

# The Snow Goose

## Getting Started

- \* When one cares for another, one is repaid with trust. Have you ever helped anyone out of courtesy and in return were you repaid in kindness?

One November afternoon, three years after Rhayader had come to the Great Marsh, a child approached the lighthouse studio. In her arms, she carried a burden. She was no more than twelve, slender, dirty, nervous and timid as a bird, but beneath the **grime** as eerily beautiful as a marsh fairy. She was fair, with deep-set, violet coloured eyes.

She was very frightened of the ugly man she had come to see. But greater than her fear was her need; for she came to know that this **ogre** who lived in the lighthouse had magic that could heal injured things.

She had never seen Rhayader before and was close to fleeing in panic at the dark figure that appeared at the studio door—the black head and beard, the hump, and the crooked claw.

She stood there staring, calm like a disturbed marsh bird for instant flight. But his voice was deep and kind when he spoke to her, 'What is it, child?'

She stood her ground, and then moved timidly forward. The thing she carried in her arms was a large



white bird, and it was quite still. There were stains of blood on its whiteness and on her **kirtle** where she had held it to her.

The girl placed it in his arms. 'I found it. It is hurt. Is it still alive?'

'Yes. Yes, I think so. Come in, child, come in.'

Rhayader went inside, bearing the bird, which he placed upon a table, where it moved feebly. Curiosity overcame fear. The girl followed and found herself in a room warmed by a coal fire, shining with many coloured pictures that covered the walls.

The bird fluttered. With his good hand, Rhayader spread one of its immense white **pinions**. The end was beautifully tipped with black. Rhayader looked and marvelled, and said: 'Child; where did you find it?'

'In t' marsh, sir, where fowlers had been. What-what is it, sir?'

'It's a snow goose from Canada. But how in all heaven came it here?'

The name seemed to mean nothing to the little girl. Her deep violet eyes, shining out of the dirt on her thin face, were fixed with concern on the injured bird.

She said: 'Can 'ee heal it, sir?'

'Yes, yes,' said Rhayader. 'We will try. Come, you shall help me.'

There were scissors and bandages and **splints** on a shelf, and he was marvellously **deft**, even with the crooked claw that managed to hold things.

He said, 'Ah, she has been shot, poor thing. Her leg is broken, and the wing tip, but not badly. We can bandage it, and in the spring the feathers will grow and she will be able to fly again. We'll bandage it close to her body, so that she cannot move it until it has set, and then we'll make a splint for the poor leg.'



KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY  
CLASS - VI, SUBJECT - ENGLISH II  
CHAPTER - THE SNOW GOOSE.

WORDS TO KNOW.

- (i) Grime : dirt.
- (ii) Eerily : Strangely.
- (iii) Ogre : a terrifying person.
- (iv) Kirtle : an old-fashioned loose gown.
- (v) pinions : the outer part of the bird's wing including the flight feathers.
- (vi) 'Can 'ee heal it, Sir?' : Can you heal or cure it?
- (vii) ~~Strips~~ of rigid
- (vii) Splints : Strips of rigid material to support a broken bone.
- (viii) deft : Quick and skilful.