

IVANHOE

by Walter Scott



THE AUTHOR

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, the son of a lawyer. He initially planned to follow in his father's footsteps, but soon took a dislike for the law and immersed himself in reading and writing. His early successes were long narrative poems, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810). When his popularity began to wane as other poets of the Romantic Age rose to outshine him, he turned to historical novels, beginning with *Waverly* (1814), a novel so popular that he produced a long string of sequels based on the history of Scotland, including *Rob Roy* (1818) and *Quentin Durward* (1823). The success of his romances made him England's most popular novelist during his lifetime. He was knighted by George IV in 1820.

His most popular novel, *Ivanhoe* (1819), is not about Scotland at all, but takes place during the reign of Richard the Lion-Hearted near the end of the twelfth century. Richard had embarked on the Third Crusade in 1190, shortly after ascending the throne, leaving the country in the hands of his weak and avaricious brother, Prince John. Richard was a daring warrior and gained renown during the Crusade, but had little interest in the details of ruling a kingdom. John, meanwhile, was confronted with a power struggle between the Normans, who had conquered England in 1066, and the Saxons, most of whom had been reduced to peasantry by their conquerors, but among whom a few powerful lords remained. The Normans were systematically displacing the Saxons from their lands, causing many to join bands of outlaws in the forest, such as the one led by Robin Hood. Ivanhoe, a Saxon knight loyal to the Norman King Richard, serves as a bridge between the two cultures, as he must regain the favor of his Saxon father while helping restore Richard to his throne (Richard had been captured by the Duke of Austria and held for ransom; as the story begins, he has gained his freedom and is on his way back to England to regain his crown). *Ivanhoe* is also a beautiful love story centering around the quadrangle consisting of the protagonist, the Norman knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, the Saxon maiden Rowena, and Rebecca, a Jewish beauty.

PLOT SUMMARY

The novel begins with a brief description of England during the reign of Richard the Lion-Hearted, talking first about the consequences of the Norman Conquest under William the Conqueror. The focus of attention is the social division of England into the aristocratic Normans and the Saxon peasantry, and the corresponding linguistic separation between Norman French and Anglo-Saxon, which ultimately combined to form English. We first see two Saxon peasants, Gurth the swineherd and Wamba the jester, both the property of Cedric the Saxon, one of the few Saxons to own a substantial estate. As they walk down the road, they meet a group of men on horseback, led by Prior Aymer, the abbot of a Cistercian monastery who is known for his libertine behavior, and Brian de Bois-Guilbert, a Templar knight returned from the Holy Land. The riders ask the two peasants for directions to Cedric's castle, but are deliberately given the wrong ones. When they reach the intersection at which they must turn, they don't remember the directions given them by the peasants, so they ask a shabby-looking pilgrim who is sleeping at the crossroads. He takes them to the castle, which he seems to know very well. As they travel, the licentious monk and the cruel Templar speak of the matchless beauty of Cedric's ward, Lady Rowena.

Meanwhile, inside the castle Cedric is becoming impatient; his dinner is late and his servants, Gurth and Wamba, have not yet arrived - he fears his swine have been stolen and would hate to miss the evening's entertainment. Aymer and Bois-Guilbert are announced, and rudely demand food and lodging. Cedric takes the demands of hospitality seriously, so receives these hated Normans graciously, but warns Rowena that she need not appear unless she chooses to do so. At the end of the line of the guests' retainers, the pilgrim slips in unnoticed. Gurth and Wamba indeed arrive safely, and Cedric scolds them for causing him two hours' worth of needless trepidation, while Bois-Guilbert immediately recognizes them as the men who had given him wrong directions. Rowena comes to dinner despite Cedric's cautionary words, and Bois-Guilbert immediately concedes that Aymer had won their bet - she was indeed the fairest maiden he had ever seen. Rowena is anxious to hear about the Holy Land, but Cedric professes no interest, assuring her that his disobedient son was dead to him now. Bois-Guilbert has nothing to offer except news of the truce between the Crusaders and Saladin. He then offers to escort Rowena to the upcoming tournament at Ashby, but she politely declines. An elderly Jew named Isaac of York arrives at the castle and requests shelter. He is rudely received and insulted by guests and retainers alike; only the pilgrim treats him kindly. As the conversation continues, Aymer and Bois-Guilbert praise the courage of the military orders in the Holy Land, but speak with faint praise of Richard the Lion-Hearted and his knights. At this point the pilgrim speaks up and tells of a time when Richard and five of his knights had defeated three times the number of French knights, including Bois-Guilbert. The last-named English knight is one Ivanhoe, who defeated the proud Templar personally. Bois-Guilbert promises to get his revenge should Ivanhoe return safely to England, and the pilgrim assures him that he will have his opportunity. As the pilgrim goes to bed, Wamba tries to get him to tell more tales of the Holy Land, but he refuses. Soon one of Lady Rowena's maidens comes to fetch him; she, too, has questions to ask, largely concerning Ivanhoe, but he has little to share. Before retiring, he asks where Isaac is sleeping and finds that the Jew is in the room next to his own. Early the next morning, he rouses Isaac and warns him that Bois-Guilbert has told his messengers to rob the old man soon after he leaves the protection of the castle. The pilgrim offers to show the Jew a secret way out of the castle and accompany

him to safety beyond the lands of Cedric's hostile Norman neighbors, Reginald Front-de-Boeuf and Philip de Malvoisin, though Isaac pleads poverty and says he has nothing to pay the young man - this despite a suspiciously full bag hanging from his belt. He wakes Gurth the swineherd, who is unwilling to help in the escape until the pilgrim whispers something in his ear, after which he becomes surprisingly deferential. On the way, Isaac tells him of a Jewish friend of his from whom he can obtain a horse and armor for the tournament.

The next day is the day of the tournament, and people come from far and wide to view the spectacle. During the description of the setting of the tourney, we learn that Prince John has usurped the throne from his brother Richard the Lion-Hearted, who on the way home from the Crusades was captured and held for ransom by the Duke of Austria. John and his allies, Philip Augustus of France, the Templars and the Hospitallers, hope to profit from Richard's imprisonment and extend it as long as possible. The country is meanwhile falling into chaos. John himself is present at the tournament, and pays special attention to Isaac the Jew, from whom he is trying to borrow a large sum of money. Isaac is accompanied by his beautiful daughter Rebecca, who is noticed by all, some of whom openly express their admiration, though they regret that she is, after all, but a Jewess. Also present are the anonymous pilgrim and a tall man dressed in Lincoln green and carrying a longbow. Prince John has the honor of choosing the Queen of Love and Beauty - a lovely maiden who will have the honor of presenting the prizes for the tournament. He proposes Rebecca, but his courtiers object, arguing that even the Saxon Rowena would be a better choice. John decides to leave the choice up to the day's champion. In the first day's jousting, five great knights led by Bois-Guilbert, Front de Boeuf, and Malvoisin challenge all comers. After defeating all who oppose them, an unknown rider who fashions himself the Disinherited Knight takes the field and, beginning with Bois-Guilbert, defeats all five to stand as the champion of the day. The victor refuses to reveal his identity, but chooses Rowena as the Queen of Love and Beauty. Both politely refuse the Prince's invitation to the banquet that night, but are quite willing to assume their respective places for the melee on the following day.

Later, the squires of the five defeated knights bring their horses and armor to the Disinherited Knight as his rightful spoil or for ransom. He accepts a relatively small ransom from four of the knights and gives half to their squires for themselves and the other retainers. From Bois-Guilbert he accepts nothing, insisting that their battle is not finished until they have met in hand-to-hand combat. The Disinherited Knight, who is in reality the anonymous pilgrim, sends his squire, who is Gurth the swineherd, with the money to pay off the loan to Isaac the Jew with which the pilgrim had rented the armor. Isaac drives a hard bargain, but on his way home Gurth is met by Rebecca, who not only returns all the money, but gives him twenty zecchins to keep for himself. Gurth then must travel a dangerous path through thick undergrowth. There, as he fears, he is set upon by a band of thieves who take him to their leader. Having little choice, he tells them about the money he carries and where it came from, omitting only the name of his master. The bandits decide to let him keep his master's money, which had been well-earned in the tournament that day, and offer to let him keep his own if he can defeat one of their number with a quarterstaff. He succeeds in doing so and is escorted back to the tournament grounds by two of the thieves.

The next day, the last day of the tournament, is the grand melee, in which two bands of knights are arrayed against one another in a huge battle. One side is led by the challengers from the previous day, headed by Bois-Guilbert, while the other is led by the Disinherited Knight. The sides are evenly matched, and after several hours of combat few participants remain. Three of the

boldest and strongest fighters among the challengers, including Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Boeuf, gang up on the Disinherited Knight. He holds them off for a while, but he is obviously weakening. Suddenly a knight armed all in black, carrying no insignia, spurs his horse forward and unhorses two of the three challengers. Now faced only by Bois-Guilbert, the Disinherited Knight again defeats him to win the day. Prince John, still angry that his favorite Norman knights had fallen to the stranger the day before, chooses the Black Knight as the day's best fighter despite the Disinherited Knight's victory over Bois-Guilbert. But the Black Knight is nowhere to be found, and the Prince must again declare the Disinherited Knight the champion. When he comes forward to receive his prize, attendants remove his helmet and reveal beneath the pilgrim who had quietly visited Cedric's castle. That pilgrim is none other than Ivanhoe, the banished son of Cedric and the beloved of the beautiful Rowena. The brave knight then collapses and is found to have the point of a lance embedded in his side.

As the identity of the Disinherited Knight spreads among the spectators, it causes considerable consternation. John and his supporters recognize in Ivanhoe a loyal retainer of King Richard, and thus an enemy to their ambitions. Furthermore, John has given the fief granted to Ivanhoe by Richard to Reginald Front-de-Boeuf, and all fear he will try to reclaim his lands. John intends to send his own physician to tend to Ivanhoe's wounds, hoping to ensure that the young knight will not recover. He then suggests to his retainer Maurice de Bracy that Rowena would make a lovely bride. Before the matter can be discussed further, a messenger arrives from France with the news that Richard has made his escape from the Duke of Austria. John immediately cuts the tournament short and calls for a meeting of his followers at York. To keep the peasants from rioting because their amusements have been curtailed, John calls for the archery contest to take place a day early. Eight of the best archers in the kingdom enter, but Hubert is clearly the best. John then confronts the tall man in Lincoln green, who had insulted him the day before, and asks him why he is not competing. The man argues that the contest would be no challenge, and John presses him to participate. He defeats Hubert by splitting his arrow after the yeoman had hit the bull's-eye, then impresses the crowd by hitting a thin reed from the distance of a hundred yards. When John asks his name, he says he is Locksley, but refuses further information.

The night John holds a banquet to mark the end of the tournament. He invites a few Saxon nobles, including Cedric, though Ivanhoe is unable to come and Rowena pleads indisposition. John offers a toast to Ivanhoe, which Cedric refuses to take up, insisting that his son had alienated himself from the family by enlisting to serve a Norman (King Richard) and accepting as a fief what should have been his land by right. John and his nobles then spend the evening insulting the Saxons. He finally lifts a glass in honor of Cedric, then demands that the Saxon respond by offering a toast to a worthy Norman. The prince expects to hear a toast to himself, but instead hears Cedric toast Richard the Lion-Hearted, to far too much acclaim around the table to suit John and his followers. In the days that follow, Waldemar Fitzurse, John's chief advisor, does everything he can to rally John's supporters, bribing some with promises of wealth, some power, and some pleasure. Maurice de Bracy tells Fitzurse that he intends to imitate the Benjamites in the book of Judges and kidnap Rowena and force her to become his bride. When he tells Fitzurse that Bois-de-Guilbert will hold the captive for him after the kidnaping, Fitzurse warns him that the Templar was not likely to relinquish his captives easily.

Meanwhile, the Black Knight is traveling back roads and uncharted paths in order to keep his identity and presence in England a secret. One night he gets lost in the forest and entrusts his fate to his noble steed, who carries him to an isolated hermitage inhabited by an anchorite. The

monk at first refuses him entry, but the knight forces his way in and convinces the monk, known as the Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst, to offer him hospitality. After being fed water and dried peas, the knight remarks that the monk looks far stronger and healthier than one would expect on such a diet. Eventually the hermit brings out fine meat and wine, and the two have a feast together, though not before challenging one another to a contest of strength. The friar then brings out a harp and the two drink and sing together for the better part of the night.

When Ivanhoe falls at the end of the melee, Cedric, despite his animosity toward his son, moves to seek him out to give him medical care, but when he arrives where the champion had fallen, he finds that he has already been taken away by the attendants of a lady. He and his retinue then head home, having captured and bound the disobedient Gurth. On the way home, Cedric and Athelstane, another Saxon noble, discuss strategy for freeing the Saxons from their Norman overlords, or at least raising themselves to a place of consequence in the kingdom during the upcoming power struggle. Cedric's plan is to unite the Saxons behind Athelstane, a brave warrior, and have him marry Rowena, who is descended from Alfred the Great. The love between Rowena and Ivanhoe, in fact, had been one of the causes of his son's banishment, which however had failed to dampen the ardor the two felt for one another. Soon, however, Cedric and his party encounter Isaac and Rebecca in the forest; they have been abandoned by those they hired to guide them safely through the dangerous terrain. Before long, the entire party is set upon by bandits. Gurth and Wamba escape, but the others are captured. The two servants encounter Locksley and tell him what has happened. He realizes that the bandits are Front-de-Boeuf's men who are dressed to impersonate his own green-clad woodsmen. He gathers his men, in the process taking Gurth and Wamba to the hut of the hermit, where the monk and the Black Knight are still carousing. The two are enlisted to help rescue Cedric and his party.

We soon discover that the leaders of the party of kidnapers disguised as woodsmen are none other than Bois-Guilbert and de Bracy. The original intention was to stage the kidnaping, then have de Bracy ride to the rescue in order to win the heart of the fair Rowena. After receiving the warning from Fitzurse, however, de Bracy is unwilling to trust the Templar and insists instead on accompanying the party to the castle of Front-de-Boeuf, where they are to be held. Bois-Guilbert assures de Bracy that he has no designs on Rowena, but instead has decided to make Rebecca his own as well as seizing as much gold as possible from her father. When they arrive at the castle, the two women are separated from the others. Athelstane, the friend of the enraged Cedric, challenges Front-de-Boeuf to a duel for his role in the charade. Isaac of York, meanwhile, is confined to the dungeon. Soon Front-de-Boeuf appears and demands from him a thousand pounds of silver; if he refuses to deliver, he will be tortured on a hot grill. Isaac finally agrees to seek the ransom from his friends and begs permission to send Rebecca to get the money. Front-de-Boeuf, however, tells him that Rebecca has already been promised to Bois-Guilbert. Isaac then insists that he will give not a single shekel until Rebecca is restored to him in safety and purity. Front-de-Boeuf then prepares to torture the old man. While Front-de-Boeuf is occupied with Isaac, de Bracy is engaged in wooing Rowena. After a few lame attempts at courtly language, he turns to threats, warning her that unless she marries him she will never leave the castle. He also reveals that he knows the identity of the knight brought into the castle on Isaac's stretcher (Ivanhoe had been nursed by Rebecca after he had been gravely injured in the tournament) and threatens to reveal to Front-de-Boeuf that Ivanhoe is in his clutches - a revelation that would shortly lead to the death of Rowena's love. Furthermore, he tells her he will also kill Cedric and Athelstane. Rowena then breaks down in tears. At the same time, Bois-Guilbert is pouring out words of love

to Rebecca, insisting that he is willing to break his monastic vows to make her his mistress, by force if necessary. Rebecca threatens to jump out the window of the turret in which she is imprisoned if he dares to move a step closer. Bois-Guilbert yields and promises that he will take her only with her consent, though she doesn't believe him. All of this dire activity is halted abruptly when a bugle sounds outside the castle.

The clarion call indicates the delivery of a message for the inhabitants of the castle. Front-de-Boeuf and his companions are challenged to a confrontation in the name of Wamba the jester and Gurth the swineherd, supported by Robert Locksley and his men along with the Black Knight. They insist that the Normans immediately yield their captives or else the challengers, who number more than two hundred men, will storm the castle. The Normans respond with a message instructing the besiegers to send a priest into the castle to confess the captives, since they intend to execute them promptly. The men outside the castle at first want to send Friar Tuck, but he claims that he has no ability to fulfill the necessary function. Instead, Wamba is disguised in the friar's garments to gain intelligence from the prisoners. He enters the castle and is taken to Cedric and Athelstane, where he exchanges clothes with Cedric and sends the latter out to join the besiegers. On the way out, Cedric is met by an old woman named Ulrica, the daughter of a friend of his father. She had long been thought dead, but had in reality been captured by Front-de-Boeuf's father and held by force as his mistress. She was now a servant in the castle. She had taken pity on Rebecca and had set her free from her prison to nurse Ivanhoe. She arranges with Cedric to wave a red flag from the battlements after creating a diversion inside so that the invaders may more effectively storm the castle. Cedric is then escorted from the castle by Front-de-Boeuf, who thinks he is the priest sent by the besiegers. He gives Cedric a message to take to his supporters at York, calling on them to relieve the siege. After Cedric leaves, a monk by the name of Ambrose arrives at the castle; he is an emissary of Prior Aymer, who has been captured by Locksley and his men. He carries with him a ransom demand.

The inhabitants of the castle now realize that they must do battle with a vastly larger force, though untrained and with inferior weapons. The assailants join battle, led by the Black Knight, and succeed in breaching the outer fortifications of the castle. The Black Knight wounds Front-de-Boeuf in hand-to-hand combat, and the gigantic Norman warrior is carried into the castle by his fellows. As the battle proceeds, Rebecca describes it to Ivanhoe as she looks out the window of the room where he is imprisoned. When a lull occurs in the action as the assailants catch their breaths in preparation for assaulting the keep, which is still protected by a moat, Ivanhoe and Rebecca argue about the validity of the laws of chivalry; she considers them base and wasteful of human life, while he believes they express all that gives man dignity. Meanwhile, Bois-Guilbert and de Bracy discuss strategy. De Bracy argues that the captives should be surrendered, but the Templar cannot envision the ignominy of releasing unarmed travelers he has captured after an assault by simple peasants and yeomen. Elsewhere in the castle, Front-de-Boeuf lies dying. In his death agonies he is visited by Ulrica, who tells him that she has gained her revenge by setting the castle on fire. She then locks him in the room and leaves him to his fate. Outside the castle, Locksley and his archers keep the defenders busy while the Black Knight supervises the building of a floating bridge to cross the moat. When they become aware of the fire, de Bracy and Bois-Guilbert lead sallies from the gates. De Bracy is defeated and captured by the Black Knight, who then rescues the wounded Ivanhoe from the flames. Cedric and Gurth rescue Rowena, but Bois-Guilbert carries off Rebecca. Wamba and Athelstane make their way out of the castle in the confusion, but when the latter sees Bois-Guilbert with Rebecca, he charges him and is killed in

the process. Friar Tuck, unbeknownst to the others, manages to rescue Isaac of York from the burning castle. Ulrica meanwhile sings out madly from one of the parapets and perishes in the flames when the tower collapses.

The next morning, the victors gather to divide the spoils. Locksley supervises the process and offers half to Cedric, who graciously declines. Wamba also refuses a reward, but asks that Gurth be pardoned. Cedric betters the request by granting the swineherd his freedom and giving him land of his own on the manorial estate. Rowena thanks Locksley for his role in the rescue and offers him and his men a safe retreat on her lands. When the time arrives to reward the Black Knight, he refuses a part in the plunder, but asks the right to dispose of the prisoner de Bracy. This right is granted, and he gives de Bracy his freedom, warning him lest he fall into worse trouble in the future. Cedric invites the Black Knight to come to Rotherwood, and the invitation is accepted, though the knight says he has other business to attend to first. He does tell Cedric that, when he comes to his castle, he will ask a great favor, which the Saxon promises to grant to half his domains. The Friar of Copmanhurst then arrives with Isaac of York in tow; he found him while he was searching the basement of the castle for fine wines and spirits. Locksley then brings forth another prisoner to be ransomed - Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx. After the Jew and the Prior trade insults, Locksley decrees that they must set one another's ransoms, since they know each other's business matters so well. Isaac sets Aymer's at six hundred crowns, while Aymer sets the Jew's at a thousand. Locksley reduces Isaac's to five hundred, arguing that a Prior should be valued more highly than a Jew. He also speaks secretly with Isaac and reminds him of a kindness the Jew had shown him when he was a young man; he also warns him to be free with his money when he attempts to deliver Rebecca from Bois-Guilbert, since the Templars love gold more than they love women. He also lets the old Jew know that he is aware of his secret hiding place where he stores his fortune, lest Isaac should be tempted to go back on his bargain.

John has meanwhile gathered his followers at York to advance his plan to seize the throne, but is reluctant to go forward without Bois-Guilbert, de Bracy, and Front-de-Boeuf. Rumors begin to circulate concerning the fall of Torquilstone, and John curses the folly of retainers who would seek their own pleasure when the entire success of their venture is at stake. Soon de Bracy arrives and tells John that Bois-Guilbert has fled and that Front-de-Boeuf is dead. Waldemar Fitzurse tells John that he has already ordered a band of men to salvage whatever may be rescued from Torquilstone; John is angered by his presumption, while Fitzurse is frustrated by his master's conceit. De Bracy then delivers the worst news of all - that the Black Knight is in reality Richard the Lion-Hearted. Both de Bracy and Fitzurse are ready to flee the country rather than be caught in treason, but John reminds them that they have already gone too far to turn back. John hints that the only way out for them is to capture Richard, who is traveling alone, and imprison him without anyone knowing about it. Fitzurse goes farther and suggests that he be killed. De Bracy, having been freed by the Black Knight, refuses to go back on his word, thus will have nothing to do with the enterprise. Fitzurse is then sent to lead a band of men to capture Richard. John then tells de Bracy that a man who has so little regard for the blood of a Plantagenet could never be his Chancellor; he intends to place the blame on Fitzurse should anything befall Richard. He then offers to make de Bracy High Marshal of the realm, though de Bracy secretly wonders at the worth of such a man's promises. After de Bracy leaves, John assigns a spy to follow him to see if he will betray his prince.

Isaac of York, meanwhile, travels to Templestowe, whence Bois-Guilbert has taken Rebecca. On the way he stops overnight with a rabbi, who warns him that the Grand Master of

the Templars has paid a surprise visit to Templestowe; he is a stickler for the rules that the Templars so freely ignore, and he hates Jews with a passion. Isaac must nonetheless continue if he hopes to rescue his daughter. Lucas Beaumanoir, the Grand Master, is in conversation with one of his companions when Isaac arrives. He speaks of his plans to bring swift and sudden retribution on those who have profaned the holy order of Templars. When Isaac arrives, the Grand Master insists on seeing him, then seizes and reads Aymer's letter to Bois-Guilbert. The wily Prior was supposed to plead for the release of Rebecca for a reasonable ransom, but the letter instead encourages the Templar to soak the old man for all that he can get. He also refers to Rebecca as a witch, speaking of her allurements, and hopes that he and the knight may soon carouse together once again. When Beaumanoir reads the letter, he decides to make an example of Rebecca, taking the reference to witchcraft literally (her teacher Miriam had been burned as a witch because of her medical skills). He announces his intention to burn Rebecca at the stake, then expels Isaac from the castle. When he informs the Preceptor of Templestowe, Albert Malvoisin, that Rebecca must be burned because she has cast a spell on the noble knight Bois-Guilbert, he goes immediately to warn his friend. Bois-Guilbert then seeks some means of removing her from the castle before sentence can be carried out, but Malvoisin advises him that Rebecca may on no account be saved, but that his own position in the Order depends on his submission to the Grand Master. Malvoisin is then offered a richer preceptory if he is able to bribe witnesses to give sufficient evidence to convict Rebecca.

The Grand Master, wishing to waste no time, orders that Rebecca be brought to the great hall, which has been set up as a courtroom. As she is led into the hall, someone presses a piece of paper into her hand, though she has no time to read it. The testimony given against Rebecca included the account of a poor peasant who had been nursed by her as well as the men Malvoisin had bribed. Their testimony consisted of insinuations related to her speech and dress as a Jewess along with totally fabricated wonders they ascribed to her powers. When asked to respond, she denies all charges and asks Bois-Guilbert to deny them also. He is unable to speak more than to tell her to read the scroll in her hand. The words on it tell her to demand a champion. She destroys the paper, then asks for trial by combat, which is her right. She has no idea who will step forward to fight for her, but entrusts her cause to God. Albert de Malvoisin nominates Bois-Guilbert to fight for the Templars, and Beaumanoir sets the third day as the day for the trial by combat. If Rebecca can produce no champion, or if her champion is defeated by Bois-Guilbert, she is to be burned as a sorceress. The only man willing to carry a message to her father is the peasant to whom she had ministered in his infirmity, and he soon finds Isaac of York and conveys her missive. In it she tells her father of her predicament and begs him to find Ivanhoe who, though too weak to take to the lists himself, may be able to procure a champion for her. Isaac's friend the rabbi suggests that simple bribery might find a champion more readily.

That night Bois-Guilbert visits Rebecca in her cell. He confesses that he had hoped that the Templars would have chosen another knight for the trial by combat so that he could appear in disguise as her champion. He warns her that, if he takes the field to prove her guilt, she is doomed to die, since the only men who have ever defeated him in single combat are Richard the Lion-Hearted, whom he believes to be in prison, and Ivanhoe, who is too weak to fight. He then offers to disgrace himself by refusing to fight if she will only agree to run away with him and be his mistress. Rebecca firmly rejects his offer while forgiving her tormentor, and he leaves her to her fate. Bois-Guilbert, obviously shaken, then goes to Albert and tells him what has happened, and that he intends to resign from the Order and serve as Rebecca's champion anyway. Albert

reminds him that Beaumanoir would immediately imprison him should he resign. Bois-Guilbert then says he will flee so he need not play a part in the travesty to come, but Malvoisin tells him that he will never be allowed to leave the castle before the trial to come. The Templar then resigns himself to taking the lance against the life of the girl with whom he is infatuated.

After the fall of Torquilstone, the Black Knight had visited Ivanhoe in the priory where he is convalescing, then told him they would meet again at Athelstane's funeral, where he would seek to reconcile the noble young knight to his father. The Black Knight then leaves with Wamba as his guide, advising Ivanhoe to rest and recuperate. Ivanhoe, fearing that the Norman knight will get a poor reception among the Saxons, convinces the Prior to lend him a horse, and he and Gurth set out to follow their friends. On the way, the Black Knight and Wamba are ambushed by a band of men led by Waldemar Fitzurse. The two hold their own until Fitzurse treacherously kills the Black Knight's steed. At that point, Wamba sounds a horn given to the Black Knight by Locksley, and the two are soon rescued by the woodsman's archers. Fitzurse, knowing the Black Knight's identity, tells him that Prince John had incited the attack, then waits for the sentence of death to fall upon him. The Black Knight, however, releases him with strict orders that he leave England immediately, never return, and promise to say nothing that would link John with the failed attack. Locksley objects to such mercy to a traitor, but the Black Knight then reveals his identity - he is really Richard the Lion-Hearted. Locksley bows before his sovereign and receives pardon for all his banditry and thanks for his strong-armed support at Torquilstone and in the forest. We then find that Locksley is the famous Robin Hood, and that the hermit of Copmanhurst is none other than Friar Tuck. Richard offers the friar a place in his bodyguard, but Tuck refuses, preferring his life of drinking and poaching in the forest.

At that point, Ivanhoe and Gurth catch up with the party. After a celebration by the victors hosted by Locksley, Richard, Ivanhoe, Wamba, and Gurth go on to Coningsburgh Castle for Athelstane's funeral. They are very well received, though Ivanhoe is disguised to avoid setting off his father's anger. After being escorted through the mourning chambers, Richard and Ivanhoe reveal their identities to Cedric. Richard demands the boon he had earlier requested, which is that Cedric would forgive his son. The Saxon noble can hardly refuse such a request, though he is unwilling to acknowledge Richard's claim to the throne because he is a Norman. Then, much to the surprise of all, Athelstane himself enters the room. Apparently he had only been stunned at the battle of Torquilstone and had revived in the monastery to which he had been taken. Cedric not only rejoices in the reappearance of his friend, but also insists that Athelstane, lone descendant of the ancient Saxon monarchs, should stake his claim to the throne and marry his ward, Rowena. Athelstane declines both honors, however, pledging his allegiance to Richard and conceding that Rowena is in love with Ivanhoe rather than himself. When Cedric yields to his friend's pleas and turns to acknowledge the same to Richard and Ivanhoe, he finds that both have disappeared. He discovers upon examination that both have hurried away after receiving an urgent message from Isaac the Jew.

Back at Templestowe, the trial by ordeal is ready to begin. Bois-Guilbert makes one last effort to win Rebecca over, offering to carry her away on his charger immediately should she agree to live with him. She nobly refuses, and he retires with an ambivalence that betrays great inner turmoil. Rebecca asks for a delay of two hours so that a champion might appear on her behalf, though she entertains little hope of such an event actually occurring. As the time is about to expire, a champion rides onto the field. He is Ivanhoe, obviously in a state of great weakness and riding the exhausted nag he had borrowed from the Prior. The obvious mismatch must

nonetheless be contested, and the two combatants thunder toward one another. As expected, Bois-Guilbert easily unseats the feeble Ivanhoe and topples his horse in the bargain. As Ivanhoe rises to confront his opponent on foot, he finds, much to his surprise, that Bois-Guilbert lies prone on the ground. Ivanhoe barely touched his shield with his lance, yet the Templar warrior lies motionless. Ivanhoe approaches and removes his helmet, but finds that Bois-Guilbert is dead - his heart had burst from the conflicting passions within his breast over the confrontation. Ivanhoe is thus declared the winner and Rebecca is released, her innocence considered proved.

Cedric still desires to rebuild Saxon England by uniting Athelstane and Rowena, but Athelstane soon convinces him that he will not be party to any such scheme. Cedric then gives his consent to the marriage of Rowena and Ivanhoe, which takes place with great rejoicing among those of all classes, Norman and Saxon alike. The traitors Albert and Philip Malvoisin are executed, Waldemar Fitzurse and Maurice de Bracy are exiled, and Lucas Beaumanoir leaves England in a rage, insisting that he will appeal to the pope the takeover of Templestowe by King Richard. To John, on whose behalf all the mischief was carried out, nothing is done. In fact, he soon succeeds his brother when Richard meets an untimely death in battle. Isaac and Rebecca leave England for Grenada in Spain, where they hope to find more congenial treatment among the Moors. Before leaving, Rebecca visits Rowena, now Ivanhoe's bride, and asks her to convey her thanks to the champion who risked all to save her life. Rowena in turn thanks Rebecca for nursing Ivanhoe during his convalescence. She tries to convince Rebecca to stay in England, convert to Christianity, and enjoy the high honor of living as a sister in the house of Ivanhoe. Rebecca declines graciously, then gives Rowena a diamond necklace and earrings of great value to show her gratitude.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

- Cedric of Rotherwood - A Saxon nobleman who is willing to take a stand against any Norman oppressor who crosses his path. He is the guardian of the beautiful Rowena, and hopes to rebuild the Saxon kingdom now under thrall to the hated Normans.
- Rowena - Cedric's ward, a lovely young lady. She ultimately marries Wilfrid of Ivanhoe, the protagonist.
- Wilfrid of Ivanhoe - The estranged son of Cedric, he returns from the Holy Land incognito to woo and win Rowena. He also rescues Rebecca from being burned at the stake.
- Gurth - Cedric's swineherd, a simple peasant; he serves as Ivanhoe's squire while the latter is traveling incognito and eventually wins his freedom for his heroism.
- Wamba - Cedric's jester; he saves his master's life during the battle of Torquilstone.
- Athelstane - A Saxon nobleman and friend of Cedric, who hopes to advance the Saxon cause through a marriage between him and Rowena; he is thought killed by Bois-Guilbert in battle, but later returns to appear at his funeral.

- Isaac of York - An honorable but greedy Jewish moneylender.
- Rebecca - Beautiful daughter of Isaac, she falls in love with Ivanhoe, but her love is unrequited. She is also the object of the obsessive love of Bois-Guilbert. The Grand Master of the Templars tries to burn her at the stake as a witch, but she is rescued by Ivanhoe.
- Robert Locksley - “Robin Hood,” he is the head of a band of men who have lost their lands to the villainous Prince John. They live in the forest and support themselves by robbing the rich and giving to the poor.
- Friar Tuck - A forest-dwelling monk who is part of Locksley’s band.
- Richard the Lion-Hearted - King of England who, while on the Third Crusade, was imprisoned by the Duke of Austria. He returns in secret to England, disguised as the Black Knight, to regain the throne that is being usurped by his brother.
- Prince John - Richard’s younger brother, he serves as regent while Richard is away and intends to gain the throne for himself.
- Aymer - A worldly Cistercian who is the Prior of the monastery at Jorvaulx; he supports Prince John.
- Brian de Bois-Guilbert- A knight of the Templar order and supporter of Prince John who has recently returned from the Holy Land. He has designs on Rebecca and holds a grudge against Ivanhoe, but dies of a broken heart in the climactic joust with the hero.
- Reginald Front-de-Boeuf - Cedric’s villainous Norman neighbor, a supporter of Prince John. He allows his castle of Torquilstone to be used by those who kidnap Cedric and his companions, and is gravely wounded in the ensuing battle. He dies when Ulrica sets fire to the castle.
- Philip Malvoisin - Another Norman neighbor, fully as villainous as Reginald. He is executed for treason when Richard regains the throne.
- Waldemar Fitzurse - John’s chief advisor; he hopes to become Lord Chancellor when John gains the throne, but goes into exile when his plots fail.
- Maurice de Bracy - A pleasure-loving retainer of Prince John who kidnaps Rowena and tries to force her to marry him. He, too, is exiled to France when his plans fail.
- Ulrica (Urfried) - Daughter of Torquil Wolfgang, she had long been thought dead, but had in reality been deflowered and held captive by Reginald Front-de-Boeuf’s father. She is determined to get revenge on her captors, and does so by setting fire to the castle as Richard and his men assault it. She dies in the ensuing conflagration.

- Lucas Beaumanoir - The strict Grand Master of the Templars, he tries to burn Rebecca at the stake as a witch.
- Albert Malvoisin - Philip's brother and Preceptor of the Templar establishment at Templestowe. He is an ally of Bois-Guilbert and warns him when the Grand Master orders Rebecca to be burned as a witch. He, like his brother, is executed for treason.

NOTABLE QUOTATIONS

“But a glance on the great picture of life will shew, that the duties of self-denial, and the sacrifice of passion to principle, are seldom thus remunerated; and that the internal consciousness of their high-minded discharge of duty, produces on their own reflections a more abundant recompense, in the form of that peace which the world cannot give or take away.” (Introduction, p.xxiii)

“The son who has disobeyed me is no longer mine; nor will I concern myself more for his fate than for that of the most worthless among the millions that ever shaped the cross on their shoulder, rushed into excess and blood-guiltiness, and called it an accomplishment of the will of God.” (Cedric, ch.3, p.31-32)

“Now, it is well known, that a man may with more impunity be guilty of an actual breach either of real good breeding or of good morals, than appear ignorant of the most minute point of fashionable etiquette.” (ch.14, p.146)

“The power of vengeance, Rebecca, and the prospects of ambition.” (Bois-Guilbert, ch.24, p.240)

“The love of battle is the food upon which we live.” (Ivanhoe, ch.29, p.300)

“Glory? Alas! It is the rusted mail which hangs as a hatchment over the champion's dim and mouldering tomb.” (Rebecca, ch.29, p.301)

“Will future ages believe that such stupid bigotry ever existed!” (Bois-Guilbert, ch.36, p.384)

“Women are but the toys which amuse our lighter hours - ambition is the serious business of life.” (Albert Malvoisin, ch.36, p.386)

“Cast my innocence into the scale and the glove of silk shall outweigh the glove of iron.” (Rebecca, ch.38, p.405)

“Lady, I doubt it not - but the people of England are a fierce race, quarrelling ever with their neighbours or among themselves, and ready to plunge the sword into the bowels of each other. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people.” (Rebecca, ch.44, p.494)

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Discuss the following in a five-paragraph essay:

1. Some critics have suggested that Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* is misnamed. While Ivanhoe is a noble character who does great deeds in several scenes in the book, he does not play the active role that one might expect of a protagonist. In your opinion, should Sir Wilfrid be viewed as the protagonist of the story, or is another candidate, perhaps Richard Plantagenet or even Rebecca of York, more suitable? Defend your choice with specifics from the novel, being sure to define the role of a protagonist in the process.
2. Compare and contrast the two leading female characters in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. May Rowena and Rebecca appropriately be considered foils? What are their chief similarities and differences, and how do these relationships help to bring out the main themes of the novel? Be sure to support your arguments with specific details from the story.
3. Would you consider Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* to be anti-Semitic? In your answer, be sure to consider the way the Jews in the story are portrayed, the attitudes of different characters toward the Jews, and the ways in which the author's attitude differs from that of his characters.
4. Compare and contrast the characters of Isaac of York in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Shylock in William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Both are in many ways stereotypes, yet both also have humanizing characteristics that take them beyond the prejudices of the ages in which they were written. Given the fact that the two accounts were written more than two hundred years apart, do they show any progress in the English understanding of the Jewish people? Remember that, while Scott wrote in the early nineteenth century, he was describing events that took place in the late twelfth century, so evaluate the authors' perspectives rather than those shown by the characters in the stories.
5. Evaluate the attitude toward women displayed in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Discuss the picture painted in the book in the light of the age in which the story was supposed to have occurred (late twelfth century), the age in which the novel was written (early nineteenth century), and the sensibilities of the present age. What do the three answers above tell you about changes in society's view of women over the last eight hundred years?
6. Compare and contrast the pictures of the rivalry between Normans and Saxons portrayed in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Jean Anouilh's *Becket*. Remember that Henry II, the king in Anouilh's play, was the father of Richard the Lion-Hearted, the monarch in Scott's novel, so that the England pictured in the two narratives is much the same. Consider the sympathies of both authors in their presentation of the conflict. How do their sympathies reveal key themes in their writings?

7. In your opinion, who is the chief villain in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*? The story has many candidates for the honor, but you must choose one and argue why he qualifies as the central villain in the story, as well as why he supersedes other candidates for the position.
8. Compare and contrast the roles of Wamba the fool in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and the Fool in William Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The concept of the wise fool is an old one in literature, and suggests that the simple possess a wisdom that exceeds those who are supposed to be wise in the ways of the world. In your comparison, be sure to include the nature of the wisdom displayed by the fools, the extent to which they influence the plot, and the ways in which the ideas they express mirror those of the author.
9. Discuss the view of the church found in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. To what extent is Scott's picture of the medieval church a faithful one? Do you see any indications in the story that Scott respects Christianity more than he respects the church? Support your arguments with specifics from the novel.
10. Describe and assess the picture of genuine Christianity presented in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. What characters are pictured as Christians whose religion is worthy of praise and respect? What does this tell you about the author's understanding of the Christian faith? To what extent does he understand Christianity and in what ways does he miss the point?
11. Sir Walter Scott was one of the leading novelists of the Romantic Era in England. Using his most famous novel, *Ivanhoe*, discuss the ways in which the leading ideas of Romanticism are present in the novel.
12. Discuss the role of hidden identities in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Various characters at various times seek to conceal their identities. Why do they do so? How do these deceptions contribute to the plot and themes of the novel?
13. Evaluate the kingly qualities of Richard the Lion-Hearted as they are presented in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Consider both his positive and negative qualities while discussing the author's view of what makes a good king.
14. Compare and contrast the kingly qualities of Richard I in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Henry V in William Shakespeare's play of that name. Consider such matters as courage, military prowess, wisdom, care for his subjects, and stability in your assessment.
15. Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* was very popular almost from the day of its publication, but the author received so many comments from readers to the effect that Ivanhoe should have married Rebecca rather than Rowena at the end of the story that he felt compelled to write a defense of his decision. What do you think? Was Rebecca more deserving of Ivanhoe's hand? Would such a marriage have violated the historical integrity of the novel? Would one marriage have been happier than the other?

16. Discuss the skill of Sir Walter Scott in the use of character development in his most famous adventure novel, *Ivanhoe*. In romantic adventures such as this, character development is not often a prime consideration. Do any of the characters in the story show growth and development as the book progresses? Choose the character who in your opinion changes the most and discuss the credibility of the character change in the context of the plot.
17. Compare and contrast the climactic rescues of Rebecca in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Guenever in T.H. White's *The Once and Future King*. Which scene do you think is more effective? Why do you think so? In what ways do the differences between the two contribute to the themes the respective authors wish to emphasize?
18. In Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, the title character is more a symbol than a participant in the action of the novel. Of what is he a symbol? What does the fact that his name headlines the story tell you about the nature of the social commentary in which Scott was engaging?
19. Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* is built around three central action sequences - the jousting tournament at Ashby, the siege of Torquilstone Castle, and the trial by combat at Templestowe. Which of the three do you find the most exciting? Why? What factors contribute to your decision?
20. In Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, which character is to the greatest extent the embodiment of the medieval code of chivalry? Choose among candidates such as Ivanhoe, Richard the Lion-Hearted, and Robin of Locksley, then defend your choice using details from the story.
21. Compare and contrast the BBC miniseries version of Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* with the novel. Consider the extent to which the miniseries is faithful to the themes, plot, and characterization of Scott's story. In your opinion, do the changes improve or weaken the story? Defend your conclusions with specific evidence from both sources.
22. Discuss the author's use of comic relief in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. What are the chief sources of comedy in the story, and how does Scott use them to advance the plot, define the characters, and break tension for the reader?