

Sir Amadace

anon

a fifteenth century ghost story in Middle English verse

Translated and retold in Modern English prose

by

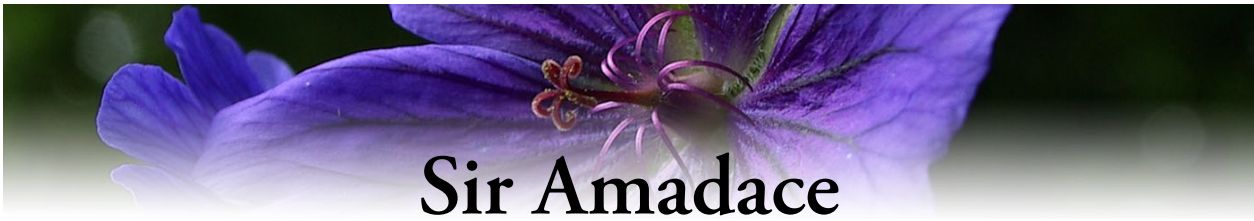
Richard Scott-Robinson

This tale has been translated and retold from: Edward E Foster, 1997. Amis and Amiloun, Robert of Cisyle, and Sir Amadace. Medieval Institute Publications. TEAMS Middle English texts. Story taken from one of two surviving manuscript copies: Princeton University Libraries, Robert H Taylor Collection MS Ireland Blackburn.

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Sir Amadace

anon
fifteenth century

Sir Amadace has been inspecting his household accounts. Things are pretty dire...

Thenne the knyght and the stuard fre · Thay casten there houe hit best myghte be · Bothe be ferre and nere
– Then the knight and his steward discussed how things stood, the balance of the accounts and how many people the estate owed money to, both immediately and in the longer term. ‘Sir,’ said the steward, ‘you owe more than you will be able to raise from the proceeds of your land in the next seven years! Whoever is most able and willing to allow you this favour, ask them for more time to pay. And you must drastically reduce your household expenses as a matter of urgency. Dismiss most of your retainers. Keep only one in every ten of them, although it may break your heart to do so.’

‘But this will go on for years!’ objected Sir Amadace. ‘I will have nothing to live on but fresh air and the charity of my creditors. I will spend my days here in the manor house in which I was born, a laughing stock. I am a nobleman! Gentlemen who have invited me into their manors and entertained me and been my good friends will soon shun me. My creditors could become fearful that they will never see their money again, and then I might come to a violent end! No. I will take a different route. I shall pursue another course. It is better to speak of sorrow than to experience it. But good steward, you are so dear to me, don’t let anyone know of this great misfortune that has fallen upon my affairs. Let us sort it out, just you and I. For seven years, place my estates as security against the debts that I owe. Let my creditors have all the income from them. And once these arrangements are in place, escape with me! For I intend to flee the country while I still have a little gold and silver in my purse, and be out of debt entirely!’

‘Furthermore, I intend to go out in a blaze of glory! For a little while more, I shall live more lavishly and more generosity than ever before. Organise things if you will. I wish to give some fine gifts to knights and squires and distribute alms to the poor. Some men might otherwise guess that I am in financial difficulty, and some of these may be more than happy that this should be the case, which will be no help to my plans in the slightest. The man has not yet been born who is so well loved that he could get away with anything, if every man’s story was told.’

So Sir Amadace, as he planned, chose a day to be the last that anybody in the district would see of him for a long while. And he gave some fine and expensive gifts to many knights and squires before he went – horses, falcons and hunting dogs. Then he said farewell and on the appointed day, taking no more than forty pounds with him, he set off. He rode as fast as he could, and beyond a great forest, close to a city, he came upon a chapel made of wood and stone. Inside he could see some candles burning. He ordered his boy to go into the building to see what the lights were there for: ‘And see that you come back to me with the truth!’

The tale of Sir Amadace is a medieval ghost story, but it is also a romance and possibly even a Breton lai. The tale follows a noble hero, not from his birth but during a particular period in his life, as he is carried around, like Sir Cleges, on the Wheel of Fortune, loses what he once possessed and regains it at last. But at the very bottom of this cycle, unlike Sir Isumbras who becomes a blacksmith, Sir Orfeo who roams a forest as a derelict, Sir Cleges who eats some magic fruit, the noble hero of Octavian who becomes a merchant’s son, the lady Emaré who is carried in a mysterious boat to a foreign land where she becomes someone else, or William of Palerne who passes himself off as a bear and then a deer, Sir Amadace enters a haunted Otherworld and is visited, perhaps unsurprisingly, by a ghost.

Sir Amadace is found in two manuscripts of the fifteenth century: the story below is retold from a TEAMS transcription of the tale in MS Ireland Blackburn in the Robert H Taylor Collection, Princeton University Libraries, dating to 1450–60.

The boy did as he was told, but there was such a stink inside the building that he could stay only for a few moments. He stood by the chapel door with his hood over his nose and looked through the glass of a window. Inside he could see a coffin standing on a trestle. Two candles were burning and a woman was sitting beside them. Lord! She looked miserable! He couldn't face the thought of going inside to ask her anything, so he went straight back to Sir Amadace to tell him what he had seen.

'I have looked inside the chapel,' he said, 'and I saw a very peculiar thing. It makes my heart feel as heavy as lead to think of it. There is an open coffin in there with two candles near it and a woman sitting alone beside it. God, she looks as though she's received some bad news! And there's such a stink from the coffin that I've never smelt anything like it. My pony wouldn't stay there, any longer than I could, and I'm sure I've caught something fatal just by being there.'



Sir Amadace dismissed the boy and turned to the young man who was his squire. 'Go inside and find out who she is,' he instructed.

The squire went to the chapel door and was filled with great pity for the woman. But the boy was right, the smell was so nauseating that he could stay for only a few moments. He couldn't face the thought of going in. He had to get away.

'My lord,' he said to Sir Amadace when he returned. 'By your leave, please don't take this badly but there is *no way* that I am going inside that chapel! Sir, there is a bier and two can-

dles there, a woman sitting alone, moaning and wringing her hands and calling upon Christ to tell her how long she must remain there. 'How can this happen!' she cries as she watches the maggots crawling around inside that putrefying body that's lying beside her. 'I shall rather die than leave you, my love,' she wails.'

Sir Amadace spurred his horse towards the chapel and quickly dismounted. As his squire and the boy had warned him, he couldn't imagine having smelt such a dreadful stink before, in all his life. But he opened the door and entered the chapel. 'Lady, God be with you,' he said.

'Sir, you are welcome,' she replied, and offered her hand to his.

'Lady, why do you sit here, watching over a dead body alone at night?

'Sir,' she replied, 'I have no other choice. Nobody else will do it and I was his wife.'

'But it is still not right,' said Sir Amadace. 'You both place yourselves in a very perilous position. Who was he when he was alive?'

'Sir, he was a merchant in the city nearby. A very wealthy man with reliable sources of income; three hundred pounds of minted coins a year. And yet he lies here a debtor.'

'By the Cross of Jesus!' exclaimed Sir Amadace. 'How did he spend so much?'

'Sir, by bestowing gifts upon noblemen and councillors and upon other great men who were his friends, by putting on banquets and arranging entertainments for these occasions, and he would distribute alms to the poor every day. He would never say no to anybody who was in the slightest way inclined to accept his generosity. But he took this to excess. Yes, he acted like a fool. He clothed more men against the winter snow than would a knight! He was over-generous with his food. The women in his hall were given costly gowns to wear and if I warned him that he was spending too much he would reply: 'I spend only what God has seen fit to give to me in the first place,' and laugh my words away. But he had borrowed so much that I dare not tell you, for shame, what he now owes.'

'And then death took him. Death parted us and left me with all this sorrow. When our neighbours heard that he was ill, they came as quickly as they could and asked to be repaid. All that we possessed, horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, were driven off or taken away by cart. I gave my own possessions, those I had had before I married him, and all my own money. Lord! We owed much more even than this would cover!

'When I had given to his creditors all that I could, he still owed thirty pounds to a merchant who was far away on business but who soon turned up when he learned that my husband was dead. When he understood that there was nothing left in the estate to repay his debt, he came angrily to me like a wounded bear, forbidding my husband's burial. He said dogs should tear his body to pieces and chew his bones in the long grass! So I have been sitting here for sixteen weeks, guarding this body and keeping the candles burning. And by Mary, I shall stay here until death takes me also.'

Sir Amadace asked the name of this merchant who was behaving so abominably. She told him. 'By God who will deliver us from all harm,' exclaimed Sir Amadace, 'comfort yourself, madam, and so, I assure you, shall he! Good night to you, lady!'

Sir Amadace leapt upon his horse, scarcely able to stop himself from crying. 'The man who lies in that chapel,' he said, 'might very well be related to me, for we have done exactly the same thing, both of us!'

Sir Amadace told the man who looked after his baggage horse what the merchant was demanding. 'I will dine with him tonight, by God! Go and prepare a fine meal, venison if you can get it, or pheasant, and get the right herbs and spices, however much they cost.'

The man went along to the dead merchant's house and made arrangements for dinner. Sir Amadace arrived a little later and dismounted from his steed, full of trepidation. He went into a room and changed all his clothes. There were torches burning everywhere. Then he sent his young squire to seek out the merchant and his wife and invite them to dine with him that night, at his own expense.

The squire found the merchant and told him all that Sir Amadace had asked him to say. 'And by Jesus, son of Mary,' said the squire, 'my lord is not used to a refusal!' There was agreement and good feeling all round. When the dinner was nearly ready, boards were quickly placed upon trestles and the merchant sat at the high table. Sir Amadace sat with him and they conversed pleasantly together, but his thoughts were always with the dead body that lay on the bier in the chapel.

'This evening, as I made my way here,' he said at last, 'I saw a sight that haunts me still, in a chapel beside a path. There is a dead body inside, lying upon a bier and a distraught woman sits beside it, wailing.'

'Indeed,' replied the merchant. 'May God sent that corpse all the harm in the world, and all wasters like him! He has wronged me dreadfully. He lies there with my thirty pounds of silver and that is the last that I shall ever see of it, I should imagine.'

'Be guided by a better wisdom!' exclaimed Sir Amadace. 'Christ forgave those who oppressed him and don't you think it would be to your merit to do the same? Reflect on how much better Christ has furnished your life with comfort and wealth than he did his own. Let the body be buried!'

'By Jesus!' swore the merchant. 'That body shall never go into the ground, not until his wife is dead as



well and their bones are being gnawed by hungry dogs in the long grass somewhere! Not unless I have my silver back!

When Sir Amadace heard this oath and saw how things stood, he called his steward to him and said: 'Quickly go and fetch me thirty pounds in coin.'



The steward thought that this was a very bad idea indeed, but he couldn't disobey his master – listen, this is important! Sir Amadace paid the merchant thirty pounds in ready coin as though it was his own debt and then asked for the wine to be served. 'Be content now,' he urged the merchant. 'Does he owe you any more?'

'No, sir, may your life be a happy one, this is what he owed me.'

'Then I shall provide another ten pounds to give him the honour that he deserves and to see that he gets a decent burial. I shall hire priests and choristers to give him a full Christian sendoff and you shall be there to witness it. Please tell all the

priests and monks and abbots in the city that I would like them all to dine at my expense tomorrow. Make sure that you organise the food properly.'

When dawn broke the next morning, all the bells were rung and every religious man in the city made his way to the chapel where the stinking body lay, clutching many a scented flower! Thirty priests sung for the deceased and Sir Amadace gave a ring at every Mass. When the service was concluded, he invited everybody to join him for a farewell meal. The merchant climbed onto the base of a pillar and many people gathered around him to hear what he had to say: 'Sirs,' he cried. 'The corpse we have just buried was lying here for a while, you all know the circumstances surrounding it. But a noble knight has arrived and repaid everything that the man owed to me. And he has summoned from his chests the further sum of ten pounds for this burial, and has given many fine rings, as you have seen. And on his behalf I would like to invite you all now to join him in some refreshment.'

They did as the merchant invited them to, and sampled some delicious foods and beverages and ate and drank while Sir Amadace went to feed the poor, for their needs were close to his heart. And when the meal was over, Sir Amadace took his leave of everybody in the hall, with as much jollity as he could feign. And is it any wonder if he is sad? In all honesty, his money is now all spent. Sir Amadace told them that he was a nobleman and a worthy gentleman, so they saddled his steed and gave things to the driver of his baggage-horse as though Sir Amadace was an esteemed guest, although now he had nothing. Sir Amadace said goodbye to them all and went on his way.

When Sir Amadace had gone, everybody gave their opinions on what they had just seen. Some said he must have obtained his wealth very easily to be so eager to get rid of it so freely, others that he must have had a penny or two to begin with, born into a family where money means nothing. Nobody guessed at the truth. How they judged this noble knight – when in reality he had spent everything that he possessed. But they had no idea that this was the case.

Sir Amadace travelled six miles from the city when he came to a place where the path he was following crossed another. Stopping, he addressed the boy, his steward, his squire and the driver of his baggage-horse. 'Good sirs, do not take this the wrong way but we must now say goodbye to one another. You all know how it is. I could only retain you if I had gold and silver in my coffers, and there is none left. This is just a bare fact of life.'

Even the hardest-hearted of them could not refrain from weeping.

'Don't worry,' confided Sir Amadace. 'You will find new masters in no time, all of you, you are all good

men and worthy fellows to have around. And God may yet decree that I shall recover from this woe and find prosperity once again. You may yet see me a merry man! And then I will welcome you all back again, you and many others. The worst of these horses is worth ten pounds. Keep the one you are sitting upon now, along with its saddle, bridle and any other gear that it is carrying. And if it was four times as much I would still give it to you, by Saint John! God shall make fine men of you all. But now, I must commend you to Christ.'

They all wept together. Then they parted.

When all his men had ridden away, Sir Amadace was completely alone and he felt his spirits sinking to new depths. His way led through a forest and after a short while he stopped, dismounted and uttered a mournful cry of anguish as he thought of all the high castles, towns and broad lands that he had had to abandon, mortgage, relinquish, flee from, leave behind, discard. He was left with nothing. Sir Amadace was bewildered and felt completely lost. 'A man without wealth,' he said to himself, 'has nothing to hope for. I had three hundred pounds of rent, I was known as a great lord and had a fine reputation. Wise men sit snugly at home while fools



wander about in the cold with nowhere to go, and God knows, I have nowhere to go now. But Jesus, as you shed your precious blood for me and claimed possession of the world through your Passion, let me never return to a place where I shall be recognised as having once been a knight, unless I can still claim that rank! And let me be able to summon once more all those who have been forced to leave my service and all those who have ever helped me in any way. Or else, dear Lord, let me quickly die. Lord that would be good! Because of my stupidity I have been expelled from this land as a vagrant, a waif, and my friends are now my enemies. I am ready to kill myself'

So floated his thoughts, as he stared death in the face. 'Jesus,' he exclaimed. 'Send me some comfort quickly! And if you send me this comfort,' he added, 'I shall willingly use it to help those who are more needy than I.'

As he went through the forest, with his thoughts in such a turmoil of regret, despair and disorientation, he was certain that nobody could hear him. There was nobody around. But then a rider suddenly appeared, startling Sir Amadace out of his wits. The man spoke to him. His horse was as white as milk, and so was he! All his clothes were white! This figure had the bearing of a knight and although Sir Amadace's thoughts were upon his dire situation, he did not forget his courtesy and greeted the man as he should.

'What man is this?' replied the white knight. 'Tell me who this is, lamenting so?'

'No, I won't,' replied Sir Amadace.

'Stop!' exclaimed the white knight. 'I have been listening to you for quite a while now. You shouldn't complain in this way. God can make men fall and rise, but his help is always near at hand. Our possessions are never ours by right, they are always on loan. Sometimes men have them, sometimes not. You are no different from anyone else in this regard. Think of Christ who died on the cross and shed his precious blood for us, for you and for all mankind. A man can conduct himself properly in every way and to every degree, but his future wellbeing is still not guaranteed. Yet this good man may find another courteous man who is able to help him, so don't regret anything that you have achieved, and remember that he who made the sun and the moon holds everything in his hand. Would you love the person who could bring happiness back into your life? – love him above all others? For nearby lives a king of royal blood who has a young daughter whom he loves as much as his own life. And you are one of the finest knights that I have ever seen! No man shall marry this girl, her father has vowed, unless her suitor has proved himself to be the finest warrior in the land and the best at jousting. You could be that man!

You will surpass everybody when you arrive, in dress and in fighting. Great lords will bow beneath your blows, and see that you give no quarter! You shall say that your men have all been drowned at sea in a storm. Be free with your money. Gather together a large entourage. I will provide everything you need, so be generous in what you give. Gather ten thousand around you if you wish! I shall pay! You shall win great honour – farms, forests, towns and castles – and you will marry the king's daughter! Then I will come to see you again, when you are in the countryside with your friends, perhaps. I will come to



the manor where you are living, for we must agree a contract before we part. You must agree that everything you gain is to be shared equally between us.'

'If you have such power, through the grace of God, to help me in this way,' replied Sir Amadace, 'you will find me true and honest. I am always fair in my dealings and I can promise you that everything will be divided equally between us.'

'Then farewell, Sir Amadace! If you apply yourself to this with God's grace, it will happen.'

'Have a good day!' called back Sir Amadace. 'You will find me, if God allows it, as true a man as you can find anywhere!'

Now as Sir Amadace walked along a seashore, he came upon the debris from a recent wreck. The amount and the quality of the things that were strewn all about was amazing! He found the bodies of knights dressed in miniver and ermine, white horses, grey steeds and all sorts of wealth, just cast up onto the beach and in the rockpools. There were chests and coffers full of gold coins, and nobody seemed to have been there yet to remove any of it. Sir Amadace clothed himself in a fine robe of cloth-of-gold that he found, and the horse he chose was the best that had ever ridden upon a jousting field. With the aid of this fine steed he was able to defend the treasure that was lying there upon the shore against every knight who came against him – and soon there were many of these! Word of this reached the king and he quickly ordered a tournament to be arranged. Then he turned to his daughter: 'There seems to be a fine knight arrived on our shores,' he observed, with a smile.

The king chose a messenger, his own squire, and gave him three knights to accompany him. 'Go and find out who this knight is,' he said. 'Say that his property shall be attended to as he instructs, on this he has my word. Go to that stretch of sand and tell him that he is welcome, if he comes in peace.'

The messengers walked along the beach, came to where Sir Amadace was standing and took him by the hand. 'Our lord the king has sent us,' they said. 'He wants to know what you are doing here, if it pleases you to tell us. He says that your property shall be attended to according to your own wishes, on this you have his word. Instruct the king's servants however you desire, and they will do as you ask.'

'I am a mighty prince,' replied Sir Amadace. 'I had intended to come here on a visit. My ship was laden with wine and flour, horses and armour, and amongst my retinue were many knights in all their finery. But a fierce storm overtook us and my magnificent ship has been smashed to pieces, as you can see! Although I can recover enough gold to spend, I have lost every single one of my men.'

Then Sir Amadace was led into the king's castle and the king was told everything. 'You are welcome,' he said, when Sir Amadace was brought before him. 'Be in good spirits, for judging from the severity of the storm you have been in, you have Jesus Christ to thank that anything has survived at all! And I have never before seen a man standing before me who looked so worthy of my love as you do.'

The king ordered that a royal pronouncement should be made throughout the city, to the effect that every knight, squire, yeoman or youth who was in any way in need of finding a nobleman to serve, each according to his own degree, should go to Sir Amadace who had lost all his men at sea. He would reward them with as much, or even more, than any other lord, if they would join him.

When gentlemen heard this cry, they quickly came in droves! And by this time, the tournament had been widely announced. Sir Amadace had twice as many men around him than anybody else when the time for the jousting arrived. He won a great deal of honour at this tournament, farms and forests, castles, towns and fine cities, in a hundred districts and more. Half of these he gave to the king, and the other half he kept for himself, to share with the white knight when he appeared.

When the jousting was all over, the knights retired to their pavilions to be unlaced from their armour. The king caught up with Sir Amadace and said: 'Thank you, Sir knight! Thank you!' Then the king's lovely daughter unlaced Sir Amadace from his armour and they both went off together to the dining hall. Each was delighted to be in the another's company and such love began to grow between them that it would be enough to last them for the rest of their lives. And when they had eaten, the king took Sir Amadace by the hand and said: 'Sir, in all truth, I must tell you that my daughter is my heir, and she is your prize. If you are a man who would wish to be married, then I give her to you. And I shall give you half of my kingdom to rule over as well, while I live. And all of it when I die.'



'Thank you, Sir,' said Sir Amadace. And it was not long afterwards that Sir Amadace found himself on his way to the church to be married. There was gold given away in plenty then, along the route that they took, and silver coins, many pounds of silver coins! And afterwards, all the gentlemen and their ladies were invited into the royal hall to dine.

Sir Amadace has recovered from all his misery! May God lend us the grace to share in his fortune.

A royal feast was placed before all the guests. Sir Amadace had married the king's daughter, and the feasting and the celebrations lasted for a fortnight. There was a lot of jousting, I can tell you! For the rest of the year Sir Amadace and his new wife laughed and played together and enjoyed one another's company when they were alone, so much so that soon a little boy was born to them, much to their joy. But listen, now, my lords and ladies, for I shall speak of a great drama that happened as they were dining in their hall one day; for the white knight appeared again.

He came in such Otherworldly attire that he looked just like an angel, clothed all in white! At the main entrance to the hall he addressed the porter: 'Go and deliver a message to your master for me, as quickly as you can. And if he asks you who I am or which country I am from, tell him that I am clothed all in white. Say that we know each other well, that he has seen me before. He will know what you are talking about.'

The porter went into the hall and found his lord sitting at his meal. Approaching him courteously he said: 'Lord, outside is the most distinguished-looking knight I have ever seen in all my grown days! I cannot remember seeing a man like him. His steed is a white as milk and so are all his clothes. He says that you know each other and I am sure that you must, for he has come alone.'

'Has he arrived, my own true friend who is so dear to me!' exclaimed Sir Amadace at once. 'I command you, everybody, tend to his every need, wait upon him hand and foot and serve him as you would me.'

Then Sir Amadace went to meet the white knight, accompanied by his beautiful wife; for her husband's friends were her own friends as well. She did as was required of her and may happiness come to all women who show such loyalty. But who should take his horse to the stables? This knight had neither

squire, yeoman nor boy with him. Sir Amadace was on the point of taking the horse by the bridle himself and leading it into the hall when the white knight stopped him: 'I shall neither eat nor drink,' he said, 'for I do not intend to stay, by Christ who bought me with His blood. Just take everything that you have gained so far and split it in two! Give me my half and I shall go.'



'For God's love! You must be joking!' replied Sir Amadace. 'Even if we had a fortnight, I couldn't divide and allocate between us all the lands that I rule over now! They are too extensive and too widely spread apart. Stay with us here, I implore you, live as though we are brothers and everything that is mine shall be yours. Let's not divide anything hastily but enjoy it all together for a while. But in your own time, Sir, all shall be apportioned as you wish. May God forbid that you should not receive what is yours!'

'May you shoulder the burden of your broad lands with much joy, your high castles and your towns, for I want nothing of them,' replied the white knight.

'Your woods, your lakes, your forests, your jewellery, your silver and gold – keep them! I have no use for them. But by my faith, I require half your wife and half your child, and I intend to take away with me what is mine!'

'Alas!' cried Sir Amadace, stunned. 'For the love of Christ! Do with me whatever you wish! Take everything I have, but leave my wife alone!'

The white knight could see how things stood. 'By God who bought me with his blood,' he swore, 'I want none of your other things, you can keep them! But think upon the agreement that we made in the forest, when you were destitute, and how gladly you spoke to me then.'

'I acknowledge all that. But to kill this lady will be a heinous sin!'

The lady had been listening to all this and she was, understandably, very distressed. But now she said to her husband: 'For the love of he who died for us, see that your contract is honoured. God forbid that I should be spared out of pity. You shall hold to your agreement, by God! For the love of he who died on the cross for us, see that your bargain is upheld, that your word is honoured. Christ wills that this be so. It must be so. Cut me in half. You won me and I am yours. God forbid that I should have married you only to be the cause of your dishonour and shame!' She stood as still as a leaf, her gaze fixed and her expression unchanging, and she did not cry. 'Fetch me my little son,' she said at last, 'for he was born from my own body and I wish to feel his heart close to mine.'

'Now, tell me,' said the white knight, 'Which of these two do you love the most?'

'My dear wife!' exclaimed Sir Amadace.

'Then since you love her the most, you shall cut her into the two halves of your own choosing!'

When Sir Amadace saw that there was no way out of this, he began to behave as though his wits had left him. All the men in his hall collapsed to the floor in grief before their lord. The lady was brought before Sir Amadace and she kissed him many times, then she walked over to a table that had been set aside as the place of execution. She lay down meekly and they placed a cloth over her eyes. She remained there quietly, that dear and gentle lady.

'I shall deal fairly with you,' said the white knight. 'Strike the blow in a manner that seems fitting to you, and so divide the goods that lie before us.'

‘At your desire, lord, so shall it be, for it seems that indeed it must,’ said Sir Amadace with grim resolve. Then he took up his sword and raised it with intent.

‘Stop!’ cried the white knight suddenly. And he went over and raised the lady up by the hand and the little boy also, and gave them both to Sir Amadace.

‘I can understand that you are distressed at having to kill such a fine lady as this in order to save your honour. But now it is time for peace.

‘Yes! I mean it!

‘I was just as relieved as you are now, equally relieved and happy when you gave everything that you had in order to give my bones a proper resting place. When I lay in that chapel waiting only to feed the dogs in the long grass outside, and you first paid the thirty pounds that was owing to my creditor and then you gave all that you had left to pay for my funeral, there in that chapel I prayed to God that you might be delivered from your sorrow, since you had impoverished yourself for the sake of my honour. So farewell!’ he cried. ‘My own true brother! I no longer wish to be here. I will go. But see that you love this lady as much as you love your own life, for she so meekly, and without any complaint, was willing to offer herself as victim for your honour.’

The white knight left the town then, he melted away like the morning dew and they all remained where they were, in shock. Then they collapsed upon their knees and thanked God and his mother Mary for the way things had turned out.



Sir Amadace and his wife lived out the rest of their lives in joy and bliss; and there are few ladies in the country now who would have gone through what she did. Many would have said: ‘No!’ But to those who serve God truly, and his mother, generous Mary, I can safely say this: that if they sometimes hate the situations they are in, yet God at last will grant them all their desire and open up before them the road to heaven.

Sir Amadace sent messengers far and wide into his own country, seeking out all those who held his forests and towns, his farms and fields, as security for the money that he owed. And these he paid off in full. Then he sent for his steward and his yeoman and many others who had formerly been with him, and he gave them gold and property, and they stayed with him until the end of their lives, in happiness and prosperity.

Soon after this the king died, as God willed it, and Sir Amadace and his wife inherited the entire kingdom. All the great lords of the land were obedient to his command. Sir Amadace was crowned king amidst the glittering of much gold!

Jesus Christ in Trinity – may he bless us with happiness and hold his hand over us all!