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HOW CULHWCH WON OLWEN

As in *Jason and the Golden Fleece*, the hero of 'Culhwch' has to undertake a number of seemingly impossible tasks, all of which he is to perform in the process of winning the daughter of his opponent. But the Welsh version differs in a number of respects. Ysbaddaden's insistence that he must die when his daughter weds underlines the primitive nature of the young hero-old king-woman plot. Moreover, whereas Jason leads the other Argonauts in the quest for the Golden Fleece, Culhwch is all but invisible among his more talented companions.

The major disparity, however, lies in the number of tasks assigned the hero, a staggering thirty-nine in the Welsh tale. Fortunately for both audience and reader, only half of these are mentioned as being fulfilled, and only two – the rescue of Mabon and the hunting of Twrch Trwyth – are described in any detail. On the other hand, the even more staggering catalogue of heroes whose aid Culhwch invokes is a veritable kitchen sink, with genuine Arthurian figures like Kei and Bedwyr quickly giving way to confusion (Corvil Bervach for Conall Cernach), desperation (Someone son of Caw) and outright self-parody (Sufficiency son of Surfeit). As a whole, though, 'Culhwch' is remarkably coherent.

Arthur, in what is probably his earliest appearance in Welsh prose, has a disappointingly minor role; already established as the great king of the British, he displays little personality. While the

exploits which made him king lie in the Celtic past, the distinguishing characteristics which made him famous seem to lie in the continental future.

How Culhwch Won Olwen

Kilydd son of the ruler Kelyddon wanted a wife as well-born as himself, and the woman he chose was Goleuddydd¹ daughter of the ruler Amlawdd. After he had slept with her the country went to pray for the couple to have children, and because of these prayers a son was born. Once she had become pregnant Goleuddydd went mad and would enter no house, but when her time came her senses returned; she was near a swineherd and his herd of pigs, and out of fear of the pigs she delivered. The swineherd kept the boy until he came to court, where the lad was baptized and given the name Culhwch, because he had been found in a pig-run;² nevertheless he was a well-born lad, Arthur's first cousin, and he was sent out to be nursed.

After that his mother Goleuddydd fell ill, and she called her husband to her; 'I shall die of this illness, and you will want to take another wife. Although wives are gift-givers, still you should not disinherit your son. I ask you not to look for another woman until you see a two-headed thorn on my grave.' He promised her that. Then she summoned her confessor and ordered him to trim the grave every year lest anything grow there. The queen died, and every morning thereafter the king sent a lad to see whether anything was growing on the grave. After seven years the confessor neglected his promise to the queen. The king, who was out hunting, visited the graveyard to see her

1. Goleuddydd: bright day.

2. Culhwch: interpreted as pig run.

grave, and finding the thorn he promptly sought advice as to where he could find a wife. One of his advisers said, 'I know a good woman who would suit you: the wife of King Doged.' They decided to go and seek her; they killed Doged and brought back the woman, with her only daughter, and seized her husband's land.

One day the good woman was out walking when she came to the house of an old hag without a tooth in her head. 'Woman, for God's sake,' she said, 'tell me what I ask you: Where are the children of this man who has carried us off by force?' 'He has no children.' 'Woe that I have come to a childless man!' Then the hag said, 'No need for that – it is foretold that he will have a child, and as he has not had it by any other woman he must have it by you. Do not be sad, either, for he does have one son.'

Then the queen went home happy and asked her husband, 'Why are you hiding your son from me?' The king answered, 'I am not hiding him.' So the lad was sent for and came to court, and his stepmother said to him, 'You would do well to take a wife, and I have a daughter fit for any noble in the world.' 'I am not old enough for a wife,' said Culhwch. 'Then I swear this destiny upon you: your side shall never touch that of woman until you win Olwen daughter of Chief Giant Ysbaddaden.' The lad blushed, and though he had never seen the girl love for her entered into every limb. His father said, 'Lad, why do you blush so? What has happened to you?' 'My stepmother has sworn that I shall have no wife until I win Olwen daughter of Chief Giant Ysbaddaden.' 'That will not be difficult,' said his father. 'Arthur is your first cousin; go to him and have your hair trimmed, and ask for Olwen as your reward.'

Culhwch set off on a steed with a glossy grey head, four years old; it was firmly crotch-jointed, hollow-hoofed and had a tubular gold bridle bit in its mouth. The lad sat

in a precious gold saddle, holding two sharpened silver spears and a battle axe half a yard across from ridge to edge, an axe which would draw blood from the wind, and which was swifter from stalk to ground than the swiftest dewdrop in the month of June, when the dew is heaviest. He had also a sword with a gold hilt and blade, a gold-chased buckler the colour of lightning, with an ivory boss, and two brindled white-breasted greyhounds wearing red-gold collars from shoulder to ear. The greyhound on the right side would run to the left and the one on the left side would run to the right, and so they sported about him like two terns, while his steed's hooves dug up four clods as if they were four swallows in the air overhead, now before him, now behind. Culhwch wore a four-cornered purple mantle with a red-gold apple in each corner; each apple was worth a hundred cows, while his footgear and stirrups, from the top of his thigh to the tip of his toe, were worth three hundred cows in precious gold. So smooth was his steed's gait that not a hair on his head stirred as he journeyed to Arthur's court.

When he reached the gate Culhwch asked, 'Is there a gatekeeper?' 'There is, and may your head not be yours for asking such a question. I am gatekeeper to Arthur every first of January, while for the rest of the year my lieutenants are Huandaw and Gogigwr and Llaesgymyn and Penpingyon, who travels on his head to save his feet, neither skyward nor earthward but like a rolling stone on the floor of the court.' 'Open the gate.' 'I will not.' 'Why will you not?' 'Knife has gone into meat, and drink into horn, and there is a throng in Arthur's hall. Excepting the king of a lawful dominion or a craftsman who brings his craft no one may enter. You shall have mash for your dogs and corn for your horse, and for yourself hot peppered chops and an abundance of wine and entertaining songs; food for fifty men shall come to you in the guesthouse where eat strangers and lads from foreign lands who bring

no craft, and you shall have a woman to sleep with and entertaining songs to listen to. Tomorrow morning, when the gate is opened for the multitude that came here to-day, you shall be first in, and you may sit wherever you choose in Arthur's hall, from the upper end to the lower.'

Culhwch replied, 'I will have none of that. If you open the gate, well and good; if not, I will bring dishonour to your lord, and give you yourself a bad name. I will give three shouts at the entrance to this gate such as will be no less audible on Penryn Penwaedd³ in Cornwall, and in the depths of Dinsol in the north, and in Ysgeir Oervel⁴ in Ireland. Any pregnant woman in this court will miscarry, and the wombs of those who are not pregnant will be oppressed and will overturn, so that the women will never again bear children.' Glewlwyd Strong Grip replied, 'However much you rail against the customs of Arthur's court, you shall not enter until I have gone inside and spoken with Arthur.'

Glewlwyd entered the hall, and Arthur said, 'Have you news from the gate?' 'Two-thirds of my life have gone by, and two-thirds of yours as well. I have been in Caer Se and Asse, in Sach and Salach, in Lotor and Fotor, in Greater India and Lesser India, and in the battle between the two Ynyrs⁵ when the twelve hostages were brought from Norway. I have been in Europe and Africa, in the islands of Corsica, in Caer Brythwch and Brythach, and in Nerthach. I was there when you overcame the troops of Gleis son of Merin,⁶ when you killed Mil the Black son of Dugum; I was there in the eastern part of the world when you conquered Greece, in Caer Oeth and Anoeth, and in Caer Nevenhyr Nineteenth. We have seen handsome noble-

3. Penryn Penwaedd=Penwith Point between Land's End and Mousehole in Cornwall, *v. TYP*, p. 234.

4. Ysgeir Oervel=Sescenn Úairbeól in Leinster, as found in the Irish tale 'Bricriu's Feast'.

5. Ynyr=Honorius.

6. Gleis: stream; Merin: sea.

looking men, but I have never seen a man like the one who now stands at the entrance to the gate.' Arthur replied, 'If you came in walking go out running – an injunction upon the one who opens his eye and looks at the light and shuts his eye. Let some serve the lad with gold drinking horns, and others with hot peppered chops, until he has had his fill of meat and drink, for it is a wretched thing to leave out in the wind and rain such a man as you describe.' 'By my companion's hand,' said Kei, 'if you took my advice, you would not abandon the custom of the court for this lad's sake.' 'Not so, good Kei. We are noble men so long as others come to us, and the more gifts we distribute, the greater will be our reputation and fame and glory.'

So Glewlwyd returned to the gate and opened it for the lad, but whereas everyone else dismounted outside at the mounting-block, Culhwch rode in on his steed. 'Hail to the chief lord of this island!' he said. 'May the lower couches of this house be no worse than the upper, and may my greeting apply equally to your nobles and your company and your troops, without omitting anyone. As I greeted you properly, so may your trust and grace and glory be proper throughout this island.' 'In God's truth, so be it, chieftain. Hail to you also! Sit between two warriors and you shall have entertaining songs, and the status of a prince, an heir to the kingdom, for the length of your stay; moreover when I distribute presents to guests and foreigners I will begin with you.'

Culhwch replied, however, 'I did not come here to beg for food and drink. If my request is granted I will repay it and I will praise you; otherwise I will bear your shame to the farthest extent of your reputation in the four corners of the world.' 'Chieftain,' said Arthur, 'even though you do not stay, you shall have the request that head and tongue name, as far as the wind dries, as far as the rain wets, as far as the sun rises, as far as the sea stretches, as

far as the earth extends, excepting only my ship, my mantle, my sword Caledvwlch,⁷ my spear Rhongomynnyad,⁸ my shield Wynebgwrthucher,⁹ my knife Carnwennan and my wife Gwenhwyvar.¹⁰ 'In God's truth?' 'Name what you want, and you shall have it gladly.' 'I want my hair trimmed.' 'You shall have that,' and Arthur took a gold comb and silver-handled scissors and combed the lad's hair and asked who he was, saying, 'My heart grows tender towards you, and I know that you must come from my lineage. Tell me who you are.' 'I am Culhwch son of Kilydd son of the ruler Kelyddon, and Goleuddydd daughter of the ruler Amlawdd is my mother.' Arthur said, 'That is true. You are my first cousin – therefore state your desire and you shall have it, whatever mouth and tongue may name.' 'In God's truth, and the truth of your kingdom?' 'You shall have it gladly.' 'Then I ask for Olwen daughter of Chief Giant Ysbaddaden, and I invoke her in the name of your warriors.'

Culhwch invoked Olwen in the name of Kei, Bedwyr, Greidyawl Enemy Subduer, Gwythyr son of Greidyawl, Greid son of Eri, Kynddilg the guide, Tathal Honest Deceitful, Maelwys son of Baeddan,¹¹ Cnychwr son of Nes, Cubert son of Daere, Fercos son of Poch, Lubur Beuthach, Corvil Bervach,¹² Gwynn son of Esni, Gwynn son of Nwyvre, Gwynn son of Nudd,¹³ Edern son of Nudd, Cadwy son of Gereint, the ruler Fflewdr Fflam, Rhuvawn¹⁴ the

7. Caledvwlch = Excalibur. 8. Rhongomynnyad: cutting spear.

9. Wynebgwrthucher: face of evening.

10. Gwenhwyvar: white phantom? The Irish Findabair of *The Cattle Raid of Cooley*?

11. Maelwys: noble pig; Baeddan: boar.

12. These names are borrowed from Irish tales. Cnychwr son of Nes = Conchobar son of Ness; Cubert son of Daere = Cú Roí son of Dáire; Fercos son of Poch = Fergus son of Róech; Lubur Beuthach = Lóegaire Búadach; Corvil Bervach = Conall Cernach.

13. Nudd = Nodons, a British deity.

14. Rhuvawn = Romānus.

Radiant son of Deorthach, Bradwen son of Moren the Noble, Moren the Noble himself, Dalldav son of Cunyn Cov, the son of Alun of Dyved, the son of Seidi, the son of Gwryon, Uchdryd Battle Protector, Kynwas Cwryvagyl, Gwrhyr Fat Cattle, Ysberyr Cat Claw, Gallgoid the Killer, Duach and Brathach and Nerthach the sons of Gwawrddur Hunchback (these men were sprung from the highlands of Hell), Kilydd Hundred Holds, Canhastyr¹⁵ Hundred Hands, Cors Hundred Claws, Ysgeir Gulhwch Govyncawn,¹⁶ Drwst Iron Fist, Glewlwyd Strong Grip, Llwch¹⁷ Windy Hand, Anwas the Swift, Sinoch son of Seithved, Wadu son of Seithved, Naw¹⁸ son of Seithved, Gwenwynwyn son of Naw son of Seithved, Bedyw son of Seithved, Gobrwyr son of Echel Pierced Thigh,¹⁹ Echel Pierced Thigh himself, Mael son of Roycol, Dadweir Blind Head, Garwyli son of Gŵyddawg Gŵyr,²⁰ Gŵyddawg Gŵyr himself, Gormant²¹ son of Rica, Menw son of Teirwaedd,²² Digon son of Alar,²³ Selyv son of Sinoid, Gusg son of Achen, Nerth son of Cadarn,²⁴ Drudwas son of Tryffin, Twrch²⁵ son of Peryv, Twrch son of Anwas, Iona King of France, Sêl son of Selgi,²⁶ Teregud son of Iaen, Sulyen son of Iaen, Bradwen son of Iaen, Moren son of Iaen, Siawn son of Iaen, Caradawg son of Iaen, all men from Caer Dathal, and

15. Canhastyr: hundred holds.

16. Ysgeir Gulhwch Govyncawn: ridge of Culhwch the Reed-cutter?

17. Llwch: borrowed from Irish Lug? The pronunciation is similar.

18. Seithved: seventh; Naw: nine.

19. Echell = Achilles. Pierced Thigh: v. p. 79 n. 23. Brân, like Achilles, is shot in the foot.

20. gŵyr: bent, crooked, or Gŵyr = Gower.

21. Gormant: excess.

22. Teirwaedd: three cries.

23. Digon: sufficiency; Alar: surfeit.

24. Nerth: might; Cadarn: strong.

25. Twrch: boar; Peryv: lord.

26. Sêl: watch; Selgi: watchdog.

related to Arthur on his father's side, Dirmyg²⁷ son of Caw, Iustig son of Caw, Edmyg²⁸ son of Caw, Angawdd son of Caw, Govan son of Caw, Kelyn²⁹ son of Caw, Conyn³⁰ son of Caw, Mabsant³¹ son of Caw, Gwyngad son of Caw, Llwybyr³² son of Caw, Coch³³ son of Caw, Meilyg son of Caw, Kynwal son of Caw, Ardwyad³⁴ son of Caw, Ergyryad³⁵ son of Caw, Neb³⁶ son of Caw, Gildas son of Caw, Calcas son of Caw, Hueil son of Caw, who never submitted to a lord's hand, Samson Dry Lip, Chief Bard Talyessin, Manawydan son of Llŷr, Llara³⁷ son of the ruler Casnar, Ysberin son of King Fflergant³⁸ of Brittany, Garanhon son of Glythvyr, Llawr³⁹ son of Erw, Anynnawg son of Menw son of Teirwaedd, Gwynn son of Nwyvre, Fflam⁴⁰ son of Nwyvre, Gereint son of Erbin, Ermid son of Erbin, Dywel son of Erbin, Gwynn son of Ermid, Kyndrwn son of Ermid, Heveydd One Cloak, Eiddon the Magnanimous, Rheidwn the Rough, Gormant son of Rica⁴¹ (Arthur's brother on his mother's side; his father was chief elder of Cornwall), Llawvrodedd the Bearded, Nodawl Trimmed Beard, Berth son of Cadwy, Rhun son of Beli, Ysgonan the Generous, Ysgawyn son of Panon, Morvran son of Tegid⁴² (no man struck him at Camlann⁴³ – because of his ugliness everyone

27. Dirmyg: contempt.

29. Kelyn: holly.

31. Mabsant: patron saint.

33. Coch: red.

35. Ergyryad: attack.

37. Llara: meek.

38. Fflergant=Alan Fyrgan, Duke of Burgundy 1084–1112. An interpolation?

39. Llawr: earth; Erw: acre.

40. Fflam: flame; Nwyvre: firmament.

41. Gormant son of Rica: some people are named twice.

42. Morvran: great raven; Tegid=Tacitus.

43. Camlann: perhaps the Roman fort of Camboglanna on Hadrian's Wall, *v. TYP*, pp. 160–62. Geoffrey places it in Cornwall.

28. Edmyg: honour.

30. Conyn: stalk.

32. Llwybyr: path.

34. Ardwyad: protector.

36. Neb: someone.

thought he was a devil helping, for there was hair on his face like the hair of a stag), Sanddev Angel Face (no man struck him at Camlann – because of his beauty everyone thought he was an angel helping), Saint Kynwyl (who was one of the three men to escape from Camlann; he was the last to leave Arthur, on his horse Hen Groen),⁴⁴ Uchdryd son of Erim, Eus son of Erim, Hen Was the Swift son of Erim, Hen Beddestyr son of Erim,⁴⁵ Sgilti Light Foot⁴⁶ son of Erim (three properties had these three men: Hen Beddestyr never found a man who could keep up with him, either on horseback or on foot; no four-footed creature could stay with Hen Was the Swift for even an acre, let alone anything more; when the desire to undertake an errand for his lord came upon Sgilti Light Foot, he never took the road so long as he knew his way, but if there was a forest he travelled along the tree tops, and if there was a mountain he travelled on the tips of the reeds, and never did a reed bend, much less break, so light of foot was he), Teithi the Old son of Gwynnan (whose kingdom the sea overran, and who came to Arthur after barely escaping; no hilt would remain attached to the blade of his knife, and for that reason he grew sick and feeble while he lived, and then he died), Carnedyr son of Govynyon the Old, Gwenwynwyn son of Naw, Arthur's premier fighter, Llygadrudd Emys⁴⁷ and Gwrvoddw the Old, both uncles of Arthur, his mother's brothers, Culvanawyd⁴⁸ son of Gwryon, Llenlleawg the Irishman from the headland of Gamon,

44. Hen Groen: old skin.

45. Hen Was: old servant; Hen Beddestyr: old walker.

46. Sgilti Light Foot=Caifte of the Irish Find tales.

47. Llygadrudd: red eye; Emys: stallion.

48. Culvanawyd: slender awl.

Dyvynwal⁴⁹ the Bald, Dyvynarth King of the North, Teirnon Twrvliant, Tegvan the Lame, Tegyr the Cup Bearer, Gwrddywal son of Evrei, Morgant the Wealthy, Gwystyl⁵⁰ son of Nwython, Rhun son of Nwython, Llwydeu son of Nwython, Gwydre son of Llwydeu by Gwenabwy daughter of Caw (his uncle Hueil stabbed him, and the wound was the source of a feud between Hueil and Arthur),⁵¹ Drem son of Dremidydd⁵² (who from Kelli Wig⁵³ in Cornwall could see a gnat rise with the sun at Penn Blathaon⁵⁴ in Scotland), Eiddoel son of Ner, Gwlyddyn, the carpenter who built Arthur's hall Ehangwen,⁵⁵ Kynyr Elegant Beard (who was said to be Kei's father; he said to his wife, 'Woman, if there is anything of me in your son, his heart will always be cold, nor will there be any warmth in his hands; if he is my son, he will be stubborn; whenever he carries a burden, whether great or small, it will be visible neither from the front nor the rear; no one will brave fire and water as well as he, nor will there be any official or servant like him'), Hen Was and Hen Wyneb and Hen Gedymddeith,⁵⁶ another Gallgoig (whenever he came to a town, if he needed anything he would let no man sleep, though there might be three hundred homes in the town), Berwyn son of Kerenhyr,⁵⁷ Paris King of France (which is why the city is called Paris), Osla Big Knife⁵⁸ (who carried

49. Dyvynwal=Dubnoualos.

50. Gwystyl: hostage.

51. On the quarrel between Hueil and Arthur, *v. TYP*, pp. 408-10.

52. Drem: sight; Dremidydd: sighter.

53. Kelli: wood. The exact location of Kelli Wig is uncertain, *v. TYP*, pp. 3-4.

54. Blathaon: probably John o'Groats or Dunnet Head in Caithness, *v. TYP*, pp. 233-4.

55. Ehangwen: wide and spacious.

56. Hen Wyneb: old face; Hen Gedymddeith: old companion.

57. Kerenhyr=Carantorix, 'king of kinsmen'.

58. Osla=Oetha son of Hengist? *v. ALMA*, p. 42. Or Offa King of Mercia 757-96? *v. BR*, p. 46.

Bronllavyn Short Broad; when Arthur and his troops came to a cresting flood, they would find a narrow spot; the knife in its sheath would be laid across the flood and that would be bridge enough for the three armies of the island of Britain and the three offshore islands, with all their plunder), Gwyddawg son of Menestyr, who killed Kei and whom Arthur killed in revenge, Garanwyn⁵⁹ son of Kei, Amren son of Bedwyr, Eli, Myr, Rheu Easy Difficult, Rhun Red Alder, Eli and Trachmyr, Arthur's chief huntsmen, Llwyd son of Kil Coed, Huabwy son of Gwryon, Gwyn Godyvron, Gweir Servant of Birds and Gweir son of Cadellin Silver Brow and Gweir Brave Wicked and Gweir White Spear Shaft, all uncles of Arthur, his mother's brothers, the sons of Llwh Windy Hand from beyond the fierce sea, the Irishman Llenlleawg, who was the exalted one of Britain, Cas son of Seidi, Gwrvan Shaggy Hair, Gwilenhin King of France, Gwitart son of Aedd⁶⁰ King of Ireland, Garselid the Irishman, Panawr Battle Leader, Fflewddwr son of Naw, Gwynn Hyvar Steward of Devon and Cornwall, one of the nine who planned the Battle of Camlann, Kelli, Cuel, Gilla Stag Shank, who could leap three hundred acres in a single bound, and who was the chief leaper of Ireland, Sol and Gwadynd Osol and Gwadynd Oddeith⁶¹ (Sol could stand all day on one foot; if Gwadynd Osol stood on the highest mountain in the world, it would become a level plain under his feet; like a warm mace drawn from the forge were the bright sparks from Gwadynd Oddeith's soles when he struck something hard, and he cleared the way for Arthur in battle), Erwm the Tall and Atrwm the Tall (the day they came to a feast they would seize three cantrivs for their wants and they would eat until noon and drink until night; when they went to sleep they would devour the heads of insects out of hunger, as if they had

59. Garanwyn: white shank.

60. Aedd=Aed in Irish.

61. Gwadynd: sole; Oddeith: bonfire.

never eaten; when they went to a feast they left neither fat nor lean, hot nor cold, pure nor fresh, green nor salted), Huarwar son of Avlawn⁶² (who requested his fill of Arthur. He was one of the three great plagues of Devon and Cornwall until he had eaten his fill, and never was there seen on him a trace of a smile unless he was sated), Gwarae Golden Hair, the two pups of the bitch Rhymhi, Gwyddrud, Gwydden the Difficult, Sugyn son of Sugynedydd⁶³ (who could suck up a sea on which there were three hundred ships until it was nothing but a dry strand; he had a red heart hidden within him), Cacamwri, Arthur's servant (show him a barn, and though there be a track for thirty ploughs within, he would strike the barn with an iron flail until the planks and cross-beams were no better off than the small oats at the bottom), Llwg, Dygyvlwg, Anoeth the Bold, Eiddyl the Tall and Amren the Tall (two of Arthur's servants), Gwevyl son of Gwastad⁶⁴ (when he was sad he would let one lip droop to his navel and raise the other until it was a hood over his head), Uchdryd Cross Beard, who could throw his fixed red beard over fifty rafters in Arthur's hall, Elidyr the Guide, Ysgyrdav and Ysgudydd (two servants of Gwenhwyvar; on an errand their feet were as swift as their thoughts), Brys⁶⁵ son of Brysethach from the valley of black fernery in Scotland, Gwydolwyn the Dwarf, Bwlch, Kyvwlch and Syvwlch sons of Cleddyv Kyvwlch⁶⁶ grandsons of Cleddyv Divwlch (three bright shinings their three shields, three piercing stabs their three spears, three sharp blades their three swords, Glas, Glessig and Gleisyad their three dogs, Call, Cuall and Cavall⁶⁷ their three horses,

62. Avlawn: not full.

63. Sugyn: suction; Sugynedydd: pump.

64. Gwevyl: lip; Gwastad: level. 65. Brys: haste.

66. Bwlch: gap; Kyvwlch: complete; Cleddyv: sword; Divwlch: continuous.

67. Call: wise; Cuall: foolish; Cavall: horse.

Hwyrddyddwg, Drwgddyddwg and Llwyrrddyddwg⁶⁸ their three wives, Och, Garym and Diasbad⁶⁹ their three grandchildren, Lluched, Neued and Eissywed⁷⁰ their three daughters, Drwg, Gwaeth and Gwaethav Oll⁷¹ their three maids), Eheubryd daughter of Kyvwlch, Gorasgwrn⁷² daughter of Nerth, Gwaeddan daughter of Kynvelyn,⁷³ Keudawg Half Wit, Dwenn⁷⁴ the Vigorous Chief, Eiladar son of Penn Llarcarn, Kynedyr the Wild son of Hetwn Silver Brow, Sawyl High Head, Gwalchmei son of Gwyar, Gwalhaved⁷⁵ son of Gwyar, Gwrhyr Interpreter of Languages, who knew all tongues, Kethtrwm the Priest, Clust son of Clustveinydd⁷⁶ (were he buried seven fathoms in the earth he would hear an ant stirring from its bed in the morning fifty miles away), Medyr son of Medyreddydd⁷⁷ (who from Kelli Wig could hit a wren in Ysgeir Oervel in Ireland through both legs), Gwiawn Cat Eye (who could cut a corner from a gnat's eye without harming the eye), Ôl son of Olwydd⁷⁸ (whose father's pigs were carried off seven months before he was born; when he grew up he tracked down the pigs and brought them home in seven herds), the bishop Bidwini, who blessed food and

68. Hwyrddyddwg: late bringer; Drwgddyddwg: evil bringer; Llwyrrddyddwg: complete bringer.

69. Och: groan; Garym: shout; Diasbad: outcry.

70. Lluched: plague; Neued: want; Eissywed: need.

71. Drwg: bad; Gwaeth: worse; Gwaethav Oll: worst of all. As Cavall is elsewhere the name of Arthur's dog (the name notwithstanding), and as Hwyrddyddwg, Drwgddyddwg and Llwyrrddyddwg seem more appropriate for horses than for wives, it is possible that Glas, Glessig and Gleisyad refer to the swords, Call, Cuall and Cavall to the dogs, etc.

72. Gorasgwrn: big bone; Nerth: might.

73. Kynvelyn=Cunobelinos, Cymbeline.

74. Dwenn: brown.

75. Gwalhaved: probably no connection with Galahad.

76. Clust: ear; Clustveinydd: hearer.

77. Medyr: aim; Medyreddydd: aimer.

78. Ôl: track; Olwydd: tracker.

drink, and finally the gentle gold-torqued women of this island: the first lady of the island Gwenhwyvar, her sister Gwenhwyach, Rathtyen the only daughter of Clememyl, Kelemon daughter of Kei, Tangwen daughter of Gweir Servant of Birds, Gwenn Alarch⁷⁹ daughter of Kynwal Hundred Hogs, Eurneid daughter of Clydno of Edinburgh,⁸⁰ Eneuawg daughter of Bedwyr, Enrydreg daughter of Tuduathar, Gwenwledyr daughter of Gwawrddur the Hunchback, Erdudvyl daughter of Tryffin, Eurolwyn daughter of Gwydolwyn the Dwarf, Teleri daughter of Peul, Indeg daughter of Garwy the Tall, Morvudd daughter of Uryen of Rheged,⁸¹ Gwenn Lliant,⁸² a fair and generous girl, Creiddylad daughter of Lludd Silver Hand⁸³ (the most majestic girl ever in Britain or the three offshore islands; for her Gwythyr son of Greidyawl and Gwynn son of Nudd fight every May Day until the Judgment), Ellylw daughter of Neol Hang Cock, who lived three generations, Essyllt White Neck and Essyllt Slender Neck⁸⁴ – in the name of all these Culhwch invoked his request.

Arthur then said, 'Chieftain, I have heard nothing of this girl, nor of her parents, but I will gladly send messengers to learn of her.' That night messengers set out, and when at the end of a year they had found nothing Culhwch said, 'Everyone else has obtained his request but I am still waiting. I will leave, and bear your shame with me.' 'Chieftain, you are not fair to Arthur,' said Kei.

79. Gwenn Alarch: white swan.

80. Clydno: famous, renowned. Edinburgh: the area surrounding the present city of Edinburgh. Clydno appears to have been a leader of northern Britain in the late sixth century.

81. Uryen of Rheged: according to Nennius, Uryen and Morgant and Gwallawg fought against the Northumbrians Hussa and Theodric in the late sixth century. Uryen=Örbogenos, 'well born'.

82. Gwenn Lliant: white flood.

83. Lludd Silver Hand: probably a mistake for Nudd, cf. the Irish name Núadu Silver Hand.

84. Essyllt=Isolt, Isolde.

'Come with us – until you say that the girl does not exist or until we find her we will not leave you.' Kei rose then. He had this talent: nine days and nine nights his breath would last under water, and nine days and nine nights he could go without sleep. No doctor could cure the wound from Kei's sword. He could be as tall as the tallest tree in the forest when he pleased, while when the rain was heaviest a hand's span about what was in his hand would be dry by reason of the heat he generated, and when his companions were coldest that would be kindling for the lighting of a fire.

Arthur also summoned Bedwyr, who never avoided any errand on which Kei went. No one in the island was as handsome as Bedwyr, save only Arthur and Drych⁸⁵ son of Kibddar, and though he was one-handed no three warriors on the same field could draw blood faster than he; moreover he would make one thrust with his spear and nine counter-thrusts. Arthur called upon Kynddilig the Guide, saying, 'Accompany the chieftain on this errand,' for Kynddilig was no worse guide in a country he had never seen than in his own; he summoned Gwrhryr Interpreter of Languages, who knew every tongue, and Gwalchmei son of Gwyar, since the latter never returned without fulfilling his errand, and was moreover the best walker and rider, and was Arthur's nephew, his sister's son and his first cousin as well. Finally Arthur summoned Menw son of Teirwaedd, for if they came to a pagan land Menw could cast a spell through which they could see everyone and no one could see them.

This party rode out until they reached a great level plain and saw a fortress, the strongest one ever. They journeyed throughout the day, and when they expected to reach the fortress they were no nearer than at first; yet as they travelled along the plain they could see a great flock of sheep with neither end nor limit to it, and a shepherd

85. Drych: look, appearance.

watching from the top of a mound, a cloak of skins on him, and a shaggy mastiff at his side, larger than a nine-year-old stallion. He had never lost a lamb, much less a sheep, nor did there pass him any company which he did not harm or wound mortally, for his breath had burned every dead tree and bush on the plain to the ground.

Kei said to Gwrhŷr Interpreter of Languages, 'Go and talk to that man over there.' 'Kei, I never promised to go any farther than you did, so let us go together,' said Gwrhŷr, and Menw son of Teirwaedd said, 'Do not worry – I will put a spell on the dog so that it harms no one.' They approached the shepherd and said, 'You are well off, shepherd.' 'May you never be better off than I,' was the reply. 'By God, because you are the head man.' 'Apart from my wife, no wound annoys me.' 'Whose sheep are you tending, and whose is the fortress?' 'Everyone knows that this is the fortress of Chief Giant Ysbaddaden.' 'And who are you?' 'Custenhin⁸⁶ son of Mynwyedig, and because of my wife Chief Giant Ysbaddaden has ruined me. And who are you?' 'Messengers of Arthur who have come for Olwen.' 'God protect you, men – for all the world, do not say that, for no one who made that request has ever left here alive.'

Then the shepherd rose, and Culhwch gave him a gold ring; he tried to put it on but it did not fit, so he put it in the finger of his glove and went home and gave it to his wife. She took the ring out and asked, 'Where did this ring come from? It is not often you find treasure.' 'I went to the sea to find sea-food, and what did I see but a body washing in on the tide. I never saw so beautiful a body, and on its finger I found this ring.' 'The sea strips dead men of their jewels – show me the body.' 'Wife, you will see the owner of that body here soon.' 'Who is he?' she asked. 'Culhwch son of Kilydd son of the ruler Kelyddon, by Goleuddydd daughter of the ruler Amlawdd – he has

86. Custenhin=Constantine.

come for Olwen.' The woman had divided feelings: she was happy that her nephew, her sister's son, was coming, but she was sad because she had never seen anyone who came with that request depart with his life.

The visitors came on to the gate of the shepherd Custenhin's court, and when his wife heard the clamour of their arrival she ran out to give them a joyful welcome. Kei drew a log from the woodpile as she approached and sought to embrace them, and when he thrust the log between her two hands she squeezed it into a twisted coil. 'Woman, had it been I whom you squeezed so, no one else would ever need to love me,' said Kei. 'A bad sort of love yours!' They entered the house and their needs were seen to, and after a while, when everyone was busy, the woman opened a chest near the hearth and out jumped a lad with curly yellow hair. Gwrhŷr said, 'A shame to hide such a lad as this. I know it is not his own fault that he is so treated,' and the woman replied, 'He is the last one; Chief Giant Ysbaddaden has killed twenty-three of my sons, and there is no more hope for this one than there was for the others.' Kei said, 'Let him come along as my companion; he shall not be slain unless I am.'

Then they ate, and the woman asked, 'On what errand have you come?' 'We have come to ask for Olwen.' 'As no one from the fortress has yet seen you, for God's sake, turn back!' 'God knows, we will not turn back until we have seen the girl – will she come to some place where she can be seen?' 'She comes here every Saturday to wash her hair; she leaves her rings in the washing bowl, and neither she nor her messenger ever comes after them.' 'Will she come if she is sent for?' 'God knows, I will not sell myself by betraying the one who trusts me, but if you swear to do her no harm I will send for her.' 'We swear.' Messengers were sent and Olwen came, dressed in a flame-red silk robe, with a torque of red gold round her neck, studded with precious pearls and rubies. Her hair was yellower

than broom, her skin whiter than sea-foam, her palms and fingers were whiter than shoots of marsh trefoil against the sand of a welling spring. Neither the eye of a mewed hawk nor the eye of a thrice-mewed falcon was fairer than hers; her breasts were whiter than the breast of a white swan, her cheeks were redder than the reddest foxgloves, and anyone who saw her would fall deeply in love. Wherever she went four white trefoils appeared behind her, and for that reason she was called Olwen.⁸⁷

She entered the house and sat between Culhwch and the best chair, and he recognized her as soon as he saw her. 'Lady, it is you I love – will you come with me?' 'I may not, for fear of bringing sin upon us both. My father has made me promise that I will not go without his consent, for he can live only until I take a husband. I will give you advice, however, if you will take it: go to my father and ask for me, and whatever he asks you for promise to get it, and then you shall have me; if he doubts you, however, you will not get me, and you will be fortunate to escape with your life.' 'I promise to do that, and I will obtain everything,' said Culhwch.

Olwen went to her room then; they rose and followed her to the fortress, where they killed nine gatekeepers at nine different gates, without a man making a sound, and nine mastiffs without so much as a growl being raised. They entered the hall and said, 'Hail, Chief Giant Ysbaddaden, in the name of God and man!' 'Where are you all going?' 'We are seeking your daughter for Culhwch son of Kilydd.' 'Where are those good-for-nothing servants of mine? Prop up the forks under my eyelids so I can see what my son-in-law is like,' said the Chief Giant, and this was done. Then he said, 'Come back tomorrow and I will have some sort of answer for you.' They rose to go, but Ysbaddaden seized one of the three poisoned stone spears that were near at hand and

87. Olwen: interpreted as white track.

threw it at them; Bedwyr caught it and threw it back and struck Ysbaddaden right in the kneecap. 'You cursed barbarian of a son-in-law! Now it will be harder to walk uphill. The poisoned iron has hurt like the sting of a gadfly; cursed be the smith who made it and the anvil on which it was made – that's how painful it is.'

They slept that night in Custenhin's house, and next day they put fine combs in their hair and made a majestic entrance into the hall and said, 'Chief Giant Ysbaddaden, give us your daughter in exchange for her marriage fee and the virgin's gift to you and her two kinswomen; otherwise you shall meet your death on her account.' 'She and her four great-grandfathers and her four great-grandmothers are still alive, and I must confer with them.' 'Then do so – we will go to eat.' As they rose Ysbaddaden took a second stone spear which he had nearby and threw it after them, but Menw son of Teirwaedd caught it and threw it back so that it pierced him in the chest and came out in the small of his back. 'You cursed barbarian of a son-in-law! That hard iron hurt me like the bite of a hole-headed leech. Cursed be the forge on which it was heated, for now when I go uphill I will suffer from chest pains and stomach aches and frequent loss of appetite.'

They went to eat then, and when they returned the third day they said, 'Chief Giant Ysbaddaden, shoot at us no more, do not be the cause of your being injured and wounded and killed.' 'Where are my servants? Raise up the forks under my eyelids – they have drooped over my eyeballs – so that I may see what my son-in-law is like.' Then they rose, whereupon Ysbaddaden took a third poisoned stone spear and threw it after them, but Culhwch caught it and threw it back, aiming at the Chief Giant's eyeball so that the spear came out through the base of his neck. 'You cursed barbarian of a son-in-law! The sight of my eyes will be that much worse as long as I live, and when the wind blows in my face they will

water, and I will suffer headaches and dizzy spells every new moon. The poisoned spear has pierced me like the bite of a mad dog – cursed be the forge on which it was heated.'

The company went to eat, and the next day they returned to the court and said, 'Do not shoot at us any more; do not seek harm and injury and martyrdom for yourself, or even worse if you insist. Give us your daughter.' 'Where is he who was told to ask for my daughter?' 'I am he,' said Culhwch son of Kilydd. 'Come here so I can see you.' A chair was brought and the two sat face to face, and Chief Giant Ysbaddaden said, 'Are you the one who seeks my daughter?' 'I am.' 'I want you to promise that you will not be less than fair to me.' 'I promise.' 'When I get what I ask for then you shall have my daughter.' 'Then name what you want.'

'That I will,' said Ysbaddaden. 'Do you see that great thicket out there?' 'I do,' said Culhwch. 'I want it uprooted and burned on the ground, down to cinders and ashes for manure; I want it ploughed and sown so that by the time the dew has dried in the morning it is ready for harvest, so that it can be made into food and drink for the wedding guests of my daughter and yourself. And I want all this done in one day.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. I want a ploughman to till the land; no one but Amathaon son of Dôn will do, and he will not come of his own free will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Govannon son of Dôn is to come to the headland to deliver the irons; he will not do the work of his own will, except for a rightful king, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get.

The two oxen of Gwlwlwyd Chestnut Hair⁸⁸ to be yoked together and to plough this rocky ground; he will not give them up of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. I want the Yellow Pale-White and the Spotted Ox⁸⁹ yoked together.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. There are two horned oxen, one on the far side of Mynydd Bannawg⁹⁰ and one on the near side; I want them yoked under one harness. They are Nynnyaw and Peibyaw, and God turned them into oxen because of their sins.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Do you see that ploughed field?' 'I see it.' 'When I first met the mother of my daughter nine hestors of linseed were sown there, and neither black nor white has appeared. I have the measure still, and I want the linseed sown in that newly ploughed soil to make a linen veil for my daughter on her wedding day.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Honey nine times sweeter than that of a first swarm, but without drones or bees; I want to make bragget for the wedding feast.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. The cup of Llwyrr⁹¹ son of Llwyryon, which holds the best

88. 'Triad 45' refers to the chestnut ox of Gwlwlwyd, rather than the ox of chestnut-haired Gwlwlwyd.

89. Yellow Pale-White, Spotted Ox: also mentioned in 'Triad 45'.

90. Mynydd Bannawg: horned mountain.

91. Llwyrr: complete.

drink, for it is the only cup in the world which can hold such strong drink. He will not yield it of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. The hamper of Gwyddno Long Shank, for were the entire world to gather round it, twenty-seven men at a time, everyone would find the food he liked best. I want to eat from it on the night my daughter sleeps with you – Gwyddno will not give it to you of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. We want to pour that night from the horn of Gwlgawd of Gododdin;⁹² he will not give it to you of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. I want the harp of Teirtu to entertain me that night. When a man pleases it will play by itself, or it will be silent if silence is wanted. Teirtu will not give it to you of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. The Birds of Rhiannon, who wake the dead and lull the living – I want them to entertain me that night.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. I want the cauldron of Diwrnach the Irishman, steward to Odgar son of Aedd King of Ireland, to boil meat for the wedding feast.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. I must wash my hair and shave my beard, and I want the

92. Gododdin: the territory of the Votadini in northern Britain.

tusk of Chief Boar Ysgithyrwyn⁹³ in order to shave, nor will I be any better for it unless it is taken while the boar is still alive.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. The tusk can be drawn only by Odgar son of Aedd King of Ireland.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. I will not entrust this tusk to anyone but Caw of Scotland, who possesses the sixty cantrevs of Scotland; he will not leave his kingdom of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. I must untangle my beard before I can shave it, and it will never straighten out until you get the blood of the Black Hag, daughter of the White Hag, from the headland of the Valley of Distress in the highlands of Hell.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. The blood will not be effective unless you get it while it is still warm, and no vessel anywhere will keep liquid warm save the bottles of Gwydolwyn the Dwarf: these retain the heat of what is poured in the east until one reaches the west. He will not give them to you of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Some will want milk, but there will be no getting milk for everyone unless you first get the bottles of Rhynnon Stiff Beard, for no liquid in those bottles ever sours. He will not give them of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

93. Ysgithyrwyn: white tusk.

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. In all the world there are no comb and shears that can straighten out my tangled hair, except for the comb and shears that lie between the ears of Twrch Trwyth⁹⁴ son of the ruler Taredd. He will not give them of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Twrch Trwyth cannot be hunted until you first get Drudwyn, the pup of Greid son of Eri.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. There is in all the world no leash that will hold Drudwyn save for the leash of Cors Hundred Claws.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. There is no collar in the world that will hold the leash save for the collar of Canhastyr Hundred Hands.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. The chain of Kilydd Hundred Holds must attach the collar to the leash.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. No houndsman in the world can manage that hound, except for Mabon son of Modron,⁹⁵ who was abducted from his mother when he was three nights old. No one knows where he is, or whether he is alive or dead.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Gwynn Dun Mane, the horse of Gweddw (swift as a wave) for Mabon to ride when hunting – Gweddw will not yield the horse of his own will, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

94. Twrch: boar; Trwyth: cf. Irish triáth, boar?

95. Mabon son of Modron: *v.* Introduction, pp. 17–18.

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Since you do not know where Mabon is, you will never find him unless you first seek out Eiddoel son of Ner; he is Mabon's first cousin and will be ardent in the search for his kinsman.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Garselid the Irishman is the chief houndsman of Ireland, and Twrch Trwyth cannot be hunted without him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. A leash from the beard of Dillus the Bearded, since nothing else will hold the two pups – but it will be of no use unless it is drawn from his face while he is still alive and plucked out with wooden tweezers. He will not allow that while he lives, and if he is dead the beard will be of no use, for it will be brittle.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. No houndsman in the world can hold the two pups except for Kynedyr the Wild son of Hetwn the Leper; he is nine times wilder than the wildest beast on the mountain, and you will never get him, nor my daughter either.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. You cannot hunt Twrch Trwyth until you first get Gwynn son of Nudd, in whom God has set the energy of the demons of Annwryn, in order to prevent the destruction of this world, and Gwynn cannot be let loose.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. No horse in the world will avail Gwynn in hunting Twrch

Trwyth save Du⁹⁶ the horse of Moro Battle Leader.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Twrch Trwyth cannot be hunted unless Gwilenhin King of France comes; it would be wrong for him to leave his country and he will never come.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Twrch Trwyth can never be hunted unless you get the son of Alun of Dyved to come; he is a good unleasher.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Twrch Trwyth can never be hunted unless you get Aned and Aethlem; they are swift as a gust of wind, and never were they loosed on an animal they did not kill.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Arthur and his companions must come and hunt Twrch Trwyth, for he is a powerful man; yet he will not come, for he is under my thumb.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. Twrch Trwyth can never be hunted until you get Bwlch and Kywylch and Sywylch, the sons of Kilydd Kywylch and grandsons of Cleddyv Divwlch. Three bright shinings their three shields, three piercing stabs their three spears, three sharp blades their three swords, Glas, Glessig and Gleisyad their three dogs, Call, Cuall and Cavall their three horses, Hwyrddyddwg, Drwgddyddwg and Llwyrdddyddwg their three wives, Och, Garym and Diasbad their three grandchildren, Lluched, Neuwed and Eissywed their three daughters, Drwg, Gwaeth and Gwaethav Oll their

96. Du: black. Du Moro is mentioned in 'Triad 44', *v. TYP*, pp. 113-14.

three maids. When these men sound their horns everyone will come and cry out, until the sky could fall and no one would care.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. The sword of Wnach the Giant, who cannot be killed save with this sword. He will give it to no one, not for price nor blessing, nor can you compel him.' 'It will be easy for me to get that, though you think otherwise.'

'Though you get that, there are things you will not get. In seeking these things you will lie awake at night, but you will not get them, nor will you get my daughter.' 'I have horses and horsemen, and my lord and cousin Arthur will get everything for me; I will win your daughter and you shall lose your life.' 'Then go - you shall not be responsible for feeding and clothing my daughter. Seek these things, and when you find them you shall have my daughter.'

They rode all day until evening, when they saw a fortress built of finished stone, the largest fortress in the world, and a black man, greater than three men of this world, coming from it. 'Where are you coming from?' they asked. 'From the fortress you see,' the man answered. 'Whose fortress is it?' 'How slow-witted you are! There is no one in the whole world who does not know that this is the fortress of Wnach the Giant.' 'How are guests and foreigners received here?' 'God save you from asking, chieftain. No guest who ever came here has left alive, nor is anyone allowed in unless he brings a craft.'

Then they made for the gate, where Gwrhŷr the Interpreter asked, 'Is there a gatekeeper here?' 'There is, and for asking that may your head not be yours.' 'Open the gate.' 'I will not.' 'Why not?' 'Knife has gone into meat, drink into horn, and there is a great throng in Wnach's hall. Except for a craftsman who brings his craft the gate will not be opened.' 'Gatekeeper, I have a craft,'

said Kei. 'What is that?' 'I am the best burnisher of swords in the world.' 'I will go and tell Wrnach the Giant, and will return with an answer.'

The gatekeeper entered the hall and Wrnach said, 'Have you news from the gate?' 'I have. There is a company at the entrance to the gate, and they wish to enter.' 'Ask whether they have any skills.' 'I did that, and one of them said he could burnish swords.' 'I need such a man, for I have spent some time looking for someone to burnish my sword without finding anyone. Since he has brought a craft, let that man enter.' The gatekeeper went and opened the gate, and Kei entered by himself and greeted Wrnach. A chair was brought for him, and then Wrnach said, 'Is it true what is said about your being able to burnish swords?' 'I do that,' said Kei. The sword was brought in, and he took a marked whetstone from under his arm and asked, 'Do you prefer it dark-hilted or light-hilted?' 'Do what you like, just as if it were your own sword.' Kei cleaned half of one side of the blade and put it in the giant's hand, asking, 'Are you content with that?' 'I would rather the whole of it looked as well than everything in my kingdom. A pity a man like you has no companions.' 'Well, sir, I do have a companion, though he does not practise the same craft.' 'Who is he?' 'Let the gatekeeper go out and I will tell you about his talents. The head of his spear will leave its shaft and draw blood and then return to the shaft.' So the gate was opened and Bedwyr entered, and Kei said, 'Bedwyr has a wonderful gift, though he does not practise this craft.'

Outside there was among the men a great argument. Kei and Bedwyr entered, and a young lad, the only son of the shepherd Custenhin, went in at the same time; he and those companions who stayed with him went over the three walls as if they thought it nothing, until they reached the fortress, whereupon his companions said, 'Custenhin's son is the best of men,' and thereafter he

was called Goreu⁹⁷ son of Custenhin. These men made for the separate lodgings in order to kill the lodgekeepers without the giant's knowing.

The burnishing of the sword being finished Kei gave the weapon to Wrnach, as if to let him see whether he was satisfied. The giant said, 'This is good work and I am content with it.' Then Kei said, 'It is your scabbard which has damaged your sword; give it to me, and I will take out the wooden sidepieces and make new ones.' He took the scabbard in one hand and the sword in the other, and held them over the giant's head as if he meant to sheathe the sword, but instead he thrust it into the giant and took his head off with one blow. Then they plundered the fortress and took such treasure as they wanted, and after exactly one year they returned to Arthur's court, bringing the sword with them. They told how they had fared, and Arthur said, 'Which of these wonders should we seek first?' 'It would be best to go after Mabon son of Modron,' they said, 'and there is no getting him until his kinsman Eiddoel son of Ner is found.'

So Arthur and the warriors of Britain rose and went forth to seek Eiddoel, and they came to the outer wall of Glini's fortress, where Eiddoel was held prisoner. Glini stood on top of the wall and said, 'Arthur, since you will not leave me in peace on this rock, what do you want of me? I have no good and no pleasure here, neither wheat nor oats, and now you come to do me harm.' 'I have not come to do you harm,' Arthur replied, 'only to ask for the prisoner you hold.' 'I did not intend to give him to anyone, but I will give him to you, and you shall have my support and strength as well.' Then the men said to Arthur, 'Lord, go back, for you ought not to accompany the host on this sort of petty errand.' 'Gwrhryr Interpreter

97. Goreu: best. Possibly an error for Gorneu - Custenhin Gorneu: Custenhin the Cornishman. In 'Gereint', Custenhin is the father of the Cornish ruler Erbin, *v. TYP*, pp. 346-7.

of Languages,' said Arthur, 'it will be proper for you to go on this errand, for you know all tongues and can speak with some of the birds and animals. Eiddoel, it is right for you to accompany my men in seeking your cousin. Kei and Bedwyr, I hope that you will obtain whatever you seek – go on this errand on my behalf.'

These men went on until they found the Ousel of Kilgwri, and Gwrhŷr asked, 'For God's sake, do you know anything of Mabon son of Modron, who when three nights old was stolen away from between his mother and the wall?' 'When I first came here,' answered the ousel, 'there was a smith's anvil. I was a young bird then, and since that time no work has been done on the anvil except by my beak every night. Today there is not so much as a nut that has not been worn away, and yet God's revenge on me if in all that time I have heard anything of the man you seek. Nevertheless I will do what is right by Arthur's messengers. There is a kind of creature which God made even before me, and I will guide you to it.'

They then went to the Stag of Rhedenvre, and said, 'Stag of Rhedenvre, we are Arthur's messengers, and we have come to you because we know of no animal which is older. Tell us if you know anything of Mabon son of Modron, who was stolen from his mother when three nights old.' 'When I first came here,' said the stag, 'there was only a single antler on either side of my head, and no tree here but a single hazel oak which then grew into an oak of one hundred branches; thereafter the tree fell and today there is nothing left but a red stump. I have been here since that day and have heard nothing of the man you seek, but since you are Arthur's messengers, I will guide you to an animal which God made before me.'

They came to the Owl of Cwm Cawlwyd⁹⁸ and said, 'Owl of Cwm Cawlwyd, these are messengers from Arthur. Do you know anything of Mabon son of Modron, who was

98. Cwm: valley, glen.

stolen from his mother when three nights old?' 'If I knew I would tell you. When I first came here the great valley which you see before you was a wooded glen; the race of man came and destroyed it, whereupon a second forest grew up, and this forest is the third. As for me, my wings are now nothing but stumps. To this day I have heard nothing of the man you seek, but I will guide Arthur's messengers to the oldest animal in the world and the one which has travelled the most, the Eagle of Gwernabwy.'

Gwrhŷr then said, 'Eagle of Gwernabwy, we are messengers from Arthur who have come to ask if you know anything of Mabon son of Modron, who was stolen from his mother when three nights old.' 'I came here long ago,' answered the eagle, 'and when I first came I had a stone from the top of which I pecked at the stars every evening, and now that stone is not a hand's-breadth in height. I have been here from that day to this, and I have heard nothing of the man you seek except when I made a trip to look for food at Llyn Llyw.⁹⁹ There I sank my claws into a salmon, expecting that it would feed me for a long time, but it drew me down into the water, so that I barely escaped. I returned with all my relatives to destroy the fish, but it sent messengers to make peace, and came itself to have fifty tridents pulled out of its back. Unless this salmon knows something of the one you seek I know of none who might know anything. I will guide you to it.'

They came to that place, and the eagle said, 'Salmon of Llyn Llyw, I have come with Arthur's messengers to ask if you know anything of Mabon son of Modron, who was stolen from his mother when three nights old.' 'I will tell you as much as I know. I swim upstream on every tide until I reach Gloucester, where I found such evil as I had never found before. That you may believe me let one of you ride on my shoulders.'

99. Llyn: lake.

So Kei and Gwrhŷr rode on the salmon's shoulders until they came to the prisoner's enclosure, and they heard moaning and wailing from the other side of the wall, and Gwrhŷr said, 'Who is crying in this stone house?' 'Alas, there is reason for this man to lament: Mabon son of Modron is here, and no one was ever so harshly imprisoned, not Lludd Silver Hand, not Greid son of Eri.'¹⁰⁰ 'Is there any hope of securing your release through gold or silver or worldly wealth, or through battle and fighting?' 'Such release as is got for me will be got by fighting.' So they returned to Arthur and told him where Mabon's prison was; Arthur summoned the warriors of this island and went to Gloucester where Mabon was prisoner, but Kei and Bedwyr rode on the salmon's shoulders. While Arthur's men were fighting at the fortress Kei broke through the wall of the enclosure and rescued the prisoner on his back, besides fighting with the men; then Arthur returned home, and with him Mabon, a free man.

'Which of these wonders should we go after now?' asked Arthur. 'We ought to seek the two pups of the bitch Rhymhi.'¹⁰¹ 'Is her whereabouts known?' 'She is at Aber Deu Gleddyv.'¹⁰² Arthur went to the house of Tringad in Aber Cleddyv and asked, 'Have you news of Rhymhi round here?' 'What shape is she in?' 'In the shape of a she-wolf, and she has two pups.' 'She kills my stock frequently; just now she is down in a cave in Aber Cleddyv.' So Arthur sailed out to sea in his ship Prydwen,¹⁰³ while others went to hunt the bitch on land, and thus they surrounded her and her two pups; God changed the wolves back into their own shapes, and Arthur's host dispersed by ones and twos.

100. 'Triad 52' names the Three Famous Prisoners at Mabon, Llŷr and Gweir.

101. Ysbaddaden requests neither the pups of Rhymhi, nor the pups of Glythvyr Ledewig, nor Gwrgi Severi.

102. Aber Deu Gleddyv (= Milford Haven): estuary of two swords.

103. Prydwen: fair face.

One day as Gwythyr son of Greidyawl was crossing a mountain he heard crying and fierce sobbing, a terrible noise to hear. He sprang forth and drew his sword and struck the anthill to the ground so that the ants were saved from the fire. They said, 'Take God's blessing and ours, and what no person on earth can find we will deliver.' Thereafter they brought the nine hestors of linseed which Chief Giant Ysbaddaden had asked of Culhwch, the entire measure save for a single seed, and a lame ant brought that in before nightfall.

As Kei and Bedwyr were sitting on Pumlumon,¹⁰⁴ on Carn Gwylathyr,¹⁰⁵ in the greatest wind in the world, they looked round and saw a great smoke blowing towards the south far away, and not being blown by the wind, and Kei said, 'By my companion's hand, that is the fire of a warrior.' They made for the smoke and approached and saw from a distance Dillus the Bearded singeing a wild boar. He was the greatest warrior who ever avoided Arthur. Bedwyr asked Kei, 'Do you recognize him?' 'I do – that is Dillus the Bearded. No leash in the world will hold Drudwyn the pup of Greid son of Eri save one from the beard of the man you see before you, nor will that avail us unless it is plucked with wooden tweezers while he is still alive, for if he is dead it will be brittle.' 'What is your plan?' asked Bedwyr. 'We will let him eat his fill of meat, and after that he will fall asleep,' said Kei, and while Dillus was stuffing himself they were making wooden tweezers. When Kei was certain that Dillus was asleep he made the biggest pit in the world under his feet and then struck him an infinitely powerful blow; they pressed him down into the pit until his beard had been entirely plucked out with the wooden tweezers, and then they killed him outright. From there the two made for Kelli Wig in Cornwall, taking with them the leash from the beard of Dillus

104. Pumlumon (= Plynlimon): five peaks.

105. Carn: cairn.

the Bearded and giving it to Arthur, and Arthur sang this song:

Kei made a leash
From the beard of Dillus son of Eurei;
If Dillus were alive he would kill you.

Kei became angry, so that the warriors of this island could barely make peace between him and Arthur; nevertheless Kei would have nothing to do with Arthur from then on, not when the latter was wanting in strength or when his men were being killed.

Arthur said, 'Which wonder should we seek now?' 'We should seek Drudwyn, the pup of Greid son of Eri.' A short time before Creiddylad daughter of Lludd Silver Hand had gone to Gwythyr son of Greidyawl, but before he could sleep with her Gwynn son of Nudd came and carried her off by force. Gwythyr collected an army and went to fight Gwynn, but Gwynn conquered, taking prisoner Greid son of Eri, Glinyeu son of Taran, Gwrgwst Half Naked and his son Dyvynarth, Penn son of Nethawg, Nwython and his son Kyledyr the Wild. Gwynn killed Nwython and cut out his heart, and forced Kyledyr to eat his father's heart, and that is how Kyledyr went mad. When Arthur heard of this he went into the north and called on Gwynn and freed the nobles from prison, and peace was made between Gwynn and Gwythyr: Creiddylad was left in the house of her father undisturbed by either side, and every May Day the two men would fight, and the one who conquered on the Judgement Day would keep the girl. When the two lords had been reconciled Arthur obtained Dun Mane the horse of Gweddw, and the leash of Cors Hundred Claws, and then he went to Brittany with Mabon son of Mellt and Gwarae Golden Hair after the two dogs of Glythvyr Ledewig; having taken them he went with Odgar son of Aedd King of Ireland to the west of Ireland in search of Gwrgi Severi, and

from there to the north where he caught the madman Kyledyr.

After that they went after Chief Boar Ysgithyrwyn, with Mabon son of Mellt and the two pups of Glythvyr Ledewig at hand, and Drudwyn, the pup of Greid son of Eri, and Arthur himself went, with his dog Cavall. Caw of Scotland mounted Arthur's mare Llamrei and rushed the boar; he snatched up a hatchet and bravely and vigorously made for the boar and split its head in two and then took the tusk.¹⁰⁶ It was not the dogs that Ysbaddaden named to Culhwch which killed the boar, but Arthur's own dog Cavall.

After Chief Boar Ysgithyrwyn had been killed Arthur and his men returned to Kelli Wig in Cornwall, and from there Menw son of Teirwaedd was sent to see if the treasures were between the ears of Twrch Trwyth, lest Arthur be shamed by going there to fight and not finding the treasures. Twrch was there, however, and he had destroyed a third of Ireland. Menw went after the treasures and found them in Ysgeir Oervel; he changed himself into a bird and alighted on the lair and tried to seize one of them, but he got only a bristle. Moreover Twrch rose boldly and stirred so that some of the poison overtook Menw, who thereafter was never completely without injury.

Then Arthur sent a messenger to Odgar son of Aedd King of Ireland to seek the cauldron of his steward Diwrnach. Odgar asked Diwrnach to give it up, but Diwrnach said, 'God knows, even were Arthur the better for just one glimpse of the cauldron, he would not get it.' Arthur's messenger returned with a refusal, so Arthur and a small force set out in his ship Prydwen, and when they reached Ireland they made for the house of Diwrnach, where the troops remarked their strength. When his men

¹⁰⁶ Ysbaddaden required that the tusk be taken while the boar is alive, but this is overlooked.

had eaten and drunk their fill Arthur asked for the cauldron, but Diwrnach answered, 'Were I to give it to anyone I would have given it at the request of Odgar King of Ireland.' At this refusal Bedwyr rose and seized the cauldron and set it on the back of Hygwydd, who was the half-brother (by the same mother) of Cacamwri, another of Arthur's servants; his task was to carry Arthur's cauldron and keep a fire lit under it. Llenlleawg the Irishman seized Caledvwlch, swung it round in a circle and killed Diwrnach the Irishman and his entire retinue; the troops of Ireland came and fought, and when these troops were put to flight Arthur and his force boarded the ship in their presence, with the cauldron filled with the treasures of Ireland,¹⁰⁷ and they disembarked at the house of Llwyd son of Kil Coed at Porth Kerddin¹⁰⁸ in Dyved, and that is now Messur y Peir.¹⁰⁹

Then Arthur collected all the warriors that were in Britain and the three offshore islands, in France, Brittany, Normandy and the Summer Country,¹¹⁰ along with selected dogs and renowned horses, and that entire army went to Ireland; at their coming there was fear and trembling in that island. When Arthur landed the saints of Ireland came to him seeking protection, and when he granted them that they gave him their blessing. The men of Ireland also came, bringing a gift of food. After that Arthur went to Ysgeir Oervel, where Twrch Trwyth and his seven young pigs were; from all sides dogs were unleashed at Twrch, and the Irish fought with him all day until evening, and at that he destroyed a fifth part of Ireland. The next day Arthur's troops fought with him, but

107. This entire episode is suggestive, cf. the invasion of Ireland and the cauldron of 'Branwen', the Irish tale of the 'Children of Tuirenn' and the story of Balin in Malory.

108. Porth: harbour.

109. Messur y Peir: measure of the cauldron.

110. Summer Country=the Mediterranean area? Somerset?

except for the harm they suffered they got nothing; the third day Arthur himself fought with Twrch, nine days and nine nights, and killed nothing more than one piglet. His men asked him about the meaning of the pig and Arthur said, 'He was a king, but because of his sins God turned him into a pig.'

After that Arthur sent Gwrhŷr Interpreter of Languages to try to talk with Twrch. In the form of a bird Gwrhŷr alighted on the lair of Twrch and the seven young pigs and said, 'For the sake of Him who put this shape upon you, if you can speak, I ask one of you to come and talk with Arthur.' Grugyn Silver Bristle (like silver wings were all his bristles, and the path he took through forest or plain could be told by the way the bristles glittered) answered, 'For the sake of Him who put this form upon us, we will neither say nor do anything for Arthur. God did us injury enough, making pigs out of us, without your coming to fight us.' 'I can tell you that Arthur will fight you for the comb and razor and shears¹¹¹ that lie between the ears of Twrch Trwyth.' 'Until you take his life, you will not get the treasures. Tomorrow we will start out for Arthur's country, and once there we will do the greatest possible damage.'

Then the pigs made for the sea and swam towards Wales; Arthur and his troops and horses and dogs boarded Prydwen and at once saw the swine and Twrch Trwyth landing at Porth Cleis in Dyved. Arthur reached Mynyw¹¹² that evening, and the next day he was told that Twrch had already passed through; they overtook him killing the cattle of Kynwas Cwryvagyl, after he had killed the men and beasts in Deu Gledddyv prior to Arthur's arrival.

111. Ysbaddaden does not mention the razor. *v.* Nennius (39) where Germanus refers to razor, scissors and comb in connection with Vortigern's son; subsequently the boy goes to his father and asks to have his hair trimmed.

112. Mynyw=St David's.

Twrch Trwyth then set out for Presseleu, and Arthur went after him with all the forces in the world, and sent his men into the hunt: Eli and Trachmyr, and Drudwyn the pup of Greid son of Eri with them, Gwartheygydd son of Caw with the two dogs of Glythvyr Ledewig at hand, and Bedwyr with Arthur's dog Cavall at his side, and Arthur deployed all his men along the banks of the Nyver.¹¹³ The three sons of Cleddyv Divwlch came also, men who had won great renown at the slaying of Chief Boar Ysgithyrwyn. But Twrch made from Glynn Nyver and went as far as Cwm Kerwyn, where he stood at bay and killed four of Arthur's champions: Gwartheygydd son of Caw, Tarawg of Dumbarton, Rhun son of Beli Adver and Ysgonan the Generous, and having killed these men Twrch stood at bay a second time in the same place and killed Gwydre son of Arthur, Garselid the Irishman, Glew son of Ysgawd and Ysgawyn son of Panon, and he himself was wounded.

The next morning at daybreak some of Arthur's men overtook Twrch, and the boar killed Huandaw, Gogigwr and Penpingyon the three servants of Glewlwyd Strong Grip, so that God knows Glewlwyd had no servant to hunt with him except Llaesgymyn, who was of no use to anyone. Twrch killed many other men of the country as well, including Gwlyddyn the Carpenter, Arthur's master builder, before Arthur overtook him at Pelunyawg, where Twrch killed Madawg son of Teithyon, Gwynn son of Tringad son of Neuwed and Eiryawn Penlloran. From there he went to Aber Tywi, where he stood at bay and killed Kynlas son of Kynan and Gwilenhin King of France, and then he went to Glynn Ystun and both men and dogs lost his trail.

Arthur summoned Gwynn son of Nudd and asked if he knew anything of Twrch Trwyth but Gwynn did not, so all the houndsmen went out to hunt the pigs, as far as

¹¹³. Nyver=Nevern.

Dyffryn Llchwyr,¹¹⁴ where Grugyn Silver Bristle and Llwydawg the Killer attacked so that only one man escaped with his life. Then Arthur and his troops came to where Grugyn and Llwydawg were and all the dogs brought for that purpose were unleashed. With the shouting and barking that followed Twrch Trwyth (who had not seen them all since they crossed the Irish Sea) came up to help, and men and dogs attacked him; he made his way to Mynydd Amanw,¹¹⁵ and there one of the piglets was killed. They went at each other life and death, first the piglet Twrch Llawin was killed, and then Gwŷs; Twrch then went to Dyffryn Amanw and there lost two more piglets, Banw and Benwig,¹¹⁶ so that there escaped alive with him only Grugyn Silver Bristle and Llwydawg the Killer. Twrch went to Lluch Ewin¹¹⁷ and Arthur overtook him, but he killed Echel Pierced Thigh and Garwyli son of Gŵyddawg Gŵyr and many others as well. From there they went to Lluch Tawy, but Grugyn Silver Bristle separated from them and made for Din Tywi, and after that for Keredigyawn; he was followed by Trachmyr and Eli and many others, and when he reached Garth Grugyn¹¹⁸ he was killed, but not before killing Rhuddvyw Rhys and many other men. Llwydawg the Killer went on to Ystrad Yw, where the men of Brittany met him; he killed Peissawg the Tall King of Brittany and Arthur's uncles Llygadrud Emys and Gwrvoddw, the brothers of his mother, and then Llwydawg himself was killed.

Then Twrch Trwyth passed between Tawy and Ewyas, whereupon Arthur summoned Devon and Cornwall to meet him at the mouth of the Havren,¹¹⁹ and there he

¹¹⁴. Dyffryn: valley.

¹¹⁵. Amanw: is the storyteller forming a connection with banw, 'pig'?

¹¹⁶. Gwŷs: pig; Banw: pig; Benwig: sow.

¹¹⁷. Lluch: lake.

¹¹⁸. Garth: hill, ridge.

¹¹⁹. Havren=Severn.

said to the warriors of this island, 'Twrch Trwyth has killed a number of my men. By the courage of man, he shall not go into Cornwall while I am alive, nor will I pursue him further, rather I will pit my life against his. You men may do as you wish.' On Arthur's advice a troop of horsemen were sent out, along with the dogs of this island; they went as far as Ewyas and turned Twrch back towards the Havren, and there the battle-tested warriors of this island met him and drove him into the river by force. Mabon son of Modron, mounted on Gwynn Dun Mane, the horse of Gweddw, went into the river with him, and so did Goreu son of Custenhin and Menw son of Teirwaedd, between Llyn Lliwan and Aber Gwy.¹²⁰ Then Arthur and the champions of Britain joined the fight; Osla Big Knife drew near, and Manawydan son of Llŷr and Arthur's servant Cacawwri and Gwyngelli; they closed in and grasped Twrch's feet and dunked him in the river until the currents rolled over him. On one side Mabon son of Modron spurred on his steed and seized the razor; from the other Kyledyr the Wild advanced on his steed and seized the shears. Before they could get the comb, however, Twrch found his feet, and when he reached land neither dog nor man nor horse could stay with him as he made for Cornwall. For all the harm they came to in seeking the treasures, they came to worse trying to save two men from drowning, for as Cacawwri was being pulled out he was dragged to the bottom by two millstones, while Osla Big Knife lost his knife from its sheath in running after the boar; the sheath filled with water, and as he was being pulled out it dragged him down to the bottom.

After that Arthur and his men overtook Twrch in Cornwall. The harm they had come to already was nothing compared to what they suffered in seeking the comb, but though they went from one disaster to another the comb was finally obtained. Twrch was hunted out of

120. Gwy = Wye.

Cornwall and driven into the sea, and from then on it is not known where he went, or Aned and Aethlem either. Arthur himself went to Kelli Wig in Cornwall to bathe and rest, and there he asked, 'Is there any wonder that has not been obtained?' 'There is: the blood of the Black Hag, daughter of the White Hag, from the headland of the Valley of Distress in the highlands of Hell.'

So Arthur set out for the north and the hag's cave. On the advice of Gwynn son of Nudd and Gwythyr son of Greidyawl, Cacawwri and his brother Hygwydd were sent to fight with the hag, but as they entered the cave she sprang at them, catching Hygwydd by the hair and throwing him to the floor. Cacawwri grabbed her by the hair and pulled her away from his brother, whereupon she turned on him, and having stripped them both of their armour and weapons drove them out yelling and screaming. Arthur was angry to see his servants half-dead, and wanted to go at the hag himself, but Gwynn and Gwythyr said, 'We cannot enjoy seeing you wrestle with her – send Amren the Tall and Eiddyl the Tall into the cave.' They went, but if the first pair emerged in a bad state, these two came out even worse, so that God knows not one of the four could have left the place in any way other than being all loaded on Arthur's mare Llamrei. Then Arthur sprang to the cave entrance and threw his knife Carnwennan at the hag, so that it struck her down the centre and made two vats of her, and Caw of Scotland took the blood and kept it with him.

After that Culhwch set out with Goreu son of Custenhin and all those who were ill-disposed towards Chief Giant Ysbaddaden, and they took the wonders to the giant's court. Caw of Scotland came to shave the giant's beard, flesh and skin right to the bone and both ears completely. 'Have you been shaved?' asked Culhwch. 'I have,' said Ysbaddaden. 'Is your daughter mine now?' 'She is. And you need not thank me, rather Arthur, who won her for

you; of my own will you would have never got her. Now it is time for you to kill me.' Goreu son of Custenhin seized Ysbaddaden by the hair and dragged him along to the dunghill, where he cut off his head and set it on a stake on the wall. They seized the fortress and the land, and that night Culhwch slept with Olwen, and as long as he lived she was his only wife. Then Arthur's men dispersed to their own lands.

This is how Culhwch won Olwen, the daughter of Chief Giant Ysbaddaden.