

## Chapter 35 HOW AN HUNTER SHOULD SEEK AND FIND THE...

Ere I speak how the hare should be hunted, it is to be known that the hare is king of all venery, for all blowing and the fair terms of hunting cometh of the seeking and the finding of the hare. For certain it is the most marvellous beast that is, for ever she fumeth or croteth and roungeth and beareth tallow and grease. And though men say that she fumeth inasmuch as she beareth tallow, yet that which cometh from her is not called fumes but croteys. And she hath teeth above in the same wise as beneath. It is also to be known that the hare is at one time male and another time female. When she is female sometimes she kindles in three degrees, two rough, two smooth and two knots that afterwards should be kindles, but this happeneth but seldom. Now for to speak of the hare how he shall be sought and found and chased with hounds. It is to be known what the first word (should be) that the hunter should speak to his hounds when he lets them out of the kennel. When the door is opened he shall say loud: "Ho ho arere,"<sup>227</sup> because that his hounds will come out too hastily. And when he uncoupleth his hounds, he shall say to them when he comes into the field: "Sto mon amy sto atrete," but when he is come forth into the field he shall blow three motes and uncouple the hounds, then he shall speak twice to his hounds in this wise, "Hors de couple, avaunt cy avaunt"<sup>228</sup> and then he shall say thrice "So how" and no more; afterward he shall say loud "Sa say cy avaunt" and then "Sa cy avaunt, sa cy avaunt so how," and if he see the hounds draw fast from him and would fain run, he shall say thus to them here: "How amy-how amy," and then shall he say "Swe mon famy swef"<sup>229</sup> for to make them go softly, and between always blow three motes. And if any of his hounds find and own to the hare where he hath been, he shall say to them in this wise: "Oyez a Beaumont le vaillant," or what the hound is called. And if he seeth that the hare hath been at pasture in green corn or in any other place and his hounds find of her and that they fall well in enquest<sup>230</sup> (hunt) and chase it well, then he shall say "La Douce, la il a este"<sup>231</sup> and therewith "So howe" with a high voice, and if his hounds chase

HARE-HUNTING WITH GREYHOUNDS AND RUNNING HOUNDS

Ere I speak how the hare should be hunted, it is to be known that the hare is king of all venery, for all blowing and the fair terms of hunting cometh of the seeking and the finding of the hare. For certain it is the most marvellous beast that is, for ever she fumeth or croteth and roungeth and beareth tallow and grease. And though men say that she fumeth inasmuch as she beareth tallow, yet that which cometh from her is not called fumes but croteys. And she hath teeth above in the same wise as beneath. It is also to be known that the hare is at one time male and another time female. When she is female sometimes she kindles in three degrees, two rough, two smooth and two knots that afterwards should be kindles, but this happeneth but seildom. Now for to speak of the hare how he shall be sought and found and chased with hounds. It is to be known what the first word (should be) that the hunter should speak to his hounds when he lets them out of the kennel. When the door is opened he shall say loud: "Ho ho arere,"<sup>227</sup> because that his hounds will come out too hastily. And when he uncoupleth his hounds, he shall say to them when he comes into the field: "Sto mon amy sto atrete," but when he is come forth into the field he shall blow three notes and uncouple the hounds, then he shall speak twice to his hounds in this wise, "Hors de couple, avaunt cy avaunt"<sup>228</sup> and then he shall say thrice "So how" and no more; afterward he shall say loud "Sa say cy avaunt" and then "Sa cy avaunt, sa cy avaunt so how," and if he see the hounds draw fast from him and would fain run, he shall say thus to them here: "How amy-how amy," and then shall he say "Swe mon famy swef"<sup>229</sup> for to make them go softly, and between always blow three notes. And if any of his hounds find and own to the hare where he hath been, he shall say to them in this wise: "Oyez a Beaumont le vaillant," or what the hound is called. And if he seeth that the hare hath been at pasture in green corn or in any other place and his hounds find of her and that they fall well in enquest<sup>230</sup> (hunt) and chase it well, then he shall say "La Douce, la il a este"<sup>231</sup> and therewith "So howe" with a high voice, and if his hounds chase

#### HARE-HUNTING WITH GREYHOUNDS AND RUNNING HOUNDS

(From MS. f. fr. 616, Bib. Nat., Paris)

not well at his pleasure and they grede (hunt) there where he has not pastured, then shall he say "Illeogs illeogs"<sup>232</sup> in the same place while they seek her. And then he should cast and look about the field, to see where she hath been and whether she hath pastured or not, or whether she be in her form, for she does not like to remain where she hath pastured except in time of relief. If any hounds scent her, and she hath

before is said, but not rechace till the hare be found, or that some man meet it and blow the rights and holloa, or else that he findeth her pointing or pricking whichever it be, for both mean the same, but some call it the one and some the other. And if he find that he can well blow the rights and holloa and jopey three or four times and cry loud "le voy, le voy," till the hounds come thither and have well caught it. And (when) she is retrieved blow and holloa and rout to the hounds as it is said you should do at the finding, and follow after and foot it who can foot it. And if it happen when men hunt her and hounds chase her that she squat anywhere before the hounds, and that any hunter find her squatting, if the hounds be nigh about, he should blow a mote and rechace and start her, and then halloa and rout to them as above is said. And if he find her squat, and the hounds be far from him, then should he blow as I last said before, and after two motes for the hounds, and the berners that hear him should answer him thus "trut, trut, trut" and draw all towards him with the hounds as fast as they can, saying to their hounds: "so-how, mon amy, so-howe." And when they be there and the hounds have all come up, they should check them with one of their rods, and when she is started, blow, holloa and rout as before is said, and according to what the case requireth, do as before is said and devised. And when she hath been well chased and well retrieved, notwithstanding her rusing and squatting and reseating, so that by strength at last she is bitten by the hounds, whoso is nearest should start to take her whole from them, and hold her in his one hand over his head high, and blow the death that men may gather thither, and when they be come, then should she be stripped, all save the head, and the gall and the paunch cast away, and the remnant should be laid on a great staff or on a board, whoso hath it, or on the earth, and then it should be chopped as small as it can be, so that it hang together; and when it is so done then should one of the berners take it up with the head and hold it as high as he is able in his hands, and then whoso is most master, blow the death, and anon as he beginneth every man help and holloa. And when the hounds have bayed, as long as is wished by the aforesaid most master, then should the berner pull as high as he can every piece from the other and cast to every hound his reward. And then should the most master blow a mote and stroke, if so be that he thinks that the hounds have done enough, and else he should rest awhile, if the hounds be hot, till they be cooled, and then led to the water to lap. And then if he wish blow three motes and

#### NETTING HARES IN THEIR "MUSES"

(From MS. f. fr. 616, Bib. Nat., Paris)

uncouple and speak and so do as before is said. And if they will seek a covert for the hare and set greyhounds without, they should blow and seek and speak in the manner as before is said, save that if the hounds find anything what so ever it be, he shall rally and jopey till he has seen it, or that he knows what it is (and if it be an hare do as above is said),<sup>237</sup> an if it be ought else he shall blow drawing with his horn and cry loud "So -how mon amy, so-how, sto arere, so-how, so-howe," and seek forthwith again with three long notes till the hare be found. Yet nevertheless if they be hart-hunters that seek a covert for the hare, and their hounds find a fox, whoso meeteth with him should blow out upon him to warn the fewterers<sup>238</sup> that there is a thief in the wood. And if they run at the hare and the hare happen to come out to the greyhounds in front of the raches and be killed, the fewterer that let run should blow the death and keep it as whole as he may till the hunters be come, and then should they reward the hounds as before is said.

227 "Back there!" from the Fr. *arrière*.

228 "Out of couples, forward there, forward!" (Precisely the same instructions are given by the later Twety and Gyfford.)

229 "Gently, my friend, gently!"

230 Quest, hunt, seek, also challenge.

231 "Softly, there he has been!"

232 "In this place," or "here, here." This passage, which reads somewhat confusedly in our MS., is clearer in Twety and Gyfford (*Reliqui? Antiqu?*, vol. i. p. 149). It reads as follows: "And then ye shall blowe iij notes, yf yowr hund ne chace not well hym, there one ther another, as he hath pasturyd hym, ye shall say 'illeosque, illeosque, illeosque,'" meaning that 3 notes should be blown where the hare has pastured to bring your hounds to the place, *illeosque* meaning here, in this place.

233 "Softly there, here she has been, back there." Following this the Shirley MS. and Twety and Gyfford contain a passage which our MS. has not got: "And thenne sa cy, a este sohow, and afterwards sa cy avaunt."

234 "Softly, my friend, she has been here."

235 "Here gently, here valiantly."

236 To call back the hounds from a wrong scent, the same as "recheat."

237 The words in brackets are in the Shirley MS.

238 Huntsman holding hounds in leash.

\*\*\*



Our ads aim to provide better support for authors.

