

Comparison of loyalty
and honor in Ianval,
chevrefoil, and sir
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Comparison of Loyalty and Honor Even though Marie de France integrated loyalty and honor into Chevrefoil and Lanval, the poet writing Sir Gawain and the Green Knight elevated both loyalty and honor to exceed previous works.

While Chevrefoil portrayed loyalty and honor while exposing complex disloyalty and dishonor, Lanval depicted both loyalty and honor in moderation with minimal disloyalty and dishonor, and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight characterized multifaceted loyalty and honor with minute disloyalty and dishonor. Marie de France revealed loyalty with disloyalty and honor with dishonor in Chevrefoil through the actions of Tristan and Queen Ysolt. Tristan, the King's nephew, and the Queen loved each other. King Mark was full of angry spite / At his nephew Tristan because the knight / Loved the Queen (11-13a). By loving Queen Ysolt, Tristan not only dishonored the King, but also showed his disloyalty to his uncle, and Queen Ysolt demonstrated her disloyalty and dishonor to her husband by loving Tristan. At the same time, the lovers showed their loyalty to each other, by keeping a forbidden love alive. Being banished to South Wales by the King, The King gave orders / Dismissing Tristan from his borders. (13b-14), Tristan honored his uncle's exile for one year.

Yet, Tristan still loved the Queen and returned to Cornwall, again dishonoring the King, so that he may be able to see his lover, but honoring his love for Queen Ysolt in the process, From his homeland he departed / To Cornwall where dwelled the Queen (26-27). Tristan hid himself in the woods, prepared a note for Queen Ysolt, and waited for her to pass by, again demonstrating his loyalty to her and his honor of his love for her. When Queen Ysolt passed by and saw the note, she knew it to be from Tristan.

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She asked her accompanying knights to stop for a rest, and proceeded to search for her lover: She asked the knights, riding beside her As an escort, to abide her: She wanted to get down and rest. And they agreed to her request. A few steps from the road she strayed Into the woods and came upon Him she loved more than anyone Great joy there was between those two ??” They spoke all that they wanted to (77-80, 84-88). Their time together again illustrated their honor and loyalty to one another.

In Lanval, Marie de France conveyed loyalty and honor in moderation in the actions of Lanval himself. ??? The knight whose tale I want to tell, / Who served King Arthur very well, ??? (39-40), revealed that Lanval was loyal to King Arthur. After the queen attempted to seduce Lanval, he once again demonstrated his loyalty to, and thus his honor of, King Arthur: ??? Lady, ??? he said, ??? Hold me excused Because your love must be refused. I ??™ ve served the king for many a day; My faith to him I won ??™ t betray. Never for love, and not for you, Would I be to my lord untrue ??? (267-272). However, Lanval strayed from his loyalty and honor when he betrays the one he loves. His amie had requested his vow that he would not tell others of her. ??? There ??™ s no command, you may be sure, / Wise or foolish, what you will, / Which I don ??™ t promise to fulfill ??? (122-124).

Yet, after his rejection of the queen and her accusation of his being homosexual, Lanval breaks the vow, ??? My lady queen, ??? was his retort, / ??? I know nothing of that sport. / But I love one, and she loves me ??? (289-291). Lanval did attempt to rectify his disloyalty and once again prove his loyalty and honor to his amie by refusing to call for her when King Arthur ??™ s court decreed that he do so. Lanval ??™ s amie conveyed her <https://assignbuster.com/comparison-of-loyalty-and-honor-in-lanval-chevrefoil-and-sir-gawain-and-the-green-knight/>

loyalty and honor to Lanval by traveling to find him, by remaining faithful to the promise she gave him of unending wealth, and by rescuing him from the court??™s judgment:???" Lanval, fair friend, for you I??™ ve come, For you I??™ ve traveled far from home.

You??™ ll be more glad and prosperous Than ever was emperor or king, For I love you over everything???" (109-114). Whatsoever thing he wanted She promised him that she would grant it ??" Money, as fast as he can spend it, No matter how much, she will send it (134-136).???" King, I have loved one of your band ??" It??™ s Lanval, there you see him stand. I would not have the man ill-used ??" In your court he has been accused Of lies he spoke???" (619-623a). Lanval??™ s amie??™ s unmistakable honor and loyalty to him uncovered the Queen??™ s dishonor and disloyalty to the King, ???" The queen committed perjury; / He never asked her for her love???" (624-625). In Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Gawain was the epitome of loyalty and honor, except for one important incident.

First, when the Green Knight challenges King Arthur, Gawain confirmed his loyalty to the King by being the only one who rose to the occasion to take the place of the King in the challenge: Gawain by Guenevere Toward the kind doth now incline:???" I beseech, before all here, That this melee may be mine.???" Would you grant me the grace,???" said Gawain to the king,???" To be gone from this bench and stand by you there???" (339-344). The court assays the claim, And in counsel all unite To give Gawain the game And release the king outright (362-365).

Gawain further exhibited his loyalty and honor for King Arthur by fulfilling the challenge he was given. Gawain next established his loyalty and honor, this time to his Christmas host, by refusing the advances of the host's wife on three different occasions. On the first day, "You are bound to a better man," the bold knight said (1276); on the second day, "Thus she tested his temper and tried many a time, / Whatever her true intent, to entice him to sin, / But so fair was his defense that no fault appeared" (1549-1551); and on the third day, "His courtesy concerned him, lest crass he appear, / But more his soul's mischief, should he commit sin / And belie his loyal oath to the lord of that house" (1773-1775). At the same time, Gawain accepted kisses each day from the Queen and kept the secret from the host. In doing so, Gawain demonstrated honor to the Queen and dishonor to the host.

Again, Gawain proved his loyalty and honor to the host by upholding his end of the game they played, that each would exchange winnings at the end of the day of whatever gifts or prey they acquired, "And Gawain," said the good host, "agree now to this: / Whatever I win in the woods I will give you at eve, / And all you have earned you must offer to me" (1105-1107). The first night, when the host gave Gawain a portion of the deer he killed, Gawain gave the host the kiss he received. On the second night, Gawain exchanged the two kisses he received for the boar the host presented.

The third night, however, Gawain displayed his disloyalty and dishonor by only presenting the host with the three kisses the Queen had given him, not presenting the green sash she had given him for protection. Gawain left to <https://assignbuster.com/comparison-of-loyalty-and-honor-in-lanval-chevrefoil-and-sir-gawain-and-the-green-knight/>

complete his journey, to find the Green Chapel to finish the challenge from the Green Knight. He was offered an escape by a guide, who stated that Gawain could leave and no one would know. Gawain's answer affirmed his loyalty and honor to his word given to the Green Knight in the challenge: "Fair fortune befall you for your friendly words! And conceal this day's deed I doubt not you would, But though you never told the tale, if I turned back now, Forsook this place for fear, and fled, as you say, I were a caitiff coward; I could not be excused. But I must befall to the Chapel!" (2127-2132a). When Gawain finds the Green Chapel, he again verified his loyalty and honor. He bowed his head for the Green Knight to chop, as was the challenge. After the Green Knight cut Gawain's neck, the Green Knight revealed that he is actually the host and reprimanded Gawain for keeping the green sash, although he understood that it was out of fear.

Gawain's response attested once again to his loyalty and honor as he confessed to the host his fear and folly, "So gripped with grim rage that his great heart shook. / All the blood of his body burned in his face / As he shrank back in shame from the man's sharp speech" (2370-2373). As this paper has shown, loyalty and honor were incorporated into Middle English writings in varying degrees. In Chevrefoil loyalty and honor were illustrated, while disloyalty and dishonor were also exposed.

Lanval expressed loyalty and honor with limited disloyalty and dishonor. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight exemplified loyalty and honor with lesser disloyalty and dishonor.