

PWYLL PRINCE OF DYFED

Pwyll, prince of Dyfed, was lord of the seven Cantrefs of Dyfed; and once upon a time he was at Narberth his chief palace, and he was minded to go and hunt, and the part of his dominions in which it pleased him to hunt was Glyn Cuch. So he set forth from Narberth that night, and went as far as Llwyn Diarwyd. And that night he tarried there, and early on the morrow he rose and came to Glyn Cuch; when he let loose the dogs in the wood, and sounded the horn, and began the chase. And as he followed the dogs, he lost his companions; and whilst he listened to the hounds, he heard the cry of other hounds, a cry different from his own, and coming in the opposite direction.

And he beheld a glade in the wood forming a level plain, and as his dogs came to the edge of the glade, he saw a stag before the other dogs. And lo, as it reached the middle of the glade, the dogs that followed the stag overtook it, and brought it down. Then looked he at the colour of the dogs, staying not to look at the stag, and of all the hounds that he had seen in the world, he had never seen any that were like unto those. For their hair was of a brilliant shining white, and their ears were red; and as the whiteness of their bodies shone, so did the redness of their ears glisten. And he came towards the dogs, and drove away those that had brought down the stag, and set his own dogs upon it. And as he was setting on his dogs, he saw a horseman coming towards him upon a large light grey steed, with a hunting horn about his neck, and clad in garments of grey woollen in the fashion of a hunting garb. And the horseman drew near and spoke unto him thus. "Chieftain" said he "I know who thou art, and I greet thee not."

"Peradventure" said Pwyll, "thou art of such dignity that thou shouldest not do so."

"Verily" answered he "it is not my dignity that prevents me."

"What is it then, O chieftain?" asked he.

"By Heaven, it is by reason of thine own ignorance and want of courtesy."

"What discourtesy, Chieftain, hast thou seen in me?"

"Greater discourtesy saw I never in man" said he "than to drive away the dogs that were killing the stag, and to set upon it thine own. This was discourteous, and though I may not be revenged upon thee, yet I declare to Heaven that I will do thee more dishonour than the value of a hundred stags."

"O chieftain" he replied "if I have done ill I will redeem thy friendship."

"How wilt thou redeem it?"

"According as thy dignity may be, but I know not who thou art?"

“A crowned King am I in the land whence I come.”

“Lord” said he “may the day prosper with thee, and from what land comest thou?”

“From Annwvyn” answered he “Arawn, a king of Annwvyn, am I.”

“Lord” said he “how may I gain thy friendship?”

“After this manner mayest thou” he said. “There is a man whose dominions are opposite to mine, who is ever warring against me, and he is Havgan, a king of Annwvyn, and by ridding me of this oppression which thou canst easily do shalt thou gain my friendship.”

“Gladly will I do this” said he “show me how I may.”

“I will show thee. Behold thus it is thou mayest. I will make firm friendship with thee; and this will I do, I will send thee to Annwvyn in my stead, and I will give thee the fairest lady thou didst ever behold, to be thy companion, and I will put my form and semblance upon thee, so that not a page of the chamber, nor an officer, nor any other man that has always followed me shall know that it is not I. And this shall be for the space of a year from tomorrow, and then will we meet in this place.”

“Yes” said he; “but when I shall have been there for the space of a year, by what means shall I discover him of whom thou speakest?”

“One year from this night” he answered “is the time fixed between him and me, that we should meet at the Ford; be thou there in my likeness, and with one stroke that thou givest him, he shall no longer live. And if he ask thee to give him another, give it not, how much so ever he may entreat thee, for when I did so, he fought with me next day as well as ever before.”

“Verily” said Pwyll “what shall I do concerning my kingdom?”

Said Arawn “I will cause that no one in all thy dominions, neither man, nor woman, shall know that I am not thou, and I will go there in thy stead.”

“Gladly then” said Pwyll “will I set forward.”

“Clear shall be thy path and nothing shall detain thee, until thou come into my dominions, and I myself will be thy guide!”

So he conducted him until he came in sight of the palace and its dwellings. “Behold” said he “the Court and the kingdom in thy power. Enter the Court, there is no one there who will know thee, and when thou seest what service is done there, thou wilt know the customs of the Court.”

So he went forward to the Court, and when he came there, he beheld sleeping rooms, and halls, and chambers, and the most beautiful buildings ever seen. And he went into the hall to disarray, and there came youths and pages and disarrayed him, and all as they entered saluted him. And two knights came and drew his hunting dress from about him, and clothed him in a vesture of silk and gold. And the hall was prepared, and behold he saw the household and the host enter in, and the host was the most comely and the best equipped that he had ever seen. And with them came in likewise the Queen, who was the fairest woman that he ever yet beheld. And she had on a yellow robe of shining satin; and they washed and went to the table, and they sat, the Queen upon one side of him, and one who seemed to be an Earl on the other side. And he began to speak with the Queen, and he thought from her speech, that she was the seemliest, and most noble lady of converse and of cheer that ever was. And they partook of meat, and drink, with songs, and with feasting; and of all the Courts upon the earth, behold this was the best supplied with food and drink, and vessels of gold and royal jewels.

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And the year he spent in hunting, and minstrelsy, and feasting, and diversions, and discourse with his companions, until the night that was fixed for the conflict. And when that night came, it was remembered even by those who lived in the farthest part of his dominions, and he went to the meeting, and the nobles of the kingdom with him. And when he came to the Ford, a knight arose and spake thus "Lords" said he "listen well. It is between two Kings that this meeting is, and between them only. Each claimeth of the other his land and territory, and do all of you stand aside and leave the fight to be between them."

Thereupon the two Kings approached each other in the middle of the Ford, and encountered, and at the first thrust, the man who was in the stead of Arawn struck Havgan on the centre of the boss of his shield, so that it was cloven in twain, and his armour was broken, and Havgan himself was borne to the ground an arm's and a spear's length over the crupper of his horse, and he received a deadly blow. "O Chieftain" said Havgan "what right hast thou to cause my death? I was not injuring thee in anything, and I know not wherefore thou wouldest slay me. But for the love of Heaven, since thou hast begun to slay me, complete thy work."

"Ah, Chieftain" he replied "I may yet repent doing that unto thee. Slay thee who may, I will not do so."

"My trusty Lords" said Havgan, "bear me hence. My death has come. I shall be no more able to uphold you."

"My Nobles" also said he who was in the semblance of Arawn "take counsel and know who ought to be my subjects."

“Lord” said the Nobles, “all should be, for there is no King over the whole of Annwvyn but thee.”

“Yes” he replied “it is right that he who comes humbly should be received graciously, but he that doth not come with obedience, shall be compelled by the force of swords.” And thereupon he received the homage of the men, and he began to conquer the country; and the next day by noon the two kingdoms were in his power. And thereupon he went to keep his tryst, and came to Glyn Cuch.

And when he came there, the king of Annwvyn was there to meet him, and each of them was rejoiced to see the other. “Verily” said Arawn “may Heaven reward thee for thy friendship towards me, I have heard of it. When thou comest thyself to thy dominions” said he “thou wilt see that which I have done for thee.”

“Whatever thou hast done for me, may Heaven repay it thee.”

Then Arawn gave to Pwyll Prince of Dyfed his proper form and semblance, and he himself took his own; and Arawn set forth towards the Court of Annwvyn; and he was rejoiced when he beheld his hosts, and his household, whom he had not seen so long; but they had not known of his absence, and wondered no more at his coming than usual. And that day was spent in joy and merriment; and he sat and conversed with his wife and his nobles. And when it was time for them rather to sleep than to carouse, they went to rest.

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Pwyll, Prince of Dyfed, came likewise to his country and dominions, and began to enquire of the nobles of the land, how his rule had been during the past year, compared with what it had been before. “Lord” said they “thy wisdom was never so great, and thou wert never so kind nor so free in bestowing thy gifts, and thy justice was never more worthily seen than in this year.”

“By Heaven” said he “for all the good you have enjoyed, you should thank him who hath been with you; for behold, thus hath this matter been.” And thereupon Pwyll related the whole unto them.

“Verily, Lord” said they “render thanks unto Heaven that thou hast such a fellowship, and withhold not from us the rule which we have enjoyed for this year past.”

“I take Heaven to witness that I will not withhold it” answered Pwyll.

And thenceforth they made strong the friendship that was between them, and each sent unto the other horses, and greyhounds, and hawks, and all such jewels as they thought would be pleasing to each other. And by reason of his having dwelt that year in Annwvyn, and having ruled there so prosperously, and united the two kingdoms in one day by his valour and prowess, he lost the name of Pwyll Prince of Dyfed, and was called Pwyll Chief of Annwvyn from that time forward.

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Once upon a time, Pwyll was at Narberth his chief palace, where a feast had been prepared for him, and with him was a great host of men. And after the first meal, Pwyll arose to walk, and he went to the top of a mound that was above the palace, and was called Gorsedd Arberth. "Lord" said one of the Court "it is peculiar to the mound that whosoever sits upon it cannot go thence, without either receiving wounds or blows, or else seeing a wonder."

"I fear not to receive wounds and blows in the midst of such a host as this, but as to the wonder, gladly would I see it. I will go therefore and sit upon the mound."

And upon the mound he sat. And while he sat there, they saw a lady, on a pure white horse of large size, with a garment of shining gold around her, coming along the high way that led from the mound; and the horse seemed to move at a slow and even pace, and to be coming up towards the mound. "My men" said Pwyll "is there any among you who knows yonder lady?"

"There is not, Lord" said they.

"Go one of you and meet her that we may know who she is." And one of them arose, and as he came upon the road to meet her, she passed by, and he followed as fast as he could, being on foot; and the greater was his speed, the further was she from him. And when he saw that it profited him nothing to follow her, he returned to Pwyll, and said unto him "Lord, it is idle for anyone in the world to follow her on foot."

"Verily" said Pwyll "go unto the palace, and take the fleetest horse that thou seest, and go after her."

And he took a horse and went forward. And he came to an open level plain, and put spurs to his horse; and the more he urged his horse, the further was she from him. Yet she held the same pace as at first. And his horse began to fail; and when his horse's feet failed him, he returned to the place where Pwyll was. "Lord" said he "it will avail nothing for anyone to follow yonder lady. I know of no horse in these realms swifter than this, and it availed me not to pursue her."

"Of a truth" said Pwyll "there must be some illusion here. Let us go towards the palace." So to the palace they went, and they spent that day. And the next day they arose, and that also they spent until it was time to go to meat.

And after the first meal "Verily" said Pwyll "we will go the same party as yesterday to the top of the mound. And do thou" said he to one of his young men "take the swiftest horse that thou knowest in the field." And thus did the young man. And they went towards the mound, taking the horse with them.

And as they were sitting down they beheld the lady on the same horse, and in the same apparel, coming along the same road. "Behold" said Pwyll "here is the lady of yesterday. Make ready, youth, to learn who she is."

"My Lord" said he "that will I gladly do." And thereupon the lady came opposite to them. So the youth mounted his horse; and before he had settled himself in his saddle, she passed by, and there was a clear space between them. But her speed was no greater than it had been the day before. Then he put his horse into an amble, and thought that notwithstanding the gentle pace at which his horse went, he should soon overtake her. But this availed him not; so he gave his horse the reins. And still he came no nearer to her than when he went at a foot's pace. And the more he urged his horse, the further was she from him. Yet she rode not faster than before. When he saw that it availed not to follow her, he returned to the place where Pwyll was. "Lord" said he "the horse can no more than thou hast seen."

"I see indeed that it avails not that anyone should follow her. And by Heaven" said he "she must needs have an errand to someone in this plain, if her haste would allow her to declare it. Let us go back to the palace." And to the palace they went, and they spent that night in songs and feasting, as it pleased them.

And the next day they amused themselves until it was time to go to meat. And when meat was ended, Pwyll said "Where are the hosts that went yesterday and the day before to the top of the mound?"

"Behold, Lord, we are here" said they.

"Let us go" said he "to the mound, to sit there. And do thou" said he to the page who tended his horse "saddle my horse well, and hasten with him to the road, and bring also my spurs with thee." And the youth did thus. And they went and sat upon the mound, and ere they had been there but a short time they beheld the lady coming by the same road, and in the same manner, and at the same pace.

"Young man" said Pwyll "I see the lady coming, give me my horse." And no sooner had he mounted his horse than she passed him. And he turned after her and followed her. And he let his horse go bounding playfully, and thought that at the second step or the third he should come up with her. But he came no nearer to her than at first. Then he urged his horse to his utmost speed, yet he found that it availed nothing to follow her. Then said Pwyll "O maiden, for the sake of him whom thou best lovest, stay for me."

"I will stay gladly" said she "and it were better for thy horse hadst thou asked it long since." So the maiden stopped, and she threw back that part of her head dress which covered her face. And she fixed her eyes upon him, and began to talk with him.

"Lady" asked he "whence comest thou, and whereunto dost thou journey?"

“I journey on mine own errand” said she “and right glad am I to see thee.”

“My greeting be unto thee” said he. Then he thought that the beauty of all the maidens, and all the ladies that he had ever seen, was as nothing compared to her beauty. “Lady” he said “wilt thou tell me aught concerning thy purpose?”

“I will tell thee” said she. “My chief quest was to seek thee.”

“Behold” said Pwyll “this is to me the most pleasing quest on which thou couldst have come; and wilt thou tell me who thou art?”

“I will tell thee, Lord” said she “I am Rhiannon, the daughter of Heveydd Hen, and they sought to give me to a husband against my will. But no husband would I have, and that because of my love for thee, neither will I yet have one unless thou reject me. And hither have I come to hear thy answer.”

“By Heaven” said Pwyll “behold this is my answer. If I might choose among all the ladies and damsels in the world, thee would I choose.”

“Verily” said she “If thou art thus minded, make a pledge to meet me ere I am given to another.”

“The sooner I may do so, the more pleasing will it be unto me” said Pwyll “and wheresoever thou wilt, there will I meet with thee.”

“I will that thou meet me this day twelvemonth at the palace of Heveydd. And I will cause a feast to be prepared, so that it be ready against thou come.”

“Gladly” said he “will I keep this tryst.”

“Lord” said she “remain in health, and be mindful that thou keep thy promise; and now will I go hence.” So they parted, and he went back to his hosts and to them of his household. And whatsoever questions they asked him respecting the damsel, he always turned the discourse upon other matters. And when a year from that time was gone, he caused a hundred knights to equip themselves and to go with him to the palace of Heveydd Hen. And he came to the palace, and there was great joy concerning him, with much concourse of people and great rejoicing, and vast preparations for his coming. And the whole court was placed under his orders.

And the hall was garnished and they went to meat, and thus did they sit; Heveydd Hen was on one side of Pwyll, and Rhiannon on the other. And all the rest according to their rank. And they ate and feasted and talked one with another, and at the beginning of the carousal after the meat, there entered a tall auburn-haired youth, of royal bearing, clothed in a garment of satin. And when he came into the hall, he saluted Pwyll and his companions. “The greeting of Heaven be unto thee, my soul” said Pwyll “come thou and sit down.”

“Nay” said he “a suitor am I, and I will do mine errand.”

“Do so willingly” said Pwyll. “Lord” said he, “my errand is unto thee, and it is to crave a boon of thee that I come.”

“What boon soever thou mayest ask of me, as far as I am able, thou shall have.”

“Ah” said Rhiannon “Wherefore didst thou give that answer?”

“Has he not given it before the presence of these nobles?” asked the youth.

“My soul” said Pwyll “what is the boon thou askest?”

“The lady whom best I love is to be thy bride this night; I come to ask her of thee, with the feast and the banquet that are in this place.” And Pwyll was silent because of the answer which he had given.

“Be silent as long as thou wilt” said Rhiannon. “Never did man make worse use of his wits than thou hast done.”

“Lady” said he “I knew not who he was.”

“Behold, this is the man to whom they would have given me against my will” said she. “And he is Gwawl the son of Clud, a man of great power and wealth, and because of the word thou hast spoken, bestow me upon him lest shame befall thee.”

“Lady” said he “I understand not thine answer. Never can I do as thou sayest.”

“Bestow me upon him” said she “and I will cause that I shall never be his.”

“By what means will that be?” asked Pwyll.

“In thy hand will I give thee a small bag” said she. “See that thou keep it well, and he will ask of thee the banquet, and the feast, and the preparations which are not in thy power. Unto the hosts and the household will I give the feast. And such will be thy answer respecting this. And as concerns myself, I will engage to become his bride this night twelvemonth. And at the end of the year be thou here” said she “and bring this bag with thee, and let thy hundred knights be in the orchard up yonder. And when he is in the midst of joy and feasting, come thou in by thyself, clad in ragged garments, and holding thy bag in thy hand, and ask nothing but a bagfull of food, and I will cause that if all the meat and liquor that are in these seven Cantrefs were put into it, it would be no fuller than before. And after a great deal has been put therein, he will ask thee, whether thy bag will ever be full. Say thou then that it never will, until a man of noble birth and of great wealth arise and press the food in the bag, with both his feet saying, ‘Enough has been put therein’ and I will cause him to go and tread down the food in the bag, and when he does so, turn thou the bag, so that he shall be up over his head in it, and then slip a knot upon the thongs of the

bag. Let there be also a good bugle horn about thy neck, and as soon as thou hast bound him in the bag, wind thy horn, and let it be a signal between thee and thy knights. And when they hear the sound of the horn, let them come down upon the palace.”

“Lord” said Gwawl “it is meet that I have an answer to my request.” “As much of that thou hast asked as it is in my power to give, thou shalt have” replied Pwyll.

“My soul” said Rhiannon unto him “as for the feast and the banquet that are here, I have bestowed them upon the men of Dyfed, and the household, and the warriors that are with us. These can I not suffer to be given to any. In a year from tonight a banquet shall be prepared for thee in this palace that I may become thy bride.”

So Gwawl went forth to his possessions, and Pwyll went also back to Dyfed. And they both spent that year until it was the time for the feast at the palace of Heveydd Hen. Then Gwawl the son of Clud set out to the feast that was prepared for him, and he came to the palace, and was received there with rejoicing. Pwyll, also, the chief of Annwn came to the orchard with his hundred knights, as Rhiannon had commanded him, having the bag with him. And Pwyll was clad in coarse and ragged garments, and wore large clumsy old shoes upon his feet. And when he knew that the carousal after the meat had begun, he went towards the hall, and when he came into the hall, he saluted Gwawl the son of Clud, and his company, both men and women. “Heaven prosper thee” said Gwawl, “and the greeting of Heaven be unto thee.”

“Lord” said he “May Heaven reward thee, I have an errand unto thee.”

“Welcome be thine errand, and if thou ask of me that which is just, thou shalt have it gladly.”

“It is fitting” answered he. “I crave but from want, and the boon that I ask is to have this small bag that thou seest filled with meat.”

“A request within reason is this” said he “and gladly shalt thou have it. Bring him food.” A great number of attendants arose and begun to fill the bag, but for all that they put into it, it was no fuller than at first. “My soul” said Gwawl “will thy bag be ever full?”

“It will not, I declare to Heaven” said he “for all that may be put into it, unless one possessed of lands, and domains, and treasure, shall arise and tread down with both his feet the food that is within the bag, and shall say, ‘Enough has been put herein’.”

Then said Rhiannon unto Gwawl the son of Clud “Rise up quickly.”

“I will willingly arise” said he. So he rose up, and put his two feet into the bag. And Pwyll turned up the sides of the bag, so that Gwawl was over his head

in it. And he shut it up quickly and slipped a knot upon the thongs, and blew his horn. And thereupon behold his household came down upon the palace. And they seized all the host that had come with Gwawl, and cast them into his own prison. And Pwyll threw off his rags, and his old shoes, and his tattered array; and as they came in, every one of Pwyll's knights struck a blow upon the bag, and asked "What is here?"

"A Badger" said they. And in this manner they played, each of them striking the bag, either with his foot or with a staff. And thus played they with the bag. Everyone as he came in asked "What game are you playing at thus?" "The game of Badger in the Bag" said they. And then was the game of Badger in the Bag first played.

"Lord" said the man in the bag "If thou wouldest but hear me, I merit not to be slain in a bag."

Said Heveydd Hen "Lord, he speaks truth. It were fitting that thou listen to him, for he deserves not this."

"Verily" said Pwyll "I will do thy counsel concerning him."

"Behold this is my counsel then" said Rhiannon; "Thou art now in a position in which it behoves thee to satisfy suitors and minstrels, let him give unto them in thy stead, and take a pledge from him that he will never seek to revenge that which has been done to him. And this will be punishment enough."

"I will do this gladly" said the man in the bag.

"And gladly will I accept it" said Pwyll "since it is the counsel of Heveydd and Rhiannon."

"Such then is our counsel" answered they.

"I accept it" said Pwyll. "Seek thyself sureties."

"We will be for him" said Heveydd "until his men be free to answer for him." And upon this he was let out of the bag, and his liegemen were liberated. "Demand now of Gwawl his sureties" said Heveydd "we know which should be taken for him." And Heveydd numbered the sureties.

Said Gwawl "Do thou thyself draw up the covenant."

"It will suffice me that it be as Rhiannon said" answered Pwyll. So unto that covenant were the sureties pledged.

"Verily, Lord" said Gwawl "I am greatly hurt, and I have many bruises. I have need to be anointed, with thy leave I will go forth. I will leave nobles in my stead, to answer for me in all that thou shall require."

“Willingly” said Pwyll “mayest thou do thus.” So Gwawl went towards his own possessions.

And the hall was set in order for Pwyll and the men of his host, and for them also of the palace, and they went to the tables and sat down. And as they had sat that time twelvemonth, so sat they that night. And they eat, and feasted, and spent the night in mirth and tranquillity. And the time came that they should sleep, and Pwyll and Rhiannon went to their chamber.

And next morning at the break of day “My Lord” said Rhiannon “arise and begin to give thy gifts unto the minstrels. Refuse no one today that may claim thy bounty.”

“Thus shall it be gladly” said Pwyll “both today and every day while the feast shall last.” So Pwyll arose, and he caused silence to be proclaimed, and desired all the suitors and the minstrels to show and to point out what gifts were to their wish and desire. And this being done the feast went on, and he denied no one while it lasted. And when the feast was ended, Pwyll said unto Heveydd, “My Lord, with thy permission I will set out for Dyfed tomorrow.”

“Certainly” said Heveydd “may Heaven prosper thee. Fix also a time when Rhiannon may follow thee.”

“By Heaven” said Pwyll “we will go hence together.” “Willest thou this, Lord?” said Heveydd.

“Yes, by Heaven” answered Pwyll.

And the next day, they set forward towards Dyfed, and journeyed to the palace of Narberth, where a feast was made ready for them. And there came to them great numbers of the chief men and the most noble ladies of the land, and of these there were none to whom Rhiannon did not give some rich gift, either a bracelet, or a ring, or a precious stone. And they ruled the land prosperously both that year and the next.

And in the third year the nobles of the land began to be sorrowful at seeing a man whom they loved so much, and who was moreover their lord and their foster-brother, without an heir. And they came to him. And the place where they met was Preseleu, in Dyfed. “Lord” said they “we know that thou art not so young as some of the men of this country, and we fear that thou mayest not have an heir of the wife whom thou hast taken. Take therefore another wife of whom thou mayest have heirs. Thou canst not always continue with us, and though thou desire to remain as thou art, we will not suffer thee.”

“Truly” said Pwyll “we have not long been joined together, and many things may yet befall. Grant me a year from this time, and for the space of a year we will abide together, and after that I will do according to your wishes.” So they granted it.

And before the end of a year a son was born unto him. And in Narberth was he born; and on the night that he was born, women were brought to watch the mother and the boy. And the women slept, as did also Rhiannon, the mother of the boy. And the number of the women that were brought into the chamber, was six. And they watched for a good portion of the night, and before midnight every one of them fell asleep, and towards break of day they awoke; and when they awoke, they looked where they had put the boy, and behold he was not there. "Oh" said one of the women, "the boy is lost!"

"Yes" said another "and it will be small vengeance if we are burnt or put to death because of the child."

Said one of the women "Is there any counsel for us in the world in this matter?"

"There is" answered another "I offer you good counsel."

"What is that?" asked they.

"There is here a stag-hound bitch, and she has a litter of whelps. Let us kill some of the cubs, and rub the blood on the face and hands of Rhiannon, and lay the bones before her, and assert that she herself had devoured her son, and she alone will not be able to gainsay us six." And according to this counsel it wast settled.

And towards morning Rhiannon awoke, and she said "Women, where is my son?"

"Lady" said they "ask us not concerning thy son, we have nought but the blows and the bruises we got by struggling with thee, and of a truth we never saw any woman so violent as thou, for it was of no avail to contend with thee. Hast thou not thyself devoured thy son? Claim him not therefore of us."

"For pity's sake" said Rhiannon; "The Lord God knows all things. Charge me not falsely. If you tell me this from fear, I assert before Heaven that I will defend you."

"Truly" said they "we would not bring evil on ourselves for anyone in the world."

"For pity's sake" said Rhiannon "you will receive no evil by telling the truth." But for all her words, whether fair or harsh, she received but the same answer from the women.

And Pwyll the chief of Annwyn arose, and his household, and his hosts. And this occurrence could not be concealed, but the story went forth throughout the land, and all the nobles heard it. Then the nobles came to Pwyll, and besought him to put away his wife, because of the great crime which she had done. But Pwyll answered them that they had no cause wherefore they might ask him to

put away his wife, save for her having no children. "But children has she now had, therefore will I not put her away, if she has done wrong, let her do penance for it."

So Rhiannon sent for the teachers and the wise men, and as she preferred doing penance to contending with the women, she took upon her a penance. And the penance that was imposed upon her was, that she should remain in that palace of Narberth until the end of seven years, and that she should sit every day near unto a horse-block that was without the gate. And that she should relate the story to all who should come there, whom she might suppose not to know it already; and that she should offer the guests and strangers, if they would permit her, to carry them upon her back into the palace. But it rarely happened that any would permit. And thus did she spend part of the year.

Now at that time Teirnyon Twryv Vliant was Lord of Gwent Is Coed, and he was the best man in the world. And unto his house there belonged a mare, than which neither mare nor horse in the kingdom was more beautiful. And on the night of every first of May she foaled, and no one ever knew what became of the colt. And one night Teirnyon talked with his wife; "Wife" said he "it is very simple of us that our mare should foal every year, and that we should have none of her colts."

"What can be done in the matter?" said she. "This is the night of the first of May" said he.

"The vengeance of Heaven be upon me, if I learn not what it is that takes away the colts." So he caused the mare to be brought into a house, and he armed himself, and began to watch that night. And in the beginning of the night, the mare foaled a large and beautiful colt. And it was standing up in the place. And Teirnyon rose up and looked at the size of the colt, and as he did so he heard a great tumult, and after the tumult behold a claw came through the window into the house, and it seized the colt by the mane. Then Teirnyon drew his sword, and struck off the arm at the elbow, so that portion of the arm together with the colt was in the house with him. And then did he hear a tumult and wailing, both at once. And he opened the door, and rushed out in the direction of the noise, and he could not see the cause of the tumult, because of the darkness of the night; but he rushed after it and followed it. Then he remembered that he had left the door open, and he returned. And at the door behold there was an infant boy in swaddling clothes, wrapped around in a mantle of satin. And he took up the boy, and behold he was very strong for the age that he was of.

Then he shut the door, and went unto the chamber where his wife was. "Lady" said he "art thou sleeping?"

"No, Lord" said she "I was asleep, but as thou camest in I did awake."

“Behold here is a boy for thee if thou wilt” said he “since thou hast never had one.”

“My Lord” said she “What adventure is this?”

“It was thus” said Teirnyon; and he told her how it all befell.

“Verily, Lord” said she “What sort of garments are there upon the boy?”

“A mantle of satin” said he. “He is then a boy of gentle lineage” she replied. “My Lord” she said “if thou wilt, I shall have great diversion and mirth. I will call my women unto me, and tell them that I have been pregnant.”

“I will readily grant thee to do this” he answered. And thus did they, and they caused the boy to be baptized, and the ceremony was performed there; and the name which they gave unto him, was Gwri Wallt Euryn, because what hair was upon his head was as yellow as gold. And they had the boy nursed in the court until he was a year old. And before the year was over, he could walk stoutly. And he was larger than a boy of three years old, even one of great growth and size. And the boy was nursed the second year, and then he was as large as a child six years old. And before the end of the fourth year, he would bribe the grooms to allow him to take the horses to water.

“My Lord” said his wife unto Teirnyon “Where is the colt which thou didst save on the night that thou foundest the boy?”

“I have commanded the grooms of the horses” said he “that they take care of him.”

“Would it not be well, Lord” said she “if thou wert to cause him to be broken in, and given to the boy, seeing that on the same night that thou didst find the boy, the colt was foaled and thou didst save him.”

“I will not oppose thee in this matter” said Teirnyon. “I will allow thee to give him the colt.”

“Lord” said she “may Heaven reward thee; I will give it him.” So the horse was given to the boy. Then she went to the grooms and those who tended the horses, and commanded them to be careful of the horse, so that he might be broken in by the time that the boy could ride him.

And while these things were going forward, they heard tidings of Rhiannon and her punishment. And Teirnyon Twryv Vliant, by reason of the pity that he felt on hearing this story of Rhiannon, and her punishment, enquired closely concerning it, until he had heard from many of those who came to his court. Then did Teirnyon, often lamenting the sad history, ponder within himself, and he looked steadfastly on the boy, and as he looked upon him, it seemed to him that he had never beheld so great a likeness between father and son, as between the boy and Pwyll, the chief of Annwyn. Now the semblance of Pwyll was well

known to him, for he had of yore been one of his followers. And thereupon he became grieved for the wrong that he did, in keeping with him a boy whom he knew to be the son of another man. And the first time that he was alone with his wife, he told her, that it was not right that they should keep the boy with them, and suffer so excellent a lady as Rhiannon to be punished so greatly on his account, whereas the boy was the son of Pwyll, the chief of Annwryn. And Teirnyon's wife agreed with him, that they should send the boy to Pwyll. "And three things, Lord" said she "shall we gain thereby. Thanks and gifts for releasing Rhiannon from her punishment; and thanks from Pwyll, for nursing his son, and restoring him unto him; and thirdly, if the boy is of gentle nature, he will be our foster-son, and he will do for us all the good in his power." So it was settled according to this counsel.

And no later than the next day was Teirnyon equipped, and two other knights with him. And the boy, as a fourth in their company, went with them upon the horse which Teirnyon had given him. And they journeyed towards Narberth, and it was not long before they reached that place. And as they drew near to the palace, they beheld Rhiannon sitting beside the horse block. And when they were opposite to her. "Chieftain" said she, "go not further thus, I will bear every one of you into the palace, and this is my penance for slaying my own son and devouring him."

"Oh fair lady" said Teirnyon "think not that I will be one to be carried upon thy back."

"Neither will I" said the boy.

"Truly, my soul" said Teirnyon "we will not go."

So they went forward to the palace, and there was great joy at their coming. And at the palace a feast was prepared, because Pwyll was come back from the confines of Dyfed. And they went into the hall and washed, and Pwyll rejoiced to see Teirnyon. And in this order they sat. Teirnyon between Pwyll and Rhiannon, and Teirnyon's two companions on the other side of Pwyll, with the boy between them. And after meat they began to carouse and to discourse. And Teirnyon's discourse was concerning the adventure of the mare and the boy, and how he and his wife had nursed and reared the child as their own. "And behold here is thy son, lady" said Teirnyon. "And whosoever told that lie concerning thee, has done wrong. And when I heard of thy sorrow, I was troubled and grieved. And I believe that there is none of this host, who will not perceive that the boy is the son of Pwyll" said Teirnyon.

"There is none" said they all "who is not certain thereof."

"I declare to Heaven" said Rhiannon "that if this be true, there indeed is an end to my trouble."

"Lady" said Pendaran Dyfed "well hast thou named thy son Pryderi, and well becomes him the name of Pryderi, son of Pwyll, chief of Annwryn."

“Look you” said Rhiannon “will not his own name become him better?”

“What name has he?” asked Pendaran Dyfed.

“Gwri Wallt Euryn, is the name that we gave him.”

“Pryderi” said Pendaran “shall his name be.”

“It were more proper” said Pwyll “that the boy should take his name from the word his mother spoke when she received the joyful tidings of him.” And thus was it arranged. “Teirnyon” said Pwyll “Heaven reward thee that thou hast reared the boy up to this time, and, being of gentle lineage, it were fitting that he repay thee for it.”

“My Lord” said Teirnyon “It was my wife who nursed him, and there is no one in the world so afflicted as she at parting with him. It were well that he should bear in mind what I and my wife have done for him.”

“I call Heaven to witness” said Pwyll “that while I live I will support thee and thy possessions, as long as I am able to preserve my own. And when he shall have power, he will more fitly maintain them than I. And if this counsel be pleasing unto thee, and to my nobles, it shall be that, as thou hast reared him up to the present time, I will give him to be brought up by Pendaran Dyfed, from henceforth. And you shall be companions and shall both be foster fathers unto him.”

“This is good counsel” said they all. So the boy was given to Pendaran Dyfed, and the nobles of the land were sent with him. And Teirnyon Twryv Vliant, and his companions, set out for his country, and his possessions, with love and gladness. And he went not without being offered the fairest jewels and the fairest horses and the choicest dogs; but he would take none of them.

Thereupon they all remained in their own dominions. And Pryderi, the son of Pwyll the chief of Annwyn, was brought up carefully as was fit, so that he became the fairest youth, and the most comely, and the best skilled in all good games, of any in the kingdom. And thus passed years and years, until the end of Pwyll the chief of Annwyn's life came, and he died.

And Pryderi ruled the seven Cantrefs of Dyfed prosperously, and he was beloved by his people, and by all around him. And at length he added unto them the three Cantrefs of Ystrad Tywi and the four Cantrefs of Cardigan; and these were called the Seven Cantrefs of Seissyllwch. And when he made this addition, Pryderi the son of Pwyll the chief of Annwyn, desired to take a wife. And the wife he chose was Cigfa, the daughter of Gwynn Gohoyw, the son of Gloyw Wllalt Lydan, the son of Prince Casnar, one of the nobles of this island.

And thus ends this portion of the Mabinogion.