CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

Lepanto

G. K. Chesterton · *1911 (collected 1915) · English original, as hosted (from PG #31184)*

White founts falling in the Courts of the sun. So this complete narrative poem begins. Later: The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke. It closes with Cervantes on his galley setting the sword back in the sheath. G. K. Chesterton, first published 1911, collected in Poems, 1915, PG #31184; this file is the Lepanto poem itself, not the whole volume. For grades 9–12. A Christian battle-poem; no gore spectacle. Quote this wording.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read this file as Chesterton's complete Lepanto, opening with white founts falling and closing with Cervantes sheathing a sword, rather than as the whole 1915 Poems volume, or as a later shortened school extract only?

"White founts falling in the Courts of the sun, And the"
Opening

G. K. Chesterton's Lepanto, first published 1911, collected in Poems, 1915, Project Gutenberg #31184. This file is the poem itself, complete as hosted, not the whole Poems volume. It opens: White founts falling in the Courts of the sun. The Pope calls the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross, and is later in his chapel before day or battle broke. It closes with Cervantes on his galley setting the sword back in the sheath, and with Don John of Austria, who has set his people free. For grades 9–12. A Christian battle-poem; no gore spectacle. Quote this wording.

KEY CHARACTERS

Don John of Austria
Named in the refrain, hidden in the smoke, and later said to have set his people free

The Pope
Who calls the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross, and who is later in his chapel before day or battle broke

Cervantes
Who, at the close, on his galley, sets the sword back in the sheath

HOW TO BEGIN LEPANTO

> *"White founts falling in the Courts of the sun, And the"*
> Opening

> *"The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke, (Don John of"*
> Before day or battle broke

Grades 6–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

White Founts Falling

OPENING

White founts falling in the Courts of the sun. The poem begins with falling water, and with a court, before a battle is named.

- Keep "White founts falling" and "Courts of the sun."
- 9–12.
- A complete short poem, not the whole 1915 volume.
- Quote this wording.

> *"White founts falling in the Courts of the sun, And the"*
> Opening

02

Swords about the Cross

THE CALLING

And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross. The calling is of kings, and of a cross, after the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss.

- Keep "kings of Christendom" and "swords about the Cross."
- 9–12. A Christian battle-poem; no gore spectacle.
- Quote this wording.
- Not a later shortened extract only.

> *"And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross. The cold queen"*
> The calling

03

The Pope Was in His Chapel

BEFORE DAY OR BATTLE BROKE

The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke, (Don John of Austria is hidden in the smoke.) The chapel is named before the battle, and a hidden name is spoken in a parenthesis.

- Keep "before day or battle broke," and the parenthesis as this file prints it.
- 9–12.
- A prayer, not a spectacle of fighting.
- Quote this wording.

> *"The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke, (Don John of"*
> Before day or battle broke

04

Cervantes Sets the Sword Back

THE CLOSE

Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the sheath. The poem does not close on a wound, but on a sword set back, and on a people set free.

- Keep "sets the sword back in the sheath."
- 9–12. No gore spectacle.
- Don John of Austria has set his people free, as this file prints the line.
- Quote this wording.

> *"Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the sheath (Don John of"*
> The close

05

Chesterton, the Poem, Not the Whole 1915 Volume

THE EDITION

G. K. Chesterton, first published 1911, collected in Poems, 1915, Project Gutenberg #31184. This file is the Lepanto poem itself, complete as hosted, not the whole Poems volume. For grades 9–12. A Christian battle-poem; no gore spectacle. Quote this wording. One short complete poem; do not invent what the file does not say.

- Name Chesterton, 1911/1915, and this file as Lepanto, not the whole volume.
- 9–12. No gore spectacle.
- White founts, a chapel, and a sword set back.
- Quote this English.

> *"White founts falling in the Courts of the sun, And the"*
> Opening

White founts, in the courts of the sun | Swords called about the Cross | A chapel, before day or battle broke | A sword set back in the sheath | A people set free

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 6–12

1. It opens: "White founts falling in the Courts of the sun."
2. "And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross." Later: "The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke, (Don John of Austria is hidden in the smoke.)"
3. It closes: "Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the sheath," and "Don John of Austria / Has set his people free!"
4. G. K. Chesterton, first published 1911, collected in Poems, 1915, PG #31184. This file is the Lepanto poem itself, not the whole volume. For grades 9–12. A Christian battle-poem; no gore spectacle. Quote this wording.

Quotations are verbatim from the English original, as hosted (from PG #31184), Project Gutenberg #31184: G. K. Chesterton, Poems (London: Burns & Oates; New York: Dodd, Mead, 1915), the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/lepanto/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.