

PART 2

"I shall right the wrong that is being done to your sister, my lady," said Gareth, catching up with Lynette.

"Don't be ridiculous! You are just a kitchen boy," she replied, in scorn. "I can smell the kitchen grease from here."

But Gareth would not be deterred from his quest.

"Speak to me as you will," he said, "but the king has entrusted me with the task of defending your sister's honour, and I will not rest until I have done so."

"You talk like a knight ..." said Lady Lynette, "... but you will always be a kitchen boy to me."

As they galloped through a wood, a man ran up to them.

"Help!" he cried. "They are drowning my lord!"



Gareth raced ahead to a river, where he found six men trying to hold a seventh under water.

"Leave him be!" roared the boy, swinging at them with his sword.

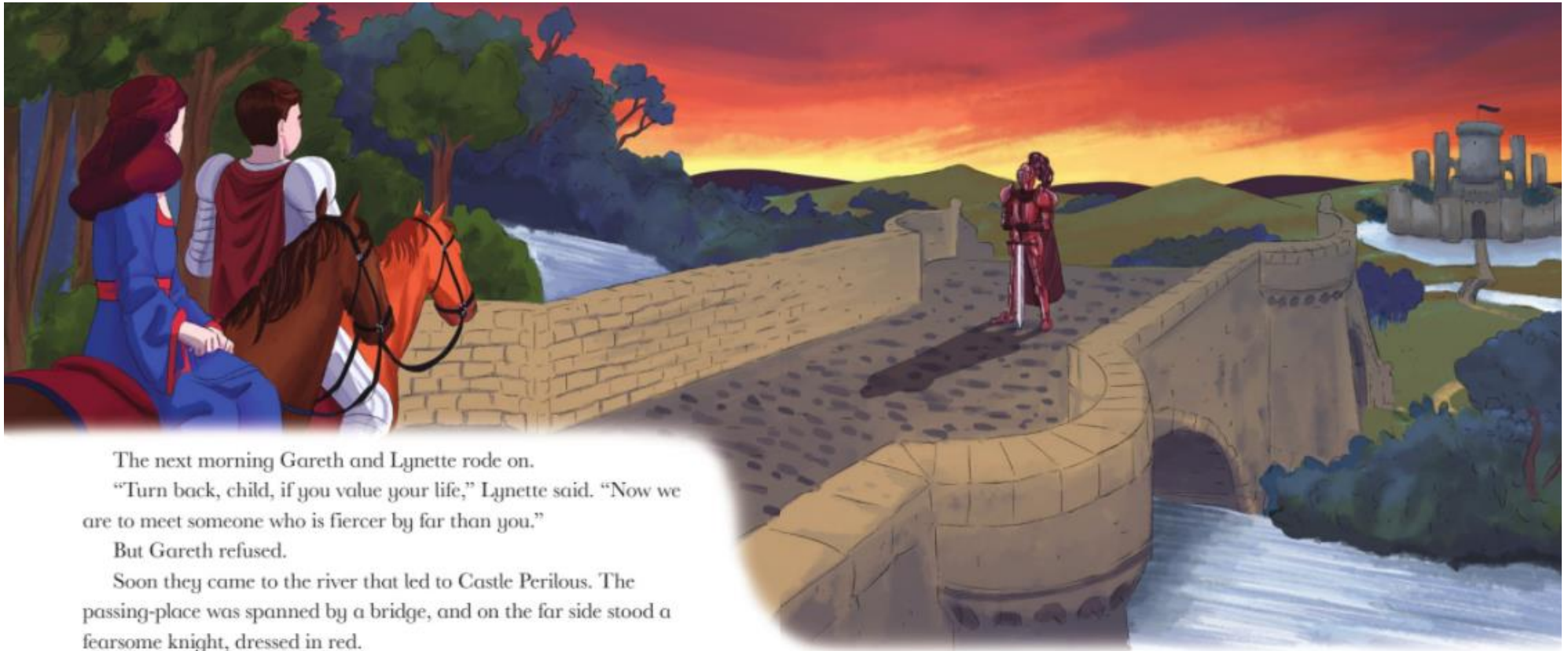
"I thank you from the bottom of my heart," said the man Gareth had saved, after the others had fled in fear. "I am lord of the castle yonder. Stay a night, and I shall prepare a feast in your honour."



When the guests sat down to eat, Lynette refused to take her seat next to Gareth.

"He is nothing but a lowly kitchen boy," she scowled. "I will not sit with him!"

So the lord took Gareth to another table, and sat with him there. "I care not if you come from a humble abode," he told him. "You are the bravest of the brave, and I owe you my life!"



The next morning Gareth and Lynette rode on.

"Turn back, child, if you value your life," Lynette said. "Now we are to meet someone who is fiercer by far than you."

But Gareth refused.

Soon they came to the river that led to Castle Perilous. The passing-place was spanned by a bridge, and on the far side stood a fearsome knight, dressed in red.

"Who goes there?" roared the Red Knight, over the rushing waters.

"Lynette!" cried the young woman.

"And King Arthur's bravest knight, come to defeat me, I see," sneered the knight.

"I may be small, but I am tough!" shouted Gareth, in return.

The Red Knight only laughed, and Lady Lynette hid her head in shame.

"You are nothing but a kitchen boy," said the knight. "I can smell the fat and onions on you from here. Be gone, child, or I shall end your days before they are barely begun."

Gareth rushed at him, fighting so bravely that his enemy was soon overcome.

"Be gone yourself, to Arthur's Court, you great bully!" cried the boy. "Say that his kitchen lad sent you!"

Without a word, Lady Lynette rode on.

When Gareth caught up with her, she surprised him with her words.

"Young man," she said, mocking him no longer. "I do not smell the kitchen grease so much as I did."

As they approached the next bridge over the river she said, "Here we will find the brother of the previous knight. He is stronger by far, so I suggest you turn back, if you know what is good for you."

Again, Gareth refused.

From across the bridge rode a Golden Knight, his armour glinting in the sun.

They fought for an hour but Gareth was the stronger, and eventually the knight fell from his horse, crying out for mercy.

"Go to Arthur's Court and beg for mercy there!" ordered Gareth.

"You are braver than I thought, boy," said Lynette, as they rode, "but the Silver Knight is braver by far."

There he stood, at the third bridge, awaiting them.

The two charged at one another, snapping their lances on each other's shields. Leaping from their horses, they attacked each

other with swords but Gareth could not pierce the other's toughened armour. Again he tried and again he failed, and he was weakening and fearing defeat when a voice rang clear and true.

"Fight, my bravest one!" cried Lady Lynette. "You are a kitchen boy no longer, but a fearsome knight of King Arthur!"

With that, Gareth found hidden strength and thrust a mighty blow, which cast the Silver Knight into the raging waters.

"Lead on, my lady," he said, when his breath was recovered.



But Lynette would not. "No," she said. "From now on I shall address you as Sir Gareth for you are already a knight to me. Now we shall ride side by side."





They rode until dusk, when they came into sight of Castle Perilous. There stood a knight, all dressed in black.

Sir Gareth, preparing himself for mortal battle, rushed at the Black Knight, but his opponent cried out in fear.

“Have mercy!” he cried, tearing off his armour. “I am only a child! My brothers forced me to dress up as a knight to look like there were four of us.”

Sir Gareth took pity on him, for he knew what it was like to be mocked.

Lady Lyonette was delighted to see them, and overjoyed that she was at long last free from captivity.

She threw a great feast in celebration, and this time Sir Gareth and Lynette sat side by side, with all the knights that Sir Gareth had defeated covering on a lower table.

Gareth and Lynette became the very best of friends and Gareth told her that he was really the son of the King and Queen of Orkney.

In time, they were married, and they lived out their lives with King Arthur in Camelot.

