

The maid answered, "I was, so please you, in the chapel, where Donna Sabine lay quiet."

"What saw you, child?"

"I went to see that she lacked nothing. They had laid her there and covered her with a sheet. When I came into the chapel all the candles were about her alight and I saw a grey nun walk from the bier, with bent head and footfalls that made no noise. And then when I came to Donna Sabine I saw her covered with the great splashed robe, and I am sure that the nun had covered her with it."

Mabilla had been listening, though her head had been hung, and she had fingered the jewels throughout. Now she lifted her eyes to Lanceilhot, but not her head.

"What was the rune?" she asked him.

He told her, "It is the Rune of Renny. Have you never heard it? It goes thus—a childish thing, an old wife's rhyme—

"When a martyr wears the Robe,
A virgin the Crown,
And the Girdle finds a middle,
Renny bath his own."

"Now I think that thus the wicked house will have peace, my dear. For Donna Sabine hath the robe, and your cousin, Donna Hold, still virgin, will have the crown, of your proud resigning. And you, fairest and holiest Renny, have given your sweet middle to the girdle. Now then there will be an end of the blood lust, and God will enjoy His own again."