that disgrace had befallen his knight. The king called Queen Zhenibra and said, "My lady, go with the maidens and ask Antsolot to bring this knight in, since Antsolot is the greatest knight among us, the crown of all knights, who worship my lordship." The queen asked Antsolot, saying: "O highest knight Antsolot, for God's sake, take the crown of thorns from our lord King Artiush and us, and the maiden will be yours." Antsolot said, "Honorable lady, why are you sending me after this knight, for my loathsome death? But if you command me, I must go." Then he dressed in his armor, mounted his horse, and rode after Tristan at a slow pace — for he knew that he would overtake him — reflecting, "The knight who is conducting such a marvelous maiden is not going to run." When Antsolot was near, Izhota and Govornar saw him, and Izhota said, "Lord Tristan, a knight is riding after you in a knightly manner." Lord Tristan said, "My lady, how is this knight riding?" She said, "The knight is of marvelous stature and is riding at a slow pace." Tristan looked far ahead of him and saw a very magnificent church, and before it a beautiful portico; said Tristan, "Let us go to that church by the portico." And they rode over there. He said to Izhota, "My lady, this is a knight of old, and I [98] do not know whether

Byelorussian *Tristan*

you will be his or mine." After this, they came to the church and sat down by portico in the coolness; he took his helmet off, for he was perspiring. Antsolot saw him and jumped off his horse very swiftly, for he recognized that it was Lord Tristan, and was very joyous in this recognition. Seeing him, Lord Tristan put his helmet on, jumped on his horse, and was ready. When Lord Antsolot saw him on his horse, he cast off his helmet; Tristan recognized him and jumped off his horse; they greeted each other very cordially, and asked each other, "Knight, what adventure have you had since the time we parted?" Lord Tristan bragged to him, saying, "Whichever knights who are riding seeking their equals, from the clan of King Ban of Banak or from the French King Peremont, no one has resisted my strokes." Lord Antsolot said: "I am the crown of all knights who worship King Artiush." Then he told Lord Tristan, "Command that your horse be prepared; let us go your way, since I am not returning to King Artiush." Said Tristan, "Why do you not want to go back to the king?" He said, "Because I will be killed by him; only by you will I remain alive." Tristan said, "How could that be, knight?" And he said, "I was sent after you to bring you back, since no other knight could ever do it." Said Tristan, "Let us go to King Artiush, and I will tell him that you are the greater knight than I." Antsolot said, "What God is not willing to do, no one can do; I am not a greater knight than you — you are the crown of knighthood." Then they said, "We will do as Izhota shall advise." The blonde Izhota said, "You are both valorous knights; God knows which one of you is greater; but since you asked me to speak up, let us go to King Artiush. Many knights have said that Queen Zhenibra is more beautiful than I, though I know myself that I am more beautiful; still we want to see the beauty of other ladies and the valor of other knights."

After this, Lord Tristan rode with his dearest friend Antsolot, to King Artiush's tent, where the knights were very joyous [99], thinking that Antsolot was bringing this knight in. But when they were near the tent, it was clear that these knights liked each other wonderfully well. And so they came into King Artiush's tent, where Lord Tristan fell on one knee and said, "My lord, let your kingdom know that Antsolot is the greater knight: he led me like a deer by the neck before your majesty." Having said this, he stood up. Then Antsolot fell on his knee and gave praise to God and said to the king and queen, "My lords, thank Tristan for my life, since he did not want to destroy me, but led me like a child to King Artiush's camp. Please know that Tristan is the crown of knights in all four corners of the world, at sea and on land." All the knights said, "You both are valorous; God have mercy on you, as you marvelously carried out your vows; your chivalry has no equal near or far. We have seen your valor, let us see now the beauty of your lady." Both Queen Zhenibra and Izhota arrayed themselves as best they could. The knights and judges of King Artiush came forth, beholding their beauty, and one of the judges said, "We are appointed to judge fairly for both sides, but it seems to me, as gold is better than silver, so is the lady of this knight more beautiful than our queen. How does it seem to you?" They said, "As you have judged, so it seems to us, that there is no knight equal in valor to Lord Tristan, and there is no lady that would compare to Lady Izhota." Queen Zhenibra was very angry with the judges because of this, but could do nothing about it, and so she was thinking how she could disgrace Tristan. She asked Gavaon, the nephew of King Artiush: [100] "Knight, compete with Tristan; if you conquer him, you will have great honor, since you will defeat the greatest knight, but even if he conquers you, there will be no disgrace, for you will have been de-

feated by the world's greatest knight." Gavaon said to Tristan, "Knight, prepare your horse, let us try each other out." Tristan said, "Good knight, you have spoken well: for a few days I have wished to tempt my fortune." And thus Gavaon rode forth in full armor.

[The Fight of Tristan with Gavaon]

When these two knights saw each other, Gavaon would have abandoned the fight, if he could have, for Tristan in his armor seemed to him to be too bold and courageous. Said Gavaon, "Knight, on guard!" Both struck so hard that their lances splintered into many chips, and they rammed with their shoulders and their shields. Gavaon fell to one side, and his horse to the other. Zhenibra and her handmaids watched what was happening between them, but did not discern that Tristan's feet moved in his stirrups, much less that he shifted in his saddle. The fair Izhota gave praise to the Lord and said, "God, have mercy on Lord Tristan!" Seeing Gavaon on the ground, Queen Zhenibra was very angry: she did not regret Gavaon's fall as much as she regretted Izhota's words. The queen went to the main palace to the knights and said to them, "Honorable knights of our King Artiush, on God's honor and by the faith of all knights and maidens, compete with Tristan, for if any one of you conquers Tristan, he will elevate all of King Artiush's court, but if he conquers you, there will not be any dishonor for you, since he is the crown of all knights." In no time, they all dressed and mounted their horses and each shouted to Lord Tristan, "Beware of my strokes."

[The Fight of Tristan with the Knights of King Artiush]

Whoever came by Lord Tristan, fell off his horse, and the fight lasted for three days. When the queen saw that there was not one knight in the king's court who could defeat Tristan, she counted only on Antsolot and begged him, saying, "Good knight Antsolot, compete with Tristan, so that

we can be elevated by you." Antsolot said, "Why are you sending me to a fierce death by Tristan's sword? I must do it, however."

After this he said to Tristan, [101] "Knight, order your horses to be readied and dress in your armor; we have to compete." Tristan said, "Knight, there is no knight with whom I would more gladly compete than with you, for if you conquer me, I will be defeated by my dearest friend and the greatest knight. Since you saw how hard my fight was for these three days, give me one day's rest for this fight." Antsolot said, "It does not befit you to ask of me one day's delay; take a fifteen-day term: you will have as hard a fight with me as with all of these knights." Antsolot set such a term because he knew that by that time Tristan would be ready to fight.

It was time for Tristan to go to his camp, having bowed to the king and queen and the knights; Antsolot wanted to go with him, but the queen pleaded with him, saying, "Good knight, do not depart now; we have heard that King Samsizh from the Black Island is to arrive at King Artiush's court." Thereafter King Samsizh came and said, "I know, O King, that you are the crown of all kings. I came because I know you have the greatest knights; and you, knights, who worship King Artiush's lordship, if I overcome any one of you — I shall have my will over him, but if any one of you conquers me, let his will be over me." The knights were very eager for this and dressed themselves in their armor and every one of them wished to take on the fight with Samsizh first, before the others, to please King Artiush.

#### [The Fight of King Samsizh with the Knights of King Artiush]

After this, King Samsizh armed himself, mounted his horse, and fought with the king's knights; whoever came by Samsizh found himself off his horse. King Samsizh de-

feated eleven knights, then Antsolot wanted to go against him. When they met, their lances broke in many pieces, and they butted with their shoulders, so that their horses fell under both of them. Antsolot fell off his horse, but King Samsizh hung on to his horse and did not lose him. The knights of King Artiush said, "The fight was not lost by our knight, since they both fell off their horses." King Artiush said, "We cannot [102] put a fight that was overthrown back on its feet: that knight who did not lose his horse won the fight."

King Artiush was dear to his knights, and the knights to him; thus said the king, "I would gladly go with my knights on the Black Island to King Samsizh's prison, rather than remain here without them." King Artiush armed himself, mounted his horse and said to King Samsizh, "Guard yourself from my strokes."

#### [The Fight of King Artiush with Samsizh]

The kings met, and for King Samsizh the fight with Artiush was easier than with even the lesser of his eleven knights. King Artiush fell far from his horse, and so King Samsizh led him off with the defeated knights. The knights were pale from sadness. Antsolot said to the king, "My lord, let us think how to get free from Samsizh's hand; if we are not liberated by Tristan, we will not be liberated by any other knight." They called Queen Zhenibra to them and Antsolot said, "Milady, go find Tristan and tell him what has happened to us, and tell him from me: 'Antsolot, your dearest friend, begs you: knight, if we are not liberated by you from the Black Island prison of King Samsizh, we are going to die in his dungeon.'"

The queen left very hurriedly; she met a maiden and said to her, "Can you tell me something about Lord Tristan?" The maiden said, "Milady, the knight of whom you are inquiring is at home, and his home is on his horse." The

queen left the maiden very saddened; she met another girl and said, "Maiden, can you tell me anything about Lord Tristan?" And she said, "Milady, I do not know what kind of lady you are, where you are from, and what your name is, but I see you are a great lady, only saddened. Since you are asking me about Lord Tristan, I will tell you because of his valor. Do you know that harbor with many vessels, over there? First you will notice the vessel of Lord Tristan decorated with pearls and precious stones; if he is not on this vessel, you should ask for him in that camp – where you see much splendor and merriment, because he likes this." Queen Zhenibra left this maiden joyously, and soon she saw [103] the harbor, recognized the vessel of Lord Tristan by the maiden's description, and she was very happy. Near the vessel, there were many knightly stations. The lady saw a maiden at the camp, went over to her and said, "I beg you, maiden, which is Tristan's lodging?" And the maiden said, "You are standing in front of the place you are seeking. The queen entered the lodging without announcement and hurriedly began to tell Lord Tristan how King Samsizh had led off King Artiush and his knights. And then she said, "Knight, your dearest friend Antsolot tells you: 'If we are not delivered from King Samsizh's dungeon by you, then we must die there.'" At that time Lord Tristan was resting, since the day before he had been fighting with great warriors and had defeated twelve knights and received slight wounds, and because of this he was still confined to bed. When he heard the queen's words, he took his sword from near the head of his bed, but moved so quickly that his wounds bled. Seeing this, Izhota said, "Milady, you are a crowned queen; why did you come to the greatest knight with sad words? You should have come quietly and opened your soft lips with gentle discourse, so that the knight's heart would change to courage." The queen said, "Lady

Izhota, how our thoughts are different! You are the most marvelous lady in the world, and you have your lord near you, in whom you have your trust; you can make him sound in no more than ten days, but I saw my King Artiush and his knights being led off." Lord Tristan looked up angrily at Izhota because of Queen Zhenibra's words.

Izhota, knowing that merriment was dear to Tristan, grasped the queen's hand and began to frolic in a round-dance very nimbly, and Tristan's heart began to change to courage; and he said to Govornar, "Give me my lute." And he began to play marvelously; hearing the lute the hearts of both ladies and of Lord Tristan filled with joy. Then Lord Tristan said to Izhota, "Prepare my vessel and put bread and wine in it for me; I pledge to you on my knightly faith: either I will liberate King Artiush and his knights, or I will remain with King Artiush in Samsizh's dungeon." [104] Izhota said, "My lord, you can go when you are well." Said Tristan, "I can heal while traveling the same as lying down, since the wounds that are underneath the armor do not require a healer." Izhota, seeing that she could not restrain him, said, "My lord, your vessel is equipped and ready, and one can outfit it easily with food and wine." Then Tristan stepped into the vessel along with Izhota, Govornar, and Queen Zhenibra; when they pushed from the shore, the wind rose and the sea swelled; they did not know where they would land. Zhenibra begged Izhota, saying, "My lady, I never learned to travel by sea: ask Lord Tristan to give the command to seek a harbor, so that we can give praise to God, Who will deliver us from death at sea." Tristan, seeing how the sea waves were, took out his lute and began to play, and when he had played some, not one lady cared about a haven – it was so pleasurable for them to listen. Then Tristan said to the mariners, "Lead us to a haven, so that we can give praise to the Lord God for delivering us from death at sea and from evil."

The mariners landed near a castle, where there was a good harbor, but an evil custom. Here, the inhabitants received Tristan politely and asked him, "Knight, who are these two ladies?" And he said, "They are my sisters." He pointed to Zhenibra and said, "This is my older sister" – and pointed at Izhota – "and this is my younger." They said, "God have mercy on us, but we have not seen such a resemblance among kin anywhere!" Lord Tristan said, "Knights, do not take as evil what I am going to ask of you, for if I knew, I would not ask." They said, "Knight, here there is a good custom: ask what you want." Said Tristan, "I am asking you about this: I see you are all handsome persons, but why are you so pale?" They said to him, "Do you not know the local custom? In this castle the ruler is a lady who has not known any man and practices this custom: whoever lands in this harbor cannot show her homage unless he is castrated; and you, knight, if you are castrated, go and bow low before her." Said Tristan: "I have traveled much by sea and by land, but have not seen such an evil custom; it must be hard for you to suffer it; as for us, [105] let it be as God wills. Give me a horse and my armor; I shall go where we came from." They said, "Knight, other knights would have done that too, if going back were possible." Then they captured Tristan and threw him into a dungeon. There were twelve knights who had been in this dungeon for seven years, who now agreed, "Let us be castrated: it is better to die outside than in this dungeon." One of them said, "O my God, Lord Tristan is among us!" Another knight said, "Why are you glad for the disgrace of the greatest knight and our own death?" The first one said, "I am not glad because of his disgrace, but because of our freedom and his honor, since I know what Lord Tristan is able to do with his sword."

The ruling lady had two brothers: one older than she, the

other younger; the younger one, when he wished, could always talk to his sister, but the elder would not dare. The younger brother said, "Princess, let me take the older sister of that knight for my brother, and the younger for myself." She said to him, "If you talk to me about this any more, I will separate you from your soul." He went out and saw Zhenibra and Izhota standing there very nicely arrayed, and said from his passionate heart, "If the younger one wants to marry me, I could talk to my sister." He approached them and said to Izhota, "Maiden, if I persuade my sister, will you marry me, and then we could let your brother go free?" Izhota said, "Prince, there is nothing dearer to us than our brother, who is in your dungeon." Izhota, all this time, had been carrying Tristan's sword under her dress. The prince said, "I can let you see your brother, but reply to what I have proposed to you." Izhota said, "Yes, ask your sister."

At this time, Izhota managed to throw the sword into the dungeon and Tristan took it in his hand and walked to the prison's gates, while his fellow knights walked after him out of the dungeon. When the local knights spied them, they rushed toward them in the streets, grabbing lances and throwing their helmets, trying to confine them again as they had done before when knights escaped from the dungeon. One of them, a very brave man, ran toward Tristan ahead of the rest, trying to chase him back into the dungeon. This knight had his head lopped off far from his body. Lord Tristan began to wield fierce [106] strokes, and when he saw a lance in somebody's hand or a helmet on his head, he killed all of them.

The princess had the custom not to budge from her place for any knight who would bow before her. When she was told about Tristan, she was sprawling on golden cushions like a snake on a mound; but when she saw Lord Tristan at

the door of her palace, she leaped up very quickly and met him in the middle of her hall, with the water running down her legs, and she knelt before him. Lord Tristan grabbed her by the top of her head, which he cut off and threw far away saying, "Let your evil custom not be held on this land any longer." Tristan looked around the palace to see if there were knights, but there were none, only a prince who had not yet been dubbed a knight. When he saw him, he said, "Is this not the princess's brother, who wanted to take Izhota?" He went outside with him and said to Zhenibra and Izhota, "Ladies, does this prince deserve to lose his head?" Izhota said, "My lord, we are not happy about any death; however, this prince was pursuing me." Tristan cut his head off. Zhenibra said, "Milady, why did you say that?" Said Izhota, "Honorable lady, I see now Lord Tristan's nature: if I had not told him the truth, I do not know what might have happened to us."

Then the knights gathered in the great hall and Lord Tristan ordered that all the horses and arms of the princess be brought to him, and he granted a horse and armor to each of those knights that he had met in the dungeon. And then he said, "Knights, for several years you waited to get out in the light; now let each one take what he wants." These knights thanked Lord Tristan very humbly and said to him, "O knight, since you have delivered us from death, we want to go with you and serve you." Tristan said, "Knights, thanks be to you that you honor me, but do not worry about me; go to your homes; but if any of you want to call himself Lord Antsolot's vassal, given by me, Tristan, I would like to make him the lord of this castle and this harbor." One of the knights, called Amodor, said, "My lord, I want to be Lord Antsolot's vassal, given by you, Lord Tristan." Thus Tristan gave him the castle and the harbor, as a [107] vassal of his dearest friend. And the knight said,

"Dear God, how much Lord Tristan thinks of Antsolot's distinction! God have mercy on him."

Then Lord Tristan launched himself very hurriedly to sea to seek King Samsizh, and landed in another harbor, which was good. The town was beautiful and had only honorable customs, but a treacherous crusader, who had amassed much by his treachery and was guilty of betraying knights and maidens, followed this custom: he killed every guest treacherously and took his possessions. When Tristan landed with the ladies, he took his lute in his hands and began to play very beautifully. The knights from the town came forth to hear this joy and this beauty, and they said, "This knight is not designed for evil, but is created for chivalry." No one had had his fill of hearing the lute when the treacherous crusader was thinking about how to kill the knight with the two ladies and said, "I have gold and silver and other goods that I amassed by treachery and audacity, yet if I could cut off the head of this knight with the two ladies, then God will have done enough for me."

From this time all through the night the treacherous crusader kept following Tristan, hoping that he could kill him, but he could not accomplish this and said, "Maybe he will go to mass early; I shall wait for him behind the wall and then cut his head off." Later Lord Tristan went to mass at the church, and following him Izhota carried his sword and Queen Zhenibra his shield. The knights who saw them said, "This is the greatest knight and these the most marvelous maidens." When they were near the church, Izhota said to Tristan, "Knight, here is the sword; guard yourself from the attack of another knight." Tristan grabbed the sword before he turned around, and there behind the wall stood the knight with a naked sword, wanting to strike Tristan dead. Lord Tristan smashed into him, and with one

swipe the head of the crusader fell off. Tristan said, "Since I became a knight, I have not had an easier fight than with this knight; but I am sorry about it." The knights of the town said to him, "He is not going to betray anyone again; he wanted to give you the same treatment." Tristan was not glad that he had killed him, since he thought that the local knights might fight for the crusader, and he wanted to hurry to King [108] Samsizh. When Tristan arrived at church, the knights of this town came with ladies and said to him, "Knight, be glorified by all of us because you abolished a vile custom from our good harbor. Come with us; we will confer this entire estate upon you, for this estate befits you, and no one else but those to whom you might give it, for you are entitled to it; we had promised: he who kills the crusader, will have this estate." Lord Tristan went with the knights, who showed him the cellars and having opened them, said, "Knight, all this is yours." Tristan saw in the cellars many varied goods: gold and silver, pearls and precious stones and every other kind of stone and ware. Lord Tristan began to parcel these goods among the knights and maidens and whomever was suitable. In turn, the knights of this town rewarded him, saying, "Knight, be exalted, for you destroyed the treacherous crusader." Tristan rested there for several days and said to Queen Zhenibra and fair Izhota, "Honorable ladies, now you see the adventures we have had on our way; and if we come like this to King Samsizh at the Black Island, I do not know what he might do with us, let alone how we could liberate King Artiush and his knights." The ladies said, "Lord Tristan, even if we traveled over sea and on land, we could not find such a leader as you." Lord Tristan ordered Latin vestments<sup>32</sup> cut for himself and for his Govornar and for both ladies he ordered nun's habits; he filled his vessel with different wares, disguised himself as a Latin merchant and set off to sea.

saying to the mariners, "Sail us to the Black Island." They pushed away, and when they were at sea somewhere far from the shore, Tristan played his lute and delighted the ladies' hearts. Then they landed at the Black Island atoll.

The knights of King Samsizh, coming out, approached him hurriedly, since King Samsizh had this custom: whenever a ship might come, his knights would take what they wanted, and whatever the merchant would appraise what was taken, the king would pay for his knights. [109] Tristan said to the mariners, "Push away from the shore, for I know King Samsizh's custom; if someone took Zhenibra or Izhota from me, the king would have nothing to pay me; I have enough gold and silver." Then Govornar called out, "Here comes a merchant who wants to sell his wares; let there be no violence." The others said, "O merchant, the king and all the knights pledge that if it is not in accordance with your wishes, there will be no violation of your safety." Then Lord Tristan disembarked, pitched his tent and spread many different wares in front of it.

One knight came up to Tristan, saying, "Good knight, why did you disguise yourself as a Latin?" Said Tristan, "Many people resemble knights: I would be glad to be this knight you mention, but I am a Latin merchant; buy if you need something. I have some to sell to you." The other said, "Knight, I know you, you are the knight who just killed three nephews of King Ban of Banak at the court of King Lenviz in Orlendea; your valor has no equal near or far." Said Tristan, "Nothing belies so much as the human face: if you put on some armor, I might presume that you are a knight, but I see that you are a buffoon who wants a hand-out from me." The knight was very ashamed and said, "I have seen no one so much resembling that good knight as this merchant."

The other knights asked him, "Latin man, what are these ladies to you?" Tristan said, "They are my sisters: one is my elder, the other is younger." They told King Samsizh, "Milord, the merchant who asked for a pledge of safety has with him two maiden sisters: if you crossed the world, you could not find more wonderful ones; the younger is as white as paper and as beautiful as a rose. If you want to, you can buy them." King Samsizh went himself to look them over; he came to Tristan's tent and said, "Be well, Sir Latin." Tristan hastened toward him and greeted him. The king's knights marveled at how gracefully the Latin bowed to the king: "Not one of us could have done this." The king entered the tent and found the ladies playing chess with figures of very beautiful crystal.

The king [110] asked, "Sir Latin, what are these ladies to you?" Said Tristan, "They are my sisters." The king said, "Sell me this chess set." He said, "You cannot pay me enough." The king said, "If you want, I will give you an errant knight for every pawn and King Artiush for a king." Tristan said, "Whatever is not for sale, you cannot buy." The king said, "Sell me your younger sister; for her I will give to you three times her weight in gold and as much silver as you wish." He said, "Milord, you said to me that if I did not wish to sell anything, there would be no coercion: if I wanted to sell my sister, I could have gotten a higher price in the very first harbor." The king said, "Let us play chess for her and for a third of my kingdom." Tristan said, "You told me that for whatever was against my will, there would be no violation done: I do not know how to play chess; I would put a bishop<sup>33</sup> in the highest place, but where would one put the rest of the figures?" The king said, "He is a true Latin; the bishop is the most important with them." And then said the king, "Latin man, let us scuffle then, for this lady and for half of my kingdom." Tristan said, "You told me

that for whatever was against my will, there would be no violence; I do not know how to mount a horse or how to dress in armor." The other said, "Let us then fight for her, for the whole of my kingdom: pick out what you wish, and if you do not want anything, I will take her away for nothing." Tristan said, "If the first thing cannot be won by me, neither could the last, for I have not seen a bigger fight than when our Latin children began to fight with wooden swords, running down the streets; are we going to do the same?" The king said, "Indeed, Latin, only we will fight with iron swords; you did well to bring me this wonderful maiden."

The next morning they brought Tristan armor from the king, saying, "Dress up, Sir Latin." Tristan began to put the left sleeve on the right arm, and the right on the left, and the right greave on the left, and the left on the right and said, "Take this shiny armor to your lord, since it could not fit the Latin." They took the armor back, saying, "Gracious king, he does not know how to dress, and our lady is laughing watching him, thus cheering herself, not minding her brother's death." Meanwhile [111] Tristan said to Zhenbra and Izhota, "Prepare the ointments for wounds, since I am going against the greatest knight in the world; and you array yourselves with your best garments."

Tristan came out in full armor and on his helmet was a crown of very beautiful flowers; both ladies followed him. King Samsizh was already standing with his knights. When he saw Tristan, he was not happy to fight with him, and when he saw Izhota so beautifully arrayed, he would have taken her without any fight, so beautiful did she seem to him, even if he was to lose his pledge. The king said, "Latin man, why have you picked a fight against me? For my kingdom?" Tristan said, "My king, you said so; but I did not want this; though I see my death near, I must take on this

fight with you. I have traveled much on sea and on land, and if I have to die, I wish it to be where more would see my death. I have heard that there are many good people in your dungeon; order them out — let them witness my death. The king said to him, "What will it help if King Artiush with his knights should see your death? Order them taken out of the dungeon." When King Artiush exited, his twelve knights and Lord Antsolot began to laugh, except for Palamidezh, the biggest enemy of Tristan. King Artiush said, "Why are you laughing? I am not wondering about the others, but I am surprised at Antsolot, who laughs at the death of the greatest knight and his dearest friend, as well as at our and his own destruction." Palamidezh said, "If we are going to be delivered by Tristan, better for us to die in the dungeon on the Black Island." Antsolot said, "I am not laughing at his death, but because our freedom is pleasurable to me — I know this: when Queen Zhenibra and Izhota are here, Tristan will exhibit his mastery."

King Samsizh approached and said to Tristan, "Fight, Sir Latin." Tristan said, "Milord, teach me." The king took his sword out and began to rattle it over Tristan's armor, saying, "This way you pierce, and this way you shield yourself." And then he said, "Latin, do you want to forget this fight and give the maiden to me?" Said Tristan, "My king, as a great lord, you taught me well, but if I am able to protect myself from your sword, may I dare to strike?" Samsizh said, "Cover yourself, if you can, but you will not be able to." Said Tristan, "But if I could strike, do I dare?" [112] The king said, "Do strike." Tristan said, "My king, you taught me; now guard yourself!"

#### [The Fight of Tristan with King Samsizh]

They began to chase each other around the field like lions, attacking like knights who have no equal near or far. Samsizh overpowered Tristan, who protected himself with

his sword and his shield and fell to his knees under Samsizh's mighty strokes; but when Tristan overpowered Samsizh, the other protected himself with his sword and his shield and fell to his knees under Tristan's mighty strokes. The knights of King Samsizh said, "Great marvels! Not one knight has been found who could withstand our lord, but this Latin does; he is leaping like a lion." Samsizh sprang over and began to strike as hard as he could on Tristan's armor; if their armor had not held, both would have been dead. Toward the end of the fight, Lord Tristan noticed that Izhota had lost the color in her face; and so Tristan cast his shield away, seized his sword with both hands, and began to deliver ferocious blows without cease, striking King Samsizh on both his hands; the hands dropped to the ground together with his sword. Said Tristan, "My king, collect yourself, lest I make your hands bleed; I do not know how to do more than this." He seized his sword by the tip and took it to Samsizh, saying, "Why did you drop your sword? If it is too heavy, give it to me and have my sword." King Samsizh looked at Tristan in a furious manner. Said Tristan, "Why are you looking at me so angrily? I defeated you cleverly and masterfully; I could not get on with you any other way than this." The king said, "Honorable Knight Tristan, I recognized you by your fencing, and was praying to God not to die a brutal death from your ferocious blows and from your sharp sword. I am telling you on my knightly faith, if you had sent someone who had told me about you, I would have delivered King Artiush and his knights to you, for I see now that death has come to me because of them."

King Artiush, with his knights, saw this and came to Tristan, his heart filled with joy; they began to greet Tristan very affectionately; they gave praise to God and thanked Lord Tristan: "Most exalted knight, praised be you by all

knights, for you delivered us from Samsizh's dungeon." And everyone said, "God bless Tristan, for he labored so much for King Artiush and his knights by his own good will." [113]

Lord Tristan ordered that amusements be brought with which Samsizh entertained himself: trumpets, pipes, lutes, harps, organs, chess and checkers – everything very marvelously decorated in lordly fashion, and they began to make merry. This merriment was pleasurable to King Artiush and his knights. When Tristan himself took a lute and began to play very melodiously, the hearts of King Artiush and his knights filled with joy, hearing the tune of Tristan's lute, none of the knights could have enough of listening. Then Izhota grabbed Queen Zhenibra and presented her to King Artiush: "Milord, Lord Tristan presents you with this lady: if ever some distress has happened between you, let it be honorably corrected." She also presented each knight with a horse and armor and said to these knights, "Whatever one's hand grasps will not be refused him." To Antsolot Izhota said, "Knight, Tristan offers you whatever he acquired from the possessions of the treacherous crusader, and also presents to you knight Amodor with the castle of that princess who established the base custom in her harbor." King Artiush gave praise to Lord God and thanked Tristan, saying, "O most exalted knight Tristan, let your great chivalry be praised by all knights and all people in all four corners of the world! Your valor has no equal on earth, near or far."

Then came a knight from France from King Peremont, who knew about the knights in this harbor and wanted much to match with them. Tristan saw that he came for this, and said to King Artiush, "Noble King, the crown of all kings, for God's sake, give me a boon." Artiush said, "You are entitled to anything, only I would not let you compete

with this knight." Tristan said, "I am asking just this; I have plenty of everything else." And the king: "I said this because you are tired out, but be free to do even this." Tristan thanked him. The French knight said to him, "Knight, you are thanking him for your great disgrace." Tristan said, "You will see."

[The Fight of Tristan with the French Knight]

Both mounted their horses and struck hard, splintering their lances in many pieces, and then rushed together with their shields and their shoulders. The French knight fell on one side, and his horse on the other, [114] but no one could discern that Tristan's feet even moved in the stirrups. Some other knights came to seek their equals, but when they saw the French knight defeated, they did not want to try to measure up to Tristan; they bowed low to Artiush and rode back from whence they came. King Artiush and his knights rested a few days in this haven, and departed from the Black Island by sea with great joy, and Lord Tristan with them.

In the very first harbor Tristan parted with them; Antsolot begged the king often to let him go with Tristan. The king said, "Antsolot, good knight, when we come home, then you can go to Tristan – you will always find him where knights seek their equals."

Thereafter seven knights came to Tristan, and gave praise to God, for they had found him; they said to him, "O most exalted knight, you deserve all knightly honors. We came because of the greatness of your fame, since other knights have asked favors of you too." Said Tristan, "Tell me, what is your need?" They said, "Glorious knight, Smerdodug the infidel observes this custom: whoever lands in his harbor, he will receive very graciously, but at the first night-watch, he subjects the knight to terrible torture; not one knight will depart without disgrace. We were in his

harbor and suffered like other knights. For God's sake, have pity on our disgrace; come with us to his harbor, for if we are not exonerated by you, this will be our end, unless you, with God's grace, abolish this evil custom." Tristan said to the knights, "I am sorry for your disgrace. I want to go with you, only for the time no one should know who I am and where I am from."

Then Tristan went with these knights to the harbor of Smerdodug the infidel, where knights from the castle greeted them very graciously, parted them from their arms, and conducted them to the main palace. Smerdodug the infidel came to his wife's chamber and said to his daughter, "Take a lute and go to the black palace and entertain the knights, who have never heard your playing, until it is time to subject them to torture." Having taken the lute, she went to them and began to play very beautifully. The knights, who had never heard [115] Lord Tristan playing, thought that no one could play as wonderfully as this maiden. Tristan said, "Maiden, let me not overstep in what I wish to ask from you." She said, "You could not ask too much." He said, "Lend me your lute. I see that you play very beautifully; though we are the errant knights, some of us are skilled with the lute, too." She gave him the lute, and Tristan did not strike it; first he began to tune it, and having tuned it, he began to play very marvelously. The heart of every knight filled with joy, and the maiden drew near so that she could catch the tune. She said to herself, "If only I were so skillful, what would all the wealth of my father matter to me?" Tristan, sensing this, returned the lute to her. She did not want, however, to strike a chord now, but went to her father and said to him, "My father, if you plan to disgrace these knights, you might not live, since Lord Tristan is among them, who would not let himself be dishonored." Smerdodug the infidel said, "How would you recognize Lord

Tristan? Would not the knights who saw him have recognized him? But you, never having seen him before, how would you know him?" She said, "I know him for this reason: not one knight can play the lute as I can, only Tristan; there is among them one knight who plays the lute better than I." The infidel went to look himself, and coming to the knights, began to converse with them. Marvelous words indeed were coming from the knight whom his daughter had described to him; he recognized his valor and began to host them the best he knew how: he gave them a good room of their choice for the night.

The next morning he dismissed them, closed the town gate behind them, and lifted the drawbridge. One knight from the town said, "You seven knights, thank Lord Tristan for the peace in this harbor, for you were to be disgraced, but when Tristan is with you, you do not need to fear anything." Tristan himself said, "We would be glad if Lord Tristan were with us, because with him we would have been honored in whatever harbor we would land." The other knight said, "Indeed, you yourself are Tristan." Having left the town, Lord Tristan parted with them, and they thanked him, for they were honored in this harbor because of him.

Smerdodug the infidel said, "I have dishonored many knights; if I could even disgrace Tristan, [116] I would then accomplish my intent." He rode after Tristan, caught up with him, and said, "Most exalted knight, who is famous in all four directions, I am thinking of traveling throughout the world; I do not want to travel with any other knights or king, only with you, and I want to call myself your servant. I beg you, milord, come to my home, so that I may entrust my castle to a duke, and then I will go with you." Lord Tristan rode alone on his word. When he came to the harbor, his people came toward him with great joy, saying, "Exalted be your name — we are your servants." They parted him

from his arms, came out of the palace, and then began to confer among themselves. There was a knight from far away, and he said to Lord Tristan, "Knight, I do not know who you are and from where, but I see you as a valorous knight and a marvelous person; I am sorry for your disgrace; they are debating by what death they should destroy you." Tristan looked around the palace and did not see any helmet or sword or lance, and he was very distressed that he did not have his sword with him.

The knights of this town came into the palace and captured Tristan, and said, "By what death will we destroy him?" Smerdodug the infidel said, "Take him and decapitate him." That same day the brave knight Palamidezh Anuplitich with two swords and a black shield — the greatest foe of Tristan — came from the court of King Artiush. He said, "It is not right to cut off the head of such a valorous knight without a fight: defeat him in a fight in a knightly manner. I have seen one knight cutting the head off another one, but in a courtly manner; I never have seen it done as you intend." They responded to him, "We have seen that one thief defends another thief."

Palamidezh, seeing that both of them were defamed, leaped forth and handed a sword to Tristan; the other was left for himself. Tristan charged like a wild one and began to slash mightily right and left: whomever he saw with a lance in hand and helmet on his head — those he smashed. He went to the palace to kill the infidel, and saw him running very fast. Tristan caught up with him, but the infidel darted into his church, where it was not proper for a knight to enter with a sword. Tristan said, "Get outside, traitor, and defend yourself in a fight." The other said, "Know for sure that as long as you are there, I will not come out of here." Thus he would not get out as long as Tristan was in his castle. Tristan went away from that church, since he knew

the rule that it was not proper for him to remain there with a bare [117] sword. He went to Smerdodug's palace and gave thanks to Lord God for deliverance from a violent death. He said to Palamidezh, "Knight, praised be you by knights and ladies that you did not let me perish." Palamidezh said to Tristan, "Knight, for all the service that I rendered you, and I plan to serve you yet, give me one thing which I will ask of you." Tristan said, "Whatever you ask, I will give you, except Izhota." Palamidezh said, "Be my greatest enemy, as you were before." Tristan said, "Let us leave this, knight; you have done me a great honor, and I also want to think of your honor." Palamidezh said, "I do not want anything else but this." When Tristan saw that he must fight with Palamidezh, he said, "Knight, if I have to fight, I prefer my sword rather than this sword." They brought Lord Tristan his sword and the two knights put on their armor.

[The Fight of Tristan with Palamidezh]

They charged at each other very bravely, and began to chase each other like two lions. They were striking so hard that if their armor had not withstood it, both would have died. Palamidezh was overpowering Tristan, who protected himself with his sword and his shield, retreating under Palamidezh's strikes; then Tristan cast off his shield and took his sword in both hands and began to strike without protecting himself. Palamidezh waved his sword and his shield, falling on both knees, expecting death from Tristan's mighty strokes. The knights of that town said, "This knight defeated many knights, and now he is conquering the handsome Palamidezh." Tristan struck Palamidezh over his helmet, split the helmet, and gave him a deep head wound. Tristan said, "Knight, if you defeat me, other knights will not praise you, for you saw the fight I had with those knights; let us abandon this fight and set ourselves a term;

wherever either of us might be, let him present himself at that time by the church where the knights gather." They set the term of fifteen days. Tristan did so because his sharp sword longed to cause Palamidezh's violent death. They then parted from each other.

Palamidezh went to King Artiush's court and recounted this adventure, saying, "O knights of our good King Artiush, remember Tristan's valor, how he bestowed honor on many knights, but now he cannot do any good for himself." [118] King Artiush and his knights said, "Why so?" He said, "Smerdodug the infidel tricked him, lured him treacherously into his town and chained him; I fought with the infidel for him and was wounded in the head; because of this I could not fight any more. We have set a term of fifteen days to meet by that church — he named it; if I am able, I will fight for him, but if my wound does not heal by that time, then you should vindicate him." King Artiush and his knights were very saddened. Antsolot said, "How could this disgrace happen to my friend?" But then he became jovial with the king: "Smerdodug will come out and he shall exhibit little of his mastery with me."

When the term arrived, Lord Tristan came to that church and with him Izhota and Govornar. Over the door of that church there was a sign with these words: "There is going to be a fight between a lion and a dragon this day." Tristan said, "If I am a lion, Palamidezh is no dragon, and if I am a dragon, then Palamidezh is not a lion; I might be one of these, but Palamidezh will not be either one."

Then Lord Antsolot came in armor and thought it was Smerdodug the infidel waiting for him. And Tristan was of the belief that Palamidezh had come there. Antsolot charged swiftly and boldly, and Tristan was waiting for him fearlessly and skillfully.

[The Fight of Tristan and Antsolot]

When they struck, their lances splintered and they smashed together shoulder to shoulder and shield to shield; and the horses fell under both of them. Tristan fell off his horse, drew his sword, and said, "No one is superior with his lance on horseback, and no one with a sword on the ground." They leaped and began to chase each other like two lions, pouncing on each other like men who have no equal near or far. Antsolot was overpowering Tristan, who was covering himself with his shield and his sword, retreating under Antsolot's strokes; but when Lord Tristan began to smash very fiercely without repair, Antsolot was covering himself with his sword and his shield, falling on his knees under Tristan's mighty blows. Tristan's Govornar said, "What a marvel! Not one knight up to now has been found among the great knights of the court of King Artiush or from the Banak clan of King Ban from the far lands who could thus withstand my lord Tristan, only his dearest [119] friend Antsolot, son of Dolot, the king of Lokva." And Antsolot's governor<sup>34</sup> said, "I have traveled much over sea and land, but never have I seen any greater knight of King Artiush, or from other far lands, who could stand thus with his sword against my lord Antsolot — only Lord Tristan." Izhota, having heard these words, said: "O good knights, disarm yourselves, lest you become sorry about this." They took their helmets off and recognized each other, and began to embrace very tenderly; one was asking another what adventures had befallen him since they parted. Tristan was bragging and said, "As many as there were who were valorous knights, seeking their equals while traveling, or from the clan of King Ban of Banak, or from the French King Peremont, no one has been able to withstand me." Antsolot said, "Whoever worships our lord King Artiush, I am the crown of them all."

Thereafter said Antsolot, "Knight, put your helmet on your head and let us strike; we are only wounded now; if one cannot be superior over the other in any fight, better let one be killed by the other." Tristan said, "God have mercy on you, knight, who wants to fight! There is no knight in the world with whom I would rather have a fight than with you, for if you defeat me, I will be conquered by the greatest knight and my dearest friend, but if I defeat you, then I will be conquering the crown of all knights, the greatest knight and my dearest friend. But, knight, I wish I did not know you — I would then fight with you more gladly than I do knowing you." Izhota said, "Stay well, knights; you can be in good health in fifteen days, but leave this fight in peace." After Izhota reproached them, they departed, their wounds burning under their armor.

They met with a man-at-arms with black insignia, and those following him, who were carrying a dead knight on a cart. The man-at-arms said to Lord Tristan, "Knight, my lord Palamidezh agreed with you on his knightly word: in whatever state, wherever one might be, one ought to be present at that church at the given time. He would have preferred to be alive, but let him, even dead, uphold his word." Tristan said, "Because of this agreement, my dearest friend and I were almost killed by each other."

Lord Tristan and Antsolot then departed and met with a maiden [120] who was carrying a letter to Lord Tristan; she gave the letter to Tristan and he, having read it, laughed out loud. Antsolot said to him, "Why are you laughing?" He said, "I am laughing because the maiden is going among people, announcing: 'For seven years a tournament has been assembled at the court of the French King Peremont; whoever wants to make his sister or his daughter a queen should come without delay.' And we cannot go there, since

we are badly wounded." Antsolot said, "Knight, we might still go there; we can see what country's knight will win the tournament, to be able later to take a lance in hand and helmet on head against that knight." They came then to a village that was full of knights and maidens, and not one knight would offer them lodging, though night was falling upon them. They took their lances in hand, willing to find lodging with force: they left the village and saw ahead of them some good dwellings, but they were rundown; in front of them stood a maiden with a very small retinue. Tristan said, "Maiden, is there any way to stay with you?" She said, "There might be." She seized Tristan with one hand and Antsolot with the other and led them into a palace that was wonderfully decorated; then she went to another palace, and this one was decorated in a lordly manner. Said the maiden, "Good knights, this is the lodging for you, and the other for your horses." Tristan said, "As good as our lodging is, so is the one for our horses." She brought them two birds to eat — one roasted, the other boiled — wine and bread; and their horses were given something to eat. She said to them, "Knights, feast, for you have to think about me and about yourselves." They saddened since they were wounded, and she was soon urging them to make her a queen.

Thereafter Lord Tristan said, "Maiden, do not regard as odd what I will ask you." She said, "Knight, such is the custom here that there is no surprise in what a knight might ask, for if he knew, he would not ask." Tristan said, "This is a good custom; pray, tell me, what are these birds?" She said, "These are two sparrow hawks;<sup>35</sup> and I am the daughter of a king who fought against King Peremont, who defeated him, took his land and chased all his servants away, only leaving him with me and these hawks. I was feeding my father as best I could; what I would kill for lunch, was also for supper, and what was for supper would

be for breakfast, too." Lord Tristan said, [121] "Maiden, you took a heavy toll in killing for our sake what was supposed to nourish your father." She said, "Knights, I am not sorry that I killed two hawks for two falcons; I see you as valorous individuals and marvelous persons. Knights, you should think about me and about yourselves."

The next morning they rode off, not talking to each other. Antsolot said, "Knight, what are you thinking about, since you are not talking to me?" Tristan said, "And what are you thinking about?" He said to Tristan, "But you are older, it is proper for me to ask you." Tristan said, "I am thinking of how we could install this maiden as a queen." Antsolot said, "O my good knight Tristan, God reward you, for you are thinking of this maiden's honor because of her courtesy! We both have the same thought." They returned to the maiden and Lord Tristan said, "Maiden, get ready and array yourself as best you can; God willing, you might be queen today." She said, "Knight, so help me God, I have no better vestments, only what is on me and a crown of marvelous cypress flowers, brought from King Artiush's court." She took the crown and put it on her head, and they said, "This crown suits you well."

Thereafter they rode off with the maiden to the tournament and overtook a knight riding in full armor and following him a maiden dressed in very rich clothes, riding in a carriage. Tristan asked the servants who they were: "This is Knight Amodor, a servant of Lord Antsolot, given by the glorious Knight Tristan." Tristan said to him, "Tristan and Antsolot happen to be right here." When Amodor heard this, he jumped off his horse, took the helmet off his head, kneeled before them, and said, "My lords, where are you going?" Tristan said, "We are going to the tournament of your lord, King Peremont, so that we may install our sister as queen." He said to them, "By God, turn back so that I

can install my sister as queen; I know you do not have a sister." Tristan said, "Knight, if you cannot make us turn back with a lance, you cannot stop us with a request." Amodor said, "I know what Lord Tristan can accomplish with just a sword on the ground, let alone with a pole on horseback; I must turn back." Tristan said, "Amodor, it would be pleasing to us if you would go with us, but if you are turning back, our maiden has no good clothes; lend us your maiden's garments." Amodor said, "My lord, take whatever you need." [122] Lord Tristan took the clothes in which Amodor's sister was planning to become a queen and said to his maiden, "Dress yourself in these clothes." When they saw her in these garments, they liked her so much that if she had been their sister, they would not be shamed by her. Antsolot said to Tristan, "Knight, give me a boon that I will ask of you." Tristan said, "You are free to take anything except the fair Izhota." Antsolot said, "Be my master today, and I will be your man-at-arms." Tristan said, "No, knight, you are an older and greater knight than I — you be my lord, and I will be your man-at-arms." Antsolot said, "This cannot be."

The French tournament obeyed these rules: whichever knight came late, had to seat his maiden in a lower place. When they came to the tournament gate, where the turnstile was closed, the knights were already competing. Antsolot jumped over the turnstile and opened it, and Tristan with the maiden rode in. The ladies were sitting in two rows from the arena's gate up to the judges; Tristan sat his maiden in the highest place. When the son of King Peremont saw Tristan, he said, "I wish that this knight's maiden would become queen." When the king's daughter saw this maiden, she did not wish for her knight to win the tournament. Having marveled, they said, "This knight is willful; he came to the tournament late but sat his maiden higher

than all the rest." Tristan said to his maiden, "Hand me your crown." She rose, took off her crown and with her white hands put it on his bright helmet, saying, "Good knight, carry it honorably through the tournament, and having defended it, return it to me." The other maidens were laughing at her, saying, "O foolish maiden, how could he return this marvelous crown without winning! When he mounts his horse, our knights will mix his fair face and his bright helmet with the dust."

Divdan, who was more pleasing to the maidens than to the other knights, heard this, and he wanted to meet with Tristan. Lord Tristan mounted his horse, which Antsolot was holding by the stirrups. Divdan said, "Knight, beware of my stroke." Tristan said, "When you wish, let us have it."

[The Fight of Tristan with Divdan]

When they struck, Divdan fell to one side and his horse to the other. [123] The maidens were watching what was transpiring between them, but they could not discern that Tristan's feet moved in the stirrups, let alone that he moved in his saddle. Antsolot grabbed Divdan and threw him outside the arena and said, "I am telling every knight: my lord is riding freely through the tournament." The heart of their maiden, who saw this, was filled with joy, and she began to look confidently among the other maidens. The knights of the tournament, seeing that Tristan was riding bravely, were afraid of his stroke, and he executed fierce strokes right and left; whatever knight he came across, he put behind his horse, and Antsolot, grabbing them, would throw them across the arena, saying in a loud voice, "Knights, my lord is riding freely through the tournament." The judge said, "The knight with the valorous man-at-arms is winning the tournament."

There was a king of many years who said, "The knight who now rides freely through the tournament, is winning." At this time Iashchor Maderym, son of Domolot<sup>36</sup>, the king of Lokva, and Antsolot's brother, was riding freely through the tournament. Tristan's maiden said, "Where there is might, there is reason." The judges said, "The knight with the good man-at-arms is winning; it is no wonder that the knight is performing chivalrous deeds, but it is wonderful that his man-at-arms is displaying great chivalry, throwing the armed knights across the arena." But the king said to himself that Iashchor, who was then riding freely through the tournament, was winning. Tristan's maiden said, "O my God, we have a fine custom in our country: good people will not allow a buffoon to talk with them, but will give him a pipe to let him amuse them."

When Lord Tristan saw what the judges were talking about, and heard his maiden's bold speech, he said, "Knight, you who are riding freely through the tournament, guard yourself against my stroke." Iashchor said, "Let us see."

[The Fight of Tristan with Iashchor]

When they struck, Iashchor fell to one side, and his horse to the other side. Tristan said, "O brother of my dearest friend, I did not wish it to happen to you, but you are not defeated by any lesser knight, only by Tristan and Lord Antsolot." Iashchor jumped on his horse and joined them. The three knights, Tristan, Antsolot and Iashchor, rode across the tournament, while another adversary was not to be found. Whatever knight saw these three, he would cast the lance from his hands and the helmet from his head, not wanting to compete with them. [124]

Tristan said, "We, Tristan and Antsolot, pledge on our knightly word not to dismount until one horse falls — lest some knight is coming from afar and has not arrived; I will

await him." Antsolot saw a gardener, who was carrying some herbs, and said, "Knight, here comes a knight in a chivalrous manner; his horse's hooves clatter, and your horse is tired." He then turned around so quickly that his horse fell; Antsolot did this so that Tristan's word might be kept.

Said Tristan to his maiden, "O fair maiden, the ladies were laughing at us, but now you are the queen over all of them; you are free to send anyone wherever you wish." Here Lord Tristan called out for everyone at the tournament to hear: "Maiden, take a hawk on your arm, approach and sit on the gilded throne." And she sat and became the crowned queen. King Peremont, who had taken the estate from the father of this maiden, thus returned everything to him down to the last item, and he took this maiden to wed his son.

Having performed this act of chivalry, the two knights, Lord Tristan and Lord Antsolot, rode off to the virgin woods and came to a very big and rich town, which was inhabited by three brothers, great knights who in times past were the strongest knights in the world: their names were Librun, Igrun, and Marko;<sup>37</sup> two of them had died, but Librun was alive and had control of this town of Kesaryia, which was very ancient. This knight Librun, because of his advanced age, forty years ago had dismissed his horse and hung up his armor and his lance, so that it had become covered with moss. He had a very beautiful wife, whose name was Tsvytashia.

Tristan and Antsolot halted before the town and sent for this lady, saying, "Come out of the castle; one of us will make love with you." The lady, very distressed about this, came to Librun and said, "Sadness and disgrace await us: two knights have come and are standing at the gates; they

sent for me, saying, 'Come out of the town; one of us will make love with you.'" Knight Librun sent word to them, saying, "Knights, go with God." But they would not restrain themselves and sent again for the lady, ordering, "Come out of the castle." Librun sent word to them again, [125] saying, "Knights, go with God." They again sent for the lady. Knight Librun said, "Give me my armor, my lance and my horse." When he took his lance, it was covered with moss, so that they had to wrap it with hand towels. He armed himself, mounted his horse and came out to them at the meadow, and said to them, "Thrust, knights!" They discussed among themselves who wanted to go first, and Antsolot desired this. Said Librun, "On my pledge, I do not want to fight one, but both of you together, since I am the first knight among knights."

#### [The Fight of Librun with Tristan and Antsolot]

They both charged at him and struck him equally, so that their lances broke into many pieces. Librun grabbed them from their horses, one with one hand, the other with the other hand, and put them in opposite directions athwart his horse in front of him and patted each one on the jaw with his hand and then said, "Go with God; you are both good knights." They left on the one hand very saddened, and on the other hand, laughing. They rode through a leafy forest and met a knight who was riding very magnificently. They said to him, "Knight, do not leave without fighting with us." He said, "I do not know how to fight." They said, "We will take away your horse." He said, "But I really do not know how." They took away his horse and his arms; then he said, "If it cannot be otherwise, give me my horse and arms," and he mounted his horse.

#### [The Fight of Tristan and Antsolot with Galets]

Antsolot rode against the knight and he defeated Antsolot; Tristan was very sorry; he charged against the knight

very promptly. When they clashed, the straps on Tristan's saddle broke and he fell to the ground; while falling, he snatched his sword from the sheath and stood on his feet as if immovable. The knight recognized Tristan angrily and shouted, "I am Galets Antsolotovich." Tristan and Antsolot were very joyous about it, but Galets was very sorry that he had defeated his father and Tristan; with great sorrow, he took the monastic vow, and later there was no news to be heard, whether he was [126] alive or dead.

Tristan and Antsolot rode to King Artiush's court, and when they arrived, the king received them with great joy. Thereafter Lord Tristan took leave of King Artiush, and the king dismissed him in great glory and with many gifts. All the lords and good people sent him off with greetings and courtesy.

Then Tristan and Izhota returned to Kornovalia to King Marko. When they came, Tristan presented Izhota to Marko and said, "King, you should thank me for her, for I conquered her for you with my sword for the second time." King Marko thanked him, saying, "My dear nephew Tristan, you did much good; I am yours and all that I have is yours to do with as you wish" Tristan knelt and gave praise to the Lord God and then thanked King Marko very humbly. Thus, the whole of Kornovalia was together, and there was no one, old or young, who would not play or dance and rejoice. They were as happy as if God Himself had come to them, since they were even more joyful than when he had first brought Izhota from Orlendea. When Izhota found out Braginia's loyalty and truthfulness, she bestowed on her kindness even greater than before. The king was very joyful as well as all his court. The king gave the keys of his kingdom to Tristan and said, "Nephew, you are free to govern over my kingdom, for I find you faithful, since you uphold loyalty and truthfulness." Tristan was honored here by King

Marko and by all good people as if he were the king himself. Then Kornovalia came to be feared by all lands and all kingdoms because of Lord Tristan.

At a later time, it was heard that a tournament was being assembled in the Pozaransk Land by the town of Barokh<sup>38</sup>. It was being called by a maiden named Izhota of the White Hands, daughter of a king; so Lord Tristan departed there. When he came to the tournament, there were many knights from many lands; one knight took [127] one side of the tournament and Lord Tristan the other. Then Tristan shouted to the knight with the insignia of a lion with canine teeth, "Come and meet me!"

#### [The Fight of Tristan with Klimberko]<sup>39</sup>

They struck so mightily and ferociously that Klimberko broke his lance into many pieces. Tristan struck him with all the might that he had in him. Klimberko fell off the horse to the ground and Tristan charged at him. Klimberko cried out, "Knight, you have won this fight." Tristan remounted his horse and rode through the tournament performing great marvels right and left; no one dared to face him openly, for he defeated fifteen dubbed knights and eighteen vassals. Tristan called out, "If someone is yet willing, let him get ready to fight." One knight named Erdin, the brother of Izhota of the White Hands, who was very valorous, responded by calling out, "Knight, wait for me." Tristan awaited him.

#### [The Fight of Tristan with Erdin]

When they struck, they broke their lances and rammed with their shields and shoulders, and fell down with their horses, but rose up and began lashing like two lions. Tristan was very skillful and though his wounds opened from the many blows, yet he did not care about it, and to the end

struck Erdin with all his might, until Erdin fell dead.

Having accomplished this knightly deed, Lord Tristan went to the church abbey. At that time a letter from the fair Izhota came to him, saying, "My lord, just as a fish cannot live without water, I cannot live without you." From great sadness and from his wounds Tristan fainted; it was altogether wondrous how he could endure such wounds, for he was bleeding very much. So he sent this note to King Marko: "My lord uncle, I cannot ride or endure to be driven; since I have served you well and you might have need of me, send me Queen Izhota, to heal me, for she knows a good cure. I am lying in the Pozaransk Land at the Barokh Town."

King Marko graciously let Izhota go, and she left with a very joyful heart; after arriving, she began healing him as best she could. I do not know whether he recovered from those wounds or died. This is all that is written about him.

## Textual notes

1. The form *Tristan* will be used subsequently throughout the text.
2. Also *Galiush* later in the text = La Gaule.
3. Also *Antsalót*, *Ontsalót*, *Ontsolót*; "a" and the unstressed "o" are used interchangeably in Old Byelorussian.
4. Ambiguous here: in the original "vedro," read by many as *pail*. Corruption of Byelorussian "vetrilo," or Serbo-croatian *Jedro* = sail?
5. Two weeks or more in other *Tristan* texts.
6. Insert from margin.
7. *Ianish* from *Lokva* is probably a mistake. In *Le Romane de Tristan* (Curtis §324), Aguisanz d'Escose; in *Tristano Veneto*, Gans de Scocia; later in the text (p. 35), a *[S]goski* king, presumably the same king, is mentioned, meaning Scottish.
8. The kings are all confused here. Indeed, the King of the Hundred Knights served Prince Galiot, but it certainly was not King Arthur of Longres. Also unclear here is the identity of the owner of the Western Islands (Lointaines Isles?).
9. He is asking here about Tristan.
10. In fact, *uncle*. In the Byelorussian tradition relatives are often given closer kinship: cousins become brothers and sisters, uncles might be called fathers, and very distant relatives are often simply called uncles and aunts.
11. Other *Tristan* versions do not give the servant's name; he is called a servant or squire (*Tavola Ritonda*); a relative of the king (*Roman de Tristan*); a relative of the queen (*Tristano Veneto*). *Kushyn* could also be a corruption of "kuzyn" = cousin.
12. Father, i. e., God. In *Roman de Tristan* (Curtis §354): "com se Diex meismes fust descenduz leanz."
13. Meaning of "Magush" is unclear. In other *Tristan* versions he is called "*le nain*," the dwarf. In *BT*, Magush could be a proper name, as we chose to interpret it; it could also mean "magician," which is certainly not appropriate in this context.
14. There might be a word or two lacking in this sentence in the Byelorussian text, since one observes a grammatically false concordance.