

**KEEPING TRYST: A
TALE OF KING
ARTHUR'S TIME**

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Keeping Tryst: A Tale of King Arthur's Time by Annie Fellows Johnston

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ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON

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ARTHUR'S TIME**

KEEPING TRYST

A Tale of King Arthur's Time

*" 'Tis the king's call. O list!
Thou heart and hand of mine,
Keep tryst—
Keep tryst or die! "*

BY

ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON

*Author of "The Little Colonel Series," "Big
Brother," "Joel: A Boy of Galilee," etc.*



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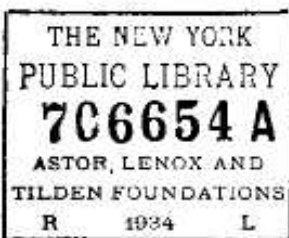
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Keeping Tryst

NOW there was a troubadour in the kingdom of Arthur, who, strolling through the land with only his minstrelsy to win him a way, found in every baron's hall and cotter's hut a ready welcome. And while the boar's head sputtered on the spit, or the ale sparkled in the shining tankards, he told

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such tales of joust and journey, and feats of brave knight errantry, that even the scullions left their kitchen tasks, and, creeping near, stood round the door with mouths agape to listen.

Then with his harp-strings tuned to echoes of the wind on winter moors, he sang of death and valour on the field, of love and fealty in the hall, till those who listened forgot

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all save his singing and the noble knights whereof he sang.

One winter night, as thus he carolled in a great earl's hall, a little page crept nearer to his bench beside the fire, and, with his blue eyes fixed in wonderment upon the graybeard's face, stood spell-bound. Now Ederyn was the page's name, an orphan lad whose lineage no man

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knew, but that he came of gentle blood all eyes could see, although as vassal 'twas his lot to wait upon the great earl's squire.

It was the Yule-tide, and the wassail-bowl passed round till boisterous mirth drowned oftentimes the minstrel's song, but Ederyn missed no word. Scarce knowing what he did, he crept so close he found him-

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self with upturned face against the old man's knee.

"How now, thou flax-haired," the minstrel said, with kindly smile. "Dost like my song?"

"Oh, sire," the youth made answer, "methinks on such a wing the soul could well take flight to Paradise. But tell me, prithee, is it possible for such as *I* to gain the title of a knight? How doth