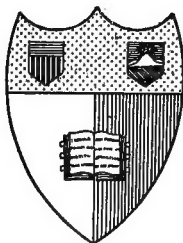




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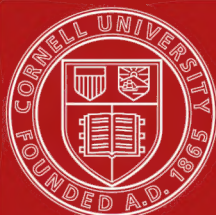
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“When eyes I put on him, I tried to pass nimbly by on my road.”



REYNARD THE FOX

AN EARLY APOLOGUE OF RENOWN

Clad in an English dress, fashioned according to the German model
supplied by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe,

By

JOHN STORER COBB.

WITH CANTON'S ILLUSTRATIONS.

BOSTON

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PRĒFACE.

Although so much in the way of commentary and criticism has been written about this renowned apologue, yet is its origin still enveloped in an apparently impenetrable fog. Many investigators, noted for learning and persevering research, have labored to clear this away; yet, with every new effort, the only result seems to be a further recession of the date of its birth. The probability of reliable discovery has vanished and naught seems left but to relegate it, as one painstaking enquirer has suggested, to prehistoric times.

By some it is regarded as unquestionably a European production; others look upon the fundamental stories as the common property of various Aryan branches of the human family, and as having been brought from their Asiatic homes by Teutonic migrants. It has certainly been traced back to the tenth century, and Jacob Grimm arrives at the

conclusion that it was then known under three forms, with the independent episodes in each so related as to furnish unmistakable hints of the groundwork of their later blending into one continuous narrative.

As with the date, so with the place, of its birth. We have no clear idea of where the narrative first saw the light or of the form in which it was brought into being. The claims of France, Germany, and the Netherlands have all been plausibly and forcibly advanced, and it has been likewise maintained that Latin ought to be regarded as the medium through which will be found the earliest account of the adventures of our famous Reynard. It seems, indeed, to have been demonstrated that the oldest extant version is in Latin, still the editor of that version has no apparent hesitation, after a very thorough investigation, in ascribing the origin of the poem to Flanders and in considering the material of the Flemish copy to be derived from some earlier source.

But, leaving these particulars as of secon-

dary importance, except as an impetus to the pleasures of antiquarian research, which are not to be despised, let us cast a glance at the substance of the famous beast-epic, as it has been aptly called. The motive of its inspiration is thought by some to have been satire. By these it is regarded as a satirical exposure of the foibles and vices of humanity, with a view to their improvement. There are others, however, who consider the romance as nothing but the expression of a general interest in animal life and habits, and as having no satirical basis or educational purpose. With our meagre knowledge of the original it is hard to form a valid judgment upon this question. Nor is it a matter of moment. Whatever the primal intent, it certainly contains, as we have it today, an abundance of satirical allusions to the general imbecility of mankind, as well as to the vices and iniquities prevalent in times past, and not yet altogether extinct, among officers and dignitaries of the church and the state.

The recital of these adventures, of which Reynard is the hero, has always been held in high esteem among German scholars, but it was not until the genius of Goethe had gathered them into his delightfully written hexameters that the allegory gained a general reception. Now it is so highly appreciated among his fellow-countrymen that the story is to be found in almost every household of the land. It would be well if the same thing could be said of the English speaking peoples of the world, for no one can read it without receiving thereby a benefit whose value will be in direct ratio to the earnestness of the study bestowed upon it. Yet among these peoples it has never been widely known. Hence this new dress. If I shall have succeeded in extending the area of its appreciation, my recompense will be ample; if not, I shall rest contented with the pleasure and the profit that I have myself derived from the attempt.

J. S. C.

ARGUMENTA.

CANTO I.

The Pentecostal days have come,
And Leo now resolves with some
Of his good lords to hold a feast,
At which the greatest and the least
Shall be commanded to attend.
The fox, however, keeps away;
He knows what they of him will say,
For he has badly injured all;
So, loudly though they may him call,
He will not e'en excuses send.

He there is charged with all the crimes
That have been known from olden times,
And only one dares him defend.
This does not much his matters mend,
For all the cases are too clear.
The council then is summoned forth,
Which thinks that, be he south or north,
To be compelled to come he ought.
The king declares he shall be brought,
And sends to summon him the bear.

CANTO II.

Forth Bruin goes upon his task,
Assured if he but Reynard ask
To go with him, as bidden, back,
He'll find him nothing loth or slack.
But Reynard is of other mind;
He pleasant greeting gives the bear
And asks what he with him can share;
Then, finding honey's to his taste,
He takes him to a place in haste
Where he a good supply shall find.

To get the honey Bruin sticks,
Through one of Reynard's scurvy tricks,
His head within a gaping tree;
And if you read you'll surely see
How the peasants, learning that,
Find, him in a sorry plight,
And beat him till, in sheer affright,
He makes escape and gets again
Back to court in grief and pain;
And in his place is sent the cat.

CANTO III.

Now Tybert meets an omen bad,
But still pursues his way, though sad.
He finds the fox, his message gives;
Then Reynard asks him how he thrives

And what he would prefer to eat.
When mice he finds that he would like,
He plays him, too, a dirty trick.
With eye knocked out and wounded sore
The cat gets back to court once more,
Like Bruin lamed in head and feet.

The Badger now essays to do
What bear and cat have let fall through.
A third time does the fox not dare
To disregard, or he will fare
Full badly at his monarch's hand.
With Grimbart he at length sets out,
Beset with many an anxious doubt ;
He finally begins to pray,
So Grimbart shrives him on the way
And warns him evil to withstand.

CANTO IV.

Excitement's high when it is known
That Reynard now draws near the throne.
No sooner there than he begins
To shift on others all his sins
And boast of service to the king.
This, howe'er, doth naught avail,
For all the beasts do him assail
And bring complaints, by anger moved.
Their charges are considered proved,
And he condemned for them to swing.

But now he talks of treasures vast,
Which he discovered in the past ;
And tells of crimes that then were rife,
And plots to take the monarch's life
And set up Bruin in his place.
These words the king do greatly rouse,
And likewise much excite his spouse ;
So he is ordered to descend
And tell them all from end to end,
Without evasion, face to face.

CANTO V.

Reynard now the plot sets forth,
And shows the treasure's princely worth ;
Maligns his father, scores the bear,
And makes the badger out as clear
A traitor as was ever found.
He tells what he himself has done,
For firmer friend the king has none,
To frustrate all their base designs.
Of how he's treated then he whines,
As if in loyalty not sound.

The king and queen his lies believe,
And promise that he shall receive
Forgiveness full for all mistakes
That he has made, or ever makes,
If only now he change his life.
He, too, before returning home,

Permission gets to visit Rome,
To get release from papal ban,
Which Leo thinks a worthy plan,
As also does the queen, his wife.

CANTO VI.

Now Reynard to the wolves' dismay,
From both their hides has cut away
A slice, to make him sack and shoes,
And then upon his journey goes;
But first he by the priest is blest.
A cavalcade of nobles go
With him some steps, respect to show;
But ram and hare induces he
To travel on, his home to see,
And there before return to rest.

Inside the house he takes the hare,
And slaughters him as soon as there;
His head he puts within the sack,
Which by the ram he sendeth back,
As if it bore a king's despatch
The head is found, the ram's condemned,
And with the captives matters mend;
Once more to honor they are brought,
And Reynard's life again is sought,
Who deed so dastardly could hatch.

CANTO VII.

A feast of such display and size
Is seldom seen by mortal eyes
As now is carried on because
The wolves and bear, against just laws,
Have been to punishment condemned.
Before its close, complaints anew
Against the fox are brought to view;
The rabbit and the crow lament
That he on them his spite hath spent,
And urge the king such things to end.

An expedition now is formed,
And Reynard's fort is to be stormed;
Each one desires that he be sent,
For they his acts do all resent,
And would chastise him out of hand.
The badger runs the fox to find,
And tell him what they have in mind;
Then him induces back to go.
As he will have much better show
If there on his defense he stand.

CANTO VIII.

The fox again that journey takes,
A second time confession makes,
And as before he tries to shift
His sins to others' backs, and lift

The burden thus from off his own,
The clergy now he takes in hand,
The king and courtiers of the land:
These all can do whate'er they will,
But should a poor man fall, they'll fill
The air with shrieks and hunt him down.

The ape now comes upon the two,
And tells the fox bold front to show;
To Rome he goes, and there he will
Make slander's tongue keep very still
And Reynard's matters straighten out.
He knows them all at court of Rome,
With all their tactics is at home;
His kinsmen are in numbers there,
With them he'll manage this affair,
And Reynard need not give it thought.

CANTO IX.

With Grimbart Reynard comes to court,
Begins a discourse far from short,
In which he labors hard to show
That his accusers, as they know,
Dare naught against him bring point-blank.
He challenges to mortal strife
Each one of those who seek his life
And equals are with him in birth;
For thus is settled, o'er the earth,
Disputes 'tween gentlemen of rank.

.

The king in fury seeks his room,
And there he finds the queen, with whom
Dame Rückenau, old Martin's wife,
In converse is about this strife.
She Reynard's cause begins to plead,
Shows how in court his father shone,
How Reynard, too, had often done
Most worthy deeds where others failed.
The king his anger then bewailed,
And let the fox again proceed.

CANTO X.

The fox describes those treasures vast
Mentioned in some cantos past:
I meant them all for queen and king,
And now the ram has everything,
Which naught can e'er replace, purloined;
Those things I sent by ram and hare,
And thus am caught within a snare,
For Bellyn has poor Lampen killed;
A comrade's blood he's foully spilled,
With whom he was as envoy joined.

And I am charged with this base crime;
You think me guilty every time
Some wicked handicraft is done,
Though I am ever on the run
My king to serve, whom I adore.

His speech is clever, well designed,
The king's induced to change his mind,
Extends to Reynard leave to go
And seek those treasures high and low;
But Isengrim feels very sore.

CANTO XI.

The wolf in ferment seeks the king,
The air with caustic words doth ring;
The king hears all he has to say,
And then decides that Reynard may
His version of the matter give.
The fox once more, with tricks of speech,
Makes out himself a saint, who'd teach
All beasts how proper lives to lead;
Yet they through spite, he says, proceed
To claim that he's not fit to live.

The furious wolf throws down his glove,
To signify that he will prove,
In combat, all his charges true.
Poor Reynard now can nothing do
But take the challenge up and fight.
The she-ape comes and proffers aid
And Reynard soon by her is made
All ready for the coming strife,
In which is wagered life for life,
To manifest where dwells the right.

CANTO XII.

The fox and wolf within the ring
Their duel fight before the king;
And never have elsewhere before
Sly Reynard's tricks availed him more.
With body shorn and laved with oil
Evades he all the wolf's attacks;
And then with subtle twists and knacks
He conquers Isengrim outright.
Low cunning better serves than might,
In folly's strife or reason's toil.

The wolf from off the field is borne,
Defeated, wounded, and forlorn;
His wife and friends about him grieve,
And think that he can hardly live.
But Reynard is exalted high;
Success has brought a change of front;
The king and all who him were wont
To vilify are now his friends.
And thus it is this fable ends;
Its moral you can now supply.

REYNARD THE FOX

CANTO ONE

Whitsun, that fairest of feasts, had arrived;
the forest and field
Rejoiced in new life; on hillock and knoll,
in thicket and hedge,
The newly inspirited birds were singing
their jubilant song;
The meads were all sprouting with flowers,
infilling with fragrance the dales,
The heavens resplendently clear, and blush-
ing the earth like a bride.

King Leo assembles his court; the vassals
and lords of the realm,
Called hither, make haste with the greatest
of pomp. Among them arrive

Great numbers of arrogant peers from the
length and the breadth of the land,
Lord Grusly the crane, sir Pica the jay,
and all of the chiefs.

Then makes up the monarch his mind, with
all of his barons, at once 10
In splendor and statè to hold court, and
bids to be thither convoked

Together regardless of caste the little as
well as the great.

Of all not a soul should be missed; but ab-
sent, however, was one,

Sly Reynard, that rascal and knave, who,
because of his many misdeeds,

Himself kept away from the court. As
shuns the conscience depraved

The light of the day, so avoided the fox
this assembly of lords,

For each of them had to complain that
harm he had done to them all,

And Grimbart the badger alone, the son of
his brother, had spared.

Wolf, Isengrim, opened the case, and with
him in court there appeared

His kinsmen, adherents, and friends; escorted
and succored by these, 20
He stepped up in front of the king and
began with the following speech:
Most worshipful monarch and lord, give ear
to my grievances, pray;
Thou art noble and great and renowned,
and to each of us all dost accord
Justice and mercy and grace; compassion
then show for the wrongs
That I, with such boundless reproach, have
suffered from Reynard, the fox;
And bear well in mind, above all, that
times without number he has,
In malice, made sport of my wife, and my
children most basely ill-used.
Yes, he has them with foulness defiled,
with pestilent, virulent filth,
Whereby I have still three at home with
harrowing blindness distressed.
These offences were all, it is true, discussed
by us both long ago, 30
And a day, indeed, was ordained to settle
the things in dispute;

He plighted his word under oath, but soon
his intention he changed,
And then to his fortress he nimbly escaped.
Too well is this known
By those who are here in the court and
now all about me I see.
My lord, the vexation and grief the villain
has caused me I could
Not attempt to relate with hurrying words
in multiplied weeks.
Were all of the linen from Ghent, what-
ever the quantity made,
At once into parchment reduced, the story
it would not contain,
And I will be silent thereon, yet my wife's
defamation and shame
Eats into my heart, and I would it avenge,
let happen what may. 40

Now when in this sorrowful mood Isengrim
thus had declaimed,
A puppy, named Nidget, stepped up and,
timidly speaking in French,

Told the monarch how poor he'd become, so
that nothing at all had been left
For his use but a morsel of sausage laid up
in a winter retreat;
And Reynard had robbed him of that. Then
hurriedly sprang forth the cat,
Mad Tybert, with fury, and said: Com-
mander, distinguished and high,
No one has cause to complain that the
scoundrel may do him a wrong
Any more than our sovereign himself. In
this convocation I say
There is none, be he aged or young, but
dreads more intensely the scamp
Than even yourself. There's nothing, how-
ever, to Nidget's lament; 50
A number of years have gone by since the
acts that he mentions occurred,
And seeing the sausage was mine, 'twas I
who complaint should have made.
I went to take part in a hunt and, while
thus engaged, I ran through
A mill in the night; the miller's wife slept,
and I quietly seized

A sausage quite small; I will it confess.
Now, pray, to the same
Had Nidget a shadow of right, then he
owed it to labor of mine.

And the panther began: What use are
these wordy complaints?
They little achieve; be content, the evil's
as clear as the day;
A thief and a cut-throat he is, this at
least I will boldly assert;
Indeed you, my lords, are aware that he
perpetrates all the known crimes. 60
Should all of the nobles, indeed, or you,
our most worshipful king,
Of goods and of honor be robbed, he
would laugh could he get for himself,
By chance, but a morsel thereby of a capon
well fattened and plump.
Let me bring to your knowledge what he
so wickedly did yestermorn
To Lampen, the hare; here he stands, the
man who has never done wrong.

Reynard assumed the devout, and would in
all kinds of device

Him shortly instruction impart, including a
chaplain's pursuits;

So facing each other they sat and their
task with the Credo began.

But abandon old tricks and their use, was
Reynard not able to do;

Within the safe conduct and peace bestowed
and assured by our king 70

He Lampen held fast in his fangs, and
worried with malice and spite

The good honest man like a fiend. I
wended my way through the street

And heard the low chant of the two,
which, almost as soon as begun,

Was brought to an end. I listened sur-
prised but, when I drew near,

I recognized Reynard forthwith; he Lampen
held fast by the throat,

And surely had taken his life if I, by good
luck, in my walk,

Had not then arrived on the scene. Here
now in your presence he stands;

Just look at the wounds he received, that
innocent person whom none
Would ever attempt to molest. And should
our good master permit,
Or ever your lordships endure, that thus
may the peace of the king, 80
His warrant and license, be mocked and
made of no worth by a thief,
I fear me that yet will the king be forced
with his offspring to hear
A tardy reproach from the folk, who reverence
justice and right.

Isengrim said in reply: You say what is
true, and, alas!
The fox never will any good to us do,
and I heartily wish
The fellow were dead long ago; that for
peace-loving folk had been best,
And if we him pardon again, then will he,
before very long,
Some of us boldly entrap, who at present
imagine it least.

Reynard's nephew, the badger, now spoke,
and with courage and force
In Reynard's behalf he held forth, de-
praved as the latter was known. 90
The maxim, though old, he remarked, is
true, my lord Isengrim, proved:
There is little that's good in an enemy's
words. Thus my uncle, in truth,
Small comfort will find in your speech;
yet is that of but little account.
Were he at the court to reply to your
words, and enjoyed he with you
The favor and grace of the king, then
might it you surely repent
That you had so spoken in spite, and all
this old tattle revived.
The evil, however, that you to Reynard him-
self have produced
You are silent about, and yet to my lords
in great number 'tis known
How together a compact you made, and
each to the other engaged
As two equal colleagues to live. Here's
something I ought to relate: 100

How once in the winter himself he put to
the greatest of risks
Altogether for you. A man with a wagon
full laden with fish
Was pacing the street; you scented him out
and willingly would
Have feasted yourself on his goods; but
alas, you no money possessed,
So persuaded my uncle to help; and him-
self he with craftiness laid
At once in the road as if dead. By heav-
ens, that venture was bold!
Yet notice what species of fish, he got for
the risk that he took.
The carrier came to the spot, my uncle
perceived in the road,
And hastily drew out his sword to evict
him forthwith, but he lay
As if dead; he made not a motion or
sign, and the wagoner then 110
Threw him up on the top of his cart, glad
of the skin in advance.
Yes! that dared my uncle for Isengrim's
sake; the cartman at once

Continued his way, and Reynard threw
some of the fish to the ground;
Then Isengrim came sneaking in from afar,
and ate it all up.
Reynard thought it not well any longer to
ride, so lifted himself
And sprang from the cart; and now he
himself on the booty would feed,
But gobbled had Isengrim all; indeed so
completely had he
Himself overgorged, he was ready to burst;
the bones cleanly picked
Were the only things he had left, which
remnants he offered his friend.
One more little trick I will tell, which also
is naught but the truth: 120
To Reynard it known had become, on a
a nail at a countryman's house
Hung a well fattened swine, but yesterday
killed; of this he informed
With frankness the wolf; they went to the
place, the profit and risk
To fairly divide; but the danger and toil
bore Reynard alone.

Right in at the window he crept, and then
with great labor he threw
The booty for both below to the wolf; just
now, by ill luck,
Not far from the place were some dogs,
who scented him out in the house
And stalwartly tugged at his skin. Sore
wounded he made his escape,
And Isengrim quickly sought out, to him
made complaint of his woes,
Demanding his share of the meat. And
Isengrim thereupon said: 130
For you a fine morsel I've saved; now earn-
estly set you to work
And heartily gnaw at it well; how much
you will relish the fat.
He brought the delicious piece forth; 'twas
nought but the crook upon which
The butcher had hung up the hog. The
savory flesh and the fat
Had been gulped by the covetous wolf, that
base and iniquitous beast.
Now Reynard, from rage, was unable to
speak; but the turn of his thoughts

You can think for yourself. Great king, of
a truth, in a hundred and more
Of matters like this has the wolf to my
uncle behaved like a knave.
But not a word more about that; were
Reynard himself summoned here,
His case he would better defend. Mean-
while, most beneficent king, 140
Most noble of masters and lords, I here beg
to notice that you
And all of these lords will have heard how
stupidly Isengrim's speech
Hath damaged the wife of his choice, and
tarnished her honor, which he
With limb and with life should defend.
Now these are the facts of the case:
Years seven and more have arrived and gone
by since my uncle bestowed,
Without any thought of reserve, his love
and allegiance upon
Dame Greedimund's beauty and charms.
This happened one night at a dance
Which Isengrim failed to attend; I say what
I know to be true.

Most friendly and pleasantly oft has she his
advances received.

Now what is there more to be said? She
never has made any charge; 150

Moreover she lives and is well, so why
does he make such a fuss?

He silence would keep were he wise; it
brings to him only disgrace.

The badger then further remarked: Now
comes this romance of the hare!

Detestable, vacuous talk! Should not a good
master, forsooth,

His pupil correct, if he be not attentive and
evil withstand?

If never we punished our boys, and put not
a potent restraint

On frivolous habits and bad, into what would
develop our youth?

Young Nidget next comes and complains,
how a sausage, one winter, he lost

Aback of the hedge; but this should he
rather in silence endure,

For certainly hear we it said that some one
had stolen the thing. 160

Goes lightly what lightly is got; and who
can my uncle reproach
For easing a thief of his stolen effects? It
surely is right
That men of high station and birth, them-
selves to rascals and thieves
Should hateful and dangerous show. Why!
had he him thereupon hanged,
Excuse there had been; yet he set him at
large to honor the king,
For penance by death to inflict has no one
the right but the king.
The requital, however, is poor, on which can
my uncle rely,
How guileless so e'er he may be and deeds
that are evil impede.
As matter of fact, ever since the peace of
the king was proclaimed,
Conducts himself no one as he. He has
altered completely his life; 170
Eats but one meal a day, like an anchorite
lives, chastises himself,
Wears raiment of hair on unsheltered skin,
and has also for long

Desisted entirely from flesh of all kinds, both
domestic and wild,
As yesterday I was informed by one who
had stayed at his house,
He has left Malepartus, his fort, and built
a small hut for himself,
In which as a hermit to live. How lately
so thin he's become,
So pallid from hunger and thirst and other
like penances sharp,
That he in repentance endures, yourselves
into that will enquire.
Then what can it matter to him if all who
are here him accuse?
Should he but arrive, his rights he'd uphold
and them put to shame. 180

When Grimbart had drawn to a close, to the
wonder of all there appeared
Henning, the cock, with the whole of his
brood. On a sorrowful bier,
Despoiled of her neck and her head, was a
hen carried slowly within;

Poor Scrapper it turned out to be, most prolific of egg-laying hens;
Alas, how her blood trickled down! and Reynard had caused it to flow.
This now must be brought to the ear of the king. When Henning, the brave,
Presented himself to the king with sad and most grief-stricken face,
Came with him still other two cocks, who also lamented their loss.
The one of them Kreyant was called, and no better cock could be found
If Holland and France were explored; the other, who stood by his side, 190
Was known by the name of Kantart, a fellow straightforward and stout.
Each carried a candle alight, and it happened that brothers were both
Of the massacred hen they brought in; and over the murder they cried
For trouble and pain. Two younger cocks were supporting the bier,
And the wailing they made as they came could plainly be heard afar off.

At length Henning spake: That loss we
bewail which none can repair,
Benevolent master and king! Oh, pity the
wrong we endure,
My children as well as myself! Here look
you on Reynard's foul deed.
When winter had from us gone by, and
leaves and blossoms and flowers
Invited us all to be glad, I much in my
offspring rejoiced, 200
That spent the delectable days so blithely
and gaily with me.
Ten juvenile sons with daughters fourteen,
and all of them full
Of relish and pleasure in life; my wife,
that most excellent hen,
Together had brought them all up in a
summer as happy as long;
They all were robust and content with their
lot, and provided themselves
Each day with the food they required at a
spot that was thought to be safe.
The court-yard belonged to rich monks, and
its walls were a shelter to us

And six immense dogs. These partners, so
noble and brave, of our home
Were much to my children attached and
sharply watched over their lives;
But Reynard, that thief, it annoyed that we,
in contentment and peace, 210
Such gay, happy days should enjoy, and
meantime escape from his wiles;
By night he would sneak round the walls,
and waiting would lie at the gate;
But the dogs found it out, so he took to
his heels; yet boldly, at length,
They managed to collar him once, and then
they made holes in his fur;
Yet out of their hands he escaped, and left
us in peace for awhile.
Now give me your ear; this lasted not long;
he soon came again
As a monk, and brought me a writing and
seal; 'twas one that I knew;
Your signet I saw on the deed, in which I
found clearly inscribed
That you a firm peace had proclaimed, as
well with the birds as the beasts.

To me the announcement he made that he
a good monk had become, 220
Had taken the solemnest vow atonement to
make for his crimes,
Of which he acknowledged his guilt. From
that time should no one from him
Have anything further to fear. He had
sacredly taken an oath
That meat never more would he taste. He
directed my eyes to his cowl
And his scapular showed. In addition to
this, he a symbol displayed,
Which the prior upon him had placed;
and, in order me more to assure,
Beneath showed a garment of hair. Then
taking departure he said:
Farewell, in the name of the Lord. I
have still a great number of things
To do before close of the day. The Sexts
I must read and the Nones,
With Vespers appended thereto. He read
as he walked, and devised 230
Numerous schemes that were base; to effect
our destruction he planned.

With a heart full of gladness and joy I
soon to my children made known
Your letter's good message of cheer. They
all were entranced at the news!
Since Reynard a monk had become, for us
not a thing was there left
Any further to care for or fear. I strutted
together with them,
On the outermost side of the walls, and we
all in our freedom rejoiced.
But alas! matters went with us ill; in am-
bush he craftily hid,
And thence springing suddenly forth, he
barred up our way to the gate;
The fairest he seized of my sons, and
dragged him away to devour;
And now not a thing could we do; when
once he had tasted their flesh 240
He ever was trying again, and neither the
hunters nor hounds
Could make us secure from his snares, not
either by day or by night.
And thus nearly all of my children he
took, till now from a score

Their number to five is reduced; of the
rest he has carried off all.

Oh, pity my woeful distress! But a day
has gone by since he slew

This daughter of mine that is here, whose
body was saved by the dogs.

Observe! Here she lies! That deed he
has done; oh, take it to heart.

Then answered the monarch and said:
Grimbart, come nearer, and look!

In this way abstains our recluse, and thus
he his penitence shows!

From now should I live but a year, be
sure that he shall it repent. 250

But what is the use of our words? Thou
heart-broken Henning, give heed;

Thy daughter for nothing shall want, what-
ever it be, that belongs

By custom or right to the dead. I will
see that her vigil be sung,

That she with all honor be laid in the
earth; when that has been done,

We council will take with these lords on
the penalty due to the crime.

Then issued the king a command that service be held for the dead.

Domino placebo the people assembled began,
and they sang

Each stanza composing it through. I also
could further relate

By whom was the service intoned, by whom
the responses as well,

But that too much time would employ, and
therefore I leave it alone. 260

Her body was laid in a grave, over which
was erected a fair

Marble stone, polished up like a glass, and
cut in the form of a square,

Quite bulky and tall, and upon it, above,
could plainly be read:

Here Scaper, the daughter of Henning,
doth lie, most faithful of hens,

Laid numerous eggs in her nest, and prudently
knew how to scratch.

Alas, here she lies! from her family torn
by the murderous fox.

All in the world shall be taught how wicked
and vile he behaved,

And bemoan the deceased. Thus ran the
inscription engraven thereon.

This having been done, the king had the
wisest convoked

To counsel with him and advise as to how
should be punished the crime 270

That now had so clearly been brought to
the knowledge of him and his lords;

At length their opinion they gave, that un-
to the mischievous scamp

An envoy at once be dispatched, that, willy
or nilly, he dare

Not refuse to obey; that he at the court
of the king shall appear

On the day when the judges next time to-
gether assemble therein.

And chosen was Bruin, the bear, the sum-
mons to take; and the king

Thus spake unto Bruin, the bear: As mas-
ter I give you advice

Your errand with zeal to perform; yet
prudence and caution I charge,

For Reynard's malicious and mean; devices
and tricks of all kinds

He surely will bring into play; will flatter
and stuff you with lies, 280

And all that is possible cheat. Twice will
he think about that,

Replied, with assurance, the bear. Let
nought you disturb, for if he

Misjudge by the breadth of a hair and ven-
ture his scorn upon me,

Then by the eternal I swear, that his ven-
geance upon me may fall

If I do not so pay it him back, that know
where he is he will not. 285

CANTO TWO.

Thus ordered, sir Bruin pursued his way to
the mountainous ridge,
With haughty and confident heart, through
a wilderness sterile and vast,
Long and sandy and broad; and, when
this at length he had passed,
He came very close to the hills where
wonted was Reynard to hunt;
Indeed, in the days that were gone, he
pleasure had sought there himself.
But the bear further went, Malepartus towards,
where Reynard had long
Fine buildings in number possessed. Of
all his strong castles and burgs,
Of which to him many belonged, he thought
Malepartus the best.
In this Reynard made his abode, whenever
a danger he sniffed.
When Bruin the castle attained, the gate
of admittance he found 10
Fast bolted and locked, so before it he
walked and reflected somewhat.

He finally shouted and said: Are you,
my dear uncle, at home?
Bruin, the bear, has arrived, judicially sent
by the king.
Our monarch has taken an oath that now
at the bar of his court
Yourself you shall place upon trial, and I
am your escort to be;
That justice you shall not refuse to render
to all and accept;
If not it will cost you your life, for if you
shall tarry behind,
With rack you are threatened and wheel.
I advise you to choose for the best,
And come with me back to the court, it
else will you evil betide.

This speech, from beginning to end, Rey-
nard did perfectly hear; 20
In silence he listened and thought: How
would it, I wonder, result,
If I the unmannerly churl should pay for
his arrogant words?

Let us upon it reflect. To the depths of
his dwelling he went,
Into its corners and nooks, for built was
the castle with skill;
Caverns and dungeons there were, and many
dark corridors too,
Both narrow and long, and doors of all
kinds to be opened and shut
As time and necessity called. When sought
for he found that he was,
Because of some rascally deed, here found
he the best of defence.
Through simplicity too had he oft in these
labyrinthian ways
Poor animals cheated and caught, acceptable
prey to the thief. 30
Now Reynard the words had well heard,
but yet did he cunningly fear
That near to the messenger still might
others in ambush be couched.
But when he himself had assured that the
bear had arrived all alone,
He went slyly out and exclaimed: My
dearest of uncles, you are

“Your pardon I beg! I vespers have read,
And thus have I caused you to wait.”



Very welcome, I'm sure! Your pardon I
beg! I vespers have read,
And thus have I caused you to wait; my
thanks for this visit accept,
It surely will help me in court; at least so
permit me to hope.
You are welcome, my uncle, whatever the
hour; however, I think
That censure must rest upon him who you
on this journey has sent,
For long and fatiguing it is. Oh, heavens,
how heated you are! 40
You've not a dry hair in your head, your
breathing anxiety shows.
Had this mighty monarch of ours no mes-
senger other to send
Than the noblest of men at his court, exalted
by him above all?
Yet thus it must be of great service to me;
and now I entreat
Your help at the court of the king, where
I am so badly defamed.
Tomorrow I'd made up my mind, in spite
of the risk that I run,

Unbidden to go to the court, and such my
intention remains;
I'm not in condition today, to try such a
journey to take:
I've eaten too freely, alas, of a dish that
I relish not much,
And one that agrees with me not; it causes
my belly great pain. 50
Bruin responded to this: What was it my
uncle? The fox
Replied in his turn: What good would it
do, if you I should tell?
With sorrow prolong I my life, but still
I'm resigned to my fate.
The poor cannot ever be lords, and if at
odd times can be found
No food that is better for us and for ours,
then truly we must
Some combs of sweet honey devour, which
always with ease can be had;
Yet eat it I only from need; and swollen
at present I am.
The stuff I reluctantly ate, how then could
it nourishment give?

If without it I ever can do, it rests far
enough from my tongue.

Heigh-ho, responded the bear, what is it,
my uncle, you say! 60

Do you in reality scorn the nectar that so
many crave?

Good honey, I must you inform, surpasses
all dishes there are,

At least to my taste; oh, help me to
some! You shall it not rue!

The favor I will you return. You are
mocking, the other replied.

Protested the bear: I am not; indeed I
mean just what I say.

If that is the case, then you I can serve,
the red one replied.

The husbandman, Rüsteviel, lives below at
the foot of the hill,

And plenty of honey has he. Indeed,
among all of your race

Saw you never collected so much. Then
lusted the bear overmuch

.....

To eat of his favorite food. Oh, take me,
my uncle, he cried, 70
Without losing time, to the place; your
kindness I'll never forget;
Supply me with honey I beg, even though
not enough can be got.
Come on, said the fox in reply, of honey
no lack shall we find;
Today, it is true, I am bad on the feet,
yet shall the regard
Which long I have cherished for you, en-
courage my wearisome steps;
For I know not a soul among those who
to me are connected by blood
Whom I honor, my uncle, as you! So
come, and you will, in return,
Me serve at the court of the king, when
there I shall have to appear,
That I to confusion may put the charges
and strength of my foes.
With honey I'll fill you today, as much as
you ever could wish. 80
He was thinking, the scamp, of the blows
the peasants would give in their wrath.

Reynard in front hurried off and Bruin
came blindly behind.

If I but succeed, thought the fox, I yet
shall conduct you today

To a market in which unto you bitter
honey apportioned will be.

They came up to Rüsteviel's yard, which
greatly elated the bear;

But in vain, as fools very often themselves
with hopes lead astray.

Eve had already set in, and Reynard quite
well was aware

That Rüsteviel lay, as a rule, just now in
his chamber in bed.

He a carpenter was, a craftsman of skill,
and down in his yard

Was lying the trunk of an oak, in order
to split which he had 90

Two good solid wedges inserted therein, so
far that on top

Gaped open the tree near the width of an
ell. This Reynard observed

And said to the bear: Dear uncle, inside
of this tree will be found
More honey than you would suspect, now
thrust in it quickly your snout
As far as you possibly can. I merely
would risk the advice
That in greed you take not too much; it
might with you badly agree.
Do you, said the bear, for a glutton me
take? Why no, not at all,
But temperance always is good, whatever it
be that you do.
Thus was outwitted the bear! his head he
stuck into the crack,
Yea, even right up to his ears, and further-
more both his front paws. 100
Then earnestly Reynard fell to, with many
strong pulls and good tugs,
And both of the wedges tore out. Now
was the brown fellow caught,
Held fast by his head and his feet, nor
scolding nor coaxing availed.
Bruin now had a-plenty to do, for all of
his boldness and strength;

And thus kept' the nephew with craft his
uncle engaged in the tree.
With howls now lamented the bear, and
tore, with his hindermost claws,
So fiercely and raised such a row that
Rüsteviel sprang out of bed
And wondered whatever was up; he took
along with him his axe,
So as weaponless not to be found, should
any one try him to harm.

Bruin was now in a terrible fix; for the
- narrowing crack 110
Was pinching him hard; he struggled and
pulled and roared with his pain;
His efforts, however, were all of no use;
he fully believed
That never therefrom should he come; so
Reynard, too, joyfully thought.
When he in the distance observed Rüsteviel
coming, he cried:
Bruin, how do you feel? Be thrifty and
eat not the honey all up!

Does it taste very good? Rüsteviel comes
and will give you a treat;
He brings you a sip for your meal; I hope
it will with you agree.

Then Reynard pursued his way back, Mal-
epartus, his fortress to gain;

But Rüsteviel came in his stead and, when
he put eyes on the bear,

He ran all the peasants to call, who in
company still at the inn 120

Were over their cups. Come on, he cried
out, in my yard there is caught

A bear in a trap; that really is so. They
followed in haste,

Each arming himself with despatch as well as
the time would allow.

The first took a fork in his hand, another
brought with him his rake,

And likewise a third and a fourth, provided
with hatchet and spear,

Came bounding with vigorous strides; a
fifth was equipped with a pole.

The sexton and even the priest came on
with the tools of their trade.

And also the clergyman's cook, (of whom
was Dame Yulock the name,
And who as none other a porridge could
serve) remained not behind,
But ran with her distaff in hand, at which
all the day she had sat, 130
To curry the skin of the luckless bear.
Bruin heard, as they came,
The increasing and deafening din with all
its most horrible notes,
And forcibly tore out his head from the
cleft; but yet there remained
The hair and the skin of his face, as far
as his ears, in the tree.
Indeed, not a wretcheder beast has anyone
seen, for the blood
Trickled over his ears. But what did he
gain by releasing his head?
For still were his paws firmly held in the
tree; now backing he tore
Them hastily out with a jerk; he raved as
if out of his mind,
His claws and the skin from his feet being
left in the narrowing crack.

No taste of sweet honey had this; alas, it
was not such as that 140
Which Reynard him led to expect. The
outing was wickedly planned,
A sorrowful trip to the bear it had proved;
his beard and his paws
Were covered all over with blood; he was
wholly unable to stand,
Unable to walk or to crawl. Now Rüste-
viel hastened to strike;
He was fallen upon by them all who had
with the master arrived;
Their aim was to put him to death. The
priest for preparedness brought
A staff of some length in his hand, and
waled him therewith from afar.
Now hither and thither in sadness he
turned, hemmed in by the crowd;
Some here bearing pikes, others with axes
out there, while the smith
Brought hammer and tongs to the fray,
and others with shovels arrived, 150
Some also with spades, and shouting they
pummelled at random and struck,

Till he, out of harrowing fear, wallowed
in foulness his own.

In the onset they all took a hand; not one
of them all stayed away.

And Huly'n, the bow-legged clown, with
Ludolph, the flat-nozzled rogue,

By far were the worst; and Gerold aloft
swung the hard wooden flail

His long crooked fingers between; his broth-
er-in-law at his side,

The burly old Korkoran, stood; these two
struck him worst of them all.

Dames Yulock and Abelquack too had also
their part in the strife,

The latter, the worse of the two, struck the
poor thing with her tub.

And those above named were not all; the
women as well as the men 160

All ran to the spot, determined to have
the life of the bear.

Old Korkoran made the most noise, regard-
ing himself as the chief;

For Poggy of Chafport was known his
mother to be very well,

And that by the sinister bar, but his father
was never revealed;
The peasants, however, believed that Sander
was probably he,
The dark-featured gleaner of straw, a fellow
robust and superb
When he by himself was alone. Stones
also came flying with force,
And harrassed the desperate bear, as they
from all sides were received.
Now Rüsteviel's brother jumped up and
struck, with a long sturdy club,
The bear on the top of his head, so hard
that both hearing and sight 170
Were wholly destroyed; yet started he up
from the vigorous stroke
And, enraged, at the women he rushed,
who into confusion were thrown,
And tottered and tumbled and yelled, and
into the water some fell;
And the water was deep. Then out cried
the father and said: Look out!
Down there is Dame Yulock, my cook,
floating below in her furs;.

Her distaff is here on the bank; •come help
her, you men! I will give
Two barrels of beer as reward, with ample
indulgence and grace.
The bear they all left lying there as if
dead, and hurried away
To the water the women to save, and drew
out the five to the land.
The bear waddled slowly away while the
men were engaged at the shore, 180
And into the water he crawled in arrant
distress, and he roared
In horrible anguish and pain; he rather
would much have been drowned,
Than blows so disgraceful endure. To swim
he had never essayed,
And now in his misery hoped that his life
he might end on the spot.
Against expectation he found that he swam,
and was luckily borne
By the water a distance below. Then him
all the peasants observed,
And exclaimed: To us this will certainly
prove an eternal disgrace!

They all out of humor became, and began
at the women to scold:
'Twere better had they stayed at home;
just look now and see how he swims
Down there on his way. Then close they
approached to examine the log, 190
And in it remaining they found the skin
and the hair from his head,
And also his feet, and chuckled thereover
and cried: You will come
To us surely again; meanwhile we accept
your ears as a pledge.
And thus to his injuries added they jeers,
yet happy was he
The evil like this to escape. The peasants
he roundly reviled,
Who him had chastised, lamented the pain
in his ears and his feet,
And Reynard denounced, who him had
betrayed. With prayers like these
He swam further off, urged on by the stream,
which was rapid and large,
Within but a short space of time, below
very nearly a mile,

And then on the very same bank, all
breathless he waded ashore. 200

No beast in a bitterer plight till then had
the sun ever seen.

The morning he thought that he never
should see; he fully believed

He must instantly die, and cried: Oh, Rey-
nard, you villainous wretch!

You dissolute scamp! He was thinking
besides of the pummelling boors;

And also he thought of the tree, and Rey-
nard's deception he cursed.

Reynard, however, the fox, when he, with
precaution so good,

His uncle to market had led, with honey
him there to supply,

Went after some fowls, whose dwelling he
knew, and pounced upon one,

Then rapidly ran to the stream, dragging
his booty along;

There he despatched it at once and hastened
to other affairs, 210

The river still keeping close by; he drank
of the water and thought:
How happy and joyous I feel, at having
the dull-witted bear
Thus led to the carpenter's yard! I'll wager
that Rüsteviel let
Him have a good taste of his axe. Always
the bear has displayed
Malevolent feelings to me; and now I have
paid it him back.
My uncle I've always him dubbed, and now
in the cleft of a tree
He lifeless remains; and for that I'll rejoice
so long as I live.
No more will he render his damaging
plaints! And, roaming along,
He looked at the river below, and saw the
bear rolling about;
To the core of his heart he was vexed
that Bruin had living escaped. 220
He Rüsteviel cried, you indolent wight,
you blundering fool,
Fat meat such as this you disdain, so tender
and good to the taste,

Which any sane man might desire, and
which, with such infinite ease,
Fell unawares into your hands! But still,
for your welcome so kind
Has the innocent bear left behind him a
pledge. Thus were his thoughts
As he upon Bruin set eyes, downcast,
bloody, and faint.
He finally called to the bear: Do I find
you, sir uncle, again?
Have you anything lost in Rüsteviel's yard?
Tell me and I'll let
Him know where you make your abode. I
also should tell him, I think,
That doubtless you have from the man a
good lot of honey purloined. 230
Or have you him honestly paid? How was
it that this came about?
Dear me! Who has painted you so? You
have a deplorable look.
Your taste did the honey not suit? At the
same identical price
Can more of it yet be obtained. Now, uncle,
do tell me at once

The name of the order to which you have
lately devoted yourself,
That you on your head have begun a red-
colored bonnet to wear!
Is it true that you now are a monk? The
barber assuredly has,
In trying your tonsure to shave, made a
very bad snip at your ears;
I see you are losing your hair and also the
skin from your cheeks,
And even your gauntlets as well. Where
did you leave them to hang? 240
And thus the poor bear was compelled, his
numerous bantering words
One after the other to hear; while he, in
his pain, could not speak;
Was indeed at his very wits' end; and so
as not further to hear,
Back into the water he crept, and swam
with the swift-flowing tide,
Lower down, till a shore that was level he
found; he landed and lay
Disheartened and sick; lamented aloud and
remarked to himself:

Oh, that some one would kill me outright!
I'm unable to walk, and I ought
My journey to make to the court of the
king; yet here I remain,
So shamefully injured, behind, and all
through Reynard's vile tricks.
If I only get through with my life, he
verily shall it repent. 250
Then got he himself on his feet and,
racked with unbearable pain,
Limped on for the space of four days, and
finally came to the court.

The king, setting eyes on the bear as in
his distress he approached,
Cried: Merciful God! Is it Bruin I see?
How is it he comes
Maltreated like this? And Bruin replied:
Alas, it is sad,
The evil on which you now look! Thus me
has the mischievous knave,
Reynard, most basely betrayed! Then spake
in his anger the king:

This outrage I certainly will, without any
mercy, avenge.

Such a noble as Bruin, in faith, would Rey-
nard defy and abuse ?

Indeed, by my honor, my crown, I now
with solemnity swear 260

That Reynard all things shall endure that
Bruin by law can demand.

If I keep not my word, no sword any more
will I wear; that I vow!

The king then a mandate sent forth, his
council together should come,

Consider at once the affair, and a penalty
fix for the crime.

They all recommended thereon, provided the
king thought it fit,

That Reynard be summoned anew himself to
present at the court,

His rights to defend against charge and
complaint; and Tybert the cat

Forthwith as the herald be sent the order
to Reynard to take,

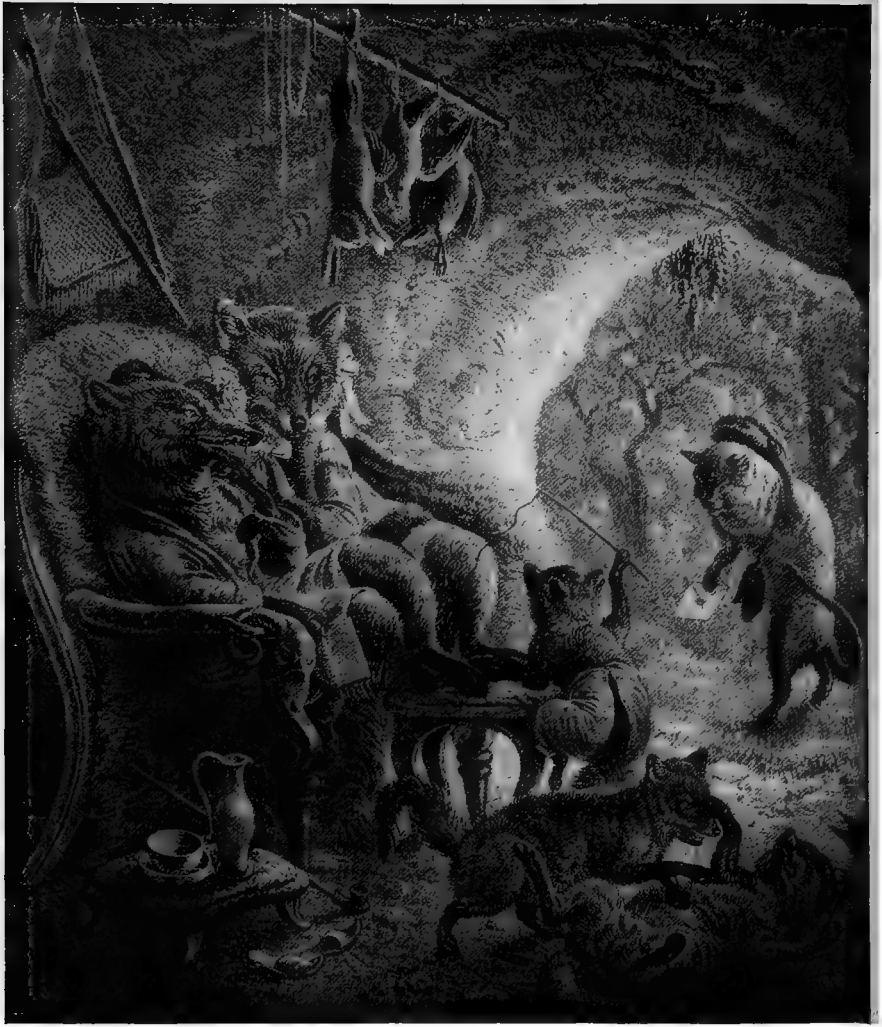
Because he is wise and adroit. So coun-
selled they all in accord.
His gracious assent gave the king to that
which the council advised; 270
And to Tybert he said: Pay attention to all
that my lords have in view!
Should he for a third time have to be
called, then shall it to him
And every one of his race for damage
eternal be held.
He will, if he's wise, come in time. . And
let your monition have point;
Others he only contemns; he listens, how-
ever, to you.

Tybert, however, replied: Whether to weal
or to woe
It tend, when I come where he is, how
shall I the matter begin?
For me he may do it or not, but still unto
me it appears
That another could better be sent, for I am
so little and weak.

Bruin the bear is lusty and strong, yet to
 master him failed, 280
What chance of success then have I? Oh,
 let me, I pray, be excused!

Your pleading convinces me not, responded
 the king; one may find
Many a man that is small full of wisdom
 and craft, which are strange
To many a one that is big. To a giant you
 may not have grown,
But still you are learned and wise. Then
 yielded the cat and replied:
Myself I resign to your will, and if I can
 meet with a sign
To my right as I go on the road, my
 journey will be a success. 287

“May God, the indulgent and good, a prosperous eve to you grant.”



CANTO THREE

When Tybert, the cat, had advanced a short
way along on his road,
In the distance a ringtail he saw, and soon
as he spied him he cried:
God speed you. illustrious bird! Oh, turn
now your pinions and fly
Down here at my right hand side! The
bird took his flight and disposed
Himself at the left of the cat, to sing on
the bough of a tree.
Now Tybert was greatly distressed, for ill-
luck it portended he thought,
But cheered himself up for all that, as many
are customed to do.
Still towards Malepartus he went, and arri-
ving, sir Reynard he found
Sitting in front of the house, to whom he
thus paid his respects:
May God, the indulgent and good, a pros-
perous eve to you grant; 10
Our monarch has threatened your life if you
shall refuse any more

With me to proceed to the court; he further
 directs me to say
 That you your accusers must meet, or your
 friends due atonement shall make.
 To this did sir Reynard reply: Dear
 nephew, I welcome you here,
 That you the protection of God may enjoy
 to the full is my wish.
 But different far were the thoughts that
 invaded his treacherous heart;
 New tricks were engaging his mind; this
 messenger too he would send
 Again to the court in disgrace. This not-
 withstanding, the cat
 His nephew he styled, and he said: My
 nephew, what can I provide
 For you in the matter of food? One always
 sleeps better when filled; 20
 I am for the present your host; we will
 travel tomorrow at dawn
 Together to court; this I think will be well.
 Of my relatives all,
 To me is not anyone known upon whom I
 so fully rely.

The brutal and gluttonous bear with insolence me did approach;
Ill-tempered and strong he is both, and therefore I would not for much
The journey have risked at his side. But now, as a matter of course,
With you I shall cheerfully go. In the morning we'll early set out
On the way, for to me this appears by far the best thing we can do.
Then Tybert responded to this: Far better for us it would be
To depart straight away for the court without more ado as we are, 30
For over the forest is shining the moon and the roads are all dry.
To this Reynard said: A journey by night I regard as unsafe;
By day there are many who'll greet us as friends and yet, in the dark
To fall in our way should they chance, it might not turn out for the best.
Now Tybert responded in turn: Just tell me, my uncle, I pray,

If here I remain, what then shall we eat?

And Reynard remarked:

But poor is our store, yet if you remain,
before you I'll set

Good honey all fresh in the comb; I'll pick
out the clearest there is.

Such stuff I could never endure, ungraciously
answered the cat,

If naught in the house can be found, then
give me, I beg you, a mouse; 40

Of food this to me is the best, your honey
for others pray keep.

Can mice be so toothsome to you? Reynard
asked, let me honestly know;

I surely can serve you with them. My
neighbor, the priest, hath a barn

Below in his yard, and within it are mice;
such numbers, indeed,

That hold them a wagon could not; and
the priest have I frequently heard

Complain that, by day and by night, to him
a worse pest they become.

The cat then imprudently said: Oh, do me
the favor, I beg,

Of leading me straight to the mice! For
to game and all else of the kind
The flavor of mice I prefer. And Reynard
then slyly rejoined:
In truth you with me shall enjoy a meal
that is fit for a lord, 50
And now that I know what for you I can
get, let us make no delay.

Tybert trustingly followed the fox, and came
to the barn of the priest,
To its wall which was made out of clay.
This Reynard had yesterday dug
Judiciously through and, by means of the
hole, from the slumbering priest
Had stolen the best of his cocks; and the
clergyman's dear little son,
Young Martin, as he had been named, was
wishing the theft to avenge;
For which he in front of the hole had
fastened a cord with a loop;
Thus hoping his bird to avenge on the
thief when again he should come.

Aware was Reynard of this and with it in
mind he remarked:

My nephew, now crawl through the hole, and
I will keep guard at the front, 60

Meanwhile look you after the mice, for there
you will find them in swarms

And readily catch in the dark. Oh, listen
how gaily they squeak!

When enough you have had, then come
again back, and join me once more.

We must not from each other this evening
depart, for tomorrow, you know,

We early set out, and will shorten our way
with frolicsome talk.

Do you feel assured, said the cat, that here
it is safe to crawl in?

For sometimes have parsons been found a
little unchristlike in mind.

Here answered that scoundrel, the fox:
However could that be found out?

Is it timid you are? Then let us return;
my dear little wife

Will you with all honor receive, and fur-
nish a savory meal; 70

If in it no mice can be found still let us
it joyfully eat.
But Tybert the cat sprang in through the
hole, for he felt quite abashed
By the bantering words of the fox, and
straight he fell into the snare.
In this way the guests of sir Reynard a
bad entertainment received.

Now Tybert, as soon as he felt the tight-
ening cord at his throat,
Made a start apprehensively back, and flurried
became through alarm.
Then made a more vigorous jump, and
tighter the cord was thus drawn.
To Reynard he plaintively called, who then
with his ear at the hole
Was listing with rancorous joy, and thus
through the opening spake:
Dear Tybert, how like you the mice? You
find them, I hope, good and fat; 80
If only young Martin but knew that you
were consuming his game

He mustard had certainly brought, for he is
a well-mannered boy.

At court do they sing so at meals? Suspicious
it sounds to my ears.

If could I but Isengrim have just now in
the hole, as I you

To ruin have managed to bring, he surely
should pay me for all

The harm that to me he hath done; and
Reynard thus went on his way.

He went not, however, alone to practice his
thievish designs;

Adultery, murder, and treason, and theft,
to him were no sins,

And now he had something on hand for
himself. To the lovely and fair

Dame Greedimund sought he a visit to pay,
with a two-fold intent: 90

He hoped from her first to find out exactly
what Isengrim charged,

And second the villain desired his old
escapades to renew;

To court had sir Insengrim gone, advantage
of which he would take;

For none had the shade of a doubt that
the all too apparent regard
Of his wife for the villainous fox had
excited the wrath of the wolf.
Reynard entered his mistress's house, but
failed to find her at home.
God bless you, my little stepchildren, he
said, no more and no less,
Gave an affable nod to the lads and on to
his errand he sped.
At morning Dame Greedimund came, as day
was beginning to break,
And she asked: Has nobody been to
enquire after me? And they said: 100
Our godfather Reynard is hardly away, and
you he would see;
His little stepchildren he called us all whom
he found in the house.
Then shouted Dame Greedimund out: For
that he shall pay! And ran off
This offense to avenge the very same hour.
She had reason to know
Where he was accustomed to walk. She
reached him and fiercely began:

Pray, what kind of language is this? What
sort of outrageous remarks

Have you, without scruple or shame, in the
ears of my children pronounced?

For this you shall certainly pay. Thus
fiercely she spake and displayed

A furious face; laid hold of his beard; and
then let him feel

The sharpness and strength of her teeth.

He tried to run out of her way; 110

She suddenly after him rushed and then
followed stirring events.

Not a very long distance away had a castle
in ruins its place,

Into which they both hurriedly ran; now,
by reason of age and decay,

In the wall at one side of a tower a crack
could by fortune be seen.

Through this Reynard managed to slip, but
not without having to squeeze,

For narrow and small was the rift; then,
bulky and plump as she was,

The wolf stuck her head in the cleft; and
there having gotten she pressed

And hustled and rooted and shoved, and
tried to go after the fox,
But only stuck faster within; she could
neither go on nor retreat.
When Reynard took notice of this, he ran
to the furthest side, 120
By the tortuous path within, and tried her
once more to molest.
But she was not wanting for words, she
rated him well; you behave,
She cried, like a knave and a thief; and
Reynard responded thereto:
As never has happened before, so may it
just now come to pass.

Small credit or honor it brings your wife
through another to spare,
As Reynard was doing just now. To the
scoundrel no matter was this.
When now, in due process of time, the wolf
herself freed from the crack,
Was Reynard already away, having gone
his own path to pursue.

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And this made her ladyship think that the
law she herself would enforce,
Her honor to guard and preserve, which
doubly at present was lost. 130

At Tybert now let us once more take a
look. The poor forlorn chap,
As soon as he felt himself caught, bewailed
in the way of a cat
His distress. This reached little Martin's
quick ears, and he sprang out of bed.
Thank God, he exclaimed, the lasso I have
at a fortunate time
Suspended in front of the hole, for the
robber is caught, and I think
He will have to pay well for the cock.
Thus did young Martin rejoice,
Set light to a candle in haste, (the folks in
the house were asleep),
His father and mother he woke and all the
domestics as well,
And cried: We have captured the fox, so
let us upon him now wait.

All came, both the little and big; yea, even
the parson got up 140
And wrapped in a mantle himself; and
posted ahead of them all
His cook with a couple of lights, and Martin
had hurriedly seized
A good solid cudgel, with which he devoted
himself to the cat,
Dealt blows both on body and head, and
knocked out in fury an eye.
And into him all of them pitched; there
came with a sharp pointed fork
The priest in great haste to the fray,
expecting to settle the thief.
Tybert now thought he should die; then
raving with madness he sprang
Between the bare legs of the priest, and
savagely bit him and scratched;
He terribly injured the man and avenged
without mercy his eye.
The priest with a scream made a rush and
fell in a faint to the ground. 150
Unadvisedly chattered the cook, that the
very old devil himself

Had managed the matter to play her a
trick; and doubly she swore,
Yea threefold indeed, how joyfully she
would have lost, if this harm
Had not to her master been done, her
entire little bit of effects.
Yea, swore that the loss of a treasure of
gold, if one she possessed,
She certainly would not regret; she without
it could very well do.
Thus bemoaned she her master's disgrace
and the terrible wounds he'd received.
At length with full many laments, they laid
him again on his bed,
And Tybert they left in the cord where
him they completely forgot.

When Tybert, the cat, now himself found all
alone in his woe, 160
So grievously beaten and covered with
wounds, and so near unto death,
He seized, out of sheer love of life, the
cord and began it to gnaw.

Is there no way to get myself out of this
horrible scrape? So he thought,
And carried his point; the cord snapped
in two. How happy he felt
As he hastened to flee from the place
where he so much pain had endured.
He nimbly escaped from the hole and then
in a trice made his way
With speed to the court of the king, and
on the next morning arrived.
He angrily chided himself: So the devil
has yet been obliged
You, through Reynard's deceit, that traitor
most vile, to subdue.
You come again back in disgrace, an eye
having lost from your head, 170
And bitterly laden with stripes, how com-
pletely ashamed you must be.

The wrath of the king waxed heavy and
hot; with threats he ordained
That death to the traitor be dealt, without
any favor or grace;

Then ordered his council convoked. His
nobles and legal adepts
Arrived in response to his call, and he
asked how the miscreant should
Be finally brought to account, who now had
so guilty been shown.
As increasing complaints about Reynard
were constantly being received,
Thus Grimbart the badger held forth: In
this court of justice there are,
No doubt, a great number of lords who of
Reynard but evil can think,
But still to a freeman's just rights must
violence never be done. 180
A third time he summoned must be; when
this has been legally done,
If he fail his appearance to make, the law
may him guilty pronounce.
The monarch responded to this: I fear that
of all there's not one
Who would a third summons convey to the
crafty and treacherous knave;
For who has more eyes than he wants?
And who is fool-hardy enough

To endanger his limbs and his life, on
account of this mutinous scamp?
To put to such hazard his health, and
nevertheless at the end
Reynard fail to arrest? I can think not of
one who would make the attempt.

The badger replied very loud: Lord King,
if it please you to make
A demand such as this upon me, I at once
will the errand perform, 190
Let it be whatsoever it may. Officially will
you me send,
Or go I as if of myself? You have nothing
to do but command.
The king thus assigned him the task: You
may go! All the charges you've heard,
As they have together been brought; but
go you with wisdom to work,
For he is a dangerous man. And Grimbart
then said in reply:
This once I will venture the task, and hope
that I yet shall him bring.

Thus started he off on the road towards
Malepartus, the fort.

Reynard he found in the place with wife
and with children, and said:

Uncle Reynard, I wish you good day! Full
of learning and wisdom you are,

And judicious regarded as well; we are all
with astonishment filled 200

That you the behest of the king disregard,
I may say, even mock.

To you seems it not that the time has
arrived? Received from all sides

Are constantly growing complaints and evil
reports. I advise

That you with me come to the court; delay
will no longer avail.

Already have many complaints been brought
to the ears of the king,

And the summons I bring you to-day is
the third that to you has been sent.

Surrender you not, condemned you will be;
and then will the king

Hither his vassals conduct, and you will
besiege, and reduce

Malepartus, this stronghold of yours; and
thus will to ruin be brought
Your wife and your children and goods, and
life you will certainly lose. 210
The king you can never elude, so the very
best thing you can do
Is to travel with me to the court. Of cun-
ning devices and turns
You never will want; you have them on
hand yourself to get free.
For you have assuredly oft, yea, even when
present in court,
Adventures encountered far greater than this,
and always contrived
To come from them all with eclat, and
leave your opponents disgraced.

Thus ended sir Grimbart his speech and
Reynard responded thereto;
Dear uncle, you counsel me well, that I
put in appearance at court
In person my rights to defend. I earnestly
hope that the king

Will grant me his grace; he knows of what
service to him I can be, 220

And also is fully aware how much I am
hated for this.

No court can be held without me. And
had I yet ten times as much

Done amiss, still without hesitation I know
that if I can succeed

Him to meet to his face and before him to
plead, he will certainly find

The ire in his breast overcome. There are
many, indeed, who attend

Our monarch day in and day out, and have
in his council a seat,

But naught about these does he care; among
the whole lot can be found

Neither reason nor sense. At every session,
however, of court,

Wherever it is I may be, the decree to
my wisdom is left.

When monarch and nobles convene, in criti-
cal matters of state 230

To formulate prudent advice, it is Reynard
who has it to find.

There are many who envy me this; and,
 alas, I must be on my guard,
For they've sworn to encompass my death,
 and the wickedest far of them all
Just now are together at court, which cer-
 tainly gives me concern.
Over ten can I count, and mighty ones too,
 then how by myself
Can I such a number withstand? For this
 have I made such delay.
I think it, however, now well to accompany
 you to the court,
My suit at the bar to defend; this me
 greater honor will bring
Than through any slackness of mine my
 wife and my offspring to plunge
Into dangers and griefs without end; we
 every one should be lost, 240
For the king is too mighty for me, and be
 it whatever it may,
The same must I do so soon as commanded
 by him; we can try
To make with our enemies there some use-
 ful arrangement, perhaps.

Reynard then said to his wife: Look after
the children, I beg!

And more than of even the rest, take care
of the youngest, Reinhart,

With his fine set of teeth in his dear little
mouth; I hope that he will

His father's true image become, and here's
Rossell, the arch little rogue,

Who is just as endeared to my heart. For
both of the children I beg,

Do the best that you can while I'm gone!
I will it you amply repay

Should I luckily come again back, and you
to my counsel give heed. 250

With this he departed from thence, attend
by Grimbart, his friend;

Left Ermelyn there with both of her sons
and hurried away;

He left ill-provided his house, which made
very anxious his wife.

Not yet a short hour on the road had pro-
ceeded together the two

When Reynard to Grimbart thus spake:

Dear nephew, most worthy of friends,
To you I'm compelled to avow that I trem-
ble all over with fear;

I cannot myself get away from the bitter
and terrible thought

That verily I am pursuing the road to
my death. Thus I see

My sins all before me displayed, all ever
committed by me.

You cannot imagine the dread with which
I now find myself filled. 260

Pray let me confess, give ear to my words,
for no other priest

Can be hereabouts found, and if a clean
breast I now make of them all,

No worse on account of the same shall I
stand in the mind of my king.

Grimbart then said: First you must robbing
and stealing give up,

All scandalous breaches of faith and other
accustomed deceits,

Or confession will do you no good. I know
it, responded the fox,

So let me begin on the spot, and you with
attention give ear.

Confiteor tibi, Pater et Mater, that I on the
cat,

The otter, and many besides right numer-
ous antics have played,

I confess it and freely submit myself to the
penance entailed. 270

Speak English, the badger replied, whereby
I may know what you mean.

At this Reynard said: I cannot deny that
I certainly have

Transgressed against all of the beasts at
present existing on earth;

For instance, my uncle the bear, whom I
caught in the limb of a tree,

Whose head was all covered with blood,
and who was so wounded with blows.

Then Tybert I led after mice, but yet held
him fast in a cord,

Very much was he forced to endure and
met with the loss of an eye.

So Henning with reason complained, for
him of his children I robbed,
Both little and big as they came, and found
them quite good to the taste.
I excepted not even the king, and manifold
capers and tricks 280
With boldness I've played upon him, and
too on his consort, the queen,
From which she but lately got well. And
further I'm bound to confess
That Isengrim have I, the wolf, with
industry greatly disgraced;
But time have I not the whole to relate.
I always him called
My uncle, but only in jest, for between us
no kinship exists.
Now once on a time, nearly six years ago,
he came to Elkmar,
When there in the convent I lived, to see
me and ask me for help,
Because he a notion had formed of becoming
a monk; he thought
It might be a profession for him; so gave
a good pull at the bell,

And greatly the ringing enjoyed. Thereon
his front paws I made fast 290
In the rope that was tied to the bell. He
did not demur and, thus fixed,
He pulled and diverted himself, and seemed
to be learning the bells;
Yet could not, however, the art but a bad
reputation him bring,
For as stupid and crazy he rang, till all of
the people around
Collected with haste in dismay from every
alley and street,
For certain they felt that a grievous disas-
ter had come to the town.
They came and discovered him there, and
before he could even explain
His wish to embrace the clerical life, he
was suddenly caught
By the surging and furious crowd, and
almost was beaten to death.
Yet still did the fool in his purpose persist,
and even implored 300
That I with due honor would see that a
tonsure for him was procured;

I therefore had cut the hair on his crown
and so thoroughly singed
That frizzled with heat was the skin and
parched as a pea that is baked.
Thus often for him I prepared hard cuffs,
severe kicks, and disgrace.
And I taught him the way to catch fish,
which never do with him agree.
He followed me once to the border of
France, when jointly we stole
To the house where a parson abode, the
richest of all thereabouts.
This parson a storehouse possessed with a
number of savory hams,
Of bacon some long tender sides he kept
there for curing as well,
And likewise a tub full of meat but recently
placed in the brine. 310
Now Isengrim managed, at length, in the
wall, which of stone was composed,
A hole of some measure to scratch, through
which he might easily go.
I jogged him along at the work, his avarice
also him urged;

But amid the profusion he found he could
not restrain his desires,
But stuffed without measure himself, by
reason of which did the cleft
Put a powerful curb on his much swollen
frame and checked his return.
Oh! how he denounced the perfidious thing,
that allowed him to pass
When hungry within, but would not permit
him when filled to go back!
Thereon in the village I raised a hubbub
and outcry so great
That soon I excited the folk to look for
the trail of the wolf; 320
Then ran to the clergyman's house, and
came on him having a meal,
Just as before him was placed a capon,
young, tender, and cooked
To a T, so upon it I swooped and carried
it off in my mouth.
Up jumped the good priest with a scream,
and after me tried to pursue,
And the table knocked over with all that
was on it to eat and to drink.

Catch and belabor him well; kick him out,
cried the furious priest,
Then cooled off his wrath in a pool that
lay unobserved in his way,
Wherein he now floundered full length; and
people rushed in crying: Strike!
At this I ran off from the place and after
me all in a crowd
Who to me the most venomous felt. The
parson was heard above all: 330
The bold and audacious thief! he took from
my table the fowl!
Then ran I as fast as I could until I
arrived at the barn,
And there, much against my desire, I let
the bird slip to the earth,
As I, to my grief, too heavy it found; and
thus to the crowd
I was lost, but the fowl was regained, and
as the priest raised it aloft
Became he aware of the wolf in the barn,
and the crowd saw him too.
The father now called to them all: Come
quickly and pummel him well;

To our hands has a different thief, a wolf,
been delivered instead;
Away should he get, disgraced we should be,
and truly would all
Be laughing at our expense from the east
to the west of the land. 340
The wolf some hard thinking now did;
upon him fell blows like the rain,
On his body in every part, and inflicted
most torturing wounds.
All shouted as loud as they could, and the
men who behind had been left
In a body together rushed up and felled him
for dead to the earth.
He never, so long as he'd lived, had met
with affliction so great;
If one should on canvass it paint, it very
astounding would be
To notice how he the good priest repaid
for his bacon and hams.
They bundled him out on the road and
seized him and dragged him pellmell
Through hedges and ditches and mud, till
in him no life could be traced;

He made himself dirty and foul, and hence,
with abhorrence and hate, 350
He out of the village was cast, and left in
a deep filthy pool,
They thinking at last he was dead. In such
ignominious swoon
I know not how long he remained, ere he
conscious became of his woe;
And how after all he got off, that too have
I never found out.
And yet not long since (it may be a year)
he swore that to me
Ever faithful and true he would be, but
this did not last very long.
Now why he did thus to me swear I was
able with ease to conceive.
I came on him once when he wished his
fill of some fowls to procure;
And, so as to play him a trick, I pictured
with clearness and care
A beam upon which, as a rule, a cock in
the evening would roost, 360
With seven fat hens at his side. I guided
him then to the place,

In stillness and darkness of night, as twelve
by the clock had been struck;
The sash of the window, I knew, was raised
with a thin piece of wood,
And stood ready open for use, so in I pre-
tended to go,
But then I surrendered my place, and my
uncle I asked to go first,
And said: Proceed boldly within; on well-
fatted hens you will come.
If you your fair lady would win, you must
never faint-hearted become.
Very cautiously crawled he inside and groped
with the greatest of care
Hither and thither about, and at length he
indignantly said:
Oh, how you have led me astray! Of fowls,
in good truth, I can find 370
Not a feather. I said: The birds that in
front were accustomed to sit
Myself I have carried away, the others are
further behind;
Without hesitation go on and mind that
with caution you step.

The beam was undoubtedly small on which
we so carefully walked,
Yet I kept him in front and myself well
behind; then backwards I made
My way through the window again, and
gave a good tug at the wood;
Down came the sash with a bang, and the
wolf made a start of alarm;
In shaking he fell from the beam and came
in a heap to the ground.
Now, affrighted, the people awoke, who all
were asleep by the fire.
What fell in the window? they cried, in
direst confusion and fear; 380
Without loss of time they arose; and, speed-
ily lighting the lamp,
Him down in the corner they found, and
struck him and polished his skin
To the fullest extent of their strength; it
surprises me how he escaped.

Still further to you I confess, that I to
dame Greedimund oft

In secret have gone, and openly too. Now
certainly that
Ought not to have ever occurred, and I
wish I had left it undone,
For, live she as long as she may, her
shame she will scarcely repair.

I now have confessed to you all that,
endeavor as much as I may,
I am able to bring to my mind, and it
heavily weighs on my soul.
Absolve me, I pray you, therefrom, and
meekly be sure that I will 390
All penance perform to its end, no matter
how much you impose.

Already to Grimbart 'twas known how he
in such case should proceed;
He broke off a twig on the way, and said:
Strike, uncle, yourself
Three times on the back with this twig,
and then put it carefully down,

In the manner I show, on the earth and
as many times over it jump;
With meekness then kissing the twig your-
self fitly dutiful show;
Such is the penance I lay upon you, and
pronounce you from all
Your sins and all chastisements free and dis-
charged. I fully forgive
You all in the name of the Lord, whatever
it be you have done.

When Reynard the penance enjoined had
duly performed to the end, 400
Then Grimbart most solemnly said: My
uncle, let now in good works
Be clear your repentance to all; the psalms
also read and attend
The churches with zeal, and fast on the
days appointed by law.
To him who may ask show clearly the way
and give to the poor
Without stint, and unto me swear your
infamous life to forsake;

All plundering, robbing, and theft, seduction and treason avoid,
For certain it is that by this you alone
will to mercy attain.
Then Reynard replied: I will do as you
say, I pledge you my word.

Thus was the shrift at an end, and then
they continued their way
To palace and court of the king; the saintly
Grimbart and he 410
Then threaded a blackish and fertile expanse,
where a convent they saw
On the right hand side of the road, in
which holy women engaged
In serving of God from morning to night,
and kept in their yard
Of cocks a great number and hens and
many fine capons as well,
Who wandered at times for their food a
distance outside of the wall,
Where Reynard had called on them oft.
So now unto Grimbart he said:

Our speediest way is to pass along by the
side of this wall.
But set were his thoughts on the fowls,
how they were out taking the air.
So there his confessor he led, till near to
the birds they approached;
Then the scamp to and fro in his head set
rolling his covetous eyes. 420
He was pleased above all with a cock, in
splendid condition and young,
Which firmly he fixed in his eye, as he
strutted astern of the rest;
Behind him he hastily sprang, and the
feathers a-flying began.

Indignantly Grimbart reproved the shameful
relapse of the fox:
Base nephew, behave you like this, and
would you already again
Make a sinful attack on a fowl so soon
after you have been shrived?
Such penitence seems to me fine! And
Reynard to Grimbart replied:

Dear uncle, if even in thought I such a
thing can have done,

Then pray unto God that he may in mercy
forgive me the sin.

I gladly forbear and never will do so again.

Then they went 430

Round about by the convent again to their
road, and thus were obliged

To cross a diminutive bridge, and Reynard
behind him cast eyes

A second time after the fowls; he could not
himself keep in check;

Had anyone cut off his head, without any
question it would

Have flown in pursuit of the birds, so vehe-
ment was his desire.

Grimbart observed this and cried: Where let
you, my nephew, your eyes

Again wend their way? Of a 'truth, an
odious glutton you are!

Said Reynard, much pained, in reply: My
uncle, you do me a wrong;



“Had any one cut off his head, without any question it would
Have flown in pursuit of the birds.”

Do not so excited become, and disturb not,
I beg you, my prayers,
But a paternoster allow me me to say, for
the souls of the fowls 440
And geese are in need of the same, as many
as I from the nuns,
Those heaven-born women, have filched, by
use of my prudence and skill.
Grimbart said not a word, and the fox
turned his head not away from the fowls
So long as in sight they remained. They
managed, however, at length,
The road they had left to regain and began
to draw near to the court;
And as Reynard the castle observed, in
which dwelt his master the king,
He inwardly troubled became, for the charges
against him were grave. 447

CANTO FOUR.

When rumour got spread at the court that
Reynard was coming indeed,
To see him all hurried outside, both noble
and common alike,
And few of them friendly disposed; nearly
all had complaints to prefer.
But Reynard undoubtedly thought that this
no significance had;
At least so he carried himself, as with
Grimbart the badger he came,
This moment with boldness and grace, along
through the principal street.
Courageous and calm he advanced, as if, of
a truth, he had been
Own son and true heir of the king, and
free and devoid of all fault;
Yea! thus before Leo he stepped, and took
in the palace his place
Right up in the midst of the lords; he knew
how to feign unconcern. 10

Illustrious king and worshipful lord, he began
to declaim,
Most noble and mighty you are, foremost in
merit and rank;
I therefore you humbly entreat to hear me
with justice today.
Of your majesty's servitors all, not a soul
more devoted than I
Has ever been found; this without hesitation
I dare to maintain;
And many I know at the court, who would
gladly oppress me for that.
To me would your friendship be lost, if now,
my enemies wish,
The lies they disseminate should, perchance,
to you credible seem.
But you, as is lucky for me, investigate
every complaint.
As fully accused as accusers you hear; and,
though they have told 20
Many falsehoods behind my back, yet tran-
quil I rest and reflect
That well you my loyalty know, which
brings persecution on me.

Be silent! responded the king, no prattle
or fawning will help;
Your iniquities din in our ears, and punish-
ment now you awaits.
Regard have you had for the peace, that I
to the beasts have proclaimed
And sworn to maintain? There stands the
cock! His children have you,
Malicious and treacherous thief, one after
another destroyed!
And for me the depth of your love, you
wish, I presume, to evince
When you my authority spurn, and my
servants so grossly abuse!
The health of poor Tybert's destroyed, and
by slow and distressing degrees 30
Will the suffering bear get well of the
wounds inflicted by you.
But I will you not further reproach, for
here are accusers enough,
And acts that are proved to the hilt; you
hardly this time can escape.

Am I, most benevolent sire, for this to be
guilty adjudged?
Reynard said. Do I incur blame if Bruin,
with blood-covered crown,
Came limping again to you back? If he
took the risk, and presumed
On Rüsteviel's honey to feed, and the half-
witted peasants against
Him lifted their hands, yet still is he strong
and enormous of limb.
If they blows and abuse on him cast, ere
into the water he ran,
He could, as a vigorous man, the onset
with ease have repelled. 40
And also, if Tybert the cat, whom I with
due honor received
And treated as well as I could, from steal-
ing could not himself keep,
But into the house of the priest, although I
him faithfully warned,
Went sneaking when night had set it, and
there made acquaintance with grief,
Have I retribution deserved because he be-
haved like a fool?

Too near to your princely crown, indeed,
would the consequence lie!

With me, to be sure, you can deal in accord
with your sovereign will,

And, clear as the case may appear, may
give what decision you please,

Whether be it to weal or be it to woe the
matter may tend.

If I'm to be roasted or boiled, if I'm to be
blinded or hanged, 50

Or beheaded indeed, I am perfectly willing
that so it be done.

We are all in the grasp of your power,
completely are we in your hands;

For you are majestic and strong, how then
can the helpless resist?

If you put me to death, by that, of a
truth, very little you gain.

Let happen, however, what may, I loyally
yield to the law.

Then Bellyn the ram began to remark:
The time has arrived

To advance our complaints. And then with
his relatives, Tybert the cat
And Bruin the bear, and a legion of beasts,
lord Isengrim came;
Also Baldwin the ass and Lampen the hare
presented themselves;
And Nidget the puppy appeared, with the
bulldog Rhyn and the doe, 60
Named Metke, with Herman the buck; and
squirrel and weasel, as well
As the ermine, were added thereto. Nor
did either the ox or the horse
Neglect to be there. Near by could be
seen the beasts of the chase,
Among them the stag and the roe; and
Bockert the beaver came too,
With marten and rabbit and boar; together
they all crowded in;
Bartolt the stork and Pica the jay and
Grusley the crane
Came^r flying across with Tibke the duck
and Alheid the goose;
And others besides came hurrying in with
their troubles and woes.

Henning, the grief-stricken cock, with his
children, now but a few,
Made bitter complaint; and hither there
came without number the birds, 70
And a concourse so great of the beasts that
no one could mention their names.
All made an attack on the fox, and hoped
that his many misdeeds
They now into question might bring, and
inflicted his punishment see.
In front of the monarch they pressed, with
vehement, furious speech;
Charges on charges they heaped, and narra-
tives ancient and new
Introduced. In one single sitting of court
there never had been
Brought up to the throne of the king, so
many complaints to be heard.
His place Reynard took and proceeded with
skill his defence to conduct.
He began his address, and forth from his
mouth the eloquent words
Of his justification outflowed, as if they
were obvious truth. 80

He was master of what to present and what
to say nothing about;
And his auditors all were amazed, and
thought he was innocent shown.
He even had claims of his own to put in,
and charges to make.
At length there rose up to their feet some
genuine, trustworthy men,
Who posted themselves by the fox, against
him their evidence gave,
And all of his wickedness clearly made
known. That settled the case,
For then, with unanimous voice, the court
of the king resolved
That Reynard the fox was worthy of death;
that he should be seized,
Imprisoned and hanged by the neck, in
order that he be compelled
For his infamous crimes to atone with an
ignominious death. 90

Just now did Reynard himself consider the
game as all up.

Not very much good had been done by his
cunning harangue. The king
Pronounced sentence himself: and then was
the criminal's pitiful end,
As him they imprisoned and bound, paraded
in sight of his eyes.

As Reynard there stood, shackled according
to sentence and law,
His foes were bestirring themselves to lead
him at once to his death;
But his friends stood about in dismay, quite
overcome with their grief,
Grimbart and Martin the ape, with others
of kin to the fox.
The sentence with umbrage they heard, and
all were more filled with regret
Than expected might be; for Reynard of
barons was one of the chief: 100
And there he now stood, of all of his
honors and offices stripped
And doomed to a shameful death. How now
must the scene they surveyed

His kinsmen have cut to the quick! In a
body together they took
Their leave of the king, and withdrew from
the court, to the last that was there.

The monarch, however, it vexed, that so
many knights should depart
From him thus. It now could be seen how
great was the crowd of his kin
Who had gone, in their great discontent at
Reynard's impending doom.
And thus did his majesty speak to one of
his trustiest friends:
Undoubtedly Reynard is vile; we must, for
all that, bear in mind
That many relations he has, who cannot be
spared from the court. 110

But Isengrim, Bruin, and Tybert the cat,
all three of them were
About the poor captive at work; impatient
the infamous death,

As awarded had been by the king, to
execute now on their foe;
So hurriedly dragged him outside, and the
gallows beheld from afar.
And now the tom-cat to the wolf began, in
his fury, to speak:
Consider, lord Isengrim, well, how Reynard
once schemed in all ways,
And everything did that he could, and suc-
ceeded, too, in his hate,
On the gallows your brother to see. How
joyously marched he along
With him to the place of his doom!
Neglect not to pay him the debt.
And remember, sir Bruin as well, how
shamefully you he betrayed, 120
Below there in Rüsteviel's yard, to the
boorish and furious clowns,
Male and female alike, and scurvily left
you to wounds and to blows,
And the shame thereupon that ensued,
which now in all regions is known.
Take care and your efforts unite, for if he
escape us to-day,

And freedom contrive to procure, by his
wit and insidious arts,
A time for our precious revenge will never
be granted again;
So let us make haste and avenge the
wrongs he has done to us all.

Then Isengrim said: What use are your
words? Go, bring me at once
A reliable cord; with that we will soon put
him out of his pain!
Thus spake they ill of the fox and jour-
neyed along on the road. 130

In silence heard Reynard their words; at
length he, however, began:
Since me you so bitterly hate, and thirst
for a deadly revenge,
I am greatly surprised that you seem not
to know how to bring it about!
Your Tybert is fully informed where a good
trusty rope may be found,

For he did it most carefully test, when into
the house of the priest
He thrust himself in after mice, and did
not with honor return.
But, Isengrim, you and the bear are mak-
ing such terrible haste
Your uncle to bring to his end, of course
you intend to succeed.

The monarch arose from his seat, with all
the noblesse of his court,
The sentence to see carried out; and also
was present the queen, 140
Who with the procession had come, by her
ladies escorted in state;
And behind them a multitude flocked, com-
posed of the poor and the rich,
All wishing for Reynard's decease, and hop-
ing to see it take place.
Isengrim uttered meanwhile a word to his
kinsmen and friends,
Exhorting them all to be sure compactly
together to hold,

And keep on the manacled fox a steady and
vigilant eye;

For they were in constant dread of the
shrewd fellow's getting away.

The wolf, above all, commanded his wife:

If you set any store

On your life, take heed to my words and
help us the rascal to hold!

If he manage to get himself free, we all
are involved in disgrace. 150

And further to Bruin he said: Bethink
how he held you in scorn!

With usury now can you pay the whole of
your debt to him back.

Tybert is able to climb, and above shall he
fasten the rope.

You hold him and give me your help, and
I will the ladder remove;

Then all, in a minute or two, with this
knave will be brought to an end.

Said the bear: Put the ladder in place, and
I will him certainly hold.

See now, Reynard said when they'd done,
how exceedingly busy you are
In leading your uncle to death! I should
think you would rather him guard
And protect; and, in his distress, would
some little pity display;
I gladly for mercy would beg, but what
should I profit by that? 160
Isengrim hates me o'ermuch; yea, even
his wife he has told
To hold me and see to it well that the
way of escape is cut off.
Should she but reflect on the past, then
could she not injure me now;
But if I am doomed to be slain, I earnestly
wish that it might
Be speedily done. My father too came into
frightful distress,
But yet at the last it was quick. There
attended, I know, at his death
Not quite such a number as here. If
longer, however, you mean
Me to keep in suspense, then must it in
truth redound to your shame.

Do you hear, said Bruin the bear, how
boldly the vagabond talks?
Come on! String him up out of hand!
The time for his end has arrived. 170

Earnestly now did Reynard reflect: Oh!
could I but think,
At once, of some artifice new, to aid me
in this urgent need,
Whereby might the king, in his grace, with
clemency grant me my life,
And these, my implacable foes, all three,
into shame might be thrown!
Of all let me think, and then must things
shift for themselves, for here
Is in question 'my neck! Not a moment to
lose! How shall I escape?
Evils of all kinds upon me are heaped.
The king is displeased,
My friends are all melted away, and matters
controlled by my foes.
I have rarely done anything good, and even
the might of the king,

As well as his council's advice, have I truly
but little esteemed. 180
I am guilty of much that is wrong, and
yet my ill-luck have I hoped,
Each time, to avert. Had I but the
chance to say a few words,
I surely should then not be hanged; I
will not abandon the hope.

His back to the ladder he turned, with face
to the people below,
And cried: Before me I see the grim fig-
ure of death, and can him
Not escape. And now from you all, as
many as hear me, I beg
But a little extension of time, before I
depart from the earth.
Indeed I should very much like, to you my
confession sincere
To publicly make for the last time on
earth, and truly disclose
Whatever of harm I have done, so that to
another, perchance, 190



“Indeed, I should very much like, to you my confession sincere,
To publicly make, for the last time on earth.”

May not, in the future, be laid this criminal
 action or that,
 Till now unsuspected by you, but done
 under cover by me;
 That I may thereby, at the last, much evil
 prevent, and may hope
 That God, in his fullness of grace, will
 remember me now in my need.

A number to pity were moved, and one to
 another they said:
 Small is the favor and short the reprieve.
 They petitioned the king,
 And the king conceded their prayer. Then
 again did Reynard become
 A little more lightsome of heart, and hoped
 for a happy result;
 The granted occasion he turned to account,
 and as follows he spake:
 Spiritus Domini, come to my aid! Not
 one do I see, 200
 In all the vast concourse that's here, whom
 I have not some time ill-used.

First, I was yet but a youngster small, and
the breast of my dam
Had hardly forgotten to suck, when my
passions I followed unchecked
Among the young lambs and the goats
that, a distance apart from the flock,
At play were dispersed in 'the fields; their
dear bleating voices I heard
Too gladly by far, as a craving I got for
more delicate food,
And soon their acquaintance I made. One
lambkin I slew with my teeth,
And drank up its blood; it tasted so good
that I killed and devoured
Also four of the youngest goats, and thus
further training obtained.
I exempted no kind of a bird, not a fowl,
nor a duck, nor a goose, 210
On which I might light, and have in the
sand full many entombed,
When all that I harried to death I did
not desire to consume.

It afterwards happened one winter to me,
on the banks of the Rhine,
That Isengrim came I to know, who was
lurking aback of the trees.
He assured me, without losing time, that I
was a kinsman of his;
Indeed on his fingers he could the precise
degrees of the tie
Call over to me. I gave my assent, an
alliance we formed,
And each to the other engaged as trusty
companions to roam.
Ah, many an evil thereby was I doomed
to prepare for myself!
Together we went through the land; while
he stole the big on our way, 220
And I stole the small. Whate'er we
obtained was common to be;
But common indeed it was not, he parted
it just as he chose;
A half I have never received. Yea, worse
have I suffered than this;
If he managed a calf to purloin, or get
for his booty a ram,

If I found him at table with more than
enough, or consuming a goat
Just recently done to its death; if a buck
in the grasp of his claws,
Despite of its struggles, was held, at me
he would grin and look sour,
Till growling he drove me away, my share
to retain for himself.
It always turned out with me thus, no
matter the size of the joint
He had got. Indeed, if to pass it should
come that, in company, we 230
Should manage to capture an ox, or our-
selves possess of a cow,
At once made appearance his wife and
seven young cubs on the scene,
Who then would lay hold of the prey, and
crowd me away from the meal.
Not even a rib could I get; so polished
and dry were they gnawed,
That nothing like meat could be found;
and I must contented appear.
But heaven, however, be praised, I suffered
not hunger thereby.

From that splendid treasure of mine I kept
myself privately fed,
By means of the silver and gold, that
securely I keep in a place
Not easily found. Therein have I all I
can want; for, in truth,
No wagon could bear it away, if it seven
times went to the task. 240

The king paid attention thereto, as mention
was made of this wealth,
Inclined himself forward and asked: From
whence did it come to your hands?
Speak out and at once! The treasure I
mean! And then Reynard said:
This secret from you I will not conceal,
what good could it do?
For naught of these costly things with me
can I take when I go.
Since then you are pleased to command, I
will all to you truly relate;
For out it assuredly must; since, whether
for evil or good,

A secret so weighty indeed could not be
much longer concealed;
For the treasure was stolen, forsooth. With
oaths had a number conspired
To kill you, beneficent king, and if, at the
very same hour, 250
The treasure had not with prudence been
moved, it thus had occurred.
Take notice of this, gracious lord, for both
your well-being and life
On the treasure's security hung; and, alas,
the purloining thereof
Made things with my father go hard; 'it
led him, in prime of his life,
The last dreadful journey to take; to eter-
nal perdition, perhaps;
But, merciful master, for you it all turned
out for the best.

Perplexedly listened the queen to all of
this horrible tale,
The intricate, furtive design for depriving
her consort of life,

The treason, the treasure, and all that he
had been telling about.

I caution you, Reynard, she cried, reflect!
for about to embark 260

You are on the road to your home;
repentant, disburden your soul;

Set forth the unvarnished truth and plainly
the murder make known.

The king supplemented her words: Strict
silence let every one keep!

Come, Reynard again here below and step
now up nearer to me,

Whereby I may hear what you say, for the
matter concerneth myself.

Reynard, who saw through it all, took
courage again, and the rounds

Of the ladder he quickly ran down, to the
malcontents' heavy chagrin;

And himself, without more ado, by the
king and his consort he placed,

Who earnestly tried to find out the mean-
ing of all he had said.

He then set himself to make up some new
and astonishing lies. 270
That I the good will of the king and that
of his consort, he thought,
Again could secure; and oh, that my cun-
ning at once would prevail,
And render me able my foes, who me are
conducting to death,
Themselves to destruction to bring; this me
from all peril would save.
For me this would certainly be a blessing
from out of the skies;
But lies without measure, I see, to carry
my purpose I need.

Impatiently then did the queen to Reynard
more questions propound;
Let us know, without any mistake, of what
the whole matter consists.
The truth let us know, your conscience
respect, disburden your soul!
Reynard responded thereto: I gladly will
tell to you all. 280

Death alone is awaiting me now, and nothing can remedy that.
Should I, at the end of my life, my soul
overburden with lies,
And eternal damnation incur, I should act
as if out of my mind.
It is better for me to confess; and if, to
my sorrow, I must
My cherished relations and friends arraign
and put under a cloud,
How can I help it, alas! At hand are the
torments of hell.

Already the king, as he listened intently to
what had been said,
Full heavy at heart had become. He said:
Are you telling the truth?
To his majesty Reynard replied, with air
for the purpose assumed:
I'm an infamous fellow, I know, yet now
am I speaking the truth. 290
What good could I get by telling you lies?
I should only myself

Everlastingly damn. You know very well,
for so it's resolved,
I must die; I am now looking death in the
face and lie will I not;
Neither evil nor good to me now can be of
the slightest avail.
He shook as he uttered these words, and
seemed on the verge of a swoon.

The queen then compassionate spake: I
pity the anguish he feels;
Deign kindly upon him to look, I beg you,
my lord, and reflect;
We both may be saved from much harm by
this revelation of his.
The sooner the better that we the ground
of his narrative find!
Strict silence enforce upon all, and let him
straightforwardly speak. 300
Then issued the king his command, and
all the assembly was still;
But Reynard uplifted his voice: If it please
you my gracious king,

Pray listen to what I shall say. Although
my narration may chance
Without any notes to be made, yet exact
you will find it and true;
The details you'll learn of the plot, and no
one intend I to spare. 305

CANTO FIVE.

Now notice the cunning displayed, and see
how the fox went to work
To hide his offences once more, and harm
unto others to do.
Gratuitous lies he devised, yea, even his
father defamed
On the further side of the grave; and the
badger he grossly traduced,
His loyallest friend, who had so persistently
come to his aid.
There was nothing he scrupled to say, by
which his narration he thought
He might plausible make; that on his
accusers he vengeance might take.

And this is the way he began: My father
once had the good luck,
Not very long since, the wealth of king
Emmrich, the mighty, to find 10
In a secret place; yet to him was the
hoard of but little avail.

He gave himself airs on account of his
wealth, esteeming no more
The beasts of his own degree, and his
comrades of former times
Too little regarding by far; more notable
friends he desired.
Tybert the cat he despatched to the wild
hunting grounds of Ardennes,
Bruin the bear to seek out, to whom he
should fealty swear,
And summon to Flanders forthwith, in order
their king to become.

When Bruin the writing had read, its im-
port him heartily pleased:
Untiring and bold he pursued his way on
to Flanders in haste,
For with something like this had his mind
already for long been engaged.
Arriving he found my father on hand, who
hailed him with joy, 20
And at once off to Isengrim sent, and like-
wise to Grimbart, the sage;

The four put together their heads, discussed
and perfected their plans,
And not far away was a fifth, namely
Tybert, the cat. Near at hand
Lay a village which Iste is called, and this
was the actual place,
A spot between Iste and Ghent, where
jointly the plot they discussed
The whole of a long cloudy night, which
kept their assemblage concealed.
With God met they not, for my father,
the devil more rightly to say,
Them totally had in his power, with his
damnable treasure of gold.
They resolved on the death of the king,
and one to the other they swore
An alliance eternal and firm, and then did
the five take their oath 30
In conjunction on Isengrim's head, that
unitedly they would select
Bruin the bear for their king; and at Aix-
la-chapelle, on the throne,
With aid of the golden crown, the realm
to him firmly secure.

This having been done, if by one of the
king's relations or friends
Resistance thereto should be made, my father
was him to convince
Or tempt with a bribe; and, failing in that,
to eject him at once.
I happened to learn of the scheme, for
Grimbart one morning himself
Full merrily drunken had got, and garrulous
had become.
. . . . Thus went the fool home to his wife and
gave the whole secret away;
Then silence upon her enjoined, thus think-
ing the matter to mend. 40
Very soon after this had occurred, my
wife she encountered, and her
Must she, by a sacred oath, in the regal
trinity's name,
Pledge on her honor and faith that, whether
come evil or good,
To no one a word would she tell; and then
she made known to her all.
In like manner too, has my wife as little
her promise observed,

For, soon as she found where I was, she
told to me all she had heard;
And gave me, moreover, a sign, whereby
the full truth of the tale
I with ease recognized; yet through it I've
only more evil incurred.
It reminded me well of the frogs, the con-
tinual croaking of whom
Ascended, at length, to the ears of our
Lord in the heavens above. 50

They, wishing the rule of a king, were
willing to live in restraint,
After having their freedom enjoyed in all
the domains of the earth.
Their petition was granted by God; he sent
them as monarch the stork,
Who steadily hates and maltreats and allows
them no peace to enjoy.
As a fiend he himself to them bears; and
wailing the fools are to-day,
But ah, it's 'too late! The king has them
now altogether subdued.

Reynard to all of the crowd spoke at the
top of his voice:

All could well hear what he said; and thus
he continued his speech:

Observe! My fears were excited for all, lest
so it should turn.

Your highness, I looked out for you and
hoped for a better reward. 60

Of Bruin's intrigues I'm aware, and the
villainous turn of his mind,

As also his many misdeeds; and the worst
I provided against.

Should he become king, we all to destruc-
tion together should go.

Our king is of noble descent, and mighty
and gracious he is,

I privately thought; a mournful exchange
indeed it would be,

A dull, good-for-nothing, unprincipled bear
to exalt in this way.

I studied it over for weeks, and tried the
whole plot to defeat.

To me it was clear above all that, if in
the hands of my sire
The treasure continued to be, he then could
large forces collect,
And surely the game he would win, while
we of our king should be shorn. 70
My care was now centered on this: to
search and discover the spot
Wherein was the treasure concealed, and
stealthily take it away.
Should my father run off to the field, or
the crafty old fellow depart
To the forest, by day or by night, in frost
or in tropical heat,
In sunshine or rain, I was always behind
and tracking his steps.

Once as I lay in the earth hidden with
care and with thoughts
Of how I the treasure could find, so much
about which I had learned,
Then and there I my father espied, as out
of a cranny he stole;

Among the stones he advanced, and up
from below he emerged.
In silence I kept myself hid; he thought
he was all by himself, 80
Scanned the whole field of his view and
then, as he no one perceived,
In the distance or near, his game he began,
and you shall it learn.
Again he put sand in the hole, and skill-
fully made it agree
In level and looks with the rest of the
ground. No one, who had not
Seen it done, could possibly know it was
there. And step after step
As he went, he saw that the spot upon
which he had planted his feet
Should over and over again be thoroughly
brushed with his tail;
And then did away with his trail by rak-
ing about with his mouth.
In this my first lesson I took from my wily
old father that day,
Who versatile was in dodges and tricks and
pranks of all kinds. 90

This having been done, he hurried away to
his task, and I thought
The princely treasure, perhaps, may be in
neighborhood kept.
I quickly stepped up to the place, and
promptly proceeded to work;
And the rift, in a very short time, I man-
aged to pierce with my paws.
Then crept I impatiently in, and heaps of
things priceless I found,
Of the finest of silver a store and gold
that was red; of a truth
Has never the oldest one here his eyes
such a hoard laid upon.
Myself I now set to my task with the aid
of my wife; we dragged
And we carried by day and by night; we
had neither barrow nor cart;
Much labor it therefore entailed and many
an hour of fatigue. 100
Faithfully held dame Ermelyn out, and we
managed at length
To get all the jewels in safety away and
conveyed to a place

That to us more suitable seemed. Mean-
while kept my father himself
Daily in contact with those who our king
were in league to betray.
Now what they resolved you shall hear and
greatly amazed you will be.

Straight Bruin and Isengrim sent to many
departments and lands
Patents the hirelings to call, who were
ordered in numbers to come
And promptly themselves to report; then
Bruin their posts would assign,
And even indulgently give the fellows their
pay in advance.
My father then traversed the lands display-
ing the letters he had, 110
Sure of his treasure that still, he thought,
in its hiding-place lay.
But now it had so come about that, if he,
with all of his friends,
Had ever so thoroughly searched, they
would not a penny have found.

For him was no labor too great, and nim-
bly his way he pursued
Through every land to be found between
the Elbe and the Rhine.
Many hirelings he'd already found, and
many another he gained,
For money was able to lend an emphasis
strong to his words.

At length did the summer arrive, and now
did my father return
To his fellow-conspirators back. Then had
he of sorrows and want
And terrible woes to relate, especially how
he almost 120
His life down in Saxony lost, as among the
castles he roamed,
Where huntsmen with horses and hounds
him daily pursued, insomuch
That barely made he his escape, and then
with his pelt scarcely whole.

Arriving, he joyfully showed the four arch-
traitors the list

Of the comrades that he had secured by
means of his pledges and gold.

Bruin rejoiced at the news, as the five in
conjunction it read.

Its import was this: Twelve hundred of
Isengrim's relatives bold,

With ravenous mouths and sharp-set teeth
in their heads were to come,

And the cats and the bears besides were all
for sir Bruin assured.

The gluttons and badgers as well, Thuringian
and Saxon, would come; 130

Collected, however, they were on this under-
standing alone,

That pay for a month in advance should
be had. Then all in return

Forward would come in their might as soon
as command was received.

God be eternally thanked that I on their
schemes shut the door.

Now, after my father had seen to all that
demanded his care,

He hurried away to the fields, to look on
the treasure once more;
Then first his affliction began, he burrowed
and sought and explored,
Yet the longer he scraped the less he could
find. Of no earthly use
Was the trouble he took on himself and
his inconsolable grief,
For the treasure was now far away, 'twas
nowhere at all to be found. 140
And then, out of anger and shame—how
horribly plagues me the thought,
By day as well as by night—my father
himself went and hanged.

All this was accomplished by me, the
infamous deed to prevent;
And now me but evil it brings, yet I do
not repent what I did.
But the covetous Bruin and Isengrim have,
by the side of the king,
Their seats in his council assigned. And
Reynard, poor fellow, how thou

Art thanked in the opposite way for hav-
ing, the king to preserve,
Thine own loving father destroyed! Where
else is there one to be found,
Who ruin would bring on himself, just
merely your life to prolong?

Meanwhile had the king and the queen
their hands on the treasure to get 150
The greatest cupidity felt; aside they with-
drew and the fox
Invited to them, in private to talk, and
hastily said:
Speak! Where have you this wealth? That
is the thing we would know.
Reynard then said in reply: To me of what
use would it be,
To show the magnificent goods to the king,
who me has condemned?
Too much he confides in my foes, the
vicious assassins and thieves,
Who cumber him down with their lies, in
order my life to obtain.

No, no! interjected the queen, thus shall it
not come to pass!

My lord will accord you your life, and all
that is past will forgive;

He will harbor his anger no more. In
future, however, you must 160

More prudence display, and loyal and true
remain to the king.

Reynard said: My lady and queen, if you
with the king can prevail,

His troth in your presence to give that he
will me pardon once more,

That he all my crimes and misdeeds, and
all the resentment that I

In him have unhappily roused, will forever
efface from his mind,

You then may rest fully assured no king of
our time shall possess

Such vastness of wealth as shall he, through
my fidelity, gain.

The treasure is great; when I show you
the place, surprised you will be.

Confide in him not, said the king, it is
only when he of his thefts,
His lies, and his robberies tells, that one
can him thoroughly trust; 170
For a greater liar than he has certainly
never drawn breath.

To this said the queen in reply: It is true
that his life hitherto
Hath little of confidence earned; at present,
however, reflect
That his uncle, the badger himself, and his
own loving father as well,
This time he has called to account, and
made their iniquities known,
If so he desired he could let them alone,
and of different beasts
These stories of his could relate: he would
not so stupidly lie.

■

Is that your idea? responded the king; if
you think it may turn

In reality out for the best, so that evil
still greater may not

Therefrom be derived, I will do as you
say, and these criminal acts 180

Of Reynard will take on myself, with all
his nefarious deeds.

I will trust him this once, but never again,
let him bear that in mind!

To him on my crown I will swear an
inflexible oath, that, if he,

In future, shall lie or transgress, he shall
it forever repent,

And that all who to him are of kin, be it
only the tenth degree,

Shall atone it whoever they are, and none
from my wrath shall escape;

With evil and shame shall they meet and
ruthless pursuit of the law.

When finally Reynard beheld how quickly
the mind of the king

Was changing, he mustered up courage and
said: Would I like a fool

Myself, gracious monarch, conduct and
stories presume to relate, 190
Whose truthfulness cannot be shown in very
few days, at the most ?

The king then believed what he said and
pardon he granted for all;
His father's high treason the first, and then
Reynard's own evil deeds;
And the latter was now overwhelmingly
pleased. At an opportune time
Was he from the might of his foes and
his own wretched destiny freed.
Most noble of monarchs and lords, Reynard
began then to say,
May God, in his mercy, reward both you
and your consort for all
That you unto me the unworthy, have
done; I will keep it in mind
And, long as eternity lasts, will my grati-
tude constantly show.
In all the dominions and states of the earth
there assuredly lives 200

Not a person now under the sun, to whom
this magnificent wealth
I would rather transfer than just to you
two. What is there of grace
That I, at your hands, have not had? For
that will I willingly give
King Emmerich's treasure to you, exactly
as he it possessed.
I now will explain where it is, and truth
I will honestly speak.

Attend! To the eastward of Flanders a
desert exists, and in that
Lies a thicket alone, which is Hüsterlo
called, take note of the name!
Beyond is a spring that is Krekelborn
named; now bear you in mind
That not far apart are the two. Within
this vicinity comes
Not a woman or man, from beginning to
end of the year. Here abides 210
Nought but the bat and the owl, and here
I the treasure concealed.

As Krekelborn known is the place, this
note and make use of the sign.

With only your consort proceed to the
place, for there certainly is

Not a soul that's sufficiently safe to send as
a messenger there,

And very great harm would result; I could
not it dare to advise.

Alone you must go to the spot. When
Krekelborn you shall have passed,

You two little birches will see; and one,
now attend, will be found

Not very far off from the brook; thus, gra-
cious king, you will go

Unhindered and straight to the trees;
beneath them the treasures lie hid.

You need only burrow and scrape; first
moss you will find at the roots, 220

And then you'll discover at once the richest
and costliest gems,

In gold most artistic and fine, and also
king Emmerich's crown.

If Bruin had had his desire, then he would
be wearing it now.

Decorations in number you'll find and jewels
of brilliance and worth,
And trinkets of gold, which now are not
made, for who could them buy?
This wealth when you see, gracious king,
as there all together it lies,
Of one thing indeed I am sure, in thought
you will honor me then.
Reynard, you honest old fox, you will
think, who so prudently hid
These treasures up under the moss, pros-
perity always be thine,
In what place soever thou art! Thus did
the hypocrite speak. 230

To this said the king in reply: You must
me attend when I go,
For how, if alone, shall I light on the
spot? Of Aix-la-Chapelle,
Without any doubt, I have heard, and Lon-
don and Paris as well,
And Cologne; but Hüsterlo's name I never
once heard in my life,

And of Krekelborn too may the same be
observed; must then I not fear
That lies you are telling again and coining
these names in your head?

Unhappy was Reynard to hear the circum-
spect words of the king,
And he said: Where I you direct is not
so far off as if you
Were told at the Jordan to seek. Why
look at me still with distrust?
To what I have said I adhere, that all can
in Flanders be found. 240
Let us ask some of these; another, per-
haps, may endorse what I say.
Krekelborn! Hüsterlo! Thus did I say,
and these are their names.
And then he called out to the hare, but
Lampen in terror held back.
Then Reynard exclaimed: Come, don't be
afraid! The king only asks
That you, by the oath of allegiance you
recently took, will tell

Him nought but the truth; so out with it
now, provided you know,
And say, where does Hüsterlo stand and
Krekelborn too? Let us hear.

Lampen said: That can I easily tell. In
the desert they stand,
The one from the other not far. The
inhabitants Hüsterlo call
That thicket where bandy-legg'd Simonet
long continued to dwell, 250
Counterfeit money to make, with his daring
companions in crime.
Greatly at that very spot I suffered from
hunger and cold,
When I from the bull-dog Rhyn in direst
distress had to fly.
At this Reynard said to the hare: To the
others again you may go,
Among them resuming your place; enough
to the king you have told.
The king then to Reynard remarked: Be
not discontented with me,

Because I impatient have been and harbored
a doubt of your word;
But see to it now, without fail, that me
you conduct to the place.

Reynard spake: How happy myself I should
prize, were it fitting to-day
For me to go forth with the king, and
him into Flanders attend; 260
But for you it would count as a sin. In
spite of the shame that I feel,
Yet out it must come, though gladly I'd
keep it still longer concealed.
Our Isengrim, some time ago, himself got
ordained as a monk,
Not at all that the Lord he might serve,
his belly's the god he obeys;
The convent he almost consumed; at eating
he's reckoned as six,
So all was for him not enough; he whined
about hunger and grief.
It moved me to pity at last, when I saw
him so thin and unwell,

And I faithfully give him my help, for
he's a near kinsman of mine.
But I, for the aid that I gave, the ban of
the Pope have incurred,
And now, without any delay, I would, with
your knowledge and leave, 270
Commune all alone with my soul and
tomorrow, at rise of the sun,
For grace and indulgence to sue, would
start as a pilgrim to Rome,
And thence I would over the sea; and thus
bring about that can my sins
Be from me all taken away; and should I
come back to my home,
I with honor may go at your side; if I did
so, however, to-day,
The world would be sure to remark: How
is it our monarch again
With Reynard is seen, whom not long ago
to death he condemned,
And who, in addition to that, is under the
ban of the Pope!
My lord, you will certainly see, 'twere bet-
ter to leave it undone.

Responded the king: Very true, to me that
of course was unknown. 280

If you are proscribed by the church, to
take you would be a disgrace.

Either Lampen or somebody else can accom-
pany me to the spring.

But, Reynard, that you from the ban are
trying to get your release,

I look on as useful and good, and gra-
ciously give you my leave

Tomorrow betimes to set out; I will not
your pilgrimage stay.

For seems it to me that you wish from
evil to good to return.

May God your intention approve and let
you the journey complete! 287

CANTO SIX

In this way was Reynard again to favor
received by the king.
And now stepped his majesty out to some
rising ground that was near,
And, speaking up there on a stone, he bade
the assemblage of beasts
Keep silence and down in the grass, accord-
ing to birth and degree,
To settle themselves; and Reynard stood up
by the side of the queen.

The king, overlooking the crowd, began
with much caution to speak:
Be silent and harken to me, ye birds and
ye beasts who are here,
Alike both the rich and the poor; yea,
hearken, ye great and ye small.
My lords and acquaintances all, of household
as well as of court,
Reynard is here in my power; you were
thinking, a short time ago, 10

He ought to be hanged, but now such a
number of secrets at court
He's revealed, that him I believe, and
advisably mercy to him
Again I vouchsafe. In addition to this has
my consort, the queen,
With earnestness pleaded for him, and I in
his favor am moved,
Forgiveness have fully bestowed, and on him
his goods and his life
Have freely conferred; henceforward my
peace him shields and protects.
Now all who together are here, are ordered,
so long as you live,
That Reynard, his children and wife, you
honor shall everywhere show,
Wherever, by day or by night, you chance
them in future to meet;
Moreover, of Reynard's affairs no further
complaint will I hear. 20
If he any evil has done, that belongs to
the past; and his ways
He will mend, as indeed he's begun, for
early tomorrow he takes

His staff and his knapsack to go as a
reverent pilgrim to Rome,
And thence will he over the sea; and never
again will come back
Until he remission complete of all his mis-
deeds has obtained.

Now Tybert, with rage, upon this to Bruin
and Isengrim turned;
Our trouble and pains are now lost, he ex-
claimed. I would that were I
Far from here! If Reynard has been once
again into favor received,
All arts that he knows he will use to bring
us all three to an end.
Already one eye have I lost, and now for
the other I fear!

30

Good counsel is dear, responded the bear,
that is plain to be seen.
Then Isengrim said in return: The thing
is so queer that it's best

To go straight away to the king. With
Bruin he sullenly walked
At once to the king and the queen; and
Reynard severely denounced,
With pungency speaking and loud. The
king interrupted them thus:
You surely could hear what I said? I've
him newly to favor received.
The king uttered this in a rage, and had
in a twinkling the two
Captured, imprisoned, and bound; for well
he remembered the words
That he from Reynard had heard concerning
their traitorous acts.

Thus in the space of an hour had matters
with Reynard become 40
Most thoroughly changed. Himself he'd
got free, and into disgrace
His accusers had come; he even knew how,
in his spite, to procure
That off from the back of the bear a piece
of his hide should he cut,

A foot in its length and its width, that a
wallet for him on the road
Provided might be; so seemed as a pilgrim
but little to want;
But still he entreated the queen to furnish
him also with shoes,
And said: Gracious lady, you own that I
am your pilgrim just now,
Then give me your help, I implore, that I
may my journey complete.
Now four useful shoes has the wolf, it
surely were nothing but just
That he with a pair should dispense, for
me on my journey to wear; 50
These get, gracious lady, for me, by means
of his lordship, the king.
Dame Greedimund also could spare a couple
of hers for my use,
For she, as a housewife, is forced to live
almost wholly in-doors.

This claim was regarded as just by the
queen. They assuredly can

Each of them part with a pair, she graciously said in reply.

Reynard was thankful for this, and said with a rapturous bow:

If four solid shoes I acquire, I will surely no longer delay.

All the good that I presently may, as a pilgrim, be able to do,

You surely shall equally share, both you and our merciful king.

On a pilgrimage we are compelled to make supplication for all

Who us have in any way helped. May God then your goodness reward!

Thus did sir Isengrim have from his two front paws to resign,

Far up as his ankles, his shoes; and then a like fate must his wife,

Dame Greedimund, also endure, for she had her hind ones to lose.

In this manner both had to lose the skin and the claws of their feet,

And together with Bruin they lay, mourn-
fully waiting for death;
But the hypocrite, having obtained the wallet
and shoes as desired,
Went hither and flaunted his jeers; at
Greedimund worse than the rest.
My love, my own darling, he said, just
give but a glance and observe
How splendidly fit me your shoes, I hope
that they also will wear. 70
Great effort already you've made, my ruin,
perchance, to achieve,
But I too have exerted myself, and my
labor has met with success.
If you your enjoyment have had, so my
turn at length it is now;
But this is the uniform rule, and one must
learn how to submit.
As now I proceed on my road, my cherished
relations I can
Remember with thanks. You me have a
present of shoes kindly made,
A deed you shall never regret; whatever
indulgence I gain

You surely shall share when I fetch it from
Rome and over the sea.

Dame Greedimund lay in such pain, that
scarcely the strength she retained

To utter a word, yet roused herself up and
said with a groan: 80

In order to punish our sins, God allows all
with you to succeed.

Still Isengrim said not a word, but to-
gether with Bruin lay still;

They both were unhappy enough, in bondage
and covered with wounds,

And now set at nought by their foe. Tybert,
the cat, was not there,

And Reynard was anxious enough to put
him in hot water as well.

The hypocrite busied himself, at morn of
the following day,

In rubbing with tallow and oil the shoes
that his kinsmen had lost;

And now, making haste to present himself
to the king, he observed;
Your dutiful servant's prepared on his sacred
mission to start;
Pray now of your mercy command the priest
of your majesty's court, 90
A blessing on me to bestow, that I full of
hope may depart;
And thus approbation divine on my going
and coming secure.
The ram by the monarch had been his
imperial chaplain ordained,
He also had charge of religious affairs, he
too by the king
Was used as a scribe, and Bellyn was named.
Then had he him called
And said: I desire that at once a few holy
words shall be read
Over Reynard awaiting you here, him now
on the journey to bless,
That he has in view; he is going to Rome
and the water will cross;
The wallet upon him suspend, and give
him the staff in his hand.

And thereupon Bellyn replied: You have,
my lord king, I presume, 100
Discovered that Reynard, as yet, has not
been released from the ban;
Should only I do as you wish, I should
wrath from my bishop incur,
Who about it would easily learn, and me to
chastise has the power.
To Reynard indeed will I do not a thing,
either evil or good;
If settled the matter could be, and certainly
would not thereto
The Bishop, lord Lackland, object; or pos-
sibly angry thereat,
The provost, sir Wanton, become, or indeed
Rapiamus the dean,
My blessing I gladly would give, as now I
am ordered by you.

And thus responded the king: What mean
these evasions and shifts?
Many words you compel us to hear, but
back is there little enough. 110

If you over Reynard will read not a thing,
either evil or good,
The devil I'll ask it to do. What's church
or the bishop to me?
Reynard would journey to Rome! Of that
would you stand in the way?
With anxiety Bellyn began to scratch at the
back of his ears;
He feared the ill-will of his king, and over
the pilgrim at once
To read from the book he began, but Rey-
nard did little attend.
Yet all it could give was received: of that
not a doubt can exist.

And now was the benison read, delivered
the wallet and staff,
And thus for his counterfeit trip the pil-
grim was fully equipped.
Sham tears were now running down the
cheeks of the rascally scamp 120
And wetting his beard, as if he were feel-
ing the deepest regret.

And truly it did give him pain, that all of
his foes he had not

Together brought evil upon, but only these
three had disgraced.

Yet there stood he up and implored that
earnestly all of them would,

As well as they could, for him pray. And
now preparation he made

To hurry away, for he felt himself guilty
and hence was in fear.

Reynard, demanded the king, why are you
making such haste ?

Who begins what is good should never
delay, said Reynard to this;

A furlough I beg of you now, for the
right and appropriate time

Has come, if your majesty please, so let
me the journey begin. 130

The furlough is yours, responded the king;
he also enjoined

In a body the lords of the court with the
spurious pilgrim to go,

And wait on a stretch of the way. In the
meantime in prison remained

Poor Bruin and Isengrim both, lamenting
their pain and disgrace.

In this way had Reynard again of the love
and esteem of the king

Come into possession complete; he went in
great honor from court,

And seemed, with his wallet and staff, to
be off to the tomb of our Lord;

Having there just as little to do as a may-
pole in Aix-la-chapelle.

But otherwise far was his aim. He had
made a successful attempt,

With a flaxen beard and a waxen nose, what-
ever by that may be meant, 140

His monarch completely to hoax; and all
his accusers were forced

To follow him now as he went, and him
with respect to attend.

But he could not relinquish his tricks, and
said, upon taking his leave:

My lord, be you well on your guard, that
now the two renegades there

Do not have a chance to escape, but keep
them in prison well bound;
Desist they would not, if at large, from
shameful and treacherous deeds.
Pray do not forget, noble king, that your
life would in jeopardy be.

So went he along on his road, with coun-
tenance calm and devout,
With guise unaffected and grave, as if any
other were strange.
At this did the monarch again himself to
his palace betake, 150
And followed him all of the beasts. Obey-
ing the order he gave,
They Reynard attended no more than a
very short distance away.
And carry himself did the scamp in a
manner so joyless and sad,
That many a good-natured man to pity had
found himself moved;
And Lampen the hare was especially grieved.
Are we now compelled,

Dear Lampen, the villain remarked, ' to bid
to each other adieu?

I would that your pleasure it were, you and
dear Bellyn the ram,

To travel with me on my road a little bit
further to-day!

By doing so you would confer the greatest
of favors on me,

For pleasant companions you are, and good
honest people withal; 160

Of you only good is e'er said, and honor
to me would it bring.

You are saintly and moral of life, and live
just precisely the same

As I, when a hermit, did live; content are
you ever with herbs,

Are wonted with grasses and leaves your
hunger to still, and you ask

Not either for bread or for meat, or other
things special to eat.

Thus was he able with praise the two little
weaklings to fool;

And both went together with him, till up
to his dwelling they came

And saw Malepartus the fort, and Reynard
remarked to the ram:

You, Bellynn, outside here remain; the herbs
and the grasses you can

Here relish as much as you please; these
mountainous regions produce 170

Vegetation abundant and rare, wholesome
and good to the taste.

Within I'll take Lampen with me; now
beg him, I pray, to console

My wife, who in sadness is plunged, and
who, upon coming to find

That I, as a pilgrim, am going to Rome,
will be in despair.

Sweet words brought the fox into use, in
order the two to deceive.

Lampen then led he within, and found his
disconsolate wife

There lying with both of her cubs, with
grief in excess overcome.

For hope she had quite given up that Rey-
nard would ever again

Return from the court, and now she him
saw with wallet and staff,

Which almost miraculous seemed. She said
to him: Reinhart, my dear, 180
Pray tell me, how fared it with you, and
what have you had to go through?
And he said: I guilty was found, and
even imprisoned and bound,
But merciful turned out the king, and again,
after all, set me free;
And I, as a pilgrim, came off, leaving
behind as my bail
Bruin and Isengrim both. Thereafter the
king, of his grace,
For atonement, gave Lampen to me; to do
with him just as we will.
For thus said the king at the last, in the
justice of his decree:
Lampen it was who made the complaint;
thus truly has he
Infinite punishment earned, and now shall
he answer for all.
Lampen was struck with dismay at the
menacing words of the fox, 190
And, puzzled, himself tried to save by hur-
rying out of the house.

Reynard blocked up his way to the door,
and quickly the murderer seized
The poor wretched thing by the throat, who,
loud and with horror, for help
Cried: help me, O Bellyn, or I am undone!
The pilgrim, indeed,
Is murdering me! His cry was, however,
not long; for his throat
Had Reynard apace bitten through. And
thus he entreated his guest.
Come now, he exclaimed, and let us eat
fast, for fat is the hare,
And good to the taste. At present, indeed,
for the very first time,
Is he of some use, silly fool! I promised
him this long ago.
But now it is past, and now may the traitor
his charges produce. 200
Then Reynard at once set to work with his
children and wife, and they tore,
Full quickly, the skin from the hare, and an
excellent dinner enjoyed.
To the vixen delicious it was, and again
and again she exclaimed:

Thanks to the king and the queen, by
whose condescension we have
Obtained this magnificent feast. May God
them reward for the deed!
Keep eating, said Reynard to her, enough
for the present is that;
Today let us all have our fill; much more
I'm expecting to get,
For all, at the last, shall be forced to fully
adjust their accounts,
Who Reynard presume to accost, with inten-
tion of doing him harm.

Dame Ermelyn said upon this: How was it
you came, I would ask, 210
To get yourself out of their hands? Thereto
he replied: Many hours
I should need, were I to relate with how
much adroitness the king
I twisted about as I would, and him and
his consort befooled.
I will not between us deny that slender
indeed is the love

That exists between me and the king, and
not very long to endure.
When he the whole truth ascertains, he
fiercely indignant will be;
If he get me again in his power, nor silver
nor gold will avail
Me to save; he certainly will me pursue
and try to arrest.
I then can no mercy expect, that know I
as well as can be;
Unchanged will he not let me go, so let us
get out of his way. 220

Let us flee to the Swabian hills, there is
nobody knowing us there;
We'll walk in the ways of the land, and
find, if but God give us help,
A plenty of savory food and abundance of
all that is good.
Chickens and geese, and rabbits and hares,
and sugar and dates,
And figs and raisins and birds of every
species and size;

And there all the bread that is used is
seasoned with butter and eggs.
The water is limpid and pure, the air is
delightful and clear;
Of fish can a plenty be caught, entitled
Galline, while some,
Pullus and Gallus and Anas are called;
who can them all name?
These fish I enjoy very much; and even
to catch them one need 230
Very deep in the water not plunge; I
always them greatly enjoy.
When there I would pass for a monk.
Yes, dear little wife, if we wish
At last to be free, we must hence, for
you must accompany me.

Now understand well what I say! The
king has permitted me now
To go free because of my lies concerning
mysterious things.
King Emmerich's glorious hoard I promised
for him to procure,

And said that it over at Krekélborn lay;
if thither they go
To seek it, alas, they will find both one
and the other not there!
In vain will they dig in the earth; and
lo! when our monarch shall find
Himself in this manner beguiled, then fright-
ful his fury will be. 240
For what I invented as lies, before I away
from him got,
You can think. For me of a truth next
door to a hanging it came;
I was never in bitterer plight, nor ever in
greater dismay;
Indeed, I should never desire again in such
danger to be.
In short, let happen what may, myself I
will never permit
To go any more to the court, and thus to
the power of the king
My life to surrender again; it needed the
greatest of skill,
My thumb, by the sweat of my face, from
out of his mouth to extract.

Then, troubled, dame Ermelyn said: What
profit thereby shall we gain?

Wretched and strange shall we be in
every country but this. 250

Here all we can wish we possess. You
master remain of your serfs.

And do you so terribly need new risks and
adventures to seek?

Remember this truth: In order to follow
the bird in the bush,

The bird in the hand to release is neither
sagacious nor wise.

We here can live safely enough! Why,
look at our citadel's strength!

If the king with his army beleaguer us
here, or even resolve

The road with his forces to hold, we still
such a number possess

Of loopholes and passages hid, that we can
in safety effect

Our escape; but you know it better than I,
so why do I speak?

For him by main force to attempt to get
us again in his hands, 260

Work without measure will take, and troubles
me not in the least.
But for you to have taken a vow to leave
me for over the sea,
That worries me much. It stuns me almost.
What good could it do?

Dear woman, afflict yourself not, said Rey-
nard to her in reply.
Just listen to me and note what I say:
far better forsworn
Than of life to be shorn! Thus said to
me once at confession a sage:
An oath of compulsion is nought. Not a
snap of the finger care I
For any such trifle as that! I speak of
the oath, understand.
It then shall be done as you say, and I
will continue at home.
But little I have, of a truth, to look for
in Rome, and if I
Myself by ten pledges had bound, I should
never Jerusalem see;

I mean to remain with you here, as is
certainly most to my mind;
Other places I do not regard as better than
that which I have.
If mischief the king will me do, then
calmly I must it await;
He is strong and too mighty for me, yet
possibly I may succeed
In duping him yet once again, and slipping
the harlequin's cap
Over his ears with its bells. He shall, if
I live long enough,
Find matters far worse than he wants; of
that I will give him my oath.

Impatiently Bellyn began to grumble out-
side of the door:

Do you, Lampen, not mean to depart?
Come now and let us be gone! 280
His call Reynard heard and hurried outside,
and there to him said:
My dear, Lampen earnestly begs that you
will accept his regrets,

He is happy within with his aunt, and
thinks you will not grudge him that.
Go on very slowly ahead, for his aunt,
mistress Ermlyn, will not,
This instant, permit him to leave; their
pleasure you would not disturb.

Then Bellyn responded in turn: An out-
cry I heard, what was that?
Lampen I heard; and he called to me:
Help! O, Bellyn, come help!
Have you any harm to him done? Then
Reynard judiciously said:
Do not misconceive what I say; I spoke of
the journey I've vowed,
And then was my wife overcome, it seemed
she was ready to faint; 290
There befell her a deathly affright, as if in
a swoon she appeared.
Now Lampen this saw with alarm, and, in
his distraction, he cried:
Come help me, O Bellyn, I beg! Oh,
tarry not long from my aid!

My aunt will never, I'm sure, again to me
living come back.

So far as I know, Bellyn said, it was
terror that made him call out.

Not a hair of his body is hurt, protested
the villain with oaths;

I would very much rather that harm to
me, than to Lampen, occur.

Reynard then said: Did you hear? But
yesterday bade me the king,

As soon as I got to my home, him back
in some letters to send

My notions of what should be done in cer-
tain important affairs? 300

Dear nephew, these take with you now, I
have them all ready to send.

Therein pretty things do I say, and give
him most prudent advice.

Lampen is fully content, I heard him with
joy, as I left,

Recalling to mind with his aunt events of
the days long ago.

How they prattled! As if they never could
tire; they ate and they drank,

And greatly each other enjoyed; meanwhile
my advices I wrote.

Dear Reinhart, said Bellyn to this, you
must the despatches be sure
To safely protect; no pocket have I in
which them to put,
And should I break open the seal, with me
very hard would it go.

Reynard said: That I know well enough
how to do; the wallet, I think, 310
That Bruin gave me from his hide, is fit-
ting exactly for that;
It is thick and also it's tough; in that I'll
the letters secure.

The king, in return, will bestow a special
reward upon you;
With honor receive you he will; thrice
welcome to him will you be.
All this believed Bellyn the ram. Then
hastened the other again
Back into the house; the wallet he took
and sprily stuck in

The head of the massacred hare, and also
bethought him of how
He Bellyn could manage to keep from getting
inside of the pouch.

He said, as he came out again: Your neck
hang the wallet around,
And nothing, my nephew, permit to move
you to make an attempt 320
Within the despatches to look; such prying
would be a disgrace.
With care have I fastened them up, and
thus you must let them remain.
Not even unfasten the bag; I heedful have
been that the knot
Shall be skillfully tied, for such is my way
in important affairs
That pass between me and the king; and,
should the king find that the thongs
Are entwined in the usual way, it then
will be granted that you
His grace and his presents deserve, as a
messenger whom he can trust.

When once you put eyes on the king, if
you in still higher esteem
By him would in future be held, then let
him imagine that you,
Have me with discretion advised what I in
the letters should put, 330
And even in writing them helped; this
profit and honor will bring.
And Bellyn was mightily pleased, and
bounded above from the place
High up in the air with delight; ran hither
and thither, and said:
Reynard, my nephew and lord, I now that
you love me perceive,
And honor on me would bestow. Before
all the lords of the court
It will add very much to my fame, that I
such transcendent ideas,
In language so choice and refined, have
composed; for I, in good truth,
Know not, as do you, how to write, but
they shall imagine I do;
And you have I only to thank. It truly
turned out for my good

That hither I travelled with you. Pray, tell
me what further you wish! 340
Is Lampen not going with me, now that
I'm starting from here?

No, coolly the villain replied, just now that
impossible is;
You slowly go on in advance, and he shall
come after, as soon
As I some momentous affairs to him have
entrusted and charged.
God with you remain, Bellyn said, I now
will walk on as you say.
And he hastened away from the place,
arriving at noon at the court.

As on him the king cast his eyes, and also
the wallet espied,
He exclaimed: You Bellyn, pray whence
do you come? And where is the fox?
You carry his wallet, I see, pray what is
the meaning of that?

Then Bellyn as follows replied: He begged
me, most gracious of kings, 350
Two letters to you to convey, which we
had together composed.
In these you will find some matters of
weight with acumen discussed;
And as to the contents indeed, therein my
advice has been sought;
Here in the knapsack they are; the knots
quite securely he tied.

The monarch commanded forthwith, that
summoned the beaver should be,
Who notary was and scribe to the king,
and Bockert was called;
His business it was to receive all letters of
weight and finesse,
And decipher aloud to the king, as he
many languages knew.
And the king sent for Tybert as well, who
also was present to be.
When Bockert the knots had untied, with
Tybert his comrade to help, 360

He drew from the wallet the head of
Lampen, the poor murdered hare,
And cried with astonishment great: And
this is a letter, indeed!
It truly is queer! Who has it compiled?
Who can it explain?
Lampen's head this undoubtedly is; mistake
about that there is none.

With horror were stricken the king and
the queen; and then did the king
Bend forward his head and exclaim: Oh
fox, that I had you again!
The king and the queen were distressed,
beyond any words to express.
Reynard on me has imposed! The monarch
cried out. Oh, that I
To his wicked and scandalous lies had not
given heed as I did!
Confounded appeared he to be, and also the
beasts were perplexed. 370

Lupardus, however, began, who was closely
allied to the king:

I cannot conceive, in good sooth, why you in
such trouble should be,
Nor either your consort the queen. Such
notions away from you drive!
Take courage, or you may indeed be covered
with shame before all.
Are you not our ruler and lord? Then all
who are here must obey.

On that score alone, said the king, you
need not at all be amazed
That I am thus grieved to the heart. In
duty, alas, I have failed!
For me has the traitor induced, with
shameful and scandalous tricks,
To punish my comrades and friends. At
present there lie in disgrace
Bruin and Isengrim both; repent should I
not from my heart? 380
No glory to me does it bring, that I to
the best of the lords
Of my court have so wickedly done, and
then in the liar himself

So fully my trust have reposed, and so
indiscreetly behaved.

I followed too quickly my wife, who suffered
herself to be duped,

And begged and entreated for him. Oh,
had I but firmer remained!

But now is repentance too late, and all
admonition in vain.

And thus did Lupardus reply: Lord king,
lend an ear to my prayer,

And suffer no longer regret. The evil
that's done can be squared.

For atonement deliver the ram at once to
the wolves and the bear;

Bellyn has frankly confessed, intrepidly too,
that he gave 390

His counsel that Lampen should die. Now
let him pay for it back!

And we, after that has been done, together
for Reynard will make,

And catch him if well it turn out; then
can he quickly be hanged.

If permitted to speak, he'll talk himself
free, and never will hang.

I know that the wolf and the bear can
surely be reconciled thus.

This heard with much pleasure the king,
and unto Lupardus he said:

Your counsel is grateful to me; so now
with despatch go and fetch

Both of the barons to me, and they shall
with honor again

With me in my council have seats. And
see that the animals all

In a body together be called, who here at
the court may have been. 400

They all shall be duly informed how Rey-
nard hath shamefully lied,

How out of my hands he escaped, and
Lampen with Bellyn's aid slew;

And all shall the wolf and the bear with
due veneration receive.

So I, for amends, give up to my lords, as
you have advised,

Bellyn, the traitor, and all his relations for
time without end.

Lupardus no rest himself gave till he had
the prisoners both,

Bruin and Isengrim, found; they then were
set free, and he said:

Consolation accept at my hands! I bring
you our prince's good-will,

And also free convoy from here. I wish
to inform you, my lords,

That his majesty suffers regret if harm
upon you he has brought. 410

He bids me assure you of this, and wishes
to satisfy both.

To expiate what has been done, you Bellyn,
with all of his race,

Yea, every one of his kin, for ever shall
have as your own.

Attack them with more ado, be it either
in forest or field

That on them you happen to come; they
are all of them given to you.

And still, in addition to this, our monarch
has deigned to permit
That Reynard, who you has deceived, you
may in all manners despoil;
And him, with his offspring and wife, and
all of his kindred as well,
Wherever they be, may pursue, and none
shall with you interfere.
This freedom so dear I proclaim in the
name of our master the king; 420
He, and all who may after him rule, these
rights will respect and uphold.
You now have to only forget the worries
you've had to endure,
And swear to him service and truth, and
this you with honor can do.
He never will harm you again; I advise
you the offer to grasp.

Thus was atonement decreed; and by it
the ram was compelled
To pay the account with his life; and all
of his kindred and kind

Have, down to this day, been pursued by
Isengrim's vigorous stock.

Thus the hate everlasting began. Even
now continue the wolves,

Without any shyness or shame, the lambs
and the sheep to revile,

And have not the shade of a doubt that
justice is wholly with them; 430

Nothing assuages their wrath, and placated
they never can be.

But for Bruin and Isengrim's sake, in order
them honor to pay,

The king had proceedings at court prolonged
for twelve days, as he wished

To openly show how eager he was these
lords to appease. 434

CANTO SEVEN

And now was the court to be seen in
splendor adorned and prepared;
Many knights were arriving thereat, and the
beasts, who together had come,
Were followed by numberless birds; high
honor did all in one breath
To Bruin and Isengrim give, who began
their mishaps to forget.
There festively sported itself the grandest
assembly by far,
That ever together was brought; trumpets
and kettle-drums clanged,
The stately dance of the court was started
with dignified grace,
And abundance was furnished for all of
whatever by each could be wished.
Herald on herald was sent through the land
to summon the guests,
The birds and the beasts made ready them-
selves and in couples arrived. 10

They traveled by day and by night, the
whole of them eager to come.

But Reynard, the fox, was not there; he
was lying in wait at his home,
And meant not to go to the court, that
pilgrim abandoned and false;
Little favor expected he there. According
to habit of old,
To practice his villainous tricks was the
pleasantest thing to the scamp.
And now at the court could be heard the
most beautiful songs of the day;
Sweet food and fine wines to the guests
with unsparing hand were supplied,
And tilting and fencing were shown. Of
those who had come to the feast,
Attached himself each to his own, and in
singing and dancing engaged;
While at intervals, now and again, the reed-
pipe and flute might be heard. 20
And the king, from his hall up above,
looked affably down on the scene;

The unwieldy disorder him pleased, and to
gaze on it gave him delight.

Eight days had thus flown to the past (the
king had come down to the feast,
And taken his seat at the board among
the supreme of his lords,
With his consort, the queen, at his side)
when bloody the rabbit arrived,
And, stepping in front of the king, said
he, in most sorrowful tones:

Oh, master! oh, king! and all of you
here! on me pity bestow!
For cruel deception so base and murderous
actions so vile,
As now from the fox I endure, have seldom
been brought to your ken.
About six o'clock yesterday morn I came on
him seated alone, 30
As, taking a stroll on the road, before
Malepartus I passed;

I expected to go on my way without molestation or fear;
But, clad in a pilgrim's attire, as though morning prayer he perused,
He was sitting in front of his gate. When eyes I put on him I tried
To pass nimbly by on my road, that I to your court might proceed.
But he spied me and instantly rose; to meet me, stepped right in my path,
And I thought that he wished me to greet; he seized me, however, instead,
With murd'rous intent in his grasp, and between my ears I could feel
His claws in my flesh, and *I certainly thought that my head I should lose,
For long and sharp are his nails; he pressed me below to the earth. 40
I luckily got myself free and, as I'm so sly, I escaped;
He snarled as I left him behind, and swore he would find me again.
I bridled my tongue and made off; alas, he, however, retained

An ear that he tore from my head; and I
 come with a blood-covered scalp.
See, from it four holes have I borne! You
 will easily grasp in your minds
The force of the blows that he struck;
 'twas a chance that I ever got up.
Now consider, I pray, my distress, and reflect
 on your wardship as well;
For who can a journey attempt, or who
 can come here to your court,
If the robber stands guard on the roads
 and damages all who approach?

He scarcely had drawn to a close when
 alighted the talkative rook, 50
Sir Corbant, who said: Most worshipful lord
 and beneficent king,
The tidings are sad that I have to impart;
 I am not in a state
To say much, on account of my woe and
 alarm; and I fear very much
That my heart it will break, so wretched a
 thing has just happened to me.

My wife, mistress Keenbeak, and I were
walking together today,
Betimes in the morn, and Reynard found
lying as dead on the heath;
Both eyes were turned up in his head, and
lifeless was hanging his tongue
Far out of his wide open mouth. Then,
from sheer fright, I began
To lustily scream; he moved himself not;
I cried and bemoaned;
Exclaimed: Woe to me! and alas! And
then I repeated the plaint: 60
Alas, he is dead! How sorry for him and
afflicted I am!
My wife was in sadness as well, and voice
gave we both to our grief.
I fingered him belly and head; my wife in
like manner drew near,
And placed herself close to his chin, to
find if his breathing at all
Gave indication of life, but she waited and
listened in vain;
We both to this fact could have sworn.
Now, please, the calamity hear!

As without apprehension and sad, to the
mouth of the treacherous scamp
She nearer put forward her beak, the mon-
ster took note of the act,
And at her with suddenness snapped and
savagely bit off her head.
How stricken with terror I was, I will not
attempt to describe. 70
Woe, woe! I shouted and screamed; then
darted he forth and, at once,
Snapped also at me, when backwards I
started and hastened to fly;
If I not so nimble had been, he would like-
wise have me firmly caught.
The murderer's clutches, indeed, I hardly
escaped as it was;
In haste I flew into a tree. Oh, had I my
sorrowful life
Not preserved! My wife I could see held
fast in the miscreant's claws.
Alas! the dear creature he quickly devoured,
and to me he appeared
Voracious and famished, as if yet another
he gladly would eat;

He left not a bone unconsumed, not even
a knuckle remained.

Such was the blow I sustained. He hurried
away from the place, 80

But I was not able to leave; I flew, with
a sorrowful heart,

Again to the spot, where all I could find
was some feathers and blood

Of my wife's, and these I bring hither to
you, as a proof of the crime.

Have pity, beneficent lord; for should you
at present again

With this dastardly traitor forbear, and legit-
imate vengeance defer;

Should you to your safe-guards and peace
not force and due emphasis give,

About it much talk there might be, that
would not be much to your mind;

For 'tis said, he is guilty himself of the
deed, who to punish hath power

And punisheth not; each then, with high
hand, tries to carry things on.

Your dignity it would affect; to give it
some thought would be well. 90

Thus had the plaint of the crow and the
good little rabbit been brought
Before the assembled court. Then Leo, the
king, was enraged,
And he cried: I now, by my nuptial troth,
before all of you swear
That I will so punish this crime, that long
it remembered shall be.
My rule and safe-conduct to scoff! That
will I never endure.
Too lightly by far put I trust in the scamp
and let him escape;
As a pilgrim him even equipped, and saw
make his exit from here,
As if he were going to Rome. What
indeed did the liar not make
Us believe! How well he contrived a word
in advance from the queen,
With ease, to secure. On me she prevailed
and now he is free. 100
But not the last one shall I be, whose heart
with repentance is wrung,
Through taking a woman's advice. And if
we shall longer allow

The villain unpunished to go, we soon
shall be covered with shame;
He never was aught but a knave, and such
will he ever remain.
Now consult you together, my lords, how
to catch him and bring him to book;
If about it we earnestly set, the matter
will surely succeed.

Most highly these words of the king did
Bruin and Isengrim please.
At last we our vengeance shall see! Such
was the thought of them both;
Yet express not a word did they dare, for
clearly they saw that the king
Was greatly disturbed in his mind, and all
boiling over with wrath. 110

And after a time said the queen: For
you, my dear lord, it is bad
So heavy to be in your wrath and so light
in the use of bad words;

Your consequence suffers thereby, and the
value of what you may say.
The facts of the case have as yet by no
means been brought to the light.
Has yet the accused to be heard; and,
should he before us be brought,
Would silent be many a one, who now
against Reynard declaims.
Both parties should always be heard, for
many a venturesome knave
Brings charges to cover misdeeds of his
own. As learned and wise
I Reynard esteemed, without wicked
thoughts, who always, indeed,
Had only your good in his mind, though
now this may not so appear. 120
To follow his counsel is good, yea, even
though true that his life
Be such as to merit much blame. And
then it is well to reflect
On the ample extent of his family ties.
The matter will not
Be improved by precipitate haste, and
whatever it be you decide

You certainly can, in the end, as lord and
commander, enforce.

Hereat sir Lupardus remarked: To many
you've given your ear,
Now also give ear unto me. He yet may
appear and what you
Decide upon then, at once shall be done;
so probably think
These lords who assembled are here, and as
well your illustrious queen.

Broke Isengrim in upon this: What each
may think best let him say, 130
Give ear, sir Lupardus, to me. If at this
very moment, indeed,
Reynard were here and himself should
acquit of this twofold complaint,
Still easy for me would it be, to make it
as clear as the day
That the law has a claim on his life. But
silence I'll keep about all,

Till we him have secured. Can you have
forgotten how much he the king
Deceived with that treasure of his, which
he should in Hüsterlo, near
Unto Krekelborn find, and the other great
falsehoods besides that he told?
To all the deceiver he's played, and Bruin
and me has disgraced;
My life I will risk upon this. Thus now
is the liar engaged
On the heath; he is roving about, commit-
ting foul murders and thefts: 140
Seems it good to the king and his lords,
there matters, of course, as they are
May go on. Yet, were he in earnest him-
self to present at the court,
We him had here seen long ago. The
scouts of the king were despatched
All over the land, to summon the guests,
yet at home he remained.

To this said the king in reply: By wait-
ing so long for him here

What good do we get? Let each be prepared (thus do I command)

To go with me off in six days; for I, let me tell you, will see

An end to these charges and grievances brought. What say you, my lords?

Would the rascal not manage, at last, a land to destruction to bring?

Make ready as best you know how, and come in your armor arrayed; 150

Come furnished with bow and with spear, and all other weapons you have,

And show yourselves gallant and brave; and before me let each of you bear,

For knights I may dub on the field, without loss of honor his name.

Malepartus, the castle, we'll seize, and what he may have in the place

We will then overhaul. Then shouted they all in accord: We'll obey.

Thus did the king and his knights determine sir Reynard's strong fort,

Malepartus, to storm, and the fox to chas-
tise. But Grimbart, at this,
Who one of the council had been, went
stealthily out and made haste
Reynard, his uncle, to find, in order to
take him the news.
In sorrow his road he pursued, and thus
he bemoaned to himself: 160
My uncle, what now may take place? Alas!
with good reason for thee
Do all of thy kindred lament, thou head of
the whole of our race.
When our causes were pleaded by you we
felt ourselves perfectly safe,
For no one could stand before you and
your varied supply of resource.

Thus going, the castle he reached and Rey-
nard found sitting outside,
Who had managed, just prior to this, two
tender young pigeons to catch,
That out of their nest had escaped, to
make an endeavor to fly;

But short were their wings for the task,
and down they had fallen to earth,
Unable again to arise; in this way had Rey-
nard them seized,
For he prowled about often to hunt. Just
then in the distance he saw 170
Coming Grimbart, and did him await. In
giving him greeting he said:
My nephew, more welcome you are than
anyone else of my blood.
But why are you running so hard? You
gasp! Are you bringing me news?
And Grimbart replied to him thus: The
tidings I have to announce,
When heard, will no solace convey; you see,
I come running through fear.
Your life and estates are all lost. The
wrath of the king I have seen;
He swears that you now he will catch and
put to an infamous death.
He even has ordered us all, the sixth day
from now, with our arms
To march to this place, with bow and with
sword, with wagons and guns.

Against you is everything now, so think on
the matter betimes; 180
For Bruin and Isengrim both are again hand
and glove with the king;
More trusted by him of a truth than I was
e'er trusted by you;
And all comes to pass as they wish. A
horrible cut-throat and thief
You Isengrim openly called, and in this
way excites he the king.
He has our high sheriff been made, as you,
in some weeks, will find out.
The rabbit appeared, and also the crow,
and they brought in the court
The gravest complaints against you. If
only the king have success
In catching you now, your life is not long
that can I but fear.

Nothing further? responded the fox. For
all that you, so far, have said
I care not a snap of my thumb. If the
king and his council complete 190

Had doubly and trebly affirmed, and taken
inviolate oaths,
Yet I, when I come in their midst, will
raise myself up above all.
They advise and still they advise, yet never
can speak to the point.
Dear nephew, all this never mind, but
come with me now and find out
What you I am able to give. These
pigeons just now I have caught,
Young and fat; they still of all dishes I
know are the most to my taste;
For easy they are to digest, one has but
to swallow them down;
And sweet do the little bones taste, they
verily melt in the mouth,
Composed of half milk and half blood.
Spoon-meat agrees with me well,
And it's also the same with my wife; so
come and she will, I am sure, 200
To greet us be pleased; yet let her not know
for what purpose you've come.
A trifle sinks into her heart and worries
her almost to death.

Tomorrow with you I will go to the court,
and I hope that you there
Will give me, dear newhew, such help as
becomes a relation to give.

My life and my goods I engage at your
service to cheerfully place,
Said the badger, and Reynard replied: Be
sure I shall bear this in mind;
So long as I live, it shall tend to your
gain. The other rejoined:
Go boldly your judges to face, and your
cause do your best to defend.
What you have to urge they will hear;
Lupardus himself has declared
That punished you ought not to be, till you
have been given the chance 210
To fully put in your defence, and the
queen doth herself think the same.
This circumstance note and endeavor to use.
Then Reynard remarked:
Be only composed and all will go well.
The irascible king,

When he hears me, will alter his mind;
it all will come right in the end.

And thus went the two within doors, and
there they with kindness were met,
And well by the housewife received;
whatever she had she brought forth.
Among them the pigeons were shared, and
tasteful and good they were found;
And each ate his share, still they had not
enough and undoubtedly would
Have well a half-dozen consumed, if but
they had been to be had.

To the badger then Reynard remarked:
You must, my dear uncle, admit 220
That I've children of qualities rare, with
whom every one must be pleased.
Now tell me how Rossel you like, and
Reinhart, the little one, too.
Some day they our race will augment; they
little by little begin

Themselves to improve, and to me are a
pleasure from morning to night.
The one can lay hold of a fowl and the
other a chicken ensnare;
And well to the water they take, in order
young ducklings to fetch,
Or a plover, perchance. To send them more
often to hunt I should like,
But taught must they be, above all, with
prudence and caution to act,
That springes and hunters and dogs they well
may know how to avoid;
And then, if right methods they learn, and
reliable evidence give 230
That they are well trained, as is fitting
they should, then daily they ought
Provisions to find and bring in, and nought
should be wanting at home.
For both of them take after me and join
in the fiercest of sports;
And, when they begin so to play, all others
come off second best;
Their rival them feels at his throat and
struggles not long after that;

Which is Reynard's own manner of sport.

They also are swift in their grip,
And sure is the spring that they give,
which methinks is precisely the thing.

To this Grimbart said: To honor it tends,
and one may rejoice,
Young children to have such as one would
desire, and who in their craft
Get early adroit, their parents to help. I
am very much pleased 240
To know them to be of my race, and hope
for the best at their hands.
That matter we'll leave for today, said
Reynard, and now let us go
To our rest, for we all are fatigued, and
Grimbart's completely worn out.
At this they lay down in the room, which,
over the whole of its floor,
Was covered with hay and with leaves, and
there all together they slept.

But Reynard, through fear, kept awake; the
matter appeared to him now

Of counsel the best to demand, and morn-
ing still found him in thought.
He got himself up from his couch, and unto
his wife he observed:
You will not be worried, I trust, but Grim-
bart has come to entreat
That I go with him back to the court.
You tranquilly rest here at home. 250
Should any one speak about me, make the
best of the case that you can,
And lock up the castle with care; this do,
and then all will go well.

And Ermelyn said: It seems to me
strange that you dare to present
Yourself any more at the court, where you
are so lowly esteemed.
Is it so that you must? I can't make it
out. Consider the past.
Indeed, said Reynard to this, no jesting
affair was it then;
For many were seeking my harm, and I
came into terrible straits.

But very diverse are the things that, under
the sun, come about.

Against expectation, at times, we of this
and of that have a taste;

And who thinks that he anything has, may
suddenly find that it's gone. 260

So let me, I pray you, depart; for I there
have a great deal to do.

Keep calm! That I earnestly beg; there
is not any reason for you

To worry yourself. The issue await, for,
my dear, you will see,

If only I can it effect, me in five or six
days again back.

And then went he forth on his way, with
Grimbart, the badger, as guard. 265

CANTO EIGHT

And now both together they went still.
further on over the heath,
Grimbart and Reynard the fox, direct to
the court of the king;
And Reynard remarked on the road: Let
matters turn out as they may,
I now a presentiment feel that our trip
advantageous will prove.
Dear uncle, attend to me, pray! Since last
unto you I confessed
New slips have I made again back into
culpable actions and thoughts;
The grave and the minor things hear, as
well as what then I forgot.

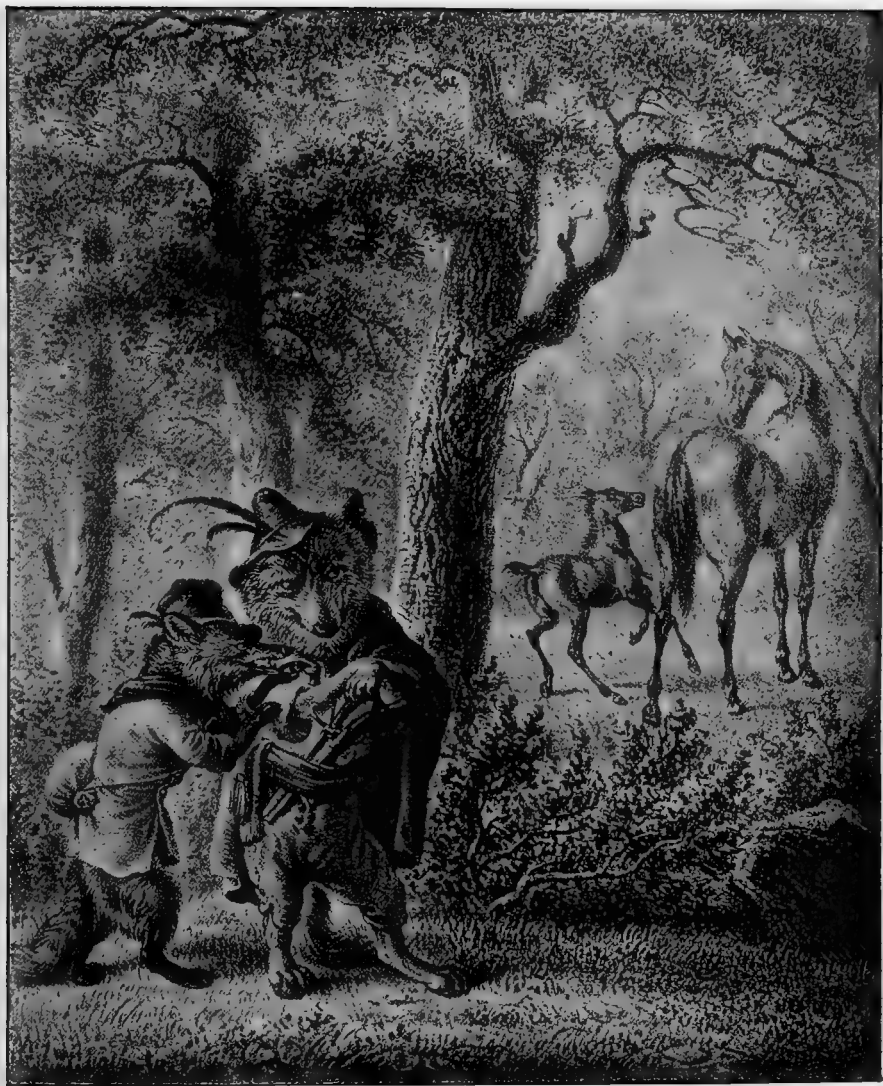
From the body and hide of the bear I
caused to be cut for my use
A large and available piece, and to me
have the wolf and his wife
Been forced to relinquish their shoes; in
this way I vented my spleen. 10

All this was by lying procured; I knew
very well how the king
To provoke, and him in this manner have
duped to a frightful extent,
For I told him a wonderful yarn and fan-
ciful treasures devised.
But that did not make me content, so
Lampen I sent to his death,
And Bellyn packed off with the murder'd
one's head. The king was enraged
As soon as he noticed the ram, and made
him the reckoning pay.
The coney I pinched as hard as I could
at the back of his ears,
And nearly deprived of his life, and then
out of temper became,
Because he made good his escape. I must
also confess that the crow
Not at all with injustice complained, for
Keenbeak, his dear little wife, 20
I devoured. Such are the deeds I have
done since last I confessed.
But there's one thing which then I forgot,
and which to you now I will tell;

An infamous trick that I played, and which
it is right you should know,
For I do not desire any more such a burden
to bear. On the back
Of the wolf I saddled it then; we were
walking together one day,
Elvarden and Houlthulst between, when, a
short distance off, we espied
A mare in a field with her foal, and each
of the two were alike
As black as a raven in hue; in age the
young foal might have been
Approaching four months. With hunger
was Isengrim racked, so he begged
Me to go and enquire of the mare if she
would not sell us the foal, 30
And also the price. So to her I proceeded
and ventured the thing.
My dear mistress mare, to her I observed,
the foal is your own,
As I know; will you sell it to me? To
ascertain that is my wish.
She replied: If enough you will pay I with-
out it can very well do,

And the sum for its purchase required,
that you may see for yourself;
Behind, upon one of my feet, you will find
it engraved. Then I saw
What she meant, and thereto I replied:
I must to you freely confess
That reading and writing with me are not
the success I could wish,
Nor indeed do I covet the child for myself;
it was Isengrim wished
Your terms with exactness to learn, and
sent me to you to find out. 40

She said in reply: Let him come; he then
can find out what he wants.
I left her and Isengrim found where still he
was waiting for me.
If you would your hunger appease, just go,
I announced, and the mare
Will give you the colt; the price can be
found on one of her hoofs,
Engraved on the frog. I could, she re-
marked, try to find it myself;



“‘If you would your hunger appease, just go,’ I announced,
‘And the mare will give you the colt.’”

But I, to my shame and chagrin, many
things am compelled to let slip,
For reading and writing I never was
taught. My uncle, you try,
And look at what there is inscribed; you
may it decipher, perhaps.

Quoth Isengrim then: Not read it you say?
To me that were strange!
German, Italian, and French, and Latin I
thoroughly know, 50
For a steady attendant I've been at the
schools which in Erfurt are found.
With the learned and wise of the place,
including the masters of law,
Have judgments and questions exchanged,
and also my license received
In regular form; and of writings, all kinds
that can ever be found
I can read with the ease of my name; I
therefore today shall not fail.
Wait here! I will go and the letters
peruse, and then we shall see.

He went and enquired of the mare: How
much do you ask for the foal?
Make it cheap! She thereupon said: The
amount you can read for yourself;
You will find it on one of my feet, a hind
one, distinctly engraved.
Let me see it, responded the wolf. She
said: I will do as you wish. 60
Then up from the grass went her foot, on
which had been fastened a shoe,
Beset with a half-dozen nails; straight
out flew her hoof, and went wide
Not so much as a hair; hit him plump on
his skull, and he fell to the earth,
And lay there as though he were dead.
She galloped, however, from there
As fast as she could. Thus wounded he
lay and long so remained.
An hour passed away, to move then again
he began, and he howled
Like a dog. I trotted then up to his side
and sir uncle, I said,
Pray, where is the mare? How tasted the
colt? You feasted yourself

And me quite forgot; that was wrong, for
I it was brought you the news;
After eating, a nap you enjoyed; now tell
me, I beg you, how ran 70
The writing found under the hoof? An
eminent scholar you are.

Said he: Are you bantering still? Just
now have gone matters with me
Ill enough! In truth, would a stone
some pity upon me bestow.
That long-legged jade of a mare! May
the hangman pay it her back!
For clouted with iron was her foot; and
these were the letters I found:
Some nails newly forged! From which I
received six wounds in my head.

He hardly got off with his life. I now
have confessed to you all,
And pardon, dear nephew, I crave for
these my iniquitous works.

How things may turn out at the court is
not sure; however, I have
My conscience relieved of a load, and
washed myself clean from my sins. 80
Now tell me how I may reform, in order
remission to gain.

Then Grimbart replied: I find you encum-
bered afresh with misdeeds;
Still, the dead cannot live any more. Far
better, indeed, would it be,
If life you'd allowed them to keep. Yet,
uncle, I now am disposed,
On account of the terrible hour, and because
of the nearness of death,
That menaces you, your sins to remit, as
the servant of Christ;
For relentless they follow you up, and I
tremble with fear for the worst.
Above all, for the head of the hare will
vengeance against you be sought;
Extremely audacious it was, I must own,
our monarch to vex,

And is of more damage to you than you,
in your foolishness, thought. 90

Not a scrap, responded the scamp. Here's
something I wish you to hear:
To live without sin in the world is some-
thing uncommonly rare,
One cannot so holy be kept, as when in a
cloister, you know;
If a man has with honey to deal, his
fingers he licks now and then.
Now Lampen me greatly annoyed, for back-
wards and forwards he skipped
In front of my eyes all about; his fat little
body I liked,
And love I let go to the dogs. To Bellyn
I'd reason to wish
But little that's good. The damage is
theirs, the sin is mine own.
But they were in measure so coarse, and in
all, whatsoever they did,
So stupid and dull. Needed I, then, observe
strict decorum with them? 100

Small liking had I for such things; myself,
at that time, from the court
I had with anxiety saved, and taught them
in this and in that,
But 'twas all of no use. Each ought, it
is true, his neighbor to love,
That I'm constrained to admit, still I held
them in little esteem;
And dead is dead, as you your own self
have remarked; then permit
Us of other things now to converse. In
truth, these are dangerous times!
In high life and low what is now going
on? But talk we must not;
Yet cannot help using our eyes and having
some thoughts of our own.

The king himself steals, as we know, like
all the rest of the crowd;
What he does not lay hands on himself he
orders the bears and the wolves, 110
To secure, and believes that so doing is
right. There is none to be found

Who will venture to tell him the truth,
not even confessor or priest,
So deep has the evil struck root. They
are dumb! and why is this so?
With him they the plunder enjoy, no mat-
ter how small is the gain.
Should any one go and complain, with equal
advantage he might
Reach out for the air; he squanders his
time, and had better employ
Himself in some other pursuit. For gone
is gone, and when once
From you a more potent one takes what
you have possessed, to your plaint
But little attention is paid, and wearisome
gets it at last.
The lion's our monarch and lord, and all
things to seize for himself. 120
He considers as due to his rank. As a
rule, us his people he calls,
And certainly all that is ours appears to
belong unto him.

Wilt allow me, my uncle, to speak? Our
king is the fondest, by far,
Of those with full hands who approach, and
who, in accord with the tune
That is piped, understand how to dance;
too clearly is that to be seen.
That the wolf and the bear have obtained
access to his council again
Is to many a wrong; they steal and they
rob, yet are loved by the king.
All see it, and yet nothing say, each hoping
that his turn will come.
Over four there are thus to be found, hav-
ing place at the side of the king,
Who favored are more than the rest, and
greatest of all are at court. 130
But if a poor devil like me put hands
upon even a chick,
Upon him, they pounce all at once and
follow till he has been caught;
And then, with one voice, they condemn the
fellow with clamor to death.
Petty robbers are hanged on the spot, the
bigger ones get for themselves

Advantages great. They govern the land
and the castles possess.

See, uncle, I notice all this, and upon it
can't help but reflect.

My own game I thereupon play and, more-
over, I think very oft

That right it assuredly is, since such a great
number so act.

To be sure, then my conscience wakes up
and pictures to me, from afar,

The anger and justice of God, and makes
me reflect on the end. 140

For injustice, no matter how small, compen-
sation at last must be made.

Repentance at heart I then feel; it lasts,
however, not long.

Indeed, what good does it do to belong to
the best? For the best

From slander's vile tongue, in these times,
remain not in safety exempt.

The people now think it their right into
all kinds of things to enquire,

And no one they lightly forget; they invent
even this thing and that.

Little good in the commons is found, but
few of them really deserve
To have for their rulers and lords such
men as are honest and just;
For of that which is evil they sing, and
ever and ever they talk;
They know what is good in their lords, be
high or be low their degree, 150
Yet this they say nothing about, and seldom
we find it discussed.
Worst of all is, however, to me the conceit
of that notion so false,
Which gets such a hold of mankind, that
any one can, in the strife
Of a vehement, turbulent will, direct the
affairs of the world.
Should each one his children and wife,
however, in order maintain,
Or his insolent servants contrive to subdue,
then in calmness he could,
While fools are expending their means,
rejoice in a temperate life.
But how shall the world be improved,
when each allows all to himself,

And determines the rest of mankind by
force to bring under his rule?
Thus deeper, and deeper, for aye, into all
that is wicked we sink. 160
Slander and treason and lies, and taking of
oaths that are false,
Embezzlement, murder, and theft, one hears
nought of anything else;
False prophets and hypocrites both are
shamefully cheating mankind.

Thus every one passes his life; and, if they
be faithfully warned,
They receive it with scorn, and remark:
Oh yes! but if sin were, indeed,
So painful and hard to be borne as learned
men here and there preach,
Then surely the parsons themselves would
try from all faults to be free.
Bad example they plead as excuse, and in
that are precisely allied
To the whole of the simian race, which,
formed but to mimic and mock,

Yet having nor reason nor choice, must
suffer ineffable harm. 170

Of a truth, ought the men of the cloth
themselves to more fitly demean.

Very much could by them be achieved, if
it only in private they did;

But they care not a tittle for us outside of
their calling and craft,

And practice whatever they please in front
of our eyes, as if we

Were stricken with blindness complete; too
clearly however we see

That their vows rejoice the good Lord to
fully as small an extent

As suit they their fallible friends, whose
lives by the world are absorbed.

Thus do the priests, as a rule, on the
opposite side of the Alps,

Their own precious darlings enjoy; in these
regions also there are

As many who sinfully act. But I shall be
 told that they have 180
 Their children like those who in wedlock
 are joined; and them to maintain
 They struggle with ardor and zeal, and
 raise them high up in the world.
 But afterwards these can reflect no more
 whence their fathers arose,
 And to none will precedence yield, but
 proudly and haughtily walk
 As if they were noble of race, and always
 are firm in the thought
 That the matter is strictly correct. A custom
 of yore it was not
 So high to regard the children of priests,
 but now are they all
 As my lords and my ladies addressed. Yes,
 money can do what it will.
 It is seldom a princely estate can be found,
 where the parsons do not
 Make a levy of taxes and rents, and extort
 from the village and mill. 190
 They turn topsy-turvy the world, and com-
 mon folk wickedness learn;

For 'tis plain when the clergy thus do,
that all in their sins will indulge,
And the blind will be leading the blind
away from whatever is good.

Indeed, who has ever remarked the good
works of these heaven-born priests,
And how they the holy church, by example
of goodness, build up?

Who ever lives now in such way? We
are simply confirmed in our sins.

Thus it now with the people befalls, so
how can the world then improve?

But listen still further to me! If one
out of wedlock is born,

Then let him thereover be still. What
more can he do in the case?

Now I mean only this understand: If any
such one shall himself

But simply with meekness conduct, and not
with an air of conceit

His fellows provoke, no offence is received,
and one would be wrong

To make it a subject of talk. Our birth
has no power us to make
Either good or exalted in mind, nor can it
be held for reproach;
But virtue and vice are the things that
make true distinctions in man.
Men of learning and worth in the church
are ever with justice esteemed
And honored by all; but the wicked a
wicked example present.
Should such a one preach at his best, yet
at length will the laity say:
When he righteousness talks and wickedness
does, how are we to select?
Nor is he of use to the church; to each
in his sermons he says: 210
Give money to keep up the church; that,
beloved, is what I advise,
If indulgence and mercy you wish to obtain.
Thus his discourse he ends.
And does precious little to help, indeed, not
a thing; and, for all
That he cares, might the church tumble
down. Still further to go, he esteems

The best kind of life to be this: in costly
attire to be clothed,
And to eat of the daintiest food. And in
worldly affairs if he finds
Himself overwhelmed with concern, how can
he in worship engage?
Good parsons in serving the Lord are daily
and hourly employed,
And put into practice the good; and thus
to the holy church
Of the greatest of service they are; and,
through good example, their flocks, 220
To the gate of salvation they lead, by the
way that is narrow and strait.

But I know the behooded as well; they
prattle and jabber and prate
Ever concerning their forms, and are always
in search of the rich;
The people to flatter know how, and love
to be called as their guests.
Invite you but one, then a second arrives,
and you further will find

Yet two or three others appear. Then
again, in the convent the one
Who well understands how to talk the
quickest promotion will gain;
The lector is sure to become, or may be
the custos or prior.
The others are pushed to one side. The
dishes are furnished and served
In quite a dissimilar way; for some must,
of nights, in the choir 230
Sing and read, and visit the haunts of the
dead, while others obtain
Great favors, and rest can procure, and eat
the most costly of food.

The legates likewise of the pope, the abbots
and prelates and monks,
The beguins and even the nuns, of all a
great deal might be said.
Everywhere is the cry: Give me what is
yours and touch not what's mine.
In truth, there are few to be found, not
seven, who live in accord

With the brotherhood's precepts and rules,
as a pattern of virtuous life.

The priesthood is thus to be found most
thoroughly rotten and weak.

My uncle, the badger replied, I see you
minutely confess

Exotical sins. What advantageth that?

Methinks there must be 240

Enough of your own. And tell me, my
uncle, why you should concern

Yourself with the clergy's affairs and this
thing and that, as you do?

Let each his own burden take up, and each
and every one give

Account of himself, how he in his station
of life doth attempt

His duty to do, which is something that
no one on earth may neglect,

Not either the old or the young, in cloister
or out in the world.

You talk altogether too much about things
of all kinds, and at length

Might me into error seduce. So thoroughly
well you're aware

How now is directed the world, and all its
affairs are ordained,

That none for a parson is better endowed.

With the rest of the sheep, 250

I would come to confess at your house, and
under your teaching would sit,

Of your wisdom a knowledge to get; for I
am compelled to admit

That stupid and rough the most of us are,
and need good advice.

When they, in such converse as this, had
come pretty near to the court,

Reynard said: Thus now is the Rubicon
passed! and he roused himself up.

And they came upon Martin the ape, who,
just at that time, had set forth,

With intention to travel to Rome. He
gave a good day to them both.

Dear uncle, stand well to your guns, he
sagely remarked to the fox,

And asked about this thing and that,
although the whole matter he knew.

Ah! how in these lattermost days does fortune
against me take sides, 260

Said Reynard to him in reply; some thieves
have been at it again

And accused me once more, I know not of
whom they consist, but in chief

Are the wretched young rabbit and crow;
the one is bereft of his wife,

And the other of one of his ears. Now
what do I care about that?

Could only I speak with the king, then
smart should they both for their pains.

But most I'm impeded by this, that under
the ban of the pope

I still, to my sorrow, remain. The dean
has full power in the case,

And he is esteemed by the king. Now
the ban has upon me been put

Entirely for Isengrim's sake, who once had
become a recluse,

But ran from the convent away, wherein he
sojourned at Elkmar. 270

He swore that he could not so live, for he
was too strictly confined,
From food had too long to abstain, nor
could so much reading endure;
So I helped him away from the place. It
repents me the deed to have done,
For he slanders me now to the king and
ever me seeks to disgrace.
To Rome must I go? In the meantime at
home will my family be
At loss what to do for themselves, for the
wolf cannot leave them alone,
But molests them where meet them he may.
Then again, very many there are
Who think nought but evil of me, and
seize on whatever is mine.
If I were released from the ban, in far
better state should I be,
My fortune again at the court to follow
with comfort and ease. 280

Then Martin replied: I can help you in
this; it happens that I,

Just now am departing for Rome, and you
with some dodges can serve.

Oppressed will I not let you be! As clerk
to the bishop, methinks

I know how the work should be done. I
surely will see that the dean

Forthwith shall be cited to Rome, and then
I against him will fight.

Mind, uncle, the business I'll push, and
how to direct it I know.

I'll see that the judgment's enforced; you
doubtless through me, will obtain

Your discharge; I will fetch it myself, and
then shall your enemies all

Laugh the wrong side of their face; both
money and pains they shall lose.

I well understand how matters are managed
at Rome, and I know 290

What ought and ought not to be done.
My uncle, lord Simony's there,

Well regarded and mighty he is, and help
gives to all who well pay;

Sir Pluralist too, such a lord! Doctor
Skinflint and others beside;

And Turncoat and Trimmer to boot, I have
the whole lot for my friends.
My funds I have sent on ahead, for thus,
you must know, does one there
The best of impressions produce. Of cita-
tions, indeed, they discourse,
But money alone they desire; and let the
whole matter be found
How crooked soever it may, with good pay
I will straighten it out.
If money you bring, then grace you'll
obtain, but let you it lack,
The doors then against you closed. You
tranquilly rest here at home; 300
Your business I'll take on myself, and
loosen its knottiest knots.
You now go your way to the court, Dame
Rückenau there you will find,
My spouse, who is held in the highest
esteem by our master the king,
As also she is by the queen. She is
quick in the use of her wit,
So tell her the case; she is wise and
intercedes gladly for friends;

Many relatives there you will find. It
does not, at all times, avail
The right of a matter to have. Two sis-
ters with her you will find,
And three of my children as well, besides
many more of your race,
To render you service prepared in whatever-
way you desire.
And should you your rights be denied, you
then will some knowledge obtain 310
Of what I can do; and if you're oppressed,
let me quickly it know,
And I'll have the whole land placed under
the ban, the monarch and all
Of the women and children and men. An
interdict I will have sent,
And no one shall sing any more, nor cele-
brate mass, nor baptize,
Nor bury, whatever it be. Take comfort,
my nephew, in this!

For aged and sick is the pope; himself he
no longer concerns

With affairs, and is little esteemed. Also
now at the court of the king
Has cardinal Querulous absolute power, and
he is a young
And a vigorous man, a mettlesome man,
with a mind of his own.
He's in love with a woman I know, and
she him a letter shall take, 320
And what it may be she demands she
knows very well how to get;
And his writer John Faction is there, who
is most precisely informed
In coins, whether ancient or new; then
Jonathan Pry, his compeer,
Is a gay hanger on of the court; and the
notary, Slippery Dick,
A bachelor is of both kinds of law, and if
he shall remain
Yet longer a year, then in practical writings
he perfect will be.
Beyond these, two judges are there, who
go by the names of Lovegold
And Palmitch; and if they any ruling pro-
nounce, then as law it remains.

Thus put into practice in Rome are many
a prank and a trick
That knows the pope nothing about.
Friends must we make for ourselves, 330
For by them are forgiven our sins, and also
are persons released
From the ban. My dearest of uncles, you
may surely rely upon this!
For long has the king been aware that I
will not allow you to fall.
Your case I will see to its end, and that
I am able to do:
He would also do well to reflect that many
there are, to the apes
And the foxes connected by ties, who best
him with counsel assist;
And that will you certainly help, go mat-
ters however they may.

Reynard then spake: This comforts me
much; I shall bear it in mind,
Should now I but get myself free. Then
each of the other took leave.

Under safeguard of Grimbart the badger
alone now Reynard pursued
His way to the court of the king, where
bitter against him they felt. 341

CANTO NINE

Sir Reynard had come to the court, believing
that he could avert

The actions which threatened him there,
yet as he went in and perceived

Together his numerous foes, as all stood
about in the place,

Each eager himself to avenge, and him to
see punished with death,

His courage gave way; he began to distrust,
yet boldly he walked

Right in through the midst of the lords,
with Grimbart along at his side.

They came to the throne of the king, and
Grimbart there whispered and said:

Now Reynard, give way to no fear; to the
timid, remember, be sure,

Will fortune her favors not grant; the
daring do danger invite,

And joy in its presence to be; it helps
them again to escape. 10

Reynard said: You tell me the truth, and
I give you my heartiest thanks

For the splendid support of your words; if
ever again I get free.

.. I shall bear them in mind. He looked
now around, and many of kin
Could in the assemblage be seen, yet few
as supporters to claim.

Nearly all he was wont to ill-treat; with
the otters and beavers, indeed,

Alike both the great and the small, he had
practiced his villainous tricks;

Yet discovered he plenty of friends inside
of the hall of the king.

In front of the throne he bowed to the
earth and soberly said:

May God, from whom nothing is hid, and
who ever mighty remains,

Preserve you, my lord and my king, and
also preserve, none the less, 20

Our sovereign lady the queen, and jointly
may he on you both

Perception and wisdom bestow, so that you
with discretion may now

Distinguish the right from the wrong, for
much of deception there is

In vogue among men in these days. Thus
outwardly many things seem

What, in matter of fact, they are not.

Had each on his forehead engraved

What he thinks, and the king should it
see, it then would be clearly revealed

That utter untruths I do not, and to serve
you am always prepared.

The wicked, I know, do me gravely accuse,
and would greatly delight

To disgrace, and out from your favor to
oust, as if of the same

I had unworthy been found. But of justice

I know the strong love 30

Of my sovereign master and king, for him
has none ever induced

The way of the law to obstruct, and thus
will it ever remain.

Now all of them came and pressed in,
and every one there was bewitched

By Reynard's intrepid display, and him was
each aching to hear.

His criminal deeds were all known, how
then could he think to escape?

Reynard, you knave, said the king, think
not any more that your words,

So glibly pronounced, will you save; no
longer are they of avail

To cover deception and lies; your game
has now come to an end.

Your faithful devotion to me, you have, I
believe, well evinced

On the rabbit as well as the crow! Suffi-
cient were that of itself; 40

But treason you bring into play, whether
home or abroad you may be,

Your strokes are malicious and prompt, yet
not any further will they

Be endured, your measure is full; but I
will no longer reprove.

Reynard thought: What now can I do?
Oh, could I again but succeed

In getting once more to my home! But
where shall I look for the means?
However it goes, through with it I must.
Let us everything try.

Most noble sovereign, mighty king, he began
to hold forth,
If you think I have merited death, then
my case you assuredly have
Beheld from a wrong point of view; I
therefore implore that you will
At least hear me through. Till now I
have you to your profit advised, 50
In need I have stood at your side, when
some, as you know, fell away,
Who between us are pushing themselves,
my ruin to try to effect,
And their chances improve while I am
away. With them you might well,
Noble king, when I have to speak been
allowed, the matter adjust.
After that, if guilty I'm found, my fate I
of course must endure.

But little of me have you thought, while I,
all over the land,
In different places about, have the closest
of watches maintained.
Think you that I now should come to the
court, if I myself knew
To be guilty of great or e'en little mis-
deeds? With prudence I should
Have fled from the place where you are,
and my enemies tried to avoid. 60
No indeed, from my stronghold at home,
most assuredly would
Not all the world's gold have me here been
able to tempt, for I there
Was free on my own ground and soil.
But in fact I no consciousness have
Of one evil deed that I've done, so here
my appearance have made.
I was staying for nought but to watch;
there brought me my uncle the news
That I was required at the court. I had
just been thinking afresh
How might I get rid of the ban, and there-
over, with Martin the ape,

Much converse have recently had, who
sacredly promised he would
From the incubus get me set free. I,
myself, am in transit to Rome,
He remarked, and from now to its end the
matter I fully will take 70
On myself; go you to the court and you
shall get rid of the ban.
Lo! thus me did Martin advise, and what
he's about he must know,
For the eminent bishop, lord Waver, him
constantly has in employ;
For fully five years has Martin him served
in judicial affairs.
And thus come I here to your court, com-
plaint on complaint but to find.
The coney backbites me, the toad; now
Reynard, however, is here
In person himself, so let him come forward
and speak to my face;
For indeed 'tis an easy affair complaints of
the absent to bring;
But the opposite side must be heard, ere
the matter to judgment shall come.

Those treacherous comrades of mine! By
all that is holy, they have 80
Themselves well enjoyed at my hands, the
rabbit as well as the crow.

The day before yesterday morn, ere the
sun had got up, I was met
By the rabbit, who greeted me fair; at
that very moment myself

I in front of my castle had placed, for
reading the prayers of the day;

He made me aware that he was en route
to the court; then I said:

May God you attend! At this he com-
plained of how hungry and tired

He had grown. Then friendly I asked:
Desire you not something to eat?

With thankfulness I will accept, he replied.

I said in response:

I will gladly it give. So I went with him
in and, quick as could be,

I cherries and butter produced; for on
Wednesdays I never eat meat. 90

And he ate, to his heart's content, of bread
and of butter and fruits.

But now the last born of my sons stepped
up to the table, to see
If anything over remained, for children do
always love food.
At something the lad made a grab, when
the rabbit him gave such a blow,
With suddenness over his mouth, that from
lips and from teeth ran the blood.
Now Reinhart, my other young son, saw
the blow and the hypocrite seized
Direct by the throat, played well his own
game, and his brother avenged.
That happened; not more and not less. I
tarried not long from the spot,
But ran and chastised the two boys, and
managed with trouble them both
Away from the rabbit to get. His punish-
ment let him endure, 100
For he merited more than he got, and the
youngsters could well, I am sure,
Had I any evil desired, have thoroughly
finished him up.
And thus he now gives me his thanks!
He says that I pulled off his ear;

Yet he was with honor received, a token
of which he has kept.

To me, after this, came the crow, and his
lamentation poured forth;

His wife he had lost, who had eaten
too much and herself had thus killed,
For a fish of a passable size, with all of its
bones, she had gulped.

As to where the misfortune occurred, that
he can best tell; but he says

That I have her slain. I'll wager he did
it himself, and if he

Were earnestly asked if I had it done, his
tune he would change. 110

Crows fly up too far in the air, no
jump can attain such a height.

If any one wish to accuse me of actions
forbidden like these,

Let him do it with evidence lawful and
just, for thus is it fit

To prosecute worshipful men; this ought I
at least to expect.
But if none of this kind can be found, yet
another resource is at hand;
Here! I am preparéd for a tilt! Let the
day be appointed and place,
Then let an opponent of worth himself
introduce in the list,
With me a full equal by birth, then each
can proceed with his claim;
Who honor shall gain in the strife, with
him let it ever remain;
Things always have thus been set right,
and I nothing better demand. 120

All stood there and heard what he said,
and everyone at the words
Of Reýnard was greatly surprised, which he
had so boldly pronounced.
And as to the rabbit and crow, they both
were confounded with fright;
They quitted the court and ventured not
further to utter a word;

But each to the other remarked: 'Twould
not quite advisable be
With him any more to dispute; all means
that we know we might try,
And then not be near to success. Who is
there that saw what he did?
Alone with the rascal we were, for witness
then whom could we get?
After all the disgrace would be ours. For
all of his numberless crimes
May the hangman upon him await, and
pay him as he has deserved! 130
He would like us in combat to meet?
That might with us badly turn out.
No, in truth! that's a thing we would rather
avoid; for nimble and false,
Deceitful and base, we know him to be.
Indeed we, all five,
Should not against him be enough, and
dearly therefor should we pay.

But Bruin and Isengrim both were ill at
their ease; they observed,

With annoyance, the two sneak away from
the place. The monarch then said:
If any one yet has complaint, let him come!
We will hear what it is.
So many but yesterday blamed, here stands
the accused! Where are they?

Quoth Reynard at this: Thus it commonly
goes; either this one or that
Is impeached, yet, when he comes, here his
accusers remain at their homes. 140
These two little mischievous rogues, the
rabbit and likewise the crow,
Would gladly have brought me to shame,
and damage and punishment too.
But now they apologies make, and I them
forgive; for, indeed,
They hesitate, now that I'm here, and slip
aside out of the way.
How I should have made them ashamed!
You see how with danger 'tis fraught,
Your ear to the wretched defamers of
servants not present to lend.

The law they do naught but pervert, and
are hateful to all of true worth.
For the rest only pity I feel, and care
not about them a straw.

Attend! said the king upon this, you traitor
malicious and mean!

Pray tell us what urged you to this, that
Lampen, the trusted and true, 150
Who used my despatches to bear, you killed
in so shameful a way?

Had I not forgiven you all, so far as you
ever had sinned?

From me you received both a wallet and
staff, thus provided you were
For a journey to Rome and over the sea;
you nothing I grudged,
And hoped for amendment from you; but
now I find out, at the start,
How Lampen of life you deprived, and
Bellyn as messenger made
You to serve, to bring in the knapsack his
head; and who, when he came,

Said out, before all, that despatches he
brought, which together had you
Indited and penned; and you, to the best
of his power, he had helped;
And I found in the knapsack the head, no
more and no less than the head. 160
This was done in defiance of me, and Bel-
lyn at once I retained
As a pledge, his life was the price, and
now we will see about yours.

Reynard said: What's this that I hear?
Lampen is killed? And I find
My Bellyn no more? What of me will
become? Oh, dead that I were!
Ah me! With them I have lost a trea-
sure unequalled in worth.
I sent you some jewels by them, none better
nor finer than which,
All over the world, can be found. Who
could have believed that the ram
Would Lampen have murdered like this,
and you of those riches have robbed?

One must be on one's guard, even when
no suspicion of danger exists.

In fury, the king would not hear the whole
of what Reynard would say; 170

To his chamber he turned himself off, not
having with clearness, indeed,

Reynard's words understood; and him he
intended to punish with death.

And, as soon as he came to his room, he
found in his presence the queen,

Who there, with dame Rückenau, stood.

Now the ape was especially dear
To king, as well as to queen, which useful
to Reynard would be.

Accomplished and prudent she was, and
very proficient in speech;

Where'er she appeared, a sensation she
made, and was honored by all.

The king's indignation she saw, and to
him circumspectly she said:

When you, gracious master and king, have
hearkened at times to my suit,

No cause have you had for regret; you
always my boldness condoned 180
In speaking a quieting word when some-
thing your anger had roused.
At present be likewise disposed to listen
to me; it concerns
My own proper race, of a truth! And
who can one's own disavow?
Now Reynard, whate'er he may be, is a
kinsman of mine, and if I
Shall frankly confess how his conduct
appears unto me, .I must say,
Since now to the law he submits, I think
very well of his case.
His father, like him, was compelled, not-
withstanding the favor of yours,
Much evil from venomous tongues and per-
jured accusers to bear;
Yet always he put them to shame. So
soon as more closely his case
Was examined, quite clear it became; but
yet did the envious knaves 190
Try even his merits to make as heinous
transgressions appear.



“Now Reynard, whate'er he may be, is a kinsman of mine.”

Thus ever himself he maintained in greater
esteem at the court
Than Bruin and Isengrim now; indeed,
'twere of these to be wished
That they should be able to cast the griev-
ances all on one side,
That are constantly heard about them; but
little do they apprehend
Of justice and right, as is shown by their
counsel as well as their life.

Here answered, however, the king: But
how can it cause you surprise,
That I am with Reynard provoked? The
thief who, a short time ago,
Put Lampen to death, led Bellyn astray,
and with insolence now
All flatly denies; and himself, as a servant
straightforward and true, 200
Has boldness enough to extol! In the
meantime do all as one man
Raise with loud voices complaints, and only
too clearly show forth

How he my safe-conduct defies, and also
how he, with his thefts,
His robbings and murders, the land and my
faithful retainers despoils.
Indeed, I'll no longer it bear! In answer
thereto said the ape:
In truth not to many is granted the gift,
in things of all kinds,
To act with discretion and counsel with
skill, and he who succeeds
Will certainly confidence earn but the en-
vious try all they can
To covertly do him a hurt; and, soon as
their numbers increase,
They openly make their attempts. With
Reynard it often has thus 210
Of yore come about; they cannot, however,
efface from our minds
How he has you wisely advised in cases
where others were dumb.
You know (it but lately took place) how the
man and the serpent came here
To solicit your aid, and the case there was
none who knew how to decide;

But Reynard discovered a way, and you
lauded him then before all.

To this did the monarch rejoin, after brief
meditation thereon:

I remember the matter quite well, yet now
it has gone from my mind

How in detail it all came about; it was
somewhat entangled, methinks.

If you can still say how it was, I gladly
shall hear your account.

She answered the king: As my lord has
commanded so shall it be done. 220

Just two years ago or about, a dragon
appeared and complained,

With turmoil, to you, gracious lord, that a
peasant could not be induced

Himself to submit to the law; a man against
whom the decree

Had twice been pronounced. To the court of
your highness the peasant she brought,

And stated the matter at length, with
numerous violent words.

Through a hole, that she found in a hedge,
the serpent intended to crawl,
But got herself caught in a cord, that in
front of the breach had been hung;
Ever tighter was getting the loop, and there
she her life would have lost,
Had not, at the opportune time, a vagrant
been passing along.

In anguish to him she cried out: Have
pity and help me get free, 230

I entreat! To this the man said: Released,
I will see that you are,

For your misery causes me grief; but first
you must give me your word,

No mischief on me to inflict. The serpent
agreed to his terms,

And swore the most solemn of oaths that
she, in no manner or way,

Would harm to her rescuer do, and thus
did the man set her free.

Awhile on together they walked; but the
serpent was feeling, at length,
The gnawings of hunger, and flew at the
man, with intent him to choke
And devour; and in fear and alarm the
poor fellow sprang from her side.
Is this my reward? This have I deserved?
_he cried, and did you
Not swear the most sacred of oaths? The
serpent then said in reply: 240
My hunger impels me, alas! I have no
control of myself;
No law does necessity know; it constitutes
right of itself.

In turn then responded the man: Keep off
from me only so long
As we to some people may come, who us
will impartially judge.
And thereupon answered the worm: Till
then I will patience preserve.

Thus further a distance they went, and
over the water they found

Cutpurse, the raven, along with his son,
who Croker was called;

And the serpent invited them both to draw
near, and thus them invoked:

Come here, we have something to say.

The raven them soberly heard,
And judgment at once he pronounced, the
man to ingest. Thus he hoped 250
A morsel to get for himself. Much pleased
was the serpent at this;

Lo! now I have triumphed, she said, and
none can the blame lay on me.

Not so, then responded the man, my case
is not utterly lost;

Shall a robber pass sentence of death, or
one judge alone try the case?

I demand that it further be heard, as equity
me doth allow;

By four, or by ten if you please, let the
matter be brought to be heard.

The serpent then said: Let us go. They
went, and were met, on the road,

By the wolf and the bear, and together
they all of them walked.

The peasant now everything feared; for him
in the midst of the five

It dangerous was to remain, seeing what
kind of fellows they were. 260

The serpent, the ravens, the wolf, and the
bear hemmed him in all around;

And anxious enough he became, for soon
did the wolf and the bear

Make up both together their minds, in this
way their judgment to give:

The serpent might slaughter the man, as a
ravenous craving for food

Acknowledged no maxim or law; one's
needs would absolve from an oath.

Now fear and concern on the traveller
seized, for they all in accord

Were after his life. Then the serpent flew
out with a furious hiss,

Spitting upon him her spleen, and in terror
he sprang to one side.

Great wrong, he exclaimed, you commit;
who you has seen fit to assign,

As master and lord of my life? You heard
what was said, she replied, 270

Decided the judges have twice, and as often
your case you have lost.

To her then responded the man: They
plunder and pilfer, themselves;

I acknowledge them not in the least, the
case we will take to the king;

When he speaks, I'll submit to his words,
and if I the loser come out,

In bad enough plight shall I be; I will
it, however, endure.

The wolf and the bear then mockingly
said: This plan you can try;

The serpent will certainly win, and better
can she nothing wish.

They thought that the lords of the court, in
session, would surely decide

As had they; and they went in good cheer,
the peasant escorting along.

Before you they came, the serpent, the
ravens, the wolf, and the bear; 280

Yea, a triplet of wolves was disclosed, for
two of his children he brought;

Allbelly was one of them called, and Glutton
the other. These two
Most trouble occasioned the man; for with
the intent had they come
Their own proper share to consume, for
ever rapacious they are.
With rudeness unbearable then, before you
they bellowed and howled,
Until you expelled from the court both of
the ill-mannered churls.
Then the man to your mercy appealed, and
proceeded his tale to relate:
How to kill him the serpent had thought;
and how she his generous act
Had forgotten, and broken her oath; so
safety he sought at your hands.
And the snake contradicted him not: My
hunger's omnipotent need, 290
Which knows not the meaning of law,
irresistibly me did compel.

Good lord, you were greatly perplexed; the
matter in hand to you seemed

To the brim with suspicion to be, and judicially hard to decide;
For to you very harsh it appeared, the kind-hearted man to condemn,
Who himself had beneficent shown; on the other hand still, you bethought
Of the mischievous hunger as well; you therefore the council convoked.
Alas! the opinion of most the claim of the man was against,
For they had an eye to the feast, and thought they the serpent would help.
But heralds to Reynard you sent, for all of the others, indeed,
Uttered more words than enough, yet the case could not rightly resolve. 300
Reynard came and the evidence heard; to him the decision you left;
As he on the matter should rule, even so should the law be enforced.

Reynard, with prudence, then said: It needful I find, before all,

Myself to betake to the place, that the
snake in her bonds I may see,
Just as the peasant her found; after that,
my decision I'll give.
The serpent was bound then afresh in the
self-same position and way.
As across her the peasant had come, when
her in the hedge he had found.

When this had been done, Reynard said:
Here now we find each of the two
In former condition again, not either has
won or has lost;
Yet the right is made perfectly plain, as
seems it to me, of itself; 310
For, provided the man shall see fit, he now
can the serpent once more
Release from her place in the cord; if not,
he can there let her hang;
He free and with honor can go, his busi-
ness to seek and transact.
Since she so untrue has become, when his
kindness she deigned to accept,

The man has now fairly the choice; to me
that appears the intent
Of the law; who it better conceives, may
now let us hear what it is.

The verdict was pleasing to you, and all of
your council as well;
Reynard was eulogised much; you were
thanked by the peasant; and all
The wisdom of Reynard extolled; the queen
also praised him herself.
Much talk there was made at the time, how
formerly you had, in war, 320
Both Bruin and Isengrim used; and how, far
and wide, they were feared,
For always were they to be found where
plenty there was to devour.
Burly and daring and strong, none could
deny that they were,
Yet often in counsel was felt the lack of
some much needed sense,
For they are accustomed too much on phy-
sical force to rely.

When work in the field is approached,
much lameness and halting there is.
Bolder can one not appear, than show they
themselves when at home;
Outside they are ready in ambush to lie;
but, if once are exchanged
Sturdy blows, they then will be found neither
better nor worse than the next.
The bears and the wolves destroy the
whole land, and little they care 330
Whose house is consumed by the flames.
They ever accustom themselves
To go and get warm at the coals, and
pity for none do they feel,
If only their maws they can fill. The eggs
they all swallow themselves,
And leave but the shells to the poor, and
think such division is fair.
On the other hand Reynard, the fox, and
all of his race comprehend
What wisdom and counsel imply; and, if
now he has done something wrong,
Gracious lord, yet is he no stick. Be sure
that no other will you

Ever give any better advice. For this,
grant him pardon, I beg.

To this then responded the king: Upon it
I'll think. The decree

Was given as you have described; the
serpent the penalty paid. . . . 340

Yet remains he a scamp, every inch, without
any chance to reform.

• If a compact with him should be made,
deception at last will result,

For in proving that black is but white,
who is there can match him in skill?

The wolf and the bear and the cat, the
rabbit and even the crow,

Are not for him agile enough, he brings
them to shame and disgrace;

From this one he snatches an ear, from
another he tears out an eye,

And a third he deprives of his life. I
certainly cannot conceive

How you can thus favor the scamp, and
speak in defence of his acts.

Gracious lord, then responded the ape, it
impossible is to deny
That his race is exalted and great. There-
on it is well to reflect. 350

Then up rose the king to go out, and all
of those who were there,
In a body awaiting him stood. In the
circle thus formed he observed
A number to Reynard most closely allied
who all had arrived
Their kinsman to shield and protect; so
many to name would be hard.
And he the great family saw; he then, on
the other side, saw
The enemies Reynard had made; divided it
seemed was the court.

In this way the monarch began: Give ear
to me, Reynard! Can you
An excuse for such wickedness find, as, with
Bellyn's assistance, to put

My innocent Lampen to death and, in your
audacity, too,
His head in the wallet to thrust, as if to
me letters you sent? 360
To mock me that deed you performed; I
have punished already the one,
The penalty Bellyn has paid, and you may
the same now expect.

Ah, me! answered Reynard thereto; oh,
would that I also were dead!
Pray hearken to me, and then you can do
as the case may demand.
If guilty, then slay me at once; I shall
never, however, get free
From my burden of grief and distress; for-
lorn I must always remain.
For Bellyn the traitor's purloined the choic-
est of treasures from me,
The equal of which never yet has mortal
his eyes set upon.
Ah, life to poor Lampen they've cost!
These treasures I had to them both

Committed in charge; now Bellyn has stolen
the costly effects. 370

But let them yet further be sought; how-
ever, I very much fear

That none will e'er find them again; they'll
rest for eternity lost.

To this did the monkey reply: Why give
you thus way to despair?

Be they but on top of the ground, to
recover them yet there is hope;

Both early and late will we go, and of
laymen and clerics with zeal

Will enquire. But first let us know, of
what did the treasures consist?

Reynard said: So precious they were, that
ne'er can we find them again.

Who possesses them now will guard them
with care. How much at the loss

Will my wife, dame Ermelyn, grieve! She
will never forgive me for this,

For me she tried hard to dissuade from
entrusting such riches to them. 380

Now lies are against me trumped up, and
I am most basely accused;

But still I my rights will defend, and the
issue await; and if then

Acquitted I am, I will travel about through
kingdoms and lands,

And endeavor the treasures to find, even
though it shall cost me my life. 384

CANTO TEN

My king, furthermore said the fox, that
villain so crafty in speech,
Permit me, illustrious prince, in the ears of
my friends to relate
What comprised all the sumptuous things
that I had transmitted to you;
Though them you may not have received,
yet laudable was my intent.
Go ahead then, responded the king, and
whatever you say, make it short.

Well-being and honor are lost! And every-
thing now you shall learn,
Said Reynard, with sadness of tone. The
first of the beautiful gems
Was a ring, which to Bellyn I gave, and
he should the same to the king
Have brought and surrendered from me.
In a most unaccountable way
This ring was designed and composed, and
worthy it was in the wealth 10

Of my sovereign's treasure to shine, being
made of the finest of gold.
On the innermost side of this gem, that
next to the finger would be,
Were letters engraved to be seen, enamelled
in blue and in black;
Three Hebrew cognomens they formed, of
significance special and great;
And none in this land could explain what
meaning lay hidden therein;
Master Abrion only, of Treves, could deci-
pher the symbols for me.
Now he is an erudite Jew, and every lan-
guage and tongue
He knows, that is spoken by man from
Lüneberg unto Poitou;
And is also especially skilled in the virtues
of herbs and of stones.

When placed I before him the ring, he said
that most precious of things 20
Were hidden within its embrace; that the
names, which therein were engraved,

Were carried by Seth, the devout, from
Paradise down to the earth,
When the oil of compassion he sought; and
who on his finger it wears,
Finds free from all dangers himself; not
thunder nor lightning nor all
The mage's enchantments can hurt, while
this on his person he keeps.
And further the master observed that, at
some time or other, he'd read
That who kept on his finger the ring, could
not, in the fiercest of cold,
Be frozen to death, but would certainly live
to a peaceful old age.
Outside it a gem had been set, a carbuncle
brilliant and clear,
Which glistened so brightly at night, that
things could be seen as by day. 30
Many virtues belonged to this stone; all
kinds of diseases it healed;
Who came into contact therewith, was
exempt from all want and distress;
Death was the only thing it had not the
power to subdue.

Still further the master disclosed the magnificent gifts of the stone;
Its owner in safety can go throughout all the lands of the earth;
Neither water nor fire can him hurt; imprisoned, or even betrayed,
He never can be, and from all the assaults of a foe he escapes.
If, fasting, he looks on the stone, in battle he certainly will
A hundred and more overcome; by the potency too of the stone,
Is the action of poisons annulled, and malignant secretions as well. 40
So also it hatred destroys; how many soever there be,
Who do its possessor not love, they shortly a change undergo.

But who could enumerate all the virtues and powers of the stone,
That I found in my father's reserve, and I, to my master, the king,

Now thought in all safety to send? For
of such a magnificent ring
I worthy was not; I knew it right well; it
ought to belong,
I thought, to the one who, of right, is held
as the noblest of all.
On him, and none other, depend our welfare
and property both;
And I cherished the hope that his life I
might from all evil protect.

Moreover was Bellyn, the ram, in addition
thereto, to the queen, 50
A mirror and comb to present, to keep in
remembrance of me.
These both had I once, out of sport, from
my father's collection removed,
And not on the face of the earth could a
work of art finer be found.
How oft has endeavored my wife them both
to obtain for herself!
For nothing so much did she long, of all
that there is in the world;

And about them contentions we had, but
my purpose she never could change.
At length both the mirror and comb, with
best of intention, I sent
To my gracious lady, the queen, who
always and ever to me
The utmost of favor has shown, and
shielded from harm of all kinds.
She often has spoken for me a mild and
benevolent word; 60
She is noble, exalted in birth, by virtue
enrobed and adorned,
And her ancient descent is proclaimed by
actions as well as by words.
She was worthy the mirror and comb, on
which, to my sorrow and shame,
She has not been allowed to set eyes. For
ever, alas, they are lost!

Now to say a few words of the comb:
The artist, this comb to construct,
Had the bones of a panther employed, a
glorious creature's remains,

Whose place of abode is the land from
Paradise unto the Ind.
All species of colors are shown in its skin,
and the sweetest of scents
Are thence given out, wherever it turns;
and thus do the beasts
Instinctively follow its tracks, wherever it
be that it goes; 70
For healthy they grow from this scent and,
without an exception, they all
Are imbued with a knowledge of this. Of
sinews and bones such as these
Was the beautiful comb, that I sent, con-
structed with wonderful skill;
Like silver in whiteness and gleam, of
ineffable purity too;
And better, by far, was its scent than cin-
namon even and cloves.
When the animal passes from life, the aroma
goes into its bones,
Remains everlastingly there, and always them
keeps from decay;
It drives all distempers away, and against
all the poisons is proof.

Again, on the back of the comb could
excellent pictures be seen,
Quite high in relief, with delicate tendrils of
gold interlaced, 80
And lazuli, azure and gules. In the middle-
most part of the field
Was the story insculptured with art, how
Priam's son, Paris of Troy,
Was sitting one day at a brook, and three
women, seraphic and fair,
Before him he saw, who Pallas and Juno
and Venus were called.
In strife they had long been engaged, for
each of them wished to possess
An apple that, up to this time, conjointly
to them had belonged.
At length an agreement was made, that
Paris this apple of gold
Should on the most lovely bestow, and she
should alone it retain.

The youth regarded them all with the
greatest attention and care.

Now Juno remarked: If the apple I get,
and if me you adjudge 90
The fairest to be, you the richest of all in
the world shall become.
And Minerva rejoined: Deliberate well, and
the apple give me;
Then you the most potent of men shall
become, and dreaded by all
Wherever your name may be known, alike
by your friends and your foes.
Venus spake: What want you with power?
And riches, what good will they do?
Are you not the ransomed one's son? And
as to your brothers, are they,
Hector and all of the rest, not wealthy and
strong in the land?
Is Troy not secured by its hosts, and I
also may ask if you have
Not conquered the land round about, as well
as more far away folk?
If me you the fairest pronounce, and the
apple confer upon me, 100
You then shall have cause to rejoice in a
treasure the greatest on earth.

This prize is an excellent wife, of women
the fairest of all,
So virtuous, noble, and wise, that none can
too highly her praise.
Give the apple to me, and you shall the
wife of the king of the Greeks,
The beautiful Helen I mean, that treasure
of treasures, possess.

Then gave he the apple to her, and
adjudged her the fairest of all.
And she aided him, in return, to elope with
the beautiful queen,
The great Menelaus's wife, whom he had
in Troy for his own.
This story was seen in relief, in the mid-
dlemost part of the field;
And all round about it were shields, with
writings insculptured with art; 110
And only had one them to read, the gist
of the fable to know.

Of the mirror I further will speak; in
lieu of a surface of glass,

A reflector of beryl was used, of wonderful
beauty and sheen;
All things thereupon were revealed, even
though a mile off they occurred,
Were it either by day or by night. And
if, in one's face, there should be
A blemish, whatever it was, if naught but a
fleck in the eye,
Should one in the mirror but look, from
that very instant there fled
Imperfections away of all kinds, and every
extrinsic defect.
Can you marvel that I am sore grieved at
having the mirror thus lost?
For setting the plate was employed the
costliest wood to be found, 120
Which shittim is called, so named from its
solid and glittering growth;
It is never infected by worms, and also, in
justice, it is
More highly regarded than gold, with ebony
only as next.
There once out of this was contrived, by an
artist of skill and renown,

In the time of Krompardus the king, a
horse of remarkable powers,
Which its rider, in less than an hour, could
take for a hundred good miles.
I find it impossible now to tell all there is
to be told,
For not such a steed has been known, so
long as the world has endured.

For the space of a foot and a half, entirely
around, was the frame,
Of the mirror embellished with work, all
carved in the best style of art; 130
And in letters of gold could be seen, under
each of the pictures inscribed,
The meaning and purport thereof; and I
will these stories to you
Concisely relate. The first was regarding
the envious horse,
Who thought that he would, for a bet,
compete in a run with a stag,
But was left far behind in the race, which
gave him inordinate pain;

And a speedy occasion he took with a
shepherd about it to talk.
He said: It shall profit you much, if me
you will quickly obey;
If you mount, I will give you a ride; there
has, but a short time ago,
A stag hid himself in the wood, and him
you shall surely obtain;
His flesh and his antlers and skin you can
sell at a very high price; 140
Get up, and we will him pursue. All
right! I am ready to go,
Said the rustic, and sprang on his back.
They galloped away from the place,
And shortly got sight of the stag; then
followed they on at full speed
In his track, and gave him pursuit. But
the stag was the lighter of foot,
And the pace was too much for the horse,
who finally said to the man:
Get down for a while, I am tired, and greatly
have need of some rest.
No thank you, responded the man, you now
will have me to obey,

And my spur you shall feel in your flank,
for me you invited yourself
To get on your back for a ride; and thus
him the rider subdued.
Lo! thus with much ill is repaid the one
who doth others design 150
To lead into harm; himself he but loads
with evil and pain.

I now will still further explain what yet
on the mirror was shown;
How together an ass and a dog into
service with Dives had gone.
The dog had, without any doubt, the pet of
his master become,
For he sat at his table at meals, and partook
of the food that was served;
And was also permitted to snuggle and rest
in his guardian's lap,
Who him was accustomed to feed with the
finest of bread; in return,
The dog was incessantly licking his master,
and wagging his tail.

Now Baldwin observed the good luck of
the dog and, grieving at heart,
The donkey then said to himself: Oh,
why does my master incline 160
That indolent creature to treat in a way so
excessively kind?
Upon him the animal springs and licks him
all over his beard,
While I must the labor perform, and to
carry the sacks am compelled.
Just let him make trial but once, and see
if, with five or with ten
Dogs, as much in a year he can do, as I
can get done in a month.
Yet the best is provided for him, while I
have to feed upon straw,
And on the hard ground must repose; and,
wherever it be that they drive
Me or ride, I am scoffed at and mocked.
I can, and I will, such abuse
No longer endure; my master's affection I
too will acquire.

Now just as he ended this speech, his
 master appeared in the street. 170
The donkey erected his tail and kicked up
 his heels; with a spring
At his master he leaped, braying and sing-
 ing and blaring with might;
Licked his beard and displayed a desire, in
 the manner and way of a dog,
To nestle up close to his cheeks, and
 bruised him somewhat with his kicks.
In terror his master ran off, and cried:
 Oh, catch me the ass!
Strike him dead! His servants then came,
 and thickly upon him fell blows.
Him into his stable they drove, and there
 he a donkey remains.

There many are still to be met, of the
 selfsame assinine breed,
Who the welfare of others begrudge, with-
 out doing good to themselves.
However, should any such one to a state of
 great riches attain, 180

At once he resembles a pig, who should try
to eat soup with a spoon;
Not very much better, in truth. The
donkey let carry the sacks,
Have nothing but straw for his bed, and
find among thistles his food.
If one shall him otherwise treat, he will
still ever be as of old.
When an ass to dominion attains, it can
meet with but little success;
His welfare he seeks to advance, and what
beyond this does he care?

My king, there is more you should know,
and at the recital I beg
That you take not offence; on the frame
of the mirror could also be seen,
Well fashioned and clearly described, how
my father did, once on a time,
Himself with our Tybert engage upon some
adventures to go; 190
And how they both sacredly swore that, in
all kinds of danger, they would

One another with valor support, and all of
their booty divide.

As forward they went on their way, they
noticed some hunters and hounds,

Not very far off from the road; and Tybert,
the cat, then remarked:

Good counsel seems costly to get! To
this did my pater respond:

Though odd it may very well seem, yet
with excellent counsel have I

My pocket already made full; and we must
remember our oath,

Together to steadfastly hold; of all, most
important is that.

On the other hand, Tybert replied: However
the thing may turn out,

There remains yet a means to me known,
and that I intend to employ. 200

And thus up a tree he with liveliness
sprang, in order to save

Himself from the rage of the dogs; and
thus he his uncle forsook.

In terror my father stood there, and the
hunters were coming apace.

Quoth Tybert: Now, uncle, how goes it
with you? Throw open the sack.
Of counsel it's full, make use of it now,
for your time has arrived.
The huntsmen sounded their horns, and one
to another they called;
My father then ran, so also the hounds;
they followed with yelps,
And he sweated all over with fear, enriching
the ground as he went.
He thus was relieved of some weight, and
so he escaped from his foes.

Most basely, as you have just heard,
deceived him his nearest of kin, 210
The one whom he trusted the most. His
life in great jeopardy was,
For the dogs were swifter than he; and,
had he not quickly bethought
Himself of a hole that he knew, he certainly
would have been killed;
But he slipped himself nimbly within, and
thus to his foes he was lost.

Many more of such fellows there are, as
Tybert was then, to his shame,
To my father so clearly revealed; how
could I him honor and love? * .
I have it half pardoned indeed, yet some-
thing still rankles behind.
This all on the mirror was carved, with
pictures and writings thereon.

In addition to this was displayed an accu-
rate scene of the wolf;
Showing what kind of return for favors he's
ready to give. 220
He found in a meadow a horse, nothing of
which but the bones
Had been left; but ahungered he was, and
greedily nibbled at these;
Till a pointed one stuck in his throat, and
askew in his gullet got fixed.
A deplorable figure he cut; for him it had
badly turned out.
Runner on runner he sent, the surgeons to
call to his aid;

But no one could give him relief, notwithstanding gigantic rewards

He offered to all who should try. The crane, in the end, was announced,

With the red-colored cap on his head, and him did the sick one implore:

Oh, doctor, relieve me at once of the fearful distress I am in;

If the bone you pull out of my throat, I will give you whatever you wish. 230

So trusted the crane in his words, that he pluckily stuck in his beak,

With his head, in the jaws of the wolf, and pulled out the bone.

Oh, dear! howled the wolf, how you hurt! you are doing me damage, I know.

Let it not happen again! For the present, I will it forgive.

Had it been any other than you, I would it not patiently bear.

Be tranquil, responded the crane, for now you again are quite well;

Give me the fee that I've earned; to you
I have been of great help.
Now hark to the fool, said the wolf, 'tis I
who have suffered the harm,
Yet he makes a claim for reward, forgetting
the favor that I,
This instant, have granted to him. Have I
not his noddle and beak, 240
Just now that I had in my mouth, released
without doing him harm?
Has the hoyden not given me pain? I had
very good reason indeed,
If reward is our subject of talk, to demand
it myself in advance.
Thus knaves are accustomed to deal with
those who them faithfully serve.

All graven with excellent skill, these stories,
with others, adorned
The frame of the mirror all round, with
many an ornament carved,
And many inscriptions in gold. Of the
priceless jewel, myself

As unworthy I thought, too ignoble I am,
and it therefore I sent
To my sovereign lady, the queen. I was
hopeful, by means such as this,
To her and her consort, the king, myself
reverential to show. 250
My children were very much grieved, those
two little well-mannered boys,
When gave I the mirror away; to jump
and to play they were used,
In front of the glass, where liked they to
look at themselves and their tails,
Hanging below from their backs, and laughed
at their own little mouths.
Of the trustworthy Lampen, alas! I little
expected the death,
When I unto Bellyn and him the treasure,
in fullness of faith,
Without reservation consigned, for as honest
I looked on them both;
No better or worthier friends did I think
that I ever could have.
Let us woe on the murderer call! I've made
up my mind to find out

Who has the treasures concealed; no slayer
shall hidden remain. . 260

More than one in this circle, perhaps, is
able to give us the name

Of the spot where these riches were put,
and tell us how Lampen was slain.

•

My beneficent king, I'm aware that daily
before you are brought

So many important affairs, that you cannot
remember them all.

Yet, haply, you still bear in mind the emi-
nent service which he,

My father, once rendered to yours, in the
place where at present I speak;

Your father lay sick unto death, and mine
his life managed to save;

And yet you here freely assert that neither
my father nor I

To you any good ever did. Be pleased me
still further to hear;

And permit me, I beg, to relate how
always, at your father's court, 270

•

Mine was at all times received with honor
and dignity great,
As a worthy physician of skill. The patient's
condition he knew,
With cleverness, how to inspect; and nature
could always assist;
And whatever was wrong, with eyes or
aught else, he was able to heal.
Well knew of emetics the gifts, and more-
over did well understand
All matters concerning the teeth, and the
aching extracted with ease.
I gladly imagine it's gone from your mind;
that would cause no surprise,
As you then were but three years of age.
To his bed was your father confined,
In winter, in exquisite pain, nigh greater
than he could endure;
And he of himself could not move. Then
all the physicians he had 280
Convoked between Rome and this place;
and they, with unanimous voice,
Had given him up as past aid. My father
was summoned at last,

“If health you desire to regain, determine, without loss of time,
From off a wolf’s liver to dine.”

You dare not refuse it to do, for your life
is concerned in the act,
The glass contains nothing but blood, so
make up your mind with despatch.

With those round about was the wolf,
whom this did no pleasure afford.
Your father now spoke in this wise: You
all have heard what is required!
Now listen, sir Wolf! That I may get
well, you will not, I am sure,
Your liver refuse to give up. To him then
responded the wolf:
Not yet am I five years of age; what good
will my liver effect? 300
Sheer nonsense, my father replied, we will
not be obstructed by that;
I soon by your liver can tell. The wolf
was commanded to take
His place in the kitchen below, and useful
his liver was found.
Your father devoured it forthwith and, as
soon as he swallowed it down,

Relieved from his sickness he was, and all
other ailments as well.

My father profusely he thanked, and all at
the court were compelled

Him as Doctor henceforth to address, and
none should it ever forget.

My father was constantly now at the right
of the king to be found.

To him did your father present, as I most
reliably know,

Very shortly, a locket of gold, and also a
crimson barette, 310

To wear before all of the lords; and thus,
from that time until now,

Have all held him high in esteem. With
his son, however, have things

Assumed an unfortunate change; his father's
great virtues and gifts

In remembrance no longer are held. The
most avaricious of knaves

Are advanced, and all thought is bestowed
on advantage and gain;

Wisdom and justice are pushed to the rear,
and our servants become
Our most arrogant lords, while the poor, as
a rule, must suffer for this.
If such gets dominion and power, he strikes
out blindly, all round,
Among all the people he rules, and his
birth he completely forgets;
His profit he seeks to extract from every
game that is played. 320
Among the exalted we see not a few such
as those I've described;
To entreaty they never give ear, if donations
are not to be found
Profusely connected therewith; and, if they
the people instruct,
It means only pay, no matter the number
of times, you must pay.

These covetous wolves ever seek the daintiest
morsels to keep
For themselves; and, had they the means,
with even the smallest of loss,

The life of their master to save, about it
they scruples would have.

His liver the wolf would not yield, not e'en
to do good to the king!

A liver, indeed! I say it right out!
Twenty wolves, of a truth,

Should be ready to sacrifice life, that the
king and our idolized queen 330

Possession of theirs might retain; much
smaller the damage would be.

If a seed be of potency void, what good
can therefrom be derived?

The things that occurred in your youth,
you cannot retrace in your mind;

But I can remember them well, as though
they of yesterday were

On the mirror the story was told, just as
my father desired;

The work was embellished with gems, and
garnished with tendrils of gold.

If I could the mirror but find, I would
hazard possessions and life.

Reynard, the monarch observed, I have well
 comprehended your speech,
Have listened to every word of the stories
 that you have rehearsed.
So great were your father at court, and had
 he so many, forsooth, 340
Commendable actions performed, that still
 was in years long ago.
I remember them not in the least, and no
 one has told me thereof;
Whereas the transactions of yours are con-
 stantly brought to my ears;
You are ever at some kind of game, at
 least so I hear it affirmed.
If injustice is done you in this, and all are
 but fabulous yarns,
Some good I for once would fain learn;
 not often to happen this seems.

My lord, answered Reynard thereto, I now
 shall make bold, about this,
To explain myself fully to you; for the
 matter me closely concerns.

Good service to you I have done; think
not, I implore you, that I
This cast in your teeth! God forbid! I
know that in duty I'm bound 350
To obey you so far as I can. One story,
at least, you have not
Let utterly slip from your mind: how, with
Isengrim, I, by good luck,
A grunter had once hunted down; it squealed,
and we bit it to death;
You came, making bitter complaint, and said
that your consort as well
Was coming, a short way behind; if some
one would only divide
With you a small portion of food, of help
it would be to you both.
Give us whereof you have caught, was the
claim that you made of us then.
And Isengrim said, indeed, yes; yet mut-
tered he under his beard,
So that one could him scarce understand.
But I, on the contrary, said:
My lord, I would grudge you it not, though
herds of swine were concerned. 360

Say, who is the one to divide? The wolf,
you responded again.
Now Isengrim greatly rejoiced, and according
to habit, he shared
Without any shyness or shame, and gave
but a quarter to you,
And your consort a piece of like size, while
he set to work on the half.
This greedily swallowed he down and, out-
side the two skinny ears,
He offered me nought but the snout and
just about half of the lights;
He kept all the rest for himself, and all
the transaction you saw.
Little chivalry showed he us there; my
king, you know it quite well!
Your portion you quickly devoured, yet I
noticed, however, that you
Had your hunger not fully assuaged; though
Isengrim would it not see, 370
But his gnawing and chewing kept up, and
offered you nothing at all.
But then you inflicted a blow so hard with
your claws on his ears,

That some of his hide was torn off; and
then, with his bloody bald pate,
He ran from the place with bumps on his
head, and howled with the pain.
And you to the cormorant called: Come
back, and learn to be shamed!
When next you divide, deal better with
me, or I'll know what it means.
Now make yourself off with all speed, and
bring something further to eat.
Sire, order you that? I replied, then fol-
low him will I at once,
And I know that I something can fetch;
and you were contented with this.
Most doltishly then did Isengrim act; he
bled and he groaned 380
And murmured to me; yet urged I him on,
and together we chased
And caught a young calf, you are fond of
the food, and when we it brought,
It proved to be fat; at it heartily laughing,
you said in my praise
Full many an affable word; I should be,
you imagined, first-rate

To send out at the time of one's need, and
likewise, still further you said:
Apportion the calf! Then quoth I: One
half is already your own,
And a half belongs to the queen; what
inside the carcase is found,
As heart, and liver, and lights, belongs, as
in reason it should,
To your children; the feet I will take,
which to nibble I very much like;
And the head may be kept by the wolf, the
savory meat that it is. 390

The gist of these words having got, you
answered: Who, pray, has you taught
To allot in so courtly a way? That, I
should like to find out.

I answered: My teacher is near; this scamp,
with the red-colored head,
And bloody bald pate, has himself the intel-
ligence opened to me.

I exactly observed what he did, when the
porker this morning he carved;

Then learnt I the meaning to seize, of such
a division as that;

Veal or pork matters not, I shall now find
it easy and make no mistake.

With shame and disgrace were the wolf
and his greed overwhelmed.

Of his like are enough to be found! They
swallow the plentiful fruits

Of all the estates in the land, as well as
the vassals thereof. 400

All, indeed, that is good they destroy, and
not the least spark of remorse

Can any one ever expect, and woe to the
land where they dwell.

Take notice, my master and king, thus oft
you in honor I've held.

All I at this moment possess, or may in
the future obtain,

I gladly devote to your use, and that of
your consort, the queen;

Be it little or ever so much, the most of
it all you shall take.
If you think of the calf and the pig, you
will see, without shadow of doubt,
Where faithful allegiance resides. Would
Isengrim, any way, dare
With Reynard to measure himself? But
still, to our sorrow, the wolf
As chief of your stewards is held, and
harasses every one. 410
Not much for your profit cares he; but
well he knows how the whole way,
In promoting his own, to proceed. Thus
now he with Bruin, indeed,
Has your majesty's ear, and what Reynard
may say is but little esteemed.

My liege, it is true that I'm under a cloud,
but I will not give way,
For through with it now I must go; and
therefore permit me to say:
If any one thinks he has proofs, let him
now with his witnesses come,

Himself to the subject confine, and judicially
pledge, on a bond,
His goods, or his ear, or his life, in case
it may be that he lose;
And I will pledge mine against his. Thus
has it been valid in law,
From time out of mind; thus let it be
now, and the whole of the case, 420
As argued both for and against, in just
such a manner can be,
In honor, conducted and judged. This now
I make bold to demand.

However it be, responded the king, from
justice's path
I can, and I will, not detract; that is some-
thing I've never endured.
Of a truth, the suspicion is strong, that
particeps criminis you
In the murder of Lampen became, that
messenger faithful whom I
So much loved, and whose loss I deplore;
grieved beyond measure I was

When drawn was his blood-covered head
from the wallet I'd given to you;
Bellyn atoned on the spot, that wicked
attendant and base;
You now may, however, the case still fur-
ther defend at the bar. 430
In what I myself am concerned, I Reynard
all freely forgive;
For he firmly has stood at my side in
many a critical case.
Has any one further complaint, we are
ready to hear what it is;
Let him trustworthy witnesses bring, and
prosecute all of his claims
Against Reynard in order and form; here,
awaiting your charges, he stands.

Most gracious my lord! Reynard said, I
give you my heartiest thanks.
To each you give ear and dispense the
benefits all of the law.
Let me now with solemnity say, with what
a disconsolate heart

I Bellyn and Lampen dismissed; I had a
foreboding, I think,
Of what was to happen to both; with
tenderness loved I them well. 440

Thus Reynard's narration and words were
garnished with skill so adroit,
That all were enforced to believe; he the
treasures so neatly described,
And conducted so gravely himself, that
truth to be speaking he seemed;
And to comfort him even they tried. And
thus he deluded the king,
Who much with the riches was pleased, and
gladly would them have possessed.
To Reynard he said: Be content, you
shall go on a journey and try,
Far and wide, to discover the lost, so all
that is possible do.
If need you may have of my help, it will
at your service be found.

Said Reynard in answer to this: Your
goodness I gratefully feel;
These words are a comfort to me, and rea-
son they give me to hope. 450
To punish foul murder and theft is the
highest of rights you possess.
The matter to me is obscure, yet clear as
the day shall become.
With care will I after it look, and travel
by day and by night,
Without any thought of repose, and question
all people I see.
If I learn where the goods can be found,
and them am not able again
To get in my hands, for lack of due
strength, for aid I shall ask,
Which you to me then will vouchsafe, and
the matter will surely succeed.
If the treasures to you I safely restore, I
shall find at the last
My trouble requited in full, and my loyalty
proved beyond doubt.

The king with enjoyment this heard; and,
without reservation, he gave 460
Assent to what Reynard had said, who had
woven his lies with such art
That the rest all believed him as well; he
now had permission, once more,
To go and to come he as pleased, and that
without question or check.

Lost Isengrim now all control of himself,
and, gnashing his teeth,
He said: Gracious lord, you mean thus
again to put trust in the thief,
Who you two and threefold befooled? Who
can help being struck with surprise?
See you not that the scamp you deceives,
and damage to all of us does?
He never gives voice to the truth, and
nothing devises but lies.
But I, with such ease, will not let him
off! You ought to know well
That he is a rascal and false. I know of
three capital crimes 470

Committed by him; get off shall he not,
even though we must fight.
We are witnesses told to produce, what
good would it do if we did?
If they came and their evidence gave, for
the sitting entire of the court,
Would that be of any effect? He still
would do just as he pleased.
Very oft can no witness be had, ought the
scallawag then to go on
Committing his crimes as before? Who
would venture to go on the stand?
Some stigma he fastens on each, and each
from such injury shrinks;
You and yours it experience too, and in
the same boat are we all.
Today I will keep him in hand, he
neither shall waver nor skulk;
But shall answer to me for his deeds, so
now let him be on his guard. 480

CANTO ELEVEN

His charges brought Isengrim forth, and said:
Pray attend while I speak!
Reynard, most gracious of kings, the villain
that ever he was,
Remains to the present unchanged; on
infamous things he dilates,
My kindred and me to disgrace; and thus
has he ever for me,
And even more still for my wife, caused
nigh unendurable shame.
He tempted her, once on a time, to wade
through a marsh to a pond,
By making her firmly believe that, every
day she was there,
Great numbers of fish she could catch. If
she in the water should put
Her tail, and allow it to hang, then sure
would the fish be to bite
So well that, if four of them tried, not all
to be got could they eat. 10
She went upon this on her way, and found
herself swimming, at last,

Toward the sluice-end of the pond, where
deeper the water was massed,
And there he induced her to let her tail
in the water hang down.
The cold towards eve was intense, and
to freeze so hard it began,
That longer she scarce could hold out; and
thus, very shortly, her tail
Had frozen become in the ice, so fast that
she could not it raise;
And heavy, she thought, were the fish, that
she had thus managed to catch.
Reynard, the dastardly thief, observed this,
and then what he did
I can trust not myself to disclose; he had
her, alas, at his will.
He shall not escape from us now! His
villainous conduct shall cost 20
One of us two, as you'll see, his life before
close of the day.
This time shall his tongue not prevail; I
caught him, indeed, in the act,
As I was, by accident, led to the top
of a hillock near by.

I heard her call loudly for help, the poor
cheated thing that she was;
Fast in the ice she was caught, and
him was not able to check;
And I, coming there, was compelled the
whole of his doings to see;
In truth, an amazement it is that my heart
was not broken thereat.
Reynard, I cried in dismay, what, in God's
name, are you at?
He heard me and fled on his way. I came
with a sorrowful heart,
Was driven to shiver and wade in the cold,
frozen water, and could 30
The ice but with trouble break up, in order
my wife to release.
Alas! we prospered not well; she tugged
with the whole of her might,
And a quarter, at least, of her tail remained
firmly held by the ice.
Long and aloud she bemoaned; the peasants,
at hearing the noise,
Rushed forward and came on our track, and
one to another they called.

They hotly ran over the dam, with axes and
pikes in their hands;
With distaff the women came too, all making
a terrible din;
Catch them, they all of them cried, and
give them a taste of your clubs.
I never had felt so affrighted as then, and
the same was confessed
By Greedimund too; we found it hard work
to get off with our lives, 40
By running till skin fairly smoked. Then
rushing along came a scamp,
A devilish fellow he was, and armed with
a long, wicked pike,
And light on his feet, who after us
stabbed, and pressed us quite hard.
If night had not come to our aid, our lives
we had certainly lost.
The women still kept up their cry, the
vixenish beldams, that we
Some of their sheep had devoured. Fain
had they added their blows
To the horrible insults they cast; our foot-
steps, however, we turned

From land to the water again; and, quick
as the lightning, we slipped
Back into the rushes at hand, where dared
not the clowns to pursue;
For now it quite dark had become, so back
they returned to their homes. 50
We hardly escaped as it was. You see,
gracious king, in this case,
Treason and murder and rape; of infamous
crimes such as these
The question is now, and these you will
punish severely, my king.

When the king this arraignment had heard,
he said: A case such as this
Shall be by us righteously judged; let Rey-
nard thereover be heard.
Reynard spake: If it were as described,
then certainly would the affair
Not much to my honor redound; but God,
in his mercy, forbid
That facts should be found as set forth; I
will not, however, deny

That fish I have taught her to catch, and
also have showed her the path
That best to the pond would conduct, and
her to the water would take; 60
But on she so greedily ran, so soon as I
spoke of the fish,
That both moderation and road, and instruc-
tion as well, she forgot.
If she in the ice was held fast, then had
she, without any doubt,
Been sitting too long at her post, for if
she had pulled in good time,
Enough she of fish would have caught to
serve for a dainty repast.
Desire in too high a degree is always
malign. When the heart
To dissatisfaction inclines, it always must
miss very much.
Who harbors the spirit of greed, has life
with anxiety filled,
For no one can give him enough. This
lesson dame Greedimund learned,
When frozen she got in the ice. Poor
thanks for my trouble she gives; 70

But this consolation I have, that help her
I honestly did,
And pushed with the whole of my strength,
in trying her safely to lift.
But she was too heavy a weight; and,
while I was doing my best,
Isengrim chanced to draw near, in walking
along by the shore.
There, standing above, he called out and,
horribly cursing, came down.
Yes, I was in truth much alarmed, his
beautiful blessings to hear;
Not once, but e'en twice and three times,
his terrible curses he flung
At me there; and to scream he began,
urged on by a fury so wild,
That I thought: You had better be off,
and not any longer wait here;
Far better to fly than be flayed. The nail
on its head I had hit, 80
For he would me to pieces have torn.
Whenever two dogs shall begin
To fight with themselves for a bone, with
absolute certainty must

The one or the other it lose. Thus seemed
it to me for the best
To scamper away from his wrath and utter
confusion of mind.
That ferocious he was and remains, how
can he deny? Only ask
Of his wife; for I will have nothing to say
to a liar like him.
So soon as he fastened his eyes on his
wife, frozen fast in the ice,
He viciously swore and reviled, and came
and assisted her out.
If the peasants made after them then, it
certainly was for their good,
For thus got in motion their blood, and
cold they no longer could feel. 90
Now what is there further to say? It
mean and contemptible is
For him to dishonor his wife with lies such
as these which he tells.
Herself you can ask, she is here; and, if
what he says is the truth,
Would surely not fail to complain. Mean-
while I beg humbly to ask

That the case be continued a week, in order
my friends to consult,
As to what kind of answer is due to the
wolf and this charge that he brings.

Greedimund thereupon said: In all of your
actions and thoughts
Can nothing be found, as we know, but
roguery, falsehood, and fraud,
Villainy, intrigue, and spite. Who your
cavilling words shall believe
Will surely be damaged at last; you always
take care to employ 100
Confused and inconsequent words. I found
it like this at the well.
Two buckets were hanging therein; in one
you had stationed yourself,
For what I have never found out, and down
to the bottom had gone;
And, finding unable yourself to get again
back to the top,
You blackened the air with your groans.
By morning I came to the well,

And asked: Who put you down there?
You answered: You just in the nick
Of time, dear gossip, have come! I yield
to you all of my gains;
Get into the bucket up there and down
you will come, and may eat
Down here all the fish you can want. At
an ill-fated moment I went,
For you I believed, when you said you had
eaten such numbers of fish, 110
That a pain in your belly you had. I suf-
fered myself to be fooled,
And stupidly got in the pail, which quickly
began to go down,
While the other began to go up, till oppo-
site me you arrived.
To me it quite wonderful seemed, and I,
in perplexity, asked:
How chanced it to come about thus? In
answer to me you replied:
Up and down, so it goes in the world, and
so goes it now with us two;
The course of things ever is thus, while
some must abasement endure,

Are others exalted in turn, in accord with
the virtues of each.

Then out of the bucket you jumped and,
fast as you could, ran away.

But, grieving, I sat in the well, and all
the day long was compelled 120

Therein to abide; and blows without num-
ber, at eve, to endure,

Before I made good my escape. Some
peasants then came to the well,

And spied me down there in the pail, as
I, with grim hunger annoyed,

Was sitting in sorrow and fear, and feeling
completely undone.

The peasants among themselves said: Now
see! Down below in the pail

Is sitting, at present, the foe that lessens
our number of sheep.

Haul him up, then one of them cried; my-
self I in readiness hold

To greet him up here at the edge, and he
for our lambs shall now pay.

But the kind of a greeting I got! That
pitiful was, for there fell

Blow after blow on my hide. Not once, in
the whole of my life, 130
Had I a more sorrowful day, and scarce
came I off with my life.

In answer to this, Reynard said: The sequel
more closely regard,
And you will assuredly find how healthful
that whipping has been;
Although, with respect to myself, I prefer
to dispense with the like.
As then was the state of the case, was one
or the other compelled
To burden himself with the blows, for both
of us could not escape.
It will aid you to bear this in mind; for
then, in a similar case,
You none will so easily trust. The world
is brim full of deceit.

Indeed, retorted the wolf, what evidence
more do we need?

No one has damaged me more than this
rascally, treacherous scamp. 140
One matter not yet have I told: how he,
out in Saxony once,
In the midst of the tribe of the apes, me
led into shame and disgrace.
He there, on some pretext, induced me into
a pit to descend,
Knowing quite well in advance that mischief
on me it would bring.
If I had not quickly run off, my sight and
my hearing would there
Have been lost. Before I went in he had
said, with plausible words,
His aunt I should find in the place, mean-
ing by that the she-ape.
It irked him to see me escape, for he sent
me, with malice prepense,
Down into that horrible nest; I thought I
had got into hell.

Said Reynard in answer thereto, before all
the lords of the court: 150

The wolf most distractedly talks, not quite
in his senses he seems;

If he of the ape would report, he plainly
should say what he means.

Two years and a half have gone by, since
into the Saxon confines

He led with carousal the way, and I thither
went in pursuit.

That is true; the rest is a lie. An ape was
there not in the place.

He is talking about some baboons; and,
never at all, will I them

Acknowledge as kinsmen of mine. But
Martin the ape and his wife,

Dame Rückenau, relatives are; I both as
my cousins respect,

And of the connection am proud. The
life of a jurist he leads,

And knows the whole law like a book.

But as to those creatures of whom 160

Now Isengrim talks, he treats me with
scorn. With them, let me say,

I have nothing whatever to do, they never
were kinsmen of mine.

They resemble the devil in hell, and if the
old lady I called
My aunt, at the time in dispute, I did it
with prudent intent;
And nothing thereby did I lose, this much
I will readily own;
She treated me well as her guest; or else
might she well have been choked.

Behold you, my lords, we had gone a little
aside from the road,
And round to the back of a hill, where we
came on a cavernous pit,
Deep and gloomy and long. Now here, as
accustomed he is,
With hunger felt Isengrim ill. Whenever
has he, of a truth, 170
Been seen with his stomach so full, that he
has contented appeared?
And then, unto him I observed: Down
here, in this cave, may be found,
No doubt, food enough and to spare; and,
doubtless, its inmates with us

Will gladly divide what they have; we
come at an opportune time.
But Isengrim said in response: My uncle, I
much would prefer
To wait for you under this tree, for you
are, by far, the more apt
At making acquaintances new; and if food
be extended to you,
Let me be informed. The villain thus
thought that he would, at my risk,
The outcome await where he was. There-
upon I directed my steps
Down into the cavernous hole; and, shudder-
ing, wandered I through 180
The lengthy and crooked approach, which
seemed as if never to end.
But that which I came upon then! Such
fright would I not undergo,
Twice in the course of my life, for a pile
of the ruddiest gold.
Such a nestful of horrible beasts, the
large intermixed with the small!
The mother, indeed, of the brood I took for
the devil himself.

Capacious and broad was her mouth, with
its big and detestable teeth;
Big claws on her hands and her feet, with
long and most hideous tail
Set behind at the end of her back; a thing
so atrocious have I
Not seen, in the whole of my life. The
tawny, disgusting young cubs
Were all most remarkably formed, like nothing
but horrible spooks. 190
Upon me she grewsomely gazed; I wished
I was anywhere else.
She bigger than Isengrim was, and some of
her cubs were, indeed,
Her equal in stature almost. Imbedded in
festering hay,
I came on the sickening brood, all over and
over besmeared
With mire up as far as their ears; while
the stink that polluted the den
Was worse than the brimstone of hell.
To tell you the truth unadorned,
But little I liked it in there; for of them
such a number there was,

While I was entirely alone; and dreadful
grimaces they made.
I gathered my scattering thoughts, and
sought for a way of retreat,
But greeted them well—though this was a
sham—and friendly behaved, 200
As if an acquaintance I was. As aunt I
the mother addressed,
And cousins the children I called, and bashful
was not in my speech.
May God in his mercy you spare to a long
and a prosperous life!
Are all these dear little ones yours? But
really, I need not have asked.
How pleasant to see them it is. Good
heavens! how brim full of life,
And thoroughly handsome they are. For
sons of the king they would pass.
I give you, a thousand times, joy, that
you, with descendants of worth,
Thus are augmenting our race; I rejoice
beyond measure thereat.
I think myself now in good luck, to know
of such kinsmen as these;

In critical times it may be, that kindred
some help can supply. 210

When honor so great I bestowed, although
I in earnest was not,
She showed me, on her part, the same, and
me as her uncle addressed,
And like a relation behaved; little indeed
as the crone
Is any connection of mine. Yet not for
this once could it do
Any harm to address her as aunt. Mean-
while, I was covered with sweat,
All over and over, through fright; and yet
she most affably said:
Reynard, dear kinsman and friend, most
heartily welcome you are;
I earnestly hope you are well. To you, my
whole life, I shall feel
Obliged for this visit of yours; henceforth,
you can rational thoughts
To the minds of my children impart, that
they may to honor attain. 220

Such was her manner of talk; and this, in
a very few words,
By calling her aunt and sparing the truth,
I richly deserved.
I still had an earnest desire to get once
again to the air,
But allow me to go she would not, and
said: You, uncle, must not,
Without some refreshment, depart. Remain
till some food you have had.
And she brought me a plenty to eat; I
could not at present recall
The names of the dishes she set; amazed to
the utmost I was
As to how she had come by it all. I
feasted on venison and fish
And other most relishing game; the whole
of it just to my taste.
When all I could eat I had had, then for-
ward she furthermore brought 230
A hunk from a stag she had got, and
wished me to carry it home,
For my wife and my children to eat; and
I took an affectionate leave.

Reynard, she said once again, I hope you
will visit me oft.

I promised her all that she wished, and
managed to get from the place.

Inside so unpleasant it was, as well for the
eyes as the nose,

That I was near dying while there; tried
all I knew how to get out;

The passage ran nimbly along, till the open-
ing I reached at the tree,

And groaning found Isengrim there. How
are you, dear uncle? I said.

Quoth he: I am not at all well, with
hunger I soon shall be dead.

I him, out of sympathy, gave the delicate
collop of roast, 240

That with me away I had brought. He
this with voracity ate,

And thanked me again and again; but he
has forgotten it now.

When finished he was, he began: Now
let me know all about those,

Who make in the cavern their home. How
did you find things within?

Good or bad? And I told him the truth,
and nought but the truth;
Exactly apprized him of all. The nest was
atrocious, but still,
Therein was much delicate food. So soon
as he felt a desire
His share of the same to receive, his
entrance he boldly could make;
But he, above all, must avoid saying out
what exactly he thought.
If things you would have as you wish, be
careful to husband the truth! 250
I repeated it several times, for if it one
foolishly has,
For ever, at tip of the tongue, oppression
he everywhere finds;
He stands, in all places, behind, and others
are called to the front.
In this way I bade him depart, and told
him, let happen what might,
That he must be careful to say what each
was desirous to hear,
And he then would be kindly received.
These were exactly the words,

Most noble monarch and lord, that conscience
impelled me to say.

But he just the contrary did; and, if he
got punished for that,

Then let him the punishment bear; he
should listen to what he is told.

In truth, are his shaggy locks gray, yet
wisdom beneath would be sought, 260

Without any chance of success. Such fellows
but little esteem

Good sense or ingenuous thoughts; the
worth of all wisdom is kept,

From gawky and blunt-witted folk, for ever
and always concealed.

I faithfully on him enjoined, this once to
be frugal of truth.

I know what is proper myself, he proudly
responded to that;

And trotted thus into the hole, and well
for his trouble got paid.

Behind sat the horrible wife, he] thought it
was Satan himself,

That before him he saw. Moreover, the
cubs! Now, bewildered, he cried:
Oh, heavens! What horrible beasts! Are
these little wretches your whelps?
They have the appearance, indeed, of a
hellish young rabble of fiends; 270
To drown them would be the best thing,
so that the brood may itself
Not spread abroad over the earth. If
mine they should happen to be,
I would strangle them every one. With
them for a bait could be caught
Young devils, in numbers, with ease; in a
bog one would only require
To fasten them well to the reeds, the
odious, villainous brutes;
Marsh-monkeys they ought to be called, the
name would exactly them fit.

With haste did the mother reply, and
uttered some violent words:
What demon has sent us this guest? Who
you has invited to come,

And greet us uncouthly like this? And
what with my children have you,
Good-looking or ugly, to do? Just now has
departed from us 280
That learned man, Reynard the fox, who
very well knows what he means;
And he did my children affirm, without
deviation, to be
Handsome, well-mannered, and good; he was
perfectly ready and glad
To recognize them as of kin. Not more
than an hour has gone by
Since he, standing here in this place, us all
gave assurance of that.
If please you as him they do not, why
then I must tell you, in truth,
That no one has asked you to come. Pray,
understand, Isengrim, that.

At this he demanded of her, that dinner at
once she provide;
And said: Fetch it here, or I will it help
you to find. I desire

No words any further to hear. And then
he attempted, by force, 290
To confiscate some of her stores; a thing
that was badly advised.
She threw herself on him forthwith, and
bit him and savagely scratched
His skin with her hideous nails, and vi-
ciously tore him and clawed.
Her children did also the same, they terribly
champed him and rent;
Then cried he blue murder and howled, his
cheeks covered over with blood;
Himself he tried not to defend, but ran with
quick strides to get out.
Wickedly bitten, I saw him emerge, all torn
and in tatters his skin;
Split open was one of his ears, and blood
freely flowed from his nose;
They'd nipped him with many a wound, and
also his pelt had contrived
To cram all together with filth. I asked,
as he trod from the place: 300
The truth have you spoken to her? And
thus he replied to my words:

I said to her just what I thought, and
then did the wretched old shrew
Me badly disfigure and lame; I would I
could meet her outside,
She then should pay dear for it all. How,
Reynard, appears it to you?
Did you ever set eyes on such whelps? So
horribly filthy and vile?
No sooner I spoke, than it all came about;
and as I, in her eyes,
No more any favor could find, very badly
I fared in the hole.

Are you crazy? I answered thereto; I cau-
tioned you well against this.
I do you most heartily greet, is the proper
thing to have said.
Pray how, my dear aunt, do you do? I
would also ask after the health 310
Of those pretty children of yours. I am
glad both my little and big
Young cousins once more to behold. But
Isengrim said in reply:

That woman accost as my aunt? And
cousins, those hideous brats?
The devil may take the whole lot! Such
kinsmen a horror would be.
Oh, faugh! Such a damnable herd! I
never will see them again.
For this was he paid with such coin. Your
judgment now render, oh king!
With justice can he now affirm that by me
he was tricked? Let him state
If the matter did not come about, as I have
this instant explained.

Then Isengrim firmly replied: We shall
not, I can readily see,
Determine this contest with words. From
chiding what good do we get? 320
Right is right, and wherever it dwells,
itself it will show in the end.
You, Reynard, now boldly step forth, if
you think its abode is with you.
We now with each other will fight, and
then we shall know where it is.

So much you have found to report, as to
how, in the den of the apes,
The torments of hunger I bore, and you
me so faithfully fed;
Though how, I can't possibly think. It was
only a bit of a bone
That you brought; most likely the meat you
had eaten already yourself.
You stand there and ridicule me, and boldly
you talk in a way
That closely my honor affects. And you,
with most scandalous lies,
On me a suspicion have cast, of having a
dastardly plot 330
To injure the king had in mind; and hav-
ing conceived the desire
Of putting an end to his life; no scruples,
however, have you
In bragging of treasures to him, which he
would be troubled to find.
You shamefully treated my wife, and that
you will have to atone.
These things I now lay at your door, with
a firm resolution to fight,

Concerning the old and the new; and this
I say over: That you
Are a murderer, traitor, and thief; and
now, setting life against life,
We in combat will settle the thing, and
chiding and scolding will end.
I tender my gauntlet to you, as always
sufficient in law,
From every challenger, is. You may it
retain as a gage, 340
And soon can our meeting be had. Our
monarch my challenge has heard,
And all of his barons as well; and they,
I most earnestly hope,
This battle for right will attend. Not a
chance shall you have to escape,
Till the matter is finally closed; and then
we shall see what is what.

Reynard now thought to himself: At risk
are possessions and life!
He is big and but little am I, and this
time should matters with me,

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In any way, take a wrong turn, then all
my devices and tricks
Of but little avail will have been; yet let
us await the event.
I think some advantage I have; for lately
he lost his front paws.
If cooler the fool does not get, he surely
shall not, in the end, 350
His way in the matter obtain, let the cost
be whatever it may.

And then, Reynard said to the wolf: It
possible, Isengrim, is .
That you are a traitor to me; and all of
the sundry complaints,
You are thinking to bring against me, are
made up entirely of lies.
If combat you wish, I will risk it with
you, and never shall flinch.
I long such a thing have desired, and here
is my glove in exchange.

The monarch the pledges received, and both
did them boldly present.

At the end of this function, he said: You
each must security give,
That tomorrow you fight without fail. Both
of the parties, I think,
Are sadly confused in their minds, I noth-
ing can make of their talk. 360
In an instant, as Isengrim's bail, came for-
ward the bear and the cat;
And then, upon Reynard's behalf, as vouch-
ers presented themselves
A son of old Martin, the ape, with Grim-
bart, the badger, conjoined.

At this, dame Rückenau said: You, Reynard,
must keep yourself calm,
You need all the senses you have. My
husband, who now is in Rome,
Your uncle, once taught me a prayer, the
subject of which was composed
By the abbot of Bolton himself; and he to
my consort it gave,
To whom he was kindly disposed, on a
small scrap of paper transcribed.

This prayer, so the abbot maintained, has
very great virtue for those
About to engage in a fight; one, fasting,
must read it at morn, 370
And then shall one daily remain insured
against danger and want,
And fully exempted from death, as well as
from wounds and from pain.
Take comfort, my nephew in this: that I,
in the morning betimes,
Will it over you read, that hope you may
have, and freedom from fear.
Dear aunt, then responded the fox, I return
you my heartiest thanks;
I shall always be mindful of this. . Yet
help I must ever expect,
Most, from the right of my cause and the
-skill I can bring into play.

Together abode Reynard's friends the whole
of the night, and dispelled
His cares with hilarious talk. But anxious
dame Rückenau was,

And busy with all he might need. With
alacrity had she him shorn, 380
From head to the tip of his tail, as well
as his belly and breast;

And covered with fat and with oil; and then
it was made to appear

That Reynard was fat and rotund, and very
well set on his legs.

Take heed, in addition she said, and con-
sider what you have to do.

Hark well to intelligent friends, for that
will avail you the most;

Drink well, and retain what you drink; and
to the arena be sure,

In the morning, as prudent, to come; then
see that you moisten your brush

All over and over till soaked, and try your
opponent to hit.

If you manage his eyes to anoint, 'twill be
the best thing you can do,

For his sight will be clouded at once; and
that will be useful to you, 390

While him it will greatly impede. At first
you must fearful appear,

And at once, in the teeth of the wind, as
fast as you can, run away.

If he should give chase, then stir up the
dust, in order his eyes

To close with excretion and sand. Then
spring to one side, and yourself

Adapt to his every move; and, while he is
wiping his eyes,

Improve the advantage obtained, and thor-
oughly sprinkle those eyes

With your aqua fortis again, till totally
blind he becomes,

And longer knows not where he is, then
yours shall the victory be.

Dear nephew, just sleep now a bit, and we
will you surely awake

When the requisite time has arrived. And
now I will over you read 400

The sanctified words I described, that braced
you may be by their aid.

Her hand on his head she imposed, and
recited the words that she had,

From Martin, her husband, received, as
stated above. Then she said:

Good luck you attend! You now are
secure! The same were then said
By Grimbart, his uncle, as well; then led
they him off to his bed,
And he peaceably slept. At rise of the
sun, the otter arrived,
With the badger, their cousin to wake.
They gave him a friendly salute,
And told him himself to prepare. The otter
then brought to the room
A tender, delicious young duck and, handing
it to him, he said:
Pray eat; I have it for you, with many a
spring and a jump, 410
At the dam by Pimpernel, caught; I hope
it my cousin will please.

Good hansel is that, I declare, quite cheer-
fully Reynard replied,
A something not lightly to scorn. May God,
of his grace, you repay,
For thinking so kindly of me. Now him-
self up to eating he gave,

And drinking quite freely as well; and then,
with his kinsmen, he went
To the spot on the unwrinkled sand, where
they were intended to fight. 416

CANTO TWELVE.

When eyes upon Reynard he set, as now
in the ring he appeared,
With body clean shaven and smooth, and
over and over bedaubed
With oil and perfidious fat, with laughter
the king was convulsed.
You fox, who that has you taught? he
exclaimed. With justice, indeed,
You Reynard, the Fox, may be called; a
trickster incessant you are.
Some hole you in all places know, and how
to make use of it too.

Quite low Reynard bowed to the king, and
also especially low
To the queen, who sat by his side; then
came he, with spirited bounds,
Inside of the ring, where the wolf, with
numerous kinsmen and friends,
His appearance already had made, all
wishing defeat to the fox; 10

And many a choleric word, and many a
menace he heard.

But Lynx and Lupardus at length, who
kept the arena, brought forth

The sacred mementos, on which now both
the contestants made oath,

The wolf and the fox, regarding the matter
which each would maintain.

Isengrim swore, with vehement words and
threatening looks,

That Reynard a traitor and thief, as well
as a murderer, was;

Involved in all kinds of misdeeds; in rape
and adultery caught;

In every matter was false; and life against
life must be staked.

Then Reynard made oath, at once, in
return, that nothing he knew

Of one of these infamous crimes; as ever
did Isengrim lie, 20

And falsely, as usual, swore; but still he
would never succeed

In passing his falsehoods for truth, at any
rate, now he would not.

As follows the stewards then spake: Let
each carry into effect

What now is incumbent on each, and soon
will the right be revealed.

The big and the little vacated the ring,
these two, by themselves,

Therein to confine. Then quickly to whisper
the she-ape began:

To what I have told you attend; forget not
my counsel to heed.

With cheerfulness, Reynard replied: The
good exhortation you gave,

More valorous makes me to feel. Rest
easy, for now I shall not

The tricks or the boldness forget, by which
I have managed to come 30

From many a peril more dire, into which
I have often been thrown,

When I this and that have acquired, for
which nothing yet has been paid,

And boldly my life has been risked. At
present then why should I not

Come forward the scoundrel to meet? I
certainly hope to disgrace
Both him and his genus entire, and honor
to bring upon mine.
I him will serve out for his lies. At this,
they were both of them left
Together inside of the ring, and the others
looked eagerly on.

Isengrim wild and ferocious appeared; ex-
tending his claws,
Thenceforward he came with forcible springs
and jaws open wide.
But Reynard, more active than he, sprang
off from his furious foe, 40
And quickly his rough, shaggy tail with his
aqua fortis he soaked,
And whisked it about in the dust, in order
to fill it with sand.
Now, Isengrim thought, he is mine; in a
moment the miscreant struck
Him over the eyes with his tail, when
vanished both hearing and sight.

This trick was an old one of his; already
had many poor chaps
Given the virulent strength of his aqua
fortis a test.
He had blinded so Isengrim's cubs, as in
the beginning was told,
And now he their father would mark.
When he his antagonist's eyes
Had lathered like this with the stuff, he
sprang away sideways and put
Himself in the wind, then beat up the
sand, and much of the dust 50
Drove into the eyes of the wolf, who,
by whisking and rubbing it in
In his haste, did the worst he could do,
and greatly augmented his pain.
On the other hand Reynard contrived, with
acumen, his tail to employ;
He struck his opponent anew, and rendered
him thoroughly blind.
It wretchedly went with the wolf, for care
took the fox to improve
The advantage he thus had obtained; and,
soon as he came to observe

The bedewed, smarting eyes of his foe, he
began, with impetuous bounds,
To assail him with powerful blows, and
bring into vigorous play
His nails as well as his teeth, and ever his
eyes to anoint.

Half crazed, the wolf scrambled about; then
him to make game of began 60
Reynard more boldly, and said: Sir Wolf,
you have oft, in the past,
Choked many an innocent lamb; and also,
in course of your life.

Gulped many immaculate beasts; I hope
they'll be able, henceforth,
The blessings of rest to enjoy; and that
you may, in any event,

Be willing to leave them in peace, and
take benediction for pay.

A penance like this will be good for your
soul, and strikingly so,

If calmly your end you await. This time,
rest assured, you will not

From me in escaping succeed; appease me
you must with your prayers;

Then mercy extend you I will, and see
that your life is preserved.

Hastily Reynard said this, and had his
opponent, meanwhile, 70
Steadfastly seized by the throat, expecting
him thus to subdue;
But Isengrim, stronger than he, then sav-
agely roused himself up,
And tore himself suddenly free. Now
Reynard laid hold of his face,
Inflicted a terrible wound, and one of his
eyes he contrived
Adroitly to pluck from his head; and blood
ran below from his nose.
Reynard cried out: This pleases me well!
This means my success!
The wolf to lose courage began; his blood
and the loss of his eye
Him out of his mind nearly drove; forget-
ting his pain and his wounds,
Directly on Reynard he sprang, and forced
him below to the earth.

The fox now began to feel ill, and little
his wisdom availed, 80

For one of his foremost paws, which he
had made use of as hands,

Isengrim hurriedly seized, and held with his
teeth like a vice.

In pain Réynard lay on the ground, and
fear, at that instant, he felt

Of losing entirely his hand; and a thous-
and ideas conceived.

Then Isengrim bellowed these words, in
a deep and sepulchral voice: ,

Your hour, you thief, has arrived! Sur-
render you now on the spot,

Or else you dead I will strike, for all of
your fraudulent deeds.

My debt to you now I will pay; to you
little help has it been,

The dust to stir up, your bladder to drain,
your hide to have shaved,

And body with grease to besmear. Woe
to you now! you have done 90

Such evil to me with your lies, and ruined
the sight of my eye;
But now you shall not get away; surrender,
or else I will bite.

Thought Reynard at this: I am now in a
fix, and what can I do?
If give I not in, he puts me to death; and
if I give in,
Dishonor for ever is mine. This punish-
ment well I deserve,
For him I too badly have used, too grossly
offensive have been.
And then honeyed phrases he tried, in
order his foe to appease.
Dear uncle, to him he remarked, I shall,
with much pleasure, become
One of your vassals at once, with every-
thing I possess;
And gladly will go as a pilgrim for you
to the sacred tomb, 100
To the Holy Land, into every church, and
bring you therefrom

Indulgences plentiful back. The same will
undoubtedly tend
To the profit and good of your soul; and
over enough shall be left
For both of your parents, as well, that in
life everlasting they may
This benefit also enjoy; who does such
assistance not need?
I honor you much as the pope; and now,
by the gods, do I swear
A sacred, inviolate oath, that from now till
futurity's end,
I will, with the whole of my kin, be ever
in bondage to you.
Without intermission we all at your service
will be. This I swear!
What I to the king would not grant, is now
freely offered to you. 110
If you my proposal accept, one day shall
the kingdom be yours.
Then all I am able to catch will I order
to you to be brought,—
Geese and ducks and poultry and fish,— ere
I the least part

Of any such food shall consume; to you
and your children and wife
Shall the pick of it always be left. I will,
in addition, with zeal,
Take care that your life is made safe, no
evil shall ever you touch.
I crafty am called, and you have the
strength, so together we can
Great deeds, I imagine, perform. If each
by the other we stand,
The one with his might, the other with
skill, who can us subdue?
If one with the other we fight, it only
vexation will bring. 120
This thing I should never have done, if I
but a decent excuse
Had known for refusing to fight; you
challenged, however, and I
Had nothing to do but accept, if only in
honor's behalf.
But courtly myself I have borne and, during
the course of the strife,
Not all of my strength have displayed; for
seemed it to me that it must

To honor most fully redound, my uncle
forbearance to show.

If hatred to you I had borne, it otherwise
with you had gone.

Slight are the wounds you've received; and
if, by unlucky mischance,

The use of your eye is impaired, for that I
am heartily grieved.

The best of the matter is this: that I a
restorative know, 130

And if it to you I impart, then thankful
to me you will feel.

Though even your eye should be gone, yet
well if you otherwise get,

That always a comfort will be; for, when
you lie down to your sleep,

One window alone you must close, while we
shall have double the care.

In order your anger to calm, my relatives
all, straight away,

Themselves shall before you prostrate; my
wife and my children, as well,

In the presence, at once, of the king, and in
this assemblage's sight,

Shall make intercession for me, and beg that
you will me forgive,
And let me depart with my life. I then
will in public avow
That I have been telling untruths, and done
you much harm with my lies, 140
Deceiving you all that I could. And further
I promise to swear,
That of you nothing evil I know, and will,
from the present time on,
Not injure you, even in thought. Now, how
could you ever demand
Any greater atonement from me than what
I am ready to make?
If you put me to death, what get you by
that? There will always remain
My friends and relations to fear; and then,
beyond this, bear in mind
That, should you me spare, you will quit,
with glory and honor, the field,
And to all will seem noble and wise; for
higher is capable none
Himself to exalt, than when he forgives.
A chance such as this

Will not again soon to you come. Take it
up! For the rest, it is now 150
The same altogether to me, whether I am
to live or to die.

Hypocrite! answered the wolf, what pleasure
to you it would be,
If I should again set you free; but of gold
if the world were composed,
And it you should offer to me, now in the
hour of your need,
I would not again let you go. Thus oft
you have taken vain oaths,
Lying rascal, to me! In truth, not the
shell of an egg should I get,
If I were to part with you now. Your
kinsmen not much do I reckon;
I am ready for all they can do, and think
it quite proper that I
Their enmity thus should acquire. Malevo-
lent rascal, how would
You not scoff, if you I let go on these
protestations you make. 160

Who you did not know would be duped.
You say you have spared me today,
You scurvy, detestable thief! And is there
not one of my eyes
Now hanging far out of my head? You
wretch, have you also my skin
Not damaged in places a score? The
chance should I ever have had
Again to recover my breath, if you the
advantage had gained?
Most stupidly would it be done if I, for
this scandal and shame,
To you grace and pity now showed. You
traitor, on me and my wife
You harm and dishonor have brought, and
now you shall pay with your life.

As the wolf was addressing the fox, in
some way the rascal contrived
His paw that was free to ingraft between
his antagonist's thighs, 170
And clutch his most sensitive parts, inhu-
manly rending him there.

But of this nothing more will I say, except
that the wolf now began
In a pitiful manner to cry and to howl,
with his mouth open wide.
Reynard now swiftly withdrew his paw
from the close pinching teeth;
With both he held on to the wolf, with
ever more tightening grasp,
And pinched and grappled and pulled, till
cried the poor fellow so hard,
That blood he began to throw up. His pain
was so great that the sweat,
All over his body, broke out, and terror
now loosened his bowels.
The fox was delighted at this; and, hoping
the contest to win,
Held on to him now with hands and with
teeth, till such awful distress, 180
Such torture, came over the wolf, that he
gave himself over as lost.
The blood from his eye ran over his head,
and he fell in a swoon
To the ground. The fox, at this moment,
would not an abundance of gold,

For a sight such as this, have exchanged;
and thus he continued to hold,
To drag, and to worry the wolf, that all
might behold his distress;
He pulled, he pinched, and he bit, and
clawed the poor impotent brute,
Till he with convulsions was seized, and in
his own filth and the dust,
He rolled with unearthly howls, in a truly
unmannerly way.

His friends now lamented aloud, and
proceeded the king to entreat
The combat to bring to an end, if so it
should please him to do. 190
The king thus replied to their prayer: So
soon as you all are agreed,
And it pleases you all that so it shall be,
then I am content.

The king then gave a command to the
keepers both of the ring,

Lupardus and Lynx, that they now to the
two belligerents go.

So within the arena they went, and to
Reynard, the victor, they said

That now it had gone far enough, and the
king had expressed a desire

The combat himself to assume, and the
quarrel see brought to an end.

He wishes that you, they went on, your
opponent surrender to him,

And now, to your overcome foe, be willing
his life to accord.

For if in this duel should one, by act of
the other, be killed, 200

Harm would on both sides be done. The
advantage you certainly have!

All, little and big, have it seen, and all
the best men of the state

Accord you support and applause. For ever
you've won them as friends,

Reynard, with feeling, then said: For this
I shall thankful be found!

With pleasure I follow the will of the king,
and that which is fit
I gladly shall do; I have conquered, and no
greater honor than that
Can wish to achieve. But one thing I hope
the king will permit:
That counsel I take with my friends. Then
shouted aloud all the friends
Of Reynard, each one: It seems to us good
with the wish of the king,
At once, to comply; and running they came
to the victor in crowds; 210
His relatives all, the badger, the otter, the
beaver, the ape.
Now too could be classed the marten and
weasel as friends of the fox,
The ermine and squirrel as well, and many
who bore him ill-will,
And would not have uttered his name; they
all of them ran to him now.
There also appearance put in, those who
had charged him with crime,
As if now relations they were; with wives
and with children they came,

The big and the small and between, and
even their infants in arms.

They fondled and flattered him all, as if not
enough could they do.

It ever goes thus in the world. The fortunate
always are wished

Enjoyment of lasting good health, and
friends in abundance they find; 220

But he whom misfortune assails, in patience
his soul must possess.

Just so did it here come to pass; and, next
to the victor, was each

Himself fully ready to puff. Some played
on the flute and trombone;

While others were singing with joy, or beating,
at intervals, drums.

Said Reynard's adherents to him: Rejoice,
in that you have, today,

Exalted yourself and your race, by what you
have done in the ring;

Excessively troubled we felt, when it looked
as if you had succumbed;

But the aspect was speedily changed, and
splendidly played was the piece.
Reynard remarked: I have won! and ten-
dered his thanks to his friends.
At this their departure they took, with
plenty of bustle and noise, 230
And Reynard in front of them all, by
both the ring stewards upheld,
Until they arrived at the throne, where
Reynard fell down on his knees.
The king bade him get on his feet, and
said, before all of his lords:
The day you have saved in good style;
with glory and honor have you
This matter conducted all through, for
which I acquit you of guilt;
All penalties now are revoked, and about it
it I fully intend,
In my council of nobles, to speak, on the
very first day that again
Isengrim's health is restored; the matter is
closed for today.

Your advice, most gracious of lords, Reynard discreetly replied,
Is good into practice to put; your knowledge is best in the case. 240
When hither I came, so many complained;
they lied to the wolf,
My resolute foe to oblige, who thought he
would me overthrow,
And got me well-nigh in his power; then
also the others cried out:
To the cross! and joined in complaint, in
order to compass my death;
And all to be pleasing to him, for clearly
it was to be seen,
That with you he stood better than I; and
none had the slightest idea
Of how it would end; nor where, perad-
venture, the truth might reside.
To yon dogs I compare them, indeed, the
which in great numbers were wont
In front of the kitchen to stand, in hope
that the goodnatured cook
Them would remember, perchance, with one
or two bones now and then. 250

These wide-awake, open-mouthed dogs now
one of their fellows observed,
Who managed to steal from the cook a
portion of meat that was boiled,
And, haplessly, got not away sufficiently fast
from the place;
For the cook, coming on him behind, hot
water upon him had thrown,
And badly had scalded his tail. Yet let he
his booty not fall,
But mingled himself with the rest, who one
to another remarkèd:
Just notice how him does the cook, above
all the others, befriend;
And see what a precious tid-bit he him
gave! And then he replied:
You little the bearings perceive; you praise
and commend me in front,
Where possibly pleasure you get, by feasting
your eyes on the meat; 260
But look at me now from behind; and, if
you me happy account,
You soon your opinion will change. They
fully examined him then,

And found him so terribly burned, that fast
coming out was his hair,
And shrivelled was all of his skin. With
terror they all were now seized,
And went to the kitchen no more, but
bolted and left him alone.
My lord, it's the greedy I'm aiming at
here; while mighty they are,
Quite ready and willing are all, to have
them as comrades and friends.
All hours of the day they are bearing off
meat in their mouths.
Who does not conform to their ways, will
for it to suffer be made.
Our praise they must always receive, how
badly soever they act, 270
And thus we encourage their criminal deeds.
In this way does each
Who does not reflect on his end. Such
fellows, however, become
Very frequently punished, indeed, and their
power has a sorrowful end.
No one will bear with them more; and
thus, to the right and the left,

Falls off from their bodies the hair. Their
friends of the former days,
Both little and big, recede from them
now, and naked them leave,
As did in a body the dogs, at once their
companion forsake,
When they had his injury seen, and noticed
his badly used half.

Gracious lord, you know very well that none
can of Reynard so talk.
For me shall my friends never have any
reason whatever to blush. 280
Accept for your favor my thanks, and if
but I could, at all times,
Learn with precision your will, I gladly
would bring it to pass.

Much talking will do us no good, responded
to Reynard the king;
To all I attention have paid, and know
very well what you mean.

You now as a baron I'll have in council
again as before,
And make it a duty of yours, at every
season and hour,
With my privy council to meet. And thus
I restore you again
Completely to honor and power, and this
you will merit, I hope.
Help all to be done for the best! I can-
not you spare from the court.
And if you take care to combine upright-
ness with wisdom, I trow 290
That none will you ever surpass, or with
greater acumen and skill,
Advice and contrivances plan. I will, in
the future, complaints
Not hear about you any more; and ever
shall you, in my stead,
As chancellor speak and perform; the seal
of the empire, as well,
Committed shall be to your hands, and
what you may do or indite,
Shall remain as indited and done. Thus
fairly has Reynard again

“With manifestations of grief, their friend on a stretcher they laid,
And carried him out of the ring.”



Himself into favor propelled, and everything
has to be done
In accord with his counsel and will, be it
either for evil or good.

In thanking the king, Reynard said: My
noble commander and prince,
You grant to me honor too great, in mind
I shall ever it bear, 300
As I hope understanding to keep. That
clearly by you shall be seen.

What happened meanwhile to the wolf, let
us briefly endeavor to find.
Defeated he lay in the ring, and treated
with insult and shame;
His wife and his friends to him went, as
also did Tybert the cat,
And Bruin the bear, and children and serv-
ants and all of his kin;
With manifestations of grief, their friend
on a stretcher they laid—

Which they had well padded with hay, in
order to furnish him warmth—
And carried him out of the ring. His
wounds being seen to, they found
That he twenty-six had received. A num-
ber of surgeons arrived,
Who bandaged him up out of hand, and
administered curative drugs. 310
He was crippled in every limb. They
likewise applied to his ear
A salve made of herbs, and loudly he
sneezed both before and behind.
They, after consulting, resolved to bathe
him and rub him with oil.
Such was the way that the wolf was
cheered by his 'sorrowing friends;
They carefully put him to bed, and he
slept, though not very long,
But woke in confusion and grief; his shame
and the pain of his wounds
Him greatly upset; he lamented aloud and
seemed in despair.
Him tenderly Greedimund nursed, though
bearing a sorrowful heart,

As she of his injuries thought. With
manifold spasms and pains,
There stood she and pitied herself, as also
her children and friends; 320
Then looked at the suffering man, and
thought he could never get well;
He was raving with pain, his anguish was
great, the sequel was sad.

But Reynard, half crazy with joy, an
agreeable gossip enjoyed,
On various things, with his friends; he
heard his own praises resound,
And went in high feather from there.
The gracious and worshipful king
Sent with him an escort along, and heartily
said, as he left:
Come back again soon! The fox on the
ground then knelt at the throne,
And said: I give you my cordial thanks,
and also my lady the queen,
Your council, and all of the lords. My
sovereign master, may God

Many honors in store for you keep, and
what it may be you desire 330
I gladly shall do; I love you indeed, as in
duty I'm bound.

At present, if you will permit, I purpose
to go to my home,

My wife and dear children to see, who are
sadly awaiting me there.

Go at once, responded the king, you further
have nothing to fear.

And Reynard thus took himself off, raised
higher in favor than all.

Great numbers there are of his kind, who
practice the very same art;

Red beards do not all of them wear, but
still are they kept out of sight.

Proudly now Reynard withdrew, with all of
his race, from the court,

With forty relations, who felt much pleased
at the honor received.

Reynard stepped forth like a lord, the
others all marching behind. 340
He seemed in good spirits just then, his
brush had much broader become,
He had, by his luck and success, found
favor again with the king,
Was now in the council once more; and
thought how to put it to use.
All those whom I love, it shall aid, and
benefit all of my friends,
He resolved; more highly is wisdom, by far,
to be honored than gold.

Thus Reynard betook himself off, attended
by all of his friends,
Towards Malepartus his fort, whither now he
directed his steps.
Himself he showed thankful to all who
friendship to him had displayed,
And who, at the moment of doubt, had
rallied themselves to his side.
He offered his services now in return, as
they parted and went, 350

Each one of them all, to his own; and he,
when he came to his home,
Found his wife, dame Ermelyn, well; she
joyfully welcomed him back,
About his vexations enquired, and how he
again had escaped.

All right, Reynard said, I came off! Once
more have I managed myself
Into favor to raise with the king; I shall,
as in seasons gone by,
In council again have my place, and this,
for the whole of our race,
Will to honor and glory redound. He has,
as prime minister, me
Appointed in presence of all, and to me
has entrusted his seal.

All Reynard may do or may write, shall
now and for ever remain
Exactly as written and done, and well may
all bear this in mind. 360

A lesson I've taught to the wolf, and not
many minutes it took,

So he will impeach me no more. Sore
wounded and blinded he is;
And dishonored, the whole of his race; my
mark I upon him have left.
Small use after this will he be to the
world. Together we fought,
And I have come out on the top. I think
he will hardly again
Recover his health. What care I for that?
Above him I am,
And all of his comrades as well, who with
him have taken their stand.

His wife was now greatly rejoiced; more
resolute also became
Both of his two little boys, at their father's
promotion and fame.
With joy to each other they said: Delect-
able days we shall have, 370
Respected and honored by all; meanwhile
we must do what we can,
Our citadel's strength to increase, and
cheerful and fearless to live.

High honor has Reynard just now! And
now unto wisdom let each
Himself at once turn, all evil avoid, and
virtue esteem!

This is the sense of the song, in which
has the poet seen fit

To mingle both fable and fact, that evil
from good one may learn

To winnow, and wisdom may prize; that
buyers likewise of this book

May daily instruction receive in the ways
and affairs of the world.

As in the beginning it was, is now and
will ever remain.

And thus doth our narrative end of Rey-
nard the fox and his ways.

The Lord in his mercy us help to glory
eternal! AMEN.

