

# **SINTRAM & HIS COMPANIONS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649171132

Sintram & his companions by Lammote Fouque

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**LAMMOTE FOUQUE**

**SINTRAM & HIS  
COMPANIONS**



**SINTRAM & HIS  
COMPANIONS**

## PREFACE

**T**HE question may have arisen from time to time as to whether a poet has drawn his imaginative creations from earlier works, or whether they have sprung from some other source of inspiration. The point is by no means without interest, as it seems to me, and I think that when an author is able to speak clearly about it, he is wise, he is even in a certain sense bound to share this knowledge with his readers. Hence the following account.

A few years ago I found a fine copperplate engraving by Albrecht Dürer among my birthday gifts. A knight in armour, with an old, worn face, riding a great horse and followed by his dog, is passing through a dreadful valley, where the clefts of rock and the tree roots distort themselves into hideous forms. The ground is thickly carpeted with poisonous toadstools, and evil serpents crawl in and out among them. Close beside the knight, on a small, lean horse, rides Death; behind, a demonlike shape claws after him

vi SINTRAM & HIS COMPANIONS  
with its long arm. Horse and dog look strange and unnatural, as though transformed by the ghastly surroundings, but the knight rides calmly onwards, carrying on his lance-point a transfixed salamander. In the far distance a fortress can be seen, its fair hospitable ramparts looking downwards into the valley, whose contrasting desolation seems to sink all the more deeply into the soul.\*

My friend, Eduard Hitsig, the giver of this picture, sent a letter with it asking me to write a romance for him in interpretation of these enigmatical figures. I was unable to do this at the time; and for long afterwards, but I carried the remembrance of the picture about with me continually, in peace and war, until now it has disentangled itself and taken the shape, not of a romance; but of a little novel, if my kind readers will allow its right to the name.

FOUQUÉ.

*Written on December 5, 1814.*

\*D. E. Schoeber in *Dürer's Leben*, etc. (Leipzig and Schleiz, 1769, p. 87) says of this unique work: "Dürer must have taken the idea from some special event, or else he meant it to express figuratively a soldier's career." A. Bartsch in *Le peintre Graveur* (Vol. 7, p. 107, Vienne, 1808) suggests that the knight in the engraving is Franz von Sickingen. When Bartsch wrote, the original oil-painting was for sale at Jacoby's Art Gallery in Berlin.



A BOY RUSHED INTO THE HALL.



# SINTRAM

AND HIS COMPANIONS

## CHAPTER THE FIRST

**I**N the lofty citadel of Drontheim sat an assembly of the knights of Norway, holding council together upon the good of the State. The council was over, but they still sat on, round the giant table of stone, in the midst of the vaulted echoing hall, feasting and making merry late into the night.

The rising storm dashed a wild cloud of snow against the shaken windows. The doors quivered in their oaken frames, and the heavy locks rattled violently. The castle clock, after a slow ominous jarring of its many wheels, struck the hour; one.

The sound had scarcely died away when, uttering a terrified shriek, a boy rushed into the hall, white as death, with streaming hair and eyes fast closed. He took shelter behind the carven seat of the great knight Biörn, and, stretching out wild hands in supplication to the splendid company, cried in a piercing voice:

## 2 SINTRAM & HIS COMPANIONS

“My father! My father! Noble knights!  
Death and that other one are following hard  
upon me!”

An awful silence had fallen cold upon the assembly, broken only by the reiterated cries of the terror-stricken child. Then an old follower of Biörn's, one of his great retinue, Rolf the Good by name, came to the weeping child, lifted him in his arms and prayed aloud in a voice that was half a song:

Help, Father mine,  
This child of Thine.  
I trust, and cannot trust.

And immediately the boy, as though in a dream, loosened his hold upon his father, and suffered Rolf to carry him, as if he had been a feather, out of the hall, still weeping and murmuring as he went.

The knights and lords gazed on each other in amazement.

Then the mighty Biörn broke the silence with wild words, laughing grimly the while: “Vex not yourselves about this strange matter. The boy is my only son. From his fifth year onwards has he been thus, and now he is twelve. It made me uneasy at first but now I am accustomed to it, for once every year it comes upon him, and always at this

### SINTRAM & HIS COMPANIONS 3

season. Your pardon for so many words about my poor silly Sintram, and let us betake ourselves to wiser themes."

But still the silence continued. Single voices, in low uncertain tones, tried to renew their interrupted speech of a while since, but there was no response. A couple of the youngest and lightest of heart began a catch, but the storm took part with such a strange singing and sighing and moaning that this, too, soon broke off and ceased.

And now there was neither sound nor movement in the great hall. The torchlight flickered drearily among the shadows of the vaulted roof. This heroic feast might have been a pale assembly of lifeless images attired in giant suits of mail.

At last one rose among them, the chaplain of the castle, sole priest in this circle of knights. He spoke, addressing Biörn:

"Dear lord and master, does it not seem that God Himself has directed our hearts and eyes, as by a miracle, upon you and upon your son? See, we can think of nothing else, so had you not best tell us plainly all you know of the boy's strange doings? It may be that the solemn tale, for such it surely is, will be profitable for us in the midst of this wild mirth."