

God has an unfading crown of heavenly beauty laid up for thee, which thou shalt win through much suffering.'

So next morning when the messengers came into the great hall to receive their answer, they saw the Princess Ursula herself sitting on the throne next to her father. She was so beautiful, and greeted them so graciously that they longed more than ever that their prince might win her for his bride.

And as they listened for the king to speak, it was Ursula's voice that fell on their ears. She began by sending her greeting to the King of England and to Prince Conon, his son, and bade the messengers say that the honour offered her was more than she deserved, but since their choice had fallen upon her, she on her side was ready to accept the prince as her promised husband, if he would agree to three conditions. 'And first,' went on Ursula, leaning forward and speaking very clearly and slowly, so that the foreign ambassadors might understand every word, 'I would have the prince, your master, send to me ten of the noblest ladies of your land to be my companions and friends, and for each of these ladies and for myself a thousand maidens to wait upon us. Secondly, he must give me three years before the date of my marriage so that I and these noble ladies may have time to serve God by visiting the shrines of the saints in distant lands. And thirdly, I ask that the prince and all his court shall accept the true faith and be baptized Christians. For I cannot wed even so great and perfect a prince, if he be not as perfect a Christian.'