

ARTHUR

Milady, I would never harm you for any reason. And as for what to do with you, I'm at a loss. I know you are to be queen and I should escort you back to your carriage. At the same time, you're a maiden in genuine distress. It's chivalry versus country. I can't quite determine which call to obey.

GUENEVERE

(Looking off toward the foot of the hill)

You'd better decide quickly. They'll soon reach the carriage and discover I'm gone. Then all of Camelot will be searching for me. At least that will be exciting. Unless of course everyone in Camelot is like you and they all go home to deliberate.

ARTHUR

(Thrown off balance, enamoured, captivated and overcome by a great sense of inadequacy)

Oh why isn't Merlyn here! He usually senses when I need him and appears. Why does he fail me now?

GUENEVERE

Who?

ARTHUR

Merlyn. My teacher. He would know immediately what to do. I'm not accomplished at thinking, so I have Merlyn do it for me. He's the wisest man alive. He lives backwards.

GUENEVERE

I beg your pardon?

Start
Here

ARTHUR

He lives backwards. He doesn't age. He youthens. He can remember the future so he can tell you what you'll be doing in it. Do you understand?

(SHE comes towards him. HE never takes his eyes off her, as the wonder of her comes nearer)

GUENEVERE

(Now at ease)

Of course I don't understand. But if you mean he's some sort of fortune-teller, I'd give a year in Paradise to know mine. I can never return to my own castle, and I absolutely refuse to go on to that one.

ARTHUR

You refuse to go on—ever?

GUENEVERE

Ever. My only choice is... Don't stare. It's rude. Who are you?

ARTHUR

(After a thought)

Actually, they call me Wart.

GUENEVERE

Wart? What a ridiculous name. Are you sure you heard them properly?

ARTHUR

It's a nickname. It was given to me when I was a boy.

GUENEVERE

You're rather sweet, in spite of your name. And I didn't think I'd like anyone in Camelot. Imagine riding seven hours in a carriage on the verge of hysteria, then seeing that horrible castle rising in the distance, and running away; then having a man plop from a tree like an overripe apple—you must admit for my first day away from home it's quite a plateful. If only I were not alone. Wart, why don't you... Is it really Wart?

ARTHUR

Yes.

GUENEVERE

Wart, why don't you run away with me?

(Suddenly excited by the notion)

ARTHUR

I? Run away with you?

GUENEVERE

Of course. As my protector. Naturally, I would be brutalized by strangers. I expect that. But it would be dreadful if there were no one to rescue me. Think of it! We can travel the world. France, Scotland, Spain...

ARTHUR

What a dream you spin, and how easily I could be caught up in it. But I can't, Milady. To serve as your protector would satisfy the prayers of the most fanatic cavalier alive. But I must decline.

GUENEVERE

(Angry)

You force me to stay?

ARTHUR

Not at all.

GUENEVERE

But you know you're the only one I know in Camelot. Whom else can I turn to?

ARTHUR

Milady, if you persist in escaping, I'll find someone trustworthy and brave to accompany you.

GUENEVERE

End
Here

Then do so immediately. There's not much time.

ARTHUR

Oh, do look around you, Milady. Reconsider. Camelot is unique. We have an enchanted forest where the Fairy Queen, Morgan Le Fey, lives in an invisible castle. Most unusual. We have a talking owl named Archemides. Highly original. We have unicorns with silver feet. The rarest kind. And we have far and away the most equitable climate in all the world. Ordained by decree! Extremely uncommon.

GUENEVERE

Oh, come now.

#5 – Camelot

ARTHUR

(Singing)

IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! THE CROWN HAS MADE IT CLEAR:
THE CLIMATE MUST BE PERFECT ALL THE YEAR.

A LAW WAS MADE A DISTANT MOON AGO HERE,
JULY AND AUGUST CANNOT BE TOO HOT;
AND THERE'S A LEGAL LIMIT TO THE SNOW HERE
IN CAMELOT.

THE WINTER IS FORBIDDEN TILL DECEMBER,
AND EXITS MARCH THE SECOND ON THE DOT.
BY ORDER SUMMER LINGERS THROUGH SEPTEMBER
IN CAMELOT.

CAMELOT! CAMELOT!
I KNOW IT SOUNDS A BIT BIZARRE,
BUT IN CAMELOT, CAMELOT
THAT'S HOW CONDITIONS ARE.

THE RAIN MAY NEVER FALL TILL AFTER SUNDOWN.
BY EIGHT, THE MORNING FOG MUST DISAPPEAR.
IN SHORT, THERE'S SIMPLY NOT

THE SIMPLE JOYS OF MAIDENHOOD

119

Shall I not be on a ped - es - tal, Wor - shipped and com - pet - ed for?

Str. Ve.

Not be car - ried off, or bet - ter st'll, Cause a lit - tle war?

Hp., Bells

poco rall.

127

Start
Here

Where are the sim - ple joys of maid - en - hood? Are those

Vi.
Lute
Vla.
Cls. *a tempo*

sweet, gen - tle pleas - ures gone for good? Shall a

+W.W.
Hp.

135

feud not be - gin for me? Shall kith not kill their kin for me? Oh,

where are the triv - ial joys...? Harm - less, con - viv - ial joys...?

Str., Gtr. Hp. Bells

143

Where are the sim - ple joys of maid - en

poco rall.

Poco più mosso (Dialogue)

hood? _____

+W.W., Hns. +Brass

mf

End Here