

**LANVAL, A DRAMA
IN FOUR ACTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649764624

Lanval, a Drama in Four Acts by T. E. Ellis

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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T. E. ELLIS

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IN FOUR ACTS**

Miss Christ Lee
from
the author

LANVAL

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

BY
T. E. ELLIS



PRIVATELY PRINTED BY
JOHN & ED. BUMPUS, LTD.
350 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

1908

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ARTHUR	-	-	-	<i>King of Britain</i>
CADOR	-	-	-	<i>Duke of Cornwall</i>
OWAIN	-	-	-	<i>Prince of North Wales</i>
GERAINT	-	-	-	<i>Prince of Devon</i>
GAWAIN	}			<i>Knights of ARTHUR's Court</i>
AGRAVAINE				
MELIARD				
ASTAMOR				
LANVAL				
BERNARDO	-	-	-	<i>An Armourer</i>
GYFERT	-	-	-	<i>Squire to GERAINT</i>
GUINEVERE	-	-	-	<i>Queen of Britain</i>
LYNETTE	}			<i>Attendants to GUINEVERE</i>
ALYSOUN				
HELÈNE				
TRIAMOUR				

Knights, Captain, Men-at-Arms, Charcoal-burners,
Girl and Apprentices.

ACT I. SCENE I.

THE ARMOURY, CARDUEL.

A large, bare vaulted room. Heavy studded doors. (C) opening on terrace. (I.) a small, spiral stair from turret. (R) a barred window and forge. Piles of spears, several tournament shields and fragments of armour.

Bernardo and several apprentices.

BER. *(to an apprentice, painting)*

Keep to the line, lad, let the field be bright
And the device well marked.

2 APP.

So! Master?

BER.

Pure

In line and colour. *(To 1st App.)* Bring that vam-
brace here,
'Tis not ill done.

1 APP.

I thought it was well wrought.

BER.

And so it is, but I'm not satisfied
With competence; or I were still a smith
A common craftsman in far Mantua
And not Bernardo, once the armourer
Of Milan's court. See, here the work is rough
And somewhat careless.

1 APP.

Must I braize again?

BER.

Nay, let it stand till I have time for it.
Look you, my lad, this art of ours is rare
And needs long service. I am old enough
To know that I shall never learn it well.
(To others) Keep to it, lads, *(To 3rd App.)* Bring
that haubergeon
And test it well, for I believe it strained.

3 APP. Here's a false ring.

BER. Then out with it, my lad.

Death's a lean fellow, and needs little space
To make his entry. Rivet it again.

A life's no stronger than its slightest hour
Nor any armour than its weakest spot.

*(While the apprentice works, Bernardo goes over to
the others.)*

Have care of it. I mind in Milan once—
I'll tell you sometime. Now go on with it.
How often, boy, must I repeat my words,
Though hard, a metal's not a rock to hack
As if it were a quarry, but a form
Worth some consideration. Yes, this steel
Has its own texture and its qualities,
And we must watch them. Iron has its use,
Bronze its own nature, steel its services,
All much akin, yet very different,
And I'd as soon take knife to my own flesh
As mangle metal with that tool of yours.
Work with the line and not across the grain
And see your play grows not too hot, for warmth
Draws out the soul of steel. Go on.

3 APP. 'Tis finished, master.

BER. Come, we'll test it then.

Give me a dagger. See, this is a life,
Here is the gorget, here would be the throat,
And I am fate in ambush 'gainst this life.
I strike it thus; the work is sound enough,
Ready for fracture in to-morrow's deeds.

3 APP. It is a grief—

BER. That such meet work is marred?
 It's nature's way. All's made for breaking here
 This linked defence and grievous instruments
 For its destruction. Yet we make them both.
 Either our blades can bite thro' our strong mail,
 Or else these links can turn our finest edge.
 We dress the balance of the world, my lad,
 For all the virtues and the strength of man
 Fare ill in life without the armourer.

(Enter Gyfert (C).)

Ah, Gyfert! Welcome!

GYF. Welcome, Bernardo, too.

It's long since we did meet.

BER. I think

Eight months.

GYF. Is it so much? I never thought

It was so long.

BER. Ye have been active then?

Whence are ye come?

GYF. Whence but from Logris, man.

We were drawn thither by some false reports
 Of Saxon landing.

BER. You have need of me?

GYF. A pair of tassets and some saddle steels.

BER. Come, let me see them.

GYF. They have had rough use.

BER. Truly they have. I cannot make them good

Before the morrow.

GYF. I'm not troublesome;

Say in three days.

BER. You do not need them then

To-morrow?

- GYF. No, why should we?
 BER. 'Tis the last,
 The final meeting of our summer court.
 To-day is Pentecost!
- GYF. I had forgotten it.
 When one is serving on the boundaries
 Of all known order, one is apt to miss
 The nice discernment of each date and feast.
 It's Pentecost.
- BER. The Prince of Devon then
 Will break no lance to-morrow.
- GYF. He is proved.
 These tests are good for practice, but the best
 Of all our knighthood serve their cause apart.
 But I am sorry that we took no hand.
 Who did the best in recent tournaments?
- BER. Sir Lamorak.
- GYF. Good! He's a noble knight.
- BER. Gawain.
- GYF. Of course!
- BER. His brother Agravaine.
- GYF. Sir Agravaine?
- BER. Aye, he is much advanced
 In strength and favour.
- GYF. I believe my lord
 Loves him but little.
- BER. He's a gallant soul.
- GYF. And so are many. He has certain faults
 Which spoil the liking men should have for him.
 Your countryman, has he gained no repute?
 We thought him likely to do much.
- BER. Who is