

drawn raiment stretched at the brooch and Lanceil-hot's eyes lost nothing. Like swelling buds that burst the sheath strained her two breasts at the cotton gown. But below them he remarked the broad girdle that she wore. It was of leather, much wrought with lacquered gold, with gold hammered clasps studded with rough cut jewels of great size. Emeralds it had, sapphires, dark as a summer night, balass rubies, crystals, moonstones, yellow topaz. In and out of the set stones ran a rune in stitched lettering. No one could read it.

He stared, then pointed his finger. "Look, look, look! she wears the girdle. The girdle of Renny! So the rune is fulfilled."

Mabilla looked down at her belt, pulling up the fullness of the gown that she might see it.

But Lanceilhot had turned to Nitidis. "Where got you that for your mistress?"

Nitidis, with wide and truthful eyes, replied, "I was in the chamber making ready for my lady. There came in quietly a grey nun. I had seen but one such before in the house. She came in bearing in her two hands the belt, as the Mass priest goes to his altar in the morning carrying the chalice under a three-cornered veil. She brought it into the chamber and laid it with reverence its length upon a table that was there. Then she turned and with bent head went away. I looked, but dared not touch that thing. It spelled danger—like all that great house."

"Where saw you another such woman, Nitidis?" Lanceilhot asked her.