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Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

John Ridland
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This well-known classic is translated into modern English verse in this enchanting and captivating book. The activities and challenges faced by the knight Sir Gawain are described in great and sometimes graphic detail as the story moves between what the author calls "hunting" and "bedroom" (interior) scenes. The story follows Gawain's struggles to live up to the high standards of a knight while he also struggles for survival in the midst of his human frailties and weaknesses. The narrative is structured into four parts, as in the original, each centered around a different event or tale, and even includes a few black-and-white illustrations of the scenes at certain key breaks.

John Ridland, who taught English at the University of California, Santa Barbara, for over forty years, here delivers a version of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* that covers every word of the original and preserves the same line numbering. What gives this translation life, however, is Ridland's meticulous care in crafting the meter and rhythm of the translation, using tools such as judicious alliteration. The result is a text that preserves the lyrical quality of the original, even if the original meter is no longer relevant. The book also contains Ridland's introduction and notes, helping to shape the understanding of this text. The resulting work is a must-read for anyone interested in tales of King Arthur, medieval knights, and the wondrous folklore of that period.

STEPHANIE BUCKLIN (Fall 2016)