

Dick Wittington and his Cat
Enid the Fair

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Enid the Fair

The first and the last of "Seven Plays"
meant to be an English reader for young folk

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Characters

Dick Wittington
Mr. Fitzwarren
Mrs. Fitzwarren
Alice their daughter
Captain
Maid servant

Act I

A London street. Dick sitting on the steps at the door of a rich looking house. Later Mr. Fitzwarren.

Dick: I came to London, a poor boy I am,
With my bit of bread I've neither bacon nor ham.
People said London was so fine to behold,
The streets were paved all over with gold.
So I came here walking many a mile.
Int'resting, well, it was for a while
Though I found ev'rything quite otherwise.
Now I am tired, I cannot rise.

Mr. Fitzwarren: What is the matter with you, my lad?
Are you hungry? I see you look sad.

Dick: Dear Sir, do let me go with you,
And please, give me some work to do.

Mr. Fitzwarren: Well, in my house, I think there'll be
A job for you; so come with me.

Both enter the house.

Act II

A room in Mr. Fitzwarren's house. Dick fondling a cat.
Later Alice and Captain.

Dick: This is my little Pussy cat.
She is not hungry, she's rather fat
'cause she has eaten many mice
Haunting my garret, and now how nice!
I'm busy in day time and sleep at night.
I thank you Pussy, with all my might.

(after looking out of the window)

There comes little Alice, she's always so kind,
A nicer girl you'll never find.
She does for me whate'er she can.

(after looking out once more)

I wonder who might be that man.

Enter Alice and Captain

Alice: My father sends a ship abroad
To foreign lands with heavy load
And with something from ev'ry one,
Their fortune thereby may be won.
What could you entrust him? Show me that.

Dick: I only have my Pussy cat.

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Captain: There're regions where there are no cats,
But ev'rywhere are mice and rats.

Dick: I love my cat with all my heart
And I do think we cannot part
Look at her paws, her slender tail.....

Captain: Is she a good mouser?

Dick: She'll never fail.

Captain: Well, many people if they had
A first rate mouser, would be glad.

Alice: Do try, let Pussy sail away!
't will surely bring you luck some day.

Act III

Mr. Fitzwarren's office. All persons present save Dick
who enters later.

Mr. Fitzwarren: Now Captain, I must say: Well done!
Your voyage was a lucky one.

Captain: As to Dick's cat I had it sold,
And it was paid with heaps of gold.
There is a land - and there we've been -
Where cats till then had not been seen,
And ev'rything the mice did eat,
The vegetables and the meat.
Now Pussy in a moment caught
More than you ever would have thought.
The rest of them ran fast away,
Cleared was the country in one day.
Non any longer was annoyed
And ev'ryone felt overjoyed.

(producing a purse): Here is some gold, and there is more
Deep in my ship a mighty store.

Mrs. Fitzwarren: Oh let's call Dick, he must be here,
(to the servant): Go, quickly tell him to appear.

Maid servant: He's waiting at the office door.

Mrs. Fitzwarren: As modest as he was before.

The maid servant has gone out and now ushers in Dick.

Mr. Fitzwarren: Dear Dick, yours is a lucky fate,
We heartily congratulate.
This gold is yours won by your cat.
There's more of it, now first take that.

Mrs. Fitzwarren: Dick you're rich, you are a man.
Buy what you'd like to have, you can.

Mr. Fitzwarren: When first you came you slept on straw,
Now you will be my son-in-law.

Dick: I thank you Sir, I cannot tell
How glad I am.

Alice (taking Dick's hand): And all is well.

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Characters

King Arthur
Queen Guinevere
Geraint a knight of Arthur's
Earl Yniol
Lady Yniol
Enid their daughter
Sparrow-hawk a mighty knight
Earl Yniol's Butler
Gareth the Butlers son
2 attendants
4 petitioners
Knights and farmers

Act I

King Arthur's court. King Arthur and Queen Guinevere on their throne with an attendant at either side. Near the throne Geraint among other knights, opposite to these 4 petitioners among other farmers.

King Arthur: A hearty welcome to you all
Who full of hope came to my hall!
Tell what you are complaining of
And feel assured of Arthur's love.

Geraint (impulsively): As long as Sparrow-hawk s' alive
No one can work in peace and thrive.

There is nodding and whispering from the audience by way of agreement,

King Arthur: I know the wild and wily man.
What evil has he done again?

1st petitioner: He broke into my grounds by force.

2nd petitioner: He stole my cattle and my horse.

3rd petitioner: My messenger was sent away,
"You were not asked" the chap did say.

4th petitioner: The village trembles at his frown,
Nor is there safety in the town.

One of the knights: Earl Yniol and his family
Are brought to utmost misery.

King Arthur: The Yniols who were rich and mild!
I knew them and their lovely child.

One of the farmers: He's justly called the "Sparrow-hawk",
We are the sparrows he's the hawk.

King Arthur (visibly repressing his grief):
You know it is my wont to do
Whate'er might be of use to you.
Now being hard beset you need
Assistance with the utmost speed.
What's in my power shall be done,
We'll stop injustice going on.

On a slight sign King Arthur gives with his right hand, farmers, after them knights withdraw, Geraint is the last to do so. Then Queen Gui-

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nevere rises.

Queen Guinevere: Oh could I help! It is too bad
To see my husband always sad.

King Arthur (resting his head in his right hand):
They must be helped and help I will,
I owe it to the throne I fill.
Oh! It is easier said than done,
Whene'er we met that en'my won.

He stops overwhelmed with grief, Queen Guinevere caresses his hand.

King Arthur: I know the mission of my sword.
I must obey the greatest Lord
Who bids the mighty help the poor. --
But there are mishaps past all cure.

Queen Guinevere: I'd say his wife is to be blamed,
She ought to make him feel ashamed.

King Arthur: He never cared to have a wife;
All he thinks of is loot and strife.
There is a tale of a wise man
Who knew the deadly risk he ran
And yet he tried and went to talk
Of love and peace to Sparrow-hawk.
But Sparrow-hawk looked wild and grim,
He merely made a mock of him
And flourishing his sword he said:
"You never learnt that man is bad?
Wheree'er you wander you will find
Foul deeds and darings of all kind
And battles lost and battles won.
Peace-loving people there are none."

Queen Guinevere: And don't you think he would come round
If he once actually found
A fellow-creature full of love
With heart and softness of a dove?

(decisively):
The fact would make him change his mind.

King Arthur: A remedy that's hard to find.
(kindly gripping her hand):
Dear wife, till now I've never seen
Some one so wonderfully keen
As to be able to make out
What anybody cares about
And whom to judge but by their mood
He will might place among the good.

Queen Guinevere (hopefully):
When Eleazar sought the bride
He neither knew, he simply tried.
(after a moment reflection):
There's Geraint! - Let me go and ask
If he would undertake the task.

King Arthur: Geraint my knight is brave and strong,
But inexperienced being young.....

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Queen Guinevere: Well, just because of that, no doubt
't will do him good to rove about.

King Arthur (continuing):

And should we really succeed
In finding the good soul we need,
You see, half only would be done
Of the strange task; we'll not have won
Unless that noble-minded man
Agrees to join us in our plan
To cure a man in such a case.
How may we else this problem face?

Queen Guinevere: Let us reliance place for it
In Geraint's honour and his wit.

King Arthur: A life-and-death-means I might call
Your proposition. - - - After all
I'll bid him go and try, my dear.
Thanks for your help, sweet Guinevere.

Act II

A hut belonging to a poverty-stricken cottage the roof of which is seen among trees in the background. On one side a door ajar. In the middle a bench and a small table. Geraint in riding-dress enters lazily and sits down on the bench. Some light from a lantern outside.

Geraint: The task the King bestowed on me
Will not be carried out, I see.
How should I find in all my life
The charitable man or wife
Who learns my mission and is bent
To try the strange experiment! - - -
Well, for the moment it's the best
To hope for pleasant dreams and rest.
It's true, bats, owls, and lizards might
Take shelter here with me this night.
Oh we shall keep good company. - - -
I need no bed nor canopy.

He is going to stretch himself out on the bench, however hearing somebody singing he abstains from doing so and keeps listening. What is heard from a distance is the song "Home, sweet home."

Geraint: What's that? - - -
(The song stopping)
An angel sang a song.
For love and joy it makes me long.
These woods conceal a bard of choice,
I never heard so sweet a voice.

Enter Butler

Geraint (aside): I say, did not some one appear?
(to the Butler):
Good friend, I've taken refuge here.

Butler: It's dark outside, you mean to stay?
If you are satisfied you may.

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I am the Butler, I must shut
The cottage, stable, and the hut.

Geraint: First tell me where I am, please do.

Butler: Earl Yniol's roof is shelt'ring you.

Geraint: And who's the singer? When she sings
It makes you think of spell-bound strings.

Butler: Earl Yniol's daughter, dear to all
Who ever entered our hall.
She's called Enid the Fair, dear Sir.
In fact you never heard of her?

Geraint (paying no heed to the question):
She's sweet as was her voice, I'm sure.

He recollects what was said at the court.
(aside):
Dear maid, I know your father's poor.

Butler (who has heard):
Rich people we are surely not,
Yet a warm stable we have got
To turn your horse in which I see
Is fastened outside to a tree.

He goes to care for Geraint's horse.

Geraint (rising): Oh Enid, suddenly the thought
Strikes me, you are the one I sought.
The voice I heard, the joy I felt
Must make a heart of iron melt.

Reenter Butler

Butler (anxious to tell the story):
A child was Enid when she left
Her home of which she was bereft.
My masters had been rich, and now ...
Theirs is a cottage and a cow.
And oft their sorrow they alloy
With Enid's song and childish joy.
Her doting father clings to her,
She must be near where he's astir. - - -

Geraint shows excitement and increasing interest in what follows.

Butler (continuing): A wondrous prophesy there is
About his daughter's fate and his.
These very woods - so people say -
Are haunted by a bird of prey
That plunders farmyards in no time
Defying proudly trap and lime.
Now three times in her life - they say -
Enid will meet him on her way

Geraint (aside): I know the bird, I know his name.
I hope anew to reach my aim.

Butler (going on): And the third time he will restore
The riches she enjoyed before.

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Geraint (trying to connect facts):

And who was he who took their goods
And drove Earl Yniol to the woods
In this precarious place to stay
Where there is neither path nor way?

Butler (disappointing Geraint):

I'll not pronounce his wretched name
That never since o'er my lips came.

There are slight steps to be heard.

Geraint: Are there not steps from fairies' feet?

Butler: Enid is coming soft and neat.
With my account I'm at an end.

Geraint (aside): Dare I disclose what I intend?

Enter Enid

Geraint (standing up): Hail, gentle lady!

Enid: Keep your seat.
(to the Butler):
Bring the late guest something to eat.
A jug of milk, a slice of bread

The Butler goes out.

Enid (continuing): Once better meals my parents had.

Geraint (joyfully): Your parents will regain their wealth,
There will be wine to drink your health!
Let us find out that bird of prey
Whereat you need but cross his way.
So by your Butler I was told.

Enid (smiling): The man is true but he is old
And bent to trust a prophesy
Of favourable augury.
A bird may steal, but it cannot
Recover e'en the smallest lot.

Reenter Butler

He puts on the table what he was told to provide. Enid helps Geraint
to a goblet of milk. On a slight sign from Enid the Butler goes out
again.

Geraint (after having drunk, kindly as well as vigorously):
Tell me, is not a hawk a bird?

Enid: It is, so I have always heard.

Geraint: And did you also hear of one
By whom great injury was done
To people living here around?
His name is of an equal sound:
The Sparrow-hawk?

Enid (in great emotion):

I did, oh dear!
He made us tremble full of fear
My mother wept and so did I.
My father fought, no friend was nigh.

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Dad was defeated, nearly slain.
We fled, imploring was in vain

Geraint (anxious to come to the point):
He is that bird. Without delay
Twice, gentle lady cross his way!

Enid (impulsively grasping Geraint's hand):
You - may - be - - - right. If you keep
I feel disposed to go and try. nigh

Geraint (in delight): He will restore what you did own.

Enid (letting go his hand):
I scarce dare hope, his heart is stone.

Geraint:
No longer so when he's aware
Of angel-like Enid the Fair.

Enter Gareth rushing in

Gareth:
So here you are. Your parents said:
Where may be Enid? They'll be glad.

Enid (to Gareth): You need not enter like a blast.
What's wrong, my boy, you look aghast.
Is there some news that's troublesome?

Gareth:
There is, a messenger has come.
He says the Sparrow-hawk is near,
In a few hours he'll be here.

Geraint (passionately):
Lady, I hope you have the heart
To meet the en'my. Let us start!

Enid (to Gareth): Go, join the watchmen on the mount.

Gareth goes out

(to Geraint in great calmness):
Now let us turn to good account
The narrow span of floating hours,
Till break of day the time is ours.
First I must ask my parents' leave,
They'll not be sleeping, I believe.

Geraint:
And when I speak and when I bow,
There is no doubt, they will allow.
They cannot lose more than they lost.

Enid:
And I do think it will not cost
My life to risk the daring ride.

Geraint:
Mind, let me keep close to your side.

He holds Enid in his embrace.

Act III

The meadow near the cottage at an early hour. Earl and Lady Yniol sitting on a bench in the foreground. There is a stool and on the ground a basket with victuals. In the background Gareth standing on the watch.

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Lady Yniol: I'm sure the lucky prophesy
Will prove to be pure phantasy.
When both they started in a still
't was done full sore against my will.
As to lost wealth I've done with it.

Earl Yniol: Nor do I care for gold a bit.

Lady Yniol: I can't help feeling full of fear.
It is the same with me, my dear.
But let whatever will occur,
A knight of Arthur's is with her.
(to Gareth):
What are you seeing, boy?

Gareth: They must
Approach, I see a cloud of dust.
They're coming but I do not see
Our dear Enid

Lady Yniol: Woe is me!

Earl Yniol: Don't cry dear wife and let us wait.
There's no discerning from the height.

Gareth: A stretcher 's seen on which they bear
- If I'm not wrong - Enid the Fair. - - -
Do not lament, I see her stir,
Knight Geraint gently talks to her.
She's helped now rising to her feet.

Lady Yniol (who has been covering her face with her hands now
looking up): She must directly drink and eat.

Enter Geraint with Enid leaning to his arm. He helps her to lie down on
the bench. The Butler follows them and sits down on the stool. Lady
Yniol approaches a goblet to Enid's lips. Gareth has come down.

Geraint: The lady fainted close before
The nasty man amid the roar
His hangers-on arranged for fun
To make the village people run.

Enid: I'm better Geraint, so we can
Carry out bravely our plan.

Geraint: I'd keep my promise if you could.

Lady Yniol: She'll not be able to.

Enid: I should.

Earl Yniol: Knight Geraint, leave our daughter here
And go and tell Queen Guinevere
You have been trying, but to touch
That man, is asking far too much.

Butler (plaintively aside):
One last attempt - we might have won.
Without his help we are undone.

All at once Geraint changes his countenance and expression. He speaks
in utter earnest.

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Geraint: I tell you I shall not be seen
At Arthur's court before the Queen.
My sword is sharp, I'll do my best.
I'll fight and die and take my rest.

Enid: Have patience Geraint, wait and stay.

Geraint: Your father spoke, we must obey.

Enid: I feel ashamed and ever shall.

Geraint: My peace with you, dear maid, farewell!
(turning round): Farewell!

Earl Yniol: I'm sorry.

Lady Yniol (to Enid): Now don't cry.

Butler: Farewell then, worthy knight.

Gareth: Good-bye.

Geraint has gone.

Enid: Oh never more I shall behold
A knight like Geraint fair and bold.
(in sudden decision):
Run Gareth! Call him back.

Earl Yniol (to Gareth): You may.

Gareth goes out.

Butler (aside): I do not think we'll make him stay.

Lady Yniol (to Enid): Last night you did not sleep a wink,
You must lie down, just eat and drink.
(as Enid shakes her head):
The stars have vanished with the moon,
The sun has risen. Very soon
We'll feel his warmth. His glorious light
Will help you to forget this night.

Earl Yniol: Do pluck up courage, child, no less
Do we feel sorry. We possess
No wealth but our daughter dear

Butler: My son is coming.

Earl Yniol: Let us hear!

Reenter Gareth

Gareth: Knight Geraint was about to ride.
I watched him being occupied
Arranging girth and saddle-strap.
I dared approach, I doffed my cap,
I bade him come. He shook his head.
"I'll fight and die" was all he said.
His stallion neighed and off they flew.
So I came back. - What could I do?
I saw them passing our gate.

Enid: Geraint, brave youth I know thy fate.

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Act IV

The hall of the cottage, a few days later. The family have been having a meal. Earl Yniol and Butler still at table. Enid and her mother sitting in the foreground. In the deep silence Enid begins humming in a low voice to herself:

Enid: In the valley, down the alley
Went a handsome gallant man.
And I saw him, and I liked him,
'would I saw the man again.

In the valley, down the alley
I've been walking ev'ry day.
I've been looking, I've been seeking,
But the man has gone away.

(louder as if awaking):

Oh what sore pain and what delight
To dream a dream of Arthur's knight!

Lady Yniol (somewhat impatiently):
Try and forget, my child, you can.

Enid: I can't forget, I loved that man.

There is silence again. Then there are voices heard from a distance.

Voices: Hail! - Hail!

Earl Yniol: What's that?

Butler (who has gone to the window):
If not a feast
It seems to mean good news at least.

Voices (louder): Hail! - Hail!

Butler: I see a motley throng.
There's Gareth running fast along.

Enter Gareth

Gareth: The Sparrow-hawk tripped up at length!
We need no longer fear his threnth.
His followers have run away,
Knight Geraint comes with him this way.

Enter Geraint and Sparrow-hawk

Geraint has been wounded, his brow is bandaged and so is his right arm and shoulder. His sword is hanging from his belt. He carries Sparrow-hawk's mighty sword in his left hand. Sparrow-hawk his hands in fetters, however does not give evidence of feeling submitted. He comes between two guardians who now withdraw.

Geraint: Earl Yniol hail! Myladies hail!
What I'll report is no long tale.
I met the foe and I was glad.
We fought and he believed he had
An easy task, but he was wrong,
My sore despair had made me strong.
He made me bleed, I did not yield.
With waning strength I held the field.

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One and another wronged by him
Now paid him for his being grim
Snatching his mighty weapon and
Thus lending me a helping hand.
They bound him. – Well, his camp is nigh
The very ground where he shall die.

Enid: You would be spoiling with a flaw
The happiest day I ever saw.....

Sparrow-hawk (to Geraint):
To pierce my valiant heart won't be
A glorious deed of yours, you'll see.
I doubt your arm is strong enough,
The blow it got was rather rough.

Geraint stands frowning

Enid (continuing): Oh Geraint, let the man repent
The way till now his life was spent.
I'm sure he never would have thought
Of crime had he been better taught.

Sparrow-hawk: I never thought what I have done
Might be excused by any one.

Enid: I'm not excusing, I forgive.
Have mercy Geraint, let him live.

Sparrow-hawk: You shield your foe! That touches me.

Geraint (in a low voice):
Queen Guinevere was right, I see.

Sparrow-hawk (bending his knee before Enid):
No longer now your enemy.

Butler (aside): Complying with the prophesy.

Enid looks up to Geraint imploring him, Geraint nods ascent. Then shrugging his shoulders he addresses himself to Earl Yniol.

Geraint: If you agree.....

Earl Yniol: My Butler can.
(to Sparrow-hawk): Do stand upright
(to the Butler): Release the man.

The following is said while Sparrow-hawk's fetters are taken off.

Enid (to Geraint): You understood me.

Geraint: In your eyes
Your soul with all its sweetness lies.

Sparrow-hawk is given back his sword by Geraint.

Geraint: Thank the fair lady and now take
Your sword and reparation make,
And use it as a knight should do.

Earl Yniol: Then all of us we'll pardon you.

There are two groups formed. Enid, Geraint and Lady Yniol standing together, in the same way Earl Yniol, the Butler, and Gareth. Sparrow-hawk stands aside looking at Geraint with unconcealed admiration, then

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approaches.

Sparrow-hawk (airily to Earl Yniol):

How I should like henceforth to be
A knight of Arthur's such as he!

Earl Yniol (astonished):

Good friend, at Arthur's Table-Round
Only most valiant knights are found.
To join that noble well-known King
It's not enough to brave a thing.

Geraint (entering in the conversation):

Humbly to serve you first may ask.
Then we'll bestow on you a task
And should you prove a stalwart man,
You'll be allowed to call again.

Lady Yniol (who has been listening):

Not such a task as yours has been,
He'll ask the King and not the Queen.

Geraint (apologizing):

There's myst'ry very often when
King Arthur sends on deeds his men.

Sparrow-hawk (aside):

Don't understand and I must cope
With being silent, but I hope
Some one will tell me afterwards
The meaning of their puzzling words.

Geraint and Earl Yniol have come to the foreground.

Earl Yniol:

Knight Geraint, you proved brave and wise,
Yours is a claim to love and prize.
As a reward for what you've done
I wish to call you my dear son.
My daughter loves you, I'm aware,
I gladly trust her to your care.

Geraint (full of joy):

Fair Enid, so you will be mine!
To drink your health there will be wine. - - -
King Arthur and Queen Guinevere
Are waiting. All assembled here
Do follow me so that we may
Report the glory of the day.

Act V

King Arthur's court. Many people waiting for King and Queen to appear.
Some knights are looking inquisitively at Sparrow-hawk.

1st knight:

His so-called friends, a pack of knaves.
He knew but criminals and slaves.

2nd knight:

The man is not a bit demure,
He's not a coward to be sure.

3rd knight:

He did not wait for our call.

2nd knight:

He looks good-natured after all.

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Enter King and Queen preceded by
attendants. They are acclaimed.

1st knight: Hail!

2nd knight: Hail!

From several sides: Hail!

Geraint: Hail!

King Arthur: Be welcome friends!
To-day a doleful story ends.
Earl Yniol kindly sent us word
And with astonishment we heard
That there were fusing wondrously
Suggestion, chance, and prophesy.

On a sign from King Arthur Geraint approaches.

King Arthur (continuing):

Knight Geraint, when I clasp your hand
It's in the name of all my land.
Surpassable the prize is not
That with Fair Enid's hand you've got.
Yet there will be a chance, I guess
To show you our gratefulness.

Geraint (ushering the Butler near the throne):

He must be thanked as well as I,
He helped me to begin and try.
When hearing of the prophesy
I set to work immediately.

King Arthur (to the Butler):

Ask for a favour.

Butler:

When you dine
Allow me Sir, to serve the wine.

Sparrow-hawk (approaching the throne):

I hope dear Sir, you will not ban
A penitent. I'll join the man.
I've done with rambling and in short
I wish to be allowed your court.

King Arthur:

First mind to keep discreet, and wait.
We do not mean to aggravate
Your situation. Be at ease.

Sparrow-hawk:

All right.

(to Gareth): Let me sit down here please.

Sparrow-hawk is shown a stool in a corner.

King Arthur:

Enid, my wife and I express
Our wishes for your happiness.

Enid (standing at Geraint's side):

Our thanks! We hope you'll come and stay
With us on our wedding-day.

Queen Guinevere (to King Arthur in a suppressed voice):

Let's make the show, the day is fine -

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And have a rest before we dine.

Voices (from outside): Hail, hail! - Hail, hail!

1st attendant: The folk outside
Ask fervently to see the bride.

2nd attendant: The balcony is fine and fit,
The garlands hanging down from it.

King Arthur: Now that we banished their distress
And made increase their happiness
They will give way to fun and glee.

Dear friends.....

Voices (interrupting): Hail! - Hail! - Hail!

King Arthur (continuing):
Follow me!

There are groups formed by pairs, King Arthur and Lady Yniol, Earl Yniol and Queen Guinevere, the Butler and his son, of course Geraint and Enid, knights. Sparrow-hawk is somewhat humorously confused where to go, but the knights design him a place in their middle and he merrily joins them. The procession is preceded by the attendants.
