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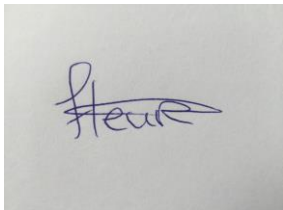
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Lady Gwen and the Green Man

A Modern Stage Adaptation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

BA Thesis English Language and Culture, Utrecht University

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Table of contents

Introduction	<u>3</u>
Chapter 1: Medium and setting	<u>6</u>
Chapter 2: Characters	<u>9</u>
Chapter 3: Adapting the plot	<u>14</u>
3.1 Challenge	15
3.2 Exchange	16
3.3 Seduction scenes	17
3.4 Ending	18
Conclusion	<u>19</u>
Appendix I: summary of original	<u>20</u>
Appendix II: summary of adaptation	<u>22</u>
Appendix III: script of adaptation	<u>24</u>
Works Cited	<u>85</u>

Introduction

The Arthurian legend has inspired many tales and poems ranging from the 12th-century *Historum Regum Britannia* by Geoffrey of Monmouth to, *Arthur*, a modern-day Hollywood depiction of King Arthur and his knights. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is a late 14th-century Middle English poem, and it is part of that legend. The poem survives in only one manuscript (London, British Library MS Cotton Nero A.x.) which also contains three religious poems – *Pearl*, *Patience*, and *Purity*. It is generally held that all four poems were written by the same author, who has become known as the Pearl-poet or the Gawain-poet. His true identity remains a mystery to this day, however the dialect used in the poems locates them “in a remote corner of the northwest midlands between Cheshire and Staffordshire, and the details of Sir Gawain’s journey north show that the author was familiar with the geography of that region” (Introduction to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 160).

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight has been translated by many talented translators. I chose Simon Armitage’s critically acclaimed translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* as the basis for my adaptation, *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*. Besides the poem being translated often, it has also been adapted several times. However none of the adaptations have modernised the poem as much as was done for *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*. This modern approach was inspired by the BBC screen adaptation of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* in 2003 (“*Canterbury Tales*”).

The first recorded adaptation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* was a stage adaptation in 1971 for children between 6 and 12 by Michael Bogdanov for the University Theatre in Newcastle. He performed this play with the National Theatre in 1977 as well in collaboration with Peter Stevens. Later stage adaptations include David Self’s version from 1979, a musical from the Midsommer Actor’s Company by Simon Corble in 1992 and 1995,

which was reworked by the o'Reilly Theatre Oxford in 2014, and a one-act play by Linda Marie Zaerr in 2001.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight has been adapted as an opera twice, in 1978 and in 1991. In 1978 it was part of "Opera in six scenes", written by John Emlyn Edwards and composed by Richard Blackford. In 1991 the music was composed by Harisson Birtwistle for the Royal Opera House, London.

The poem has been adapted for screen as well, both times by Stephen Weeks. In 1973 as *Gawain and the Green Knight* (1973) and in 1984 as *Sword of the Valiant: The Legend of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (1984). In 2001 Lisa N Elliot wrote a similar study to the present thesis, however she wrote a screenplay called *The Pearl Poet* in which the audience simultaneously follows Sir Gawain, the Pearl Poet and a student reading the poem for the first time in the 21st century. In 2002 an animated TV Movie was created by Tim Fernee, Moving Still Productions and Vinegar Hill Productions for Channel4 Learning. This animation won a BAFTA in 2002 for the best Children's Animation. Furthermore, many documentaries have been made about the poem and its poet, including a documentary by Simon Armitage for the BBC in 2009.

The present thesis offers a modern stage adaptation of Simon Armitage's critically acclaimed translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* named *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*. None of the existing adaptations have modernised the poem as heavily as was done with *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*, it was however inspired by the approach adopted in the BBC adaptation of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Through the modern adaptation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* this thesis proves that the medieval values found in the 14th century poem are still relevant today.

This thesis relies on Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* for its theoretical framework. Hutcheon's theory provides a guideline on "What? (Forms)", "Who? Why?"

(Adapters)”, “How? (Audiences)” and “Where? When? (Contexts)” of adaptations.

Hutcheon’s framework will be the guide to analyse and justify the choices that were made while adapting *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* into *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*.

Hutcheon’s cross-media framework provides the needed background into adaptation theory as well as providing examples to demonstrate that adapting is central to story-telling. The aim of the adaptation was to be enjoyable for both the “knowing” audience and the “unknowing audience” (Hutcheon 121) and to deliver the same moral message to both audiences as the poem did in the 14th century.

This thesis is divided in three chapters. Each chapter will first cover an overview of the relevant parts of Hutcheon’s framework and use her framework to compare the corresponding elements of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* to *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*. The first chapter will focus on medium and setting which equates to Hutcheon’s chapters “What? (Forms)” and “Where? When? (Contexts)”. The second chapter will concentrate on the adaptation of the characters and Hutcheon’s “What? (Forms)” and “Who? Why? (Adapters)” will provide the theoretical framework for this chapter. The third chapter will deal with the adaptation of the challenge, the exchange, the seduction scenes and the ending. The third chapter will rely on Hutcheon’s “How? (Audiences)”. A summary of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* can be found in Appendix I, a summary of *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* can be found in Appendix II and the script of *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* can be found in Appendix III.

Chapter 1

Medium and Setting

Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* describes medium and setting in the chapters "What? (Forms)" and "Where? When? (Contexts)". In her chapter "What? (Forms)" Hutcheon discusses how adaptations are similar to palimpsests: beneath the layer of the adaptation, the original is still visible (33). An adaptation is a work on its own, and can be enjoyed and understood without knowledge of the original. However, if the audience is familiar with the original they will pick up on the intertextuality the adaptation usually supplies. The medium of an adaptation is important for this, so Hutcheon poses the question "[w]hat can one art form do that other cannot" (35). This is an interesting question considering the change of medium from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* to *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*, from a written poem to a stage performance.

In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* the poet writes:

So listen a little while to my tale if you will / and I'll tell it as it's told in the town
 where it trips from the tongue / and as it has been inked / in stories bold and strong /
 through letter which, once linked / have lasted loud and long (Armitage 6)

Medieval poems were not only meant to be read, they were also meant to be recited (Armitage viii). Hutcheon describes the adaptation of a written text into a stage adaptation as a shift from the telling to the showing mode. Hutcheon states that "[i]n reading, we gather details of narrative, character, context and the like gradually and sequentially; in seeing a film or play or musical, we perceive multiple objects, relations, and significant signs simultaneously" (130). The need for visual stimuli is larger now than it was in the 14th century. The modern society is surrounded by visual stimuli such as TV, film, photography, YouTube, and Instagram. This would be inconceivable for a medieval audience. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* lends itself well to be adapted into a play; it contains action and dialogue as well as well-rounded

characters. The length of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is also suitable to be adapted to a play, it is not too short and not too long. Hutcheon states that a novel often contains so much information that the adapter will have to make cuts in the story when adapting it to stage or screen (39). This was not necessary when adapting *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Adapting the poem to screen would also have been a possibility, however “the camera limits what we see, eliminating the action on the periphery that might have caught our attention when watching a play on stage” (Hutcheon 43). Furthermore, according to Peter Brook, as quoted in Hutcheon, the way in which the audience becomes involved is more powerful in the theatre than it is in the cinema (131).

Lady Gwen and the Green Man has a modernised setting compared to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. The 14th century court in the original became a 21st century office in the adaptation. The reason for modernising the setting of the adaptation is partly due to the audience. The audience will consist of two groups of people: those who are familiar with the original and those who are not. By changing the setting to the 21st century, the play becomes more accessible for the audience who is unfamiliar with the original, while providing a refreshing take on the original for the audience who is familiar with the Middle English poem. Hutcheon calls this the “knowing” and the “unknowing” audience. An adaptation can only be successful if both the knowing audience and the unknowing audience can enjoy it (Hutcheon 121), even though both sorts of audiences have different expectations and demands (Hutcheon 124). Hutcheon also states that “time and place shifts should bring about alterations in cultural associations” (145). The choice of an office setting provides a similar hierarchical environment as the original setting does in the poem; there is someone in power who is challenged and his employees or knights are loyal to him and help him. However, the cultural etiquette has changed in seven centuries and this has been adapted in the modern setting in the adaptation as well. The 14th century court brings a courteous hierarchy with a specific set of

rules of, for instance, hospitality. For instance, when Sir Gawain first arrives at Sir Bertelak's castle, he is offered shelter before they even learn his name, in line with courtly chivalric convention. He is welcomed by "a group who had gathered to greet the stranger" (Armitage 42) and helped when he takes off his helmet "many hasty hands / reached out to receive it and to serve this stranger" (Armitage 42). Once he makes himself known the "proud fellows pressed forwards to confer their respects" (Armitage 42). When Gawain meets Sir Bertelak for the first time he does so "with all due honour,/ saying, 'Behave in my house as your heart pleases. / To whatever you want you are welcome, do what you will'" (Armitage 42).

Likewise Arthur cannot refuse the Green Knight access to his castle, for fear of insulting him. In *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* the hospitality of Arthur and Sir Bertelak are less evident. Arthur is not pleased with the arrival of the Green Man, however he does not ask him to leave (Kronenberg 4). Likewise, when Gwen first arrives at Morgana Industries she is not welcomed by Sir Bertelak; Gawain even tells her he has been hired via email and has not met anyone at the company yet (Kronenberg 8). This is in line with the depersonalised individualised modern world and it shows great contrast with the original. However, when she first arrives she makes friends with Sat and Angel; Sat is very friendly to her and Angel welcomes her to the company (Kronenberg 10). The interactions between Gwen and Sat and Angel, but also between Gwen and Liz and Dan, help to create the sense of a modern work place environment.

Chapter 2

Characters

The adaptation *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* has a cast of nine characters: Narrator/Arthur, Gwen, Gawain, Sir Bertelak/Green Knight, Lady Bertelak, Sat, Angel, Dan and Liz. The poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* has the knights of the Round Table, Gawain, Arthur, Guinevere, Sir Bertelak of Hautdesert/Green Knight, Lady Bertelak and Morgan le Faye. In this chapter I will justify why I decided to cut some characters and add others. Linda Hutcheon does not focus on character particularly, however the chapters “What? (Forms)” and “Who? Why? (Adapters)” provide a background into the decision-making process of adaptation and can be applied to explain the choices that were made for changes in character.

First off, some of the characters from the original have been cut and some have been added to the adaptation. The characters that have been cut are Guinevere, the knights of the Round Table and Morgan le Faye. Guinevere has not been adapted as a character in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*. Her part in the overall storyline is rather small and she is mainly mentioned in *Sir Gawain and the Green Man* when compared to the other women in the poem. For instance, when Lady Bertelak is first introduced, it is stated that she is fairer than Guinevere, even though Guinevere is the fairest maiden of them all (Armitage 46). In the poem Guinevere’s beauty is part of the reputation of Arthur’s court and her beauty knows no compare, however because of the modernised setting and the move from the telling to the showing mode – inherent in a stage production – her character became less important.

The name of Arthur’s company is Round Table Incorporated, a direct reference to the Round Table in Arthurian legend. This way the employees at his company are still part of the Round Table. The rival company is called Morgana Industries. At the end of the poem it is made clear that the entire plot was Morgana’s attempt to destroy Arthur’s court and reputation. Morgana is not personified in the play, however she is still present as the company

Sir Bertelak works for. Morgana is the company which causes Sir Bertelak to take on the role of the Green Man and thus take over other companies. Morgana still has the same function in the adaptation as she does in the original. She is in the background planning the destruction of Arthur's Round Table. She is the reason the Green Man visits Arthur, and Morgana, the company, benefits if the Green Man succeeds.

The Narrator is the first character the audience encounters. He brings structure to the play. He introduces the setting and the main character, Gwen. Furthermore, he announces the intermission and he brings closure to the epilogue. The Narrator is needed in order to explain the modern setting of the adaptation. The Narrator opens his monologue with the exact same words as Armitage opens his translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. This was done to honour the original and to establish a direct link to the adaptation, after the first lines he fast forwards to the 21st century and explains the change in setting. The Narrator becomes Arthur after the introduction. By transitioning on stage the narrator guides the audience into the story. Arthur's character in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* is similar to Arthur in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. He is a man in a position of power: in the poem he is the king, in the adaptation he is the CEO of Round Table Inc. The biggest change in character is that while King Arthur's court thrives, as CEO Arthur's company is not doing well and he has to sell it. This change was necessary to give the Green Knight a reason to march in and propose the challenge. This will be further explained in the third chapter of this thesis.

Gwen is the main character in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*; she is the adaptation of the character of Sir Gawain in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. She is young and wants to prove herself to the world and to her uncle. She wants to prove she is worth something in her own right and not just because she is Arthur's niece. Her attitude parallels that of Sir Gawain who states: "I am weakest of your warriors and feeblest of wit;/ loss of my life would be grieve the least/ Were I not your nephew my life would mean nothing;/ to be born of your

blood is my body's only claim" (Armitage 20). The biggest adaptation of Gawain's character is his gender; in the poem he is male, while in the adaptation Gwen is female. When the poem was written, in the 14th century, it would have been unthinkable to have a female knight (Machann 201): this warrior role was solely meant for men. Such gender inequality is less marked in the 21st century. Gwen is an intern in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*, hoping she will prove herself during her internship and receive an offer for a permanent job at Round Table Inc., similar to Gawain who just became a knight at the Round Table and still has to prove he is more than just Arthur's nephew. Their character is the same even though their gender is different. According to Sharon Rowley "the Green Knight and the Lady test Gawain's ability to inhabit his identity fully, that is, to 'be' the seamlessly perfect knight his pentangle and reputation claim him to be" (158). The importance of personal integrity has been retained in the adaptation. The Green Knight and Lady Bertelak test whether or not Gwen is worthy, not as a knight, but worthy according to the current social standards. These social standards are similar to the values of knightly conduct and are still relevant today. The values that are focused on in *Lady Gwen and the Green Knight* are honesty and loyalty.

When Gwen decides to spy at Morgana Industries to find the Green Man she needs a cover so the Green Man will not recognise her. To retain the tension between Lady Bertelak and Gawain in the *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* she had to change into a man. This way the homo-eroticism between Sir Bertelak and Gawain which is evident in the poem also remains intact in a humorous way. According to Carolyn Dinshaw "the poem both produces the possibility of homosexual relations *and* renders them unintelligible" (206). By having Gwen disguise as a man this element remains in the adaptation. To avoid confusion Gawain was introduced as a character in the play and Gwen disguises herself on stage.

Sir Bertelak in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*, who is also the Green Man, is the CEO of a rival company, Morgana Industries. Sir Bertelak has a nervous high voice and is

insecure. His alter ego of the Green Man has a roaring low voice and is very self-assured. The main reason why Sir Bertelak is insecure is because of his wife, Lady Bertelak, who he believes is out of his league. Sir Bertelak's character in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* is different from his character in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* where he is a jovial and kind host. This change was mainly made for comedic purposes. The Green Knight has become the Green Man due to the lack of knights in a modern office. The Green Man portrays a fantasy element in an essentially realistic setting; his presence appeals to the audience's desire for flights of fancy. It suits the comedy and adds a medieval fantasy flavour to the adaptation. He is a powerful and confident man who taunts Arthur and challenges him and his reputation.

Lady Bertelak in the adaptation is similar to the Lady Bertelak in the poem, however her part in the narrative has expanded. In the poem the reader only meets her during the seduction scenes as a clever and beautiful young woman. In the adaptation the audience also sees more of her relationship with Sir Bertelak and she is present when Gwen and Sir Bertelak meet at the end of each day. In the poem Lady Bertelak seduces Gawain as part of Morgan's plan to destroy Arthur's reputation; in the adaptation Lady Bertelak tries to seduce Gwen because she wants to know if Gwen is at Morgana Industries as Arthur's spy, however Lady Bertelak also needs some space from her husband and she finds a soulmate in Gwen.

Sat and Angel are not in the original poem. They were added to display Gwen's conscience. According to Hutcheon, "[i]n the move from telling to showing, a performance adaptation must dramatize: description, narration, and represented thoughts must be transcoded into speech, actions, sounds, and visual images" (40). In the poem, in story telling mode, Gawain's internal struggles are written down. This is not possible in a stage adaptation, except when you work with a narrator who interjects to elaborate on these struggles. However, this might cause the audience to lose focus when a narrator constantly interrupts the story. Therefore the decision was made to characterise Gawain's conscience as part of the

play. Sat is the angel on one of Gwen's shoulders and Angel is the devil on the other shoulder. The name swap took place for comedic effect and to slightly confuse the audience. Sat and Angel work at Morgana Industries as well and they help Gwen in her quest to uncover the Green Man's identity. They were giving their own story line to create more rounded characters. Gwen's struggles with loyalty and honesty, which parallel Gawain's struggles in the original poem, are portrayed through the discussions between Sat and Angel. For instance, when Gwen has received the first kiss from Lady Bertelak she discusses with Sat and Angel whether or not she must kiss Sir Bertelak in agreement with their deal. Angel tells her not to do it and Sat tells her the truth will always come out in the end. She hesitates until the last moment and finally agrees with Sat (Kronenberg 33). During the play Sat and Angel learn from each other and in the end of the play their characters have developed and became more balanced and less polarised.

Liz and Dan are two employees at Morgana Industries. They are in no way related to the original poem and are introduced to create a modern workforce which is needed in the office setting. The office staff is equivalent to Arthur's court with similar tensions and rivalries between the employees as existed among the knights. Furthermore, Liz and Dan anger Sir Bertelak which cause him to lose his high voice and show his true – green – colours.

Chapter 3

Adapting the plot

This chapter explores the changes that were introduced in the adaptation of four important narrative moments in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. These four narrative moments are the challenge at the beginning of the poem from the Green Knight to the knights of the Round Table, the agreement between Gawain and Sir Bertelak, the seduction scenes between Gawain and Lady Bertelak and the ending, when Gawain meets the Green Knight for the second time and returns to Camelot. This chapter will explain the choices made while adapting these scenes to a modern setting using Hutcheon's chapter "How? (Audiences)". In this chapter Hutcheon explains how audiences influence adaptation decisions. Once again she emphasizes the distinction between a knowing audience and an unknowing audience. Hutcheon describes the knowing audience as "savvy and street-smart as well as knowledgeable" (120). The unknowing audience will experience the adaptation as they would any other work for they are not familiar with the original. Hutcheon states that "to experience [an adaptation] *as an adaptation* ... we need to recognize it as such and to know its adapted text, thus allowing the latter to oscillate in our memories with what we are experiencing" (121). According to Hutcheon danger of adaptation is when the adapter relies too much on the knowing audience and the unknowing audience will no longer understand what they are experiencing. Therefore an adaptation is not successful until both the knowing and the unknowing audience understand it in its own right.

3.1 Challenge

In the original poem the Green Knight challenges Sir Gawain to a beheading game. Gawain gets to cut the Green Knight's head off and in exchange the Green Knight can do the same to Gawain in a year's time. Since cutting someone's head off does not suit the modern setting in the adaptation, the challenge was changed considerably. It has become a quest to discover the identity of the Green Man with Arthur's company, the Round Table, at stake. At the beginning of the play the audience is told Arthur's company is not doing well and he has to sell it. The Green Man crashes Arthur's party and proposes a challenge, he will save Arthur's company if Arthur can discover his identity in a week's time. If Arthur fails, the company will become the Green Man's. In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* the identity of the Green Knight is a mystery as well; this aspect was expanded in the adaptation to become the focus of the challenge. According to Hutcheon a knowing audience has "expectations and demands" (122), the knowing audience might be disappointed that the beheading element was omitted from the adaptation or they will understand the decision to change the challenge. The unknowing audience will accept the challenge as it is.

In the poem a year passes in which Gawain searches for the Green Chapel and the last days before meeting the Green Knight he stays at Sir Bertelak's castle. In the stage adaptation a year would have been too long to suit the modern setting and type of challenge, therefore the timeframe was shortened to a week in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*.

The motive for the challenge has been retained: Arthur will lose his life's work and his reputation if he fails the challenge. According to Hutcheon "[t]he appeal of adaptations for audiences lies in their mixture of repetition and difference, of familiarity and novelty" (114). By retaining the central idea of the challenge and the quest while changing the form this mixture of the familiar and the new is achieved.

3.2 Exchange

In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, when Gawain arrives at the castle of Sir Bertelak, they make an agreement. While Gawain stays in the castle, Sir Bertelak will go out hunting and at the end of the day they meet and exchange what they found during the day. Gawain agrees to this for he “find[s] it pleasing that you (Sir Bertelak) favour such fun” (Armitage 53). Similar to the challenge, the essence of this exchange has been retained, however the form has changed in the adaptation due to the changes in setting. Gwen gets in trouble on her first day by unknowingly spreading a rumour about Sir and Lady Bertelak. Her boss, Sir Bertelak, is not amused and as punishment Gwen and her two new friends, Angel and Sat, have to spy for him in his own company for the next three days. In exchange she will not be fired from the company. At the end of each day they have to report what they discover during that day. Both the unknowing and the knowing audience will understand the terms of this exchange. However the knowing audience will realise the exchange is less equal than in the original. In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Gawain receives something from Sir Bertelak at the end of the day as well. However in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man*, Gwen, Sat and Angel have to spy for Sir Bertelak in exchange for not being fired. The exchange became less equal because of this, however it provides the opportunity to test Gwen’s loyalty and honesty. Gwen cannot be fired because she needs to be at Morgana Industries to prove her loyalty to her uncle Arthur and find the Green Man. Hopefully the knowing audience will realise this.

3.3 Seduction scenes

In the poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Gawain is visited each morning by Lady Bertelak. She enters his room and tries to seduce him, Gawain is conflicted between his chivalrous nature, which does not allow him to send her from his room, and his duty to his lord on the other hand, which does not allow him to respond to her advances. Therefore he merely kisses her. This happens three times. The third time she offers him a golden ring, he knows he cannot accept this gift. When he refuses the ring she offers him her girdle instead. The girdle will protect him against magic and with the second part of the beheading game looming he accepts the gift.

In the adaptation *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* Lady Bertelak seduces Gwen, thinking Gwen is a man. Gwen is conflicted between her loyalty to her uncle, the fact that she does not want to get fired if she insults Lady Bertelak by sending her away, and her secret concerning her gender which would get her fired as well. Like Gawain, Gwen has to balance this conflict of duty and ends up kissing Lady Bertelak three times. During the last day Lady Bertelak offers Gwen the green scarf she is wearing as a gift to remember her by. This is the same scarf the Green Man wore during his first meeting with Gwen. This clue is what helps Gwen to solve the quest and win the challenge. These scenes and the behaviour of the characters will be most familiar to the knowing audience and they might understand the context of these scenes better than the unknowing audience. Because of this Lady Bertelak explains her reasoning in the second seduction scene as bringing a spark and some space to her relationship with Sir Bertelak.

3.4 Ending

The original ending of *Sir Gawain and the Green Man* is ambiguous. It is unclear who wins the challenge. After Sir Bertelak explains the plot to Gawain, Gawain feels shamed and feels like he has lost the challenge: “As I feared, I am found to be flawed and false, / through treachery and untruth I have totally failed” (Armitage 108). To which Lord Bertelak replies: “By confessing your failings you are free from fault” (Armitage 109). However, the Green Knight (and thus Morgana) does not win either, for Arthur’s reputation is still intact. Furthermore when Gawain returns to court they respond to his story by congratulating Gawain on his adventure and wearing green sashes in honour of his adventure. Therefore it can be claimed that *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* has a happy ending.

The ending in *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* is a more unambiguously happy ending. Gwen and Arthur clearly win the challenge at the last moment and do not lose the company, the Round Table. The narrator then walks on stage and tells the audience how and where every character ends up. All the characters will have a green item added to their costume to make a direct link with the Knights of the Round Table. The unknowing audience will think it an interesting detail even though they will not understand the idea behind it. The knowing audience will understand the link to the original.

Conclusion

While adapting *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* into *Lady Gwen and the Green Man* the aim was to make it an understandable and enjoyable play for both the knowing and the unknowing audience as described by Hutcheon. The setting has been changed from a medieval court setting to a modern office setting and the medium has changed from a poem to a play. Due to these changes some elements had to be added to the plot, such as the characters of Sat and Angel, whereas other elements were cut or changed drastically, such as the beheading game. The overall message of the plot remained the same in that it teaches the audience the importance of loyalty and honesty. It shows both the knowing and the unknowing audience that the story of Sir Gawain is a universal one to which everyone can relate.

Appendix I

Summary of original

It is New Year at King Arthur's court and King Arthur is bored. He does not want to eat until something marvellous happens. This is the moment a mysterious Green Knight rides in and he challenges Arthur and his court to play a Christmas game with him: someone gets to strike him once with his axe, the catch is that the Green Knight may return the blow in a year and a day. Arthur prepares to accept the challenge since none of his knights dare, but Sir Gawain stands up and wants to take the challenge instead. He is Arthur nephew and feels he has to prove he deserves the honour of knighthood. The other knights agree that Sir Gawain should take the challenge and he swoops the Green Knight's head off in one swift blow.

Unfortunately, the Green Knight won't die, he takes his severed head and remounts on his horse. The severed head speaks to the court and reminds them and Gawain of the deal they made and that he wants to see him again in a year at the Green Chapel.

Gawain sets out to find the Green Chapel and as the year has almost passed he arrives at the castle of Sir Bertilak and his wife. Gawain tells them of his quest and they assure him the Green Chapel is close and that he can stay in the castle until the day of the challenge has arrived. The next day Sir Bertilak is going hunting, but before he leaves he proposes a bargain to Gawain: he will give Gawain whatever he catches on the condition that Gawain give him whatever he might gain during the day. Gawain accepts this deal, however, after Sir Bertilak leaves, his wife Lady Bertilak visits Gawain's bedroom to seduce him. Gawain is torn between not wanting to offend Lady Bertilak and not wanting to betray his religion and his love for Mary, Christ's mother. Lady Bertilak ends up giving him one kiss. At the end of the day he receives a deer from Sir Bertilak and in return gives him the kiss without telling who he got it from. The second day repeats the first as does the third. However on the third day Lady Bertilak not only offers Gawain a kiss, but also a golden ring, which Gawain refuses.

She then asks him to at least accept her Green Girdle, which will keep him from harm and Gawain, afraid for the challenge which will take place the next day, accepts. In the evening when the exchange with Sir Bertilak takes place he does not offer him the girdle, thus breaking the bargain.

The next day Sir Gawain goes to the Green Chapel and finds the Green Knight. The Green Knight reminds him of the challenge and Gawain holds out his neck, but just before the Green Knight strikes, Gawain flinches and the Green Knight scolds him for being a coward. Gawain promises he may strike again and that this time he will not flinch. The Green Knight prepares to strike, but he stops just before he hits, Gawain does not flinch and the Green Knight explains he was testing him. Gawain scolds the Green Knight and asks for a proper blow this time. The Green Knight agrees and lets the axe come down, grazing Gawain's neck, leaving only a slight wound. The game is over and the Green Knight reveals himself as being Sir Bertilak, he explains this challenge was invented by Morgana to bring shame upon Arthur's court. Sir Gawain returns to the court wearing the girdle as a token of his shame and failure to keep his promise, but the knights forgive him and will from that moment onwards all wear a green sash in recognition of Gawain's challenge.

Appendix II

Summary of adaptation

Sir Gawain has become Lady Gwen and Arthur is no longer king but the CEO of Round Table Inc., Gwen works there as an intern and is Arthur's niece. Unfortunately the company is not doing very well and has to be sold. When Arthur tells his employees the sad news the event is rudely interrupted by a mysterious Green Man. This Green Man proposes a bet with the company as the reward. Arthur has a year to identify the Green Man and Gwen (who wants to prove herself to her uncle) wants to help with this. Gwen and Arthur find out the Green Man has done this before and the company ended up at Morgana Industries. One of Gwen's best friends is going to start there as an intern soon, his name is Gawain. Gwen decides to take his place instead, but this means she will have to dress up as a guy.

Upon arriving at Morgana Industries she meets the other two interns, Sat and Angel, they will be Gwen's conscience during the play and they will help her during her search into the identity of the Green Knight. The CEO of Morgana Industries is Sir B (Sir Bertelak/Green Knight). Sir B's wife (Lady Bertelak) is a seductress who takes a fancy to Gwen. When Gwen has just started working she becomes involved in a rumour about Sir and Lady B and she is called to a meeting with Sir B. She will have to prove herself to him and prove her loyalty to the company. They agree that Gwen, Sat and Angel will have to report all she has hears, sees and receives to Sir B for the next three days. The next three days are a mixture of fights between Sat and Angel, the uncovering of rumours from Dan and Liz (the biggest gossips in the office) and shows Sir B's dark side while interacting with Dan and Liz. During these three days Lady B seduces Gwen and gives her kisses; one on the first day, two on the second and three on the third. Gwen, as part of the agreement, gives these kisses to Sir B at the end of the day. On the third day Gwen also receives a scarf from Lady B, but she does not give this scarf to Sir B.

At the end of the three days she meets with the Green Man again and he gives her three chances to tell her who he is. The first time she does not answer, the second time she gives a vague insecure answer, the third time she solves the puzzle because she sees the relation between the scarf she is wearing and the Green Man. Thus she wins the challenge and wins the company back. The Green Man tells her to keep the scarf as a reminder of her spying and lying.

Appendix III

LADY GWEN AND THE GREEN MAN

an adaption of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Written by:

Fleur Kronenberg

With special thanks to Erik van Dijk and Erik de Vries Lentsch for their suggestions and advice.

Cast

Arthur / Narrator

Gwen

Sir Bertelak / Green Man

Lady Bertelak

Sat

Angel

Gawain

Dan

Liz

Setting

Modern office building:

- Round Table Inc.
- Gawain's house
- Office Morgana Ind.
- Coffee Corner Morgana Ind.

ACT 1
SCENE 1

NARRATOR

[SLOWLY] Once the siege and assault of Troy had ceased; with the city a smoke-heap of cinders and ash; there once was a king and his name was Arthur. He had a great kingdom and a Round Table of knights.

[NORMAL SPEED] This was all back in the 14th century. So we're going to fast-forward a little bit. It is now the 21st century. We're no longer at court but in an office - the offices of Round Table Incorporated, a small media company. Arthur, once a king, is now the CEO. But his company isn't doing very well. It's near bankruptcy, and Arthur has only one option left: sell the company he founded exactly fifteen years ago to the highest bidder. He is about to deliver the bad news to his loyal knights, his employees. Among these hard workers is one whose opinion he values most: his niece, Gwen.

[GWEN waves shyly]

She has just started her internship at Arthur's failing company. And now someone is about to make Arthur an offer he cannot refuse.

[NARRATOR takes off his top hat and so becomes ARTHUR. He addresses the audiences as if they are the employees]

ARTHUR

Dear employees, dear friends. I'm glad you're all here. The human resources department, the pie chart department, the water cooler department, the synergy department, the coffee department. Welcome to our fifteen-year jubilee party. This should be a happy occasion, but it is with a heavy heart I stand before you. You make our company what it is today. We built it up from nothing. Unfortunately, we aren't doing well. In fact, we're doing very badly. I'll be honest with you. I have but one option left: I have to sell Round Table Incorporated. I know you will have many questions, but I don't have all the answers yet. All I can say is that I'm sorry. Thank you.

[ARTHUR walks to GWEN]

ARTHUR

Gwen, welcome to the company. Or what's left of it.

GWEN

I didn't expect that on my first day of work.

ARTHUR

I'm sorry. It all happened so quickly. I hope you'll still enjoy your time here. Even though I don't know how long that will be.

GWEN

I looked forward to this internship for years. I really wanted to work with my favourite uncle.

ARTHUR

And I with my favourite niece.

GWEN

What will happen when you sell the company?

ARTHUR

With the market as it is now, it'll up for grabs for any giant faceless corporation out there. I'll be fired, most likely. And then they'll destroy all the heart I put into this company for fifteen years.

GWEN

That's horrible!

ARTHUR

Yes. [sobbing increasingly] The people from human resources will have to do the synergy work. The people from the water cooler department will have to make coffee. And the people from the pie charts... they'll have to make line charts instead.

GWEN

Poor uncle. I wish I could help you.

[Light effects and music. THE GREEN MAN enters]

GREENMAN

Well, well, well. Having a little party, Arthur? I didn't think there was any cause for celebration.

ARTHUR

Who are you?

GREENMAN

And I didn't think you had any money for celebration, either.

ARTHUR

Who are you and what are you doing here?

GREENMAN

Hahahaha! I'm here to help you.

ARTHUR

I don't need anyone's help.

GREENMAN

That's not what you just said in that heart-breaking little speech of yours. 'I have to sell the company, boo-hoo-hoo.'

ARTHUR

Let me clarify. I don't need your help. I don't want your help.

GWEN

Are you sure? Maybe we should see what he has to offer.

ARTHUR

He's got bullshit to offer. This is not how business is done.

GREENMAN

Now, now, Arthur. Listen to the young lady. She's absolutely right. You should hear what I have to say before you judge me like that.

ARTHUR

Out with it, then! You're wasting my time and spoiling my evening.

GREENMAN

Listen carefully. I propose a challenge. It's very simple. I want to have Round Table Incorporated, but I don't want to buy it. That's boring. I want to win it fair and square.

ARTHUR

What's the challenge?

GREENMAN

I will give you one week to find out who I am.

ARTHUR

You must be barking mad if you think...

GWEN

What will happen to the company?

GREENMAN

I'll use my funds to keep it afloat for a week. If I win, it will come into my possession, and I'll do what I want with it. Maybe I'll have the pie chart department make line charts. If you win, however, I will pay off all your debts and the company is yours to keep.

GWEN

Then we accept!

ARTHUR

What? Gwen, no!

GWEN

Didn't you hear what he said?

ARTHUR

There's always a catch.

GWEN

What could possibly go wrong?

GREENMAN

M'lady, do we have a deal?

GWEN

M'mister, we do. [they shake hands] One week to uncover your identity and win back my uncle's company.

GREENMAN

Then I will see you in one week's time. [Laughs and walks off to the right. Then turns around.] Wrong way. [Laughs and walks off to the left. Exit.]

ARTHUR

What have you done?

GWEN

What do you mean, 'what have I done'? I saved your company, you silly.

ARTHUR

No, it just isn't right. A week is awfully short. And there must be a catch to this.

GWEN

A week is plenty of time. I'm sure we'll succeed!

[ARTHUR sighs]

GWEN

Let's start on Google. [Takes out cell phone] What if I search for 'company + green'...? The Grass Company, that's not right... 'Company + green + bankrupt?' Let's give that a try.

ARTHUR

Google isn't going to solve our problems. I don't think this kind of thing happens very often.

GWEN

You never know. Ah, I found something. There's a blog post from someone who worked at Penwin & Co. [increasingly excited] Apparently, the same thing happened to them. The company was about to go under and a green man walked in and proposed the same challenge and... [suddenly disappointed] oh, they lost the company.

ARTHUR

See? This was a bad idea.

GWEN

No, we're smarter than Penwin & Co. I mean, they sell medieval poems and novels. Who likes that stuff? No one.

ARTHUR

Penwin rings a bell. Could you google what happened to the company after they lost?

GWEN

They ended up at Morgana Industries.

ARTHUR

Morgana Industries? That's interesting. They're a media company, like us, but they're one of those giant, faceless conglomerates.

GWEN

Wait! I have a brilliant idea!

ARTHUR

[sarcastic] Another one?

GWEN

Do you remember my friend from high school, Gawain? I saw on his Facebook that he was starting an internship there. I could go in his place!

ARTHUR

What?

GWEN

He owes me a big favour. I can take his place and snoop around at Morgana. It's perfect.

ARTHUR

It's crazy.

GWEN

Crazy enough to work.

[blackout]

ACT 2
SCENE 2

[GAWAIN's home. GAWAIN is reading when GWEN knocks on the door]

GWEN
Gawain! Oh my god! It's been so long!

GAWAIN
Gwen! Always great to see my old buddy! What's up?

GWEN
Well... I need your help. I've got a problem. A big one.

GAWAIN
What's wrong?

GWEN
It's complicated. [muttering words]

GAWAIN
What?

GWEN
This may sound weird, but I kinda need your job?

GAWAIN
You... You need my what now?

GWEN
Your job. Your internship at Morgana Industries. I read on Facebook that you got an internship there and I need to take your place.

GAWAIN
What the hell are you talking about? You can't just come here and ask for my job! I worked really hard to get that internship. It's going to be the start of my career.

GWEN
Listen. My uncle's company, Round Table Incorporated, is in trouble, and I need to be at Morgana to fix it.

GAWAIN
It's a lot to ask of me, Gwen.

GWEN
I know. But remember you little incident a few years ago?

GAWAIN
[anxious] I don't know what you're talking about.

GWEN
Really? You don't remember the vodka? Or the taxi driver? Or the lama?

GAWAIN
That was a long time ago.

GWEN

Yes, but you still owe me for it. And you can get another internship. If I pull this off, I'm sure there will be a position available at Round Table Incorporated, the greatest company in the world, run by the greatest uncle in the world.

GAWAIN

If you pull this off...

GWEN

Please? It's really important to me!

GAWAIN

I don't know. How would you go about taking my place?

GWEN

Have you met anyone at Morgana yet?

GAWAIN

No, it was all arranged by e-mail.

GWEN

That's what I hoped for. It means they don't know what you look like.

GAWAIN

But they know the rest! They know my name, my resume. And they know I'm a dude!

GWEN

The name and resume shouldn't be a problem. As for being a dude, I think I'll be able to use my acting skills. Remember the school play? I was a very convincing tree. You'll have to help me, though.

GAWAIN

You want me to make a man out of you?

GWEN

Yes! Ow, it's going to be so cute.

GAWAIN

If you're going to act like a dude, you'll have to stop saying that kind of thing. Dudes don't think stuff is cute, they think shit is dope. And you can't stand like that with your hip all popped out.

GWEN

[excited] Does this mean you're going to do this?

GAWAIN

There's no stopping you. Yes, I'll help you.

GWEN

Yay!

GAWAIN

No, no, no. A guy doesn't 'yay' like that.

GWEN

[low voice] Yay.

GAWAIN

[rolls eyes and sighs] This is going to be a long night.

[They try on different outfits before deciding on the right manly outfit. In the meantime they focus on GWEN's walk, talk and attitude.]

SCENE 3

[SAT and ANGEL are standing at the Morgana Industries coffee corner]

ANGEL

Do you really need that much sugar in your coffee?

SAT

It's bitter without it. I don't like bitterness.

ANGEL

I just take it black. Like my soul.

GWEN

[enters] Good morning. My name is Gawain.

SAT

Hi! I'm Sat. Nice to meet you. Are you new here? Do you need someone to show you around?

GWEN

That's very nice of you. [to ANGEL] And what's your name?

ANGEL

Angel.

GWEN

Angel?

ANGEL

Yes, Angel, and I'm not interested in this social situation.

GWEN

Okay. Hi.

SAT

We started here last week. But we've known each other much longer. We go way back, all the way to high school!

ANGEL

Humph.

SAT

Have you met the boss?

GWEN

No, not yet. What's he like?

SAT

He's very tall and very nice because he always asks us how we're doing.

ANGEL

Yeah, that's annoying. I like his wife better. She's the real boss.

SAT

That's not true. Sir B is the CEO, so he's the boss. His wife is only the manager.

ANGEL

The company would fall apart if she weren't around.

GWEN

'Sir B'? What does that stand for?

ANGEL

Sir Bertilak. But we call him Bertie.

SAT

No, we don't! He doesn't like it when we call him that. He prefers 'Sir B'. [proud] He told me so himself!

ANGEL

Ugh.

GWEN

And what about his wife?

SAT

Lady B. She's something special.

ANGEL

You didn't do your homework before coming here, did you?

GWEN

Well, ehm, it was a very last minute thing... bro.

[awkward silence]

SAT

So, tell us about yourself!

[GWEN's phone rings]

GWEN

I'm sorry, I have to take this. [exit]

SAT

He's very nice!

ANGEL

Meh. He's okay.

SAT

Angel, could you stop being so negative for once!

ANGEL

If you stop being annoyingly positive.

SAT

The world needs more positivity.

ANGEL

Let's agree to disagree.

[GWEN enters]

GWEN

Sorry, that was my uncle, the boss of [realizes she can't mention Round Table Inc] Round... Pears... Incorporated.

ANGELS

'Round Pears Incorporated'?

GWEN

Yes. They sell apples.

SAT

That makes sense. So, you were going to tell us about yourself?

GWEN

I'm Gawain and I'm 22. I'm definitely a man and I like changing the world and eating cake. By the way, I was thinking: I want to make a good impression on the boss, since I'm new here. What sort of gift should I bring him? Maybe an apple pie? Or a pineapple?

SAT

That's a really good idea!

ANGEL

You should bring him grapefruits.

GWEN

Grapefruits?

SAT

Yes, the boss really likes them. He always has some on his desk.

GWEN

What a weird choice, grapefruits. I didn't even know you could eat those.

SAT

They're not very nice. They're bitter.

ANGEL

Maybe he doesn't even eat them.

[LIZ walks in, unnoticed]

GWEN

You mean he uses the grapefruits for something else? Maybe when he is having sex with his wife!

[ANGEL laughs]

SAT

How would that work?

GWEN

I don't know. I read it in 'Cosmo' once.

LIZ

Lady B and Sir B have a grapefruit fetish? O my god. I have to tell Dan! [exits]

[SILENCE]

GWEN

What just happened?

ANGEL

You, my friend, just started a rumour.

GWEN

But... who was that?

ANGEL

That was Liz from accounting. The biggest gossip in the western hemisphere.

SAT

I don't think you should give the boss grapefruits as a present.

ANGEL

Welcome to Morgana Industries.

[blackout]

SCENE 4

[SAT, ANGEL and GWEN are standing in front of SIR B's office.]

SAT

But why did he summon us?

GWEN

I don't know. He just called me and said 'you must come to my office, and bring your two friends with you'.

ANGEL

Friends? Great, that means I can leave. Ciao!

GWEN

No, you can't. It's as much your fault as it is mine. You were the one who suggested it!

ANGEL

You were the one who said it!

[GWEN knocks on the door]

LADYB

Come in. Please take a seat.

[There is only one chair. GWEN sits on it. ANGEL stands. SAT, after a moment of confusion, sits down on the floor.]

SIRB

Now, then. Let's discuss what happened. Angel, you can start. Why do you think you're here?

ANGEL

I don't know.

SIRB

[surprised] Really?

ANGEL

I don't know.

SIRB

You don't know why I asked all of you to come here?

ANGEL

I don't know.

LADYB

This is obviously not going to work. Let's ask Mr Handsome over there.

SAT

[stands up] Me?

[LADYB leers at him. SAT sits down on the floor again.]

LADYB

What's your name?

GWEN

My name is Gwe... Gawain.

LADYB

Gawain, huh?

SIRB

So, Gawain. Do you know why you're here?

GWEN

I think it's because of something I might have said.

SIRB

Exactly. You said something and I want to know what nonsense you've been telling people.

GWEN

[mumbles]

LADYB

Speak up, will you!

ANGEL

We all did it. We started a rumour about you and your wife.

GWEN

We might have said something about your... preference for grapefruit. In the bedroom.

SIRB

Outrageous! [bangs his fist on the desk; it hurts him] How did you find out this little tidbit?

GWEN

What, you mean to say it's true?

SIRB

[anxious] True? Of course not! Hahaha! Just a joke.

GWEN

We're really sorry, sir.

SAT

Yes, we really, really are.

SIRB

'Sorry' is not enough, I'm afraid. You deserve to be punished.

LADYB

[leans over the desk] We have a proposition for you.

SIRB

[tries to out-lean his wife] A way for you to make this up to us.

ANGEL

But we apologized.

SAT

[to ANGEL] 'We'?

GWEN

What do you want us to do?

SIRB

I want you three to be my eyes [points at ears] and ears [points at eyes] on the floor for the next three days. I want to know what's going on in my company when I'm not in the company of my company myself... [trailing off]

LADYB

At the end of each day, you will report back to us and give us everything you have seen, heard and received. We want to know and have all of it.

ANGEL

But why?

SIRB

Because if you don't, I'll fire you. [looks at his wife] We'll fire you.

SAT

Of course, we'll do it.

GWEN

Yes. Everything we see, hear or receive, we'll pass on.

SIRB

Good. Now leave.

[LADYB lets them out]

SIRB

I have more important things to do than sit around and talk to you... [trailing off again]

LADYB

Why did you think of this assignment for them?

SIRB

Let's just say I'm expecting some dubious activity this week. I want all the information I can get.

LADYB

Does this have to do with...?

SIRB

[low voice] Maybe.

ACT 3
SCENE 5

[GWEN, SAT and ANGEL are standing at the coffee corner]

GWEN

Are you guys ready for our mission today?

ANGEL

Why are you so repulsively excited?

GWEN

I'm new and I want to know everything about this company and I just like finding things out.

SAT

What sort of things?

GWEN

I don't know. Green things.

SAT

I ate a green salad this morning. I'm a vegetarian.

ANGEL

[sarcastic] Great.

GWEN

[excited] Yeah, cool story bro.

ANGEL

It was sarcastic. Now, has either of you stopped to think how we're going to pull this off?

GWEN

We can either ask people for info or we can eavesdrop.

SAT

Dropping eaves isn't nice.

ANGEL

But it's fun and it's effective, so I'm doing it. See you in an hour. Angel out. [exits]

GWEN

Are you included in the gossip circles?

SAT

No. [rambling] I'm not a gossipy guy because I don't think gossip is very interesting most of the time and I'm still new here and I don't know the people very well and also they don't like me because I tend to ramble a lot. [normal] Angel is the only one here who talks to me. You could try to gain Liz's confidence. She's the gossip queen.

GWEN

Good idea. And you should hide and listen, and try to pick up any rumours that way.

SAT

But that's eavesdropping. [starts to ramble] And I just said that I don't like eavesdropping because it isn't a nice thing to do and I...

GWEN

No, it's not. It's... a game. It's called: 'Hide and... hear... things... about your co-workers... accidentally... without their knowledge or consent - hey, do you fit in this cupboard? Let's try!

[As SAT protests, GWEN shoves him in a cupboard by the coffee corner, making sure the audience can still see SAT's face and SAT can see everything that's happening]

GWEN

Are you sitting comfortably?

SAT

No.

GWEN

Good! I'm going to try and find Liz's circle. [exit]

[DAN and LIZ walk in, gossiping]

[SIRB enters]

SIRB

Good morning, Dan, Liz.

LIZ and DAN

Good morning, sir.

SIRB

Dan, how's the Synergy report coming along?

DAN

I'm working on it.

SIRB

Liz, how's the accounting department doing? And how is the Penwin account?

LIZ

Going fine, sir. I've got big plans for Penwin.

SIRB

Have you guys noticed anything unusual these days?

DAN

The colour of the bathroom tiles has changed.

SIRB

That's not really what I meant.

LIZ
What colour are they now?

DAN
Olive green.

LIZ
You're joking!

DAN
I am not joking. It's hideous.

SIRB
Still, not really relevant.

DAN
It's, like, offensive. Olive green!

LIZ
That's such a seventies colour.

DAN
It's practically medieval.

[LADYB enters unnoticed]

SIRB
[low voice] Dan, the bathroom is where you shit. Who cares about the colour?

LADYB
Darling?

SIRB
[high voice] O, hi! I was just telling Dan how much I like the colour green.

DAN
[to LIZ, sarcastic] Aren't they the perfect couple?

LADYB
We should get back to our office. Coming? [exits]

SIRB
[to LIZ and DAN] Get back to work, you two! [exits]

[LIZ and DAN ignore his words. LIZ makes a whipping noise]

LIZ
He's such a wuss.

DAN
I can't believe she's still with him. She could do so much better.

LIZ

I know, right? By the way, you won't believe what I heard. It's the juiciest of rumours!

DAN
About them?

LIZ
Yes. And grapefruits.

DAN
Grapefruits?

[GWEN enters. DAN and LIZ fall still]

DAN
Good morning. You're the new guy, right? Gawain, was it?

GWEN
Good morning. Yes, I'm Gawain. I'm definitely a man and I'm new here. Who are you? How are you doing?

[Awkward introductions. GWEN makes a cup of coffee]

GWEN
Did you see the sky this morning? It was grey, because... clouds. The weather. Rumours? Coffee. [exit]

LIZ
He's weird.

DAN
Yeah, but in a hot way, don't you think?

LIZ
There's something about him, something I can't quite figure out.

DAN
What?

LIZ
Just the way he walks. And he has an oddly high voice.

DAN
[sniggers] Maybe he's gay.

LIZ
Yeah, maybe.

LADYB
[enters, quickly walks by] Get back to work. [exits]

[DAN and LIZ exit. SAT comes out of hiding]

SAT

[stretching, visibly in pain] Still not sure if this is the best strategy.

[ANGEL enters]

SAT

Learned anything useful?

ANGEL

Nope. You?

SAT

Liz and Dan think Sir B is a... [whispers] a wuss and that Lady B can get a better guy.

ANGEL

You don't have to whisper that. Everybody knows.

SAT

I don't think Sir B does.

ANGEL

Bertie? I think the fear of losing his wife probably keeps him up at night.

SAT

And there was something else they said. They thought Gawain was... gay.

ANGEL

Nah.

SAT

That's what I thought as well, yes.

[GWEN enters]

SAT

Gaywain, my man, how are you? Found out something useful?

GWEN

No. No one wants to gossip with me.

ANGEL

No surprise there.

GWEN

[defensive] What did you learn, then?

ANGEL

Nothing.

GWEN

No surprise there.

ANGEL

Sat has some interesting news, though.

SAT

No, I don't. No interesting gossipy thingies here!

ANGEL

Yes, he does. He was just telling me about a very interesting gossipy thingy.

SAT

[rambling] It was nothing. Not interesting at all and no one else probably ever says it or even thinks it.

GWEN

[puts arm around SAT's shoulder; amicably] Out with it! What did you hear? You can tell me, I'm your friend.

SAT

[very fast] They said you might be gay.

GWEN

[takes hand off SAT's shoulder] What? No, that's ridiculous. I like me... I like women. With lady parts. Yeah.

ANGEL

It's a worthless rumour anyway.

GWEN

You're right. We still need something to report tonight, and we've only got two hours left! How are we going to do this? Any brilliant ideas?

SAT

Well, Liz and Dan...

ANGEL

We should interrogate people. We should play 'Good Cop, Bad Cop'. I'll be the bad cop.

SAT

I think that Liz and Dan...

GWEN

We could bribe people with chocolate. And put truth serum in it!

ANGEL

Or poison.

GWEN

But they would die.

ANGEL

Well, that's what you get when you don't tell us the truth.

SAT

I think...

GWEN

We could tickle them.

ANGEL

Sat, you're not contributing anything.

SAT

If you would just listen! The only bit of success we just had was with Liz and Dan. They know almost everything. We need to get the gossipy information from them.

ANGEL

That's actually a solid idea.

[SAT is shocked by the compliment]

GWEN

Sat, get back in the cupboard so you can play that game again!

SAT

No!

ANGEL

We could just tap their phones.

GWEN

That's illegal.

SAT

Yes! No!

ANGEL

[proud] I know. Cool, isn't it?

SAT

That's not cool. We should try to get involved in their little circle of gossip.

GWEN

But I tried that, and they don't like me.

SAT

We could make them like you.

ANGEL

How were you planning to do that?

SAT

We need to give them a rumour of our own, as a rite of passage.

GWEN

Like what?

SAT

Angel works as a volunteer at a puppy shelter in her spare time!

ANGEL

Damn it, Sat!

GWEN

Really? But you act all tough.

ANGEL

Reputations, centuries to build, seconds to destroy. Thanks a lot, Sat. You know, our lovely little Sat here... still lives with his mum!

SAT

Angel! That's not fair! The thing about me is much bigger than what I said about you.

ANGEL

It's just weird. You're a grown man - sort of -, and you should learn how to live by yourself.

SAT

But mummy likes that I stay around.

GWEN

Shut up, you two! Go argue somewhere else.

[SAT and ANGEL exit, arguing. LIZ and DAN enter]

LIZ

Oh hi... Gawain, was it?

GWEN

Hi Dan, hi Liz. You won't believe what I just heard. Do you know Sat?

DAN

You mean that weirdo? The one with all the nervous ticks?

GWEN

Yeah. I heard he still lives with his mum!

LIZ and DAN

No!

GWEN

Yes! And Angel, do you know her?

LIZ

The bitchy one?

GWEN

Yeah, well, she likes bitching all right - she works at a puppy shelter in her spare time!

LIZ and DAN
No!

DAN
How do you know all that?

GWEN
I'm just a gossip expert who deserves to be included in the best circles around the globe.

LIZ
Impressive.

DAN
Very impressive. We should get back to work, though.

LIZ
Bye, Gawain. Till next time.

[DAN and LIZ exit. SAT and ANGEL enter, still mad at each other.]

GWEN
They were sold immediately. I think this will actually work!

ANGEL
I'm getting bored of this.

SAT
Gawain, could you please tell Angel to shut up.

GWEN
Angel, Sat asks if you can shut up.

ANGEL
Gawain, could you please tell Sat not to be such a little baby.

GWEN
Sat, Angel asks if you could quit being a baby.

SAT
Gawain, could you please tell Angel where she can put it?

GWEN
[turns to Angel, then quickly back to Sat] Where can she put it?

SAT
In her stupid butt!

GWEN
Angel, Sat says you can put it in your butt.

ANGEL
Gawain, ask Sat if he kisses his mum with that mouth.

GWEN

Sat, Angel asks if you...

SAT

Leave my mum out of this! [exiting] And yes, I always kiss her goodnight!

ANGEL

That's better. So, what did you find out?

GWEN

Nothing new yet, but if we give this time, it should work.

ANGEL

Good. Are you also going to tell Sir B that you're not who you say you are?

GWEN

What?

ANGEL

I know your secret, Gawain.

GWEN

I don't know what you're talking about.

ANGEL

Don't play dumb with me. I know you're not a guy.

GWEN

What? Dude! That shit is not dope!

ANGEL

Quit the act, Gawain, if that is your real name.

GWEN

[breaks] I really tried to be a guy, but it's damn hard to do. How did you find out?

ANGEL

I'm surprised no one else has noticed yet.

GWEN

They just think I'm gay. [they laugh] Do you think Sat knows?

ANGEL

No. Sat wouldn't recognize a girl if she sat on his face. But I don't understand why you're doing this?

GWEN

I'm here to save my uncle's company. We made a bet with a mysterious green man. I have one week to find out who he is. If I succeed, the company is saved. If I lose the bet, we lose the company.

ANGEL

But why are you here dressed as a dude?

GWEN

I took the place of my friend Gawain because the green man is linked to Morgana Industries. I'm here to investigate. But you can't tell anyone! If I'm discovered, all hope will be lost! Do you promise not to say anything?

ANGEL

I think it's exciting, snooping around. I want to see how this plays out, so don't worry, I won't tell.

[ANGEL exits. GWEN sits down. LADYB enters. Continue; no blackout]

SCENE 6

[GWEN is sitting on a chair near the coffee corner. LADYB enters.]

GWEN

Good afternoon, Lady Bertilak. How are you?

LADYB

Fine, thank you, and a good afternoon yourself... Gawain, your name was?

GWEN

Yes.

LADYB

I remembered that name. It's the same as the hero in one of my favourite poems.

GWEN

I don't read poetry. And I'm not a hero.

LADYB

Have you been working here long?

GWEN

No, just started.

LADYB

Do you like it?

GWEN

Yes, I like it a lot. I already met a lot of interesting people, like Sat and Angel. And Dan and Liz.

LADYB

Very interesting people indeed. Why did you say you're not a hero?

GWEN

Heroes always know what to do and what to say. I don't. I just make it up as I go along.

LADYB

Heroes do the same thing. Your namesake didn't know what to do either. He was doubting all the time.

GWEN

Was he?

LADYB

Sure.

GWEN

What happened to him, then?

LADYB

Read the poem, you'll find out.

GWEN

I usually just read magazines. Where can I get it?

LADYB

There's an old Penwin bookshop in town called Green Chapel. It's my favourite store. You can get it there.

GWEN

I didn't think you were the type of person to have a favourite bookstore. I mean, you're kind of... intimidating. No offence.

LADYB

None taken. I tend to boss people around on the work floor, but I have my other interests. There are many sides to every person, even if you can see only one.

GWEN

I guess so. Could we visit the Green Chapel together one day? If you'd like that, and if it's okay with your husband?

LADYB

Of course.

GWEN

Thanks, Lady Bertilak.

LADYB

Call me Lady B. I need to go now. It's been nice talking to you.
[kisses GWEN, then exits]

GWEN

[bewildered] ...bye.

SCENE 7

[GWEN, SAT and ANGEL are in the office. LADYB and SIRB are not there yet. ANGEL is going through the things that are lying around. SAT is pacing nervously. GWEN is sitting on the chair in deep thought.]

SAT

I don't like waiting in their office while they aren't here.

ANGEL

I do. Bet they have a lot of fun stuff lying around. [picks up something breakable]

SAT

Careful!

[ANGEL pretends to drop it once, and then pretends again, but it actually nearly falls. She saves it and quickly puts it back]

GWEN

I'm glad you two are friends again. If only we hadn't failed the assignment.

SAT

Don't we have anything?

GWEN

The only thing I learned today was about your puppies...

ANGEL

No!

GWEN

...and your mum.

SAT

No!

GWEN

So, nothing then. We're going to get fired.

SAT

Did anyone receive anything?

GWEN

Not really.

ANGEL

What do you mean, 'not really'?

GWEN

Well, someone did kiss me today.

ANGEL & SAT

Who?!

GWEN

I'm not one to kiss and tell.

SAT

But if it happened at work, you have to pass it on.

GWEN

It did happen at work... I don't know what to do. Should I kiss Sir B?

ANGEL

No, bad idea. It'll just get weird. They will never find out if you don't tell them.

SAT

Of course they will. The truth always comes out in the end.

ANGEL

Not if he's a good liar.

GWEN

I don't know if I'm a good liar. Do you think I'd get away with it?

ANGEL | SAT

Yes! | No! [simultaneous]

[LADYB and SIRB enter. GWEN quickly stands up and gives SIRB a kiss.]

SIRB

Hello to you to.

GWEN

Good evening, Sir B.

SIRB

To what do I owe that kiss?

GWEN

Just honouring our agreement, sir.

SIRB

You mean to say you received a kiss today? Is there an office romance going on?

GWEN

Romance? I don't think so. I'm not sure what to call it, sir.

SIRB

Then what happened exactly?

LADYB

Are you sure that matters? It's only a kiss. No need to invade his privacy, is there?

SIRB

You're completely right. Sorry, Gawain.

ANGEL

Can we go now?

SIRB

Do you mean that's all you've got? Just this kiss?

GWEN

I'm afraid so, sir.

SIRB

You disappoint me. A kiss isn't useful information. I mean, it wasn't bad. Not unenjoyable. Not that I enjoyed it. It's just that...

LADYB

We'll expect much more from you tomorrow.

SIRB

[quickly] We'll expect much more from you tomorrow.

LADYB

You can go now.

[ANGEL, SAT and GWEN leave.]

LADYB

Satisfied?

SIRB

No. But I think they'll succeed eventually.

LADYB

You do?

SIRB

Yes. That Gawain, he fills me with hope. And with many other emotions that are weird and deeply confusing.

[NARRATOR enters]

NARRATOR

The challenge is set, the deal has been made.
The first day has passed and has been weighed.
The tale is not finished, make no mistake.
We will be back after this short break.
Go have a drink, enjoy a little snack,
And in 20 minutes, we'd like to see you back!

SIRB

What the hell are you doing in my office?

[INTERMISSION]

SCENE 8

[Enter ANGEL and GWEN at the coffee corner.]

ANGEL
Coffee?

GWEN
Hmf.

ANGEL
What?

GWEN
Hmf.

ANGEL
I think you mean 'yes, Angel, thank you very much'?

GWEN
I'm sorry. It just bothers me that we screwed up the assignment yesterday.

ANGEL
It's a stupid assignment anyway. Who treats their employees this way?

GWEN
I also haven't learned anything useful about the green man and I've only got two days left.

[SAT enters with a suitcase and a teddy bear]

SAT
Two days to do what?

GWEN
To... fulfil the assignment and impress Lady B and Sir B, of course.

ANGEL
What's with the suitcase?

SAT
I got kicked out of the house.

GWEN
Your mother kicked you out?! What happened?

SAT
I didn't give her a goodnight kiss and she asked why not and I said that I'm a grown man, sort of, and I want to have my own place soon.

GWEN
And then?

SAT

She said I was being naughty and if I wanted my own place, I should just get out and find one the next day. So then I... I called her a b...

GWEN

You called your mother a b...?

SAT

Yes. A butthead. This morning I gathered my stuff [holds up teddy bear] and I had to leave.

ANGEL

That's shitty. You got a shitty life. And a shitty job, just like me. Everything is shit.

SAT

That's mean. You're always mean to me.

ANGEL

I'm not mean, I'm honest.

SAT

I have nowhere to go, I'll probably have to spend the night here at the company, and here you are talking about poop! It's not nice.

ANGEL

Listen, I don't feel like being a shrink right now, or being a spy for that matter. This is absurd. [starts to walk off]

[GWEN stops ANGEL at the edge of the stage, where they stand and talk. SAT puts his sleeping bag in the cupboard while listening to the conversation]

GWEN

Angel, wait. What's going on?

ANGEL

Nothing.

GWEN

Yes, there is. You're way crankier than usual. Something's wrong.

ANGEL

There's this dog. At the puppy shelter. His name is Buster. We don't have room for him and nobody wants him and I can't take him... and if we don't find him a place, he'll have to be put down! He's so young, it's unfair.

GWEN

Why can't you take him in?

ANGEL

My roommate is allergic.

GWEN

Can't you find another room?

ANGEL

Do you have any idea how hard it is to find a decent home with a decent roommate? It's not going to happen.

SAT

I'm not allergic to dogs.

ANGEL

[not paying attention to SAT] They're going to kill Buster.

SAT

I'm looking for a place, too!

GWEN

Angel, I think Sat wants your attention.

ANGEL

Just leave me alone, Sat. I'm not in a good mood.

SAT

But I've got an idea... We could be roommates!

ANGEL

That's the worst idea you've ever had! And that includes the time you tried to e-mail me a sandwich.

SAT

It would solve our problems! Don't you want to save Buster?

ANGEL

Yes, but not at any price!

SAT

But we've known each other for so long.

ANGEL

That's the problem.

SAT

You're being really mean.

ANGEL

I don't want to live with you.

SAT

Then I guess we're not best friends anymore.

[A moment of silence. SIRB enters, well-humoured.]

SIRB

Good morning, all! How's the investigating business today?

GWEN

Fine. We're doing fine.

SIRB

Righto. [Exits]

GWEN

Guys, we need to get back to our assignment. Can you bury the hatchet for a while?

[ANGEL and SAT exit in silence]

GWEN

Fine, I'll do everything myself. Again. You're lousy friends - to each other most of all!

[DAN and LIZ enter]

LIZ

Ah, those Penwin suckers. I told them 'no more Chaucher in the stores' and they cried like little girls.

DAN

That's hilarious. Hey, Gawain.

GWEN

Hey.

DAN

[gets coffee] Don't you hate the coffee here?

GWEN

Yeah, totally, it's terrible.

LIZ

So, what's new?

GWEN

Something about Sat and Angel.

LIZ

Really? What is it?

GWEN

Well, Sat wants to be roommates with Angel, but she doesn't want that, and now they're in a fight.

LIZ

Ooh! I already love it.

GWEN

I feel kind of bad talking about it.

LIZ

You're just sharing intimate details about your friends. You don't have to feel bad.

DAN
You know what's bad? This coffee. It's, like, offensive to my taste buds.

LIZ
I knooow.

GWEN
I knooow as well.

DAN
There's so much here that I don't like.

LIZ
But you like me, right?

DAN
Honey, I love you. You're perfect. But look around you. The coffee is terrible, the cookies are stale, and then those olive-green tiles in the bathroom. I think I'm going to quit my job.

LIZ
No! You can't do that to me!

DAN
I'm sorry, but the bathroom tiles are the dealbreakers. Don't you agree, Gawain?

GWEN
I don't really care.

DAN
What?

GWEN
I mean, I don't really care for those tiles either.

DAN
See? Even Gawain agrees with me and he's gay, so he should know.

GWEN
What?

LIZ
Well, fine! Leave me, then!

DAN
I'm going to write my resignation letter straight away.

[DAN exits]

LIZ
So you're supposed to be my new best friend now. I guess you'll do.

GWEN

Ehm... Thanks... Are those shoes new?

LIZ

They are! Aren't they gorgeous?

GWEN

Yeah, they're dope. They look really expensive, too.

LIZ

They are. But I'll tell you about that later. I need to get back to work. Bye! [exits]

GWEN

Bye! [exits]

[blackout]

SCENE 9

[Lights on, reveal GWEN sitting and reading 'Sir Gawain'. She reads aloud a passage relevant to the theme of doubt/seduction/something]

GWEN

'In good faith,' said Gawain, 'such gracious flattery, though in truth I'm not nearly such a noble knight. I don't dare to receive the respect you describe and in no way warrant such worthy words. But by God, I'd be glad, if you gave me the right, to serve your desires, and with action or speech bring you perfect pleasure. The honour would be priceless.'

[LADYB enters]

GWEN

Good afternoon, Lady B. Would you like some coffee? [holds out mug as a barrier between them]

LADYB

Yes, please. Hey, I see you're reading 'Sir Gawain'.

GWEN

I bought it at the Green Chapel store. They said I was in luck, it was the last copy they had.

LADYB

That's strange. They usually have plenty of medieval lit. Anyway, how do you like the poem?

GWEN

I'm not used to reading this kind of stuff. But I'm starting to like it. Love it, even. It feels recognizable, in a weird way.

LADYB

I knew it. Isn't it wonderful and elegant?

GWEN

Yes. Like yourself! ...I mean... I'm sorry, I didn't...

LADYB

It's okay.

GWEN

Can I ask a personal question? What's it like to work so closely with your husband? Don't you ever get sick of each other?

LADYB

No. We love each other and we know when the other needs some space.

GWEN

Space? Isn't that a bad sign for your marriage, if you need time apart?

LADYB

You're really young, aren't you?

Look, my husband and I have been married for a long time. But as long as we still have our own things, not doing everything together, and we believe in the love that we share, we'll be just fine. Space is a good thing.

GWEN

What kind of space are you talking about?

LADYB

It differs. Sometimes a good conversation with someone else can be very satisfying.

GWEN

I never thought of love in those terms.

LADYB

You'd do well to remember it, for when you're married as long as we've been.

GWEN

I don't really think about that stuff yet.

LADYB

You're still young and innocent and sweet. And cute.

GWEN

[giggles]

LADYB

And sometimes there's a certain spark which you can't ignore.

GWEN

What kind of...

SIRB

[from within] Darling? I have a question about these documents you gave me to sign.

LADYB

Let me tell you something about love and marriage. [kisses GWEN twice] Sometimes, you just need to spice things up. [exits]

SCENE 10

[LADYB and SIRB are sitting in their office. GWEN has just joined them.]

SIRB

Good afternoon, Gawain. I hope you had a fruitful day?

GWEN

I did, Sir B. A great, fruitful day.

SIRB

Where are Sat and Angel?

GWEN

I don't think they're coming, sir. They're ill... They gave each other the flu. Now, to honour our agreement. [kisses SIRB twice]

SIRB

You don't have the flu, do you?

GWEN

No.

SIRB

Good... So... You had a good day, I take it?

LADYB

Looks like it.

SIRB

And have you found out anything that's helpful to me? Us. Helpful to us?

GWEN

I think I did. Dan from Human Resources wants to quit his job because of the new bathroom tiles. He doesn't like the colour.

SIRB

How strange. I like that colour.

GWEN

O? You like green?

LADYB

This is actually an interesting bit of information. Keep up the good work.

SIRB

Yes. We're curious what you'll find tomorrow. You can go now, Gawain.

GWEN

See you tomorrow Sir, milady. [exits]

SIRB

Told you this plan would work.

LADYB

For once, I think you're right.

SIRB

[smug] Come again? [LADYB leers at him]

Well, it's good to know. We'll need to make sure that Dan finishes the Synergy report before he leaves the company. It's very important. Honey, could you tell him to do that?

LADYB

Why don't you do it yourself?

SIRB

Because... you always do it.

LADYB

You're the CEO.

SIRB

O. Okay. I'll do it.

LADYB

By the way, darling. Do you know what's going on with the Penwin account and the Green Chapel store?

SIRB

When we acquired Penwin I gave it to Liz. She runs that branch now. Says she has big plans for it. Why do you ask? Does it have anything to do with...?

LADYB

Maybe.

SCENE 11

[SAT has spent the night at the company, in the cupboard. He is still in there, unbeknownst to his colleagues and to the audience. GWEN and ANGEL enter and go sit at the coffee corner.]

GWEN

Last day already!

ANGEL

Finally.

GWEN

It's not that bad. But I am getting tired of pretending to be a dude. It's exhausting.

ANGEL

Have you gathered any clues about that green guy yet?

GWEN

None. And I'm supposed to meet him tomorrow! And I don't even know where!

ANGEL

So, to summarize. Tomorrow you have to meet a man you don't know in an unknown location to answer a question you don't know the answer to - and if you fail, your uncle loses his company and it'll be your fault entirely?

GWEN

Yep.

ANGEL

Which line would you prefer on your gravestone? 'Died of shame' or 'Pretty but stupid'?

GWEN

[half-amused] Stop it! I really thought I was helping my uncle. At least you're back to your old cynical self.

ANGEL

I calmed down after I got home yesterday. I think I might have been very mean to Sat yesterday, even by my standards.

GWEN

Well, you were emotional. You thought you were going to lose Buster.

ANGEL

It's not that I would hate living with Sat. I've known him for a long time and I don't, you know, despise him. He can be sweet sometimes. He just jumped me with the question yesterday. I don't like being caught off guard.

GWEN

We need to get back to work.

ANGEL

Do we have to?

GWEN

Yes. Time for me to be a man again.

ANGEL

'Look at me, I'm Gawain, I'm a man.'

GWEN

That's not how I talk!

ANGEL

'That's no how I talk'

GWEN

Stop it, Angel!

ANGEL

You sound like Sat when you say that.

GWEN

'Look at me, I'm Sat, I have a beard.'

ANGEL

'I'm Sat, I'm too blind to recognize a girl when she's right in front of me.'

[they get up]

GWEN

He really has no clue, does he?

[they exit]

SAT

[Emerges from the cupboard, completely baffled, carrying a teddy bear. He sets the bear down and talks to it.]

I'm not sure what just happened. Gawain is a girl. That's astonishing. He... I mean, she is looking for a green man. That's really weird. And Angel doesn't despise me. That's... nice. That's nice. I hope we can still become roommates. But what should I say when I walk into them? I'm bad at lying.

O, someone's coming!

[gets back into the cupboard]

[DAN enters to get coffee. After a moment, SIRB enters.]

SIRB

Dan, I was looking for you.

DAN

What do you want from me?

SIRB

Your report on Synergy. I'd like to have that sometime soon.

DAN

O, that old thing. [unconvincing] I'm totally working on it.

SIRB

From what I hear, you're working on your resignation letter.

DAN

What? Those are just rumours. I'll get you the Synergy thing..
sometime. I promise.

SIRB

Okay then.

[DAN starts to walk off]

SIRB

Wait. I can't work on promises, Dan. I need that report. Or else..

DAN

O, shove it. Yes, I'm quitting. And no, you won't get the report.
What are you going to do, fire me? Boo, I'm so scared.

SIRB

I'm your boss..

DAN

You're not the boss around here.

SIRB

[low voice] Dan, if you screw me on this, then so help me God I will
destroy your career before you can say 'olive-green'.

DAN

I'll get on it immediately. [exit]

SIRB

[high voice] Thank you.

[SAT stumbles out of the cupboard again.]

SIRB

Sat? What were you doing in there?

SAT

I spent the night here, Sir B. I hope you don't mind. My mother
kicked me out and my best friend says she won't live with me.

SIRB

Goodness, man. You shouldn't let people walk over you like that.
[exits]

SAT

[to his teddy bear] This morning is getting weirder by the minute.

[enter ANGEL and GWEN]

GWEN

Hi Sat. We were just looking for you. Where have you been all morning?

SAT

[mumbles]

GWEN

I beg your pardon?

SAT

I was nowhere. I was just around, walking somewhere and going this way but I didn't see you guys this morning so we were obviously not in the same place and definitely not in the cupboard.

GWEN

What?

SAT

I... I was in the cupboard and I know you're a girl.

GWEN

O no! No! You didn't tell anyone else, did you?

SAT

Nobody! And I won't tell anyone either, I swear!

ANGEL

You heard us talking? What were you doing in the cupboard?

SAT

I slept there. I didn't have anywhere else to go.

GWEN

You poor thing!

ANGEL

You were spying on us? And you heard all the stuff we said about you?

SAT

I wasn't spying, but I did hear that stuff. It wasn't that bad. Some of it was nice. Angel, you're mean, but you can be nice sometimes and I like you. I hope we can be friends again?

ANGEL

I don't hate you either. You can be weird and annoying but you're.. tolerable. Sometimes you're even nice. Friends.

SAT

Best friends?

ANGEL

Sure.

SAT

Roomies?

ANGEL

... What the hell, why not?

GWEN

Yay! And Buster will be saved! Now all we have to do is finish our assignment for today. Now scram and go be best friends somewhere else. I'll see if I can learn anything new from Liz today.

[SAT and ANGEL exit. LIZ enters.]

LIZ

Hey Gawain. Glad you're here. Dan won't talk to me this morning. [incredulous] He says he's got work to do. What's up with that?! Anyway, what's new with you?

GWEN

Sat and Angel are friends again and they're going to be roommates.

LIZ

So the fight and the drama ended?

GWEN

Yes.

LIZ

Damn it.

GWEN

So, anyway.. You still have to tell me where you got your shoes from.

LIZ

Ah yes. Sir B gave them to me.

GWEN

He did?

LIZ

Well, he doesn't know about it. But he sure paid for them. You see, I can access the company's funds for so-called 'unexpected expenses'. And I quite unexpectedly bought some shoes.

GWEN

Wow.

LIZ

Impressive, isn't it? I've been doing it for years. Nobody ever noticed. Anyway, back to work. See you around.

[exits]

SCENE 12

[GWEN is still on stage after LIZ left, she starts pouring herself some coffee. LADYB walks onstage wearing a green scarf]

GWEN

Hi Lady B, how are you? You are wearing an awesome scarf!

LADYB

Really do you think?

GWEN

Yeah, I sure do. That is a wonderful colour on you.

LADYB

You can have it if you want it.

GWEN

No I could never accept a gift like that!

LADYB

Seriously, take it! I was thinking of giving you a gift anyway!

GWEN

Why?

LADYB

To remember me by of course! Anyway, this scarf is my husband's, he won't even notice it's gone.

GWEN

Then I really cannot accept.

LADYB

As if you have a choice. This is a special scarf and I'm giving it to a special person. You. Plus, he hardly ever wears this.

[LADY B wraps scarf around Gwen and kisses her three times]

LADYB

That colour looks good on you as well!

GWEN

Thanks I guess..

LADYB

Now, Gawain. You have to promise me something.

GWEN

What?

LADYB

This must be our little secret, understand?

GWEN

But I have an agreement with Sir B.

LADYB

... And with me. And I am asking you to keep this gift between the two of us.

GWEN

But...

LADYB

Can you promise me that?

GWEN

Ok. Yes, I promise.

LADYB

Good.

GWEN

Thank you for this gift Lady B.

LADYB

You're welcome.

GWEN

One more question though. You are sure it was your husband's?

LADYB

Yeah why?

GWEN

Nothing, just, I feel like I have seen it somewhere before.. I just can't recall where..

LADYB

Loads of people probably have it. Or maybe you have seen it on TV or something.

GWEN

Yeah maybe.. Anyway, thanks! Our little secret!

LADYB

Yes, our little secret.

SCENE 13

[SIRB, LADYB, GWEN (without scarf), SAT and ANGEL are in the office]

SIRB

Last day guys! And gal of course.

LADYB

Tell us, what do you have for us today?

GWEN

We have uncovered rather shocking news, Sir.

SIRB

Come out with it then!

GWEN

Liz, from accounting, has admitted to me that she has been using funds from the company for personal expenses.

LADYB

Do you have proof?

GWEN

She told me so herself and she showed me the -very expensive I might add- shoes which she bought with the money.

SIRB

Wow.

LADYB

We will have to confirm these allegations of course

SIRB

Yes, of course.

LADYB

But if what you say is true, we will fire her. Great job.

SIRB

Yes, great job! We will call her in right away.

[SIRB grabs the phone and calls LIZ]

SIRB

Hi Liz. Could you come into my office for a moment?

. . .

(low voice) No Liz. Right now.

[hangs up the phone]

(to Gwen)

Was that everything you had for us today?

GWEN

Oh wait no, I almost forgot.

SIRB

What did you forget..?

[GWEN kisses SIRB three times]

SIRB

Three kisses?!

GWEN

Yup

SIRB

And that's it?

GWEN

Ehm.. Yes.

LADYB

Well, back to work then. You have three days of rapps and assignments to get back to.

ANGEL

That is unfair.

SAT

We will get on it right away!

ANGEL

Ugh.

[LIZ knocks on the door]

LADYB (to ANGEL, SAT and GWEN)

That will be Liz, so this would be your cue to leave..

[GWEN, ANGEL and SAT exit, LIZ enters]

LIZ

What can I do for you Sir?

SIRB

Something has come to our attention about you Liz.

LADYB

Nice shoes.

LIZ

Thanks, I just.. Oh. Wait.

SIRB

I not sorry to inform you that you are fired. Effective immediately.

LIZ

But you can't do that. You have no proof.

LADYB

Those shoes are proof enough. It's over Liz.

LIZ

But I was going to make the Penwin stores successful! I had the greatest business-plan to present to you! I was already throwing out the old rubbish and replacing it with stuff that sells - entertainment glossies, tabloid newspapers, biographies of sports figures and B-list celebrities. It could have been glorious!

SIRB

I'm sorry, Liz. You're fired.

[LIZ exits]

LADYB

Darling. I'll take over the Penwin account if you don't mind.

SIRB

And leave me on my own? Why?

LADYB

Because I think I'll feel at home there. And because I think you'll do just fine on your own.

SIRB

Really? You trust me?

LADYB

Yes, darling.

SIRB

[low voice] Very well then.

[blackout]

SCENE 14

[GWEN, SAT and ANGEL are standing in the coffee corner]

GWEN

This is a disaster!

SAT

No it isn't. We found out really useful information right.

GWEN

That's not what I was talking about Sat.

ANGEL

I thought I told you this.. Gwen is here to spy for her uncle's company, Round Table incorporated.

GWEN

And if I haven't figured out who the Green Man is by tomorrow it will be my fault my uncle lost his job. [starts sobbing]

[Both ANGEL and SAT don't know what to do to help GWEN]

SAT

I am sure everything will be fine.

ANGEL

You are not going to fix anything by crying.

GWEN

I know [sobs some more]. It is just. I only wanted to help him.

SAT

I'm sure he knows that.

ANGEL

How can you know that?

SAT

Shut up, Angel.

GWEN

I don't even know where to meet him!

ANGEL

Assuming it's a him.

GWEN

That's the only thing I'm pretty sure about.

ANGEL

You're also pretty sure that he has something to do with Morgana Industries right?

GWEN

Yeah, it is the only logical explanation. But that still doesn't solve my problem with where I have to meet him!

SAT

Where did you meet last time?

GWEN

He kind of came barging in during my uncle's 15 year jubilee party. At Round Table Inc.

SAT

Wouldn't it make sense for you to just meet him there?

GWEN

Maybe..

ANGEL

It's worth a shot.

GWEN

You know what. He is the one who set the challenge. I will go to Round Table Inc. and he will just have to find me.

ANGEL

That's the spirit!

SAT

What will happen when you meet him there?

ANGEL

Shut up Sat!

SAT

Oh sorry.

GWEN

I don't know. I guess I'll find out tomorrow.. Wish me luck!
[exits]

ANGEL

Hmm I might even miss her once she is fired

SAT

Why would she be fired?

ANGEL

If this green man is someone who works at Morgana this story is going to be big tomorrow and Bertie will find out she has been lying.

SAT

But why would they fire her?

ANGEL

She came here to spy on the company, she pretended to be someone else, ... she is for sure not going to come back to work here tomorrow.

SAT

Maybe they won't find out.

ANGEL

They will. Even with Dan and Liz out of the picture, word of something as big as this will surely get around.

SAT

I guess we'll just have to see.

ANGEL

Wanna bet?

[SAT and ANGEL exit]

[blackout]

ACT 4
SCENE 14

[Gwen is standing in the middle of the podium alone, she is wearing the scarf]

GWEN

Green ehm.. man? This is where we supposed to meet, right? Where are you?

[BAM BAM BAM GREEN LIGHT EVERYTHING: GREEN MAN enters]

GREENMAN

Hahahahaha Hi. Welcome Gwen. It is good to see you again.

[Gwen remains quiet]

GREENMAN [circles Gwen]

First, let's revisit the agreement shall we. You, Gwen, the niece of Arthur, CEO of Round Table Inc., agreed to a challenge. I gave you one week to uncover my identity. The stakes are high. The company. So now Gwen my question is: WHO. AM. I?

GWEN

Well..... [fumbling with the scarf]

GREENMAN

Speak up you fool! Is the company worth this little to you?! You should be ashamed of yourself! I will ask again. WHO. AM. I?

GWEN

I know for sure you are someone who works at Morgana Industries?
[She fumbles a bit more with the scarf, as if she is hot or it is too tight around her neck]

GREENMAN

So many people work there. I am starting to get the idea you haven't solved the puzzle. I will give you one more chance Gwen and then the Round Table will be mine! WHO. AM. I?

[Gwen fumbles more with the scarf, then takes it off.]

GWEN

WAIT! That's it! Now I remember where I saw this scarf before! I knew there was something different about you when you walked in here! This is your scarf!

GREENMAN

It might be, or it might not be! What does that have to do with anything. You are losing this challenge Gwen!

GWEN

No I am not! I have solved it! Lady B gave me this scarf! Oh my god! She said it was her husbands. But it yours. So that means. YOU. ARE. SIR. B!!!! It must be you!

GREENMAN

Might be? Might not be?

GWEN

Don't try to might-might-not-me. It's you, it's obvious. It has to be you. It has been you all this time.

GREENMAN

Yeah?

GWEN

Yeah.

GREENMAN

Ah bollocks. Gwen, you have won the challenge. Morgana Industries will not take over the Round Table. Turns out you won't have to worry about the future of the company. I have one question for you though: How did you get that scarf?

GWEN [in her manly pose and voice]

Somebody offered it to me as a gift. Gawain at your service.

GREENMAN

Wait, did you and my wife...?

GWEN

We might have, we might not have.

GREENMAN

Well played Gwen, well played. I'll have to ask my wife. Oh and of course, you are fired.

GWEN

I didn't expect anything less. It is the first time I have been fired though... Do you mind if I just tell people I decided to leave Morgana myself?

GREENMAN

Yes.

GWEN

Why?

GREENMAN

Because I fired you. And you will have to wear that shame.

GWEN

Fine.

GREENMAN

You can keep the scarf though. I don't want it back.

GWEN

Why thank you Sir B. I will keep it as a souvenir. To remember this adventure.

[GREEN MAN exits left humming, the light slowly fade back to original, GWEN exits right]

SCENE 15

[The narrator walks on stage, as he concludes the story all the characters walk up on stage when they are named, they all wear something green]

NARRATOR

And this is how our story concludes. Gwen has saved her uncle's company and they live happily ever after. Or whatever the modern equivalent of that is. Gwen kept in touch with Sat and Angel of course, and though they bickered for the rest of their lives, Sat and Angel were the best friends Gwen could have wished for. Sir Bertilak and his wife continued to run a successful company. Without any more appearances of the Green Man however. Liz and Dan made a fortune for themselves after being fired from the company. They moved to LA, both married rich fortune seekers and neither of them had to work another day in their lives. And Arthur? Well I can safely say, Arthur was happy to have his company back. He changed a few things around, hired Gwen as his personal assistant and the company flourished as it had never done before. This is how our story ends, this is where we say GOODBYE.

THE END

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