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## **Illustrations of northern antiquities, from the earlier Teutonic and Scandinavian romances**

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Book Third. - Of the garden of roses at Worms

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THE  
BOOK OF HEROES.

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BOOK THIRD.

OF THE

GARDEN OF ROSES,

AT

WORMS.

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ADVENTURE I.

ON the banks of the Rhine is situated the magnificent city of Worms, where in ancient time King Ghibich<sup>1</sup> reigned. He had three sons, and a daughter of great beauty, named Chrimhilt, who was promised in marriage to Siegfried, a hero from Netherland, whose courage was so superlative, that "he caught the lions in the woods, and hung them over the walls by their tails." Chrimhilt had a garden of roses before the city, seven miles in length, surrounded only by a silken thread; but no one was suffered to enter it without giving battle to the twelve gigantic guardians. These were the old King Ghibich, Gunter, Ghernot, Hagen, Folker, Pusolt, Schruthan, Ortwin, Asperian, Walter of Wachsenstein, Staudenfuss, and Siegfried himself.

<sup>1</sup> So he is denominated also in the older Scandinavian romances, but in the Nibelungen and the Wilkina-Saga he is called Aldrian.

One day Lady Chrimhilt was boasting of the invincibility of her champions, when Folker of Alsace upbraided her for her pride and presumption, and bade her beware of the Wolfings at Bern, in Lombardy, and particularly of their leader, the renowned Dietrich. She immediately called upon him to bear a message of defiance to him; but he refused, on account of the bravery and fierceness of the heroes of Bern. But the youthful Duke Sabin of Brabant came before her, and expressed himself willing to undertake the expedition, on the condition of obtaining the beautiful Saba, one of Lady Chrimhilt's damsels, for his spouse. The damsel consented reluctantly, apprehensive of never beholding her lover again.

The duke having collected five hundred knights, set out on his journey, and on the sixth day arrived within sight of the castle of Bern. To guard themselves against any sudden attack, they grasped their shields, and made themselves ready for battle. Dietrich was just sitting at the high table, with his thousand knights and their ladies, and when he beheld the strangers, bade his champions prepare for the fight. But the noble duchess of Ghisel, in Lombardy, recognised the duke of Brabant, and issuing from the castle, demanded the reason of his entering the dominions of Dietrich without his safeguard. He explained the nature of his message, and she conducted him into the presence. It was, however, not easy to pacify the wrath of the enraged Lombard. The chaplain read the letter of defiance, in which the knight of Bern was challenged to come to Worms, with eleven of his champions, every one of whom was to fight with one of Chrimhilt's, and the conqueror to be rewarded with a chaplet of roses, and a kiss from the young queen. In the conclusion she threatened to drive him from his possessions, if he refused the challenge; which so enraged Dietrich, that he swore none of the messengers should return alive. Both the parties prepared themselves for the engagement, but the duchess begged the bold Sir Wolfort to intercede for the Burgundians, offering to bestow on him one of her fairest damsels. He declared that his mind was not bent on lady's love, but promised to defend the guests, and to strike down the first who lifted up his hand

against them. He armed himself, collected his knights, and rode up to the Berner, declaring his resolution to defend the guests, and upbraiding him with his treacherous intention. Old Hildebrant applauded his purpose; and at last Dietrich saw his error, and received the duke of Brabant courteously. They were splendidly entertained for ten days, and a thousand marks of gold distributed amongst them. Dietrich accompanied them through his dominions, and bade them bear message to Lady Chrimhilt, that he would shortly appear before Worms with twelve champions, and an army of sixty thousand men. The duke returned to Burgundy, and having dispatched his message, was rewarded with the hand of the beautiful Saba, with whom he returned to his own dominions.

## ADVENTURE II.

Dietrich sitting in counsel, prayed Hildebrand to choose the several champions who were to fight against the twelve guardians of the garden of roses. The old hero advised Dietrich to fight with Siegfried of Netherland. He himself undertook to challenge the old King Ghibich. Against the other ten he directed Wolfort, Sighestab, Heyme, Wittich, young Ortwin, Eckart the true, Helmschrot, Duke Amelolt, Monk Ilan, and Dietlieb of Styria. Sighestab was sent as messenger to Styria, with five hundred knights, to induce the latter to accompany them. But when he came thither, Bitteroff, the father of Dietlieb, admonished him to abandon such a dangerous and fruitless enterprise, and informed him that his son was gone to Bettelar. Sighestab cared little for his admonitions, and immediately proceeded in search of Dietlieb. But the old margrave Rudiger informed him that the hero whom he sought was at the time in Transylvania, where he had been wounded by a sea-monster. The indefatigable messenger renewed his journey, but had the satisfaction of finding Dietlieb standing before the cathedral of Vienna; who accepted the fight in the gar-

den of roses without hesitation, and proceeded to Bern with Sighestab.

Dietrich had now assembled his army and all the champions, with the exception of the warlike monk Ilsan, who dwelt in the abbey of Eisenburg. Thither he marched with his host, and encamped before the walls. When Ilsan beheld the army lying on the territory of the abbey, his face waxed green and yellow with anger. None of his brethren dared to inquire the cause of his wrath. He explained to them his alarm, bade them bring his armour, and declared his resolution singly to attack and drive away the supposed enemies. He took an iron pole, twelve fathoms long, and issued from the abbey. His brother Hildebrand was the first to desery him, and perceiving his menacing attitude, bade the host beware, armed himself, and came out to meet him. He endeavoured to avoid the blow of the monk's pole, but was hit on the head, and his helmet struck off. Then Ilsan discovered him to be his brother, and demanded the reason of the warlike encampment before the abbey. Hildebrand related the challenge from Worms, and Ilsan bade him ask the abbot to grant him leave of absence. Dietrich, with all his champions, proceeded to the gate of the monastery, and the abbot issued with all his monks. He did not at first grant the request, but expatiated on the impropriety of friars engaging in temporal warfare. But Ilsan threatening to make him and the friars answerable for the death of any of the Lombard champions, the abbot granted him leave to accompany Sir Dietrich, on the condition of his bringing him a chaplet of roses from Worms. Ilsan exclaimed, that every one of the friars should receive one, if they would pray for his success, and for the welfare of his soul; and that to obtain them, he would fight with a number of champions equal to that of the friars. They promised to pray for him day and night; but they were weary of such a savage companion, and offered up daily prayers that he might fall under the blows of the giant Staudenfuss.

Hildebrand guided the host towards Worms, and on the fifth day they arrived on the opposite shore of the Rhine. There he acquainted

his companions that the ferryman was the most fierce and savage one in Christendom, and that he and his twelve sons demanded, as reward, a foot and a hand from every one whom they ferried over.

Up and spake Monk Ilan,— “Quickly will I ride,  
And beg the savage ferryman to lead us o'er the tide;  
When he views my mickle beard, and this grey cowl of mine,  
He will deem us friars, and speed him o'er the Rhine.”

“Marvel strange,” spake Wolfort, “were it thus to beg,  
And for such a host as our's to lose a hand and leg.  
Pray him as ye pray an ass, when the sack he will not bear;  
Tell him his lord and master, Satan, give him care.”

Quickly sped Monk Ilan, and cried to the ferryman bold,  
“Say, wilt thou ferry over and fetch twelve friars old?”  
When he viewed his beard he spake,— “Yes, holy father mine.”  
He took his oars and rudder, and ferried o'er the Rhine.

But when he beheld the armed champions instead of the twelve cowed monks, he heaved up his oar, and struck a weighty blow on the monk, who had leaped into the boat. But the latter returned his blows so forcibly, that he was obliged to pray for mercy, exclaiming that he had never before met his match. And when he understood that the heroes came upon Lady Chrimhilt's invitation, he quickly provided ships for them, and ferried them to the opposite shore.

### ADVENTURE III.

When the arrival of the Lombard heroes was made known, King Ghibich went forth to receive them, accompanied with five hundred knights. A splendid encampment was prepared for the guests before the city. Queen Chrimhilt soon appeared, with a train of three hundred virgins, richly apparelled, to welcome Dietrich and his cham-

pions. Welfort was so enraged at her pride and presumption, that he declared he would give her a blow if she approached him; but Hildebrand upbraided him for his want of courtesy, and Dietrich commanded every mark of honour to be paid to her. On her approach she bade them be without fear, and gave them a truce of eight days, during which they were splendidly entertained with feasts and tournaments.

On the ninth morning the truce was at an end, and Chrimhilt came to propose the conditions; but old Hildebrand, who had little courtesy towards the ladies, bade her beware, and leave the camp. She complained of his uncourteous behaviour to the old king, who commanded the giant Pusolt to revenge her injury. When the Lombards beheld him, they armed Welfort, who leaped into the garden, treading the roses under his feet. The giant struck him to the ground, but Hildebrand called to him, and encouraged him, that he arose again, and, after a fierce fight, struck off the giant's head; upon which Lady Chrimhilt gave him the stipulated chaplet and the kiss. The old king called upon Pusolt's brother, the giant Ortwin, to avenge his death, against whom Sighestab appeared. They drove one another about the garden for a long time, but in the end the giant shared his brother's fate, and his opponent received the promised reward. Ghibich cursed the fatal garden of roses, and begged Schruethan to revenge the fall of his champions, promising him half his kingdom if he succeeded. The giant called out aloud, and demanded upon whom he should take vengeance for the death of his two nephews. Heyme was called upon to engage him, but was not immediately willing, pleading the enormous strength of Schruethan. At last Hildebrand encouraged him to the fight, and he leaped into the garden, felled the giant to the ground, and was rewarded with the chaplet and the kiss. Asperian, a bolder giant than the former, now appeared, and defended the garden, bearing a sword in each of his hands. Wittich, a champion of little size, but great strength, was called upon, but felt little inclination to encounter the uncouth champion. Not even the proffer of a dukedom could prevail upon him. Hildebrand advised Dietrich

to offer his invaluable grey horse in exchange for Wittich's falcon, to which the Berner was very unwilling to consent. But when he saw nothing else would induce Wittich to hazard the combat, he made the offer, which was immediately accepted. The champion assaulted the giant with the two swords, and after receiving many severe wounds, put his opponent to flight, and received for reward from Dietrich the horse, and from Chrimhilt the kiss and the chaplet. The old king could not stifle his wrath, and called upon Staudenfuss, the fiercest of all the giants, who lamented that he had not been the first, as he would have put all the knights of Bern to flight.

'Mongst the roses Staudenfuss    trod with mickle pride ;  
With rage and with impatience,    his foe he did abide ;  
Much he feared no Longobard    would dare to meet his blade ;  
But a bearded monk lay ready    for the fight arrayed.

" Brother Ilsa, raise thine eyes,"    spake Sir Hildèbrand,  
" Where, 'mongst the blooming roses,    our threatening foe does stand !  
Staudenfuss, the giant hight,    born upon the Rhine.  
Up, and shrive him of his sins,    holy brother mine !"—

" It's I will fight him," cried the monk ;    " my blessing shall he gain ;  
Never 'mongst the roses    shall he wage the fight again."  
Straight above his coat of mail    his friar's cowl he cast,  
Hid his sword and buckler,    and to the garden past.

Among the blooming roses    leaped the grisly monk :  
With laughter ladies viewed his beard,    and his visage brown and shrunk ;  
As he trod with angry step    o'er the flowery green,  
Many a maiden laughed aloud,    and many a knight, I ween.

Up spake Lady Chrimhilt,—    " Father, leave thine ire !  
Go and chaunt thy matins    with thy brothers in the choir."  
" Gentle lady," cried the monk,    " roses must I have,  
To deck my dusky cowl    in guise right gay and brave."



Loudly laughed the giant, when he saw his beard so rough,—  
 "Should I laughing die to-morrow, I had not laughed enough.  
 Has the kemp of Bern sent his fool to fight?"—  
 "Giant, straight thy hide shall feel that I have my wits aright."

Up heaved the monk his heavy fist, and he struck a weighty blow,  
 Down among the roses he felled his laughing foe.  
 Fiercely cried Sir Staudenfuss, "Thou art the devil's priest!  
 Heavy penance dost thou deal with thy wrinkled fist."

Together rushed the uncouth kemps; each drew his trusty blade;  
 With heavy tread below their feet they crushed the roses red;  
 All the garden flowed with their purple blood;  
 Each did strike full sorry blows, with their falchions good.

Cruel looks their eyes did cast, and fearful was their war,  
 But the friar cut his enemy o'er the head a bloody scar;  
 Deeply carved his trusty sword through the helmet bright:  
 Joyful was the hoary monk, for he had won the fight.

They parted the two champions speedily asunder:  
 The friar's heavy interdict lay the giant under.  
 Up arose Queen Chrimbilt, to Sir Ilan has she sped,  
 On his bald head did she lay a crown of roses red.

Through the garden roved he, as in the merry dance;  
 A kiss the lady gave him, where madly he did prance.  
 "Hear, thou lady fair; more roses must I have;  
 To my two-and-fifty brothers I promised chaplets brave.

"If ye have not kemps to fight, I must rob thy garden fair,  
 And right sorry should I be to work thee so much care."  
 "Fear not, the battle shalt thou wage with champions bold and true:  
 Crowns and kisses mayst thou gain for thy brothers fifty-two."

The next combat was fought between Walter of Wachsenstein and  
 the noble Dietlieb of Styria, both of them young heroes. By the

persuasion of Hildebrand, Chrimhilt consented to allow them to be parted, and to bestow the stipulated reward on each of them. Then King Ghibich called Folker of Alsace, surnamed the Fiddler, to the fight, who bore a golden fiddle on his back. Young Ortwin was opposed to him, and put him to flight. The giant Haghen was now ordered to defend the garden, and the true Eckart defied him to the combat. After a courteous salutation, they commenced the fight; but Chrimhilt, when she found her champion in danger, relieved him, by crowning Eckart with the chaplet; he, however, refused the kiss of a maiden so cruelly inclined, and without truth. The young kings Ghernot and Gunter fought successively with Helmschrot and Duke Amelolt, and were both forced to fly to the ladies for shelter, cursing the bloody disposition of their sister. When King Ghibich saw the evil success of his champions, he armed himself, and was attacked by old Hildebrand. The two aged champions waged a long and bloody fight. At last the king was felled to the ground; but Hildebrand spared his life, at the intercession of his daughter. He received the chaplet, but refused the kiss.

“Lady, keep thy kisses,” spake Hildebrand the bold;  
 “Mine will I carry home with me, to my housewife old;  
 Far her love is famed around, her steadfast faith and sooth;  
 Why then should I kiss a maiden without truth?”

No champions now remained but Dietrich of Bern, and the horny Siegfried. The latter leaped into the garden, and loudly upbraided his opponent for making him wait. The knight of Bern was admonished by Hildebrand and Wolfort to the fight, but he accused them of conspiring his death. He feared particularly three things:—Siegfried's sword *Mimung*,<sup>1</sup> his hauberk, made by Master Eckenbrecht,

<sup>1</sup> We have here another instance of the confusion which has taken place among the writers of these romances. *Mimung*, according to the *Wilkin-Saga*, was the sword of Vidga, or Wittich, not that of Siegfried, to whom the former lent it in the adventure corresponding with this portion of the *Book of Heroes*. (See page 35.)

and the horny consistence of his skin, in consequence of his having bathed in the dragon's blood. Hildebrand used every persuasion to stimulate his master to the fight, and at last gave him a severe blow, which Dietrich returned, and threw him to the ground. Ghibich upbraided him with the disgrace he had received; and at last, growing ashamed of his fears, he mounted his horse, and entered the garden. This battle was the fiercest that had yet been fought. Siegfried gave the knight of Bern a severe wound, and was very near gaining the victory, when Wolfort, to rouse his rage, cried out aloud, that Hildebrand had been murdered. This had the desired effect. Dietrich cut through the hauberk and the horny hide of his opponent, and forced him to fly into the lap of Chrimhilt, who covered him with a veil, and begged his life of the conqueror. But Dietrich would not be pacified till Hildebrand shewed himself. Then he received the reward from Chrimhilt, and retired.

Up spake the queen,—“ Monk Ilan,    see your chaplets ready dight;  
Champions two-and-fifty    stand waiting for the fight.”  
Ilan rose, and don'd his cowl,    and run against them all;  
There the monk has given them    many a heavy fall.

To the ground he felled them,    and gave them his benison;  
Beneath the old monk's falchion    lay twelve champions of renown,  
And full of fear and sorrow    the other forty were;  
Their right hand held they forth,    begged him their lives to spare.

Rathly ran the monk,    to the queen Chrimhilt he hied:  
“ Lay thy champions in the grave,    and leave thy mickle pride:  
I have dight them for their death;    I did shrive them and anoint them:  
Never will they thrive or speed    in the task thou didst appoint them.

“ When again thy roses blow,    to the feast the monk invite.”  
The Lady Chrimhilt gave him    two-and-fifty chaplets bright.  
“ Nay, lady queen, remind thee!    By the holy order mine,  
I claim two-and-fifty kisses    from your lips so red and fine.”

And when Chrimhilt, the queen, gave him kisses fifty-two,  
 With his rough and grisly beard full sore he made her rue,  
 That from her lovely cheek 'gan flow the rosy blood:  
 The queen was full of sorrow, but the monk it thought him good.

Thus should unfaithful maiden be kissed, and made to bleed,  
 And feel such pain and sorrow, for the mischief she did breed.

The old King Ghibich was obliged to swear fealty to Dietrich, and take his dominions from him in fee. Chrimhilt never re-established the garden of roses. The Lombards returned to Bern, where their victory was celebrated with feasts and tournaments; at the expiration of which the monk took his leave, and returned to the abbey. When he knocked at the gate, every thing was in consternation, and the friars issued forth in procession, to deprecate his anger.

" Brothers mine, approach! coronets I bring:  
 Come, your bald heads will I crown, each one like a king."  
 He pressed a thorny chaplet on each naked crown,  
 That o'er their rugged visages the gory flood ran down.

They sighed that all their prayers for his death had been in vain;  
 Loud they roared, but silently they cursed him in their pain.  
 " Brothers we are," so spake the monk, " then must ye have your share;  
 For me to bear the pain alone, in sooth it were not fair.

" See how richly ye are dight! beauteous still ye were;  
 Now ye are crowned with roses, none may with ye compare."  
 The abbot, and the prior, and all the convent wept,  
 But no one, for his life, forth against him stept.

" Ye must help to bear my sins, holy brethren all;  
 For if ye do not pray for me, dead to the ground ye fall."  
 A few there were who would not pray for Monk Ilsan's soul:  
 He tied their beards together, and hung them o'er a pole.

Loud they wept, and long they begged,    "Brother, let us go;  
At vesper and at matins    will we pray for you."  
Ever since, where'er he went,    they knelt, and feared his wrath;  
Helped to bear his heavy sins,    until his welcome death.