Sit Gawainand The Green Knight Essay, Research Paper

Sir Gawain and the Green knight is an Arthurian story about the adventure of Sir Gawain to find the Green knight. King Arthur and his court are gathered for a Christmas celebration. Suddenly, the Green Knight appears and challenges king Arthur’s court to a game. He asks one man to hit him with the ax. In return, this man will have to seek the knight out at the Green Chapel within a year and a day to receive three hits from Green Knight. The only one who is not afraid to fight is Sir Gawain. He hits the Green Knight with the ax, cutting off his head, which rolls around the floor. The Green Knight picks up his head and tells Sir Gawain to try to find him. Everybody believes that Gawain’s journey is without return because he has to face harsh conditions, like wild animals, freezing weather and wild men of the woods. He leaves King’s Arthur court, and after Gawain wanders in the forest, a castle mysteriously appears on his way. My passage analysis comes right after the first kiss between the wife of the lord and the Gawain. As days passes the wife of the lord becomes even more aggressive to Gawain.

The Lord welcomes Sir Gawain to his court and he allows him to stay as long as he wants. The Lord then proposes to Gawain that while Gawain is in his castle, they will exchange at night what they have won during the day. My passage analysis begins right after the first day when the Lord hunts a deer which is considered a shy, gentle and innocent animal. At home, in the bedroom, the Lord’s wife tries unsuccessfully to seduce Gawain, and she only gives him a kiss. At night the Lord gives Gawain the deer, and Gawain gives him the kiss he has received from the Lord’s wife. They agree to continue the same agreement for a second day.

On the second day, the Lord goes hunting again. This time he is hunting a wild boar which is much more difficult to catch and kill than the deer. The wife of the lord tries one more time to seduce the noble knight in his bed. This time she is dressed much more provocatively. Gawain, amazed at her appearance, says: “God love you gracious lady”(Norton, p.234). Further, he is happy that a very beautiful woman like the Lord’s wife spends time talking with him: “it is a pleasure surpassing it comforts my hurt”(Norton, p.234). Afterwards she tries to kiss him again, but Gawain is very defensive so that no fault appears but only complete happiness. Finally, she kisses him for a second time: “They linger and laugh awhile and she departs without more ado”(Norton, p.234). Gawain is hesitant to be involved with the Lady for three equally important reasons. First, she is the host’s wife. Second, if he sleeps with her, he has to exchange it with the Lord. Finally, he is afraid to commit sin before he faces God, once it is almost certain death at the hands of the Green Knight.

Directly after the second kiss, Sir Gawain rises up from his bed and dresses for an extraordinary meal. In the mean time, the Lord hunts the wild boar. In the field, it is much more difficult to kill the animal than the first day, which means that his wife will be even more aggressive to Gawain in the bedroom: “Pursued his sorry swine frightful to see”(Norton, p.235). The Lord is finally able to kill it: “He had hurt so many by then that was brainsick, and out for blood”(Norton, p.235). After a while, the Lord gets off his horse, walking with long steps straight into the streams. Then, the description of the boar follows: “the boar makes for the man and dogs pronounce him dead.” The last section of my passage talks about the exchange as it was previously agreed between the two men. They are ready to exchange their experiences: “He thought it long indeed his payment due.” Perhaps parallel to this action, we have a detailed and realistic description of the preparation of the boar to be eaten: “Began to dress the boar in the stream with his strong arm, right through”(Norton, p.235). The third day the Lord goes hunting for a fox, a sly creature, and on this day his wife is also cunning. She uses all her charms to try to seduce Gawain. She gives him a green belt and tells him it will protect him from all harm.

He then understands that Bercilak is the Green Knight and offers his head. Bercilak misses three times and Gawain is satisfied to be alive. Gawain is ashamed for his acceptance of the girdle but the Green Knight forgives him. On his departure Gawain wears the belt as a sign of timidity. Finally, he returns to his court where everybody.

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